

BODYFIT WITH AIMEE

Aimee Parscale, I.A.F.S. Certified Nutritionist
[Specialized in Autoimmune Disorders & Gut Health & P.C.O.S]
Online Fitness Trainer • NPC Figure Competitor
Bodyfit with Aimee, LLC • www.aimeeparscale.com • 770-633-8257



LIVING FIT



Photo by Dan Moore photography @drmfoto

Living Fit is a way of life and as a sponsor of this exciting new section in our magazine, BodyFit with Aimee has taken her personal journey and turned it into a business that strives to help others find the success she has through transforming their lifestyle to become healthier and happier. We hope by sharing these two remarkable stories you'll be motivated to start your own journey to becoming your best self, plus look for the new SMG presents Living Fit digital monthly newsletter. You can subscribe to receive it at southernmuscleguide.com

My Personal Journey

I'm Aimee, I have a fitness and wellness company and am an NPC figure competitor. Ten years ago, I decided to take back my health. I was living a life full of headaches, soreness and fatigue. I was overworking myself and not giving my body the care it needed, putting myself on the back burner. I spent so many years not allowing myself to live my life to the best abilities and truly enjoy everything life had to offer. One day, I had enough. I was sitting in traffic and a friend I had met not long before was a personal trainer, so I called her and never looked back.

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Two years had gone by and suddenly, I felt my body take a turn and I noticed something was wrong. After years of trying to figure out what it was, I had finally gotten diagnosed with IC, Interstitial cystitis. I was consistently going into flare-ups and after doing lots of research, I cut out every food and supplement that would make it worse. It took many years of getting it right, but I have now been in remission for over 2 years. I still struggle with it, but I know so much more now and therefore can help many people. From the day I got diagnosed, from there on I knew I was changing my life for the better, no longer letting things get in the way of my journey towards a happier, healthier self.

There were countless times I thought, “I’m not going to make it”; or “This is too much.” But I knew that I needed to keep going. Nutrition truly wasn’t hard for me. Once I found



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“I ended up losing over 178 pounds.”

that putting the right foods in my body kept my energy up and I started to feel better internally, I didn't have any doubts. The gym was a bit harder as I'd spend many days getting sick, thinking I couldn't push any harder. Nevertheless, I kept pushing...getting better and better each day.

I began to fall in love with this new life. Fueling my body in ways I didn't know were possible, all while seeing the results I was aiming towards was such a surreal experience and I never wanted to stop. I always told myself, "I'm going to compete in a bodybuilding competition." I felt I had to dangle something in front of me so large, I couldn't fail. For eight years I worked towards my goal. I ended up losing over 178 pounds during that time and gaining more muscle than I had before. Then, in 2019 I walked out on that stage for the first time at the NPC Nashville Night of Champions. After the show, Lee Haney, 8x Mr. Olympia, reached out to me to get my I.A.F.S. Certification through him to grow my business. One month later, I had gotten my certification as a functional trainer.

By January 6, 2020, I had gotten my fitness company up and running. It has taken off and I have been incredibly blessed for almost two years now. I help lifestyle clients from all over the south. Seeing them change every month is such a beautiful thing; I just love watching everyday people thrive! I can truly say I love what I am doing and have so much passion for helping people achieve their best life!



Photos courtesy npcnewsonline

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After that night at NPC Nashville Night of Champions 2019, I had a new admiration for competitors and knew that this would not be my last time on stage. I love the hard work that goes behind the scenes to prepare for these days. The preparation and grind are like no other. I found that in doing these shows, my fire for the love of fitness only got bigger. I also found that my business grew exponentially every time I would compete. People loved seeing my dedication right up until I stepped on the stage and they were hooked, just as I was.

“ That's when I knew...hard things, they're worth it.”

I decided to compete again at NPC Masters Nationals held in October 2020. The difference between my first show and this one, was not only how much growth I had in a year, but my readiness to get on the stage was still there! I grew in confidence and it showed. I remained in prep to compete again at the NPC Clash of the Titanz in Atlanta, GA. I competed in 4 different categories. I received 1st place in the Transformation category, where I had my personal story read aloud and got a standing ovation. That's when I knew...hard things, they're worth it.

