

Eating Triggers: Aging gracefully in a youth-obsessed culture

Insatiable Season 5 Episode 4

[INTRO]

[0:00:08.9] AS: When you're fed up with fighting food and your body, join us here. I'm Ali Shapiro, creator of the Truce with Food Program and your host for Insatiable; where we explore the hidden aspects of fighting our food, our weight and our bodies and dive deep into efficient science and true whole health. Fair warning, this is not your parents' healthcare. This is a big rebel yo to those who crave meaning, hunger for truth and whose lust for life is truly insatiable. Believe me, freedom awaits.

[EPISODE]

[0:00:47.7] AS: Welcome to Season 5 of Insatiable. This season, **our theme is eating triggers**; namely, what triggers the on-off eating cycle? We're really focused on getting clear about these eating triggers, because clarity is a process and a tool. Why? Because when you're actually clear on what's happening, you get to the root cause. When you get to the root cause, your efforts actually make an impact on what you're doing, which is super exciting and motivating.

Second, logic doesn't change us. We all have emotional reasons that inform our logic. When we get clear, we can start to understand some of the emotional reasons, or why we think the way we do, feel the way we do, and that opens us up to change in our feelings, which change everything.

Lastly, clarity equals distance. If you've ever really reflect back on anything in your life and you think, "Hey, I'm over that now, right?" It's because you were able to see from a

different perspective. You could see what you could have done differently, or what you didn't not so great, or what other people did that wasn't so great, or what just the situation was what it was.

You have that distance, because you're clear on what was actually happening versus the emotional intensity of the moment. When we can get clear on what's really triggering us, it puts some distance in the immediate present and offers us different opportunities to have different perspectives and then we can change.

Today, we're talking about aging. Aging is completely natural, yet we are encouraged to fight it. Today's episode, *Eating Triggers: Aging gracefully in a youth-obsessed culture*, Juliet and I are turning milestone birthday. Juliet is turning 30 in the ultra-youth oriented world of fitness. Ali turns 40, feeling like aging is the ultimate privilege, yet also still has some feelings about it. We're going to discuss a range of feelings on aging in ways that we can detach from the triggers of a youth-obsessed culture and embrace aging gracefully.

For our new listeners, Juliet Burgh has been active in the fitness community since 2008. An expert in her field, she came to Philadelphia after working in New York City as a personal trainer at a prestigious sports club. She is the partner and nutrition director for Unite Fitness Studio franchises, a rapidly growing group in personal training studio, the hardest workout in Philadelphia and is helping to craft Unite's trademark; heart, muscle, mind, workout methodology.

Juliet appears as a regular contributor on Fox and ABC News, helps educate people on the topic of fitness, health and nutrition. When she's not in the studio, she's playing with her cats, loves to connect with nature and frequently takes trips to the Woodstock, New York area to hike and relax. Juliet.

[0:03:34.7] JB: Aye.

[0:03:36.7] AS: Aging. How you feeling about turn 30 here at time of recording in a couple weeks?

[0:03:41.3] JB: Yeah. I wasn't really feeling anything in particular around it, up until a couple days ago and I just realized how close it was. It's been interesting just in the last year to say like, "Oh, this is my last year in my 20s." Just something I would say. Now that it's quickly approaching, I did have this brief 10 seconds of panic the other day and I try to figure out what that was about. I said to my husband like, it's just more that time goes so quickly. I can't believe that I'm already 30 when I just feel like – I remember being 20, now I'm 30. Does that mean 40 is going to feel like it's going to happen quickly and then 50, and then I'm just going to die? He was like, "Oh, my God. Slow down. You're not going to die for a long time."

[0:04:39.2] AS: It's true though. As someone turning 40 I'm like, "Where did the time go?" When I tell people that, they're like, "Oh, you're still a baby and it goes even faster once you turn 50 and 60," and I'm just like, "Oh, God. I don't want it to go so fast."

[0:04:53.7] JB: You don't want to hear that. That scares me when people say it goes faster.

[0:04:58.9] AS: Me too.

[0:04:59.4] JB: I don't' like that. It's interesting to think about I'm turning 30 and then you start to think about you're turning 40. Do you think about where your family was, or people that you know were at that age? I think about my mother and she was pregnant with me and my brother when she was 30. That just sounds – it's incredible to me, because I have no plans at any time soon for that to happen, or I just even think about her at 40, and I don't think that these ages are – that they're old. When you're young, you perceive them as being old, because you're so young.

[0:05:41.0] AS: Totally, totally. I just thought about that this morning. I was like, my parents at 40 we're commuting to the city to teach, we were in our first I guess home growing up and I was six-years-old and my sister was four and I'm like, "Oh, my God. I'm still debating the child question," right? At almost 40.

I mean, my mom got married later in life and had us for that era, right? It was like, that was really old, I guess you could say at the time. Now it's funny, because a lot of my friends I feel are asking about the kid question in late 30s, or early 40s. Yeah. No, I think about yeah, my grandmother had nine kids at this age.

[0:06:20.7] JB: Doesn't it make you feel you have a lot of respect for those people and just pretty a different perspective of what they went through at those ages and makes me feel really proud for them. I think about my business partner, he turned 40 last year and I think about when he started our business, he was 29, and I just think I'm 29. At 29, he took a chance of starting his own brick-and-mortar business and it just seems like, "Wow, that's crazy that he did that."

[0:06:54.1] AS: Yeah, when I was preparing for this episode and just thinking, I started my business when I was 29 and I put my notice and at my corporate job on my birthday October 1st and then had to give two weeks. I was thinking about how the 30s were – they were great in many ways, but they were also just really hard. It was a lot of – I'm really confident and like, I was in grad school having no idea if I made the right choice and things were so financially tight and Carlos was getting two different master's degrees and we did long-distance marriage. I went through a really bad depression in 2012 when I was doing that healing work with Bob. Then when I was 37 I had a miscarriage. All these things.

I think about it was really great and it was – I mean, not – it wasn't great. I shouldn't have said that after saying having a miscarriage. Although it felt a little differently for

me, I think then a lot of people, because we never knew if I could get pregnant from chemotherapy. There was a lot going on in my 30s, I guess. It was just so jam-packed and I felt I didn't start to breathe until the past two years. For my 40s, the word that just keeps coming to me is savor. I just want to be where I am.

