

JOAN MARKWELL COACHING

# Strong By Friday

*5 things midlife women can do this week  
to feel better in their body*

One win per day.  
Five pillars.  
Real results starting now.

*Your age is just a number, not your script.*

A free guide by Joan Markwell  
Women's Strength & Fitness Coach  
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# Here's how this works

This is not a 12-week overhaul. It's not another plan that asks you to change everything at once and then wonders why you can't sustain it.

This is five small, specific wins, one for each day Monday to Friday that target the five areas midlife women need most right now. Movement, Fuel, Mindset, Sleep and Stress.

Each win takes minutes. Each one is backed by what actually works for women at this stage of life. And each one is designed to make you feel something real by the end of the week, not in three months, not after you've been perfect - this week.

## Why small wins?

Because small wins compound. And as a coach I am all about celebrating the small wins along the way to any goal. Because feeling better motivates more change. Because the all-or-nothing approach has cost you enough already.

The goal isn't perfection. The goal is momentum. And momentum starts with one good decision

*Small wins compound.  
That's the whole philosophy behind everything I do.*

I'm Joan Markwell, women's strength and fitness coach with 20 years experience. I've spent a decade navigating perimenopause myself and came out the other side stronger, leaner and more confident at 54 than I have ever been in my life.

It may not be 'perfect' but it's what I have 100% created. And I want that for you.

*Let's get you a win this week.*

*Joan x*

# Monday - Movement

## Do one set of strength work today

Not a full workout. Not a program. Not a gym membership. One set of one lower body strength exercise - today.

Here's why this matters more than it sounds. From our mid-30s we naturally lose muscle mass. Without deliberate resistance training this accelerates and muscle isn't just about how we look. It's our metabolism, our bone density, our energy, our ability to do everything we love for the next 30 years.

Most midlife women are still leading with cardio. Cardio has its place but if you're wondering why your body composition isn't changing despite all the effort, this is usually why.

### Your Win

Do 3 x 10 squats. Bodyweight is fine. Focus on sitting back into your hips, keeping your chest up, and pushing through your heels to stand.  
That's it. Done.

If squats aren't comfortable right now try wall sits, step-ups or a sit to stand to work equally well. If you are at the gym, jump on the seated leg press, do three sets there.

The movement pattern matters more than the exercise.

*Not to shrink. Not to go back. To build something better than before.*

### Why strength over cardio in midlife:

- Builds and preserves muscle mass as hormones shift
- Boosts metabolism more effectively than steady-state cardio
- Improves bone density - critical for long-term health
- Increases insulin sensitivity and energy regulation
- Builds the physical confidence that changes how you carry yourself

One set. Today. That's Monday sorted.

# Tuesday - Fuel your body

## Add protein to every meal today

Not a diet. Not a meal plan. Just one question at every meal today: where is my protein?

Most midlife women are eating roughly half the protein their body actually needs. And in midlife — when muscle mass naturally starts to decline, when hormones are shifting, when your metabolism is demanding more support not less — this gap matters enormously.

Protein preserves and builds muscle. It stabilises blood sugar so you're not riding the energy crash-and-craving rollercoaster all afternoon. It keeps you fuller for longer. And it supports the strength work you did yesterday. ;-)

### Your Win

At breakfast, lunch and dinner today — add a palm-sized serving of protein if it isn't already there. Eggs, chicken, fish, Greek yoghurt, cottage cheese, legumes. Don't change anything else. Just add the protein.

A palm-sized serving at every meal gets most women meaningfully closer to their protein target without counting a single gram. Simple. Sustainable. Effective.

*Food is not the enemy. It's the friend you can rely on.*

### Easy protein additions:

- Breakfast - 2-3 eggs, Greek yoghurt, cottage cheese on toast
- Lunch - tin of tuna, grilled chicken, legumes added to a salad or soup
- Dinner - palm of fish, chicken, meat or a generous legume portion
- Snacks - handful of nuts, boiled egg, protein shake if needed

Protein at every meal. That's Tuesday sorted.

# Wednesday - Mindset

## Notice the story - then write a better one

This is the pillar most fitness coaches skip. And it's often the one quietly running everything else.

The way you talk to yourself about your body, the beliefs you hold about what's possible at your age, the permission you haven't yet given yourself - it's all operating underneath every good intention you've ever had.

You can have the best program in the world and still self-sabotage your way out of it if the inner story doesn't shift. Today we start shifting it.

### Your Win

Write down "Three things my body did well today."

Not how it looked - what it did.

Walked somewhere. Carried something. Got you through a hard moment.

Kept you going. Three things. That's the practice.

This may feel small but it isn't. Consistently noticing what your body does - rather than only how it looks - rewires the relationship over time.

And the relationship is everything

*Your age is just a number - not your script*

### **The comparison trap - my thoughts on this:**

One of the most damaging things midlife women do is compare themselves to who they were at 25 or 35. You look at old photos and think - look how good I looked. But do you remember how self-conscious you were then? How little you actually appreciated it?

You are not going back to that woman. You don't need to. What you're building now - with everything you know, everything you've lived is something new, something she could never have been. You are more powerful now, you need to step into that.

Three things. Written down. That's Wednesday sorted.

# Thursday - Sleep

## Give your brain a runway tonight

Sleep is not a lifestyle bonus. It is the foundation that every other pillar is built on. And most fitness programs treat it as an afterthought.

