

**Dotsie Bregel,
Founder and CEO of
The National Association of Baby Boomer Women
(NABBW)**



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**Achieving Ageless, Youthful, and
Modern Personal Style**

With

Sherrie Mathieson

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Achieving Ageless, Youthful, and Modern Personal Style

With
Sherrie Mathieson

Dotsie: Hello and welcome to the call.

For those of you who don't know me, I am **Dotsie Bregel**, and I'm founder of the **National Association of Baby Boomer Women** which can be found at www.NABBW.com and www.boomerwomenspeak.com which are the number one sites on major search engines for baby boomer women. I'm passionate about educating and empowering my generation of women who were born between 1946 and 1964.

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Let's get started. Today we have **Sherrie Mathieson**. She worked as an award winning costume designer for film and TV for 28 years. Now I'm going to mention here that the key word is costume designer, because that is different than working with the women and men on what they wear day in and day out, and Sherrie will tell you a little bit about that. She costumed many celebrities during the years including Susan Sarandon, Brooke Shields, Rita Wilson, Billy Joel's band, Sugar Ray Leonard, Lee Iacocca, Lena Horne, and many others. She's collaborated with top directors like Ridley Scott.

She began her private style consulting 14 years ago and today, she enjoys a diverse clientele that includes men and women around the country. She also travels to do seminars, and book signings, and even TV appearances including *The Today Show* and *The View* as the author of "**Forever Cool**" which is her book and it was published by Clarkson-Potter, 2007. They are a division of Random House. Her book provides amazing "makeovers" for real men and women over 50. And her sequel on style for boomer moms and their daughters is due out spring 2009. She received her education in New York City where she attended The Cooper Union, Parsons School of Design, and NYU. Today she

and her husband divide their time between CT, NYC, and Arizona. You can visit her at www.sherriemathieson.com.

And I've got to tell you that Sherrie is a member of the association so she sent us her book for review, and actually the review has not been done yet because we do them in the order in which they are received. So everyone has to wait their turn. But the title is "**Forever Cool**," and the subtitle is, "**How to Achieve Ageless, Youthful, and Modern Personal Style for Women and Men.**" I have to tell you that it is a very fun book to look at because almost every page has photographs of her models and they're all your pretty much typical boomer men and women, and she has a picture of them dressed as "*Never Cool*," and then another picture of them dressed opposite that photo as "*Forever Cool*." And it's just a real fun book to look through. In fact, we're getting ready to go to the beach with two other boomer families, and the three of us boomer couples are going to look through this book and just kind of laugh and joke, and have a good time because we've all been to black tie festivities together before; we've spent weeks at the beach, and we'd go out to dinner, and movies, and everything. So it's going to be a real hoot because I know we're going to see some of ourselves in the "*Never Cool*" pictures but hopefully, in some of the "*Forever Cool*" pictures. So anyway, I recommend her book and Sherrie are you on the call?

Sherrie: Yes I am.

Dotsie: Well good, I'm so happy to have you here; how are you today?

Sherrie: I'm great, thanks.

Dotsie: Good! Why don't you tell us a little bit about dressing people for success and the difference between costuming them.

Sherrie: Yes there are obviously different names you can call style consultants. Some of them are personal shoppers, per se, that many of us have seen going around with their clients within stores, and they just help people within that store, and are limited to that store. So the customer or client really needs to be aware of that because that is how that person earns their living. Then in terms of what I did, there was costume design and styling. Costume design is what a person does for theatre, or film, or TV, every often where just as it implies, a costume is involved, or certain something either from period to modern day that would help an actor with a role. And that is what I did for twenty-eight years in addition to some styling work, and high-fashion print work. So those are all under the same banner, so to speak, but a costume designer is a very specialized field which you have to be taking a test for and go through a lot in order to be able to do it legally. And then, I transitioned into what I do now which is what I termed *Style Consulting* which is really advice that I give on personal styles for men and for women of all ages, of all backgrounds, and I enjoy it tremendously. And it's a

wonderful off-shoot of costume design because in essence, I think we all are the major players in our own life's roles; so to speak.

Dotsie: Okay, very good. Alright what we're going to do is I'm going to kind of run some thoughts by you that you imply, and share in your book, and I'd just like for you to take it a little further for us, if you would. You mention that you should not be caught in the safety trap of buying clothes that cater to baby boomers. And your comment is that a lot of the fashions at these stores actually make you look older. So first, and I'm totally comfortable doing this, if you are. If you wouldn't mind telling us the stores that you believe cater to baby boomers because I know locally, we have *Chico's*, and we have *Cold Water Creek*, and we have *J. Jill*, and those are ones, in my mind, that cater to boomers. What other stores would you be talking about?