[0:08:03.1] JB: Yeah. That's the different place I think getting to 40, then the feeling of turning 30, right? There's a lot of societal pressure on these numbers and these ages that I want to talk about with you today, and just what's expected of us and how we're supposed to feel when we turn these specific milestone ages. Are you supposed to be savoring? Is that a thing that people – when you're 40 versus when you're 30, you're supposed to be like, okay, you're finally establishing yourself and what your purpose is in your career path and getting ready, just settle down into something and start a family.

Then when you're 50, what does that look like and who made these decisions for us and how do we navigate our way around them, because they can affect us in a way that creates unnecessary stress and pressure.

[0:08:54.7] AS: Oh, totally, totally. We've been focusing on the tail triggers during this season. Again, part of why we eat is after these feelings of do I feel tired? Do I feel anxious, which is usually uncertainty? Do I feel inadequate? Do I feel lonely? I came up with some of the issues that these feelings dried the certain thoughts around aging. I think was tired regardless of what age, it brings up this striving and pushing to have our body be something, especially look young.

The challenges is I don't know if you've felt this way, but I feel this way at 39 in 11 months is that my body just doesn't recover as well from working out, or from drinking, or anything of that matter. There's that tired piece that aging can trigger. Uncertainty, what will happen to my health? What will happen to my body? Am I doing what

matters to me in my life, right? There's a lot of uncertainty, I think that especially milestone decade birthdays bring up, right?

I think this is why a lot of people have what the midlife crisis at their 50s. I shared this with a lot of clients. I think it'll be helpful for listeners in graduate school. In one of our courses, we were talking of narrative coaching. In America, we are told that we can be whatever we want and there's unlimited opportunity and potential, but when you start to get into your mid-30s to late 30s, you start to realize that you've made very real choices that have real consequences.

Maybe you decided to get a mortgage, maybe you decided to have kids, maybe you went down a certain educational path, right? Or you've dedicated a good portion of your life to something, and that closes off choices and that brings up your own uncertainty of, "Okay, I don't have every single choice." It doesn't mean you don't have no choices which we'll get to, but I think these milestone birthdays can bring that up, just we have to reconcile with what we've been taught versus reality.

I think it brings up inadequacy. Am I ahead, or behind? Or am I losing my looks? Am I going to be worth it in a patriarchal culture, right? I want to get into how aging feels so threatening, especially to women because in the patriarchy you're only valuable if you're having kids, or what you look like in relation to men, and that's bullshit. That triggers a lot of deep-seated inadequacy, and then I think it triggers loneliness.

Some of the questions I hear for my clients like, "Am I going to meet anybody? Is it too late for me, right?" I'm asking myself from moving back to Pittsburgh like, "Is it too late to develop new deep friendships when you're in your late 30s, early 40s, and everyone seems to be in their own lives understandably so?" Those are some of the big things. I think we have these thoughts, but it's brought up and trigger aid by these feelings of being tired, uncertain, inadequate and lonely.

Yeah. One thing I just – I'm reading this book right now called *The Ascent of Humanity* by Charles Einstein and it's basically about how we started to separate from nature. It's really interesting, because he focuses a lot on agriculture and how that really separated us as a technology, away from natural rhythms. He talks about time being this constructed technology that keeps us really separate from our natural rhythms and thinking of life in a linear fashion, which I think aging in our culture does. It's like, oh, you just peak at 30 and then it's downhill, or something. Rather than having seasons and spirals. He talked about before agriculture, people looked at time, there would be low tide, high tide and it was this less judgmental, linear way of being. I thought that was just really interesting.

[0:12:42.0] JB: I was thinking about that earlier today, because I had one appointment today. Well, two appointments if we count this podcast, because it's just a really slow time right now for me. My clients are away. I only had one class this morning. My husband and I, we got breakfast and then we went and walked around a little bit, but I started to feel this sense of I'm running out of time. At 10:00 in the morning I'm thinking to myself, "I'm running out of time. I have this podcast at 2:00."

That anxiety that I put on myself with the clock and watching the clock like, "Okay, that gives me this many hours." All that time pressure, I actually had a moment where I thought to myself like, "This is fucking bullshit. I need to just be enjoying my morning off. I don't have these opportunities a lot, where I do have time to enjoy walking around the city." Why I felt this time constraint I was putting it on myself?

[0:13:44.0] AS: Yeah. In the book – I mean, I'm still in the chapter of time, but he talks about when commerce started, it introduced this very linear way of time and we started measuring time to like, "I've got four hours. I've got three," because they're all of a sudden needed to be a past or present, so that you could record and track what was buying and selling and coming and going. That really time is experienced very differently, based on how present you are, or what you're thinking about.

You calmed yourself down and the like, you have time, right? You're running at a time. I think about even how we look at aging, right? Which is okay, you're turning 30, I'm turning 40, but then you have your biological age. How old are you actually biologically based on how you've been taking care of yourself and what environmental things you've been exposed to? I thought, I want a street cred age. Don't you want that?

[0:14:37.0] JB: If I have a street cred age, then I'm like 85. That's a good thing, I guess.

[0:14:43.5] AS: Yeah. I always joke, because I don't to stay out late. I'm like, I have an inner 90-year-old grandmother wise woman in me, but I'm like, "Hey, that's a street cred age."

[0:14:55.9] JB: Do you have an age that you – a body age that you feel you are, I know turning 40, but do you still feel like 30? Have you thought about that?

[0:15:07.1] AS: Yeah. I mean, I actually feel the best I have ever felt in my life.

[0:15:11.9] JB: Great.

[0:15:13.0] AS: Yeah. I feel so – I mean, I was thinking about this, because I've been telling people that I'm turning 40 here in Pittsburgh and they're like, "You don't look like you're 40." I tell Carlos. I'm like, "Someone else told me that." I know I have genetically good skin and I eat well and I take care of myself and I sleep and hydrate, but I think that's part of why it's easier, but I also just feel so content.

I took that huge chance when I was 29 to pursue, I didn't exactly know what. A lot of my friends who took a more conventional path, they have kids, they've settled into this routine. I always wanted that, but my life was just so unpredictable for 11 years. I feel

like I'm finally at this place where now I'm like, "Am I going to have a family, or am I not?" I'm settling into a routine that I always wanted, because I'm very routine-driven, because I'm now – my business is established and it's the financial resources to like I'm going to Montana next month on a business retreat, and Carlos and I took a vacation this summer.

