

Hey there, beautiful! 🌈 Before you dive in, a quick heads-up: this transcript is a super close-to-verbatim buddy from our podcast, but it's got its quirks! We didn't call the grammar cops on it, so you might bump into a typo or two. But hey, that just adds character, right? 😊 Embrace the wild side of language and enjoy the read! Happy exploring! 🚀



Get Fit and Healthy After 50

Carmen Hecox: If you think midlife means slowing down, think again. Today, I'm hanging out with Alicia Jones, who's got a knack for proving women over 50 can be stronger, healthier, and happier than ever. Quick heads up she once turned her 72-year-old mom into the star of a fitness event. Yes, you heard me right.

By the end of this chat, you'll find out exactly how that one epic moment lit a fire under her clients and how it can do the same for you. Let's dig right in.

Meet Alicia Jones: Fitness for Women Over 50

Carmen Hecox: Alicia Jones, welcome to Create The Best Me, I am over the moon excited to have you on the show.

Alicia Jones: Thank you so much for having me. I'm so excited to be here too.

Carmen Hecox: And the reason why I'm super excited is because you and I speak to the exact same audience. Women over 50.

Alicia Jones: It is definitely I think, uh, we both have passion for that group. And I'm really excited to talk about it with you today.

Carmen Hecox: So, Alicia, before we get into today's conversation, could you please tell the viewers a little bit about who you are and why you are so passionate about women over 50?

Alicia's Personal Journey and Inspiration

Alicia Jones: Yes, so my name is Alicia Jones and since 2006, I've helped women over 50 with health, fitness, weight loss, as a means, through health. So maybe, if you are feeling like it's hard to move, it's hard to walk, you have a health condition, heart disease, your joints are hurting you.

That's really what I mean when it's talking about weight loss not necessarily, you know, trying to fit into the smallest bikini you can possibly fit into. And I started this because from a very early time, I was raised by my grandmother. My mother was, she was away. She was a single mother working.

And so, my grandmother was the main person that raised me growing up, but she had COPD, she had heart disease, and she was ill. So even though she was the main caregiver, and I loved her so much, we actually had to get in babysitters because she started to be too ill to take care of me.

And that's hard, the relationship between a grandmother and a grandchild is really, really special. The bond can be very special, and I wanted her to be there and fully present, but she wasn't able to be at all times. And so, years later, I get into fitness and health, that was something that was very important for me.

And I studied kinesiology and went to university for this. And, then my mother started to be around the same age that my grandmother was when I remember her being sick. But my mother was very different, she was very healthy. One thing about my grandmother is she grew up in a time when smoking was considered normal. She was a nurse, and she smoked. And that was just the age and the era.

But my mother was in the next generation when smoking was out. And you know, she rarely drank, she ate healthy, she did the fitness classes. And so around the age of 72, my mother was doing these fitness events with me, and she ended up being the main mascot or marketing pitch for me and my clients. Because I'd have clients that were over 50, I'd say, let's do this event, let's do this thing. They'd say I'm too old. I can't do this. I'm not going to do it. And I didn't really hold a lot of weight in that because I was a lot younger than 50 at the time, but my mother, she was in her seventies. And so, I started using her as my main marketing thing. I was like, if she's 72, so can you. And so, I started recruiting people because of my mother, because of her health.

The Importance of Health and Fitness After 50

Alicia Jones: And it was then that I started to see this shift, this difference between what happens when you're able to take care of your health, and you have the knowledge to take care of your health in a certain way. What does aging look like? How can that shift?

And so, for me, I see so much power in healthy eating and fitness and wellness that it can really shift your quality of life. And for some it can even shift the lifespan, but quality of life is most important because what's the point of living long if at the end of the day you don't have a good quality of life, right. And so, I really started to focus on that over 50 population

Carmen Hecox: So, you were kind of sort of thrown into that market per se, because of your mom.

Alicia Jones: Because I think it was that difference. It was almost like I could see the shift like my grandmother at the age that my mother became the marketing piece for me. It was the CN Tower climb here in Toronto in Canada. There's a CN Tower used to be the highest tallest structure. And you can climb that as a fitness event, for either World Wildlife Federation or for heart and stroke for certain different charity events. You can do this climb; but that's when my clients were like, no, we are not, we're too old for that. That was literally what they said, we were too old. And to start to see this, oh my goodness, when you age, you can be healthy. You can climb the CN Tower or be bedridden sitting on the sidelines as life passes you by. And so, to see that difference of what happens when you're able to do the healthier things and have the knowledge on what to do that can make you healthy versus not being able to follow that path. I think that for me was that big moment where I was like, this is all I want to, I have passion for this. This is all I want to study and research. And this is the only population I want to work with.

