

Step 1: Emotions/stats - MP3-2 Audio Transcript

Hello again!

I invite you to take a look at the image showing there are 13million women (in the UK) currently in the age group going through menopause - you may see other published stats that are lower than this number but they usually reflect women working up to the age of 60 or 65 and working women at the upper end of the scale drop off significantly and this, of course, lowers the overall number that will be shown in those stats. For the purposes of this illustration, the numbers I use here are women age 45 - 55.

7:10 women experience debilitating symptoms and are unprepared!

13 million women currently going through Menopause



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Now, 13million is a HUGE number - luckily 25% of them will sail through menopause without experiencing very many symptoms or challenges at all; until, with your new found knowledge, or if they attend any of my talks and these symptoms are discussed, all of a sudden they will connect with many more symptoms than they thought possible ;)

So that's the minority but the MAJORITY, that is 75% will experience a variety of debilitating symptoms, to a greater or lesser degree, the most common of which are:

- Lack of concentration - resulting in under-performance (which could become a disciplinary issue)
- Feeling one degree under
- Hot flushes
- Sweating - hot flushes and sweating seem to have more of an adverse effect for women working in operations call centres, teachers, nurses - in other words, those people who can't 'change' what they are doing. They may be stuck in one room and

it's not acceptable to take yourself out of that situation and we will talk about this later.

But think about it, this is a HUGE number of women - over 9million in the UK that experience the debilitating effects of menopause and with a rising, ageing population. Menopause is NOT a minority issue, in any way, shape or form. And, is it any wonder that employers are now feeling they have an itch they can't scratch because they don't understand it - it's call menopause!

Who'd be a Woman, eh?

- "I thought I was dying"
- "I'm so tired all the time"
- "There are some symptoms just too embarrassing to talk about"
- "If asked what I felt, I would say I had stopped living; nothing brings me pleasure, everything brings me endless sorrow"



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Continuing with the Emotional theme, I invite you to look at the next image showing four common, I was going to say complaints but they're not complaining they're stating facts; the one that does it for me every time is the last one, 'if asked what I felt, I would say I had stopped living: nothing brings me pleasure, everything brings me endless sorrow.' Gosh! That's enough to get you reaching for the Kleenex, isn't it. In fact when I read this, I burst into tears because this is how I was feeling at the time and it is not an uncommon emotional state to be in.

I took this phrase from an autobiography written by Sofia Tolstoy, wife of Leon, the author of War and Peace and other great works of literature. I think it was called 'The Diaries of Sofia Tolstoy' and I thought it was out of print but I found it on Amazon recently as someone asked me where I could get it. But anyway, allow me to take the time to tell you a little bit about these diaries... Sofia Tolstoy was an educated woman, the daughter of a solicitor and she hand-wrote the transcripts of all Leon's great works (no computers!!). She gave birth to 14 children, seven of whom did not survive childhood. She, of course, remembered all their names and birthdays and although common at the time, end of the 19th beginning of 20th centuries, it is always a tragedy to lose a child, never mind many children, in any circumstances. You can imagine her state of mind.

Later on, in her early 50's, Sofia recognised she was going through 'the change', menopause, and had doctors at her beck and call, which she dismissed as she knew they didn't really understand what was really happening. She described her own depression; no surprise when you consider the loss of seven children. Depression, for her re-emerged as she was going through menopause (again, a miss-diagnosis? In my view this was triggered by hormones and not a mental health problem). I know all this now because this is what I felt. I felt isolated from the world - I felt I had stopped living. I couldn't explain it, I didn't know the cause and I certainly didn't know what to do about it. I know all this now because I'm talking to academics in the worlds of psychiatry and gynaecology - if only they'd get together on this...

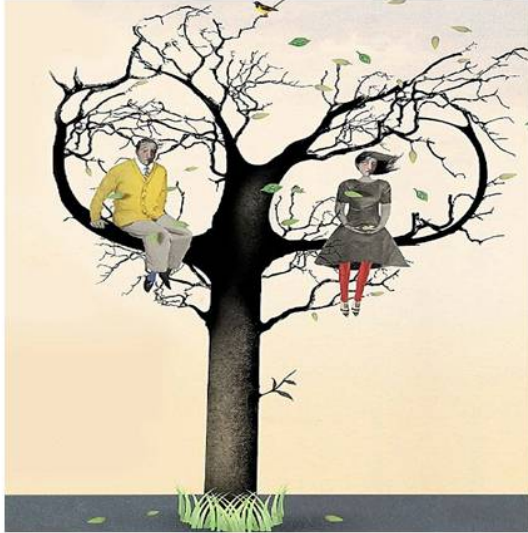
For me, when I got the diagnosis, I was referred to a Psychiatrist - now that's scary. I'd been told I had a mental illness and I needed mind-numbing drugs for then next two years to help me through this (oh, and don't forget another two years after that to be weaned off the drugs...). I declined. It was not a road I wanted to go down. I asked what else there was for me and it was suggested I try CBT - cognitive behavioural therapy. I didn't understand it, at first, but it did help. It's a talking therapy, peeling back the onionskins of my life, right back to childhood.

As a result of my continued research and questioning the status quo, I also know that hypnotherapy also works, in fact it can work faster than the two years I was in therapy. CBT was also very painful, emotionally, for me. Digging up the past is not something we would normally volunteer to do but it did allow me to lay some ghosts, understand myself more and I even started analysing my husband about his childhood and could see why he thought the way he did and acted the way he sometimes does. It all made more sense.

I do recommend a talking therapy - talk to therapists before you take the plunge, in order to find out not only what suits you but also finding the therapist that suits your personality; don't just accept someone who is recommended to you, find out about them first.

I encourage you to make some notes here, ready to add to the Q&A section at the end of this module. Do you know anyone under your care who you think may benefit from this type of therapy? It's also good for couples.

Relationships Suffer!



- I'm scared!
- *Symptoms are so distressing*
 - *I cry at the drop of a hat*
 - *I'm shouting all the time!*
- My marriage is going down the pan!

SOLUTION:

- *I need someone to talk to who understands what I'm going through*

These comments are very common

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Take a look at the image here about relationships - I found this image on Google and to me it really shows the isolation that people feel when they experience a breakdown in personal relationships. The last item, 'I need someone to talk to who understands what I'm going through' is really profound. Many women say this to me and of course I now provide a personal telephone consultation to discuss these issues. It is important to talk - do find a good person to talk to, or recommend staff to do this, and TALK

Emotions are a big subject and we cover it a little more in the next section, so, let's move on and get to know more about symptoms of menopause.