

The OVER
50
REVOLUTION



A PORTRAIT EXPERIENCE CELEBRATING
THE STRENGTH, WISDOM, & BEAUTY
OF WOMEN 50+
2022 - 2024

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PHOTOGRAPHY

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P H O T O G R A P H Y

People are Beautiful®

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Introduction

I began this campaign to help change the way the media and society define aging. I want to cultivate the freedom and confidence that result from appreciating—and loving—our own maturity. It has been my honor and pleasure to photograph each of you. Each one of you is inspirational, beautiful, and unforgettable. Thank you for trusting me. I'm so glad that you did this for yourself, for everyone who loves you, and for the world.

Maundy Mitchell

Nancy

Nancy decided to book a portrait experience for *Unforgettable* because “I thought it was a wonderful idea to feature older women who are so seldom the focus of attention. And this just sounded fun!”

Being over the age of fifty is “a time of change for most women, with families grown, shifting dynamics at work, looking toward retirement. Many feel a new sense of freedom, but also some apprehension. I think our experiences tend to give us more empathy.”

Nancy’s mother was a role model. Nancy said, “My mother grew up in the city but adapted to being a farmer’s wife who cared for her family, including her grandchildren, with patience, love and kindness. But she also found time for the things she loved to do.”

Since she turned fifty, Nancy is less concerned with what people think of her. When asked what advice she would give to other women, she said, “Pursue your dreams. It’s okay to do things for yourself. And don’t take any bullshit from anyone!

“I’d be happy if in some way I’ve had a positive effect on the environment, our wilderness areas and wildlife.”



Anne

"Now that I'm well past the age of 50, I have been dismayed by images of myself in the plethora of cell phone photographs that friends and family have shared. Then I saw Maundy's Facebook post about her [campaign] Unforgettable: the over 50 Revolution, and I wondered whether I should try another option. And I'm SO glad that I did! During my photo reveal session, instead of saying 'Is that really me?' with dismay, I asked the same question with delight.

"Society is unkind to people who aren't glamorous and look like the Hollywood elite. I think as women get older, they are expected to tame down the glamour...cut their hair, wear less makeup, etc. and while for some women it may feel like a challenge to physically age, it is important for them to make their own decisions about their physical appearance. Women over the age of 50 have a lot of wisdom and knowledge to share with their families and community."

When asked how she has changed since she turned fifty, Anne laughed. "I gained weight, and it made me feel horrible. Seriously, though, I wanted to try to learn new things (knitting, for example) and never stop learning or growing in my field. I'm also considering taking on more leadership roles as opportunities arise."

Anne was a "girly-girl who loved to watch beauty pageants and idolized Princess Diana. If you asked me who I idolized when I was a tween and teen, I would have to admit to admiring those women. In my family of course, I looked up to my mother Joanna, my Aunt Jeanie and a good friend Peg. Now, I admire women of strength who are comfortable in their own skin and not afraid to advocate for themselves and others."

Her advice to younger women: "In bad times, remember that things often work out the way they were supposed to. Mistakes, poor judgement, etc. is all part of the growing process. And don't burn any bridge unless you have to. Times change, people change, and something old may become new again."

In her everyday life, Anne tries to "be thoughtful of others and encourage the same in my children and grandchildren."



Mary Francis

Mary Francis wanted to participate in *Unforgettable* as an example of a confident, self-accepting, middle-aged woman. "Midlife women in our culture are easily erased or diminished at a point when we have increasing power and strength. Showing mature feminine power is encouraging and empowering to both midlife sisters and to young women looking to their future. Standing in truth is a joy and responsibility to those who got me to this point and to those who will follow.

"I love midlife women; they have generally passed the place of self-consciousness and facade and are getting real and raw. Life experience and wisdom come to the forefront of women's experience as we age. We no longer put up with bullshit from the powers that be. We have exquisite compassion for those in need. We are fierce protectresses of the fragile people, animals, and the environment. The job of a midlife woman is to speak truth to power, protect the weak, serve those in need, and shine our loving kindness on the world. This takes a delicate touch and sometimes a fierce fire. Both are qualities that I espouse and encourage."

She enjoys the changes since fifty. "Life feels much simpler. I was thrilled to cross that remarkable threshold and come into a deeper knowing of myself and my place in life. I have gone through the powerful transition of menopause which leads us into the elder-woman status. This transition grounds wisdom and insight into our being. Our world needs wise women whose skin is toughened and whose hearts are softened. Our voices must be heard to create the beautiful world our hearts know is possible.

"As I child, I had examples of women who were loving but oppressed and fierce but unkind. Those examples did not serve me so much as the wise woman that mentored my own mother. Her name was Mickey Ackerman. She was unpretentious, powerful, and gifted. I had a healthy fear of her power and a deep curiosity about her way of being. More than my mother or grandmothers, Mickey showed me how to embody the power and wisdom of the feminine. She was a formidable force of wisdom and strength."

Mary Francis's advice to young women: "Find an elderwoman to mentor and encourage you - a woman who will speak truth gently and encourage you to be your best self. The formation of identity and self-respect takes time, experience, and effort. Have a trusted and mature mentor to support this growth. I still have elderwomen in my life for this purpose.

"The greatest impact we can make is to find our true nature and live out our life and mission from that place. Each person is unique and brings a gift to the world. In my life, I offer teaching, counseling and spiritual direction to help people find their way home to themselves. The world needs the gifts of each individual in order for all of us to thrive. I experience great joy in supporting people in growing into themselves and freely giving what they came to give. The world will be better when we're more tuned into our part in the collective as humanity and as creatures of the earth. I want to be an example of just such a midlife woman; true to myself and my mission. I hope this example helps others find their own way."



