

Chapter 19 — The Menopause

from the 1938 edition of *The Sex Life Before and After Marriage* (a.k.a. *Living a Sane Sex Life*)
by
William S. Sadler, M.D. and Lena K. Sadler, M.D.

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Sources for Chapter 19, in the order in which they first appear

- (1) Th. H. **Van de Velde**, M.D., *Ideal Marriage: Its Physiology and Technique* (New York: Random House Publishers, 1926, 1930)
- (2) William J. **Fielding**, *Sex and the Love-life* (New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1927)
- (3) Millard S. **Everett**, Ph.D., *The Hygiene of Marriage: A Detailed Consideration of Sex and Marriage* (New York: The Vanguard Press, 1932)
- (4) Havelock **Ellis**, *Psychology of Sex: A Manual for Students* (New York: Emerson Books, Inc., 1933, 1938)

Key

- (a) **Green** indicates where a source author (or an earlier Sadler book) first appears, or where he/she reappears.
- (b) **Yellow** highlights most parallelisms.
- (c) **Tan** highlights parallelisms not occurring on the same row, or parallelisms separated by yellowed parallelisms.
- (d) An underlined word or words indicates where the source and the Sadlers pointedly differ from each other.
- (e) **Pink** indicates passages where the Sadlers specifically share their own experiences, opinions, advice, etc.
- (f) **Light blue** indicates passages which strongly resemble something in the Urantia Book, or which allude to the Urantia phenomenon.

- (g) **Red** indicates either an obvious error on the Sadlers' part, brought about, in some cases, by miscopying or misinterpreting their source, or an obvious inconsistency brought about by the Sadlers' use of an earlier Sadler text.

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VI: SEXUAL PHYSIOLOGY OF THE ADULT WOMAN (Van de Velde 86)

III. *Ovarian Activity, Rhythm of Vital Manifestations in the Female Organism, and Menstruation* (Van de Velde 86)

The manner in which menstruation stops differs widely and individually.

In some cases the stoppage is heralded by a succession of long and profuse periods.

Again, the amount lost may become less and less, till it stops for a while, and then reappears.

In many women the menopause occurs abruptly, "at one blow."

Others, after an interval of longer or shorter duration, may again experience losses of blood (V 109-10).

[Uterine hemorrhage also has a significance in this connection as a possible indication of cancer in the internal generative organs ... After cessation of the menopause, any bleeding whatever, whether profuse or slight, should be considered a danger signal (Fielding 198).]

X I X — T H E MENOPAUSE

19:0.1 The conditions accompanying the cessation of menstruation are vastly different in different women.

Sometimes the menopause is ushered in by several lengthy periods with excessive flow.

In other cases the hemorrhage may gradually diminish, stopping for a time and then recurring.

Again, menstruation may stop abruptly.

In still other cases, cessation for a time may be followed by renewed hemorrhage.

This type of case demands careful attention,

for the supposed renewal of menstruation may be due to very serious uterine conditions.

Immediate consultation with a competent gynecologist is imperative.

SOURCE

[contd] As we have seen how immensely the function of the ovaries influences women's chemical processes (metabolism) and psychic states,

we shall readily understand that cessation of this function must affect all the activities of the organism.

The cyclic ebb and flow of maturity ceases, and the vital processes remain at a continuous level,

of a lesser degree of vigour and acuteness than the average of former years (V 110).

[contd] One of the signs of changes in metabolism is frequently increased development of fat all over the body.

Characteristic symptoms of the days of vital ebb, and menstruation, tend to appear in chronic form.

The disturbances of circulation are most trying.

They include sudden flushes and "waves of heat,"

the face becomes suddenly and deeply flushed;

perspiration is excessive and sudden,

there are palpitations, dizziness, vertigo, roaring in the ears and blackness before the eyes; all the signs of faintness (V 110).

19: LIVING A SANE SEX LIFE

19:0.2 Because the function of the ovaries has such a powerful influence on the metabolism and psychic state,

the cessation of menstruation also affects all the body activities.

