

THE  
WARDROBE  
WAKEUP

Your Guide to  
Looking Fabulous  
at Any Age

LOIS JOY  
JOHNSON

Foreword by  
CHERYL  
TIEGS

Photography by  
MICHAEL  
WARING



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**To my BFFs, the girlfriends  
who have always been there  
for me 365 days a year, 24/7!**



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## Life Is a Dressy Occasion: How To Get It Right

**Once upon a time** I was a happy, healthy California girl with five dresses hanging in my closet . . . one for each day of the high school week. It fit my lifestyle and I was content. Then I got a phone call from *Glamour* magazine in New York. They booked me to go down to St. Thomas in the Virgin Islands for a photo shoot. So I took a light yellow dress from my closet and thought it would make the cut. When the group decided to go out to dinner and a nightclub I realized my wardrobe was sorely lacking. I will always be grateful to the other model on the job, Ali MacGraw, who opened her suitcase and threw dress after dress (each with the tags still on) across the room for me to wear. Her generosity was and will always be much appreciated.

That's when I realized I had to put some thought into my wardrobe. If I was going to travel the world and work in all kinds of different climates I had better be prepared. So I came up with a system that still works for me to this day. I decided what my core items would be: well-cut pants in different fabrics; one-of-a-kind silk shirts; T-shirts; tailored skirts and blazers; sweaters in subtle colors; coats; jackets; and coats. I always prefer to put on one outfit that will get me through the whole day and classic styles to offbeat zany ones. Coming up with a really successful offbeat look takes a lot of time, thought, and creativity, and unless you get it exactly right it usually comes out exactly wrong.

Whatever fashion imagination I have blossoms at night, when I put some real effort and ingenuity into the way I dress. I love the fantasy of evening clothes—shiny fabrics; satins; velvets; rhinestones; belts; and sexy, strappy sandals. One of my favorite outfits for evening is a pair of tight turquoise jeans that I wear with my brilliant purple faux fox fur.

I'm fortunate enough to have worked often with Lois Joy Johnson—you should be so lucky! She had the great instinct to intuit who I was and how I would feel comfortable. She wouldn't insist I wear a trendy look for a shoot. We would go through racks of clothes and decide which ones fit my personality. And the whole time we had fun and a lot of laughs!

Find a mentor for yourself. If you know a beautifully dressed woman, someone whose fashion sense you admire, watch what she wears, notice how she combines colors and fabrics, how she puts her clothes together, and how she uses jewelry, belts, and scarves to create her own style. You don't need to copy what she's wearing but be open to ideas and inspiration.

I could go on and on but I think it's time for you to turn the page and read. There is a treasure trove of inspiration in this book. Lois Joy Johnson has made sense of this wonderful wide world of fashion. Enjoy!

—Cheryl Tiegs



*Baby editor me on a beach shoot*



*On an NYC street shoot with Candace Bushnell*



*In LA at Jamie Lee Curtis shoot*



THE  
WARDROBE  
WAKEUP

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INTRODUCTION BY LOIS JOY JOHNSON

**After a certain age women and their clothes just don't get along anymore.**

The romance is over. The body you've dressed and shopped for has evolved but your wardrobe hasn't. Clothes and looks that made you feel sexier, more confident, successful, well-dressed, and put together in your twenties, thirties, and early forties suddenly don't do it for you anymore. Changes in weight, hormones, work, finances, lifestyle, attitudes, opinions, and needs have had a major impact on your closet and style.



*Taken by Francesco Scavullo in 1985: Me with Brunette curls and cowl-neck cashmere*

As a top fashion editor (and one of the founding editors of *MORE* magazine, where I was beauty and fashion director from 1998 to 2008), I've spent twenty plus years working with thousands of models, readers and A-list models and celebrities to redefine how women dress after forty. I've also interviewed and photographed hundreds of women who changed forever the way we dress, shop, and think about clothes, including Diane Keaton, Diane von Furstenberg, Cheryl Tiegs, and Lauren Hutton. Like you, I've griped about age, sag, flab, the high price of good clothes, the things I can't wear

anymore, and those that I do.

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*Me watching a model on set*



*With Lauren Hutton*



*Me on bed arranging designer Adrienne Vittadini for a shot*



*At the studio at the end of a shoot*

**The Wardrobe Wakeup** is a realistic, honest fashion guide that crunches all my experience and knowledge into practical lessons and tips. You'll learn hundreds of body-enhancing, style-boosting, closet-reviving, money-saving tricks—straight from a fashion editor's mouth. It will give you the practical, chic strategies that do work for your everyday life starting right now.

In this book you'll also meet eighteen extraordinary women that are highlighted throughout—each remarkable in her own way and a fashion pro in her own right. All have survived trends, fads of the minute, weight changes, husbands, jobs, grown-up kids, and life's little lemons with wit and style. Find yourself in them, or maybe like me you'll be a combo.



*On South Beach shoot in Miami*



*Me in my office at work*



*Me in gold Dior dress at a gala in NYC with chums Rosanna Arquette, Charla Krupp, and Sandy Linter*



# Use this book three ways.

## 1

If you want more style and flattery from your same old clothes—without having to buy a thing (okay, maybe one or two things, but honestly that's it!). The tricks I relied on as a fashion editor can update everything in your closet, de-age your look, and slim you down. For some women this is good enough. You'll learn to layer like a stylist, mix prints and colors like top designers do, and restore "lazy" clothes to activewear again. Find out exactly which sweaters, pants, skirts, and tops are the only ones worth keeping before you let them go.