Pamela

Pamela wanted to participate in the *Unforgettable: the over 50 Revolution* because she feels that women over 50 are easily forgotten. She said, "The media and magazines are so focused on young women under 50 that we tend to remain invisible.

"Women over 50 have so much wisdom and life experiences to share with the world that go far beyond our physical appearance. We are a force to be reckoned with!

"Since I turned 50 fifteen years ago, I have become more confident and comfortable in myself. I embrace my body and all its flaws.

"My Aunt was one of my role models. She carried herself with confidence and grace.

"My advice to younger women is this: Now is the time to nurture yourself, love yourself for all that you are. You are powerful and a beautiful spirit!

"I hope to leave a legacy of kindness and compassion for others."



Andrea

Andrea's daughters and husband introduced her to the idea of being photographed for the Over 50 Revolution. "It's wonderful to be celebrated and encouraged by them as a beautiful older woman, well over 50 heading into my 70s!

"Women over 50 are the best! They are strong, smart, accomplished, and sure of themselves. A better version of our younger selves."

Since she turned fifty, Andrea says "yes" more often. "I embrace adventure and I have a blast! I feel wiser, while still knowing that I will always have lessons to be learned."

Growing up, Andrea was fortunate to have many women role models. She said, "I had a wonderful mother, as well as grandmothers and aunts to look up to and be supported by. They seemed happy and had done some interesting things during their lifetime. When I was in my 40s, I started doing things with women 20+ years older than me. I kept up with those friendships and have really learned a lot from their experiences and stories. I am grateful to still have women as role models in my life!"

Andrea's advice to younger women is to "take good care of yourself, both physically and emotionally. Stay current and positive. Be grateful every day, be kind and have FUN!

"I try to send out positive energy, waves of kindness towards people I know and don't know. I stand up for what I believe in and try to be supportive whenever possible. I think that makes a difference in the world. I really believe that one person can make a difference."



Amy

Amy feels that women over fifty have a lot of knowledge to share. "Being 'older and wiser' is a true statement," she said. She became more confident after she turned fifty. She says she is also more patient with herself and others, and she has embraced learning new hobbies. Now that she is retired, she can refine her skills in sewing, needle felting, and jewelry design, among other things.

Her number one role model was her mother. "I told her as I became a mother that she had made it look so easy. Being a mother of four, she managed the household and encouraged all of us to participate in the arts. We all played an instrument in the school bands, some of us took dance and art classes. She would always make time for her friends as well. All good things to try to emulate."

Amy's advice to younger women: "Have a few hobbies you enjoy. Take time to learn new things. Get outside and enjoy a walk on the beach or in the woods. Take a camping vacation, you will cherish the memories.

"I worked in the medical profession for forty years, treating everyone with the same care and compassion. I took great pride in my work. May others joining the medical field feel the same worldwide."



Garlyn

Garlyn decided to participate after seeing *Unforgettable* on social media. "When I saw the call for participants in 'the over 50 Revolution' I saw that as a sign to put myself 'in the picture.'"

Garlyn thinks of women over fifty as her sisters, friends, coworkers, and peers. "I love their wisdom, encouragement, and critiques. I love the idea that they should be seen and not just heard."

Since she turned fifty, she doesn't hesitate to speak her mind. "I have also become more conscious of my health. I cherish exercise and have loved exploring healthier dining choices. I have loved teaching other women easy cooking techniques and fun ways to share their new skills with friends and family."

Garlyn's mother, who recently passed away, had always been her role model. "She created a career for herself in her late 40's. As she always said, 'One minute I was stirring the soup on the stove and the next I was handed a Press Pass and I was writing stories and taking pictures for the local newspaper'. She shared her love of all things political to me and my siblings. We are all news buffs.

"My advice to young women: buy the shoes, eat the cake, take the trip, and start that business."

Garlyn would like to be known as a small business owner who has mentored young employees, delivered positive customer service, made a "mean" meal – the "Hostess with the Mostest," as she says! She enjoys giving back to the community "with a big heart as they have given to me."



Maundy

"After photographing several women for the campaign, a friend asked when I was going to do self-portraits and share my own thoughts. It had not occurred to me, but of course I needed to! This issue is important to me, to exist in beautiful photographs for myself and for everyone who loves me, no matter my age, weight, wrinkles, or anything else.

"I began this campaign after years of listening to women over 50 tell me that they feel invisible and no longer worthy to exist in photos. I want to celebrate the lives and beauty of women over 50. I believe that one person can make a difference in the world, but there are photographers all over the world doing this now, and together we can make a greater difference.

"I think women continue to gain knowledge and power throughout our lives. But we are continually fed a line that with age, we must start fixing things! We must buy and do all the anti-aging things, and if we don't, we're doing something wrong. We need to push back because we are beautiful and valuable, just the way we are (and no matter how we change).

"Since turning 50, I've gotten better about interrupting my negative self-talk; I try to appreciate myself more. (Isn't my white hair amazing? I love my naturally downturned mouth! I'm also super-smart! ha).

"Growing up, there were several women who influenced me in various ways. Beatrix Potter and Queen Elizabeth are on the list! My grandmother was the main one. She was an artist who exhibited her work all over the world. I spent a lot of time with her. She taught me that you really can choose what's important to you, no matter what anyone else thinks of it. She had an old farmhouse with lots of small rooms and a barn. One day she told me that she was getting rid of all of her furniture so we could turn her entire house into studio spaces. In one room, we would smash dishes together and create mosaics. In another, we would do watercolors and drawing. My grandmother recognized how important art was to me. Starting when I was nine, she would frequently help me turn her only bathroom into a darkroom for the day. When I was a teenager, I took a welding class so I could make sculptures in her barn. I didn't care that I was the only girl in class because I was on a mission, and those kinds of decisions were always supported by her. She would really like my studio now!

