

"I make all my own food, including the butter!"

ANGELA COUNSEL, 50, gave up a corporate banking job to become a naturopath in her 40s. Her focus on nutrition and regular exercise means she feels fitter and stronger now than she did in her 20s.

Turning 50 didn't worry me for a second. Funnily enough, I went through a major depression when I turned 30 because it seemed so old. Now I know that nothing could be further from the truth. I see women in my naturopathy practice (theambaatree.com.au) who are my age but look a lot older—they seem to have accepted 50 as somehow less than youthful. I think mindset plays a huge part.

I was 40 when I started studying naturopathy. Before that, I worked my way up—from bank teller to manager of IT projects—at the Commonwealth Bank for nearly 20 years. Then, I took on IT contract-work for other banks and telcos. The work stress was immense. I'd been trying to have a baby and had a miscarriage, so decided to take three months off. I used that time to study naturopathy, as I'd always had a passionate interest in it. Within a month, I was pregnant again. I had my son, Isaac, 10, when I was 40, and my daughter, Madde, 7, when I was 43.

I'm a lot more conscious about nutrition now that I know about physiology and how the body works. When I started studying and realised how the food we consume influences our overall wellbeing, I realised that living healthily and eating well is what keeps us young and fit. I eat a lot of vegies, a bit of meat, and I try to stay away from packaged food. I make almost all of our food, even butter and yoghurt.

I rarely use make-up—I wear it when I have speaking engagements. I use a Lush scrub and cleanser, and that's it. If you're healthy on the inside, it shows. At work, I do live blood screenings for clients, so I can see very clearly how diet and lifestyle choices affect our health.

I recently tackled the Pub2Pub Charity Fun Run, a 13-kilometre event on Sydney's Northern Beaches. I also box, and I do weights and TRX—a core workout with suspension bands. I train for an hour, four to five times a week, and it definitely ups my energy levels. When I started my clinic three years ago, I didn't do much exercise because I was too busy. My stress levels skyrocketed as a result. For me, exercise isn't about weight, it's about looking after myself, both physically and mentally.

I don't think I look any different now to how I looked 10 years ago, and I certainly don't feel different. Maybe it's genetics—my mother doesn't look her age, either. In 20 years time, I'll be 70, and my biggest concern is the fact that I'm an older mother. Will I still be here when my kids are 30? But rather than see the negatives, I choose to focus on all the fantastic life experience I can give them. Age isn't an issue for me anymore—it doesn't factor into anything I do. One of the most important lessons I've learnt? Give your body the right fuel and the right tools, and you can look forward to a long and healthy life.



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ANGELA WEARS KATIES BLOUSE (KATIES.COM.AU); GAP BLAZER (GAP.COM); COUNTRY ROAD PANTS (COUNTRYROADS.COM.AU); TIGHTS (TIGHTS.COM.AU); SHOES (TIGHTS.COM.AU)