A lot of the freedom that I think a lot of my friends had instability in their 30s, I'm just now getting there. I just feel so happy that I took the risks I did. I feel so grateful, because it's easier to look back and say that they were going to work out, but I had no idea if any of this was going to work out, and I'm just proud of myself. I don't know. Am I allowed to say that? Can I own that?

[0:16:37.1] JB: A 100%. I don't think that people give themselves enough credit, or allow themselves to feel proud of themselves because oh, there's always – I could always do better. There's always more. That's the society we live in is that nothing is good enough, right? You could always be better, you could always be doing more, you could always be more successful, you can always have less wrinkles, you could always have less fat. It's enough already with that.

[0:17:03.2] AS: Yeah, and I never – I was never really into I'm starting to drinking, and I know a lot of my friends are, right? They do that now on the weekends. They get babysitters and have wine o' clock, or whatever. I've never really been into what a lot of – and maybe they're growing out of that I should say, but I was –

[0:17:21.0] JB: I'm growing into that right now.

[0:17:24.3] AS: Carlos started to drink this summer every night. He's like, "It's summer." I'm like, "Okay, so you're just going to be that person who has scotch every night?" I mean, he's drinking Portuguese wine, but I feel a lot of the things that people are getting into like spirituality and personal development I've always been into. It feels

really fun, and especially social justice and which the election has made me hyper aware of, and I feel people – that's cool to do now if you're in your 40s. I just feel I'm finally aligned with where a lot of other people are. Not that I –

[0:17:57.3] JB: Well, I feel like you just are more comfortable with yourself too. That's part of it. It's just this level of comfortability and confidence and you're more sure of yourself, because of all the things that you've gone through over the last decade and the resiliency that you have to cultivate having your own business and all the uncertainty, especially that you had financially with supporting yourself and just being in a long-distance marriage with Carlos. You've gone through so much over this last decade that yeah, now I feel you are on this other side of it and it's that you've learned so much and have grown so much.

I feel of course, you should feel so proud of yourself and take a deep –be able to just breathe a little bit deeper and just feel like, "Yeah, let's savor these moments," because you're just in a different, more relaxed place in your life.

[0:18:52.9] AS: Yeah. Thanks Juliet. I feel so emotional while you're saying that and seeing that. Thank you.

[0:18:58.3] JB: I think it's important for people to see each other. I really want our listeners to think about that too, people in your life, can you acknowledge anybody and see them in a way that they need to be seen, because it's hard for us to see ourselves. It really is. We always have a filter over ourselves again, because we're conditioned to feel it's not enough and we got to just keep on trekking along.

I think it's important that we offer that to people that we see in our lives that have made shifts and changes over the years. The milestone birthdays, I think it's great to acknowledge look how far you've come and where you are, so that you can feel grateful and proud of yourself.

[0:19:37.6] AS: Yeah, I feel incredibly grateful, because even though I've worked really hard, I've also had a lot of serendipitous luck and privilege. It doesn't take away from my hard work. I always say white people need to learn the capacity of and, especially when we're talking about racial privilege. I have worked harder than I thought I ever could in my entire life, and it was – I sacrificed a lot, and I still had a lot of people help me, I had a lot of privilege. It feels very magical.

I think too, I think as we're thinking about aging, I think about even the 50s, right? The next decade. I think because our society again, from a patriarchal standpoint, we think age matters, because it was like, well can you bear children and are you pleasant to look at for men, right? Then capitalism, which we're also part of sells youth, right? Yet, we know Asian and indigenous cultures, they really value wisdom.

I think that's shifting and changing in our culture, but I think for women who are especially hitting 50s, that menopause is a threshold, right? There's a huge metaphor there. I saw this meme about how women's emotions tend to be used against them when they're having their period, but yet, did you know that that's the time men and women's hormones are the most similar actually when we have our periods?

I didn't know that, but as you stop menstruating you become – naturally you have less estrogen, and estrogen makes those of us who identify as women, I guess. I don't know a lot about gender sis non-conforming, like that is still a growth edge for me, so I hope I'm not botching the terms too badly. For women who have estrogen, when you go through menopause, that decreases and you have all this amazing wisdom and you're discerning and you just don't care as – you're less unattached in a healthy way.

Doesn't mean you're a bitch, or not caring, but all that stuff that we as women I think have to work through, it just goes away naturally in your 50s. That's when you can be super powerful. You have all this capacity. Yet our culture, it focuses on the weight

gain, on the hot flashes and that stuff has to be the hot flashes and you want to nurture your hormones, but no one talks about the great I think wisdom threshold that that is either.

[0:21:58.1] JB: Yeah. I was saying to you earlier Ali, that I've been getting a lot of clients lately who are in their 50s.

[0:22:04.6] AS: I get a lot of clients 50s, late 20s, those transition points.

[0:22:09.3] JB: Yeah. Especially with the 50s, the body it does change for many women. That level of acceptance can be hard; to have a different shape than you did 10 years ago, and how do you reconcile that and just be okay with that and not fight that and not try to – I had a client ask me about CoolSculpting earlier today.

[0:22:40.5] AS: What's CoolSculpting?

[0:22:42.1] JB: It's some less invasive form of a liposuction. I don't even really know, but it's like they freeze your fat off. Because her stomach is different than it was in her – she's approaching the 50s and her stomach has been changing. Although she feels she's in the best shape and she feels she takes care of her health and she eats really, really well, the hormonal shift that has occurred for her has left her with an excess amount of body fat around her midsection.

[0:23:15.2] AS: Yeah. Yeah, I think that's probably really hard for people to hear. If their looks and their – it's like that's really wrapped up in their identity.

[0:23:23.5] JB: I mean, don't you hear this all the time? "Oh, I could eat whatever I wanted in my 20s, but once I hit 30 it just all started going downhill." That's a message that we hear a lot.

[0:23:34.3] AS: Yeah, I think a –

[0:23:34.8] JB: Once I went through menopause, then I just had this spare tire I couldn't get rid of. These messages we hear, they're such blanket statements. This isn't everybody.

