

Hey there, beautiful! 🌸 Before you dive in, a quick heads-up: this transcript is a super close-to-verbatim buddy from our podcast, but it's got its quirks! We didn't call the grammar cops on it, so you might bump into a typo or two. But hey, that just adds character, right? 😊 Embrace the wild side of language and enjoy the read! Happy exploring! 🚀



# Menopause: Defeating Depression Beyond Hot Flashes

## The Hidden Challenge of Menopause

**Carmen Hecox:** Stop scrolling! What if I told you that menopause brings more than just hot flashes - it might also carry a hidden sneaky challenge that could catch you off guard? Yes, I'm talking about depression. Intrigued? Good, because today, we're diving deep into why menopause can feel like an emotional undercover mission and how to come out on top. Don't miss out - this episode could be a game changer for how you experience midlife!

**Carmen Hecox:** Hello and welcome back to Create the Best Me. I am your host, Carmen Hecox. If you're tuning in for the first time, fantastic, you picked the right episode.

## Unveiling Depression in Menopause

**Carmen Hecox:** Today, we're peeling back the curtains on the topic that many shy away but is crucial to discuss depression during and after menopause. We're here to break down the stigmas, shed light on the shadow and empower you through this transition. So, let's get started and turn insights into action!

## The Emotional Landscape of Menopause

**Carmen Hecox:** Menopause marks a significant shift, not just for your body, but your entire life's landscape. Here's what contributes to the emotional challenges that can lead to depression.

Reflection on life's regrets and missed opportunities. This phase often acts as a milestone, prompting reflection on past decades. It's like flipping through a mental scrapbook we're not All memories feel fulfilling. You might stumble across chapters filled with "what ifs" and "if only" that provoke feelings of regret and thoughts about different choices you could have made.

The loneliness echo chamber. As life progresses, social structures often change. Children leave home, retirement looms, and the social network you once relied on might not be as readily available. This can create an echo chamber of loneliness, where the silence of the house amplifies the soulless, making you feel disconnected and unsupported. The daunting prospect of aging, facing aging is confronting the inevitable change in physical appearance, health, and societal roles. In a culture that celebrates youth, finding value and beauty in an aging self can be tough. This confrontation can lead to a crisis of confidence, ignite fears and uncertainties about what lies ahead.

As we delve deeper into understanding depression during menopause, it's crucial to recognize that it can manifest in ways that are often unique to this life stage and can easily be misinterpreted or overlooked. These aren't just run of the mill symptoms; they're specific nuances that reflect the complex interplay of hormonal changes, life transition, and emotional upheavals typical to this phase.

## Identifying Depression During Menopause

**Carmen Hecox:** Let's explore some of, the more distinct signs that may indicate depression during menopause.

Pervasive exhaustion that sleep doesn't fix: You might sleep the whole night and still wake up feeling as if you're dragging a heavy weight. This isn't just physical fatigue - it's an emotional exhaustion that dims your usual zest for life and makes even small tasks feel insurmountable.

Unexplained physical discomfort, aches and pains may creep in without any apparent physical cause acting as a physical manifestation of your mental health struggle. Your body might seem like it's rebelling, developing aches in new places, which adds to the overall burden of how you're feeling.

Social withdrawal and emotional isolation: One of the most clearest signs of depression can be a gradual retreat from social life. It's not about enjoying some alone time; it's about consistently avoiding interaction, skipping gatherings you used to love or not answering calls from friends.

The world seems to be contracting and the thoughts of reaching out feels increasingly overwhelming.

By identifying these patterns and understanding the root, we can begin to address them directly, setting the stage for strategies that promote healing and well-being. Stick with us as we delve into how to tackle these challenges, ensuring that menopause becomes a phase, not a loss of profound personal growth and rediscovery.

## **Strategies to Overcome Menopause-Related Depression**

**Carmen Hecox:** Now that we've explored the "whys" and the "what" of depression during this transformative time, let's talk about the "how" - how can we manage and overcome these emotional hurdles? This part of our journey is all about turning understanding into action and despair into hope. So, let's dive into some effective strategies that can help you navigate through these turbulent waters.

