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Menopause Imagery

Welcome to this Healthy Living To Go podcast from Kaiser Permanente, designed to fit the way you live and the way you learn. Listen, live well, and thrive.

I'm Belleruth Naparstek, and this is guided imagery designed to help you with menopause.

Guided imagery is gentle but powerful. It's been shown to help increase self mastery and self awareness; reduce the discomfort of many change of life symptoms; improve energy and self-esteem; stabilize mood; reduce anxiety and fatigue; and enhance personal growth and wellness.

For all these reasons, it's a wonderful tool for helping with the very natural ups and downs of menopause and peri-menopause, whether it happens naturally or from surgery. This audio will complement any treatment approach or wellness regimen you are already on.

Try to listen to this once or twice a day for several weeks. You'll find that over time it will have a stronger and stronger effect. Different parts of this will probably capture your attention at different times. Always feel free to ignore or change whatever doesn't suit you. Your unconscious mind will probably do that for you anyway.

You don't need to pay perfect attention for this to work. In fact, your mind will probably drift in and out naturally. You may even fall asleep while listening, and it will still have an effect, especially with repeated listening. If you notice your mind wandering, you can gently guide it back.

And because this imagery is designed to create a relaxed mind state, it's best not to play it while driving. But you can listen to the affirmations any time. And don't worry if this brings forth some unexpected emotion. That just means it's working for you in a deep way.

By positioning your hands the same way each time you listen, you'll establish a kind of conditioning cue. Later, you'll be able to use this physical gesture to move very quickly into a place of calm self-mastery.

So for now, see if you can take this next while, to commit yourself to this process of engaging the power of your imagination to help you heal... by gently immersing yourself in this safe and easy process... all you have to do is settle in, relax and let yourself listen...

To begin with, see if you can take a moment to adjust your position, shifting your weight so that your body feels well supported...

And gently allowing your eyes to close ...

Letting your hands rest comfortably on your body... on your chest or midriff or abdomen... so you can feel the rise of your body when you breathe in... and the way it settles back down when you

breathe out. ... So more and more, you're becoming attuned to the steady rhythm of your breath moving in and out of your body...

Breathing in as fully as you comfortably can... and breathing out, completely and easily... and with the next in-breath, imagining that you're sending the healing energy of the breath to any part of your body that's sore or tense or tight... and releasing the tension with the exhale.... so you can feel your breath, going to any uncomfortable places... warming and loosening and softening them... and releasing them with the exhale...

Breathing into any unwelcome thoughts or worries... (pause) ..and breathing them out with the exhale... more and more, able to quiet your mind with the steady power of the breath... so that for just a moment, you are blessed with stillness...

Breathing into any emotions you might be feeling... as they rise and subside on the waves of powerful hormones washing through you ... and releasing them with the out-breath... so more and more, you're allowing the steady rhythm of the breath to bring balance and calm.... becoming peaceful and quiet... like a lake with no ripples...

And just taking a moment to settle into your body... your oldest friend... your steadiest companion... understanding that even in this time of change... your body is guided by its own, built-in intelligence... that it knows how to do this... and remains your trusted ally....

Breathing in and out... deeply and easily... and you might begin to notice a tingling in the air all around you... the pleasant, subtle sensation of energy on your skin... tingling and vibrating... as if you were surrounded and protected by a magical cushion of air.... alive with humming energy... tiny, vibrant waves of it, sparkling and dancing with light and color, all around you...

(pause)

And now, see if you can imagine that this cushion of energy is drawing to it all the love and sweetness that has ever been felt for you by anyone at any time... pulling in all the caring, all the loving kindness that has ever been sent your way... every prayer and good wish... every smile and gesture of gratitude... every nod of acknowledgement and respect... permeating and filling the field of energy around you.. pulling it all in like a powerful magnet... calling every good wish home... and so increasing the protective field of power around you...