Carmen Hecox: So, tell me, because you were young when you started. And so, you had to learn how to adapt to your clients.

Adapting Workouts for Women Over 50

Carmen Hecox: How is, working out over 50 differ from working out when you're under 50?

Alicia Jones: Yes, so there's a few differences. So, what I always like to say is that it's really important to take the science of health and fat loss and strength and blend that with lifestyle. These are two separate entities, but you need to be able to blend them together. So, from the science perspective, we know that the body is shifting.

Hormones are shifting, especially around 50. Even earlier 45, 40 you start to go through perimenopauses. Estrogen levels are starting to have dips and rises. Progesterone levels are shifting as well. And then you get into postmenopause when your estrogen is really low this plays a shift in the way that you work out.

One, we have to make sure that we're maintaining bone density. Estrogen was in charge of keeping our bone density at a certain level. Without estrogen we need to place demand on the bone to keep our bone density, to enhance bone density and lean muscle starts to decline without estrogen as well.

Something else that starts to happen is cortisol shifts. Our adrenals try and help creates some estrogen and so there's extra demand and pressure placed on our adrenal system. So, cortisol levels shift, and they shift much higher for women than they do men. That is both because of going through the hormone shifts of perimenopause all the way to postmenopause but it also has to do with the lifestyle component because let's be honest in the 50 plus and even now in the 40 plus category; there is a lot of stress, and a lot of demand placed on women as we age.

You might have kids at home that you're still taking care of, or they're growing up, but they're still needing you. They need your help. You've got a job that you love or a career. You've got different passions. So, you're pulled in all of these different directions. You're pulled in life directions. You might even have parents that you're taking care of. So, you're the "sandwich generation" where you are really in charge of doing it all for everybody still at this time. And that place a lot of stress on the body. And so the question is when you're joining the science and lifestyle, how can you start to shift the formula of your fitness, of your nutrition to match your hormone shifts, to match this decrease in lean muscle and bone density, but also something that you are going to be able to sustain with your life, with the level of busyness, with the demand that's placed on you. And with the amount of time that you can really honestly give and give yourself permission to do just what is needed. The quality that is needed instead of, you know, putting all of that guilt

and pressure and frustration because you can't do two hours of exercise, or you can't make every meal. Do you do what I mean?

Carmen Hecox: And, you know, I had, a prior guest say that, and maybe you can elaborate on this. He had mentioned that people get this impression that you can work out burns, I'm on this funky diet where I'm consuming 1200 calories because I want to lose weight. I want to have my bikini body. And so, they say, well, I'm going to work out and try to burn 1800 calories, so that everything's kind of lopsided. So that I can reach that optimal weight that I want to get. What he had mentioned is he says, that is not sustainable. There is no way that I'm going to be able to sustain that and lose the weight because it's, you just can't do it.

Alicia Jones: Exactly. It is the whole idea of move more, eat less, and that's just not sustainable, especially with age. And especially when we're talking about lean muscle, we need lean muscle. It boosts our metabolic rate so that here we are sitting having this podcast and because of the workouts that we do you have more lean muscle, you're burning more fat, even when you're sitting down and at rest. It is in charge of your better quality of life to have that lean muscle as well. You need to fuel your muscle. And it doesn't mean you bulk up. I think that's a fear that many of the women come to me, oh, I don't want to lift weights, I think I'm going to bulk up. As women, we have 45-fold less testosterone than men. We cannot bulk up. You would have to be doing something behind the scenes that's pretty intense, if you were planning on bulking up. We can't bulk up.

So, I think it's just really important to understand you have to be fueling your lean muscle. You have to be fueling your body for the workouts that you do.

Managing Stress and Cortisol Levels

Alicia Jones: And really at the end of the day, eating less and moving more, it's just going to cause more cortisol, more stress. Probably not sleeping very well at night because your body is underfed. And again, especially for women, as we're going through hormone shifts, that cortisol level, making sure that we have a proper good night's sleep and making sure that our cortisol starts to shut down at night so we can sleep well, that becomes valuable.

