

**Let the Body Lead
BodyMind Wisdom for Menopause**

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San Diego Center for Bio-Psychosynthesis

Let The Body Lead

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Menopause Choices: Body and Soul**

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Let The Body Lead

When I first had the idea to put together a menopause symposium, I had a strong sense of wanting to bring together the best experts and speakers I could find to cover a broad range of choices available for women going through the menopause experience.

I also knew I wanted to offer Women a perspective on the resources available in our own bodies which provide a beacon of light to guide us through the fog of confusion endemic to any situation, like menopause, in which there are so many symptoms and so many solutions. In addition I wanted to share what I have learned about how to tap into this wellspring of wisdom.

Another reason I wanted to produce this Symposium is because I have needed and still need to learn to listen to my body, **to let my body lead me into deeper self-knowledge.** I have especially needed **to take responsibility for my own healing.**

My own experience has been a trial by fire. The flames were fanned by my being out of balance in my life, by not being in touch with my own inner knowing.

I began my menopause journey in a state of fear, actually terror as the result of the murder of one of my closest friends, Pam Clark and her daughter Amber. Many of you in this room knew and loved Pam or were touched by her in some important way. Pam would have been with us in the flesh, either on the podium or in the front row, beautiful, radiant, committed to her body, to consciousness and to her heart. I know she is with us now in spirit. I would like to take a moment of silence to remember Pam and Amber.

My menopause process began on January 16, 1991 at about 3 A.M., five months and three days after Pam's death. I was

awakened from sleep by a huge sensation as if the house were being shaken by an Earthquake, or as if a huge airplane. In a panic, I awakened my husband and told him there must be an earthquake. He felt nothing.

After that initial jolt, my body was still vibrating. I felt as if jolts of electricity were continuing to surge through my body. Thus began my odyssey.

I couldn't get back to sleep as my brain frantically tried to figure out what was happening. If it wasn't an earthquake or jet, I thought maybe it was Low Frequency Electromagnetic Waves (LF), I was picking up because of my sensitivity... maybe it had something to do with the Gulf War which began that same night. As soon as daylight arrived I called my parents who had experience with LF in Northern California and other people I thought might have information about that in Colorado, and Arizona.

Next, I called my holistic MD for an emergency appointment. My family Doctor, knowing the history of Pam's death, my recent move and new marriage, diagnosed me as having nervous burnout. He ordered a battery of blood tests, to try to determine if this were the result of something environmentally toxic. They were negative. Frantically, I planned a trip to Phoenix to visit some energy healers. I also wanted to try and see if being away from the area would change the vibrations.

The vibrations were worse in Phoenix. When the four healers put their hands on me I couldn't stand the intensity of the energy. I was uncomfortable in my body day and night. I was not sleeping well. The friend I was staying with would come into my room at night and hold me and sing to me which was the only thing that soothed me at all.

I returned to San Diego exhausted and still buzzing. My new husband, Arturo, was very concerned. We called our friend

Dr. David Simon and went for a neurological work-up to see whether this might be the precursor to MS. He found no signs of nervous disorder. He consulted with a psychiatric colleague who said the only thing he could think of was atypical panic disorder. He suggested an anti-anxiety drug. My whole being recoiled at the thought of drugging myself. David suggested I see his wife, Julia, and have her check my meditation.

Arturo and I went to see Julia. Meditating in her presence was soothing to me and I felt somewhat hopeful. Julia was convinced this was a spiritual crisis. She supported me in working with my meditation. I tried to meditate that night and I couldn't find the same peaceful place. I had another sleepless night.

In the morning I became nearly hysterical as the vibrations pounded through my body. (The lonely part of this was that the energy wasn't visible...none of my health care providers, or massage therapists could feel it or sense it...I kept fearing I might go crazy). A Reichian therapist had suggested I put my feet in seawater so Arturo, Adam and I went to the ocean and brought back two buckets of seawater. I remember vividly the scene of me sitting in our family room with my feet in buckets of sea water, crying, despairing and my son Adam (Then 12) said to me, "Mom, I'm sure you'll find a way through this. **You have to trust the process**" or something like that, incredible, clear and strong... His faith buoyed me temporarily.