Sherrie: Well I would add one like "*Territory Ahead*," and I think that you just mentioned really major ones. Now there are subtexts ones like *Talbots*, which actually does a better job than the ones that you mentioned just now. And I think *Sigrid Olson* which just went out of business, also did a better job. But still, in my opinion, even Sigrid's store or *Talbots* are still ones that I would lead a much older client too; much, much older, and yet I see baby boomers in those stores, and I feel that is a mistake.

Dotsie: We're kind of in, I think, a difficult spot and actually I've written about this. I wrote an article called, "*Sell us something, please!*" because I spent some time at the mall one day, and I was there to buy gifts for others and also, a couple of new things for myself because I was going to a conference and I was also going to a 50th birthday party. I left the mall with gifts for everybody and nothing for myself. And basically, you know, the point of my article was boomer women have money to spend, so sell us something, for gosh sakes. We don't want to look like our daughters, we don't want things cut below our bellies and up to our boobs, and you know, but we want to look fashionable. And I know that while some people love *Cold Water Creek* and the other stores we mentioned, there are other people who still don't particularly like the elastic waist, or the longer lengths, or whatever it is. So what do we do? Where are boomers finding clothes?

Sherrie: Well and this has become part of my problem because a lot of boomers are my clients, and they're very concerned about this, and they want to look their best, and of course, I'm a boomer. Actually I'm on the late end of the boomerdom because I'm 62. So I've tried quite a few different things on myself and I've come to certain conclusions and of course, it all depends on your taste, of course, whether you're going to agree or not. But I believe that to segregate a segment of the population is a very, very difficult thing to do, to begin with, because the minute you do that, you're putting a certain guise, or a certain look on it which tends to be artificial. I'll give you an example. The jean jacket. Let's say if you find

a jean jacket just in Levis, it's a generic type; you know, it may be cut to the latest cut, but it's generic. If you go to the current *Liz Claiborne* or the current even *DKNY*, it's going to have certain things about it that become lady-like, and the minute you become lady-like, you look older.

So that's something that is a very visual kind of distinction that a lot of people haven't made yet, and haven't ascertained for themselves. I really believe that your core education has to come from classic clothes. And classic clothes really work no matter what age you are. In my new book, I'm going to show an 86-year old woman wearing a Levi jacket from *J. Crew* and looking absolutely amazing in it, just like her granddaughter who's about 29 years old. Just to give an example, one type of clothing that I consider classic, say a white shirt is another thing that is a classic. What a baby boomer or any of us should be looking for are say...that white shirt, in any line. I don't care in what store, that is very simple, in the best possible fabric you can find it; in the most current fit that works on you. And those are classic items that I just mentioned, and there are many; like a black skirt that goes to the knee, say, a kick and heel pump to go with that; a little cashmere sweater that might go around the shoulder. And there are a slew of accessories that you can find in all stores that will make your outfit look younger and hipper as you go along because that isn't so age distinctive. You know, you can—and I'll show this in my very next book—how you can very easily trade with your daughter all these accessory items. So what the boomers need to learn is to identify these classic pieces and that's what "**Forever Cool**" is really about.

Dotsie: Okay something that you mentioned while you were talking is "something that works on you." I think that's so important and if you don't mind, I'm going to interject here for a second and see if Janet is on the call. Janet, are you still there?

Janet: Yes, I'm still here.

Dotsie: Okay, Sherrie I hope you don't mind, but I believe that Janet will be able to add a little bit to this piece about *something that works on you*. Janet has a business. It's called, "**Fashion Fit Formula**," and what they do is they measure your body; I met Janet a conference we attended and she's also done a teleseminar for us that if you haven't listened to Sherrie, I hope you will, and anyone else on the call. But what she does and what her business does, is that they measure your body and then they give you a formula of what pieces work on you; the length you should have, the length your skirt should be, the length your Capri pants should be, the length your sleeves should be, the length of your necklace, whether it should be more of a choker or it should be longer. So do you want to just tell us a tiny little bit about that, and how the length of things really make a difference in what works for you.

Janet: Everybody's bone structure is different. We've done over 10,000 women, and we have not found two women to have the same bone measurement. That is

your structure of your body, and how much weight you gain or lose does not make any difference. Your need does not change the distance it is from the floor. Mathematically, according to your bone structure, you have four hemlines that will work for you; a mid-calf, right below the knee called the street-length; a mini, and a micro-mini for those that can still wear it. You have four perfect jacket lengths that are mathematically correct for you; a crop jacket which is near the waist, a hip jacket, a standard jacket like a blazer, and a three-quarter length jacket. You have two sleeve lengths; a three-quarter length that is perfect for you, and a short-sleeve that is perfect for you. And if you miss on the three-quarter, it just starts to make you look old, it's just mathematically correct. And there's a perfect neckline point and I say that's ideal for you.

