



The Silent Passage: Menopause

Gail Sheehy

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The Silent Passage: Menopause Details

Date : Published May 5th 1992 by Random House (first published 1992)

ISBN : 9780679413882

Author : Gail Sheehy

Format : Hardcover 1 page

Genre : Nonfiction, Health, Self Help, Psychology, Feminism, Classics

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Terry Bourbon says

This book is an investigative report on menopause circa 1993. It is an excellent chronicle of something that is a part of every woman's life, but to that date was absolutely a taboo subject. I find this shocking as someone who got married in 1990. I thought the women that preceded me, including my own mother and mother in law, would be much more well informed and able to pass on things to me to make it easier. It turns out they had no help, and were "taught" that it was a taboo subject. An excellent read, and worth the read. I just found out there is a new updated version, and that is on my list as well.

Rebekah says

I like to be prepared for what's coming next, but it doesn't help when the info. is so dated. I've gotten more out of magazines in a doctor's office.

Donna says

I found some information useful and some too dated. I think she strongly advocates hormone replacement, but all women cannot take hormones. There are many alternatives in today's world and women should educate themselves as to what is currently available and choose what works best for their individual symptoms. I think humor is very important during menopause and Gail touches on that in her book.

Kimber says

SILENT indeed. Outdated a little bit now, but a pioneer in its day. Women seem to go into perimenopause in a sort of haze of denial. "It can't happen to me." I was 39 when I was diagnosed, and this year at 43 (ONLY for gee whiz) has been quite traumatic. I mean no one prepares you for this stuff. I think we fully expect to turn 50 and Bam! Menopause! and it's done with...not always but I hear it sometimes happens for some fortunate souls....(How the middle aged women of "Real Housewives" party the way they do and rebound, I will never know.)

But what I can feel--is that this is the time in a woman's life of total empowerment. Sheehy calls it Second Adulthood, a "hormonal rewiring". I agree. But I call it becoming a New Woman. However difficult the process may be for some of us, it's transformative--a butterfly coming out of its cocoon. And I love butterflies.

Karen Cooley says

Very informative for anyone needing info on the change of life/menopause--what to expect and what some

of your options are. I think women are more open about this topic since the book was written and there are more alternatives of treatment. However, this is the best I have read in terms of clear info.

Graceann says

About a year ago, I mentioned that I was feeling unwell, and specified how I was hurting. A good friend said "you know what? I think it's time you read The Silent Passage." As I become more "seasoned" the issues presented in The Silent Passage are becoming more relevant with every passing day, and I zipped through the informative pages very quickly.

Back when this book was released in the early 1990s, nobody wanted to talk about this completely natural event (not "disease") that every woman experiences if she's blessed to live into her 40s or 50s. Women didn't even speak among themselves about the changes they were going through, and doctors were (and, sadly, still are) largely condescending and useless when it comes to women's issues. Gail Sheehy shines a light on the confusing, conflicting data coming at women from all directions, and separates the wheat from the chaff in a no-nonsense, easy-to-understand manner.

There is a lot of talk about the grieving the end of the "joy of creating life" which, as a childfree woman, means nothing to me. I would have liked to read more from women who have never been pregnant regarding their symptoms. There are quite a lot of us, and it would have been nice to have been represented in the data.

A lot more options have become available in the decade since this book was last updated, and thankfully more has been written about the changing seasons. Given that, if we take care of ourselves, many of us still have half our lives to live after the Change, it's well worth knowing what we should expect, no? I'm grateful to Gail Sheehy for talking early on about something that so many are so foolishly eager to ignore, and even more grateful that in the years since this book came out, more women have become willing to discuss their experiences, so that those of us starting the journey don't have to feel so utterly alone.

I'm glad this book was around for me to read; I only wish my mother had had Gail Sheehy to explain what was happening to her. She suffered mercilessly and needlessly; The Silent Passage could have helped her be her own best advocate.