Adam had a foundation for having faith in me and the process because he and I had lived through the transformation of the divorce from his father and the move across the U.S. Arturo had known me only one year. We were newlyweds and he had no idea what to make of this.

I called Julia and David to tell them I wasn't able to handle the vibrations as well in my own meditation. I was desperate. They both got on the phone. David felt I was suffering so much he

compassionately urged me to reconsider the drugs. Julia strongly felt if I just stayed with this, and looked upon this as an evolutionary process my body would move through whatever it needed to move through and I would come back into harmony. I felt better again hearing her words, reconnecting to my **faith in my body, my spirit, and my evolutionary process**. I vowed to keep working with the vibrations.

I took the results of the neurological tests back to my family doctor. He supported me in not taking drugs and prescribed increased amino acid supplements, increased B vitamins, more rest and more meditation. He gave me a mild sleeping pill to help me restore somewhat of a normal sleep pattern.

Meditating was not working for me, because whenever I would sit still the vibrations were so strong, I couldn't keep my mind on my mantra. I found my way to a massage therapist, Anita Brown whose subtle massage work began to help me relate in a less fearful way to the vibrations. Anita was also convinced that this was a spiritual passage. While it didn't feel "spiritual" to me, I certainly preferred that interpretation to nervous exhaustion, atypical panic disorder, or low frequency electromagnetic waves that only I could feel.

After several weeks, the vibrations were as strong as they had ever been but I had become more accustomed to them. **Although I had no idea what the answer was, I was fairly certain that "Could I let go?" was the question.**

I walked. I tried (mostly unsuccessfully) to meditate. I cried. I raged. I panicked. I took my supplements. I maintained my low fat, vegetarian diet. I took salt and soda baths. I asked my husband to sing me to sleep. I asked my parents to sing to me over the telephone. I asked my son to hold my hand. I read books about Kundalini. I thought, if this is a spiritual awakening, how come it's not more fun, more angelic or something? It sure doesn't look like

what I thought a spiritual awakening should look like. The bottom line was... I still vibrated.

It is now three years later. I am still vibrating. The energy is more subtle, has moved up my body in the classic kundalini manner. Initially it was the strongest in my hips and lower torso. Now it has moved to my upper body, moving up my neck but not quite reaching my crown chakra.

During these past three years I have experienced almost every menopause symptom known to Womankind. It was not until six months and five doctors/health professionals after the first vibration that I was first diagnosed as being peri-menopausal. For six months I thought I was falling apart... in the beginning stages of some terrible illness.

This past winter I had my first appointment with an Oriental Doctor, Yitian Ni. When I described my vibrations, she said, Oh yes, that's the "Du" channel. Your experience makes perfect sense in terms of the Chinese theory of menopause. I had waited 3 years for someone to mention that these symptoms might indeed be a part of menopause.

After the article about my experience came out in the Union Tribune, I got a call from a lovely 68 year old woman who told me she was so grateful for that article; that I had mentioned those vibrations. She said she had been vibrating for 13 years and had also discovered, **on her own...by virtue of her awareness and observation!** that she needed to eat more protein in order to cope with the energy. She doesn't like to eat meat so she supplements with gelatin... something I'm going to try. This woman waited 13 years, keeping her own counsel before finding confirmation and support for her experience outside herself.

During these past years I have had skin rashes, cosmetic allergies, allergies to all my hair products, heart palpitations, night sweats, menstrual flooding, intense emotional swings, weeping

spells, angry outbursts, insomnia, panic attacks, paranoid thoughts, backache, aching bones, indigestion, gallbladder pain, memory lapses, low libido, extreme fatigue.