As far as the necklace goes, if you have jewelry and things that don't fit that point, you will know what your absolutely mathematical best is. And your waist, very few people's waist falls where it mathematically should, so we show you, too, how to adjust the appearance of your waist. And then what happens when you put all of these things together, which is not really all that much, just your skirt, or your Capri length, or your short length, and your jacket or top if you're wearing your top on the outside, it would be worn to one of your jacket lengths; what happens is that you're in symmetry to your bone structure, and you're in symmetry to your body, and you visually loose ten to fifteen pounds.

Dotsie: Okay, very good, and I'm going to cut your off because this is Sherrie's call, but I think it's important to mention this because what looks good on us, and what works for us, really has a lot to do with the length of things. So I just wanted you to be able to share that and tell us your Web address.

Janet: www.fashionfitformula.com

Dotsie: Okay, let's go back to Sherrie. Now Sherrie, I'm sure you have a lot to say about lengths and I'd just like to know if you could add anything to that for the women on the call.

Sherrie: Well, I think that what we're really talking about here is proportion, and there is what we've just talk about, and that's mathematical, but there is so much more that goes into this which is purely visual and that a trained eye can assess pretty quickly if something fits or not. I do beg to differ to some extent that when a person gets wider, you know, with more mass on them, their clothes will spread out and the distances will be different, and the fit will be different, if they gain weight, or if they lose weight, with the same outfit.

So that is under the headline of "fit." And a person can see if things are pulling, they can see if something overtakes them. They can visually assess whether they even feel comfortable sometimes, within a very large jacket, or shoulders that are too big, etc. Fit is an important thing, but it's actually a pretty obvious thing without even any calculations if a person experiments enough with different

fits, and has the interest to do that. I think a lot of people are in a hurry and they don't reexamine themselves, and they don't reassess their wardrobes, and they don't try things on enough. And as a result, they don't get that educated eye.

Dotsie: Okay, one thing that I think is really important and something you've mentioned in your book too, is going thru and getting rid of things. Because I think a lot of us are pack rats, I don't care what generation you belong to. Some of us learned it from our parents who lived thru *The Depression*, and we just hate to get rid of certain items. Tell us how much is to be gained by just getting rid of something we haven't worn in x-amount of time, or something like that.

Sherrie: Well it gives you a certain peace of presence of mind, so to speak, when you walk into your closet, you can see actually, what is there that you can actually use. Because if you eliminate the things that you are not wearing, for, say over a year, segregate them, maybe into another closet and think about it, but don't keep it in the mainstream of the closet that you are using on a daily basis. Eventually, you'll be able to part with things, maybe slowly, but surely, but eventually you will. I even keep what my husband calls a little museum of things; things that remind me of the past, or whatever. My first dress I have; I have a wedding dress that I never used. I have things like that which are more sentimental. I have some beautiful items that I spent a lot of money and I was very upset that they went out of style, but I recognized that they did and I segregated them into another closet.

Dotsie: How about, and this is something I have seen a lot of boomer women doing; I live in a town in Towson, Maryland, pretty typical middle-class town. And every Friday night, we have this "*Feet on the Street*" gathering where they block off one of the streets in town and they have a band and everybody appears. And I have seen so many women that are boomers that whose clothes are too revealing, in my opinion, or they're tight. And I think there are some women who think that think, you know, if you've got it, flaunt it. Is that still true at our age?

Sherrie: I think those women are dressing for attention that they really long for; that they had maybe naturally when they were younger. And they're really having a hard time substituting other elements of life into their personality. Many women really hang onto the invisibility factor, where if men don't look at them, they feel less attractive, less desirable as human beings, let alone as women. And because they haven't substituted something else that needs to happen as you get older. I think, as I said, these women definitely are dressing for men because obviously you, as a woman, just told me your reaction which is similar to mine. I not only become a little uncomfortable; I almost feel a little like what's wrong with that woman that she doesn't realize that she doesn't look right; that maybe she still has great legs, but her skin gives her away, or maybe she has great hair but something else gives her away. It could be anything because we all have our good points, and we all have our not so good points. So moderation is so important, and learning what moderation is in terms of what you should reveal

and not, is critical as you age, because you could either fall onto the frumpy side where you cover yourself too much, or you can reveal too much, as you just said.

Dotsie: Okay, because I know one of your rules is not to be overly revealing, and not to wear the tight clothes, and I have to say that I see a lot of boomers doing it. Okay, let's move on to something else. Less is more. So we're saying don't overdo makeup, hair-styles, or jewelry. Kind of go for the naturalness and the femininity that is uncontrived. This actually kind of reminds me of the 60s, of how our generation was to kind of go natural. Do you want to talk a little bit about that?

Sherrie: Well yeah, in a way I mean it's not specifically for the 60s because we had other things, you know, like parting the hair in the middle, the over use of eyeliner, that kind of look. But what I'm talking about is a certain naturalness that really lends itself to a youthful appearance. Because when you think of it, when you were younger, you were able to be more natural. And naturalness is a very subliminal kind of effect that you have on others. It lends itself to a more feminine look. In other words, a woman that is too coiffed, or too made up, doesn't look accessible, she doesn't look vulnerable, she doesn't look youthful, as a result. She looks like you have to sort of skirt around her, in a way, like she's unable to do manual labor, like she's not active, like she's not energetic. And all those things to me, really make a woman look so much older.

