



The Mood Swing Olympics

A Cliff Notes Guide to Emotional Whiplash in Menopause—And How to Regain Your Sanity

A Menopausal Survival Series
by Virginia Crowe
Thrive by Design



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About Thrive by Design w/ Virginia Crowe

Thrive by Design was born out of my own personal journey through menopause and a deep desire to change the experience for other women. After facing a terrifying panic attack on a hike—one that resulted in me being airlifted off a mountain—I realized how little support and information was available for women going through such a major transition. My doctor brushed it off as “just

perimenopause,” offering no guidance or solutions. She didn't even share with me that hormones fluctuations could cause panic attacks! That moment changed everything for me. I set out on a mission and created my program so women could have a safe place to find answers, or at least be pointed in the proper direction.

With years of experience as a personal trainer, wellness coach, art for healing facilitator, and nutrition coach, I had many of the tools—but I knew I needed to understand menopause on a deeper level. That's why I sought out an excellent certification program and I became a Certified Menopause Coaching Specialist. Thrive by Design is the program I wish I had: a fully customizable blend of fitness, nutrition, mindset, and creative healing, tailored to support the unique and complex needs of women in midlife. Whether online or in person, this program is designed to help you feel informed, empowered, and truly supported.

If you've ever felt confused, dismissed, or alone during this transition—you're not. I'm here, and so is Thrive by Design. Reach out if you have questions. Let's change the narrative together.

Reach out to Virginia directly.

Email: thrivewithvirginia@gmail.com

Introduction: If You Cry, Snap, and Laugh Within 10 Minutes—You're Not Alone

Menopause is famous for its hot flashes, but let's be honest—the **emotional rollercoaster** might be even harder to handle. One moment you're feeling fine, the next you're sobbing at a laundry commercial, and by evening you're annoyed that your partner is breathing too loudly.

This guide is here to help you understand **why mood swings happen in menopause**, and what you can actually do about them. It's not all in your head—it's in your hormones, your nervous system, and your lived experience.

What you're reading here is a Cliff Notes version of the deeper support, structure, and science available inside my full **Thrive by Design** program—a lifestyle solution for women navigating the chaos of perimenopause and menopause with clarity, compassion, and a real plan.





Section 1: What's Actually Going On With Your Emotions?

As estrogen and progesterone levels drop, your brain chemistry shifts.

- Estrogen affects **serotonin** (your feel-good brain chemical)
- Progesterone supports **GABA** (a calming neurotransmitter)
- When both decrease, mood swings, anxiety, and irritability increase

Combine that with poor sleep, blood sugar crashes, inflammation, and overstimulation from life? It's no wonder you're feeling like a stranger in your own

Section 2: What Mood Swings Might Look Like

You may be experiencing:

- Irritability or frustration that feels out of proportion
- Sudden bursts of sadness or crying without clear cause
- Anxiety or racing thoughts, especially at night
- Mood “drop-offs” after eating sugar or drinking alcohol
- Low motivation, joylessness, or mood crashes around your cycle

This isn't weakness. This isn't mental illness. It's your body responding to a **complex hormonal transition**, and it's a call to **support—not shame—yourself**.



Section 3: What Actually Helps Regulate Mood

You can support your emotional health with science-backed tools that don't require perfection or self-blame.

1. Stabilize Your Blood Sugar Your mood is deeply tied to your glucose levels.

- Eat protein, fat, and fiber every 3–5 hours
- Avoid long fasting windows and sugar-heavy snacks
- Reduce processed food and simple carbs

2. Strengthen Nervous System Resilience Stress management isn't optional—it's your lifeline.

- Breathwork, art, walking, and music all help regulate the nervous system
- Avoid over-scheduling and give yourself permission to rest
- Creative practices like mindful art can interrupt stress patterns and bring grounding

3. Move for Mood Even short bursts of movement can increase endorphins and reduce cortisol.

- Walk outdoors for 10–20 minutes
- Do strength training 2–3x/week
- Try mobility or gentle yoga on high-sensitivity days

4. Supplementation That May Support Mood (consult your doctor)

- Magnesium (especially glycinate)
- B-complex vitamins
- Omega-3s
- Adaptogens like ashwagandha or rhodiola
- Herbal support (black cohosh, St. John's Wort, or Vitex)

5. Sleep and Downtime Sleep is foundational for emotional regulation. Without it, your brain struggles to reset.

- Create an electronic-free wind-down routine
- Try journaling or stretching before bed
- Be mindful of late caffeine and evening wine

Section 4: What to Avoid (That Feels Tempting in the Moment)

- Bottling it all up (your body keeps score)
- Over-scheduling to escape your feelings
- Assuming you're "too sensitive" or "crazy"
- Comparing yourself to how you "used to be"
- Drinking alcohol to unwind—it may spike cortisol and worsen sleep/mood cycles

You're not failing—you're adapting. Give yourself the same grace you would give your best friend.





This eBook Is Just the Beginning

This Cliff Notes guide is designed to give you quick clarity, humor, and hope—but **my full Thrive by Design program goes much deeper**. Inside the full experience, we tackle:

- The emotional, mental, and physical impact of menopause
- Nutrition and movement plans tailored for midlife balance
- Gut-brain connection and hormone-mood cycles
- Mindset strategies to stop the inner criticism loop
- Optional 1:1 concierge coaching in person or online
- Art-based stress reduction techniques and creative self-expression

Whether you want a simple self-guided reset or personalized support, **Thrive by Design** offers a clear path forward.

You Deserve to Feel Like Yourself Again

You don't have to ride the emotional wave alone. There are proven strategies and compassionate support that can bring you back to center—mentally, physically, and emotionally.

If you're tired of mood swings ruling your life, it's time for tools that actually work.

Website: www.thrivewithvirginia.com

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Let's build the next version of you—stronger, softer, and more supported.

Created by Virginia Crowe

Virginia Crowe is a certified menopause coaching specialist, wellness educator, certified fitness trainer, artist, and midlife empowerment coach dedicated to helping women thrive through menopause with strength, humor, and confidence. Drawing from her own experience and years of coaching women in midlife, Virginia blends science-backed wellness, mindset support, and creativity to guide women in this powerful season of life.

She offers a range of online programs under the name **Thrive by Design with Virginia Crowe**, from **self-guided memberships** to **concierge 1:1 coaching**, both online and in person at her studio in Laguna Hills, California.

In addition to her wellness programs, Virginia teaches **mindful art classes** to reduce stress and anxiety and is the author of *Unlocking the Soul*, a guide to using creative practices for emotional well-being and healing. Her offerings include on-demand art classes, paint parties, and wellness-focused coaching that meets women wherever they are in their journey.