I went to healers, acupuncturists, massage therapists, herbalists, urologists, skin doctors, psychics, yoga teachers, chiropractors, hemopathies, physical therapists, internists, Chinese doctors, Japanese doctors, Body Mind Clinic, psychotherapists, astrologers. I searched everywhere for solutions. And I found them by the dozens. **Within my body, East has met West and also explored the outer limits.** There is a broader range of health care options available to us now more than any other time in history. **We not only have access to the full range of wisdom and medicine in our own culture, but in every other culture on the planet, as well. In this age of information, we have an abundance of choices.** An embarrassment of choices.

I didn't know how to choose. **I didn't know how to make distinctions between the logic, world view, and charisma of a particular doctor or health care provider and the truth about whether what they were offering was right for me.** Just because it's logical, or even just because it's "natural", or from Brazil, or the Australian Bush doesn't mean it is right for us.

Not only did I not know how to choose; I didn't want to choose! I was stressed, I was scared, and I was tired. I didn't feel good and I wanted someone to take care of me. I wanted someone to make the choices for me. I didn't believe I had the resources. And so I found many, many doctors and healers who were happy to make choices for me and tried their best to take care of me. They wanted to take care of me, because they cared about me, because they were trained to diagnosis and treat me.

Every step along the way a health care provider offered me something that was of genuine use to me and several other solutions that not only didn't help me, but also made me worse.

The treatments, given with only the best loving intentions, that made me sick were: Phenylalanine for my vibrations hurt my bladder (it was great for my memory, though). Citricidal (Grapefruit extract) for Yeast hurt my bladder and vagina. Dong Quai made my eyes itch. Progesterone cream hurt my bladder and urethra, "Natural" Yam estrogen and progesterone made me so ill I would rather die than take them for 10 minutes. Estrace increased my vibrations, palpitations, anxiety attacks and insomnia. Estrace without progesterone made my breasts ache almost unbearably. Provera (Progesterone) made me irritable, crampy and swollen. My low fat, vegetarian diet increased my fatigue, insomnia, and vibrations. Occasionally an acupuncture treatment would increase my vibrations. Too much fat and meat, as an attempted correction to the vegetarian diet caused gallbladder pain. Certain Chinese herbs that supported my kidneys and increased my vaginal lubrication increased my system wide yeast infection, Candidiasis. Certain strenuous workout stretches kept my L5 (low back) area out of alignment and created a neuralgia, which contributed to my vaginal and bladder irritation. (I have written a short article, One Woman's Menopause Discoveries, about which of the treatments helped me...attached to this essay) There's a phrase we all, as patients and providers, need to be aware of as we embark on our life's journey, and particularly on our Menopause Journeys. That phrase is **iatrogenic illness, or "illness induced in a patient by a physician's actions or words"**. Actually that definition could be abridged to read "illness induced in a patient by a physicians actions or words"... after the patient has handed responsibility for the cure over to the physician.

There is no blame here. It is easy to see with tenderness how we can fall into the longing to have someone "make it all better" when we are hurting, and the desire to "make it all better" when we see someone hurt. The problem is that when we give up

responsibility for our own healing, when we give up responsibility for making our own choices, we are sitting ducks for iatrogenic illness.

We need to take responsibility for our own Healing. We need to take responsibility for our own medical choices. Let me be clear here that I do not mean we shouldn't consult with our Doctors and health care providers. I do not mean we should not explore alternatives or create a network of complementary solutions. We need to gather around us the best team of experts we can find who offer us complementary solutions.

Imagine what your health care situation would be like if when you went to visit your provider to discuss a problem, his/her first question were "What's your intuition?" or "What do you think you need?" Imagine if before every remedy your provider asked you to tune in to whether you had a sense this was right for you or not? Imagine that? Even if they do muscle testing and kinesiology, you still need to be asked these questions. You need to engage in a mutual inquiry with your provider at a level that acknowledges your body wisdom and intuition.

