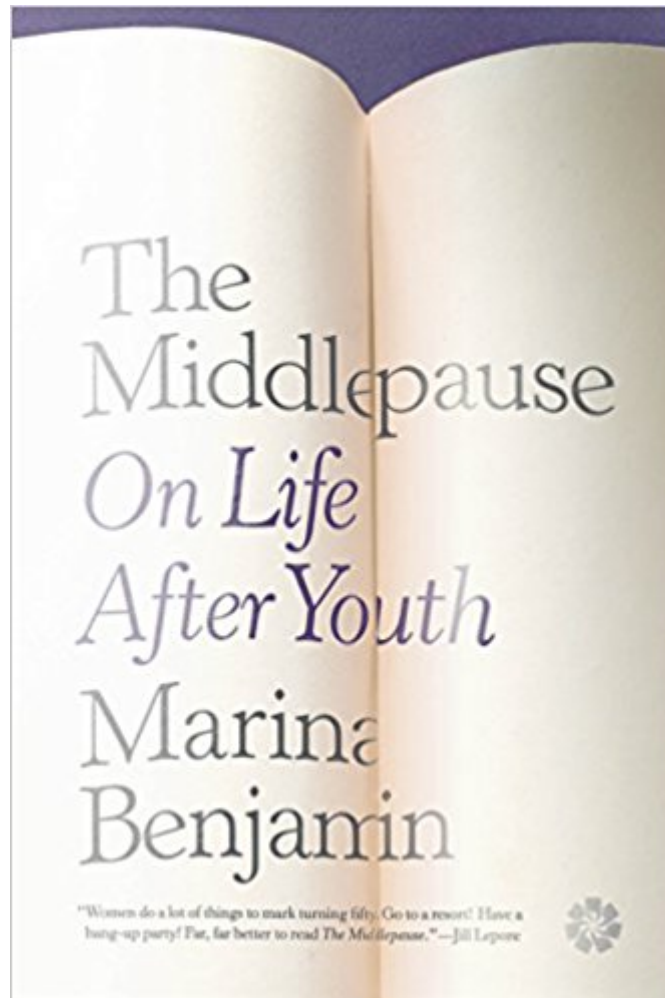




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# The Middlepause: On Life After Youth



## Synopsis

"In *The Middlepause* Benjamin deftly and brilliantly examines the losses and unexpected gains she experienced in menopause. Menopause is a mind and body shift as monumental and universal as puberty, yet far less often discussed, especially in public, which is what makes Benjamin's work here so urgently necessary." —Kate Tuttle, *The Los Angeles Times*

*The Middlepause* offers a vision of contentment in middle age, without sentiment or delusion. Marina Benjamin weighs the losses and opportunities of our middle years, taking inspiration from literature, science, philosophy, and her own experience. Spurred by her surgical propulsion into a sudden menopause, she finds ways to move forward while maintaining clear-eyed acknowledgment of the challenges of aging. Attending to complicated elderly parents and a teenaged daughter, experiencing bereavement, her own health woes, and a fresh impetus to give, Benjamin emerges into a new definition of herself as daughter, mother, citizen, and woman. Among *The Middlepause*'s many wise observations about no longer being young: "I am discovering that I care less about what other people think." "My needs are leaner and my storehouse fuller." "It is not possible to fully appreciate what it means to age without attending to what the body knows. . . . I have always had a knee-jerk distaste for the idea that age is all in the mind." "You need a cohort of peers to go through the aging process with you. A cackle of crones! A cavalry!" *Marina Benjamin's* memoir will serve as a comfort, a companion to women going through the too-seldom-spoken of physical and mental changes in middle age and beyond.

## Book Information

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Memoirs > Specific Groups > Women

## Customer Reviews

Praise for *The Middlepause* by Marina Benjamin "In *The Middlepause* Benjamin deftly and brilliantly