## 2

If you want to look contemporary but not silly, spend less but look better, and dress for comfort without giving up on fashion. I'm going to let you in on the pro secrets to wearing leggings and jeans, how to really tie a scarf and a pareo, the one best pant style to buy, how to make low-cost clothes look like couture, how to give up stilettos and tight or skin-revealing clothes without losing your shape or sex appeal, why dresses and prints are always the best bets, the cheap deals to never pass up again, and where to find smart fashion now.

## 3

If you're starting over after a major lifestyle transition, financial change, job loss, weight change, or divorce. I'll tell you what to wear for the job interview when the competition is age thirty-five, how to dress when dating a much younger or much older man, or if you're going back to college. Find out how to look slim and stylish for a college reunion or your second wedding. Learn when to wear sheer pantyhose and when to go barelegged, what to wear on a cruise, a long road trip, to your kid's engagement party or when you finally meet his ex and family. You'll look fresher, hipper, and hotter than

ever and your clothes will, too.

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**SAME OLD  
CLOTHES,  
10X MORE  
STYLE!**

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## Clothes are a necessity, fashion is an option, and style is your choice

Whether your very chic satchel bag is a \$59 faux leather bargain from Target, a \$398 leather class from Coach, or a \$1,950 pebbled leather splurge from Salvatore Ferragamo, you control the purse strings for trillions of dollars and most of the financial wealth in the U.S. As babes-of-a-certain-age, we're the largest, richest, smartest segment of the population, with more spending clout than any other group. In fact, we're the real wizards behind the Oz-es of the fashion industry. We've "made" designers, set trends, and practically invented the dress-down look everyone now calls "lifestyle clothes." We're informed, opinionated, and super-savvy about sales and bargains. We know our H&M from our Hermès, our Gap from our Gucci, and our Banana Republic from our Burberry. But when it comes to clothes, our relationship goes way beyond money, trends, and the runway—it's emotional. We used to dress to fit in, stand out, or move up. Now we dress only for ourselves . . . at least that's our line and we're sticking to it!



## Here's the real backstory

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Your closet, like mine, is probably a compilation of past and present, designer labels and cheap finds, good buys and bad choices, sweet memories of good times and some difficult ones too. And you probably have more stuff than you really need.

**We all have keepers—the clothes that were our allies.** They made us feel fashionable, sexy, thin, comfortable, confident, successful, well-dressed, and/or put-together. They helped us juggle kids and careers, relationships and schedules, hormones and diets, and we're so grateful they did. We owe them.



## Question & Answer



**Q:** No new clothes?  
What's YOUR reason?

**A:** Guilt. Money. New priorities. Fashion's gotten too hard to deal with. Some of us refuse to buy new clothes. We're done . . . at least for now.

The reasons are diverse. New financial concerns or business projects come first. Passions like travel, gardening, and home renovation are getting more of our attention. Social consciousness and environmental concerns make us want to minimize the clutter, even in our closets. Lots of women feel they have enough clothes and don't have a need to buy more of the same. Major lifestyle switches or work changes for many have brought lifetime shopping habits to a screeching halt. Some women say fashion itself is to blame. They think it's gotten too young, too hard-to-wear, too trendy, or just too expensive.

One thing's for sure: our bodies change, sag, and shift whether our weight goes up, down, or stays the same. Yet many of us say we're in the best shape of our lives and appreciate or at least accept our bodies more. We eat healthier, work out, feel stronger, energized, and more toned. We're more in control of the way we look than we were at 25. This is a huge influence on what we buy and wear.

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## What a wardrobe shake-up can do for you now

This chapter is a friendly fashion intervention for grown-up women with a past. It's devoted to those of us with new lives, evolving bodies, fresh attitudes, and the same old clothes. Stay the course because fashion is 50 percent clothes and 50 percent hocus-pocus.

**Styling tricks make clothes work, not the clothes themselves.**

We all benefit from a little deception and cheating. Illusion is part of every fashion photo or story you display you see. It's behind every well-dressed woman on the street or magazine ad, and shimmering beneath every runway show. The job of a good fashion editor or stylist is to make anything—no matter how boring, baggy, cheap, weirdly colored, oddly patterned, or unappealing—look great, desirable, and most of all wearable. Simply by manipulating color and proportion you can update, slim down, and get more versatility from your same clothes. Don't let them sit in the closet.



We're not our mothers (in truth we're not even like our old selves ten years ago). We don't buy clothes for perpetuity. I've given up minis, chunky sweaters, and big dangly earrings forever. You turn!

**Remember: If you don't wear it, it doesn't count.**

**Me too! Same thing!** A few years ago my whole life changed. I went from a glam big-city magazine career to working from home as a freelance editor/columnist/author. My new daily routine in the suburbs did not require fresh pairs of Manolos and seasonal updates of designer duds. Jeans, ballet flats, boots, and layers of tees under sweaters became my new year-round "uniform." This was huge. I'd put in decades as a fashion editor, sitting front row at major fashion shows. My days were a

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