Let me also be clear, here, that I do not mean we shouldn't have loving partners and friends to hold us and serve us and nurture us while we are going through a healing crisis. We need to surround ourselves with support during this menopause process. What I mean is that when we do consult with others, we make ourselves our own Chief of Staff. We have the final say. How can we possibly ask ourselves to take on that responsibility, when we feel tired or scared or our bodies are behaving in ways they never have before? Where will we find the strength, the resources, and the will to possibly do that when we're not trained healers or medical experts?

The answer is in our very own organism. **Our bodies have all the wisdom we need to make the choices we need.** They may

not know every detail of every cure or prescription...but they know what they need when they see it, smell it, sense it, hear it, touch it, taste it. Our bodies are brilliantly designed self-regulating organisms. They have healing resources we are just beginning to appreciate, just beginning to perceive.

Our bodies are concrete, real life feedback machines which let us know what we need, moment by moment...and...if we can resist the temptation to override these brilliant built in physicians, they will guide us to make wise and healing choices.

We are the best physicians to head our own health care teams. Our bodies and the images and fantasies that arise from them are the first consultants we need to check with before we try anything any other physician suggests.

I can hear you thinking, that sounds good, but **how do I find that inner physician, that inner Chief of Staff?**

We do that with awareness...observation...slowing down enough to notice subtle sensations, shifting currents of energy, the pulsation of expansion and contraction in our own bodies. Finding our inner physician requires us to learn to make a distinction between sensations and thoughts, feelings and interpretations of sensations.

For example: "I'm scared", is not a sensation. It is an interpretation of a cluster of sensations, which break down into..."I have a knot of energy in my stomach. My heart is pounding so loud I can hear it in my ears. My breathing is shallow. My hands are cold and clammy. I feel tingling sensations in my back, my legs are buckling under me."

"I'm happy", is not a sensation. It, too, is a label we give to another cluster of sensations...I feel warm energy in my stomach. My heart energy feels as if it is radiating out... filling my chest. The corners of my mouth are turning up and I feel my spine elongating and my head arching slightly backwards. The muscles

and bones in my legs feel well connected and there is energy available in my legs for whatever I need to do. I feel currents of light, pleasurable energy running up my body, actually all over my body. I feel bubbles of energy rising in my body like I want to laugh.

The foundation for all medicine is awareness. Every medical and healing discipline in the world is based on observation. One of the reasons the Chinese and Ayurvedic views have so much to offer the Western view is that they have been observing natural phenomena for thousands of years longer than we have. Our Western ability to quantify and measure observed phenomena adds a tremendous dimension of clarity to Eastern views. I would not be comfortable if my personal healing team did not include as a foundation and open-minded Western MD. And for surgery...I wouldn't want to be anywhere but in a Western Hospital.

Do you see the fallacy in expecting anyone outside of yourself to be better able to be aware of what is going on in your own body than you are? The most gifted physicians and healers are the ones who track YOU. They are watching you, your body, your subtle movements. They are trying to decipher you. The really good ones read your mind and offer back to you what your own body has told them. Then when you get better, you thank them for being brilliant.

How do I know this? I know this because I am one of those healers. My clients transform their lives...in part because I am especially good at sensing what is going on inside of their organisms ...I am especially good at reading their minds. I know perfectly well that I am not doing the healing and transforming. They are. The hardest part is finding the ways to help people stop resisting and receive the wisdom and guidance streaming from their bodies.

Our bodies' innate programming, since the beginning of time, is for our health, harmony, and smooth functioning. At the deepest levels, the moment there is any imbalance or injury, the organism is marshaling its' considerable resources to take care of the problem.

The evolution of the cerebral cortex or "new brain" which gives us our unique human qualities, our civilization, art, poetry, math, science, etc...also gives us an ability to override our bodies' innate self regulating mechanisms.

The human ability to override our instinctual, reptilian, self regulating organisms is our biggest obstacle to learning to let the body lead us in making wise health/life choices.

Overriding our organisms is especially a problem whenever trauma or fear is involved...both of which may play a role in menopause. The multitude of body changes involved in menopause can elicit a shock or fear response, which may escalate into panic. When we are scared as a result of sudden or dramatic changes in our own bodies' (as a result of menopause); which we can't fight or flee...we may get stuck in the freeze mode.