If we start to do things like we're not eating enough and we're exercising too much, then we're disrupting sleep patterns, we're not fueling the body properly and we're just creating an imbalance in our hormones to a greater extent.

Carmen Hecox: I know that, as you had mentioned, our estrogen level drops and when our estrogen level drops, I think what people need to remember is that we really need that estrogen. Because estrogen helps us balance our stress. And if we are already running on empty or low, and we are over depleting ourselves, we're inviting more cortisol. And even though you're eating less, working out, and managing all these other personal things you're like adding more cortisol. And what happens is that you start to gain weight instead of lose weight. And then you're stressed out and you're more cortisol.

Alicia Jones: Yes, and one of the main things that we tend to crave when our cortisol level is really high is sugar and carbs and there's a twofold to this one part is because if you're eating the healthy carbs, you can actually suppress cortisol a little bit when you do that like a buffering effect.

So doing something like a no carb diet one of these ketogenic diets, you're basically allowing your body to stay in this stress zone for a long time. So, we do need some carbs, but what ends up happening is when cortisol is high, that's basically a fight or flight reaction. Our cortisol runs high and when we were cave people, that used to be when we ran away from the tiger, the lion, the bear, whatever the case may be, we were running, we were actively moving away from whatever was causing the stress.

So, we needed to have really simple sugar to give us that energy to run away. So, glucose, the blood sugar would start to rise, we've released the blood sugar within our body in order to have the energy to get away. And we would also be able to store more of that fat, that's the easy, simple fat around the stomach in order to have that simple energy.

And so those are things that still stick, even though we're not running away from anything now. You're more prone to being insulin resistant, having issues with your blood sugar levels when your cortisol or your stress hormone is running high. You could be storing more belly fat because of this reaction. It's not the only reason, but it is one of the reasons that some tend to get more belly fat around the stomach during that time.

Carmen Hecox: And so, Alicia tell me, what you do when, you have a client that comes up to you and you start to fact find, find out who they are, and you discover that they are someone who is totally running on cortisol. How you get that person to be able to bring down their cortisol?

Alicia Jones: Yes. So, again, it really depends on the person because everybody is very different on what they can do. And to take two examples into consideration, if you've got parents that are sick, like I have clients who have both of their parents in homes, running back and forth from one home to the other because they're in separate homes.

One may have Alzheimer's; the other one may have Parkinson's. They're not able to be in the same facility. This is a very high stress environment where you're doing your very best. And I think the first thing I would say, you're doing your very best that you can and there needs to be some grace given.

Because you're not going to be able to run a marathon at this time or make sure that every meal is pre-made. It could be incredibly hard, especially if you're going from one home to the next, trying to eat cafeteria food and figure things out. So, I think it's the first thing I would do in that situation is give yourself grace, forgive yourself, and just, be in this moment. And do the best that you can and that is good enough. It's more than good enough. Just be with that.

So that's what I would say in that situation. If it's somebody that's stressed, but they're trying to take their time back. And this is the other side that I see a lot. So it is somebody who is a working, has the kids, maybe has one parent, that they're taking care of. It's not a full-time job but are just running on empty because they're giving themselves too much.

And they started to get to a point in life where, realistically, they don't need to be giving themselves as much. They need to start to take back their time. That conversation would be a lot different if I was starting with that person. I'd say, listen, we need to find time for you. How can we do this? And what is realistic? And for some people, that's a 10-minute time period. That's all that they can commit to at that time because it is a hard change to have done everything for everyone else your whole life and to say, no, I'm taking back my time.

And so that's where if people have come to me, they obviously want to work on their fitness and their nutrition and health. I say, okay, how about instead of an hour workout, what can we do for quality 10-minute workout? And actually, in both situations, I'd say, can we do something that's short, but very good quality.

Because I think that's another myth that comes into effect, people think that they need to do long workouts. They need to do incredibly hard workouts. The more

they do, the more they're going to get results. And truthfully, especially with age, it's more about the quality that you do. So, if you're going to do weight training, are you going to do quality weight training moves? If you're trying to eat a meal and you have to eat out, what are you gravitating towards? Is it more of the protein, for example, that we know is going to fuel your lean muscle and maybe some of the whole grain or healthier carbs or an apple, even you're just grabbing, that's going to fuel your body so that you're not completely depleted of carbohydrates and you're getting your fiber in. So, it's small little things that all together accumulate into creating something that is sustainable for you at that moment.