By the way, we were talking about dating, actually, and as far as going out on a date with all of this jewelry and makeup, men don't really like that sort of thing. Ask any man and the last thing he is going to look at is your jewelry. Jewelry is really conversation for women. And for men, men really love a woman that they feel that they can touch; I mean that in a good way. So when her hair looks like something that will blow in the wind, I mean in *Terms of Endearment*, there was a very funny—I don't know if you saw the movie where Shirley MacLaine went out with Jack Nicholson in that car and her hair was blowing, and she was holding on for dear life because her hair do was going array, do you remember that?

Dotsie: I did see that movie twice and I loved that movie.

Sherrie: I mean this is a lesson in that, and that's what I'm talking about. A lot of women as they get older they begin to look, or try to look, too neat, too coiffed. Something should be a little askew, something should be a little off. It's actually very nice. In Europe, you see women looking much more natural, not all, I should qualify that—Mediterranean women, specifically Italian women, can be learned from, because they have a more natural air and they wear less makeup, just a well chosen thing here and there, the eyes, or the lips, and do the jewelry really well. This is all something that has to be studied and I'll get to that later.

Dotsie: Okay, we're about a half hour into the call. Let me see if anyone has a question for you before we move on to some other things, because we're going

to continue to talk about women a little bit but we're also going to touch on men a little bit, too. So does anyone have a question or comment to Sherrie at this point? No? Okay, then I think we're going to keep moving here. Also, with the not overdoing the makeup, and hairstyles, and jewelry, I have to agree there are some women who look like their hair is cement. And so basically, what you are saying is the energy, and you also mentioned being active, just...I guess what you are saying is it's better for that impression to come across than you know, you're just too stiff, too done up to have a good time, or something.

Sherrie: It's a good time in terms of life, a life of being an active and intelligent woman. And that's the aura that I want women to convey as they get older rather than trying too hard on any level whether it is the over-revealing clothes, or whether it's doing too much makeup, or hair, or any of those things. It shows that a woman is insecure, rather than secure.

Dotsie: Right. We interviewed Anne Kreamer who is the author of "Going Gray." Have you read that book?

Sherrie: Yes, I'm familiar with that one.

Dotsie: Okay. I wish I had known you then so we could have had you both on at the same time, because she went through a lot of experimentation on going gray and looking more natural and authentic, and it's also archived in the ***Member's Only*** page if anyone wants to listen to that. But you also mentioned nails, short and natural. Ah, I'm wearing pink on my nails! <insert laughter>. Tell me what you mean by that.

Sherrie: Okay. I believe that when your nails are short and natural, it also helps with that image of an active woman that can do things, but has a certain refinement to it. There's something about that air of vulnerability that I think is very, very attractive to human beings, that their not impervious. Not to say that occasionally you can't wear a color of lacquer of some sort. I have seen some wonderful, even high fashion looks that included a very dark blue, and even black, or what not, but as a general philosophy, I tell my clients for many reasons, the one I just mentioned with that the air of vulnerability and the look of an active woman, but also in terms of your clothes looking well always, no matter what you pick that day, will work with your outfit instead of clashing, which I frequently see, or chipped nails, which I frequently see. I think that if you keep your nails just beautifully groomed, you know...look at the close up sometimes of Martha Stewart's hands because she's on TV all the time, and this is a certain aesthetic and don't think they didn't think about it. They did think about it; that when her hands are in a close up, you see just really well-groomed, clear polish, always beautifully manicured hands.

Dotsie: Okay let's talk about fabric a little bit, and how important that is, and what are some good fabrics?

Sherrie: Well, there is a range of fabrics and no longer can I say that polyester is bad because “*Prada*” uses polyester quite a bit in a lot of their things, and I’m a big fan of that line. But when I say invest in quality fabrics, is that as you age, and your skin tone and your skin’s vibrancy has been diminished, you need fortification by your clothes. As time goes on, those clothes that say a teenage woman or man can wear, no longer will do it for you. Maybe not even because of the style, but because of the quality of the fabric. What it really means is, and going back to a classic white shirt, instead of picking a white shirt that is inexpensive, and looks it, go for the best that you can afford.

Dotsie: I can understand that because some of the cotton shirts are a lot thinner than they use to be. And it definitely looks better on a woman to have a cotton shirt that has a little more fabric to it.

Sherrie: Yes, some body, maybe a tint of a sheen, you know, a slight—it doesn’t mean a real sheen, but a certain quality to it that you can actually feel. And that’s why I encourage people to go into better stores sometime even if they can’t afford them, because it’s an education like going to a museum and seeing great art. But in those stores, you can feel the goods and compare them. So when you go into a store next time that you actually can afford, you’ll be much more selective.