This was certainly the case for me. The jolting vibrations opened a Pandora's box of panic. In my search for healing, I was led to the work of Dr. Peter Levine, an astute Boulder, CO. Psychologist who specializes in trauma.

The organism's instinctive response to trauma is to fight, flee or freeze. Each is adaptive. Each response allows the body to integrate the tremendous survival energies unleashed by the trauma. Fighting and fleeing enable the organism to expend and resolve that energy in defensive movements involving muscles, bones and viscera. Freezing enables the body to buy time, to wait out a possible captor by "playing dead". If the organism survives by "freezing"; when the coast is clear, it resolves its' tremendous charge of survival energy by slowly and unsteadily thawing out.

The body may tremble and vibrate as the organism discharges energy and works through its' own pattern of resolution... at its' own pace.

Almost all panic is the result of mind overriding this "thawing out" process. For example, if a person has been frozen in fear, and then starts trembling during the "thawing", she may believe the trembling is bad and contract her muscles, resisting this essential discharging process. If she tenses all her muscles and spine and begins thinking again about whatever it was that shocked her, she may very likely recycle herself back into the initial trauma and freeze again. The huge pent-up energy is trapped in her organism and she experiences a continual sense of panic or low-grade anxiety. Unresolved traumatic experiences are usually stacked up on top of each other, so each may trigger another.

For Chinese Medicine, the **kidneys are the organs responsible for governing metabolic functioning in our bodies**. In menopause, they will be the ones overseeing the shift from ovarian sources of hormones, to non-ovarian sources of hormones. The emotion most associated with the **kidneys is fear!** Imagine how those overworked kidneys feel when they try to manage this huge transition for us and they are further stressed by, our very understandable, fear about what is happening to us.

We need to learn to work with the fear that may arise during the continually changing symptoms of menopause. This fear may bring up earlier, previously unconscious traumas which are now ready for healing. This is a tremendous opportunity for growth and personal integration. Enormous parts of ourselves which have been bound up in unresolved issues are now asking to be included in the mainstream of our personal energy field. Our creative energies will flourish when fertilized by this process.

The good news is that, we now have an elegant technology for resolving trauma and fear...the foundation of which, again, is...awareness. While this is an oversimplification of the subtle kinds of neurobiological unraveling one may need to do with severe shock and trauma...for the purposes of Menopause Choices...awareness is the major key.

Let's stop for a moment. I want to invite you to look inside for a moment and ask yourself... "What is the biggest barrier to my awareness...to believing that my body can give me the answers to the questions I have about my health?" What am I afraid will happen if I slow down and begin to really observe how my body responds to everything I do, everything I eat, the vitamins I take, the Prescription drugs I take, the herbal remedies I use, the people I spend time with, the way I spend my time, how I exercise, how I sleep? ...The answer may be that you are afraid you'll have to change something. You are afraid to let go of something that has given you comfort and helped you survive thus far. It is important to recognize and honor the strategies you have developed for survival, even if they are no longer working. You need to thank them for what they have given you even as you begin to look for something that will bring a deeper level of pleasure and fulfillment and health.

Guess what? The bad news about menopause is that it is all about change. It's even called The Change. Whatever resistance to change we may have had in the past...is now out of our hands. Our bodies are changing, **daily**. Even when we find a solution to a new symptom it may only be a short while before it is obsolete and we need to find another one.

The good news about menopause that it is all about change. This transition demands we play in the arena of letting go. The menopause transition gives us an extra push,

an extra support in the direction of change, of our souls evolution.

To whatever extent you are in crisis during this Change, that will increase the possibility for transformation. The Chinese word for Crisis means Opportunity. If you are not in crisis, do not despair for opportunity. Your change is more subtle and will call you to be even more focused and delicate in your awareness of what your body is telling you.