When sleep is disrupted (and in midlife it very often is) everything gets harder. Your body can't recover from training. Your appetite hormones go sideways. Your cortisol rises. Your motivation, mood and patience take a hit. And your ability to make the good decisions that support everything else drops significantly.

The good news?

There is a great deal within your control that most women are never told about.

### Your Win

Tonight, create a 30-minute wind-down window before bed. Phone in another room. Lights dimmed. Something that quiets your nervous system— a book, a bath, gentle stretching, some soothing music, a meditation.  
Give your brain a runway to land.

Your brain needs a transition from the stimulation of the day to the stillness of sleep. When we go from scrolling to pillow in 60 seconds, we're asking it to do something it simply isn't designed for.

One consistent wind-down routine can change your sleep quality faster than almost anything else. Tonight is night one.

*You deserve to wake up feeling rested. That's not a luxury - it's a basic requirement for the life you want to be living.*

### Other sleep shifts worth knowing:

- Alcohol disrupts sleep quality even when it feels like it helps - less is more
- Caffeine after 2pm affects sleep architecture even if you fall asleep fine
- Cool, dark rooms dramatically improve sleep depth
- Consistent wake times - even on weekends - anchor your sleep cycle

30 minutes. Wind-down. Phone away. That's Thursday sorted.

# Friday - Stress

## Do one thing today that is purely for you

We saved this one for Friday deliberately. Because by now you may be noticing something - the quality of your sleep, your food choices, your motivation to move - all of it is quietly shaped by one thing: how much unmanaged stress you're carrying.

Chronic stress in midlife isn't just uncomfortable. It's physiologically disruptive. When your nervous system is stuck in high gear - from work, relationships, caregiving, or simply the relentless mental load most women carry - your body responds. Hormones shift. Sleep suffers. Hunger cues go haywire. Recovery slows. The body prioritises survival over thriving.

This doesn't mean you need to eliminate stress - that's not realistic. It means you need to deliberately, intentionally create moments of recovery. Not as a reward for getting everything else done. As a non-negotiable part of how you function.

### Your Win

Choose one thing today that is genuinely restorative for you - not productive, not useful to anyone else. A walk without your phone. Ten minutes of stillness. A conversation with someone who fills you up. Something creative. Something slow. Protect that time like it matters. Because it does.

The women who transform their health in midlife aren't the ones who push harder through the exhaustion. They're the ones who learn to recover as deliberately as they train. Stress management isn't soft — it's strategy.

*Recovery is not a reward for getting everything done. It's the reason you can keep going.*

### What stress recovery can look like:

- Time in nature - even 10 minutes outside shifts your nervous system
- Breathwork - slow, deliberate breathing calms you immediately.
- Movement you enjoy - different to training; this is movement for pleasure - dancing, sex, floating in the ocean.
- Digital boundaries - choosing when to disconnect is one of the most powerful tools you have. Just because it pings does not mean you need to answer it now.
- Connection - being truly heard by someone you trust is deeply restorative
- Creative expression - anything that gets you out of your head and into flow

One thing. Just for you. That's Friday sorted.

# Congratulations - Look what you just did!

One set of strength work. Protein at every meal. Three things your body did well. A proper wind-down. One moment of recovery just for you.

None of it was revolutionary. You know that. But you did all of it, and that's the thing. That's exactly the thing.

Because most women download guides like this, read them with the best of intentions, and do nothing. You did something. Five somethings. And now you know what it feels like when the right pieces are in place.

That feeling? That's what I want to help you keep. Not just for a week, for good.

The webinar is where I show you how the five pillars work together as a complete system, so that what you started this week doesn't fade, it builds. I'd love for you to be there.

***You started something this week.  
One hour could bring the shift you've been waiting for.***

**Your next step is free**

## Strong Energised & Confident - The Midlife Reset

A free 60-minute live training for women 45+ who are done with exhaustion, confusion and starting over, and ready to build something that actually sticks.

This week you felt what's possible when the right things are in place. The webinar shows you how to make it permanent.

In one hour, I'll walk you through exactly why midlife women struggle, and why it has nothing to do with willpower, discipline or not trying hard enough. I'll show you how the five pillars work as a complete system, where most women are losing ground without realising it, and what it actually looks like when all five are working together.

You'll leave with clarity, a framework, and a real sense that this is possible for you, right now, at this age, in this body.

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## **Here's what we cover:**

- Why your body stopped responding - and what it actually needs at this stage of life
- The five-pillar framework that produces lasting results for midlife women (and why most programs only address one or two)
- The single biggest mistake women make when they try to change their body in midlife
- What the next chapter of your life could realistically look like - and how quickly things can shift when the system is right

## **This is for you if...**

- You're a woman 45+ who is tired of working hard and not seeing it reflected back at you
- You've tried programs before and they worked, until they didn't
- You're overwhelmed by conflicting advice and just want to know what actually works for your body, right now
- You're not looking to go back, you want to build something better than before

# Strong Energised & Confident - The Midlife Reset

It's free.

It's one hour.

And it might be the most useful thing you do for yourself this month.

The women who get the most from this webinar are the ones who showed up to themselves this week - exactly like you just did.

You're already in the right mindset. All that's left is to take the next step.

**Reserve your spot here:**



**Book My Seat**

Free to attend | 60 minutes | Live via Zoom | Replay available

*Not going back. Building forward.*

*This is your time.*

**Joan Markwell Coaching – Making women strong since 2006**