

How can you create calm in your life?

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Midlife is a time when everything seems to happen at once to women: if you have children they may be in the middle of exams, leaving home for work or university, there may be a role-reversal with your parents so you look after them more, you may have more responsibility at work or be looking for a different kind of work, and in the midst of all of this there is the menopause.

So many women I coach feel pulled in different directions. There is evidence that stress can exacerbate your menopausal symptoms too. So, what can you do about it?

Here's how you can take control and create some calm.

Emotional wellbeing

What's dragging you down? Write it down. Which of these can you change? And how? The first rule of coaching is you can't change anyone else, only yourself. There may be things going on in your life which make you unhappy or stressed. For whatever reason, you may not be able to change those at the moment. But you can always change your mindset. It's about attitude.

Changing your mindset

We all know 'glass half full and glass half empty' people. But did you know you can change your mindset to anything in your life? We are all subject to emotions – and especially fluctuating emotions during the menopause. But, and this may surprise you, we can control these. Imagine you are faced with a situation. It has the potential to make you angry, sad, anxious, happy or stressed. What if you could choose what you'd like to feel? Well, to an extent, you can. If something is making you angry, you can choose not to let it. You can let that feeling go and replace it with another, like acceptance or forgiveness. If something makes you worry or feel anxious, accept that emotion then let it pass. Replace it with a memory of something calming. Try changing your thoughts like this and it'll become easier. Put yourself in charge of your thoughts, rather than allowing them to control you.

What gives you a lift? Write it down. How many of these can you experience today? We all have our own stress-relievers. Try to carve out some time for yourself in your day, even if it's just half an hour. You might want to read, > ...



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listen to music, visit an exhibition, chat to a friend, take some time to pamper yourself, stretch or do yoga. If you are stuck, why not focus on the five senses? Slow everything down around you and – to use that cliché- ‘smell the coffee’. What can you smell, see, hear, touch and taste? Releasing stress can come from really engaging with your senses in the moment. If you can manage a walk outside, away from the bustle of a busy street, use all your senses to engage with your environment.

Physical wellbeing

It can be hard to keep on top of your physical wellbeing if you are tired and not sleeping properly. Having a healthy lifestyle can help your symptoms.

As a life audit, how about looking at your own nutrition and exercise? Some of your inner calm may be battling with the highs and lows created by your diet. Food certainly influences hormones, as this latest research shows how some foods may even influence the timing of the menopause. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-43948399#>

You can get an energy rush from anything with sugar in it, but the downside is that when your blood sugar levels crash, you'll feel tired. It's at this point that you need to

resist reaching for another biscuit to make you feel better! Constantly drip-feeding your body with sugar can, in time, cause insulin resistance.

You may want to experiment with reducing caffeine, alcohol and sugar to help your mood swings in your search for some calm.

If you want to explore working on your own mindset, using methods like CBT, a couple of classic self-help books are:

- **Mind over Mood**
- **Cognitive Behaviour for Dummies**

If you put any of this into practise and feel like sharing your success with other readers, I'd love to hear from you (and you can be anon.) If you'd like to suggest topics for future blogs, drop me a line via my website. www.glyniskozmacoaching.com

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