[SPONSOR MESSAGE]

[0:23:45.5] AS: This Insatiable episode is sponsored by my client-described life-changing program, why am I eating this now? If you are tired of the on-off cycle, want food to stop being worth it in the moment but not afterwards and you want to stop self-sabotaging with food, this live program is for you.

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[EPISODE CONTINUED]

[0:24:31.3] AS: There's this line between like, is it everybody because everybody's stressed out and drinking wine every night? Or is it because that's part of just what happens? Is that destiny? I'm not saying that if it is happening, it's your fault and you can change it or anything, or that it's even a fault. Do you know what I'm saying?

I wonder what is true, because I know that even menopause symptoms are really aggravated here in the states, because people when you're going through the actual physiological process of menopause, your adrenal glands will pick up what your ovaries are no longer doing, but most Americans adrenal glands don't have the estrogen, testosterone and progesterone to be the reserves, because people have been drinking coffee, drinking wine, overworking and often because you have to in this

culture, versus other cultures don't have quite the physical symptoms of hot flashes and insomnia, because the adrenal glands are like, "Okay, we're taking over now." I always just wonder that.

[0:25:29.9] JB: It's very individual. It's very individual. It's very much your environment. I think there's just a lot of fear put on to aging, right? That it's this out of control process. Then how do we gain control over it, to make it all okay? I mean, Botox for example, that's a big thing that I see with people who are young in their late 20s.

I was at a dinner and all these people in their late 20s had had Botox already and they were all saying, "Oh, we've got to start now because it's really preventative, so that when you are starting to get the wrinkles, they won't even form." It's like, "What the hell?"

[0:26:14.9] AS: Is that even true?

[0:26:16.3] JB: I don't know, because I'm – Listen, everybody is different, but how I feel about it is I really want to be natural in my look and I have no desire to get elective surgery, or partially because I'm terrified of surgery and medical environments. That doesn't help. I'm so scared of that stuff. That isn't something I don't want to have to put myself through on purpose. God forbid something happens and I need to have some medical procedure done, but I'm not one to feel like, "I'm going to go get breast implants. I'm going to go get Botox." It scares me more than anything.

I also want to be an advocate for women who – to age. I want to be comfortable with myself and honestly be a role model for people, in that I want to keep my natural look. If this is what I was born with and I'm doing the best I can with what I have.

[0:27:18.5] AS: Yeah. I think we have similar fears, because for me, it definitely is like, I want to stay out of the medical system as much as possible. In fact, part of – I saw someone in Facebook was posting about their doctor told them now that they're 45.

They should start getting mammograms and I'm like, "Oh, God." I'm like, "How am I going to navigate this," right? Because there's no clear-cut answer, but I don't want all of that. That testing is –

[0:27:42.2] JB: The colonoscopy?

[0:27:43.8] AS: Well, I've had those, because my mom had colon cancer. Those "aging diseases," right? I've worked really hard to not get that stuff, but you just never know. However, I think a lot of times they make these recommendations, because if you haven't been paying attention, or taking care of yourself, it starts to catch up with you in your late 40s, 50s. For the younger generation who doesn't have as clean of an environment as our grandparents had, because all of us born, right? When our mothers were born, they were born with all the eggs that our grandma. When you're born, you're born with all the eggs you have.

Our generation is benefiting from our grandmothers and grandmother's eggs, right? This generation is like, that's going to be born, not our grandkids are growing up with us, who've grown up with a completely toxic environment. I don't know, this is –

[0:28:38.4] JB: Dirty eggs. Get those dirty eggs away from me.

[0:28:44.0] AS: The body is resilient, but I'm just saying we're just not – there's less room for error, so I think we're going to start seeing, and we're seeing this already, right, with obesity being younger and younger. Again, obesity isn't just a calorie issue, it's an environmental issue. I just share all that, but it's like a lot of these recommendations are based on the average population. I take better care of myself than the average population for, because I have – some of that is privilege, but some of that is work an effort as well.

It's like, it opens up this whole thing how often am I going to go to the doctor and because once they start looking for stuff days, sometimes find stuff. I remember even my oncologist in Philly who's super conservative, we were talking about how many times they find this stage one breast cancer that will just cannibalize itself. Because I'm at a risk for breast cancer because of radiation in my chest, she's like, "We don't want to over scan you. We don't want to overlook for this stuff, because a lot of times in healthy people, it just goes away."

Then if you were to say to someone on the internet I mean, again, we all have to make our own choices, but people are like, "You need to get your mammograms." I'm like, Oh, God. It's so much more nuanced than that. I don't know, my point in saying is it's so nuanced that that's what scares me about aging is will I make the right choices? Will I get these very serious diseases? I think because I've had cancer, just so many people contact me about people in their 20s being diagnosed with cancer. I've had another thing that was really hard about my 30s is I had some close friends die. One of my best friends from home, her sister died of cancer.

[0:30:20.4] JB: Cancer?

[0:30:21.4] AS: Yeah. Leukemia AML. Yeah, she was 37, she left behind two gorgeous kids, a girl that I went to IIN with. Her name was Jessica and she was this awesome super healthy woman and got lung cancer and died. She grew up in Detroit and I wonder if, I don't know, the air pollution during the –

[0:30:44.1] JB: For you, does aging feel like life is fragile?

[0:30:48.9] JB: Oh, yes. I've always felt like that. I mean, whenever I go to fly somewhere I say to Carlos, "If I go down, know that I have loved my life and I feel very content with the choices I've made." I mean, and he's like, "Ali, you're flying to Boston."

[0:31:04.7] JB: Yeah, flying is safer than driving. It's funny how you don't think about that when you get in the car every day, right?

[0:31:11.0] AS: I know.

[0:31:11.9] JB: It's just because I think movies, and for me, I'm a Virgo so I'm an earth sign, so I need to be grounded. I need my feet in the ground. If I'm in the air, it feels super out of control. I'm like, I can't see the road. I mean, if you look at the statistics, flying is safer than driving, but we don't think of it that way. We have this major fear.

