

# MENOPAUSE

SEASON 2

## SHIFT

WITH P. S. BLOSSOM





## Narrative Change SHIFT with P.S. Blossom

The US has a complex history with race, reproduction, and class, which leads to negative health outcomes for women and other birthing people of color. Dominant public narratives surrounding these health outcomes do not always reflect the perspectives, voices, or lived experiences of women and other birthing people of color. The P.S. Blossom podcast explores issues at the intersections of reproductive justice and capital with a specific focus on the autonomy of women and other birthing people of color.

SHIFT with P.S. Blossom is a guide that accompanies each topic covered in the P.S. Blossom podcast. It provides a reproductive justice approach to controversial conversations. We encourage readers to actively participate in SHIFT-ing the Narrative by sharing personal stories and lived experiences in their communities.

## Menopause

A person reaches menopause 12 months after their last period. However, menopause is also known as a spectrum. The menopausal transition most often begins between ages 45 and 55, and can last up to 14 years. The duration can depend on lifestyle factors such as smoking, age, and race/ethnicity. Causes of early menopause include hysterectomies, hormonal replacement therapy, some cancer treatments, genetic factors, and other conditions or syndromes. The transition affects each person differently. The body begins to use energy differently, and they experience changes in sleep, vaginal health, sexuality, mood, and body.

“**My advice to women, young women, young mothers, love yourself, take pride in your body, take pride in your mental health, and always, always, always give yourself permission to be free, to be you regardless of what anyone says, because no one can tell you how your body feels. So, advocate, advocate, advocate for yourself, your health, your wellbeing.**”

—Reshonda Robinson

“**Menopause is certainly a physiological experience. I also posit that menopause is a cultural and a sociopolitical experience as well.**”

—Omisade Burney-Scott

### NARRATIVES AROUND MENOPAUSE

Sometimes, it is difficult to identify harmful dominant narratives since they are deeply rooted in our culture. By identifying harmful dominant narratives, we can positively SHIFT social structures and behaviors.

Here are some examples of **harmful dominant narratives** around menopause:

- “You shouldn’t talk about menopause or perimenopause. It’s rude, not classy, and makes people uncomfortable - you just deal with it.”
- “You shouldn’t want to have sex after menopause; everything is dry, and it’s too much work to get you turned on.”
- “It may be painful to have sex, but at least your sex life gets spicy because you don’t need to use condoms.”

Here are examples of healthier **intersectional counter narratives** that can help SHIFT harmful dominant narratives:

- Open discussion about menopause – symptoms, consequences, and the possibility of early menopause are all normalized.
- Taking care of your sexual, mental, and physical health after menopause is just as crucial as during menopause and before - life hasn’t stopped moving, and your body is still speaking to you as it’s going through the changes.
- Sex after menopause is a thing - get used to it and get over it because there are so many benefits.



## Omisade Burney-Scott *(she/her)*

### S2 EPISODE 23+24

[Omisade Burney-Scott](#) is a Black Southern 7th generation native North Carolinian feminist, social justice advocate, and creative with decades of experience in nonprofit leadership, philanthropy, and social justice. Omisade works with leaders who want to strengthen their organizational culture and capacity, adopt a Healing Justice praxis and structural supports, and/or deepen their Reproductive Justice work. She helps nonprofits, philanthropic organizations, and community groups adopt healthy and intentional liberatory practices from the inside out.

Omisade is a sought-after, nationally recognized speaker whose energy and authenticity have captivated listeners and readers from Forbes to Prevention Magazine. Her love for people and passion for racial and gender equity fueled her work and allowed her to be at the forefront of conversations regarding Reproductive and Healing Justice; death, dying, and grief; and menopause and aging for Black women, women identified, and gender expansive people.

In addition to speaking and consulting, Omisade curates a multimedia storytelling platform engaged in culture and narrative shift work around menopause and aging. She also writes articles for national publications, advocates for, and helps design policies

impacting reproductive justice, menopause, and aging. She is on a mission to center, protect, and amplify the personhood of Black women, women identified, and gender expansive throughout their lifetime.

#### ON THE EPISODES

In [Surviving and Thriving Through Menopause \(Part 1\)](#), we speak with Omisade Burney-Scott (she/her), the creator and curator of the [Black Girl's Guide to Surviving Menopause](#). This multimedia platform focuses on shifting the narrative around menopause in marginalized communities. In this episode, Omisade talks about the experiences and realizations that motivated her to found Black Girl's Guide and why it is a vital resource. In [Surviving and Thriving Through Menopause \(Part 2\)](#), we've got Omisade Burney-Scott (she/her), the creator and curator of the [Black Girl's Guide to Surviving Menopause](#), back in the hot seat. In this episode, Omisade talks about the value of community and the power of storytelling on the journey through menopause, and why you are never too old to prioritize your sexual health.

