

PODCAST TRANSCRIPT



EPISODE 15

*Executive Women and
Menopause Series*

Part 1: My Personal Journey

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HAPPY EXECUTIVE WOMAN

Episode 15

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### Executive Women and Menopause Series: Part 1

Hello there, and **welcome to National Menopause Month**. I don't even know if you knew that was a thing, but it is! October happens to be the month for several different things, and throughout the years I've celebrated the different things that meant something to me in my life. And so this year, menopause is right up there, so that is what I'm going to dedicate October's episodes to. So this first episode is going to be my personal story. We're going to begin with a replay of episode number five, which was titled Executive Women and Menopause.

**This is my personal journey of struggling to understand myself, and what was happening to my body.**

At the time of that episode, I had struggled for over five years, mentally, physically, emotionally, and in so many other ways. I thought I was losing my mind. So I want you to listen in as I share things that most women will not share with you due to shame and or embarrassment. Come back every Wednesday this month, as I take you on a journey through the many facets of menopause, and how best to prepare yourself, your significant other, and those around you for the changes that will occur. Trust me, I would not have suffered for five years had I known the realities of what to expect, how would it affect every area of my life, and what I could have done about it. No one has written, at least I haven't found a book called *What to Expect When Expecting Menopause*, but maybe that's something that I should put on my radar. It is my prayer that this series will help women young and more mature understand and love themselves more through this journey and that all women understand that they're going to go through it. You may not have all of the symptoms, but you will go through menopause. It is just as definite as puberty was, trust me on this one. Okay?

Also, I hope that this month episodes helped shed a light on what it's like to be in a woman's body, for the men in their lives, so that they can learn what to expect and how to support them, or at least have a clue about what's going on with them. And if you have any questions for me, as you listen to this month's episode series, Executive Women and Menopause, feel free to go to my website and click the contact page. I would love to receive an email from you with your thoughts, with your questions. And who knows! If your email with your thoughts and your questions come in early enough, I may respond to them, answer them, or even read them on the upcoming episodes this month.

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So thank you so much, and prepare. **Prepare yourselves.** Trust me, I'm telling you to trust me. I've told you to trust me like six times already. *But believe me*, you want to be prepared as you're listening to these episodes. Alright, I'll see you on the inside.

On **May 12, 2014**, I had a partial hysterectomy. The OB/GYN said that leaving my ovaries intact would delay the onset of menopause. By **November 2014**, all emotional and physical hell had broken loose. I was in full-blown menopause. From 2014 until 2019, my emotional, physical, sexual, and mental life was pure hell.

You see, until I began losing sleep due to **waking up drenched in the middle of the night** as if someone traced the outline of my body with a blow torch, what I'd heard from other women about "the change" were just complaints that older women made. They didn't apply to me and my situation until they did. No one told me, ***but it's like puberty...for older women!***

I suffered for five years. I packed on additional weight that I could not lose no matter what. I took prescription meds that were supposed to help me sleep through hot flashes at night but had me walking around **like a zombie** the next day, practically drooling on myself. I bought every *natural supplement known to man*, *drank nasty teas*, *ate things I will never eat again*, *did headstands*, *stopped wearing wool*, *let my perm grow out*, and *went natural*.

You name it; I tried it. Nothing worked.

I tried meditating but then became irritated that my **brain would not slow down long enough for me to benefit from it**. I tried being a vegetarian and then bulked up on the protein powders and additional supplements to make up for what I lost. I...tried...it...all until my best friend told me about **bioidentical hormone therapy (BHRT)** (a.k.a., pellets).

My former doctor was entirely against it.

"They are not regulated by the FDA. Why would you want to inject animal estrogen/testosterone into your system? I would not recommend it, and I cannot write a prescription for it," she said.

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So, I listened to my doctor (**who had not experienced any form of menopause**); I dismissed the idea of HRT; and I continued to suffer and accept the prescriptions she wrote for me for *diet pills, sleep (zombie) meds, etc.*

But one day, I said to hell with it.

In no way am I suggesting you do what I did. However, if I can get you to see there may be other options to relieve your menopausal symptoms, then I'm willing to put all my "*hormonal business*" out here in these streets.

Where were we? Right, I remember now. The brain fog is real!

I went to the endocrinologist on **October 13, 2019**. She asked a ton of questions, took vials of blood to do a series of tests, and ordered a mammogram. I also made an appointment with my primary care physician (PCP), who ordered my annual blood work and mammogram. Two days later, my PCP said ***all numbers looked fine*** and reminded me that it would be a good idea for me to work on losing weight and lowering my cholesterol.

On **October 24, 2019**, I went back to the endocrinologist, and **in an instant, my life changed**. As she looked over my test results, she told me she had the answer to my *menopausal discomfort; the migraines, sleepless nights, painful sex, brain fog, hot flashes, mood swings, and, you guessed it, my weight gain*. In less than twenty minutes, she identified the things that had plagued me for the past five years. Why the hell didn't I go see her sooner? **Oh right, my PCP told me not to.**

Take charge of your own menopausal journey!

The inability to lose weight was due to an underactive thyroid. **WAIT! Didn't my PCP just tell me on October 15th that all numbers looked good? That everything was fine and just focus on losing weight and lowering my cholesterol? WTH?!?!?** The endo also told me there was one thing to blame for the other menopausal challenges. My testosterone level was low.

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I know what you're thinking. Why would a woman need a high testosterone level? I was thinking the same thing; hell, I already have to pluck hairs from my chin and have my cheeks threaded along with my eyebrows. Why would I want to grow **more** unwanted hair?!? *What she shared with me is that testosterone is the "feel-good hormone," and if it is low, it can cause all sorts of changes women may not be aware of.*

The endocrinologist told me the normal level of testosterone for a woman of my demographic is **100**, and mine was only seventeen! **SEVENTEEN!** Why didn't my doctor know (how) to (properly) test my thyroid? **Why didn't she think knowing my hormone levels would be helpful?** There is a **huge** gap between seventeen and 100; no wonder I felt like I was losing it on the inside but needing to keep it all together on the outside.

Once we had the numbers, *she inserted the right dosage of both testosterone and estrogen to bring my hormones up to the right levels, in my right hip, just beneath the skin's surface.* Your body naturally takes what it needs, which is great. It was one less thing I need to worry about. HRT is supposed to last between three to four months; however, **my numbers were so low, and my stress level was so high, mine ran out before month three** (stress will use up your pellets faster). Now that pellets are a part of my routine, I will **never** go back to **not** having them. She also put me on a daily thyroid prescription. The weight is still a challenge for me, and so I am now having additional nutritional tests done to see if there is a food sensitivity to blame.

Sis, the pellets **were a game changer**; they gave me my life back! No more headaches, no more painful sex, **no more wanting to pick up a plastic utensil and "fork somebody up."** No more hot flashes, no more mood swings, less brain fog. The fact that *my body doesn't feel like it's fighting against me anymore* gave me back the mental space I needed to "give everyone their shit back" and to focus on being mindful and present with and within myself every day.

I am fifty-five, post-menopausal, and I am finally learning how to navigate this life with confidence and calm, all while being in command of my emotions. It wasn't easy, but it is **a hell of a lot better** than where I used to be.

Take charge of your own menopausal journey. Don't wait five years like I did!