And perhaps sensing too the presence of helpers and guides in this cushion of energy... those who love and protect you... who wish you well... and you might notice a circle of wise and loving women around you, who have already made this journey... mothers and grandmothers, sisters and aunts... from many generations.... some familiar, some not ... coming around you now, nodding and smiling, to lend you their encouragement... their friendship and laughter... welcoming you into their circle and this magical time...

And so you sense them around you now... kind and wise, knowing and steady ... remembering their own transition... and for some it was uncomfortable... and for others it was easy... but all came through it, to arrive at their own place of balance and knowing... and now they are here to help you make the journey... into the power and mystery of this time...

Understanding that the waves of heat flushing through you... are burning off whatever no longer serves you... purifying your being... tempering your strength... and distilling your purpose ... so you can share the full measure of your gifts... and become the instrument you were born to be...

And so you can breathe into the powerful energy surging through you... allowing the exhale to help it move through you... and release.... letting the breath bring you back into balance...

And so too with the shifts in mood... the sudden lift or drop in your spirits.... or your energy... the changes in your memory and attention... all of these natural swings can be evened with the power of the breath... until your body reaches the new rhythm it is destined for ... and settles itself again....

And you know... that these are your witnesses... the wise ones who understand the value of moving deeper and deeper into yourself... to rediscover the mystery of your body.... the wisdom of your senses.... and the richness of your deepest knowing....

The ones who have known the emergence of the fire and courage of this time... who've already returned to the clear spirit of girlhood.... And they are here to be with you now... as you find your voice... embrace your spirit... value your body.... and come all the way home to yourself....

And so they gather around you, these helpers and guides... holding gifts and signs... garments and symbols... to help you discard the outworn parts of your self... and welcome you into the lustrous magic of this powerful time... when you will emerge stronger and clearer and freer than you have ever been before...

And you can breathe, deeply and fully, inhaling all the love and care around you.... and breathing out fully and easily... understanding that your breath is your instrument... the rudder that will hold you steady... as you ride the choppy waves of change... using the power of the inhale and the energy of the exhale to balance your body... clear your mind... calm your nerves... lift your spirits... and even lull you back to sleep when your dreams are interrupted...

So more and more, you can turn your attention to breathing in, and breathing out... slowly and fully... deeply and easily.... Understanding that this is the route back to your center... whenever the shifting tides in your body jar you loose from your peaceful center...

One of them approaches you, and, with kind and wise eyes, nods and gently touches the center of your chest... sending soft waves of comfort deep into your heart... solace for whatever losses need to be grieved... for all the outgrown people and outlived places... for opportunities lost... for roads not taken... for whatever needs to be acknowledged, and grieved and cleared away...

And it might be the memory of your own careless beauty... or the grace and ease of youthful limbs.... or a limitless future waiting to be lived... it might be the heart-stopping passion that held your will hostage ... or perhaps it's the memory of the soft, fragrant necks of babies... or all the dearly loved people no longer with you...

And so you're given the space to feel it all... while waves of change washing through your body work to shake you loose from your old self... and make room for the new.... Cleansed by waves of heat and sweat... leaving you fresh and new... and readying you for the next stage...

You feel something soft being placed around your shoulders... perhaps a shawl, or a robe... but like no other.... because it's light and glowing and tingling with energy... and you can sense its healing magic wrap your body in comforting calm...soaking strength and power into your skin... permeating muscle and tissue and bone... all the way down into each and every cell.... and you can feel your bones soaking up the strength... becoming more vibrant and dense... as they draw energy from the soft, glowing mantle...

And so too the muscle of your back and limbs...your neck and hands and feet... the steady muscle of your heart... absorbing strength and nourishment all through your body... becoming stronger and more resilient... more efficient and capable... better able to produce heat and growth, motion and power.... better and better able to support this powerful time your life...

Readying you for the time when all the lush fluids of your body are yours to keep, to use for yourself... and your body is newly balanced and purified... still sensual and sensate... still in tune with your own sexuality.... but steady and balanced and even... filled with a new kind of feminine energy and vitality... and infused with an inner-lit beauty that radiates from deep within each and every cell, through and through.... glowing with the incandescent light of your awakened spirit....