The vital processes continue on a more or less stationary level,

less vigorous and active than during earlier years.

SYMPTOMS OF "THE CHANGE"

19:1.1 Increasing obesity is an indication that changes are occurring in metabolism.

Characteristic symptoms become chronic.

Circulatory disturbances are particularly trying.

Among them are "hot flashes,"

the face suddenly becoming deeply flushed;

excessive and sudden perspiration,

palpitation, dizziness, vertigo, roaring in the ears, blackness before the eyes, and the various symptoms of faintness.

SOURCE

[contd] The psychic symptoms during the change of life

may be not only painful but much more protracted and obstinate—corresponding to their cause—than similar disturbances just before and during the menstrual periods.

Caprice, excitability, increased impulsiveness combined with diminished power of reason and reflection, depression with a tendency to melancholia, are all frequent manifestations,

though generally remaining within the limits of what is excusable and endurable.

But in women who before this stage in their development have had no mental poise or stability of character,

in neurotics, in hysterical cases, and those whose heredity shows morbid tendencies—

the “change” causes a degree of psychic suffering and storm which is positively *dangerous* to themselves and others (V 110).

When the “change” has been successfully weathered, and the *menopause* established,

even in women who have had much to suffer during the “change,” an era of mental and psychic equanimity *should* and often *does* begin.

19: LIVING A SANE SEX LIFE

19:1.2 *Psychic symptoms* of the menopause,

while similar to those experienced just before and during menstruation, are painful and much more protracted and obstinate.

Such symptoms include: capriciousness, abnormal impulsiveness complicated by lessened reasoning and reflective ability, depression tendency toward melancholia;

these symptoms do not as a rule overstep the bounds of the excusable and endurable.

When the menopause comes to a woman who has previously lacked mental poise and stability of character,

to a neurotic, to hysterics, and to those with hereditary morbid tendencies—

in these cases the measure of psychic derangement is very serious, even dangerous.

19:1.3 After the climacteric has been successfully lived through and the menopause has been established,

a period of mental and psychic tranquillity should be, and often is, inaugurated, even in women who have suffered much.

SOURCE

Together with the steady level of bodily health, characteristic of women after middle life, this mental balance

forms a well-merited compensation of Nature for the extremely high biological demands on women during sexual maturity (V 111).

III: PHYSICAL HYGIENE OF SEX (Everett 46)

THE MENOPAUSE (Everett 53)

In cases of artificial menopause in which an abrupt change of life has been precipitated by the removal of the ovaries,

constant glandular treatment often effects a very satisfactory cure (Ev 53).

If one approaches the menopause with the realization that nervous instabilities are to be guarded against and that the sexual life does not necessarily cease

but that sexual pleasure is possible for a considerable number of years following,

especially if the woman has been accustomed to regular, satisfying sexual intercourse in previous years, then a large part of the usual superstitious fears will be removed (Ev 53).

19: LIVING A SANE SEX LIFE

This mental balance, with the uniform physical health which women after middle life so often enjoy,

is Nature's compensation for the excessive biological demands made on them during sexual maturity.

19:1.4 Even when the ushering in of the menopause is abrupt,

the disturbing symptoms so common to this period can often be greatly relieved by the administration of certain ovarian, or sex, hormones.

19:1.5 The sexual life of a woman need not completely stop at the menopause.

Sexual pleasure can be enjoyed throughout her lifetime,

particularly if she has had regular and satisfying intercourse before the climacteric.

MANAGEMENT OF THE MENOPAUSE

[Compare E 17, Ev 43, W 139 & F 186, and see 1:2.32.]

[The phenomenon of a “change of life” is not commonly associated with the man.... There is no question, however, that between the ages, approximately, of forty-five and fifty-five, man enters another epoch of life, and that every side of his personality reflects in some degree the change that takes place (Fielding 64).]

[Climacteric Psychosis. There is a common superstition to the effect that insanity is liable to occur at the menopause. A great deal of unnecessary worry and mental suffering have resulted from this fiction (Fielding 199).]