"I like to help people with my work. I want to raise the perception of power of the people I photograph, in their own eyes, as well as in the eyes of others. I am also interested in creating connections between the subject and viewer, creating images that invite the viewer to look closer. A closer look creates empathy, and empathy brings people together."



Jeanne

Jeanne likes when women celebrate women, and she is “a big fan of all genres of art that do that. Participating in Unforgettable: The Over 50 Revolution seemed like a perfect fit for me.

“When I think back to the woman I was in my 20’s, 30’s, 40’s and 50’s, I can honestly say I am happier, stronger, smarter and more confident than ever. Experiences and memories are what transformed me to the woman I am today.”

Jeanne comes from a female-dominated family. She has five sisters and a daughter. “My mother had a quiet strength about her, and I like to think I inherited that from her. She was not one to react or confront aggressively. She took her time with important decisions in her life. Life changed dramatically for her when my father passed away. She took the hand she was given and chose the path that made her happiest. I will always admire her for that.”

Jeanne values strength and independence. She said, "One piece of advice I would share with younger women is to not let anyone dictate what you can and cannot do. Be the boss of you.

"I want us to be kind to each other and to our planet. I want to teach my grandsons the golden rule, and to lead by example."



Lisa

For Lisa, turning fifty began a decade of radical changes in her life and in her world view. "My physical being can be captured in snapshots, but these don't tell a story about me." She wanted to participate in *Unforgettable* because "This was an opportunity to be portrayed in a way unique to me, also as seen by someone else, and to capture this part of my life when I've never been happier."

On turning fifty, Lisa said, "It's a good time to become more open, less shackled by responsibility and to be more free for things like creative, physical, and spiritual growth and change."

"Many of the ways I've changed have been out of necessity and survival. I refuse to be disappointed by other people or by unfortunate circumstances in my life. I'm committed to living the life that I want and I am proudly able to create that for myself."

Lisa has a long list of women role models. Her grandmother, who started a new career at the age of fifty after her grandfather died, was the most important. "I also had a mom, two aunts, several surrogate moms, and one professional mentor who nurtured me and provided examples - positive and negative - that have greatly influenced me."

Lisa would tell younger women that "Life is meant to be fun, joyous, and fulfilling. Don't let yourself get lost in responsibility, and things that others expect of you. Things don't 'happen for a reason'. Things just happen. It's our responsibility as thinking and feeling individuals to give events meaning."

"I've been lucky enough to observe the positive impact of professional work I've done, which is very rewarding. I hope that the way I've led my life has been a decent example for others, and that I'll be remembered as someone who did her best."



Donna

Donna participated in *Unforgettable* when she saw posts about it on social media. She was struck by the beauty in the photos. “The joy and confidence captured spoke to me. The honesty and insight expressed by the women was inspiring. I was intrigued. I love sharing with and learning from other women. I thought 'How great for these women - I wish I could do something like this, but this isn't me. But wait, who says it's not me? Just because I've never done anything like this before doesn't mean I can't.' The project is beautiful and moving and new to me. All reasons to participate.

“I see women over 50 being dismissed in many ways. How ridiculous. We have done amazing things. We are intelligent, strong, and brave.” Since she turned fifty, she has rekindled things about herself that she loves - confidence, passions, joy in the peace of simple pleasures. She said, “I didn't lose them, I just forgot where they were. I don't feel old. I feel like ME!”

All of the women in Donna's life have been role models. “My aunt and my grandmother are always the first to come to mind - physically and emotionally strong women who took on challenges to do what was right for them. Both women accepted and loved me for who I am and supported me to do what was right for me. They shared their experiences and knowledge with me. The women who may not fit the mold of a traditional role model were mentors and examples in their own ways. Some of their lessons I am still learning today.”

Donna tells younger women to “Forget your age. Be you - not a version of yourself that other people expect. Be true to yourself - the longest relationship you will ever have is with yourself.”



Laura

Laura likes taking photographs but is rarely in front of the camera. "I am more comfortable behind the camera, so I did this as a twofold: as a challenge to myself to accept how I look, and secondly because I needed a new headshot for work!"

Thinking about women over fifty, she said, "We should be proud of what we have accomplished in our lives to get to this point as well as waking up each day and being thankful for being given another day!

"I have accepted that it is okay to let go of toxic people and surround myself with people who bring joy to my life."

Laura was fortunate to have had several women role models. "I had the best role models - the strongest women who were in my life from the start - my mother, my grandmother and my mother's sisters."

Laura's advice to younger women is to "Be grateful for the good and the bad in your life. Both provide growth. And never feel that growth or learning are done.

"I would like to be thought of as adding a bit more kindness to this world."



Jill

Jill feels that women over the age of fifty are at their most powerful. "They have either cast off that which kept bogging them down and begun to soar, or they are ready to do so." She expressed the need to use acquired wisdom to empower others.

"I am about to be 73 years old. My fifties were the time of my parents dying, and divorce. It was time to take the next step and own my life. I had my profession; I had my own income. I wanted to keep my home and needed to become more capable physically. I faced my physical limitations through perseverance."

She has faced some health challenges. "I survived breast cancer. In the last couple of years, I was able to get both shoulders replaced! Quite a blessing! Good friends helped me through. I prepared my home for a period when I was one-armed.

"My maternal Grandfather had an arm cut off in a railroad accident - no union, no Social Security. I thought of him often and how he learned to be one-armed. At age 73, I face, at some point, being unable to care for my home and land. This is a BIG Dragon. I will know when I know, so for now I love my life and the magic all around me."

