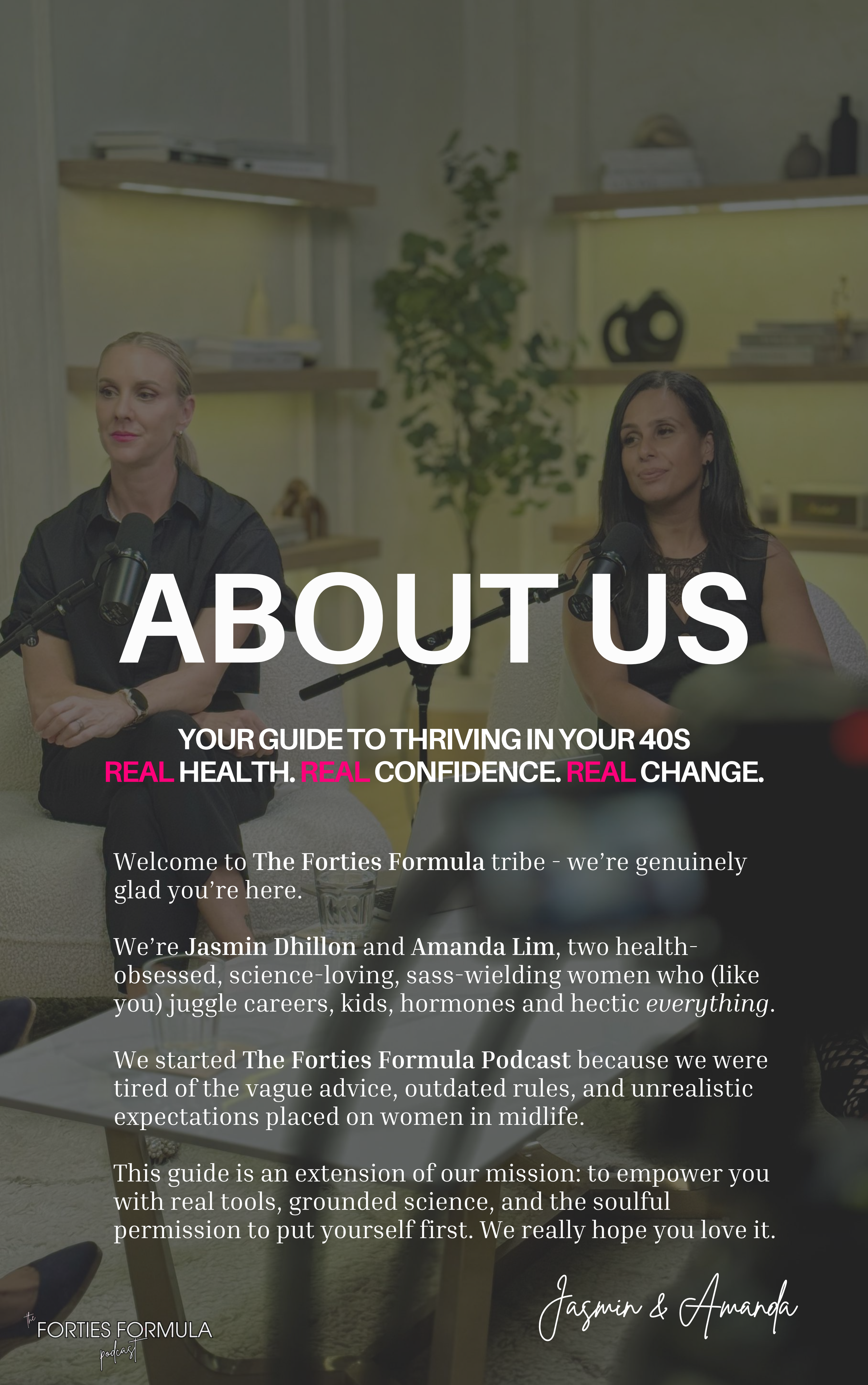


THE FORTIES FORMULA

YOUR WELLNESS GUIDE

**EMBRACE IT,
ELEVATE IT,
BECOME UNSTOPPABLE.**

A background image showing two women, Jasmin Dhillon and Amanda Lim, sitting at a table with microphones, recording a podcast. They are in a cozy, modern living room setting with shelves and a plant in the background.

ABOUT US

YOUR GUIDE TO THRIVING IN YOUR 40S
REAL HEALTH. REAL CONFIDENCE. REAL CHANGE.

Welcome to The Forties Formula tribe - we're genuinely glad you're here.

We're **Jasmin Dhillon** and **Amanda Lim**, two health-obsessed, science-loving, sass-wielding women who (like you) juggle careers, kids, hormones and hectic *everything*.

We started The Forties Formula Podcast because we were tired of the vague advice, outdated rules, and unrealistic expectations placed on women in midlife.

This guide is an extension of our mission: to empower you with real tools, grounded science, and the soulful permission to put yourself first. We really hope you love it.

Jasmin & Amanda

CHAPTER ONE

THE TRUTH ABOUT YOUR BODY

If you have hit your 40s and suddenly feel like you are living in a stranger's body, **you are not alone.**

Midlife is not just about grey hairs and more candles on the cake. It is a **full-body reset** that affects your hormones, metabolism, mindset, and even your bones.

