

Sparking a  
new chapter of  
brilliance and  
resilience.

 **MENOPOWER**

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# **MenoPower** **Eliminating Gender Bias in the Workplace**

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# Story Title: I've reclaimed my joy for living: Joanne's story

## Background Information

Age range: Not explicitly stated (adult)

Country/region: United Kingdom

Employment sector or life context: Experienced surgical menopause after major surgery

Stage of menopause: Surgical/Induced menopause

## Personal story

Joanne's menopause journey was triggered suddenly when major surgery forced her body into an overnight hormonal change. She was unprepared for the emotional and physical aftermath: hot flushes, joint pain, extreme mood swings, and overwhelming anxiety hit her hard. Joanne was frightened by how distant she became from the person she once was, vibrant and full of life. The loss of joy, hope, and connection to things she loved was powerfully disorienting.

For a long time, Joanne struggled alone. Overwhelmed by the stigma around menopause and fearing judgment at work, she isolated herself and quietly suffered. The turning point came when, at her lowest, she discovered a support group and realized she was not alone. Through honest conversations, medical advice, and learning more about treatment options, including HRT, Joanne began to feel herself again.

Gradually, with support and the right information, Joanne's joy returned. She felt more energetic and optimistic than she had in years, and the experience inspired her to support others and advocate for mental health in menopause. She now proudly tells others: "Menopause may have changed me, but it didn't end my ability to live fully."

## Key takeaways

- Surgical menopause can hit especially hard and often comes with unique emotional challenges.
- Stigma around menopause and mental health can lead to isolation, but reaching out can be life-changing.
- Peer support, community groups, and the right healthcare can help you reclaim your life.
- You are not alone, even if you feel like you are, there are others who understand.

There is always hope for renewed happiness, purpose, and connection.

## Reflections/Message to others:



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“Ask for help, talk about what you’re going through, and don’t be afraid to reach out. It may feel dark for a while, but with support and knowledge, you can find your way back to yourself, and even discover new joys.”

## Supplementary Material:

[“I’ve reclaimed my joy for living”](#) – Joanne's Story, Rethink Mental Illness



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