Carmen Hecox: That's really good.

Over 50 Fit and Fabulous Program

Carmen Hecox: You have a program, a 12-week program called "Over 50 Fit And Fabulous".

Alicia Jones: Yes,

Carmen Hecox: Is that a community or is that a program where somebody just signs up, buys your workout video and nutrition program? And they're on their own. Could you tell us about that program?

Alicia Jones: Yeah, it's a small group support program? Because again, we've talked about this it's the science is very important, especially with age on how you shift the way you eat and exercise with age. But so does whatever you are doing with that science it needs to match your lifestyle. And so, for me, you have to have a program that has somebody like an expert, which is me. I'm there for it something called support seats. Every week we do support seats in small groups where you take the plan there's the workout that's already done. It's a membership site that you can do the workout. You've got the nutrition steps for the week. And I teach you how to tailor everything in that program, but then you've got the support seats where we're in small groups and I keep these groups small on purpose, so that we can tailor and modify things even more to you.

So, in the support seats, for example, we talk about modifications to your workout. Some people have, especially with age, you know, frozen shoulders, really common for women, plantar fasciitis, knee issues, back issues. So we talk about

modifications, how to ship the plan to you. We do talk about taking care of yourself, especially during busy periods.

We talk about how to incorporate the foods that you love and still get results. We talk about macronutrients. We talk about a whole gamut of things inside of the group.

It's a support system and you need to have a support system and a way of tailoring any program that you do because I think there's this myth. Yeah, we can just do it. We'll go in alone. It's fine. I should be able to do this on my own. But the truth is that we all have an area where we need to ask for help, and we need support. If we could do that thing on our own, we would have done it already. So sometimes we just need help in certain areas, and we need support in certain areas as well.

So, that's where that program comes in. It's a three-phase food and fitness formula for women over 50.

Success Stories and Community Support

Carmen Hecox: You know, and I was looking at your website, last night and I saw this amazing testimonial about a woman who joined your community and then had a bunch of life challenges that just hit her, with her mom and then her dad. When I'm reading this testimony, I'm thinking there's no way this lady can lose weight or even become healthy because she's got all these challenges and she's over 50.

I can't remember her age exactly, but in her testimony, she talked about how valuable this community was and how she was able through all these personal life challenges and working with your community; to achieve her weight loss goal and become fit. Can you tell us a little bit more about Sharon?

Alicia Jones: I'm going to guess you're talking about Sharon. Yeah, actually, what's so funny is, she was in the group for more than one period. So after the 12 weeks of Over 50 Fit and Fabulous, I give you all of the tools so you can do it alone after that, if you want to. You don't have to, there is a way of continuing with support seats, but I get forever access to Over 50 Fit and Fabulous. And I do that because sometimes it's going to take longer because life happens, right? I don't want this strict guideline. And then, you know, you're like, oh, I have to get it

done. And I feel behind. I don't want people to feel behind. This is your life, you're going to get to that destination in the timeframe that is right for you and your lifestyle, right?

It might take longer, like people don't want to hear that, but it might take longer than 12 weeks. It might take 26 weeks, or it might take less time than you expected. Everybody is different and there's no judgment.

And so, with Sharon she wanted to continue with the support even after the program was done and just work the steps. She went through a lot her mother died when she just started the program. And her father died as well. So, they were both in separate homes, actually we were just talking about you know, a lot of, the over 50 age group is taking care of parents, and she was taking care of both of them in separate retirement, nursing home facilities. They both ended up passing. She was very close with both of them. She also had major hormone shifts. And remember when you're going through trauma and stress and dealing with losing parents in a busy lifestyle. She is a nurse actually, although retiring now. Just this huge amount of stress and loss at the same time. And then you're going through menopause. I mean, talk about hormone shifts, fluctuations, like just on survival mode. And this woman showed up to every meeting. She did not have like, you know, quote unquote, perfect weeks at the beginning. You know, she just needed to know she was doing her best and you know what? She lost weight, she got stronger and recently actually, she just posted another picture of her, she had gone to Hawaii with her husband for their anniversary and she's back down to the weight she was when she was in her twenties when she was going to her college reunions. And she looks fabulous. She feels great.

And I think when you're going through a lot, sometimes people are like, it's not the right time for me to do a program or to focus on myself because I have all of this going on. But that's actually one of the best times to do it. Because one, you get the support system, but two, you also get to understand how to manage and navigate your health, your wellness, your fitness, your nutrition during the times of the busiest, most stressful times.