She referenced Gloria Steinem's *My Life on the Road*. "A 98-year-old womyn who had been a Ziefgeld Girl said, 'You're always the person you were when you were born--you just keep finding new ways to express it.'

"In the '50's, I was instructed that you first 'got' a man, then you could get what you wanted. Leaving livelihood and joy up to the male partner is not fair to anyone. We can learn how to fly a plane, pilot a boat, build a home, or drive a truck!

"I believe a key step to self-worth is to think of our guidance system as circular rather than linear, to think of it without gender. Earth and the atmosphere that holds all of us, I think of as The Soup. This for me, removed all gender and parental aspects of a loving guidance system. We are all One, all Connected."



Kree

Kree participated in *Unforgettable* because she “wanted to be part of something that highlights the power, confidence, and wisdom that comes from being a woman who has arrived at a certain age. When I was young – hard bodied, beautiful, and full of mischief – I didn’t know my own power. Sure, I knew I could wield sexuality to get some things, but I really only felt powerful in that realm. Now, in my fifties, as my physical body has become a roadmap of decades of living this life, growing, and bearing children, time in the sun, lots of laughter, good food, butter, cheese and whiskey, my power rests in my mind, my intuition, and my heart. Those same decades of navigating relationships, recognizing human connection, introspection, loss, the value of compassion and forgiveness, heartache, and joy, has me here, enjoying the privilege of growing older. We become unshakeable when we harness the collective, intuitive, compassionate knowledge about what it means to sit in our power. I wanted to be part of a project that celebrates that.

“Women over 50 have seen some things. We have navigated coming into our own, through many complex relationships. We have honed our intuition, learning to trust what we know to be true. We have fought off unwanted advances, stood our ground, taken care of the children, mastered some recipes, and created homes. We have forged our places, proven our knowledge, run naked through the forest, and screamed from the mountain tops. We have harnessed our desires and become fearless about asking for our needs to be met. We are strong, we are smart, we are wise, and we are unafraid.

“There is an ease that has come as I’ve entered my fifties. I am no longer concerned if everyone likes me. I am no longer concerned about being seen as ‘nice.’ I am comfortable being honest, I am fearlessly authentic, and I have a radar for bullshit and pretending that allows me to be selective about who I draw close. We can still party together, but I’m not telling you my secrets. Only a select few have access to that realm.”

Kree’s mother is her most significant role model for what it means to be a woman. “She is both strong and graceful. She has not had an easy life. In fact, she’s had more than her fair share of tragedy and heartbreak. She still finds joy and beauty in simple things. She has shown me through her tenacity that women are, in fact, the builders of safety and security in this world. The tattoo on my right forearm is in her honor. It says, simply, ‘Actually, I can.’”

Kree’s advice to younger women: “If you know nothing else, know this – you are worthy. You are worth a fight, you are worth going after, you are worth the work, you are worth understanding. Do not spend a minute in doubt and shame. Wash your face, put on your boots, and get back to it.”

When asked what effect she’d like to have on the world, Kree said, “I feel like my most significant contribution in this life has been the two children I had the privilege to mother. They are my greatest source of hope and optimism, and I know that they are both here to make the world better, brighter, and kinder. Now, I just want to do my work, complete my lessons, intersect with others doing their work, and hopefully come back around next time on a new realm with different assignments.”



Carol

"These are the years when I think more about what I want to do and how I want to live so I can live my best life. Participating in this project was a gift to myself, to acknowledge and celebrate my life experiences.

"We are bombarded with gendered messages throughout our lives. Early on, messages are about beauty, motherhood, and which careers are appropriate for women; nurses, not doctors or scientists. Later, we face gendered ageism and assumptions that we are less energetic than younger colleagues or men. Men are 'experienced' and 'distinguished,' while women are 'past prime' and 'of a certain age.' Instead, these are years of high productivity fueled by life experience and accumulated wisdom. The narrative needs to evolve, and women of all ages must push for that change."

Carol's fifties have been a time of self-assessment, of "taking stock of where I am versus how I would like to spend my time going forward. It is time to pursue things that I love. My mother died before my second birthday. Both grandmothers also passed away when I was very young. These events may have inspired me to look for qualities in others I admire. My former mother-in-law was elected the first female mayor of a midwestern city. I admired her talent for public speaking. From a front-row seat, I observed her depth of knowledge, preparedness, and ability to communicate with a large audience.

"As a woman working in science, I co-led a workshop for junior high girls at a Sally Ride Science Festival. This event highlighted for me the fact that girls do as well or better than boys in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM). However, during junior high, interest wanes such that women remain underrepresented in STEM careers. I also had the opportunity to meet Sally Ride, the first female astronaut in space. She talked about how she studied and prepared so that she was ready when the opportunity to join a space crew presented. Even now, I look to strong, intelligent, and accomplished women as examples. I am particularly interested in women who have made career changes later in life."

Carol's advice to younger women is, "Don't subconsciously give up your power. Know your value. Speak up. Support other women. My first job out of college was working as a microbiologist and chemist at a meat processing plant. One of the supervisors on the processing floor would call me 'babe' and 'toots' even though my name was clearly printed on my nametag. I asked my manager for advice and explained that I wanted to be called by my given name. He seemed uncomfortable with my question but said he would deal with it. After that, the supervisor just glared at me.

"While recently browsing headshot photos on Pinterest, I was struck by the number of women tilting their heads as if to soften or apologize for their success and confidence. Men look at the camera straight on, no head tilting, no apology. I was also struck by couples' photos where the man is physically engulfing the woman instead of positions suggesting equality in the relationship. Images like this sink into our subconscious.

"I'd like to share my knowledge and skills and be a positive example for others."

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Xine

Xine participated in *Unforgettable* because she has made many positive and empowering changes in her life since she turned fifty, and she wanted to acknowledge that.