[Etiology [of Involution Melancholia].—Melancholia is essentially a disease of the period of involution—forty to fifty years in women, rarely before fifty in men....

The menopause seems to be an important etiological factor in women (William A. White, *Outlines of Psychiatry* [1932], p. 257).]

19:2.1 The average woman passes through the menopause (which comes to women between the ages of forty and fifty,

and to men between forty-five and fifty-five)

without any particular difficulty other than the experiencing of a few hot flashes.

Most of the troubles associated with the change of life are due to the fear which has been generated by stories of how women “went crazy during the change.”

There is a definite form of really serious mental and nervous trouble—

involution melancholia—

which appears now and then as a feature of the menopause,

but these cases are comparatively rare, though a type of *nervous perturbation* may appear.

VI: MARRIAGE (Ellis 256)

The Menopause (Ellis 317)

It is associated with changes in the functional activity of the endocrine glands,

and also in the autonomic nervous system,

with consequent emotional, vasomotor, and nervous symptoms, of which palpitations and flushing are found specially unpleasant and are due not so much to heightened blood pressure as to oscillations in that pressure (E 317).

[See Ev 53.]

On the psychic side

it is inevitable that the “change of life,” the realization of the fact—which she has perhaps tried to postpone—that she is no longer young,

should make a deep impression on a woman (E 318).

[Compare E 318.]

19:2.2 This condition is brought about by the readjustments which are then taking place in the endocrine glands,

and it concerns the behavior of the sympathetic nervous system

and most often is manifested as heart flutterings, face flushing,

and other feelings of restlessness, with bizarre sensations in different parts of the body.

Many of these superficial symptoms are almost immediately relieved by some form of ovarian preparation.

19:2.3 There is a psychic side to passing through the change.

Both men and women sometimes suddenly wake up to the fact that they are no longer young.

This seems to make an especially deep impression upon women.

The single woman becomes more than usually self-conscious about her status in life, and the married woman becomes apprehensive about holding the affections of her husband.

More particularly mothers, whose children are by this time grown up, perhaps even married, are saddened by the realization of a peculiar isolation, especially if, during the period of rearing the children, they neglected to be play fellows with their husbands, so that now, with the children leaving home, they are **inexpressibly lonely**.

19:2.4 Certain women, at the appearance of the menopause, become **suddenly** and **increasingly** interested in their sexual lives.

With the cessation of the menopause they no longer fear pregnancy. There is no further need to practice any bothersome method of birth control, and since the menopause in no way affects the sex desire of females,

There is thus sometimes a **sudden increased sexual activity**, with occasionally an unwonted tendency to be attracted to some new man and to make advances to him (E 318).

some married women indulge in such an outbreak of **sexual activity**

as to perturb their husbands, who may feel quite inadequate, because of their declining sexual powers, to meet

Yet we have to recognize that the period of the menopause may sometimes be marked by such disturbances in the sexual psychic life, especially **exacerbation of desire**—

this sudden and unexpected **exacerbation of the sex drive**,

a **final flare of the generative flame**—

what one writer called “a **finale of the generative flame**.”

SOURCE

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perhaps accompanied by various caprices and suspicions and occasionally by actual deviations of the sexual impulse.

In married women the results are often aggravated by the fact that the husband is at this time beginning to lose sexual power,

and his affection for his wife has entered into a stage of peaceful affection rendering it difficult for him to respond to her renewed ardor,

which thus tends to go into other directions and perhaps to assume the form of jealousy (E 318-19).

Hofstätter remarks that there become visible not only some physical male characteristics

but what he terms “a surprising approximation to masculine habits and ways of thought:

19:2.5 It must also be recorded that many times during these *sexual flare-ups* accompanying the change of life,

numerous minor abnormalities appear,

and even in the average case,

where the husband is experiencing a decline of sexual power,

his failure to meet the increased sex demands of his wife

causes her to become jealous.