When do plans fail? They don't fail when everything is going perfectly. Everybody has no problem following that plan when life is smooth sailing. It's when the bumps pop up, if you don't know how to manage and navigate that and then you don't have a support system during that, that's when many fall off track.

And I think that's what made Sharon so successful because she started all of these events were happening to her and she stuck it out and she learned how to eat and exercise around everything that was going on. And sometimes that was barely any exercise at all. You know, just again, quality, 10-minute quality workouts.

Sometimes it was just prioritizing protein. Sometimes it was X, Y, and Z. It was all dependent on what was going on and it fluctuated a lot, but she got those tools to understand what to do. And she also got the support she needed.

Carmen Hecox: And I think another thing that's pretty important to point out here is that when we hit mid age or 50, sometimes it could be a lonely place. We find that we don't have friends anymore I mean, we do have them, but they're not as close as they used to be. Because our friends have moved on to other things in their life, or they are caring for their parents.

And so having a community. is very important. And I think that's what helped Sharon. Get through the bumps.

Alicia Jones: Yes, yes, definitely it did. And being able to discuss that. You know, I think there's a lot of apologies that go on. I'm Canadian, so we always say sorry. But there are a lot of apologies that go on when we're talking about vulnerability. And so, when you say, oh, my day has been so hard.

The first thing that tends to happen is, oh, I'm so sorry. I'm sorry I said anything. I'm sorry I didn't mean to bother you. I didn't want to bother you with my problems. And I think it's really important to understand that you need to be able to talk about that. You're not bothering anybody. That you need a supportive place to be able to discuss what's going wrong, what's going right, what could be wins. You need a space where you can feel vulnerable without saying sorry. If that makes sense.

Carmen Hecox: And with people that are perhaps going through the exact same thing or have been there.

Alicia Jones: Exactly! Yes, yeah.

Carmen Hecox: So, your workouts in this a 12-week program, how long are they? Because a lot of people might say, well, I don't have time for that.

Alicia Jones: Well, I'm so glad you asked that because they're anywhere from 30 to 45 minutes. However, on purpose, I created a bonus called "The Busy Lifestyle Backup Plan", and it turns all of the workouts into 10-minute workouts. So, you can do them in 10-minutes, and that's it. On top of that, what I really love to do is also give a handout.

So, once you've watched even the 10-minute version and you understand how to do the movements, you come to the support seats and said, hey, maybe I need to swap this exercise out because, you know, my knees hurt and so what can I do instead? Whatever the case may be, you've got this sheet. So, you don't even need your laptop. You don't need anything. You can just download the sheet and you're like, oh, this is when we did this exercise. Oh, I'm swapping this exercise because Alicia said to swap and modify this exercise for a rehabilitative knee exercise instead. XYZ and you can finish even faster than the 10 minutes because you've got your own sheet there and you're not following the video.

What I like to do in the video because you start with the foundation of weight training. You know many are really comfortable with going for a walk, doing a Zumba class, but weight training is still fairly new or it's something that people have dabbled in, but the form maybe needs a little bit of work or understanding what size of weights you need in order to really give you those results. A whole plethora of reasons. Weight training still is just coming into being something that everybody is doing.

So, what I like to do is start people with the foundation and really understand how to move. And that is what we do, we do the fundamental movement patterns for the first four weeks, and then you retest and assess because that's a really important tool to understand if you've seen progress, what you need to do to shift. It's always about how you can shift and tailor things to you before you move on to the next phase.

And so there are three phases, the discovery phase, adaptation and strength. And you go through each one of those phases. And because you have forever access, some people go through it in exactly 12 weeks and some people take much longer and they stay in each phase until they feel very comfortable and then they move forward.

That was something that was really important to me. I think many programs, like this should have the capability of joining multiple times or having forever access

because it rarely ever takes the exact time frame that is promised or given in the program.

Carmen Hecox: Yeah. And I think that's very important because the way you're doing it, because if people are focusing on form, there's less likability that they are going to hurt themselves, and so they'll be able to move on to the next phase.