My search has motivated me finally to challenge all advice, all prescriptions and all remedies as they are presented. My experience and observations have directed all my attention back to my own body. My body, if I can resist the temptation to override it, guides us to wise choices.

For me, this demand to let go, to become more aware, more observant, more responsible for bringing my body into balance, harmony, and health has been important not only for my personal of physical well being; but for my connection and concern for the well being of the body of our human brother and sisterhood. This Change finds me more committed to restoring health and balance to the body of our beloved earth. For me this is what spiritual awakening is all about. My vibrations and my menopause journey have done this for me and to them I will be eternally grateful.

Now, almost three and one half years later, do I know what these vibrations are? Not really. Are they panic discharges? Are they Kundalini? Are they menopause? Is menopause really a Kundalini experience? Being somewhat of a mystic I like the poetry of that... **believing that we women have built into our bodies' natural psychobiogenetic evolution the opportunity for spiritual awakening of the deepest order.**

Certainly the menopause process shifts the flow of energy for us from down into the arena of personal family and care taking up into the region of the third eye and crown chakra. What if each

hot flash opens our third eye a little wider, opens us up to the farthest reaches of our intuition, our ability to see with our soul's perspective...the vision of eternity.

Two days ago after a relatively sleepless night... (the excitement and planning for this Symposium kept me stimulated!) The sun finally broke through the clouds in the morning. I raced out to our backyard in order to do some qi gong exercises. As I stood there and felt the sun nourishing me to the very marrow of my bones...warming, reassuring all of me, I turned so my back could receive that direct sunlight. As I did so my breath was taken away ...I saw the azure sky, as bright as I'd ever seen, with billowing white clouds (so unusual for San Diego). A hawk flew from a tree behind me into the canyon to the left of my yard. The sunlight glimmered on his wings, the sparrows sang full beautiful songs, the ice plant shimmered with bright green light and rain drops left from the pre dawn shower. For an instant I was transfixed. I saw clearly that this incredible beauty was a gift, a backdrop, against which I could create whatever play I chose, whatever life I chose. I felt as if I were all of beingness, viewing the human life I was inhabiting from a soul perspective. For just an instant I allowed myself to open to this experience fully. Then I got scared, "Maybe I'll go crazy", I thought, and I contracted into my more limited sense apparatus.

That instant was a taste I will never forget. My commitment is to keep letting go and letting go and allowing change to move me and shift me and open me more and more to this kind of nourishing soul contact.

If I can support you, and other women in knowing from the beginning of this process that **You have the resources you need to heal yourselves...** If I can help you open to the knowing that **you need not fear taking full responsibility for your health...** If I can help you open to the truth that **your body is the first**

consultant you need to check with before you try anything, that your sensations, your intuition, your images and dreams are your best resources for ultimately determining what you need...I will be a happy woman.

* * * *

During the next presentations, we will be passing out notebooks for you to note and write any observations you make about your own body's reactions to any of the speakers.

While listening to any speaker . . . notice your body sensations... they are the beacon through the fog...the surest feedback. The body doesn't lie. The idea here is to become aware not only of the content of each presentation, but also about the sensations, feelings, images, you have as each speaker is talking. Notice any changes in temperature, in posture, in breathing. Notice if you feel bored or excited.

Keep a lookout for the difference between sensation and interpretation. When you are reasonably sure you are noticing a sensation, ask it for an image or word to help you decipher its message. You can see how this can be tricky. If you start interpreting an interpretation you are farther away from the message your body is trying to give you. Deciphering our bodies' signals is always a bit tricky because self-deception lurks at every corner. This takes practice...and sometimes guidance from someone who can help track you with you. You may want to practice this with a friend.

Watch the images and thoughts at the periphery of consciousness as you are focusing (we hope) on the speakers. Just notice them and write them down, even if they don't make sense. You can work at analyzing it later. In the realm of the mind, the

area of the periphery of consciousness, (also known as daydreams), is for the mind what sensation is for body. The periphery of consciousness gives you information closer to the deeper, intuitive levels of body wisdom. The periphery is the feminine aspect of consciousness as focusing is the masculine. Deciphering the periphery can also be tricky as old habits and patterns, desires, or dysfunctional thought forms can masquerade as intuitions very easily. Remember, this is a process!