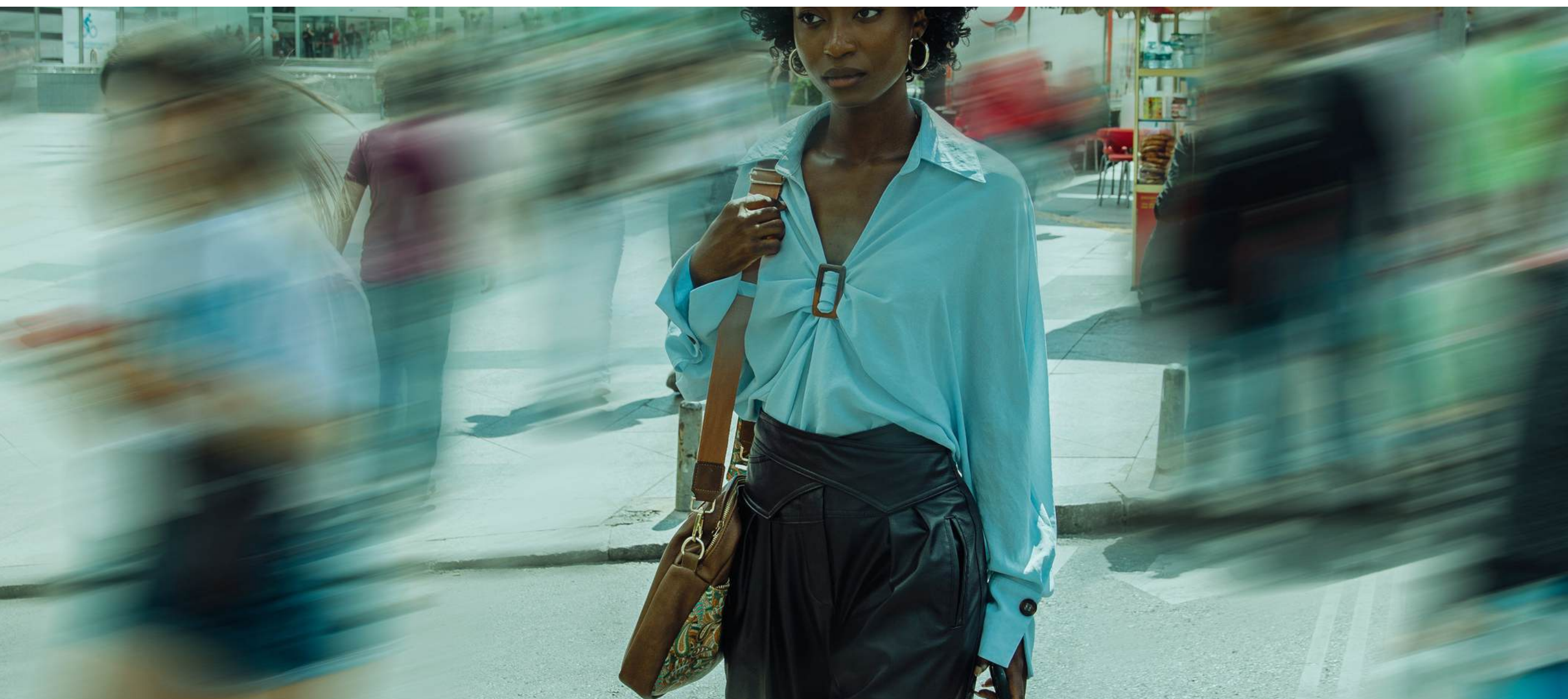
Dr. Sundus Hussain-Morgan explains that perimenopause is a whole-body transition. It Your 40s are the wake-up decade when prevention becomes power.

This is the phase where sleep gets lighter, moods shift quicker, and energy becomes something you chase instead of have on tap.

But it is also the most powerful time to intervene and support your future health. *"This is not the beginning of the end. It is the beginning of deeper, wiser living,"* she says.

Here is what is happening:

- Hormonal shifts affect your brain, mood, metabolism, and sleep.
- Muscle loss begins and accelerates - unless you actively train against it.
- Bone density starts declining. Strength and protein become critical.
- Stress and overstimulation keep your nervous system in survival mode.





WHAT'S CHANGING

Nutrition pro Charlie Thakrar reminds us that gut health, blood sugar regulation, and metabolic flexibility are all affected by these midlife changes. And what we eat, when and how we eat it, can either support or sabotage our transition.

Happiness scientist Sha-En Yeo adds another layer. This is not just a physical shift. It is emotional.

Women in their 40s are carrying some of the heaviest loads: caregiving, careers, relationships, identity. She reminds us that burnout is not a personal flaw. It is a signal. A signal to pause.

To feel. To ask what needs to change, not just what needs to get done.

Trainer Laura Phillips speaks to the physical stories we carry in our bodies. Shame. Pressure. That persistent internal voice saying we are not doing enough. Movement becomes a negotiation.

Strength training becomes a metaphor. Building muscle is no longer about aesthetics in your 40s. It is about self-worth, function, and feeling safe - and healthy - in your own skin.

What we've learned from the combined wisdom of these amazing women & their voices:

"WE HAVE BEEN TOLD MIDLIFE IS A CRISIS. IT IS ACTUALLY YOUR OPPORTUNITY TO COME HOME TO YOURSELF."

- Perimenopause is not a phase. It is a transformation.
- Your body composition, not your weight, is the real health marker.
- Stress is not just in your head. It is in your cells.
- The decisions you make in your 40s shape how you live in your 70s.
- Midlife does not have to be managed. It can be mastered.