Alicia Jones: Exactly, yes. And that is so important. And we discussed that in length and we have different little challenges in the support seats that help with that as well. Each week in the support seats it's different based on what the questions have come up and where people are really either struggling or having great success and they want to share that success. So, it really depends, but I give a lot to do with how to make sure that your form is doing really well. And I think another thing that happens, especially with weight training, is if something hurts, people just stop altogether. You know, if it's like ouch, my back hurt or my knee hurt. I'm never going to do that exercise ever again.

And so, what I like to do is I like to say, hey, why don't you show me what's going on first? Because a lot of times I can see imbalances almost right away. There tends to be certain imbalances that happen, especially with age, because we have done certain movement patterns or lack of certain movement patterns for so long, certain muscles aren't even awake anymore.

So, I like to see form and give exercises that complement that so that you are able to do that exercise. You might not be able to do it right away. It might take a couple of weeks. You rehab what wasn't working or wake up that muscle that has gone to sleep for a little while and then you move on to it.

But I think that's one of the things like, oh, I should stay away from this exercise forever. And that might actually be a big mistake. It might be an exercise that is absolutely powerful for your quality of life. We just need to get you there. And you're not at that step just yet.

Carmen Hecox: So, Alicia can you talk about why it is important for women over the age of 50 to begin a workout routine and what will happen if they don't.

Alicia Jones: Okay, so as of the age of adulthood, which according to some studies, at least it starts as early as 20; adulthood is 20. And then for every decade thereafter, you lose lean muscle. You're losing lean muscle. So, if you lose lean

muscle, think about it. Lean muscles in your entire body. It is in your legs. So lean muscle is in charge, as we talked about your metabolic rate, but it is also in charge of picking your legs up, so you don't shuffle. It reduces your risk of falls. It increases bone density. Cardiovascular exercise, which also with weight training, you can do a cardiovascular workout because if you're lifting heavy enough, your heart rate's not staying low, it's getting up high, high as well. And so, it make sure that your blood sugar stays at a good level. You're reducing your risk of type two diabetes, cardiovascular disease.

Now there's more studies coming out to say that blood flows to the brain because of exercise, can reduce your risk of cognitive issues such as Dementia and Alzheimer's. So, exercise is so important for our quality of life with age to enhance lean muscle the whole gamut. And what ends up happening is if you don't work out, you are reducing blood flow. Brain shrinkage, you're increasing your risk of Dementia, Alzheimer's. A fall and of a break, a bone break. You're reducing your quality of life. We know that sitting and standing up out of a chair, that seems simple for some, but with age that becomes harder and harder if you're not using your muscle.

So, you may see somebody, let's say that's 55 years of age that just jumps out of their seat, has no problem and runs to the kitchen, grabs something, and you could also see someone of that exact same age holding on to the side of their chair, grunting as they get up, barely able to get up or barely able to pick up a pen from the ground, really having to push themselves up.

These are the two realities that we face. It's really about what reality you want. Do you want to be the woman that jumps up out of your chair that lives your best quality of life? And you know, really in the 50 plus, especially as you go towards retirement, you have this second chance, a second life that is in front of you.

And you don't want to be sitting on the sidelines. You don't want to be sitting in a chair, barely able to get up. You want to be out there doing that thing that lights you up. And really for me, that includes having your best health and your best quality of life, being able to do all of those things instead of being stuck in a chair.

Carmen Hecox: Alicia, what are three exercises that you feel are very important that women should be incorporating into their regular routine daily?

Alicia Jones: So, glad you asked because we just talked about standing up from getting out of a chair. So that's called a squat exercise. So again, if you're just getting started sitting down and standing up, doing a squat, just do it 15 times. So, when you stand up to go to the kitchen, sit back down and do it again and again, and a couple of times. And maybe you don't start at 15, maybe you do two. And then the next time you do it you do three. So, a squat is really important. If your leg strength decreases, we know from what the research shows that you're more likely to be at risk for falls. You're more likely to lose that quality of life, like things like getting up out of the chair.

And I hope this isn't, vulgar and that's understandable, but think about going to the washroom. You need to be able to do that same movement. And I have heard horror stories. from people that were in public restrooms that were not able to get up and they had to call the fire department to get them out. And, you know so I think a squat becomes very valuable at that point for quality of life and just for independence and being able to do those things that we need to do as well as want to do.