Night Dreams are also invaluable tools as you try to decipher your soul's wisdom. I am not going to go into them in depth because so much has been written about them. But menopause is an excellent time to keep a dream journal as well as a day journal.

When all else fails return to the body. If you are not sure about a sensation or message you are receiving or a step you are about to take, return to the sensations. Be still, listen, ask your body again and again what it needs. **Let the body lead.**

In closing, I'd like to invite you to join me in a meditation to help connect you with the fountain of your awareness. I'd like to begin with a few moments of silence, and then guide us in an attunement process to help center us, and bring us into contact with the reservoir of wisdom in our organisms. Close your eyes (if you feel comfortable doing so). If you are more comfortable with your own meditation or inner connection, feel free to be with yourself in any way you need to.

Let's bring our attention to our breath, to our bodies, to whatever sensations are present.. Scan your body for any discomfort or contraction. Shift or change position if you need to, bring your breath to any tight places. Notice any places in your body where you feel good. Warm places, where your life energy is flowing and comfortable. Notice any places where your energy is blocked, where you feel discomfort. Notice how being in

a body involves contraction and expansion, pain and pleasure, energy flowing and energy being blocked.

Now imagine a line of energy flowing down from the sky through the center of your body down, down into the center of the earth. Good. You can just do this by imagining it or intending it. Take a moment to sense what it feels like to be aligned in this way...sense what a sacred space our human experience is -- a place where spirit and matter meet. Sense how vast your perspective is from this place of awareness. Sense how much you know, how much knowledge is available to you with this kind of consciousness. Allow yourself to know that through this alignment you can be connected to the deepest Wisdom of your body, heart, mind and spirit.

Join me now in tuning in to the power of us all being together in this room, all focused on an alignment with body and soul, earth and sky. Pause. Yes. **Let us know that this alignment and this sense of community supports each of us and indeed supports the evolution of all beings on our earth.**

HOT FLASHES

One Woman's Menopause/Body Mind Discoveries

Tight jeans or pantyhose can restrict the flow of blood and energy to the female organs.

Ingredients in diet sodas and **artificial sweeteners** can cause irritation in the urethra and bladder.

Acid foods and foods high in tyrosine, tyramine and tryptophan may increase urinary difficulties.

The herb **Chastetree** (sold as Vitex) is very helpful. **Evening Primrose Oil, Vitamin E, Flax Seed Oil, and Sardines** are great for balancing hormones, joint mobility, and keeping skin vibrant!

Women who use **lubricating creams** to ease irritation during sex, may discover they can't tolerate the preservatives in them. Any edible vegetable oil may be used. (Sesame oil is very light and soothing.)

Speaking of sex, the more you can have during menopause, the better! Being in loving connection with a partner is good medicine. If you don't have a partner, self love, a.k.a. masturbation, can also be very effective in increasing blood flow and circulation healing energy to the genital area, and providing an over all sense of well being.

If you follow an extremely **low fat diet** and you have **acid blood**, your body may need more particular kinds of fats, fish, meat and vegetables.

Fat digestion may be a problem; try smaller portions.

Estrogen is **stored in fat cells**. Women's bodies with five to ten extra pounds can use stored estrogen during menopause to aid estrogen-depleted areas.

Sugar and alcohol have harmful effects on the endocrine and immune systems, both of which may take a huge hit during menopause. Sugar use while taking HRT (Hormone Related Treatments) may contribute to cancer growth. Alcohol also stresses the bladder and urethra.

Hot tubs, hot baths and prolonged **hot showers** suppress the immune system and interfere with the regulation of the endocrine system. They may increase hot flashes as the body's internal thermostat struggles to find balance during menopause. **Cold rinsing** after hot water use can mitigate some of these difficulties.

