

Menopause matters™

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Naomi Watts

On menopause, sex and what has helped her

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How keeping up a network of friends really can help

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YOUR 5 A DAY

But we're not talking vegetables here but some different tips to help your day along

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2, 4, 6, 8 *motivate!*

The indomitable Trudi Roscouet does some straight talking to help us through the season.



• Trudi: "We need to start ourselves on a very simple plan..."

Photo courtesy of the Jersey Evening Post.



As Christmas is coming, the goose is getting fat... or should I say, the goose isn't the only one! At this time of year motivation flies out of the window and all we can do is hold onto the fact that we will wait until January.

Let's be honest, this has happened to us for years. If you haven't done the 'little black dress' diet by beginning of November, that's it – game over! Or so you think...

The problem is life isn't really like that. Every week or month there will always be some celebration, dinner, drinks. In fact, forget that, why do we need to celebrate to have a glass of wine or two biscuits in the afternoon with our cup of tea? Exactly! Have you got my point? Every day is another day. Every day, we fall into a trap – the mindset trap. *"It doesn't matter, there's always tomorrow"* or *"well, you only live once, what the heck?"*

I get it! Really I do! However, the problem is that when we hit perimenopause we become 'victims.' As estrogen falls (let alone progesterone) the metabolism slows down, our weight increases, cortisol levels increase and not only that, but we have a much higher risk of heart disease because of high cholesterol levels due to the liver's inability to process drink and 'fatty' foods properly. Great! So, that's before we get out of bed and start the day.

BMI

If you are reading this – I would love you to do your BMI. Yup right now! Go over to NHS BMI Calculator - here's the link - www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-weight/bmi-calculator/ and complete the information. I love this one as it allows you to work in kg and feet! If your result has come out at over 30, this means you are, what they call, obese. I hate this term but to me this is the truth. You can't escape it – this is the 'Call to Action.'

I use this term as what this article is all about is MOTIVATION. Motivation is defined as the process that initiates, guides, and maintains goal-oriented behaviours. We need to start ourselves on a very simple plan to help ourselves every day – a small goal, and if it's to lose weight whether that's 1, 5, or 10kgs, it's vital that we take the first step forward. →



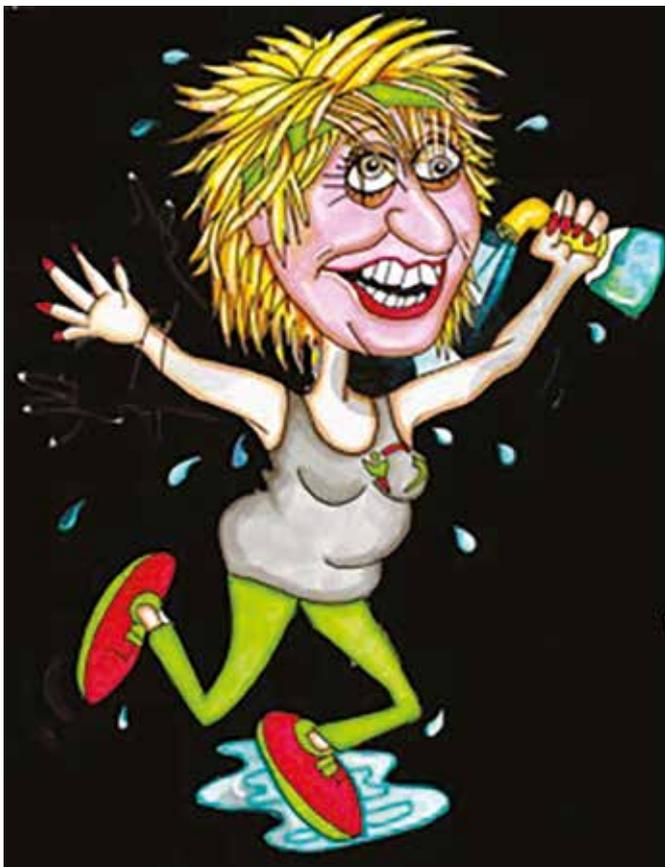
Always remember, life happens. It will always happen so we have to learn to live our best life daily. I know. I did it. Having worked in the fitness industry until I was about 48, I walked away from it, had surgery, enjoyed my best life (or so I thought) and then the photo that changed my world. The day I thought 'enough'. I didn't know I was probably perimenopausal at this point. I didn't know about weight gain and additional cortisol/sugar pounding and layering on my belly. I just thought I'd stopped fitness (I mean a huge amount of fitness) and started living a normal 9-5 life.

