

Your Fire Brunch

Two to eight women. Ninety minutes. Room for all of it.

A companion to Your Fire Years by Colleen Ann Murphy, MD. The four original book rounds are retained below. The conversation cards quote The Fire Pages and Chapter 22. Welcome and hosting notes are adapted for this guide.

Before they arrive

Invite a friend. When you can, include a woman ten years older and one ten years younger. Send a chapter or the free Fire Score link. Print copies of Her Card for the table; it is page two of the score download. Add pens and something good to eat. “No hosting talent required. No matching plates. Nobody cares about your kitchen.”

An invitation you can send

“Come over for coffee, something good to eat, and the conversation we keep meaning to have. Menopause, sex, the absurd bits, and what we want next. Come exactly as you are. Want to pick a day?”

Start with this

You can arrive tired, angry, curious, quiet, or ready to laugh. Nobody owes the table a number, a medical history, a sex story, or a hopeful ending. Passing is always an answer. Ask before offering advice. Keep personal stories at the table; ask permission before photos or sharing.

“What’s your Shrug story?”

You go first. The appointment, the comment, the year you wondered whether it was only you. Listen. Leave room for laughter and for the part that still hurts.

Let the table talk.

The four book rounds

Run two, or all four. Anyone can pass.

1. Recognition: "Which page was you?" Read the line out loud. Let it land.
2. Numbers: "I'm a ____." Share only if you choose. A number is information, never a ranking.
3. Wanting: "The thing nobody tells you about sex after fifty is ____." Optional. Run it only if the table has earned it. Solo, partnered, dating, uninterested: nobody has to want the same thing.
4. Done: "I'm done tolerating ____." Go around twice if you want to.

And what do we want now?

Choose a possibility card. Travel. Pleasure. Food. Learning. A business. A quiet afternoon. Ask what she wants for herself, without turning her answer into homework.

"What did you love doing at ten years old, before anyone was watching? Describe it. Then schedule it."

"What do you wish someone had explained?"

"What would you like help asking about?"

"Describe your laugh. The real one, the one that embarrasses you. When did you last hear it, and who was in the room?"

Bring back the ridiculous.

The book gives you two remotes in one bed, a chin hair with tenure, and a great deal nobody warned us about. Read a favorite passage. Tell your own story. Laugh with one another; nobody's pain has to become the punchline.

Take something with you.

Raise the coffee.

Invite someone to read the Toast. Read the Manifesto together, one line per woman. These are the book's exact words. Nobody has to have reached every feeling or experience in them to belong.

One thing. Your choice.

Choose a question, a next step, or someone to reach out to. It might be a conversation with your clinician, looking up a class, or asking a friend to dinner. Invite a check-in if you want one.

Hand her the match.

Offer each woman a printed copy of Her Card to take home and pass along. It contains the full twelve-item Fire Score, the "handed to me by" and "handing the next one to" lines, and STRIKE UP A CONVERSATION. Leave the names blank unless she wants to fill them in. A page, a text, a conversation: she chooses how to pass it on.

Ninety days later.

Retake your Fire Score at ninety days. Meet again if you want company. Ask: "What has changed—and what is still hard?" Then: "What came up when you felt better?" and "What would you like next?" Relief, grief, no improvement, and new plans all have a place. Nobody has to report progress to keep her seat.

A table is company.

The host is not acting as anyone's clinician. This gathering is for conversation and general education, not diagnosis, treatment, or personal medical advice. Bring treatment questions to a clinician who knows you. The Fire Score is an original tracking tool, not a validated diagnostic test.

Print only what you want.

The kit includes Your Fire Score and Her Card, optional place cards, conversation cards, the full Manifesto, and the Toast. Free resources: unpausedclub.com/fire-brunch and unpausedclub.com/fire-score.