Dotsie: Okay so fabric; what about color?

Sherrie: Well color; they use to have these “Color Me Beautiful,” and all this color formula. I’m not a big formula person. Personally, I’m not a formula person. I believe that you can see when a color is really great on you. A trained eye can see that. A lot of people look better for sure, in certain colors not because they’re a “summer” or “spring” or all this, this is all merchandising and has nothing to do—it’s a combination of your skin tone, and by the way, skin tone will change daily, especially on women. So that maybe one day, and I know this from my own self, there are days that I can put on black, and I can look pretty good. And other days, it completely washes me out. So there are days that I know I have to go for my favorite color like orange which will, if I’m not feeling so good, will always look great on me no matter what my skin tone is. But being a blonde, and light-eyed, and having a certain complexion, light complexion, I look great in that color and I see many women who do. I also see a lot of women who look in a lot of shades of green very well, like a citric green. It brings a lot of life into their face and sometimes it’s a redhead, a brunette, or even a dark-haired woman, but I think that it varies from woman to woman, very specifically on that day, and it’s a combination more of her hair and her skin, especially.

Dotsie: Okay. You talk about staying modern and knowing the latest trends. Can you share any of the latest trends for this fall with us?

Sherrie: Well one of my favorites is the equestrian look, or the classic look. It comes in, it goes—a lot of looks you’ll find, go in and out of our lives and the reason is a good one because they actually have some validity to them, and that’s why they come back. Things that have no validity will never come back. You know, like big hoop skirts from Lincoln’s day. They just don’t work anymore. You know what I’m saying. Those things will never come back. But from the thirties on, there are some very, worthwhile things that will resurface. Fur has come back in vogue. For a while, you know, people were getting pies slapped at them and egg yokes, if they wore furs, and a lot of designers have sworn off them, but certain designers like Michael Kor has some really beautiful pieces in fur if only just a piece around the neck, you know. Luxury fabrics, which is sort of questionable in these days where money is scarce for a lot of people, but a lot of lux kind of looks are coming back, a lot of the deconstruction is still around, you know, where clothes have no real structure, and I think that a lot of the looks from last year will go on, you know, the trend of the empire line persists, and it persists because it does something for—well, certainly younger women have embraced it. It lengthens the body. It’s the empire line all the way back to Napoleon’s era that all women wore at the time and now so many women embrace. And if you combine the empire with the flaired leg, you’re going to look as long as you possibly ever could.

Dotsie: I think there are a lot of boomer women who have tummies, and how about that waistline for women with a little bit of a stomach? I mean, do you think that is flattering?

Sherrie: Yeah, actually, it depends—that line, that empire style has come in many, many ways. And what the boomer has to do is pick out the style that is not overly youthful, because some of them are very risqué, and extremely youthful, and the stores that they’re shopping in are a clue. Like you should not go in to “*Forever 21*.” Though they say you should, you shouldn’t go into “*Forever 21*,” because that’s where you sixteen-year old daughter should be shopping. But there are stores like *J. Crew* that have done things with that kind of line, and there is also for the woman that has the expanding waistline, she can do certain tricks to the eye layering or go for *Eileen Fisher* clothes which have no structure, but are really quite modern always because they are very simple clothes, and really flatter just about any woman. And they try to embrace the younger set too, but really what they’re trying to do is corral in the boomer woman; which they should; because their clothes don’t make a huge demand on an expanding figure.

Dotsie: Okay, and tell us who that is again.

Sherrie: *Eileen Fisher*. Also, to add to that, if you can stand a little bit more structure, but they do come in larger sizes for sure, is the *Lauren Line* from *Ralph Lauren*. Also an excellent line. There again, I’m not saying that everything on their line is wonderful. I always take things case by case. I always examine the

line per season, and if I like certain things, I'll take my clients to see them if they are appropriate for the client, and if I think they will fit the client; not only in figure, but in their personality.

Dotsie: Okay, well let's talk about the boomer woman who's on a clothing budget, and might be able to afford one piece from an expensive line, but needs to shop other places for less expensive clothes. Do you have any stores that you recommend for a boomer woman on a budget who wants to be fashionable?