**Building us a supportive community:** First and foremost, connection is key. Depression can often lead us to retreat to ourselves, but it's the warmth from others that can help bring us back.

**Reach out to friends and family.** It might feel daunting, but reaching out to people who care about you can provide a tremendous boost. You don't have to go into all the details or have a heavy conversation - just a simple coffee date or a phone call to share your day can make a big difference.

**Join support groups:** Sometimes talking to those who are going through similar experiences can be incredibly validating. Look for support groups specifically for menopause women. Sharing your experience and hearing others can foster a sense of community and mutual support.

**Engage online:** If face to face interactions feel too overwhelming, start online. There are numerous of forums and social media groups dedicated to menopause wellness. Engaging in these can help you feel less isolated and more empowered by the collective strength of women sharing their common journey.

**Embrace self-care and self-compassion.** Taking care of your mind and body is crucial. It isn't about indulgence; it's about giving yourself permission to prioritize your well-being.

**Routine self-care practice:** Establish a routine that includes activities that make you feel good. Whether it's yoga, meditation, or reading a book, in a quiet corner of your home, make it a non-negotiable part of your day.

**Mindfulness and meditation:** These practices can be particularly helpful in managing depression. They help you stay present and reduce the overwhelm of the past regrets or future anxieties. Apps like Headspace or Calm can guide you through meditation tailored for emotional balance and stress relief.

**Journaling:** Writing down your thoughts and feelings can be a powerful way to process them. Sometimes the act of writing can help you discover insights and solutions that weren't apparent when tangled in your mind.

**Professional guidance and therapy:** There's absolutely no shame in seeking professional help. In fact, it's a step of strength and self-care.

**Consult a healthcare provider.** A healthcare provider can offer treatments that may include hormone therapy, antidepressants, or other medications that can help manage symptoms effectively. It's important to discuss all your symptoms openly to get it right.

**Therapy:** Talking to a therapist can provide you with strategies to manage depression. Cognitive Therapy, Cognitive Behavior Therapy and Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy, for example, are highly effective in treating depression by helping you manage negative thought patterns.

**Telehealth Options:** If getting to a physical appointment is a barrier, utilize telehealth services. Many therapists offer sessions over video calls, which can be just as effective and more convenient.

Physical activities and connect with nature. Last but definitely not least, get moving, get outside. Physical activity and nature have profound healing effects on both the mind and the body.

**Regular exercise:** Exercise isn't just about physical health; it's a powerful antidepressant. This doesn't mean you need to run a marathon. Just regular gentle activities like walking or swimming can significantly boost your mood.

**Nature Therapy:** Spend time in nature. Whether it's gardening, hiking, or simply sitting in the park, being outdoor can increase your vitamin D levels, reduce stress, and improve your mood.

**Mindful Movement:** Incorporate practices like Tai Chi or yoga. These gentle movements are not only good for your physical health, but also meditative, promoting emotional well-being.

By integrating these strategies into your life, you can manage and even prevent depression during menopause. It's about creating a toolkit that works for you, one that respects your body changes and supports your mental health.

## **Real-Life Stories of Overcoming Depression**

**Carmen Hecox:** Now let's explore some inspiring real-life stories that highlight how others have navigated through their struggles with depression or disconnect with their true self. These stories not only offer insights, but also provide practical ideas and hope.

Susie's Journey from anxiety to empowerment.

Let's talk about [Susie Maldonado](#). Last week, she was gracious enough to share her story with us. Susie dealt with significant anxiety as she entered a career shift, relocated to a new city, and the loss of her mother, which initially seemed to tighten its grip on her life. However, Susie found solace and strength through journaling and breathwork. She explained how these practices helped her focus on the present, controlling what she could, her breathing and her thoughts. This mindful focus led to a profound shift in her perspective. She adopted the motto, "Grow." God Rewards Our Work, which helped her move from anxiety to a state of empowerment. Today, Susie runs a successful podcast called Believe with

Susie, where she inspires others with her story and the lessons she learned. Her journey is a testament to the power of taking control over the small things and watching them grow into big changes.