She said, "It's a shame, but I think women over 50 tend to be ignored by society.

"I am more confident than when I was younger. I have more courage to try new things and step out of my comfort zone from time to time."

Growing up, Xine had many female role models. She said, "At home, I had my Nana and mother, both very strong, confident women. I attended an all-girls school up until 8th grade, and most of my teachers were women, so I was constantly surrounded by smart, intelligent women."

The advice she would give to younger women is, "Be willing to step out of your comfort zone occasionally. You are never too old to start something new. Don't look to others to make you happy. Learn how to be happy by yourself.

"Money complicates things, so be sure to understand your finances and always keep your own financial accounts separate.

"You can't make people change, but you can inspire them to change by setting an example."

Xine hopes through her writing and artwork to bring smiles to the world and "share messages of love and hope for our future."



Karen

Karen participated in *Unforgettable* for a legacy. She said she wants her children and grandchildren to see “me beyond the person they think they know”.

When she was younger, the age of seventy or eighty seemed very old. She pictured “women in shawls and blankets sitting at home, knitting, and waiting for their adult children to call them or visit, Boy Scouts taking them by the elbow and helping them cross the street, cranky ladies calling the police on boisterous outdoor play.

"Now, having accumulated that number of decades, what I have found is the honest company of vibrant, active, funny and very wise, thoughtful women who are a joy to know. There's not a cranky, impatient knitter in the bunch!

"It's quite wonderful, this freeing time in life where I've hopefully been successful at casting off the pretensions of youth and status.

Karen said, “If I could influence any other group I would say to young women, trust your heart. Other people's expectations of you are only based on their own life experiences. They are not you. Give yourself the space and time to listen to what you know is inside you. There, you will find your truth.”



Liz

Liz wanted to participate in Unforgettable to celebrate, acknowledge, and honor her 77 years of life.

She feels that the world could be more equitable, kind, safe, healthy, and productive if women over 50 held a larger percentage of decision-making positions.

After she turned fifty, "Having lost many family members, I became more focused on the people and things that are most dear to me. I strive to 'keep it simple'."

Liz's role models were her grandmothers, who immigrated to America at the turn of the 20th century. She said, "They each raised ten children, despite never learning to speak English; my mother who instilled hard work, valuing a well-kept home, and the ability to recognize the small details that make something beautiful rather than just ordinary."

Liz's advice to younger women is, "Know yourself, have real conversations and discussions with people who are not your age, be a good listener. You can learn so much from others if you can step out of your comfort zone. And get outside every day, no matter the weather. Read more books."

On what effect she'd like to have on the world, Liz said, she would like to "do as little harm to the earth as possible; consume less, leave a small footprint."



Susan

Susan participated in *Unforgettable* "To be part of a community of women of diverse backgrounds and experiences who give voice and perspective to all those who come after us is exciting to me!

"We are a rich tapestry of women of diverse backgrounds who share a well-traveled road along the spectrum of human emotion. We freely share our own experiences; trials, triumphs, pain, and fears in the hopes of lifting others up to help them to navigate freely.

"Many of the women in my life have had the ability to laugh and cry and share complex emotions with me; and I them, as our lives have intertwined. I'm grateful to all the women in my life; young and old, for all they have shared and for all the times they've been there for me.

"I've learned that there are some things in life that just don't matter. They have no relevance in the big scheme of things. It's important to keep things in perspective, though sometimes hard.

"It's important to have people in your life that can bring perspective and levity.

"Continually throughout my personal and professional life, I've had the great privilege of journeying with family members, friends, and colleagues that I've learned from and have hopefully positively influenced in some way."

The women who have helped to shape Susan's life the most are her mother, Barbara, her aunt Bev, her grandmother Ruth, and her mother-in-law, Theresa. "These women have all worked hard inside and outside of their homes their whole lives to help provide for their families. They have all instilled in me the values of honesty and integrity and the gifts of kindness, humility, empathy, and an inherent love for all people."

The advice Susan would give to women who are younger than her is, "Make good health and self-care a priority. You only have one physical body! Build your own community of women along every life phase who you can learn from share with and laugh with! Be transparent and vulnerable with people you trust so they can help you navigate along the way; you may then, in turn help them by sharing your experiences. Be kind. Always."

Susan hopes that, "through kindness, acceptance and love, I would have made a difference in the lives of people who have been part of the journey with me."



Rebecca

Rebecca said, "Maundy Mitchell's projects are so powerful and beautiful. When she approached me to participate in *Unforgettable*, I was excited at the opportunity to collaborate with her. She was intrigued with a concept I had for an art piece and worked with me to bring it to life."

Many of Rebecca's friends are over fifty. "I tend to see them as ageless. Friends I have had for many years don't really seem to age. Often there is a light in women over 50—a light of confidence, a light of experience, a light of life."

When asked how she has changed since she turned fifty, Rebecca said, "That was so long ago, I don't remember! Kidding aside, I see body changes (skin, hair, joints) attitudes and knowledge. Retirement at age 59 was a real release. A chance to learn more, travel more and engage with my art more.

"Growing up in the 50's I am not sure I was aware of what a role model was, but I had strong, loving women in my family. My mother's younger sisters were both different from my mother and despite large families, always seemed happy and took in stride whatever came along. My grandmothers were quick-witted, compassionate, and mindful."

The advice Rebecca would give to women who are younger than her is "advice my grandfather gave to me when I was a child. He was a great reader and Shakespeare fan who loved to stroll about the house quoting '...To thine own self be true...' Be true to yourself, know thyself, and find passion in learning."

Rebecca encourages random acts of kindness and hopes to promote joy.