Sherrie: Absolutely and in the back of my "***Forever Cool***" book I have those "***Smart Shopping***" where I have little hangars next to the line that are not overly expensive, and the lines that are. And when I dress, or when I dress my own clients, or the ones that are not wealthy, I always mix. And I do exactly what you say. I try to bring in something every year that has real merit and might be quite expensive for them, for their budget. But it is a piece that will carry them thru the years. Very often it is a piece of accessory, or a cashmere sweater, something like that, or shoes. Because shoes, very often, shoes can take you from—I have shoes from twenty years ago that still work really well, in my closet; as well as bags, as well as necklaces, as well as bracelets. So all of those things really do a lot. Those could be the items that you might want to pick as the expensive items. But when I say that a store like *J. Crew* is a worthwhile store, I say that to people up to size 14. Within the walls of *J. Crew*, you can find a bounty of clothes that are not only extremely well-styled, they have pretty good quality, and I think they are classically oriented so they have longevity. And they can be mixed with so much. That is why I'm such a fan of *J. Crew*. And I'm a fan of sales which is another way of saying something that is less expensive. Because what you should really be doing also, is going again into expensive stores that you may not be able to afford, look at an item, tell a sales girl that you are interested in it, and tell her if it goes on sale, please, please, please, let me know. She will.

Dotsie: That's interesting. I've never even thought to do that.

Sherrie: Oh, I do that all the time.

Dotsie: Oh what a great idea!

Sherrie: That way you are ensuring you're also getting quality.

Dotsie: What about stores like *Target*? Do you recommend them for any type of clothing? Because there are people who can only afford *Target*... or others.

Sherrie: Yes, absolutely. *Target*, yes. *Isaac Mizrahi*, is...and actually he was just signed by *Liz Clairborne* and I think that is a very smart choice because he is a classicist that has a slightly fifties bend to his designs, so when he has his couture line, it had sort of a fifties look to it. And he had to close out the line for whatever reason, and he did very well, later on, as a TV host, as you know, and

he also had a movie called “*Unzipped*.” And he actually is a very talented guy with very good ideas and *Liz Clairborne* was failing as a line just like *Chico’s* line is not doing very well and in the same breath, *Sigrid Olson* went out. So it’s a troublesome area, needless to say. So they just hired him and he has been designing for *Target* for quite a few years now. And I love the things that he did because he makes them very simple. The simpler, the better. Not only is it better on the body because it is easier to accessorize, and just more flattering, but also it gives longevity to the way you can mix it with other pieces of clothing. So the fact that he has designed—he was a pioneer there, actually, and now they’ve gotten a few other additional designers.

Dotsie: Okay, so you do recommend shopping and buying at different other places. What about like *Marshall’s*, or *Ross Dress for Less*, that sells better quality clothes are less expensive price?

Sherrie: Well you have to have a very good eye. And again, the cue that I’ve giving you is classicism and simplicity, and so I’m urging you to hone your eyes. And not only through say, the pages of “***Forever Cool***,” but by shopping at really upscale stores, where you can feel and see the items that I’m talking about. Because once you go into those stores, I can’t say in a blanket statement that everything is going to be, in fact, most of it is *not* going to be really great. So you have to be able to judge and pluck out, what *is* great. And so I say that an educated consumer is the best kind of consumer. Once a slogan for a retail chain, they used to say that “an educated consumer is my best customer.” It’s so true actually, you know, when you think about it. We have to educate ourselves and that means we have to be interested enough to educate ourselves. I would like to see greater interest in doing that.

Dotsie: We really haven’t gotten to the men, but I will say that she does include men in her book and if you’re interested in learning some about men, I thought we would have more time but I don’t think we’re going to, you have to pick up a copy of this book, because it is just a fun book to look at. I think that you’ll see yourself, maybe you didn’t Sherrie, but I certainly saw myself on both sides of the page sometimes, and just saw like some of the things that were outdated that I wore at one time and hopefully, aren’t in my closet anymore, just different things like that. So it’s a really fun picture book also full of lots of good tips and ideas for dressing at midlife, and how to look our age really, which is something, that, I think, our generation is often fighting sometimes because we want to remain youthful. So how do we dress so that we look our age, but we still have a youthful look? And that why, I think, a lot of people are having a hard time finding clothes for our generation. I know that *The Gap* opened a chain, or a certain store, that was just for boomers and it ended up going out of business. I know that *Ann Taylor* I read was going to and then they changed their mind and were not going to do it. But there are stores out there that are trying to find the right clothes and offer the right clothes.

Sherrie: Well, *Ann Taylor*, I use on boomers all the time, I don't even know why they would need to. I just select the things that are right for the boomer.

Dotsie: Right and they have different—I know a lot of times with buying pants, some are cut too low, some are cut too high, but one thing that *Ann Taylor* has is and *Ann Taylor* loft has, are the different waistlines. And they have different names for them. So if you fit into the *Marisa*, then when the winter line comes out, you still fit into the *Marisa*. Anyway, let's just talk a little bit about denim. How about jeans? Because I know a lot of the people will spend more money on jeans because they might get a lot of wear out of them, or they might last longer, or whatever. I mean, are people still wearing jeans? And if so, what style?