Plank is another one that's core strength. That's an exercise where you can hold yourself up and you're really working your core. When you do a plank exercise, all of the muscles surrounding everywhere from your back, all the way around to the front, they act almost like a corset. So, if you exhale, like you're blowing out of a balloon, especially when you're doing this exercise, all of those muscles contract. So not only does it pull in your stomach, which many women say to me, how can I flatten my stomach? But it's also like a back brace. It is literally the thing that is holding your spine in good alignment, good placement. And so you can reduce your risk of a slipped discs, you know, issues with the back when we're talking about osteoporosis and osteopenia, the L4 and L5 in the back; so the low back, that low curve, that tends to be a major place where bone breaks happen.

So, if you can start to strengthen those muscles, remember, when you are strengthening a muscle, it's pulling on bone, it's creating that demand on bone. And so you're strengthening bone as well. So that's another really important exercise to be doing.

And another one that I love is the row. It's a back exercise. Again, we're talking about big muscle groups with each one of these that we're doing, and the more muscle that you can hit, the more lean mass you're working on at one go.

And the back, it's a postural exercise. So, squeezing your shoulder blades together when you're bowed forward, like even just doing that sitting here, squeezing your shoulder blades together as much as you can. I don't know about you; it feels really good. It also, Yeah, doesn't it? And also, I don't know if you're really tight, if you've been rolling forward, if you've had bad posture for a while, or for all of us with driving and typing and everything else, we're always forward motion, right? So, if you squeeze your shoulder blades together and you feel that tightness in your shoulders or in the chest, that's another reason to be doing this exercise.

We are so forward all the time. We need to work the back, the, the back chain. So, squeezing those shoulder blades together with weights, it's really going to start to help with posture. Help, even things out a little bit, reduce shoulder issues because honestly, as you roll forward more, your shoulder's not in proper alignment, your chest gets tight and your posture, your spine, your neck, it's suffering.

So, we need to be rolling those shoulders back and working the postural muscles with the row. So those are the three exercises I would give.

Carmen Hecox: Those are good. Those are good, especially the row, because I always find myself to work, like you said, rowing forward. And I read an article, I can't remember where I saw it, but it said that women, when they're in their peri - post or menopause years, they usually develop frozen shoulder.

Alicia Jones: Mm hmm.

Carmen Hecox: And so, when you brought up the frozen shoulder, I'm like, oh, that's so weird. I read an article about that. And so doing this rowing exercise is great because it's building those muscles in the back to ensure that, hey, we're in menopause. We got a really good chance of getting frozen shoulder. It's kind of like saying, no, I got this. I'm in control. I'm not going to get it.

Alicia Jones: Yes. Yeah, and I think so some of the reason that frozen shoulder becomes much more common during perimenopause into postmenopause is with those hormone shifts blood flow also decreases and shifts in the main joints or cartilage area. And so, getting blood flow to those areas So we talked about the row your arms moving forward and back but, other movements, like even just shoulder rolls or shrugs, things like that. Think about how you can start to increase blood flow to the area. And it's not necessarily bringing your arms overhead. If you have frozen shoulder, you're probably not going to be able to do that to begin with,

but it is about starting to increase the blood flow to those areas. And we know you've got to move the shoulders. It's not going to be the same way as if, you know, you're doing jumping jacks and your arms are going flailing, but you need to get blood flow to that area. And the row is one way that you could do that because of that shrugging, that squeezing of the shoulder blades together.

Carmen Hecox: Alicia, as per your website, the 12-week program is on a wait list. When do you expect to open that up?

Alicia Jones: Well, actually, right now we are open. So, we've started a process of having it open more often, but you have to, watch the free masterclass in order to get access. So, I can give you the link to the free masterclass. The free masterclass is called [“The Three Phase Food And Fitness Formula, Every Woman Over 50 Needs To Know”](#). And at the end of that masterclass, I share all of the details of “Over 50 Fit And Fabulous”.

Carmen Hecox: Oh, great, because I also did see that you have a free challenge that's on right now. It's “The 7 Day Starter Strength Training Slim Down Challenge for Women over 50”.

Alicia Jones: Yes, if you are just starting at basics with everything with weight training and your nutrition and you want the lowest hanging fruit, you would do the seven-day challenge. Just to get information on the “Three Phase Food And Fitness Formula”, that is the free masterclass. And I personally, even just to see what “The Three Phase Fitness Formula And Food Formula” is, where you blend the science with your lifestyle, I think the masterclass is the way to go begin there. And then at the end of the day, if you're like, okay, got this information, but I'm at the lowest hanging fruit, then sign up for the seven day challenge.