MaryEllen

MaryEllen had always wanted to do a portrait session. She participated in *Unforgettable* because she wanted to show her grandchildren that it's never too late to fulfill a desire.

She feels that women over fifty possess a treasure trove of wisdom, love, courage, and compassion. She said, "Our society's tendency to devalue aging women has ripped the very fabric of our collective consciousness. It's caused a deep wound that we need to heal, together."

Since she turned fifty, she said she has grown more compassionate, braver, less concerned about others' opinions, and "clearer with holding boundaries. I've shed B.S. beliefs that were imprinted on me as a child. I've learned to dance with the flow of life. I no longer strive for outcomes.

"I have felt an urgency, a tugging from my soul to live a life of MY choosing. A Soul led life. One of service as a healer."

MaryEllen's role models were her grandmother, her friend, Shirley, and her mother. "I was fortunate to have a strong grandmother in my life. Mimi was a true matriarch. I sought her advice in all things. She was the glue that held our family together. She taught me how to cook using my senses. She instilled in me a love of reading and the pursuit of knowledge.

"My dear friend Shirley was instrumental in my spiritual journey. She helped me to understand and guide my spiritual practice.

"My mother taught me about natural healing and beautiful food that nourishes the body and soul. I have a passion for herbal medicine, and it all started with the influence from my mother."

MaryEllen's advice to younger women is, "Don't wait. Be brave NOW. Pursue your passions, your deepest desires, and dreams. Don't let anyone tell you that you can't accomplish whatever you set your mind and attention to. If you've had childhood trauma, seek counseling, and excavate all the pain a.s.a.p. Otherwise, it will just hold you back from being who you were born to be.

"Whatever role I'm in, whether it's a teacher, a mother, a grandmother, a mentor, or a woman, I strive to be the kind of person I needed growing up. To be a role model."





Dianne

“I’m proud to be where I am in life. Being over 60 is just a number to me and I want to share with other women that this is a beautiful time in your life to embrace. As a hairstylist, I believe there are no rules about what defines beauty. I believe each age has its own beauty, regardless of the number.”



Robin

“To quote Betty White, ‘I may be a senior, but so what? I’m still hot.’” When asked about her role models, Robin said, “Two women come to mind right away: Betty White for her love of life, and Barbara Walters for not just breaking the glass ceiling [but] shattering it!”



Rebecca

“The belief in possibilities, in change & transformation, provides us each with a path, a way to live ‘our dash’ — that space between life and death. That is what I want for my children, grandchildren, family, and friends. A life filled with possibilities and change. This is why I wanted to participate in the Over 50 Revolution. We must always support each other and share the wisdom we have developed with age. Accepting how we look now, and who we have become, is the stuff of miracles.”



Kathy G.

“Women over 50 have fought, struggled, or possibly stressed over making right and wrong decisions about life issues. Our roles have made us wiser and stronger, striving for the confidence of a ‘maturing’ woman. In my opinion, we are feeling that growth/strength. I’ve changed into a stronger, wiser woman and have dealt with life-changing traumas. It changed all relationships and eventually made me self-reliant.”



Susan

The advice Susan would give to younger women is “Be courageous and don’t be afraid to accept responsibility if things don’t go as planned. There is no perfection—mistakes are our greatest learning tools. Be kind, be confident, be open to learn from others’ perspectives. Don’t be judge-y!”



Heidi

“Like fruit that has ripened, I have arrived at my most flavorful and juicy self...complete with the bruises and blemishes that come with aging. [Women over 50] have power. We have life experience and have grown through pain and struggle, ecstatic beauty, miracles, and grace. We have seen truth; heart-wrenching as well as divine. We have perspective that informs how we understand and see the world. We recognize bullshit and have less tolerance or time for it. We speak our minds. We truly can and must create a revolution that harnesses feminine power and wisdom. The world needs us.”



Kathy S.

“Turning 50 was actually a proud moment for me. I was thrilled to have made it to the half-century mark, which neither of my parents did. I know this was not the case for some of my friends, who found the milestone painful. It’s true that age leaves its mark on your body, but a little gray hair is a small price to pay for this much wisdom! (You may have seen this on a tee shirt – I wrote it.)”



Nicole

When she turned 50, she no longer felt the need to prove herself to anyone. She finally understood “that the opinions of others were not my problem, and that it is okay to take time for self-care and interests. As women, we often want to fix things, so everyone is happy. Realistically, we are not responsible for the happiness of others. In the end, I am enough.”



Deb

“I think it is SO important for people to know how much we have to share with the world and each other, all the wisdom we have gathered along the many roads of our lives.” She believes women over 50 could make the world a much better place if we weren’t undervalued by society.



Maundy

“In my work, I want to help people appreciate their own strength, wisdom, and beauty. I also try to raise the perception of power of everyone I photograph, in their own eyes, as well as in the eyes of others. I am interested in creating connections between the subject and viewer (and the viewer might also be the subject). I like to create images that invite the viewer to look closer. A closer look creates empathy, and empathy brings people together.”



Christy

"I think that women over 50 have experienced life and have a treasure trove of stories to tell. Recently, I came across a quote that rang true for me (paraphrased here). 'Age is irrelevant. Ask me how many trips I've taken, how many sunsets I've seen, laughs I've shared, bedtime stories I've read to my children, and happy wedding anniversaries I've celebrated with my husband. That's how old I am.' I think there's a lot of pressure from society to look a certain way, and some women succumb to that pressure to an extreme. It's important to enjoy life, which includes having an ice cream cone once in a while. Treat yourself!"



Maria G.