Cortney's Transformation, Living by Your Own Design. Cortney McDermott's transformation, as discussed in [episode 42, Unmasking Success](#). Courtney, a former corporate executive, author of Give Yourself Permission, and a life coach shared how feeling discontent when she was at the top of her career, pushing her to re-evaluate her life's priorities. She felt she was constantly living for others, wearing a metaphoric mask to meet everyone's expectations, but her own. The turning point came when she decided to listen to her body and respond to its needs rather than suppress them under the weight of societal pressures. This shift not only brought her inner peace, but also visible rejuvenation in her appearance, leading many to believe she had undergone cosmetic surgery and no, my girl Cortney has not had any cosmetic procedures. Cortney's story highlights the profound impact of self-care and authenticity on our overall well-being and appearance. She now inspires other women to remove their mask and live a life that truly brings them joy and fulfillment.

My personal reflection from dark to light. I'd like to share a piece of my own journey. Losing my father was a monumental challenge in my life. I thought I had processed the grief until a year and a half later. I realized something was off. I lacked creativity. I couldn't make decisions. I found myself discontent with almost everything. My life felt covered in a fog of unshakable sadness. One day the emotional dam broke, and I found myself crying without any apparent reason. That was my wakeup call - I was suffering from depression and I hadn't fully processed my father's death. I decided to listen more intently to my body's cues. When things felt overwhelming, I started to take walks, plugged in my favorite uplifting music and soaked in the sunlight. The physical activity combined with the support and love from my husband and daughter allowed me to process my grief gradually. I learned to cherish the memories of my father, transforming my pain into celebration of the time we had together. This journey taught me the importance of acknowledging our feelings, giving them space and actively seeking healing through simple everyday actions.

These stories are powerful reminders that while menopause can introduce challenges like depression, it can also offer an opportunity to rediscover and realign with our deepest selves. Through community support, personal reflection, and proactive self-care, we can navigate this phase with grace and strength.

# Key Takeaways and Conclusion

**Carmen Hecox:** As we're near the end of this episode, let's summarize the key takeaways on overcoming depression during menopause. This journey, while challenging, can be navigated with resilience and empowerment. And here's how you can do it.

**Community and Connection:** Never underestimate the power of a supportive network. Whether it's family, friends, or a dedicated support group, stay connected and provide the emotional sustenance you need to manage the waves of depression.

**Prioritize Self-care and Listen to Your Body:** Incorporate daily practices that enhance your physical and mental well-being. Whether it's meditation, exercise, or simply doing activities you love, make self-care your priority. Remember, when you take care of yourself, you're better equipped to handle life's challenges.

**Seek professional help when needed.** Consult with the health care provider or therapist can offer you tailored strategies and treatments to manage your symptoms effectively. Don't shy away from seeking help. It's a sign of strength, not weakness.

**Embrace physical activities:** Engage in regular physical activities that you enjoy. This can be anything from walking, swimming, yoga, Tai Chi. These activities not only improve your physical health, but also boost your mood, and mental clarity.

**Stay Open to New Experiences:** Menopause is a time of change, with change comes the opportunity for growth. Embrace this time to try new things, explore new hobbies, and open up new experiences. This can significantly shift your focus from the challenges to the possibilities.

And there you have it, your roadmap through the complexities of menopause and depression. I hope today's discussion has enlightened, inspired, and equipped you with the tools to not just cope, but to thrive. If you found value in today's episode, don't forget to subscribe and share this with someone who might need to hear it. Your support helps us grow and continue to bring meaningful content your way.

Be sure to check out our website, [CreateTheBestMe.com\ep065](https://www.CreateTheBestMe.com/ep065) for the show notes, resources mentioned today, and more information to help you on your journey. And don't miss next week's episode where we'll be joined by Denae Robinette, a

seasoned yoga instructor who will be here to share unique breathwork practices to help manage those pesky hot flashes and bring a sense of calm and empowerment to your daily life.

Until then, keep dreaming big, take care of yourself, and remember you are beautiful, strong, and capable of creating the best version of yourself. Thank you for watching. Catch you next week. Bye for now.