Carmen Hecox: Okay, so your masterclass is kind of like a sneak peek behind the curtain and see, is this something I want to pursue?

Alicia Jones: That's right. And it goes through exactly how to cycle yourself through the three phases of food and fitness. So, we go through how you start with your weight training, how you move with your food into the next phase and the next phase so that you're aware of what you can do. So, if at the end of the masterclass, you say, I'm not ready to join the program yet. You still have a [“Three Phase Food And Fitness Formula”](#) you can do. You just bring a pen and some paper and take some notes, and you can at least get the basics of what to do.

Carmen Hecox: That's great. You're so generous. I was looking at your website. You have so many videos of showing, giving people bite sizes of different things. I think that's great.

Alicia Jones: Oh, thank you so much. I really do think that it's all about just start really small. Just start with something, anything, and then once that starts to feel comfortable, if or when you're ready, when you're ready, because I know everyone will be eventually when you're ready, that's when you can dive into a full complete program. But you don't need to do a hundred different exercises and spend hours of your day planning out all of your meals and exercising every moment of the day.

Just start where you are right now and add on a little bit from there

Carmen Hecox: Oh, I was gonna ask you, in your 12-week program, how difficult are the meals to prep or purchase?

Alicia Jones: Well, I don't make any of the meals, you don't make any of the meals I mean you are you're gonna make meals. But what I do is I teach you how to eat the way that you're eating now and make small changes to that based on your preferences. So, I ask you to log your food, one, I get to see what you're eating as well as you. And during the discovery phase, when you log your food, it's just simply to see what you're eating, what the choices are, and we can go through that together. And then in the second phase, that's when we adapt nutrition more to your hormones. But I'm never going to tell you exactly what to eat.

I mean, we talk about different foods that you can incorporate. And if you're really struggling and you don't understand what healthy versus unhealthy foods are, there are lists of healthy versus unhealthy and high protein foods, all of that sort of fun stuff. But what I want to do is teach everybody how to do that on their own, which means that at the end of the program, you know what you like to eat and whether or not that food is worth it, whether it's actually healthy for you. Whether you've been fooled into believing it's healthy.

We go through labeling, like how to read nutrition labels properly, how to understand your food choices. The whole nine yards. So, we even talk about emotional eating, willpower, how it's not a real thing. Hormones, there's the science and the lifestyle components all in it together. So, you're armed with everything you need to eat the foods that you love, without having that restriction. Like once a meal plans over, it's done, right? That's it. And then you're like, oh, am

I going to just follow the same meal plan over and over again? It worked, but you know, it's kind of boring at that point. No, it's about creating variety and fun and understanding how to eat so that you can make those choices, taking control of your food choices.

Carmen Hecox: That's great.

Final Thoughts and Encouragement

Carmen Hecox: Alicia, what is the one thing from today's discussion that you would want a listener or viewer to hold close to her heart and remember?

Alicia Jones: Yeah, that you're never too old. It's never too late. And you do not need to be doing everything, all at once. It can be as simple as starting with a 10-minute plan and a few workout moves and just starting to find a little bit of time for you and build on that from there. Start small, lowest hanging fruit, and then work from there.

Carmen Hecox: Great. Alicia, this has been eye opening. This has been wonderful. Thank you so much for coming on the show. I will make sure to include all of your information in the show notes and the link to the masterclass that you spoke about.

Alicia Jones: Perfect. Thank you so much.

Carmen Hecox: All right. Thank you.

Conclusion and Next Steps

Carmen Hecox: So now you know how Alicia's 72-year-old mom ended up inspiring a whole community, and maybe that's just the spark you needed to jumpstart your own transformation. If you'd like to watch Alicia's free masterclass, [“The Three Phases of Food and Fitness Formula, Every Woman Over 50 Needs to Know”](#), you'll find that link in my show notes or at [CreateTheBestMe.com/ep101](https://www.createthebestme.com/ep101).

After watching, you can decide if “Over 50 Fit and Fabulous” is right for you, because you'll get a personalized invitation to join her 12-week program and gain support from Alicia's amazing community.

If you enjoyed this episode, don't forget to hit subscribe, share and come back next week for another amazing episode created just for you.

Until then, keep dreaming big, take care of yourself, and remember, you are beautiful and stronger and capable of creating the best version of yourself. Thank you for watching. Catch you next week. Bye for now.