CHAPTER TWO

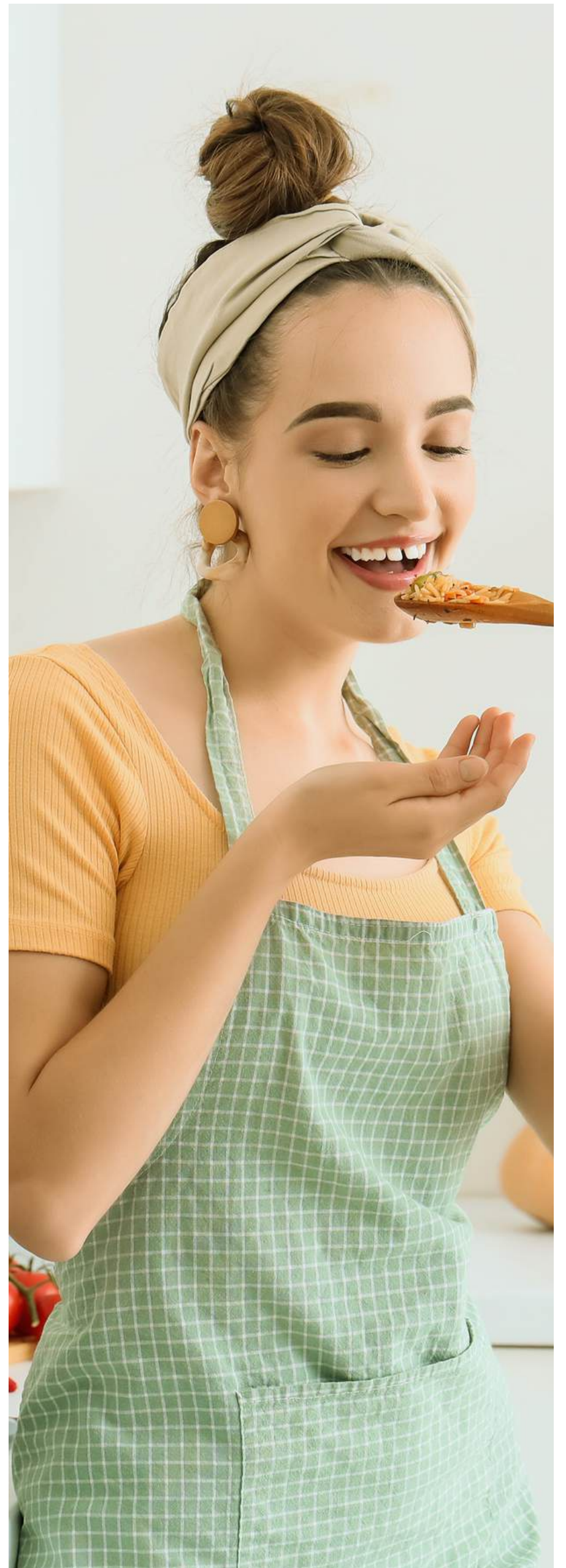
FOOD AS SELF-RESPECT, NOT RESTRICTION

Food in your 40s stops being about rules and starts becoming about relationship. A relationship with your body. Your energy. Your cravings. Your confidence. And perhaps most importantly, your story.

Jieun Wrigley unpacks this beautifully. As a clinical nutritionist, she sees women who are doing “all the right things” yet still feel tired, foggy, or stuck. The problem is not just what they are eating. It is the pressure to eat perfectly, the lack of understanding about what their body actually needs, and undoing years of messaging that turn food into fear.

Food is information. Every bite communicates something to your body. If you are still chasing low-calorie or low-fat meals while ignoring your protein, fiber, and hormonal signals, you are working against your biology. What Jieun makes clear is that nutrition in your 40s needs to be strategic.

This is the decade when blood sugar regulation, gut diversity, and muscle matter more than ever. Women need protein for their muscles, fibre for their hormones, and healthy fats for their mood and brain. They need to stop eating like they are trying to shrink and start eating like they are trying to grow...muscles!





FOOD IS FREEDOM

Sugar also plays a big part here. In our sugar-focused LIVE episode, we looked at how cravings are often misunderstood. It is not always about lack of willpower. It is about habit loops. When you are tired, overwhelmed, and emotionally stretched, your brain looks for a hit. Sugar gives it to you. Temporarily. But it also keeps you in a cycle of spikes and crashes that affect your mood, focus, and sleep.

The trick is not to eliminate sugar completely, but to understand when it helps and when it harms. This requires more than just willpower. It needs strategy, support, and softness.

Your health is like a savings account. Every choice you make is either a deposit or a withdrawal. The goal is never perfection, but progress. Consider that you build your health with habits – and you build resilience by feeding your body with diversity, colour, and nourishment.

Throughout our first-ever LIVE event, Breaking Up With Sugar, Jasmin and Amanda made it clear that a balanced, nutritious diet outweighs any single-ingredient restriction or crash diet. Nourishing ourselves is more than just dropping sugar - it's eating *right*, too.

What we've learned about what nourishment really looks like in our forties:

**“FOOD IS NOT THE ENEMY.
FOOD IS HOW YOU SHOW YOUR
BODY THAT IT MATTERS.
THAT YOU MATTER.”**

- Calories are less important than quality and function.
- Protein, fiber, and hydration are your midlife nutrition non-negotiables.
- Food can either fuel your energy or drain it.
- Sugar is more complex than a craving, but you do have control over it.
- Eating well in your 40s is not about shrinking your body, but expanding
- your capacity to live fully.



CHAPTER THREE

THE POWER OF MOVEMENT

Movement in your 40s is not about burning calories. It is about building capacity. About choosing strength over stress. It is about shifting from punishment to partnership with your body.