“The administrative policies that exist or the human resource policies that exist inside of an organization should be driven by the people who are experiencing those things.”

“There's just this hard push to be perpetually young, which is not possible. What's possible is to be healthy. What's possible is to be happy. What's possible is to have vitality. But youthfulness is not necessarily the goal.”

# THE EPISODES





## **Ann Garnier** *(she/her)*

### **S2 EPISODE 25**

[Ann Garnier](#), the Co-founder and CEO of Lisa Health, is a seasoned healthcare leader and operator, helping to create, launch, and scale innovative tech companies and products that have improved patient outcomes and access to care. Prior to Lisa Health, Ann was COO at CarePayment, Senior Vice President at RelayHealth (McKesson), and Vice President at Paradigm Health (Optum). She is passionate about using technology to transform women's health, advancing research on menopause and healthy aging, and helping women thrive in midlife and celebrate the start of something great.

**“ Women in midlife are incredible! We're at the peak of our careers, the peak of our power, and when you have menopause symptoms that are interfering with your ability to be your best work self, your best home self, or your best self for you, how do we support women? ”**

**“ We're the first digital health company using deep tech to revolutionize menopause and healthy aging. ”**

#### **ON THE EPISODE**

In [Support for Every Stage of the Menopause Journey with Ann Garnier](#), we speak with Ann Garnier (she/her) at Lisa Health and Midday Health. She joins us to explore the topic of menopause and its impact on women's health and longevity.

**“ It's important to note that hormone therapy is not going to address all symptoms of menopause. Some women are not eligible for hormone therapy. Women need a broad range of therapeutic strategies. ”**



“Night sweats are horrible. [For] anybody innovating a product to help with night sweats, there are a lot of advances to be made and money to be made in that space.”

“She explained to me why they don't call it early menopause because I still have my period regularly. It's not that I've entered menopause. It's just that my ovaries have stopped functioning.”

## Keisha A. Leverette (she/her)

### S2 EPISODE 26

[Keisha A. Leverette](#) joined Rhia Ventures as Vice President of Development & Communications in March 2022. She has more than 15 years of fundraising experience in the philanthropic and nonprofit sectors. She received her bachelor's degree in psychology from Spelman College. Prior to joining Rhia, Keisha served as Campaign Director at Spelman, where she was responsible for the day-to-day operations of a \$250 million comprehensive campaign that raised more than \$305 million in five years. She previously served as the Director of Development and Donor Services and the Campaign Director at the Baltimore Community Foundation (BCF). In those roles, she oversaw the Foundation's annual fundraising goals and its work with private foundations, corporations, individual donors, and families. She was responsible for the overall organization and management of the Foundation's successful \$100 million endowment campaign.

Keisha began her fundraising career at CCS Fundraising, where she served as a consultant for clients on fundraising and directed campaigns in various sectors, including associations, the arts, education, healthcare, and human services.

### ON THE EPISODE

In [Living with Primary Ovarian Insufficiency with Keisha Leverette](#), we hear from Keisha Leverette (she/her), Vice President of Development and Communications at Rhia Ventures. She generously shares her story of being diagnosed with primary ovarian insufficiency, processing the implications of her condition, and her hopes for awareness building on this topic to help other young women. Join us for this open-hearted conversation on what it means to live with primary ovarian insufficiency, the importance of awareness, and the power of resilience!

“I would say for this piece of my life, for whatever reason, I was prepared for it. I didn't know that I was being prepared for it, but there was just a certain amount of resilience that I built up. Life just happens, and it turns out how it turns out.”





“Menopause is a lifestyle change, so there should be a packet that's given to women when they're close enough to menopause, not just a pamphlet. It should be a booklet. Other women's testimonies, things that they face, here's how to take a more holistic approach. Just in case you would prefer not to go for hormone treatment or take hormone tablets. I think that would be a good resource for women to have.”

## Reshonda Robinson *(she/her)*

### S2 EPISODE 27

[Reshonda Robinson](#), based in Oklahoma, is a mother to seven young adults. She volunteers for company events, walk-a-thons, and community organizations. Reshonda is a Mississippi Valley State University graduate with a B.S. in Business Administration. In her day-to-day life, she works in the natural gas sector as a Senior Analyst in Customer Accounting and the Energy Efficiency Rebate Program for One Gas.