And suddenly you are certain... you know with your whole heart, your whole being... that your body is leading you home... that a time is coming when you will see with your clearest vision...and speak with your truest voice.... and share the wondrous gifts of your heart and your hands....

And so you can appreciate yourself, just as you are, right now, in this very moment... and appreciate your body... your oldest friend, your steadiest companion... and perhaps beginning to comprehend its true beauty, its awesome intelligence, and its faithful service to you...

You again become aware of the support all around you... you might even see a nod, a smile, a gesture... maybe hear an approving murmur, an encouraging phrase... perhaps a touch on your shoulder... And you know that they are your witnesses ... your private cheering section... yours to call forth whenever you wish...

And so... feeling peaceful and easy... ... you can once again feel yourself in the center of your body... strong and balanced and steady... feeling your feet on the floor, your hands in your lap, your breath in your belly...

And so... very gently and with soft eyes... allowing yourself to come back into the room whenever you are ready.... knowing in a deep place that you are better for this...

And so you are....

AFFIRMATIONS

Affirmations are positive statements designed for repeated listening, a sort of reprogramming of your unconscious mind to combat negative thinking. Over time, they can have a profound, cumulative effect. Some people find them easier to work with than guided imagery.

See if you can listen to each statement in a state of open, relaxed attention, breathing in deeply as you hear each one, and breathing out as you repeat it to yourself, either aloud or in your mind.

I know there are times I become moody, anxious, angry or sad, and I accept what I feel as my inner truth of the moment.

I know that the more I can acknowledge and accept what I feel, the more I can return to a place of peace, balance and calm.

More and more, I can soften around my feelings and release them... breathing in to soften them, and breathing out to release them.

When I remember to feel my breath moving in and out of my body, slow and steady, I return to my own inner peace, balance and calm.

More and more, I can allow myself to let go of worrying about things I cannot control, and focus on my own inner peacefulness.

I am better and better able to ride the waves of hormones, washing through my body, by focusing on my breath and my own inner peacefulness.

More and more, I see that when I accept myself, without criticism or blame, the more I return to my own inner peace, balance and calm.

I know that when I let go of harsh expectations and unrealistic demands, I return to my own inner peace, balance and calm.

I know that when I allow myself to grieve for what is past, the more I can welcome and embrace my future.

I give myself the space to grieve for all that is gone, in order to clear the space for this new time. More and more, I understand that my body is my ally, my oldest friend and my steadiest companion.

I know that I am better and better able to listen to my body and sense what it needs. I'm better able to seek out people and places that are nourishing to me, and avoid those don't serve me.

I know that when I appreciate my body, respect it and take good care of it, I return to my own inner peace, balance and calm.

I thank my body for all it has done for me in the past and all it will do for me in the future.

I am learning to trust my body and to appreciate its wisdom.

More and more, I am able to let go of confused, distorted standards that overvalue youthfulness and surface beauty.

More and more I know that even in this time of great change, my body is guided by its own built in, impeccable intelligence.

I know that this is a time for my body to balance and ready itself for the next powerful stage of my life.

I welcome the time I can keep all the lush fluids of my body, and use them to nourish my own life.

I welcome the return of my own creativity, guided by the clarity of my own inner knowing.

I know that when waves of heat and sweat flush through me, they are burning off whatever is irrelevant or extraneous to my life.

I know that this is a time for tempering my strength and distilling my sense of purpose.

I know that this is the time for me to transition, from someone who has been the object of vision, to someone who is a voice to be heard.

I know that this is the time for me to deepen the definition of my own beauty.

I know that I am lit from within by a luminous glow that comes from the power of my awakened spirit.

I know that my feminine essence will always fill each and every cell of my body.

I celebrate my willingness to move through this time with love and respect for my mind, body and spirit.

I welcome the courage, clarity, power and vision of this next phase of my life.

I know that the changes in mood, energy and focus are a natural part of this process; and that I can find my balance with the power of my breath.

I welcome this time of my life, as I move deeper and deeper into myself, discovering more and more of who I am.