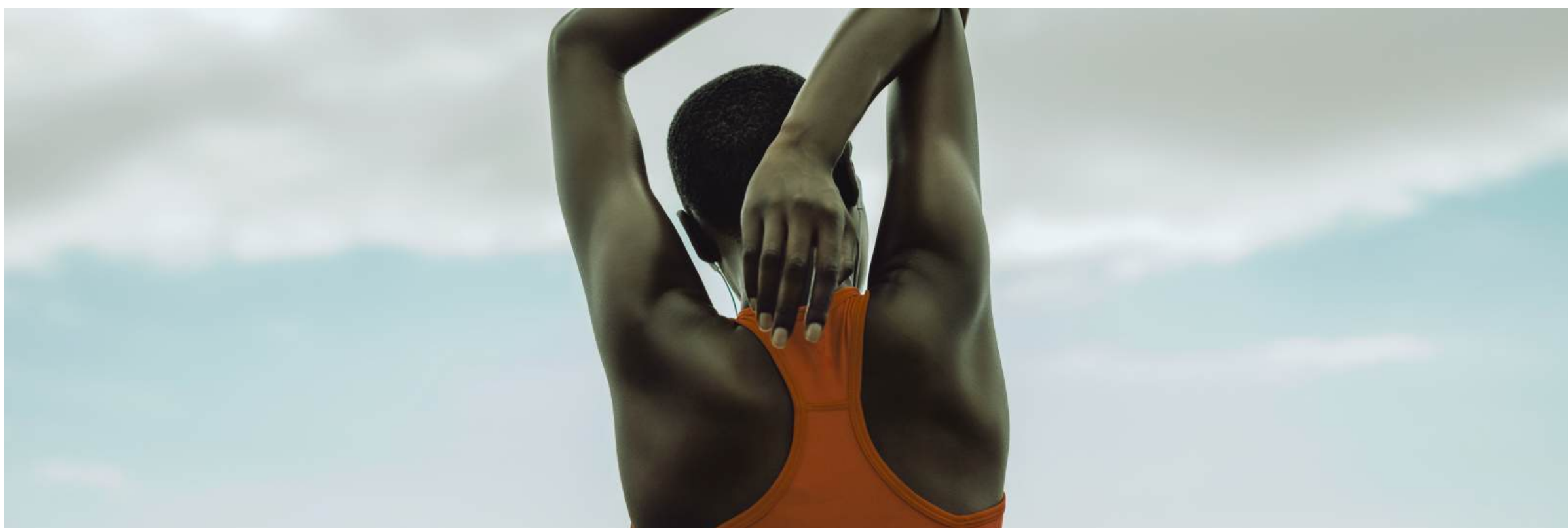
Laura Phillips, a coach who helps women in midlife reconnect with their bodies, sees strength training as the ultimate anti-aging prescription. It is not about chasing smaller jeans. It is about being able to carry your shopping, lift your child, or hike with ease.

Strength is function. Strength is freedom. In your 40s, your muscle mass usually declines, and your metabolism takes a hit.

That is biology. But it is not your destiny. The research is clear: women who strength train have better bone density, fewer injuries, sharper cognition, and better blood sugar regulation - why *wouldn't* you want that?

Physician Dr. Sundus reminds us that our bones and muscles are living tissues. They respond to what we do. And if we are not lifting, we are losing. She urges women to prioritise resistance training, twice a week, and to let go of the myth (yes, it's a *myth*) that they will become “bulky.”





MOVE TO LET GO

Sha-En Yeo brings in the emotional side of exercise, to make it clear it's not just about the sweat.

Exercise is not just physical. It is emotional release. It is presence. It is one of the most accessible ways to support your mental health.

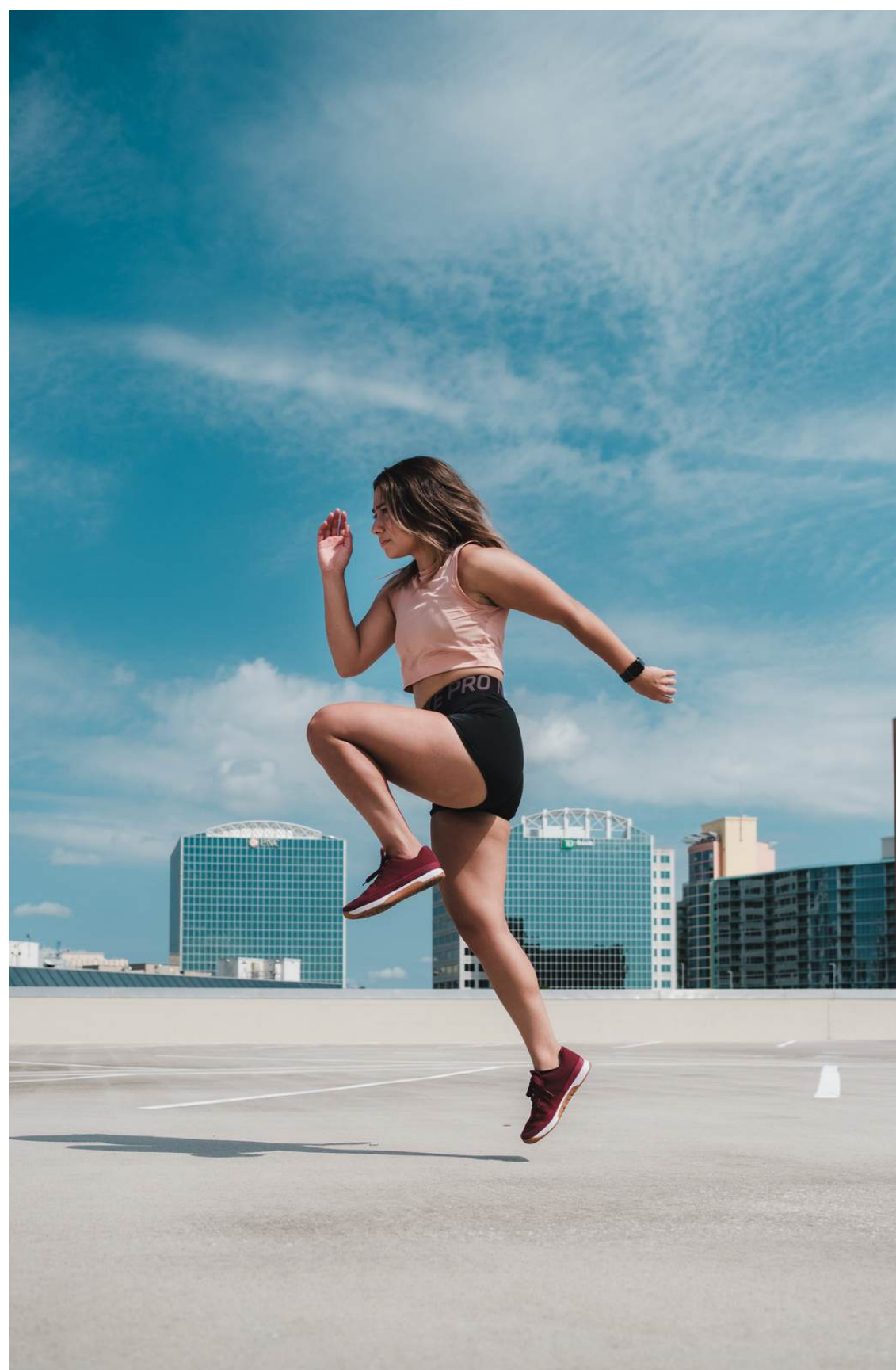
She explains that movement changes your neurochemistry. It gives you more energy, better focus, and improved emotional regulation.