Sherrie: Well people love jeans and the younger generation, well actually, when we were young, at least when I was young, they were popular. I mean this has been going on since the 50s, and they've become even more popular in the sense that now we can mix dresser items with the jeans and make them items we can go happily out to dinner with. But again, you have to know how to do it. The *Levi* line has been experimenting quite a bit. Recently there was an article I believe it was in the *Wall Street Journal*, about a new line they swear up and down will fit women perfectly. I read the article, and I couldn't believe the amount of experimentation that they went thru and I thought all they needed to do was call me! <Insert laughter> I would have told them what they needed to do. But actually, they really did a very, very, very, thorough job. But I recommend again, not only *Levi's* but *J. Crew* if you're up to a size 14, they also, thru their catalogue, have petites for particularly tall women, and they don't have the exceptionally low rise that many women are so, you know, against. And rightly so, because you sit down and you're half naked. You don't want that to happen. I'm not sure even much younger people should be doing that, but they do. So a boomer doing that really looks wrong.

But today, I think one of the directives I'd like to give them is to have a little stretch in it, is an excellent quality in terms of fit, a slight flare on the bottom. A dark jean is wonderful. I'm wearing a pair of dark jeans on the cover of my book. They almost look black as that picture was taken. But actually, you don't really see my jeans on the cover of my book, but I am, and the full picture exposed it. And I love them, and have quite a few pairs. I think whether you are slim or not, they're going to make you look even slimmer, and ideally, the top of your jeans should be right under where you belly button is, and sort of meeting the bottom of your hip bone, more or less. So in other words, when you sit, again, it won't reveal your naked skin at all. And those are the qualities that are going to be most flattering. You need several pairs. You need at least one pair for when you wear flats, and you need another pair for when you wear a heel.

Dotsie: And what about boots for this season?

Sherrie: Well boots for this season are coming every which way you can possibly imagine them, and of course, you want to be comfortable. A lot of my clients are not comfortable in a pointed toe even though it is very elongating, and I believe it's a wonderful look emanating from the 50s. But if you can't wear that, they have some wonderful round toed, and especially the riding boots I love, because again, I'm a classically-oriented person and I like to mix the classic with the high fashion. I believe that is the art of the mix; that is *forever cool*. When you know how to combine that which is vintage, that which is classic, that which is high fashion, and mix it all up, also even in price point, on your body at one time, you know you've gotten the hang of it. They have boots today that are very, very comfortable also because they have some rubber soles, so if you do a lot of walking, some of them have nice corrugated rubber soles which make life a lot—I know I do a lot of walking, so I always look for that. Especially on the streets of New York.

Dotsie: You know, we are running out of time here, but what I would like to know is if you had one piece of advice for a woman in the middle years, when it comes to dressing, what would that be?

Sherrie: Okay. You say when it comes to dressing, but I would like to go back a little to the first step that we all have to do. And that is we need that curiosity and that interest that will open our eyes now. I hope after this conversation, listening to it, a lot of the listeners will go to an airport, or to their local supermarket, and really observe how people look, and see what they're doing wrong. And also, see what they're doing right. That kind of observation around them, looking around them, getting the best magazines, for instance, helps also. If you get *Town and Country*, if you get *Vogue*, if you get *W*, magazines like that that really lift your esthetic. And I'm not saying you should buy the things that are in there, but they're going to lift your esthetic and give you a starting point. It's like in drawing, and I was educated in fine art, I had to learn draftsmanship. This is the first step before I can do the abstract, which is the fashion part. So you can compare that very well to dressing. You have to have a starting point, and a lot of people have skipped that starting point, and that's why they're making so many mistakes.

Dotsie: That—just observing, is such a good idea. And you know, I have to say that's one of the things that I really liked about your book, because it caused me to pay attention to these outfits that your models are wearing, and really look at them to see what it was they were wearing that either made them look, you know, I guess, as good as they can, and what made them look, not as good (not a nice way to say it). So I think that's a really good point to make. I just want to again, share Sherrie's Web address which is www.sherriemathieson.com and you'll be able to get a good feel for her book at her site, and you can also find her book on www.amazon.com, and I'll just see very quickly if anybody has a question for Sherrie before we end this call. So does anybody have a question for Sherrie at this time?

Caller No. 1: I have a question. I'm just wondering if you have any suggestions like about for workout wear, workout attire.

Sherrie: Oh absolutely. I start in the book from sports wear on to evening dress, just so you know as a point of reference you can see some pictures of some things that I absolutely love. And you hit upon something that is so important because our lives are becoming so casual. I know I, for one, stay sometimes in my workout outfit for the whole day. And I want them to be something that I can start at the gym with, and then end up maybe, you know, being seen for lunch with, or something, you know, meeting a friend, or whatever. I feel that sportswear, and you've just watch the Olympics, is one of the most underdeveloped areas of our lives right now, and can fulfill so much for boomers as well, because they have retired, and they want to become more casual.

