

Becoming Real: Harnessing the Power of Menopause for Health and Success by Rose Kumar, M.D.

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Why is the menopausal transition so difficult for women in America? Why do we experience menopausal symptoms in epidemic proportions? How can women safely transform through their midlife transitions? How can they be intrinsically empowered and not dismissed with synthetic hormones and psychiatric medications?

As a physician, I am awed by the physiology of menopause. It is biologically precise and has common elements that all women share. In this book, I have explored these physical aspects in addition to uncovering the inner life of the midlife woman. She begins to feel her truth and power arise within her through feelings that facilitate her connection to her real self. This is illustrated through stories of midlife women and how their symptoms and processes created a “course correction” where they were able to step away from an adapted to a more authentic path with guidance from their intense feelings, instincts and intuitions. I have also presented my framework of the “Four Body System.” This framework provides an understanding of how symptoms that present at physical and mental levels may have their origins at emotional and energetic levels. An understanding of these levels is important so that one can seek the appropriate care needed for healing. This can accelerate the restoration of well-being on the journey towards true health and wholeness in midlife.

Women’s Health is currently defined by our traditional medical system through a lens of pathology. I have replaced this with a transformational lens, where it becomes evident that an open system for healthy transformation and balance is critical for safe guidance through the territory of midlife. I have presented many stories of courage and healing from women’s lives—ordinary, midlife women like you and me. During their midlife transitions, these women redefined and reframed themselves from feeling like victims to feeling empowered and free.

As midlife women, we have an immense and important opportunity to help our hurting world. Our world-systems need to transform from closed into open ones in order to heal the chaos and separation that has created suffering for all. Facilitating this transformation will require our collective effort.

My hope is that this book will awaken us to question our normalized, unhealthy and adapted lives that long for meaning, and encourage us to redefine our understanding of health. We need to heal the cultural wounds that perpetuate the *illusion* of health and

integrate and live from its true definition. We need to engage our courage to transform our closed systems into open ones committed to growth and empowerment. This powerful work transcends race, color, religion, gender and nationality. It is the sacred and true work of our time.

My intent is to evoke creative thought which facilitates us to question the “status quo” as defined by the current and prevailing paradigm of the “power principle” whose presence is central to maintaining our current closed systems. Our questioning is necessary for both our personal and organizational health and healing.

My hope is to encourage the beginning of a dialogue that can transform our current definition of Women’s Health which does not value empowerment or feeling function, into one that is inclusive of these elements. At its heart, this redefinition will be restorative and healing, and acknowledge the death-and-life cycle of transformation as a necessary part of our personal and collective growth. This redefinition can only occur by reintegrating the Feminine Principle into our relationships and our current systems.

This courageous and necessary work has the potential to heal the deep wounds in our culture and transform the shape and feeling of our personal and professional lives. Ultimately, this could also transform our health care system into one we can trust again for our healing.