Women who are more active also have lower rates of depression and anxiety.

What we've learned from the lived experience of these and other amazing guests:

- Your metabolism is not broken. It just needs more muscle.
- Strength training is essential, not optional.
- Movement supports mood, focus, and emotional resilience.
- You do not need to exercise more. You need to exercise better.
- Gentle movement, like walking or yoga, can supplement a strength program.

**"IF YOU ARE FEELING
OVERWHELMED OR
EXHAUSTED, MOVEMENT
MIGHT BE THE RESET YOUR
BODY IS ASKING FOR.
START SMALL. START LIGHT.
BUT START."**



CHAPTER FOUR

WRITING WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND

By the time you hit your 40s, you are carrying literal *decades* of stories.

Stories about your body.

About food.

About worth.

About what you are “supposed” to be doing.

Most of those stories were not written by you - **but you are the only one with the power to rewrite them.**

Sha-En Yeo, a leading voice in positive psychology, explains that happiness is not a destination. It is not about “fixing” yourself. It is about choosing presence. It is about learning to meet your emotions instead of escaping them.

Krystal Clavier-Choo also broke down this myth at **our second LIVE event**. Women in midlife are praised for being strong, for holding it together. But this strength often masks exhaustion, loneliness, and suppressed emotions. Real strength is in softness. In allowing yourself to feel grief, joy, rage, and everything in between.





YOU ARE THE SUM OF YOUR BELIEFS.

Laura Phillips adds that self-sabotage often comes from unaddressed shame. Women stay stuck in cycles of restriction, overworking, and neglect because they believe they are not worthy of rest or nourishment.

Rewriting the story starts with choosing yourself. Not when the kids are grown. Not when the weight is lost.

Now.

Dr. Sundus also sees this clinically, too. Many women know what they need to do, but mindset stops them.

They are afraid of being judged. Afraid of failing. She encourages women to shift from “fixing” to “curiosity.”

Ask yourself:

What does my body need? What am I ready to let go of, now, in my 40s?

What we’ve learned from these take-no-sh*t pros and their straight-talking advice:

“YOUR 40S ARE THE PERFECT TIME TO BREAK THE CYCLES OF GUILT AND SELF-NEGLECT. CHOOSE A NARRATIVE THAT SERVES YOU, RATHER THAN PUNISHES YOU.”

- Your mindset affects your biology. Beliefs change behaviours.
- You cannot heal a body you hate. Choose compassion over criticism.
- Choosing rest is not laziness. It is strategy.
- Emotional expression is just as important as physical health.
- You are allowed to rewrite your story at any age.



CHAPTER FIVE: QUIZ

WHERE ARE YOU RIGHT NOW?

Before you change anything, it helps to know where you're actually starting from.

Not where you think you should be.

Not where Instagram says you should be.

Where YOU are, right now — honestly.

This quick self-assessment is not a test.

There are no wrong answers.

Think of it as a check-in with yourself — the kind of honest, no-judgment conversation you'd have with a really good friend over coffee.

How to use this:

Read each question and circle or note the answer that feels most true most of the time.

Each answer correlates with points (1, 2, 3, or 4, listed next to each response).

Then tally your score at the end to find your starting zone.



TFF MIDLIFE QUIZ

Q1	How is your energy on a typical day?	
	I crash hard by mid-afternoon and rely on caffeine to get through.	01
	All over the place — good some days, wiped out others	02
	Mostly okay, with only the occasional dip.	03
	Pretty consistent — I feel energised most of the day.	04
Q2	How often do you eat a proper meal with protein?	
	Rarely — I graze, skip meals, or grab whatever's easiest.	01
	Once a day, maybe twice.	02
	Most meals include some protein, but I'm not intentional about it.	03
	Every meal — I prioritise protein consciously	04
Q3	How would you describe your relationship with your body?	
	Honestly? Frustrating. It feels like it's working against me.	01
	Complicated. Some days are fine, others I avoid mirrors.	02
	Mostly accepting, though I still have moments of criticism.	03
	Good — I'm working with my body, not against it.	04
Q4	How many times a week do you do intentional exercise?	
	Barely at all — life just gets in the way.	01
	Once or twice, inconsistently.	02
	2-3 times, including some strength or resistance work.	03
	4+ times, including regular strength training.	04
Q5	How well are you sleeping?	
	Terribly — falling asleep, staying asleep, or waking up at 3am	01
	Hit or miss. I get some good nights but mostly feel unrefreshed.	02
	Mostly okay, though not as deep or restorative as it used to be.	03
	Well — I wake up feeling rested most mornings.	04

TFF MIDLIFE QUIZ

Q6	How do you handle stress?	
	I absorb everything and rarely switch off. I'm basically always 'on'.	01
	I cope, but it costs me — sleep, mood, or health usually suffers.	02
	I have some tools but still get caught off guard.	03
Q7	I have strategies that actually work and I use them consistently.	04
	How often do you put your own health last?	
	Every damn time. Everyone else comes first, always.	01
	Most of the time — I feel guilty when I focus on myself.	02
Q8	Sometimes — I'm getting better at it but still struggle.	03
	I've made myself a priority and I protect that.	04
	How would you describe your gut health and digestion?	
	A mess — bloating, discomfort, or irregularity is normal for me.	01
	Up and down depending on what I eat or how stressed I am.	02
	Generally okay, with occasional issues.	03
	Good — I eat a variety of whole foods and feel well in my body.	04



WHERE ARE YOU NOW

YOUR SCORE

29-32 pts YOUR THRIVE ERA

You are genuinely walking the talk — and we love that for you.