“There is always a lot to be thankful for if we take time to look for it. For example, I am thinking how nice it is that my wrinkles do not hurt, or that I can get out of bed without falling on my face. Seriously, I have been in remission from cancer for 19 years. I traveled the world (40 countries) at age 51; received my higher academic degree at 58; became a grandmother at 60; retired from a medical job that I enjoyed at 72; found love again (after being a widow for 13 years), at 74; married a wonderful man at 76. Yes, I truly believe that a woman can still accomplish much after the age of 50. As women, we should congratulate ourselves! Every one of us have accomplishments: we should celebrate them and use them as inspiration for new ones.”



Emilie

Emilie sees opportunity in being over the age of 50. "We can be free of the traps of standard beauty expectations. Leaving the possibility of childbearing, we can reclaim our creative energy and learn new ways to live in our aging skin. I have put my own well-being ahead for the first time in my life. I am healthier than I've ever been because I prioritize exercise and diet in a new,



Taunya

Since entering her 50s, Taunya has continued to evolve. “I think the biggest change has been that I’ve started to relax more... I’m more open to experiences, [better able] to ‘stop and smell the roses.’ I have embraced my uniqueness and love doing things to have fun. There may even be some evidence of me in a Unicorn costume somewhere! I’ve realized that life is just too short, so I’m going to buy the tickets, eat the cake, and enjoy the shoes.”.



Jessie

Since she turned 50, Jessie is learning to explore her personal wants and ideals. “I’m looking at how I can embrace what I want to do after giving years and years of my time and energy to my family and countless others in my work life. I am working on consciously embracing and accepting my authentic self — including the self-proclaimed ‘imperfections’ — but at the same time, knowing that these imperfections are not that at all, but instead they just are.”



Karen

“We’re a wise and wonderful bunch! Seriously though, I think women in particular have the ability to take all of their experiences, good and bad, and incorporate them into who they are becoming. Women over 50 have a unique wisdom and an openness to share it with anyone who wants to listen. We’re also more comfortable in our own skin than when we were younger and that makes us free to enjoy life without always sweating the small stuff.”



Kim

Since turning 50, Kim has embraced the idea of letting go of what no longer serves her. “I have worked incredibly hard to get to where I am. But I also know I deserve rest. I am a fixer. I am a caregiver. I am a mom. I am a business owner. I am a chemist. I am an artist. I am a lawyer. But I’m also a queer woman and it saddens me that it took me nearly 50 years to show up as my whole self. I’m done hiding, and I am done serving others at the expense of myself. I wish I had this wisdom earlier in life and I hope that women reading this can take what they need from it. I am worth it. You are worth it. I am enough. You are enough.”



Beth

When asked her advice to women who are younger than her, she said, “It is so important to embrace YOU as God made you. Don’t believe the lies of the nip-tuck world. Eventually, it all will wrinkle and sag. Embrace the wisdom of your journey.”



Judith

The advice Judith would give to women who are younger than her is to dedicate themselves to a purpose that is bigger than themselves. “It might require that they take some risks, even when it’s a little bit uncomfortable to do so. To speak up and speak out. To write that letter or call that congressperson. The times we live in demand it, and we women have what it takes to make an extraordinary contribution. Engaging our lives with a sense of purpose is not only energizing and fulfilling, but it just might also serve to change the course of history.”



Debbie

"We have let go of some of the stressors we have dealt with in the past and have a different perspective on life. I turned 65 this year, which really does not feel any different to me. I now see it as being important to make time and spend time with those who are most special to me."



Cheryl

When asked about advice she would give to women who are younger than her, Cheryl said, “Your biggest failures, rejections, closed doors, and seemingly lost opportunities forge you into the amazing woman you’ll become. You’ll see how every bad boss, horrible breakup, loss, and accident tests your mettle and forces you to level up. They’re gifts... Put yourself first. Prioritize self-care...We can’t change others. We can only change ourselves. Improve you, and the world is improved.”



Lisa

Lisa was open to breaking the “rules” of portraiture. She was also open to challenging the expectations of how women are “supposed” to present themselves in a portrait – soft and sweet. Bravo to beauty AND power, in all its forms!



Sharon

“I am proud to be a woman over 80 and still enjoying life. I believe women over 50 are just hitting their prime years. They have so much to offer to the world and I hope they are aware of their incredible potential. I appreciate and admire the supportive and inspiring women that I surround myself with today.”



Maria M.

Maria's advice to younger women: "Do not spend time and money worrying about your weight or looks. You might regret working so hard to meet impossible societal expectations. Instead, focus on improving your mind, your self-assuredness, and your genuine interests. People will judge – ignore them. This is YOUR journey so honor it."



Deb

“Don’t look at getting older as a burden, look at it as becoming wiser, stronger, kinder. Embrace the things you have done. Continue to learn and take care of yourself physically and mentally as you grow older.”



Robin A.

“I love the age I am! I have learned not to sweat the small stuff and to embrace every day with the hope of finding something new and wonderful!”

When asked what advice she would give to women who are younger than her, Robin said, “I recently went on a yoga retreat to a small, very rustic resort in Costa Rica. The resort housed about 30 people. It amazed me that two thirds of the attendees were young, solo women travelers. They were from all over the world. I loved seeing young women navigating the world, traveling, and enjoying themselves on non-traditional adventures. My advice would be to keep it up! Travel and enjoy yourself. you will gain perspective, experience, and insight, tools to help navigate through life’s many challenges.”



Terri P.

Terri thinks that women over 50 have a unique opportunity to support each other and mentor young women. “Being an example doesn’t have to be one-on-one with another but can be in those moments where others see that being a woman over 50 doesn’t have limits.”

“[My] main role model [Ginny P.] has always been my mother. She taught me to be a strong, confident woman. She leads by example. She took up snowboarding and became a grandparent for the first time the year she turned fifty! I’ve grown up believing that age is just a number and something that can be celebrated, not dreaded.”



Ginny P.