Rosemary says

I remember the day when my mother and I went to the bookstore to buy this book. At the time, there were only a handful of books about menopause. I'm glad to say that there have been many more written, but The Silent Passage is a groundbreaking classic. Thank you, Gail Sheehy, for writing this book, on behalf of women in the 90s.

Barb Lawrence says

I was disappointed in this. At times it was too text book, and at other times it was too over-written philosophizing.

Karen Mosley says

"...nineteenth century obstetricians taught that 'the change of life unhinges the female nervous system and deprives women of their personal charm'." pg. 131 "Laughter and forgetting...two of the best gifts women of any age can share with one another." pg. 55 "No, we are never again going to be that girl of our idealized inner eye. The task now is to find a new future self in whom we can invest our trust and enthusiasm." pg. 136 Yes, I'm going through "the change", so I read this book from my mother's bookshelf. It is not up-to-date (published in 1991), yet much of the information is the same as it has always been. I was interested to read about the "symptoms", especially to realize that my strange, new bouts of "forgetfulness" can be attributed to "the change". Thank goodness I'm not developing dementia or just getting stupid! There's hope it will go away soon! That is, if I can live through these hot flashes!

farmwifetwo says

Since I am "of an age" I have been reading quite a bit about the joys of being "way too close to 50".

The biggest complaint in other reviews is "this book is dated". Yes, I read the 1991 version first and just finished it and the updated one arrived a few minutes ago so I will see what is new... but truth is.. for all my reading.. NOTHING has changed in nearly 30 years. Well, the ladies she mentions were the stars when I was a teen but the information unfortunately, has not changed. The discussion I have with the locum a few weeks ago and the results that I have decided to ignore for now, (I see my Dr in a few weeks she's back from mat leave), was as vague as is discussed in the 1991 book.

You pretty much have 3 choices, mood altering drugs, hormones or "suck it up". Then there's the pro's and con's... maybe breast cancer with hormones.. but much higher risk of osteoporosis and heart disease without. Then there's the whole mood and body changes. Nobody is exempt, so, lots to think about.

My recommendation, give it a read, old or new or both, and keep reading other books/articles and taking notes. It's the only way to make the correct decisions for you and know what to tell or ask your Dr.

Sally Ewan says

This was an interesting book, a mix of hard science and personal experience. I could identify with the physical symptoms the women described, but I didn't relate to their anguish over aging. For me, the goal is maturity and wisdom, so the physical aging process is not such a big deal. (Not yet, anyway!) The author talked a lot about hormone replacement therapy and how important estrogen is, but since I can't 'use' hormones, I'll have to live without it!

Cheri says

I know this book is outdated in some of the medical thinking, but I still found it an interesting read. A bit repetitive thought and it was missing more of the "what to expect" and "treatment options" that I had hoped to find.

Leslie says

I've read many books on menopause, but I'd read Sheehy's *Passages*, so I picked this one up at the free book exchange at the library. I didn't get very far into it before I flipped to the front to see what year it was published, 1995. We have learned a *whole* lot about having a healthy menopause since 1995.

I skim-read most of the book, if only to see how much attitudes and science have changed. I didn't finish it, I didn't want to spend the time, there are better books on menopause to read.

I did get one useful piece of information. Menopause takes almost a decade to go through completely. It is the equivalent of adolescence, a woman's body is undergoing a complete hormonal rewiring. Patience.

Beth says

I checked out a pile of books on Menopause in an effort to figure out what is going on with my mind and my body. This one seemed to have the most potential to be helpful, but it seemed that her main pupose was to reassure the reader that post menopausal women can have an active sexz life. There was some helpful information int it, but not a lot

Vivian says

I had read this book six or seven years ago just out of curiosity about what was to come. Now I read it to find out whether I was losing my mind or just experiencing menopause! I agree with other reviewers that the author seems to promote the taking of hormones. At the time the book was written, I may have gone along with that, however, with what has been learned in the intervening years, I would not touch them with a ten foot pole. Are the hot flashes, sleepness nights, and mushy thinking annoying and debilitating? Yes, but I am woman, I will survive!