This phase is about going deeper: understanding your hormonal cycle, fine-tuning your recovery, and becoming the kind of woman who inspires others by simply living well.

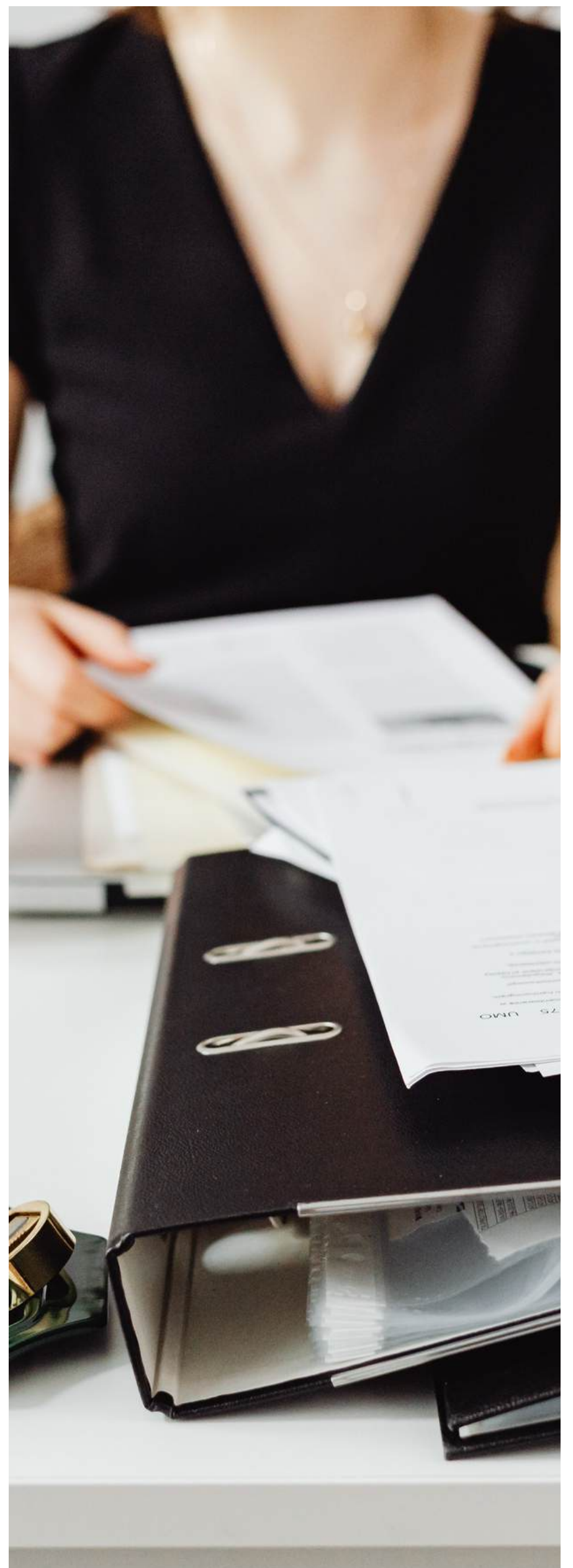
Share what's working. You're proof it's possible.

23-28 pts YOUR OPTIMISE ERA

You've built a solid base and it shows. Now it's about refinement.

Focus on getting strategic with your nutrition, training smarter not harder, and protecting what you've built.

Strength training, protein targets, and stress management are likely your biggest levers right now.



WHERE ARE YOU NOW

YOUR SCORE

15-22 pts

YOUR MOMENTUM ERA

You're doing some things really well but there are gaps that are holding you back. You probably have the knowledge but struggle with consistency or putting yourself first.

Pick one area from your lowest scores and commit to it for four weeks. Progress — not perfection — is your path.