[0:31:35.7] AS: Yeah. Well, and I also think my sister and I talk about – I mean, I live with my – close to my parents now, but my parents are in pretty good health, but we can see them declining in certain ways. My dad's dexterity is going and my mom is forgetful. I mean, for being 74, I think they're 74 they're in great shape. It's inherently that is really scary. One thing that I think I really have worked through my 30s for the most part is my fear of death, especially me concluding that there might not be anything after this. I mean, I hope there is and I'm at not –

[0:32:10.9] JB: Is that what the conclusion you came to? Because I know that you have been asking a lot of your guests, what do you think happens when you die? Is that one of your conclusions that might be nothing?

[0:32:23.2] AS: Yeah. I'm at peace with that actually. I mean, not so much at peace. Again, when my grandma died, it sent me on this big existential like, I think a lot of my beliefs were her beliefs. Then when I realized that this meritocracy belief that we have in America, we have – America tells you, equality and justice for all. If you're a Christian, you believe that justice comes in the form of God at the pearly gates, right?

If you're not, I realize my grandma, she's a fallen Catholic believed in reincarnation, because that just mirrored how she saw the world. She gave everyone multiple

chances, right? Because there's no justice, there's not absolute justice here on earth. She needed a place holder for the pearly gates. After the election, I realized that this was all a meritocracy belief that we've been taught in America, which is if you work hard, you will get – you will be rewarded, which is an equal justice. It's like justice.

When you look at atheist countries, or communist countries, they're more atheist, they don't have that same – they're like, there's nothing more we need to make things as fair here. I mean, and I'm not saying I'm communist, but if you just look at our the way that we believe spirituality is very much informed by our political and cultural values is my point.

When she died, I just was like, "Huh," and it made me like, my whole worldview crumbled. Part of that worldview crumbling was just really grappling with uncertainty and what do I rebuild up. Yeah, I've come to the conclusion that I don't know. I believe in nature, I believe God is nature. I don't I think it's within us, I think it's a female, I think it's – not that it's a gender per se, but I just don't know if that means that we go on in any way. I think our energy probably does, but I don't think me in my ego form of Ali and understanding things. A lot of people in my family will challenge me on that. I don't know. Where are you with things?

[0:34:21.8] JB: I think people challenge – I think it all has to do with uncertainty. Nobody has been given the key to unlock the mystery that is life. There are theories there. I guess, there are some science that you could taut, to say about the big bang theory. Everything is magical and made up, and everything to me is just a complete mystery. I think that it's so random and this is just what I've been thinking a lot lately, so random and so crazy that I'm even – I'm Juliet sitting here in this chair talking to you Ali Shapiro, or just who are we really like, we're the sole beings in this place called planet Earth and it's so much bigger than we are and there's so much mystery.

Death, it's the biggest mystery of them all and we don't know. No matter what theory we come up with, there's no truth to it, because the truth is unknown, and so we have to accept that uncertainty and just feel comfortable with okay, we just don't know. You can't be scared of nothing because we don't even know. There's nothing to be scared of, because it's not we know the answer.

[0:35:45.8] AS: Yeah. Well and I and I just feel like, yeah, I say I'm open to the mystery. That's really lying that I –

[0:35:52.9] JB: Now if we knew for sure that there was heaven and hell, then yeah, it would be scary.

[0:35:57.6] AS: Well, I don't believe in hell. I don't think there's heaven. It's just it's such a man-made thing. I know and a lot of my clients are religious and they are genuinely use religion for its best – it's the best that it can be. Historically, people in power have used religion for violence and everything and just to scare people. When you look at how things are constructed, but no, and part of my big existential searching was like, can I believe in an energy and a design even if it means that we don't go on? I and I had conflated it too. I do. I believe there's this nature as miraculous and it's so surprising.

That's why I'm like, a lot of atheists to me, they'll sometimes be critical of religious people who want certainty, but I'm like, "If you're an atheist you're also certain." It's still the same belief, it's just dressed up differently. I want to be open to the mystery, because I don't want – I think that brings a magic to your life as well, and that's – I'm hedging my bets that let's make the most out of this life, I guess is what I'm doing.

[0:37:11.9] JB: No, I think that's all you can do and going back to the aging thing to be to be run by fear of aging, or what could happen next approaching my 40s, could

there be some illness that's upon me. It's like, we don't. We can't predict the future and really worrying and fretting about that stuff is taking away from the here and the now.

[0:37:36.6] AS: Yeah. Yeah, totally, totally. I do think when we're talking about physicality, I think there's this myth that because that the body is in inevitable decline. I know, like again, I'm probably not in the best cardio shape of my life, but holistically I'm in the best shape of my life. Now granted, it will probably change when I hit 50 and menopause and that shifts things. Well actually, I mean, I guess, I maybe I'm TMI, but part of what I've been dealing with is that I might potentially be in early menopause, because of the chemo.

That's what my insomnia might have been about last year. I thought it was from the election, but no it was something else. I've been doing acupuncture and herbs to fortify myself, so that I can support my body. I think there's still – we need to look at ourselves, the aging holistically and knowing that the body doesn't have to decline at the rate that often we've been conditioned to do it, and that you taking care of yourself at any time, emotionally and on that soul level.

I've not with my clients no matter what age they are, they're so glad that they took the journey that they felt that they've arrived home to themselves, right? Rather than, I feel as you're growing and being culturally conditioned you leave who you really are at your core in a way to try on different things and it's about coming back to that, the most – I don't want to say innocent, but child-like version of yourself, in the sense of the qualities of who you were as a kid. It's almost like hopefully you're circling back in a good way.

I thought we should share some examples of people who not that they got their start later in life, but they just used the accumulated wisdom to really create really cool things, and so that we aren't hinging everything and dreading aging just strictly from a health and beauty standpoint.

[0:39:31.0] JB: Yeah. Also I can say that something that I've grappled with is like, okay I'm turning 30, am I as successful as I want to be? I had definitely put a time stamp on things. I remember in my 20s being like, by the time I'm 30, I want to be super successful and have everything altogether. What does that even mean? I didn't have any – I don't even think I had specific metrics on that, which if you're going to set a major time stamp, I think you should actually have like, "I will have this much money, or whatever it is."