She recalls the years in which she was not able to give him one-half of what he desired by way of sexual gratification, and now that she feels really awakened to do her full duty in this regard, failure of her husband's response frequently suggests that he may be indulging his sex urge in forbidden pleasures.

19:2.6 Some women, after passing the change of life, not only take on masculine characteristics of a physical nature,

but their mental behavior much more closely resembles the masculine pattern.

clarity, objectivity, a sense for conceptions of abstract justice, toleration, **business aptitude**, general **social** as well as **political aptitudes**" (E 319-20).

There is no doubt about the increased intellectual activity of women at this age and the active **careers** of many women of distinction may only be said to have begun after **the sexual reproductive period was over**.

There are, indeed, some women who at this time use their increased activities in striving to interfere with the activities of their growing-up children, especially to dominate their daughters, if unmarried and still within the home-circle ... (E 320).

It is a debated question how far there can be said to be any period in men corresponding to the menopause. If so it is certainly vague,

as indeed is sufficiently indicated by the fact that the **sperm-secreting function** has no necessary final term and **may be continued to advanced old age**, even in one reported case to the age of 103.

They often develop

keen **business aptitude**, enter **politics**, or become very active in **social** leadership.

Many married women take up **careers** after the menopause and the marriage of their children.

The reproductive period of life being over, they enter into new creative spheres of social or business activity.

Other women who do not find these new outlets for their postmenopause life become *mischief-makers*,

developing a heightened interest in their married sons and daughters

and often becoming a great menace as meddling mothers-in-law.

19:2.7 It is very difficult to identify the masculine menopause

since the **sperm-secreting function** is **continued to an advanced old age**.

Since Kurt Mendel called attention to the point, such a phenomenon, corresponding to the menopause in women, has been widely recognized, though Krafft-Ebing and others have **denied** it (E 320).

We cannot, however, speak strictly of a "male menopause." On this ground Marañón prefers the term "**critical age,**"

meaning thereby a stage of **organic evolution,** having permanently at its center the extinction or diminution of active genital life, although this is not the axis on which it turns (E 320-21).

[Compare E 321 and 5:4.1-2.]

In **abnormal** cases

there may be **exhibitionism,** the sexual attraction to young girls,

or, sometimes, taking a **homosexual** turn ("retarded homosexuality"), to boys (E 321).

Some physicians **deny** there is such a thing as the male climacteric,

but most modern medical men recognize this so-called "**critical age.**"

In the male it seems to be more a matter of

the **organic evolution** of endocrine readjustment,

of the preparation of the organism to approach the changed conditions and relationships of advanced age.

In certain neurotic and psychically unstable individuals the male menopause is characterized by queer behavior. Men who have heretofore been serious-minded, sober, and circumspect, suddenly begin drinking to excess and distracting their families and associates by their shocking sex misbehavior.

In the more serious and **abnormal** types,

for *involution melancholia* appears in the male as well as the female,

there may develop, in connection with other mental and nervous aberrations, a tendency toward **exhibitionism** and a peculiar attraction for young girls.

Many times a latent **homosexual** trend is observed.

SOURCE

Hirschfeld believes that this phenomenon is specially marked in unmarried men and widows, and Max Marcuse in sexually inadequate men (E 321).

Still it may induce a number of minor psychic traits of disagreeable character—irritability, meanness, miserliness, etc.—corresponding to traits found in women at the same period.

It may also lead to a wider and calmer outlook on life, the psychic changes involved, however, being more endogenous, more within, on account of the normally greater activity of men in the world, than with women.

There may be, as Rankin put it, “a new lease of life,” even though on a plane of lessened activities,

modified ambitions, and a chastened philosophy (E 322).

19: LIVING A SANE SEX LIFE

The masculine menopause is most likely to appear among unmarried men and widowers.

19:2.8 In the average, or more normal, type

the menopause brings about, after the passing of this nervous irritability,

a more settled and stabilized nervous behavior, a calmer view of life.

Many individuals do their best work after this period;

while their activities may be lessened quantitatively,

they are characterized by new enthusiasms,

controlled ambitions, and a wider and broader philosophy of life.