8-14 pts

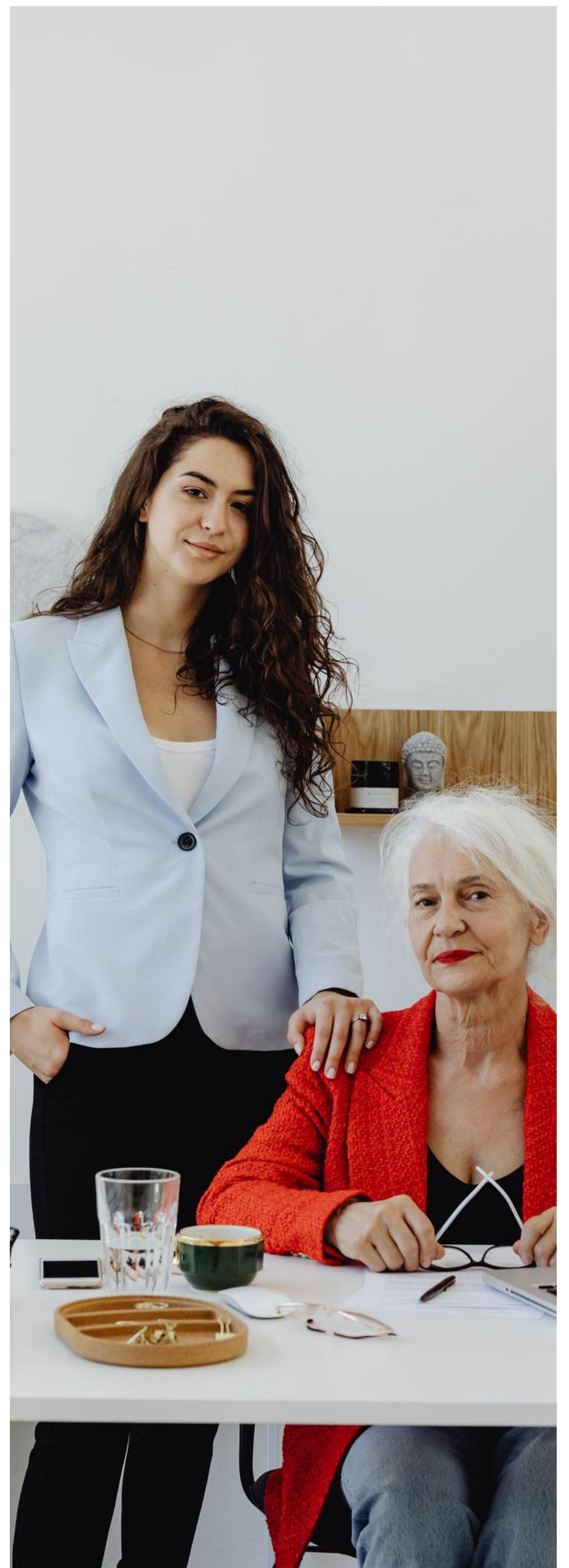
YOUR FOUNDATION ERA

Your body is sending you clear signals and they deserve to be heard. You're likely running on empty in more than one area — energy, food, movement, or self-care.

The good news? Even small, consistent changes will create noticeable shifts fast.

Start with sleep and protein. Everything else builds from there.

“Whatever your score — you picked up this guide. That already says something about you.”



CHAPTER SIX

EAT LIKE YOU MEAN IT

We are done with complicated. Done with guilt. Done with eating less as the answer to everything.

Here is what actually works in your 40s, grounded in science, stripped of nonsense.

MIDLIFE NUTRITION NON-NEGOTIABLES

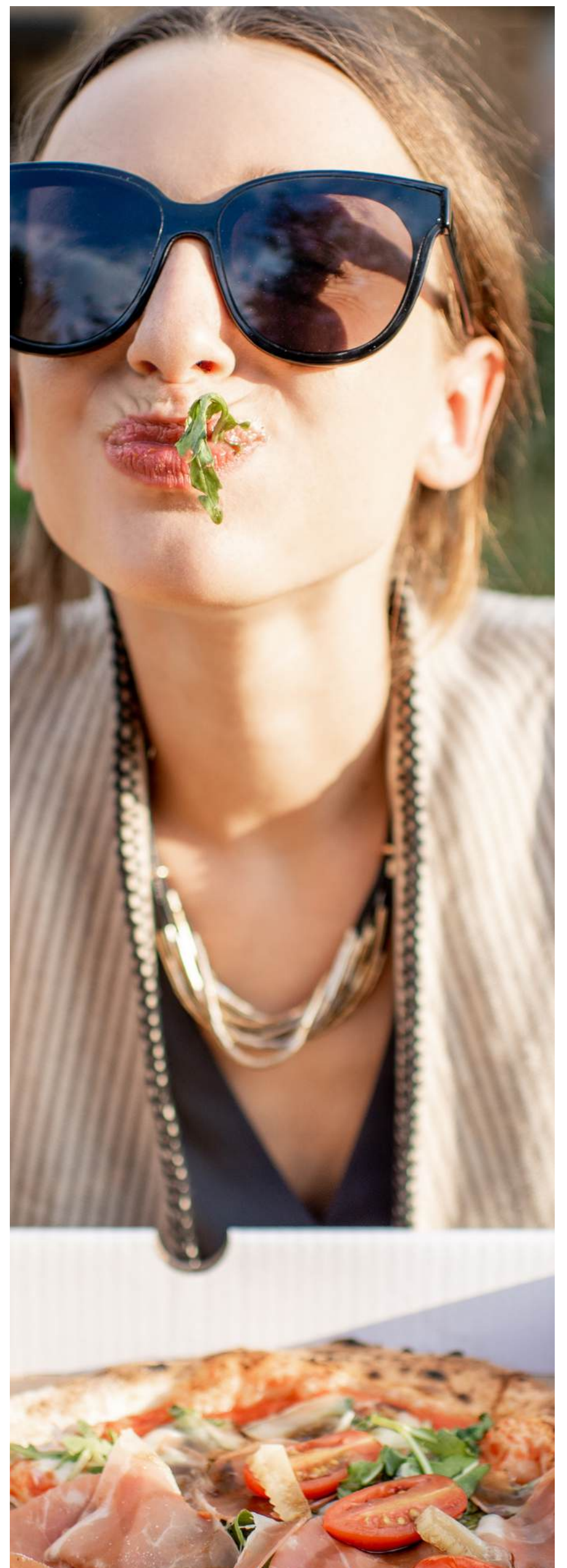
30g of protein per meal

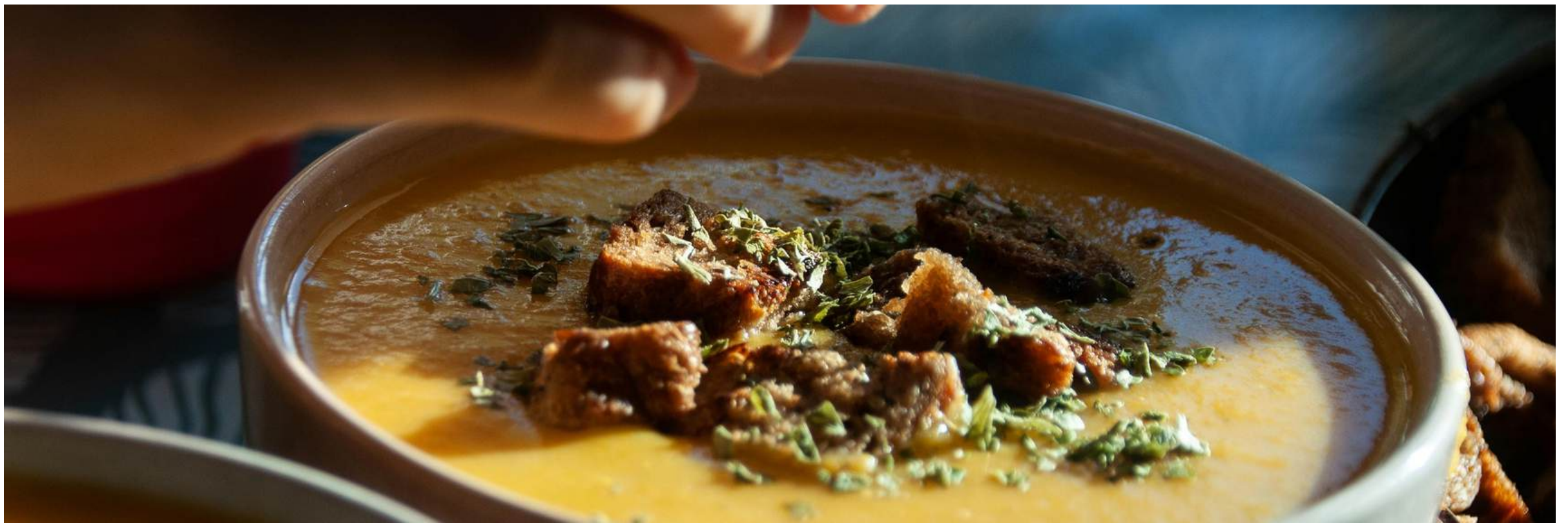
This is not optional. Protein is your muscle's best friend, and muscle is your metabolic engine. 30g per meal — not per day, per meal — is what your body needs to actually use it.