Anyways, I just did feel – I did feel this pressure. I think something that has helped me and we're going to talk about different people, because for me I put a lot of pressure and on my career and where I need to be with my career, and it's been really helpful to see other people that have been much older than me that I've reinvented themselves, or didn't get started much later in life, or it took them a long time, especially in the fitness industry. I'll have looked to other brands to just support me and make me feel like –

Because in business, you'll always find people that ramp up really quickly, right? Then it's easy to compare yourself to them and be like, "Oh, my gosh. Look, they're so successful and they just started." What am I doing wrong? I've been doing this a decade. We were talking about that before the podcast, how long in the trajectory of our businesses, because Ali started hers 11 years ago and it's actually exactly when we started Unite Fitness. I would have thought we would have been so much further along by now, and it's having this acceptance of we are where we are and I'm proud of where we are. It's not over yet. I put all this effort and energy into it and it's not for me to just give up on it and the reason to give up on it, because I'm not where I thought I was going to be.

[0:41:36.1] AS: Right, because everything takes everybody longer. Check this out, right before we were ready to record this episode, I think because entrepreneurship is

super-hot right now and everyone thinks it sees young 20-something. Forbes has 30 under 30. There's this youth-obsessed culture, but Harvard Business Review did a study and what they found about the most successful startups was that, and I'm going to read this to you, among the top 0.1% of startups based on their growth in the first five years, we found that the founders started their companies on average when they were 45 years old.

These were the highest performing firms. They were identified – they measured basically based on employment growth. The age finding is similar using firms with the fastest sales growth instead and found their age is similarly high for those startups that successfully exit through an IPO, or acquisition. In other words, the most successful people ages 40 to 49 who sell their company to someone else. That's success in the startup world.

If you look at the most successful firms, the average founder age goes up, not down. Overall, the empirical evidence shows that successful entrepreneurs tend to be middle-aged, not young. They attribute it to the wisdom and the skill set that these people have gotten through their lives.

[0:42:54.1] JB: All the failure you've had to go through to learn.

[0:42:59.9] AS: They found that evidence points to entrepreneurial performance rising sharply with age before crest falling in the late 50s.

[0:43:05.3] JB: Can you send me that article, Ali?

[0:43:07.3] AS: Totally, totally.

[0:43:08.4] JB: I need to forward that to my business partner, who's all – he's in his early 40s, so he's feeling a similar thing, which is look at all these young pups who are

in their 20s that are starting a similar in business to him, that he did start his 20s, but they are in 20 million times further along than where we are a decade later. They did it in three years.

[0:43:38.3] AS: Yeah. You think, but they – in this article they talked about – people were like, “Well, what about Steve Jobs?” Yet, they said that Apple's most successful product ever and in its most profitable innovation, the iPhone didn't come out till Jobs was 52. Think about that. We think, “Oh, Steve Jobs was this young guy, all these people.”

[0:43:57.4] JB: Which you're only remembered for that, your peak a lot of times.

[0:44:00.5] AS: Yeah, yeah.

[0:44:01.7] JB: Not the 30 years prior that it took you to get there.

[0:44:06.1] AS: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

[0:44:07.6] JB: That's the stuff I want to know. What were the first 30 years? Tell me that. Tell me all the ups and downs of that.

[0:44:19.1] AS: Yeah, but I just want to – that's an example, I think Silicon Valley again praises youth all that stuff, but when you really look at the data, not the hype, it is middle age is where it's at. I was doing some research for this episode. Toni Morrison, she was 40 when her first book, *The Bluest Eye* were published in 1970. Then she was really 58 when she got the Pulitzer Prize for *Beloved*. Laura Ingalls Wilder, do you remember *Little House on the Prairie*?

[0:44:46.3] JB: Yeah.

[0:44:47.3] AS: Yeah. Guess how old she was when she created that series? She created the series, not the TV series, but she actually created the books.

[0:44:54.9] JB: The books. Yeah. I don't know, 50 something, I don't know.

[0:44:58.2] AS: 65.

[0:44:59.0] JB: What?

[0:44:59.9] AS: Yup.

[0:45:01.3] JB: That's you awesome.

[0:45:02.4] AS: Vera Wang?

[0:45:03.5] JB: Yes, the Vera Wang I know didn't start designing, or she – she didn't start designing until like 39.

[0:45:10.1] AS: Yeah, she started at 40. What's interesting is she was a competitive figure skater growing up in a journalist, but then she studied art history, worked at Vogue and then, and then she basically she worked for about flora and all these places, but it was until 40 that she entertained the idea of becoming a bridal designer. Then she had to grow the business, but all of her experiences, again we see this wisdom. If you really pay attention to what you're learning – Kathryn Bigelow, do you remember the movie The Hurt Locker?

[0:45:42.2] JB: Yeah.

[0:45:43.1] AS: Guess how old she was when she won the Academy Award for Best Picture and Best Director. Guess how old she was.

[0:45:48.2] JB: Well now I'm just going to go older. 72.

[0:45:50.8] AS: Okay. [Inaudible 0:45:51.4]. 57 years old.

[0:45:55.7] JB: Nice.

[0:45:56.7] AS: Yeah. Viola Davis. I mean, I love her. She went to Juilliard in New York, she debuted on Broadway, but guess how old it was until she really got the big movie role on the role – in the movie Doubt with Meryl Streep.

[0:46:11.0] JB: Late 40s?

[0:46:12.0] AS: Yup. 43–years–old, which again Hollywood tells you you're ancient at 20.

[0:46:16.9] CS: Yeah. Well, it depends on the role you're playing too with Hollywood, right?

[0:46:19.7] AS: Yeah, yeah, yeah. It was at 49 that she became the household name that she is with the series How to Get Away With Murder.

[0:46:28.5] JB: Damn, girl kept trekking along. You know what I mean? You've got to give someone credit for that, because when you know that that's what you love to do in your passion, you just keep trekking along, I think at a certain point, you do have to accept like I might never make it in this industry, but I love it and I'm passionate about it, so I'm going to continue doing it.

[0:46:48.6] AS: Yeah, because I like the work, exactly.

[0:46:50.2] JB: It can't be attached to the outcome at that point.

[0:46:52.9] AS: Exactly. I think aging gives you that. I was talking to a friend of mine over e-mail who's also about to turn 40 and we were saying how good we feel and we're like, "Why did it take us this long?" We blamed it on the patriarchy. We're like, "What if we felt this great about –" Because you can really become more unattached to the outcome, the wiser you get. It's like, "What if we felt this great when we were 10?" I can't even imagine.

Another, just a couple more people, Jane Lynch. Do you remember her from Glee?