I affirm my intention to support and care for this body of mine, my faithful ally, in spite of its alleged imperfections.

More and more, I am learning to be gentle and considerate toward myself.

More and more, I am saving my energy for what truly matters to me.

I know that this is the time for me to feel the freedom that comes with discarding the outworn parts of my life.

I welcome my ability to cushion myself from jarring events, modulating my responses with the power of the breath.

I know that my breath is the rudder that will hold me steady, as I ride the choppy waves of change.

More and more, I am using the power of the in-breath and the outbreath to balance my body, clear my mind, calm my nerves and lift my spirits.

When my sleep is interrupted, I can use the soft rhythm of my own breath to return to sleep, gently and easily.

I welcome my awakened awareness of my own worth and beauty.

I welcome my ability to follow the wisdom of my body, telling me to rest, respect my needs, pace my energy and take gentle good care of myself.

More and more I can appreciate the inborn power of my body's beauty, intelligence, and ability to thrive during this time of change.

I know that I am less and less influenced by the opinions of others, as I move deeper and deeper into the wisdom of my body.

I know that my body is leading me home, to my truest, deepest self.

More and more I'm able to savor the gifts of the present. More and more, I can appreciate the beauty of my own being.

More and more, I can take the time to touch a leaf, smell the morning air, and receive the caress of a soft breeze on my face.

I welcome the pleasant feel of my body as it moves, stretches, breathes, rests and settles in for sleep.

More and more, I can take pleasure in the simple joys of living.

I know that when I am fully engaged in the present, I return to my own inner peace, balance and calm.

I know that when I feel the joy of doing what comes from my heart, I return to my own inner peace, balance and calm.

I welcome my new awareness of the peaceful power in my heart, the seat of my strength, and the home of my spirit.

More and more, I can be true to myself, judge by my own standards, and listen to the voice of my heart. I salute the calming action of my own breath.

I can see and feel radiant sunlight, entering my body, sending peaceful joy and sweet healing deep into my body.

I can see and feel a powerful blue-green wave of healing, washing through me from head to toe, clearing away any unwanted debris and taking it out with the tide I can see and feel a soft, glowing shawl of magical comfort surrounding me, gently infusing me with its rich, nourishing energy.

I can feel strength and power softly infusing muscle and tissue and bone.

I can feel my bones soaking up the healing energy, becoming vibrant, resilient and strong.

I can see and feel the fibers of my muscles soaking up the healing energy, becoming stronger and more flexible.

I can see and feel my circulation increasing inside and around my muscle and bone, bringing nourishment and strength to enrich my tissue.

I can see and feel vital energy and fluids, nourishing my heart and keeping it strong and steady.

More and more, I can feel myself getting stronger, building muscle, gathering energy & power, a clear mind and a joyful heart.

More and more I can celebrate the sensual richness and lush sexuality of my own body.

I know that when this transition is complete, a balanced calm will settle all through my body, and a joyful spirit will inform my actions.

I look forward to entering the welcoming circle of wise and powerful women who surround and assist me now.

I thank all the prayers and good wishes that have been sent my way, enveloping me in powerful protection and support.

I invite assistance from my friends and loved ones, past, present and future, to lend me their help and strength.

I sense the presence of allies all around me, offering encouragement and support, balance and guidance, friendship and laughter.

I can feel the love and care of friends and loved ones all around me, applauding my arrival into this powerful time of my life.

I know that I am surrounded and supported by invisible forces, blessing my dreams and affirming my strength.

More and more, I can feel my mind getting clearer, my body stronger, my heart fuller and my energy freer.

I know that in the years to come, I will be seeing with my clearest vision and speaking with my truest voice.

I know that in the years to come, I will be sharing the wondrous gifts of my heart and my hands.

I know that this is the time to reclaim the passion and zest of my girlhood, combined with the power and wisdom that I possess now.

I know I have things to do, purposes to accomplish, gifts to give, and I require a strong body, a clear mind and a free spirit for this.

And I am perfectly, utterly safe.

And so you are...