This looks like a palm-sized piece of salmon, a scoop of protein + Greek yoghurt, three eggs with chicken, a cup of legumes with tofu. Aim for it at breakfast especially — most women are severely under-eating protein in the morning.

Prioritise protein and produce

Build your plate starting with these two. Protein anchors the meal. Produce — especially vegetables and legumes — feeds your gut, supports your hormones, and keeps your blood sugar steady. Everything else is secondary.





FOODS THAT NOURISH

Variety in your plant-based sources

Your gut microbiome thrives on diversity. Aim for 30 different plant foods across the week — this includes vegetables, fruit, legumes, whole grains, nuts, seeds, herbs, and spices. It sounds like a lot but a handful of mixed nuts, a sprinkle of seeds, and a varied salad gets you there faster than you think.

Reduce ultra-processed foods

Ultra-processed doesn't just mean junk food. It includes most packaged snacks, flavoured yoghurts, protein bars with 20+ ingredients, deli meats, and fast food. These products are designed to override your hunger signals and spike your blood sugar. Swap where you can — not perfectly, but consistently.

BUILD-A-MEAL CHEAT SHEET

Stop overthinking it.

Every meal is just a formula, and you can repeat them over and over (it works!).

On the next page you'll just mix and match from 4 columns:



BUILD A MEAL

CHEAT SHEET



Pick Your Protein

30g Palm sized

- Chicken breast (150g)
- Salmon fillet (150g)
- Beef mince (120g)
- Eggs × 3 + egg whites
- Greek yoghurt (200g)
- Tofu (firm, 200g)
- Tempeh (150g)
- Cottage cheese (200g)
- Tuna in spring water (1 tin)
- Edamame (1.5 cups)
- Lentils (1 cup cooked)
- Chickpeas (1 cup cooked)

Pick 2-3 Plant Sources

- Broccoli / broccolini
- Spinach / kale
- Zucchini / capsicum
- Cucumber / tomato
- Cabbage / bok choy
- Mushrooms
- Beetroot
- Carrots
- Green beans
- Snow peas
- Fennel
- Mixed salad leaves
- Sauerkraut / kimchi
- Onion / leek / garlic
- Herbs: basil, coriander, parsley, mint

Pick A Healthy Fat

15g about 1 thumb size

- Avocado ($\frac{1}{4}$ – $\frac{1}{2}$)
- Olive oil (1 tbsp)
- Mixed nuts (small handful)
- Tahini (1 tbsp)
- Nut butter (1 tbsp)
- Pumpkin seeds / sunflower seeds
- Feta cheese (30g)
- Olives (10)
- Flaxseed / chia seeds (1 tbsp)

Pick A Carb

30g - 40g 1 cupped hand

- Sweet potato ($\frac{1}{2}$ cup)
- Brown rice ($\frac{1}{4}$ cup dry)
- Quinoa ($\frac{1}{4}$ cup dry)
- Oats ($\frac{1}{2}$ cup dry)
- Sourdough bread (1–2 slices)
- Wholegrain pasta ($\frac{1}{2}$ cup dry)
- Chickpeas (1 cup cooked)
- Lentils (1 cup cooked)
- Corn (1 medium cob)
- Banana (1 medium)
- Apple (1 medium)

Tip: Legumes (chickpeas, lentils, edamame) count as BOTH a protein AND a carb — double duty.
If you're plant-based, lean into them *hard*.

WHAT DOES THIS ACTUALLY LOOK LIKE?



Breakfast

3 eggs scrambled + 100g cottage cheese + spinach + capsicum sautéed in olive oil + 1 slice sourdough. Approx. 32g protein.



Lunch

150g grilled chicken + big salad (mixed leaves, cucumber, tomato, red onion, beetroot) + $\frac{1}{4}$ avocado + olive oil dressing + $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cooked quinoa. Approx. 35g protein.



Dinner

150g salmon fillet + roasted broccoli + zucchini + mushrooms + $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sweet potato.

Drizzle tahini. Approx. 30g protein.



Snack

200g Greek yoghurt + mixed berries + 1 tbsp chia seeds + small handful mixed nuts.

Approx. 20g protein — a useful top-up.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Next Steps

MIDLIFE IS NOT A CRISIS (WHEW)

If there is one thing we hope you take away from this guide, it is that your 40s are not the beginning of the end—they are the **beginning of something new, and something powerful.**

You are not meant to survive this decade by shrinking, silencing yourself, or playing small. That's behind us now, ladies.

You are meant to take up space. To nourish your body with intention. To move with strength. To think with clarity and compassion.

Whether it is redefining your relationship with food, finding joy in movement, managing your changing body, or rewriting old mindsets —this is your invitation to stop waiting for permission.

You are officially allowed to thrive. *Now.*