examines the losses and unexpected gains she experienced in menopause. Menopause is a mind and body shift as monumental and universal as puberty, yet far less often discussed, especially in public, which is what makes Benjamin's work here so urgently necessary." â• Kate Tuttle, The Los Angeles Times "Women do a lot of things to mark turning fifty. Go to a resort! Have a bang-up party! Far, far better: read *The Middlepause*." â• Jill Lepore, staff writer for The New Yorker and author of *The Secret History of Wonder Woman* "Eloquent and intelligent . . . This is a measured and beautifully written critique of menopause and middle age that pre-, mid-, and postmenopausal women will find eminently relatable, and that those who love and care for them will likewise appreciate." â• Publishers Weekly, starred review "Piercingly intelligent and bracingly honest." â• Barnes & Noble Review "We are not supposed to beguile, we the middle-aged women. But with *The Middlepause*, Marina Benjamin does that: she beguiles and entrances with a lyrical, thoughtful, erudite, and always lucid exploration of the middle years of her life, and what they mean to her, and what middle-aged women mean to society." â• Rose George, author of *Ninety Percent of Everything* and *The Big Necessity* "Intimate, open-hearted, clever and kind, this book is a companion which, by naming the shadow fears, finds the truer gold." â• Jay Griffiths, author of *The Wild: An Elemental Journey* "While *The Middlepause* is indeed intellectual and cultivated, Benjamin also speaks directly to a sense of communal, lived experience. . . . She writes so perceptively about the familiar that she effortlessly freshens and elevates it." â• Isabel Berick, Financial Times "I loved this candid and beautifully written 'wrinkles and all' meditation on the middle years." â• Caroline Sanderson, The Bookseller, "Editor's Choice" "Benjamin takes the process of self-help thoughtfully. For starters, to recognise change, rather than deny it, is to begin to deal with it." â• Iain Finlayson, Saga Magazine "For emotional honesty, look to a midlife memoir from Marina Benjamin." â• Tom Gatti, The New Statesman, "The books to look out for in 2016" "This gentle but honest book should be standard reading for friends and loved-ones of women trying to make sense of this transitional stage in life." â• Sue Wright, The Malcontent "Lucid and sophisticated. . . . *The Middlepause* is a restrained but wonderful guide to the convulsive changes of 50 and over. . . . This is a book that yields valuable insights on almost every page." â• Melissa Benn, The Guardian "In *The Middlepause*, Marina Benjamin takes a candid look at what it means to be 50 today. . . . It's warm, wise and beautifully written." â• Good Housekeeping (UK) "This book does not contain advice on diet, yoga, emollients or wardrobe makeovers. Marina Benjamin instead pursues an intellectual perspective of her journey to 50. . . . As a means of inducting younger women into the business of getting older, this is a welcome narrative." â• Deirdre Conroy, Irish Independent "The *Middlepause* isn't some deluding self-help book that insists middle-age is a time of great growth for us all. It's an accurate and

thoughtful assessment of the credit and debit sheet, and it remains emotionally genuine throughout.  
... This is a thoughtful, compassionate and wise book." â •Shiny New Books

Marina Benjamin is the author of two previous memoirs, *Rocket Dreams*, short-listed for the Eugene Emme Award, and *Last Days in Babylon*, long-listed for the Wingate Prize. She lives in London and is currently a senior editor at the digital magazine Aeon.

honest description of women health a must read intelligent

When I came across this book I was thrilled to find a door opening into my wife's menopausal experience. For those of us outside this profound change, Benjamin's is likely to be the best description we have: she leaves us with insight, understanding, and empathy. Her account -- well crafted, solidly researched, and thoughtfully tied to broader reflections on middle age -- can be read with profit and appreciation by anyone, perhaps especially husbands. I'm very glad I read it and have shared parts of it with my wife. My admiration for the book is tempered, though, by an important omission. Despite many personal details, Benjamin seems to have been unable to process -- or, at least, to tell us about -- the impact her menopause had \*on others.\* Menopause is a big deal for everyone in the spousal relationship, in the family. Addressing this subject would have given the book a powerful further dimension. The mysteries and fate of desire after menopause are merely one area that would have benefited from her searchlight.

A beautifully-written meditation on middle age. If that doesn't sound like a thrilling read, let me say that Benjamin turns her everyday experiences into gold. Menopause is a marker, but so is the aging and death of a parent, the gathering of siblings, and all the superficially mall but deeply felt occasions of life. This is a must-read, whether you are in this time of life or not. It's the autobiography of an "ordinary woman" at a significant turning point in her life. We need more books like this! Brilliant, insightful, delightful, empathetic.

First, Ms. Marina is a gifted writer. Wow. Secondly, Ms. Marina, the rest of this review is drafted for you. A direct message to you. Thank you. I'm only on chapter "Heart" having worked my way through organs, hormones, skin, and muscle. There are few thoughts (in the text) that I have not had since the decline of estrogen. But all these thoughts were fragmented and lacking clarity. You pulled them together so beautifully. I needed your book. It's a key that unlocks doors, Ms. Marina.

Forever grateful.

While a memoir about menopause is not my usual reading material, "The Middlepause" immediately captured my attention and held it throughout. Marina Benjamin tells her story frankly and in such relatable fashion that I would recommend this book to anyone--whether you have a uterus or not.

Gave it as a gift.

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