Ginny became aware of the Women's Movement when she was in her early 40s. She started to pay attention to who she was and what was important to her. "I started college in my 30s and graduated at 40. The kids were on their way to adulthood. I had never thought about who I was before that. As a non-traditional student, I naturally fell into a role of mentor in many ways. I always wanted to be sure that young women heard that they had gifts and did not need to take crap."

At age 81, Ginny snowboards and earns gold medals in the World Ice Swimming Championships.



Georgia

Georgia has always loved photography, especially portraits. But she had never considered being photographed herself. She said, “I had never liked nor considered being on ‘that side’ of a camera.” Like most women over 50, Georgia did not believe it was possible for her to love photos of herself. She believed she was “un-photogenic. But The Over 50 Revolution experience sparked her own creativity.

Participating in The Over 50 Revolution changed Georgia’s mind about the possibility of existing in beautiful photos. Now she understands that she was “photogenic” all along – she only had to decide to do it.



Sue M.

“The conditioning [we] endure around how beauty is defined, particularly as women age, has typically cast aside many of our elders and wisdom keepers. I was drawn to looking in the mirror/lens and really seeing my own beauty, wisdom, and power, for the first time.

“Each story of brokenness becomes a gift of wisdom. Each time a woman is courageous enough to be truly seen (body, mind, and spirit), the light shines into the darkest shadows. I am now one of those called to brighten the light within and around me. The women I walk with are treasured pilgrims on the road. They are Anam Cara (‘Soul friends’).”



Wendy D.

When asked how she has changed since she turned 50, Wendy said that she now feels a sense of calmness. She no longer feels a need to control everything that happens, but can now “flow with it, taking what is good for my mind, body, and spirit and leaving the rest.”

“Be kindest to yourself... Perception is powerful and can shape one’s feelings about the world, others, and self. Stay on the path of positive perception with kindness, caring and love for all.”



Sandy P.

Sandy heard about The Over 50 Revolution and, as a woman in her 60s, was drawn to the idea of celebrating herself, something she felt she had never done.

Sandy spends her days caring for both people and animals. You might say she's a Renaissance woman, interested in many things. Sandy is a nurse who also pursues passions as a dog-rescuer, beekeeper, and chicken-raiser. She can also wield a chainsaw and operate an excavator, among other things!



Lyla

“We are all unique and beautiful beings. We all have insecurities, and we all have that voice in our heads that just never stops. Even the girls who seem so confident, the ones who seem to have it all, they have that voice too. Stop comparing yourself to everyone else, you are just as worthy. Here’s the truth about that voice. It’s not your friend, in fact it’s a huge source of suffering. Try to develop a practice of becoming aware of it, and then turning away from it by saying ‘no, thank you’ and redirecting your thoughts. Do that again and again and again. Your brain is a wonderful problem-solving tool. The rest of the time, it’s full of shit. Trust your gut and try to listen to the signals your body sends you to determine whether something is good for you. Good things feel light and expansive. Bad things feel heavy and constrictive. Also, never be ashamed to ask for help. Keep learning and growing. Life is a journey. There’s something to be learned from everything, especially the toughest things. That’s how we become the wise ones, and there is no shortcut.”



Rebecca S.

Rebecca said that for the most part, she's enjoying her 50's. "I feel like things are crystallizing. More than two years ago, I stopped dying my hair and have loved the transformation as it continues to morph. I get a lot of compliments from total strangers about my hair, which I find both flattering and funny. After being a consultant and working remotely for nearly 17 years for a large corporation, at age 51, I went back to work in a traditional environment on a college campus, a setting where I had started my career. While everyone was fleeing the office during the pandemic, I went back to one. It was a big and welcome change for me, and I enjoyed it, especially working in-person with a team of people again. I was the first person in this role in a newly formed division and it was challenging but exciting."

Her job was eliminated last year, but Rebecca saw it as a gift to "pause and just be." 2024 has been fabulous as my 'career break' has enabled me to be even more present with my high school-aged boys, travel, and to pursue my love of flowers through an 'adult internship' at a local floral wholesaler in Vermont. I even had the good fortune to go to Flower School in London to learn foundational techniques related to flower arranging. 'With age comes wisdom,' isn't that part of the quote? Being almost 54 means all of the twists and turns of the past few years have been tempered with other life experience and I really try not to let the turkeys get me down. I just don't have time for negativity. I want to do all the things."



Debra O.

Now that she is in her mid-fifties, Debra finds herself much less concerned about what others think of her. "I also feel a greater sense of confidence about who I am and who I am becoming. I have hardly any interest in following the confinements and expectations that society has for women, especially those of us who are older. I am more present, and I have such a greater appreciation for life as it is in the moment. I cherish the relationships that I have with my family and loved ones, knowing that so much is changing for all of us. I am amazed as I watch my children grow and navigate new chapters in their lives and I don't want to miss a second of it."

The advice Debra would give women who are younger than her is to "Unapologetically be your true self. Don't be afraid to speak up or take up space. You have so much to offer. Know that whatever choices you make that they are yours to make as you are the one who will live with them. If you find yourself going in a direction that you don't believe is right for you, take the time to pause and reassess, nothing is ever wasted. Often, mistakes are what we need to move us forward along our path. Be kind to yourself and never settle for less than what you know in your heart is right for you."



Joann V.

If a younger woman were to ask for her advice, Joann said she would make it simple. “Try to walk your path with ease and grace as much as you can. Make the best of who and what you are. Never compare yourself with others. Reach up and reach out for support because there are many women traveling this wild journey just as you are. Try as you might, no one really knows how the end game will turn out. Take small steps in the direction of your dreams and keep the door open for miracles and blessings. You are special, amazing, and beautiful.”