Adequate sleep, rest and meditation all **support the kidneys** and **adrenal glands**, which take over some ovarian function at menopause.

Many women experience problems with digestion and regulating their blood sugar during HRT. **Licorice tea** greatly eases digestive difficulties, helps balance blood sugar and strengthens the immune system.

While **all forms of aerobic exercise are essential** for healthy hearts, minds, bones and immune systems, there is one exercise that menopausal women need more than any other, **the kegel**. This consists of **squeezing the pubococcygeus muscle** (also known as

the love muscle). This results in increased blood circulation, energy and consciousness to this area.

Spiritually, menopause is a kundalini like experience. In a hot flash, energy moves up the body toward the third eye. The spiritual and energetic changes women experience during menopause provide an enormous opportunity to increase wisdom, spiritual clarity, and connection to life purpose. **Meditation will help the nervous system integrate these powerful new energies.**

Previously unconscious material may come flooding into awareness during the transformational fire of menopause. This is a good time for journaling, dreamwork, and therapeutic support.

Author's Note!

Spring 2000

In June, 1994, shortly after I produced the Symposium and wrote this monograph, **I discovered the miracle of homeopathy.** The universe guided me to an experienced, homeopathic M.D., Sosamma George, who has guided me for the past 6 years to profound healing. I am now in the best health of my life. I have the most vitality, energy, clarity, love and enthusiasm I've ever experienced. **Post Menopausal Zest is real!**

Homeopathy is energetic medicine. We don't yet know why it works, yet countless accredited studies prove it does. You don't have to believe in it for it to be effective. It works on children and animals. (It is the medicine of choice of the British Royal Family!) While there are many helpful homeopathic menopause remedies sold at health food stores and some drug stores, for profound

healing you need an expert, experienced professional on your team.

I believe homeopathy is an enormous gift from Spirit for us. **Homeopathy works gently, with no side effects, to support and free up our own vital force.** Our own vital force then provides whatever healing we need.

My vibrations are, for the most part, gone. If I get too tired, eat too much sugar or alcohol, they may flare up briefly. I am taking no hormones, not even natural ones. I do continue to work with all the tips mentioned previously. I fare best with a low carb, moderate protein, and moderate fat diet.

In addition to my psychotherapy practice and teaching, I am embarking on a talk radio adventure. This Spring, I'll be launching, ***Woman Alive! A Show for Women and the Men Who Love them!*** on a local San Diego radio station. My goal is nationwide syndication. Check out my web at www.penelopetalk.com. for the latest news.

I send you all best wishes for your journey.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Penelope Young Andrade, LCSW, Ana Cara*, is a licensed psychotherapist, founder of the **San Diego Center for Psychosynthesis** and founder of **Transformational Talk Radio**. You can hear Penelope's Woman Alive! Minute on her website www.penelopetalk.com. She's had **30 years' experience** integrating the **best of traditional and alternative therapies** including: Family Systems, Psychosynthesis, Eidetic Imagery, Subtle Energy Work, Trauma Resolution, Living Meditation™, and the Relational Psychotherapy of the Stone Center.

Penelope received her MSW degree from Fordham University, completed an internship in Marriage and Family Therapy at Albert Einstein College of Medicine, pursued training in psychosynthesis in Canada and the U.S. and studied with Dr. Jean Houston and Dr. Peter Levine.

Penelope enjoys public speaking, leading workshops and women's groups. She is the **author of several monographs** including: Right Feeling: Doorway to Transformation, Reach Across Time, and Family of Origin. Penelope has produced an audio tape series, Let the Body Lead, and a video tape series, Session as Sacrament. Penelope also enjoys family time, mountain hiking, swimming, vegetables, flowers, trees, children, and Karaoke.

Penelope has **offices in Del Mar and Rancho Penasquitos**. For information, **call 858-481-5752**. Look for her Web site at www.penelopetalk.com.

*old Gaelic phrase meaning "Friend of the Soul"