As a mother, it was difficult for Reshonda to find time to take care of herself and allow herself to seek her own pleasure. She eventually found a way to balance caring for her physical and emotional well-being while working and loving and caring for her family. She welcomes warm, inviting, joyful presences into her circle of life. She enjoys speed walking, reading, and writing in her free time.

### ON THE EPISODE

In [The Change with Reshonda Robinson](#), we hear from Reshonda Robinson (She/Her) - a Strategic, Empathetic Leader and Human-Centered Analyst. Reshonda compassionately articulates her journey with menopause, also known as “the change.” From learning about it to experiencing it firsthand, to the lessons she learned and the milestones she celebrated throughout. She is inspired to leave a legacy for her daughters and other young women.

“One thing for sure that I learned doing pre-menopause, menopause, and perimenopause was my emotional health, did a 360. Now, even my children and my spouse say, “Who is this woman?” It was life-changing for me, but it was a good change.”

## Reflection Questions

What does menopause look like?

Why is sex different after menopause?

How can you have better sex after menopause?

How do you view premenopause?

How can we view menopause as a spectrum?

How can one manage their emotions in their sex life post-menopause?

Do you still need to use protection post-menopause?

Do you need to get STI testing post-menopause, and if so, how often?

How does one manage their body physically post menopause?

How does insurance change in relation to your reproductive health post-menopause?

How do your well-woman visits change?

## Guest Recommendations Topic

### Surviving and Thriving Through Menopause (Part 1)

- Listen to the episode [here!](#)
- Read the full episode transcript [here!](#)
- [Black Girl's Guide to Surviving Menopause](#)
- [North American Menopause Society](#)
- [Menopause Whilst Black](#)

### Surviving and Thriving Through Menopause (Part 2)

- Listen to the episode [here!](#)
- Read the full episode transcript [here!](#)
- [Queer Menopause](#)
- [Gabriela Espinoza: Women's Body Wisdom](#)
- [The State of Menopause](#)
- [The Honey Pot](#)
- [Black Reproductive Justice Organization](#)
- [Black Women's Health Imperative](#)
- [Pleasure Activism by Adrianne Maree Brown](#)
- [Goody Howard](#)
- [Sex Down South](#)

### Support for Every Stage of the Menopause Journey with Ann Garnier

- Listen to the episode [here!](#)
- Read the full episode transcript [here!](#)
- [Midday Health](#)
- [Mayo Clinic](#)
- [SRI International](#)

### Living with Primary Ovarian Insufficiency with Keisha Leverette

- Listen to the episode [here!](#)
- Read the full episode transcript [here!](#)

### The Change with Reshonda Robinson

- Listen to the episode [here!](#)
- Read the full episode transcript [here!](#)

# Follow Our Guests

Omisade Burney-Scott  
[Linkedin](#)  
IG: [omisadeburneyscott](#)  
X: [@Osunsweetnsour](#)

Ann Garnier  
[Linkedln](#)

Keisha A. Leverette  
[Linkedin](#)

Reshonda Robinson  
[Linkedin](#)  
IG: [@thepeachroom37](#)

## Relevant Social and Platform Links

Rhia Ventures is a social impact organization with a mission to advance reproductive and maternal health equity by intentionally leveraging capital to center the needs, experiences, and perspectives of historically marginalized people in decision-making.

### BLOSSOM

IG: [@ps\\_blossom](#)  
X: [@ps\\_blossom](#)  
TikTok: [@psblossom](#)  
<https://rhiaventures.org/narrative-change/>

### RHIA VENTURES

IG: [@rhiaventures](#)  
X: [@rhiaventures](#)  
Linkedin: [linkedin.com/company/rhiaventures](https://rhiaventures.org/)  
<https://rhiaventures.org/>

Check out the P.S. Blossom Podcast on [Amazon Music](#), [Apple Podcasts](#) and [Spotify](#)!





Menopause Narratives Activism Experience Black  
Longevity Ageism The Change Holistic Health  
Metamorphosis Primary Ovarian Insufficiency  
Hormone Therapy Perimenopause Ovaries Per  
Night Sweats Diagnosis Awareness Pleasure  
Advocate Wellbeing Treatment Period Mental  
Post-menopause Black Menopause Narratives  
Mental Health Activism Experience Longevity  
Ageism The Change Holistic Health Metamorp  
Primary Ovarian Insufficiency Hormone Therapy  
Perimenopause Ovaries Night Sweats Diagnos  
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