Since then, I have continued to push in the gym as I go through a bulking season. I am allowing myself the time to grow, because I know I will be stepping on stage again. I've gotten to meet so many competitors and just incredible people throughout this journey and I am just so grateful for an amazing community to lean on! For now, I am really investing my time into my wellness company, since lifestyle clients are my focus. I work with each client one-on-one each week online to help them achieve their goals mentally and physically. It's satisfying for them to see the change they can make and I'm all in to help them get there.

Even though getting to the stage was my personal goal, I realize that's not everyone's. That is why I created BodyFit with Aimee, my online personal training company. I've worked with over 100+ clients and they all have different goals, whether it be to look good on vacation, or to make a huge transformation in their life. I have encountered many people during this and one woman in particular has worked with me for over a year and a half now and she is outstanding. My friend and client, Chandra Menard, has lost over 70 pounds and 31 inches all around. Her dedication has never wavered and she has been all in, every single day, no matter what arises. Her transformation is truly incredible and I am so proud to call her my friend. She has allowed me to share her transformation and some insight as to how she has stayed the course and remained consistent.

Q&A With Chandra Menard

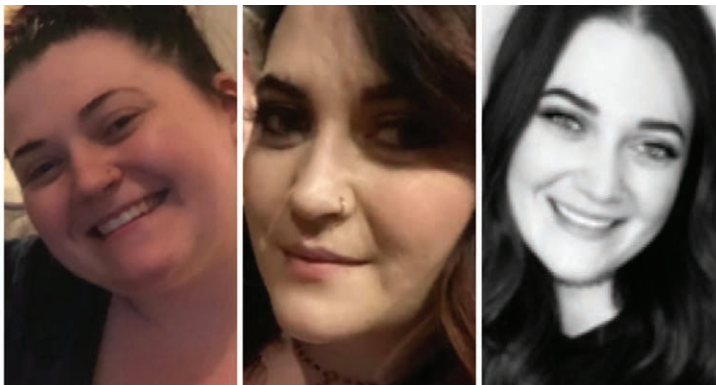
I had the opportunity to sit down with Chandra and discuss her journey through the past year and a half.

Q What was the deciding factor that helped you know it was time for a change? What has been the most significant change you have noticed since starting your journey?

A I was tired of looking in the mirror and hating what was looking back at me. I didn't even recognize myself sometimes and I knew I needed to change. I have gained so much confidence from changing the way I eat and what I do day to day. I know who I am now and I think that's the biggest thing with changing your lifestyle. It shows you who you really are and what you are capable of.

Q What have you learned in the last year and what were your struggles?"

A I have learned that I am stronger than I ever thought I was. I have the ability to do so many things that the old me would have never even tried. It's amazing what you are capable of if you just try and put your mind over matter. I think the biggest struggle for me is still feeling like I can always do better or more if I'm not losing as much weight as I think I should be, but really the biggest thing has been learning to love my body no matter what. This body has done so much and truly has so much potential. Learning to love yourself is hard, but it's something I'm constantly working at.



Q What is your advice to others that are looking to embrace a wellness lifestyle program with an online trainer? What is the question you get asked the most since you have taken the weight off?

A My advice for people looking to work with an online trainer would be to trust and listen to them and be honest about what you are doing on your end. There's always a reason for the way they adjust your numbers and even though you may not understand the "why" right away, you'll see the results if you stick to your plan. People always ask me, "What's your secret?" I always laugh and respond by saying there is none. There is so much that goes on behind the scenes that people don't see and that's the key to a lifestyle change. Being consistent and working with my trainer has helped me lose close to 70 pounds. No, it didn't happen overnight and it was tough, but that's what people don't see and I think that's important for people who want to lose weight in an attainable way to understand.

Q Do you feel that having an online nutrition and fitness coach was key in your weight loss success? If so, why?

A I absolutely could not have done my journey without Aimee. She is the reason for my success. Yes, there was a lot to do on my end, but she has kept me on track, been honest with me and made the adjustments where they were needed. Anytime I had self-doubt or got frustrated, she encouraged me to keep going and see where next week takes me, helping me plan small goals along the way and keeping things realistic.

Q Do you feel that your overall outlook on life has changed since embarking on this journey?

A My outlook on life has changed significantly. I now know my worth and I look at myself in a completely different light. I know I can push myself to goals that I used to not even think were in reach. I have a lot more faith in myself than I used to and I have more confidence than I have ever had before!

