



# Top-tier MIDLIFE INSPO HEROES

It's hard to lose weight at any age, but as we get older it can feel near impossible. That's when these health and fitness gurus come into their own.

 **CHARIS TORRANCE**

## International

### Tim Spector

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Renowned genetic epidemiologist Professor Tim Spector has changed the way we talk about food and ageing. He is the author of several books, including *The Diet Myth* and *Identically Different*, in which he has emphasised the importance of the gut microbiome and

International



## Jillian Michaels

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**Website:** jillianmichaels.com

Jillian Michaels rose to fame as a fitness trainer on the reality show *The Biggest Loser*, and she's since become a household name. She is also an advocate for ageing well through diet and exercise.

Jillian believes that by working out just 30 minutes a day four times a week, you can slow down ageing. Comparing our bodies to a car, she says, 'When we eat right and train, our body is in "drive", as it's actively getting and staying healthy. When we eat right but don't train, or train but don't eat right, we are sort of in neutral – not rapidly accelerating our chance of disease, but not aggressively slowing ageing and working to prevent disease either.'

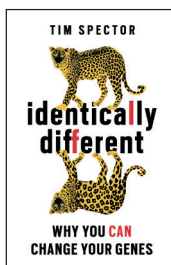
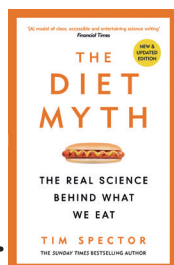
She has written several books on the topic, including *Slim for Life* and *The Master Your Metabolism Cookbook*, and has launched The Fitness App, a personalised health and fitness app to help people take charge of their health and wellbeing.



its role in human health. 'The gut microbiome holds the key to healthy ageing, both as an indicator of health and by its influence on the immune system and the body's natural repair mechanisms,' he says.

After suffering a mild stroke in his early 50s, he went from a relatively fit middle-aged man to a 'pill-popping, depressed stroke victim with high blood pressure'. He set out to research diets in order to avoid a relapse. Since then, his research has shown that diet, lifestyle and genetics influence gut health, and that a healthy gut microbiome is essential for overall health and

wellbeing. His key to warding off infections, combating age-related diseases and maintaining a healthy weight? A diversity of food choices. 'It's that diversity of gut microbes that gives you a diversity of chemicals and, we believe, a healthier immune system and a better metabolism.'



Follow their lead

International



## Halle Berry

**Instagram:** @halleberry

**Website:** re-spin.com

She doesn't need much of an introduction: Halle Berry is an actress who has won numerous awards, including an Academy Award for Best Actress. But lately we've all been obsessing about her commitment to fitness and healthy living. Halle has been vocal about her journey to achieving and maintaining a fit and healthy lifestyle, often sharing workout tips and videos on social media, including the occasional snap of her naked on a balcony. (Who can blame her? If we had that bod, we'd be naked all the time.) She has also been open about her struggles with diabetes and her efforts to manage the condition through keto and exercise. Her dedication to fitness is an inspiration to many, which is probably why FitOn app, a free digital fitness platform with workouts guided by celebrity trainers, wanted to work with her and her personal trainer. She has also launched Re-Spin by Halle Berry, a digital health, awareness and wellness community.

*'Age is just a number. It's up to us how we look throughout the ages.'*





## Dawn Jackson Blatner

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A registered dietician and author, Dawn Jackson Blatner is passionate about helping people live healthier lives. She's been a mainstay on the US TV circuit, emphasising the importance of balance and enjoyment in healthy eating habits.

When it comes to ageing, Dawn encourages people to focus on the positive aspects of getting older, such as gaining wisdom and experience, and to prioritise self-care practices like exercise and nourishing foods to maintain overall health and vitality. 'What you eat and drink can have a tremendous impact on how you look and feel,' she says. 'Eating healthy is important at any age, but as you get older, certain foods can have a powerful impact on your overall wellbeing.'



## Amanda Mbongwa

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When Amanda Mbongwa isn't busy managing her long-distance transport company Ulwandle *and* her active-lifestyle brand FitFanatic Activewear, she's off climbing mountains – the real and the figurative kind.

Her fitness journey started at uni when she was looking for an outlet: running became her passion. These days you can find her working up a sweat on a mountain somewhere. 'I do a lot of hiking. I love the endurance involved in climbing high peaks with my own two feet and about 70kg on my back; it's literally the coolest thing about being fit,' she says.

And when she's not conquering mountains, she's at the gym, boxing, or running. She also makes it a priority to help others reach their health and fitness goals. Her youth development programme Loskop Gijima, which started as a running club in the village where she grew up, helps young people discover their natural athletic talents.

Amanda's advice for those who are looking to get started on their fitness journey is simple: just start. 'The older we get, the more difficult it is to start something new and maintain it, but I'd urge anyone to start from a point of, "I love my body, therefore I am going to take better care of it. I love my life, therefore I will invest in being my healthiest self. I love my loved ones, therefore I will give them the gift of a healthy me."'



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South Africa



## Sally-Ann Creed

**Instagram:** @sallyann\_creed  
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Nutritional therapist Sally-Ann Creed is the queen of the local low-carb movement. For her, there's no greater sign of your love for your family and yourself than to serve whole, real food. In fact, she has authored 10 books on the importance of what we put into our bodies, and she's created one of SA's favourite ranges of health products.

When she was a child, Sally-Ann suffered tremendously from asthma and spent most of her formative years in bed or in hospital. As she got older, her health problems became worse. With the help of holistic medical doctor Robbie Simons, she took back her health and decided to help others do the same. She has made it her life's work to study nutrition and spread her message of health and wellness.

Sally-Ann says her secret to curbing cravings is protein. 'If you eat enough protein, you will never want to snack. That's first prize: no snacking at all, ever, if you want to remain slim.'

South Africa



## Rozanne McKenzie

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Rozanne McKenzie started training in 2011, when she was 29 and working on a TV show, travelling a lot and generally not taking care of herself. 'I felt sluggish and I didn't like how I looked, especially on screen, so I decided to make a change, and I've never looked back.' Today, the Jacaranda FM radio presenter somehow balances a career, time with her husband, mom duties and a regular workout routine. 'When you're busy, it can sometimes feel really difficult to find time to train, but mark it off in your calendar and don't miss that meeting with yourself, even if it's just moving for 10 or 15 minutes.'

'Run your own race,' she says. 'No one else is on the same path as you, so you don't need to compare yourself to anyone else.'

Follow their lead

South Africa



## Connie Ferguson

**Instagram:** @connie\_ferguson  
**TikTok:** @connie\_ferguson

She may be best known as Karabo Moroka from the local soap *Generations*, but fans have dubbed Connie Ferguson the Iron Queen after she showed off her six-pack on social media. At 56, Connie is looking better than ever – her not-so-well-kept secret is daily exercise. Embracing her grey, Connie says, 'Age is just a number. It's up to us how we look throughout the ages.'

As an actress, taking care of her body has always been a priority for her, but since losing her husband, Shona Ferguson, in 2021, Connie has found solace in the gym. 'Exercise is good for so many reasons, but the reason I commit even when I don't feel like it is because of its effect on my mental health!' She is a big fan of HIIT, skipping and Box Fit.

You might say gym-life runs in her blood, as her father, Fish Tuelo Masilo, a decorated karate sensei and boxer, will even hit the gym today at 86 years old.

We can't get enough of Connie's Instagram account (@iconniefit), where she documents her fitness journey and offers fitness goals every day.