[0:47:22.3] JB: Yeah.

[0:47:23.2] AS: Guess how old she was when she got the part as Sue Sylvester on Glee?

[0:47:27.8] JB: 46.

[0:47:29.1] AS: 51.

[0:47:30.1] JB: Wow.

[0:47:31.2] AS: Yeah. It was interesting. When I looked at a lot of the actresses who "peaked" later in life, they were so grateful for it, because they were like, "I would not have been able to handle the Hollywood scene and all of the things that are coming at you at a younger age."

[0:47:47.4] JB: You do see a lot of what happens to young people who are under the spotlight; a lot of drug addiction, a lot of burnout, a lot of mental health problems,

because it's so being that vulnerable and when you're at that age, it's really hard to handle all that success. Young stars, you see that happen a lot.

[0:48:09.7] AS: Totally. Oh, my God. So many. It's almost to the point that you wonder why people, like do they want their child to be in Hollywood, because it's a lot for a kid? Then the last one, although when we were chatting about this, you have some examples. Julia Child. Did you know that she didn't even learn to cook until she was 36?

[0:48:30.5] JB: That's amazing.

[0:48:32.1] AS: I know.

[0:48:33.7] JB: That gives me all the feels. I love that.

[0:48:38.0] AS: Then it was at 40 years old and she wanted to become a novelist. She wrote these plays and short stories. Again, novel writing, cooking, all artistic. She submitted the stories to The New Yorker, but they were never published. She moved to France in 1948 and then basically at 40 years old became a TV icon on the TV show, the French chef which aired on WGPH and then syndicated to 96 stations. How about that? She basically felt she failed and what did they say, when one door closes, another one opens. She entertained us, so she was like 90, I think, right?

[0:49:14.5] JB: Yeah.

[0:49:15.9] AS: What about you were telling me the owner of flywheel?

[0:49:19.4] JB: One of my mentors in life. I look up to her a lot, as I work for Flywheel Sports, which is an indoor cycling company and I think they have such an incredible product, but we considered Ruth Zukerman, she's considered the queen of spin, because she not only founded SoulCycle, but she also founded Flywheel, which are

the two biggest names in the indoor cycling industry. She didn't start SoulCycle until she was in her 40s and she didn't start Flywheel until she was in her 50s. Especially in the fitness industry, you think that you definitely aren't going to be creating an industry, or a workout regimen one that caters to so such young people at that age.

It took her years and years of perfecting her craft and figuring out her energy and her presence and what she wanted to do. Then she also had children and life happens. She kept doing her passion, which was fitness.

[0:50:22.6] AS: That makes me think about – I feel the spiritual lesson in my life is trusting timing. You sometimes have to – it's not the standard. Not everyone's going to have the same timing, right? Especially based on what your skill set and your gifts are. I think I'm also really comfortable with my age, because I'm the business of wisdom, right? You can only get wiser with age, hopefully. Do you believe in divine timing, or synchronicity, or –

[0:50:53.2] JB: I would like to believe in it. Yes.

[0:50:55.8] AS: Yeah, I think that's the answer I would say too.

[0:50:57.7] JB: I like to believe in it. Yeah. I do find that some things are just so weird timing-wise, that I'm like, there's got to be something driving this.

[0:51:06.9] AS: Yeah, I know. I know. Sometimes it's like – I mean, I love the Daodejing and it's like, nature never rushes, but everything gets done. I was like, "Oh, my God. That's so true." You think about nature. Again, nature is my spiritual compass and it's like, you can't rush the caterpillar turning the butterfly, or an oak tree that's going to be an oak tree takes that amount of time, a fly has a shorter life span. Do we each have these inner potential and we've just got a – I don't know. I feel like that's what I'm really taking – I'm owning who I am on my 40s, but surrendering my own timeline. It

doesn't mean they won't flare up, but I just get that I'm not in control of that. I can really get that.

[0:51:53.5] JB: You know what movie came on the other day and I love this movie. Yeah, he's a very controversial person and some people listening to this might be like, "I fucking hate that guy."

[0:52:03.9] AS: Who is it?

[0:52:05.5] JB: Private Parts, the movie about Howard Stern.

[0:52:08.2] AS: Oh, people don't like Howard Stern?

[0:52:10.5] JB: I think he's very controversial, because he's just – has had a lot of naked ladies and porn stars on his radio show. It's just like – I don't know, maybe some people might find him to be a misogynist. Just a different kind of humor, I guess. Just his trajectory of his career, just having been on the radio since he was 22-years-old and he's still doing it at 64. Just all the different things that he's gone through from starting just at his college and working his way up to different networks. Even throughout the years, things have shifted with radio and just staying relevant. I don't know, I just find those stories, because he's just put in that effort from 22 to 64.

[0:53:01.2] AS: Yeah. I think in our youth-obsessed culture and in an instant gratification culture with social media, all the stuff, we forget that your craft takes time.

[0:53:11.9] JB: Yeah, exactly.

[0:53:13.3] AS: That's whether your craft is parenting, whether your craft is your career, whether it's how to relate to people. Life just takes time to figure out. I mean, I think that's one thing that we can – that's the upside of aging. We really have all this

experience, and I think again, and we talked about this on the scale episode, but when we want meaning in our lives, we are in this unique time where everything is broken. The jobs that used to exist forever, the stability that used to exist forever just doesn't exist anymore.

We have this chance to look back at what have I accumulated, what have I learned, what's been the consistent themes, right? You could have changed jobs four times, but what did I always love doing, or my kids could have been all these different phases, but what do I really cherish about that? Then you can go contribute that to the world, because it needs it. I don't know. I don't know. I do know.

[0:54:13.0] JB: Yeah. Think about how old you are, forget about where you thought you should be, or where you think you should be at this age and think about the lessons in life more than what has to happen.

[0:54:32.0] AS: Yeah. I think also reframing rather than this chronological age, like what season of my life am I in, right? Because I think that helps us – I think back in my 30s and there were seasons of rest of wintertime. When I was running with Bob, it was just a really cold long winter. Then there were times of let's go out in the world at springtime, right? Then there were reflection times. I just think that puts us more in sync with our own natural rhythms more than using our age, I don't know.

