

# Menopause matters



April 2018

Spring is a time of re-birth. As I look out of my window now, I am amazed at how much colour is in the garden, considering the harsh winter we've had. The bulbs have pushed their way through, the blossom is starting to form on the trees and everything's looking green and lush.

You might wonder what this has to do with the menopause or life coaching. For many women, the menopause can seem to be the end of something; fertility certainly, which may bring a certain sadness. If your identity has been bound up with being a home maker, you may feel redundant and your self-esteem may take a nose-dive. The empty nest syndrome does exist and it can be hard to adjust. But rather than thinking about what you have lost, think of this as a time to re-invent yourself.

If your self-esteem is low or you lack confidence to try new things, start by giving yourself some praise.

## This is an exercise I always do with my clients

Write down ten good things about yourself which you value. Start with 'I am...' If you are like many of the women I coach, you might struggle. I've had clients unable to think of one, let alone ten. To get started, think about day to day life: I'm a loyal friend, a caring daughter, dependable, a great cook, patient, intelligent, a good gardener, a reliable employee, a savvy business woman, a loving mum....'

Get the idea? Okay, I'll let you off if you can't get to ten, but I want at least five on your list. Why do this? Because it's so easy never to give yourself credit for who you are. If your self esteem is low, I suggest you choose one from your list, write it on a post-it and pop it where you see it every day. It could be on your pc screen, the fridge, a mirror, your wardrobe door- you get the idea. Every few days, choose a new one and work your way through your list.

## You don't have to be invisible

Midlife can be a time when many women feel invisible. But it doesn't have to be. Looking good is part of feeling good about yourself. Obviously, keeping healthy and not allowing your weight to creep up is essential but if you have lost your way with your clothes or hair, maybe set aside some time to invest in yourself. I keep coming back to the idea of spring and re-birth; this is a time of your life when you can

# Now is the time to re-invent yourself Regain your sparkle



spend some time on yourself. Boosting your confidence and self-esteem doesn't have to be expensive. But how about setting time aside once a week to do something just for you? It could be using a personal stylist in a department store, to give you ideas to update your clothes. Or, how about a free make-up makeover? There are some great brands around now which specialise in the subtle no-make-up look so you won't come out looking like a clown. A small change like a lipstick that really suits you, a new haircut or a great pair of jeans can give your confidence a real boost if you have lost your way or feel 'frumpy'.

## Set your goal

Coaching always ends with a goal. What's yours for this month? What are you willing to commit to, to raise your self-esteem? If we continue the theme of spring being a time of regeneration, what's on your list? As a coach, it's never my role to choose clients' goals. But as you are reading, you might like to consider any of these:

- *Focusing on who you are and your strengths*
- *Trying something new – maybe travelling or visiting somewhere.*
- *Investing time in feeling and looking good. Anything from a Pilates or yoga DVD in your lounge, to a class, a new hair cut, cosmetics, or a pampering session.*
- *Your personal growth: learn something new, whether it's at home, or going to a class or workshop. The online site [www.futurelearn.com](http://www.futurelearn.com) has some lovely bitesize short courses that are free.*

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