I love *Nike* and my sources, and they have a catalog if you live some place that there isn't a *Nike* store, I don't know if you do. I love *Nike* and I mix it with other brands like *Puma*, I love *Puma* sneakers, for instance. I feel that they're young, and you know, if you don't need to workout and just walk, you can wear a *Puma* sneaker. If you need to workout, you wear a **Nike** sneaker. I love the *Adidas*, you know, 3-stripped pants. And then I'll put a *LaCoste* top with it, you know, a polo top, that you can put up the collar. If you're a boomer, you want to support your neck. You always want to frame your neck unless you're working out. Then, you know, wear your t-shirt, wear your tank, take it off, slip on the *LaCoste* when you leave, or wear a t-shirt or a tank with some kind of a great windbreaker jacket that so often *Nike* supplies. Some of the higher end lines like *Prada*, have some beautiful pieces that are investment pieces that you can have for the rest of your life. But every year, I peruse all of these lines. I look at what they have, and I make sure that not only do I pick up the best pieces for myself and my customers, but that I keep them in mind for future advice books, whatever, seminars, that I can demonstrate on women what this mix and match ideal would be.

Dotsie: Okay does that answer your question?

Caller No. 1: Yes, great. Thank you.

Dotsie: Okay good question. Very good question.

Sherrie: Yes, it was an excellent question.

Dotsie: One other quick question before we have to end the call and that is what about coats for this winter because I've seen that there are some different ideas out there. Like some really funky fabrics that are colorful and have pattern, as a coat. And then I've seen like the knit, long knit sweaters are coming back in style, and even some cape-type things. Can you comment on that?

Sherrie: I think that a woman should try to buy something, if it is her only coat, that really works with everything possible in her wardrobe that she needs for when she wears a coat. But you will need probably, more than one coat, so it is very, very difficult to say this is the coat, this is it forever. But I do feel that there should be some classicism to a coat. So if you're looking at something very funky, think twice, because does it go with the rest of your other outfits? If you can afford it, and you love it, and it looks great on you, and it's appropriate, why not? So it depends on your budget. It depends on your figure, and on so many other things. Don't just buy anything on the spur of the moment though. Really put some thought into it because this is something that has to go over things.

Dotsie: And especially, yeah, I was going to say, especially with a coat, yes. Give it consideration. That's a good point. Okay and one last question. What magazines do you like to look at that show women at midlife looking good in their clothes? And that's another thing I want to mention about your book. One of the things that I really liked about it was it's the first time I've seen so many people at midlife in print. Do you know what I'm saying? Because a majority of the magazines, of course other than *More* magazine, which I love, are really, a lot of the models are geared towards, you know, are just the younger kids. Any particular magazine that you really enjoy?

Sherrie: Well, you know, I mentioned, and I know a lot of people would say, what is she saying; *Town and Country* is kind of an upscale kind of magazine where I can't afford most of the things in its pages. But I love to look at the people because they are of all ages, and the looks are spectacular. And I get an educated eye out of it. I was that way since I was a child and my mother said why are you looking at *Vogue*, it has nothing to do with your life, she said to me. And I said, "But mommy, I'm educating myself." I remember that day, and now I'm 62 and I remember it, and that's why I advise my clients. It's nothing that I didn't do. I was not a wealthy child, and yet, I knew instinctively what I had to do in order to learn. And I think the biggest mistake people do is they avoid *Vogue*, and *Bazaar*, and *W* because they think, oh this has nothing to do with our lives, and we can't afford those things, so let me just buy *Woman's Day*. And *More* magazine, you know, I understand why you like it, but I still don't think it brings you up there. I think actually, Oprah's magazine does a pretty good job very often, but you know again, these are sort of blanket statements. I look at these magazines, like even *Real Simple* has some wonderful examples of affordable, and sometimes older women's clothes, I should say boomer's clothes. I think these magazines, and I spell it out also in the last pages of my "*Get Inspired*," not only in this book, "*Forever Cool*," but in my next book which is going to be called, "*Steal This Style*," the book about mothers and daughters. It will have a very nice section again about all the magazines, and even books that you might want to reference in order to get this education that I'm talking about.

Dotsie: Okay very good. So again it's observing, looking at what can work for you, and then trying to find that piece within your budget.

Sherrie: Exactly.

Dotsie: Okay, well I think we have definitely come to an end here Sherrie. I want to thank you so much for being on the call. I hope you all will visit us or visit Sherrie at www.sherriemathieson.com and also visit me at www.nabbw.com or www.boomerwomenspeak.com.

Sherrie: May I interject, one thing, my site is going to be renovated. So by the end of September, they should check in again because it's going to be a whole new site.

Dotsie: Okay, very good. Okay. Alright. And do you have a newsletter?

Sherrie: I will. I'll have quite a few added interactive possibilities with the new site.

Dotsie: Okay, sounds good. And thanks for being on the call and have a good night.

Sherrie: It was my pleasure, thanks Dotsie! Bye-bye.

Dotsie: Good night.