So, what made me motivate myself?

Well, it was Covid!

I couldn't understand how I could have become this overweight. Little by little, I researched and realised that I had to make decisions on everything I put into my mouth.

I had to change habits. It is now the back end of 2022 and every day is my own little challenge. I always take out food the night before for the next two nights. My partner thinks I like to 'control' the kitchen; maybe he's right, but I need to know that food is there so I don't make poor choices - like grabbing a pizza! I try to prepare vegetables on a Sunday - actually over this year apart from washing veg, there is no need to scrub skin off carrots, parsnips, potatoes - leave them on and get the added fibre!



“I didn't know I was probably perimenopausal at this point. I didn't know about weight gain and additional cortisol/sugar pounding and layering on my belly.”



Everything is about organisation.

Before I finish off the food, let's talk alcohol. It's hard and rubbish, I know! However, there are **so many** reasons not to drink every day. Notice I said every day not forever!

- wine contains more calories - 7g/fat per alcohol content. Drinking 4 bottles of wine a month adds up to a yearly consumption of around 27,000kcal, which is equivalent to eating 48 Big Macs per year. Drinking 5 pints of lager each week adds up to 44,200kcal over a year, equivalent to eating 221 doughnuts.

- Have you noticed after a 'sesh' how your hangover is worse or lingers for a couple of days? This is primarily due to two reasons:

Firstly, Cartlidge and tendons lose water as we age, which causes your body to hold less water. Therefore, we require more water in your body. Of course, alcohol dehydrates us, which means we are less capable of diluting the alcohol and therefore it has a more toxic effect on our cells.

Secondly, women also have less of the alcohol dehydrogenase (ADH) enzymes in their stomach. As a result, our bodies can't handle alcohol as well.

- I won't mention the increase in hot flushes, poor sleep quality and nausea, which can also accompany drinking!

Have you got the picture? So, before I go on to the call to action - let's just talk about exercise/movement issues that we also face.





Exercise

Again, I get it! It's cold, wet and windy. For example, as I write this article at 7am I look out of my window to a very bleak display of Jersey weather. Does this make me want to put on my trainers and head outside? No! This is why I loved Spain! (I was so lucky to live there for two years). However, if I continued to think like that my body would 'give up.'

Seriously, if you have done fitness all your life and you just stop, the body just seizes. Haven't you noticed how stiff you feel when you wake up? Is putting your socks/tights on an effort? Or perhaps you have a twinge in your back when you are walking? Is this how you want to continue?

I am hoping the answer is NO.

Priorities

This is now time to consider your priorities. I was interviewing Dr Maria Luque, a US menopause fitness professional, for my podcast channel (*Let's Talk About Health, Baby*) and she said that the vision of being helped in and out of their bath by one of their children was enough to motivate them to get out of bed and do something every day. I think that's a powerful statement. Personally, I know my left knee is very close to being fully arthritic (11 arthroscopies and an ACL) but at the age of 53 I can still do 10 burpees!

Exercise is not a competition

It's about keeping ourselves alive. Try setting small goals – walking 1000 steps (or 1000 more). Swinging your arms. Breathe.

I love paddle tennis (back to Spain again) and we have a new paddle centre in Jersey and I go there on my own, during the week, and join in a group session. I meet new people and have 90 minutes of fun.

I always suggest Zumba (I can already hear the sighs!) It's not about dancing – or the ability to not be able to dance. It's movement with great music – shaking your toosh and waving your arms. The dopamine hit is amazing! Who cares what you look like? Ok, I think I'm Beyonce, that's all that matters!

These two things together will equal weight loss and staying alive! When you find those excuses as to why you can't/won't exercise or the reasons as to why you want a drink/eat a takeaway/have that bar of chocolate/eat that doughnut, remember this:

- cravings pass in 20 minutes
- break the habit – change your routine
- stay focused – just for the day – think of the challenges at the end of the day and how you avoided them
- keep a journal and celebrate the small wins
- remember this is life – not a diet or a quick fix – this is about promising ourselves to live our best life
- every day is a call to action, from the moment you get up, make it your first day.

If you want to join Trudi on her next 'Mission,' visit her website and sign up to the waiting list. www.Vitality40plus.com



• Exercise in Jersey's stunning countryside is one of Trudi's little wins and big joys.