[0:55:03.9] JB: Because that's a default, isn't that, don't you think? That's a default for all of us, because everything is unknown. It's like, I don't know. I don't trust myself. I know you do trust yourself, Ali. A lot of times we say things and it's just a default. I'm sorry, or I don't know. It's like, "No, you're not sorry. You do know." It's just the ego default. Well, so where are you right now, about to turn 40, what season – you said you're in this season of feeling you're savoring, so what does that look like for you?

[0:55:38.1] AS: Yeah. I feel I am in a season of – well, I mean, Carlos and I are really weighing – it's interesting. I feel I want to savor, but we're really contemplating the family question. Nature is really my guide and I had that miscarriage at 37, which we were – and we were more excited than we thought about being coming parents, because neither of us have ever been like, “We have to do that,” right? Part of me wants to do it like an Insatiable season all on the conversations I've had with so many people about to have kids, not to have kids, with people who thought about who have had them. It's such a big choice and it's one that you just can't prepare yourself for no matter what.

When we got this information just about my own hormones and having low egg reserve, because most likely because of chemo, maybe also because I'm 39, it just brought up a lot more questions, because I don't – I know everyone needs to decide, but I'm not doing IVF or anything. Again, my body is bringing a different biological age, probably than most people's because of what I've been through.

Part of me is in this like, I'm in a fall season, but part of me is also like, we need to decide are we ready to feel spring chickens? We're going to continue to try naturally, but if that doesn't work, do we want to put in the effort to adopt, or something like that? I feel a tension in seasons, but I'm taking an overall, like let things unfold type of way. I guess, that would be more fall reflective. How about you?

[0:57:08.1] JB: Which is my favorite season.

[0:57:10.2] AS: Me too. I'm also excited. I love fall so much.

[0:57:13.9] JB: Me too. It has so many nostalgia feelings for me that are positive and that just I don't know, summer for me is slow and not exciting. I know a lot of other people love the summer, because it's more time off, but I prefer – I just like to do and fall just feels, I know you're saying reflective. That's more winter for me, but for fall,

everything feels fresh and new and we're coming back to – it's the back to school, back to work, back to the hustle. I live for the hustle. I like the hustle.

[0:57:49.4] AS: Once you're packing them, I'm like, you're right, I do like that. That really is –

[0:57:52.8] JB: Energy. It's energy. I like that energy.

[0:57:55.8] AS: It's also a seasoned energy.

[0:57:57.7] JB: Yeah, and I love crisp air.

[0:57:59.8] AS: Me too. No humidity. I hate humidity, that's why I'm not a summer person.

[0:58:03.8] JB: I can smell the crisp air that I can feel and hear the crunchy leaves under my feet, the smell of the wet leaves mixed with the soil. Do you know what I'm talking about right now?

[0:58:16.0] AS: Oh, my God. In fact, I like describing so much better than I did.

[0:58:19.2] JB: Intoxicating for me.

[0:58:20.9] AS: I definitely in your fall season, not mine. I don't like mine anymore.

[0:58:27.3] JB: Yeah. Maybe because I grew up in upstate New York, where we just had the most gorgeous perfect falls, the quintessential golden leaves and being around mountains and stuff like that. It's ingrained in me that fall is just this amazing time of year. My birthday falls right on September 15th, the end of the summer into the fall. For me, going into 30, it's feeling a lot more sure of myself and less insecure. I think

that's for a lot of people who come out of their 20s, your 20s can be a very insecure scary time. Everything is new and you're figuring everything out and there's a lot of judgment on yourself.

[0:59:13.4] AS: Yeah, I joke, if you're not lost in your 20s, you're not doing it right, you know what I mean?

[0:59:18.9] JB: I do think about the going to – I just was nine years ago yesterday that I started at Unite Fitness. I was 20-years-old, almost 21-years-old and I think about just where I thought I needed to be at that age, and now if I met a 20-year-old, 21-year-old now and they talk to me that way, I would be like, “Oh, my God honey. Come here. I'm going to give you a hug. Don't worry. You're just discovering things.”

I think a lot of my drive for success at such an early age did come from the fact that I had to be on my own after my dad passed away. I was orphan at 16-years-old, which is really odd. I became an adult earlier than most people had to, and had an apartment and got a job and went to school. I do think I was a little bit older, maturity-wise at that age, but still carried around all those insecurities that someone in their early 20s does about, just being unsure of themselves, like where you fit into the world, if you're allowed to really take up space in the world.

At 30, I refused to have certain friends that aren't suiting me, or do certain things that don't suit me. I feel confident in being able to say no, or – I feel I'm coming into this next decade, I want to say, like a boss. That's how I feel.

[1:00:51.0] AS: I love it. I love it. Yeah, and I feel I'm just coming into owning what's unfolded, who I am. I mean, I'd still would have to work on it. There's an inner calm that I think I earned through my 30s, so I'm excited.

[1:01:07.0] JB: Yeah. I'm ready for the era of the next era of hustle, but without the frenetic anxiety that I had in my 20s.

[1:01:15.6] AS: Yes, yes, yes.

[1:01:17.2] JB: A more grounded hustle.

[1:01:19.1] AS: Yes, yes. Seriously, thank you for describing fall that way for people who are in that fall season, because that's exactly how I do feel about with my business is doing really well and I feel confident and what we're creating over here and how we're going to support people and yet, I still feel that energy of are we going to start a family? Are we not? I do feel there's new horizons, which is a part of fall that I love as well.

Time will unfold for all of us, if we're lucky. I do still think that aging is the chuck a lot about privilege on this podcast and I think aging is the ultimate privilege. I'm just grateful, because I know I always criticize America in this culture, but it is a freaking fun time to be alive in the sense that if you're creative and you want to make a contribution in any way possible, there's so much opportunity, right? Everything's broken and that's the upside, right?

[1:02:17.8] JB: Yes.

[1:02:19.9] AS: Wonderful. Well, thanks for this chat Juliet. This Insatiable episode is sponsored by my life-changing program, why am I eating this now. That's not an exaggeration. Session after session, clients tell me this program changed their life. Or in the case of Shelley who said, "I wish I could bottle this feeling up and give it to everyone." If you're tired of the on-off cycle, want food to stop being worth it in the moment, but not afterwards and you want to stop self-sabotaging with food, anytime you feel those tail emotions, this program is for you.

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[END OF INTERVIEW]

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