



Your Menopause-Friendly Christmas Guide



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Wellbeing Office

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Supporting women through every stage of menopause — with calm,
compassion & practical tools - By Catherine O'Keeffe
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Introduction

Christmas can be a beautiful time of connection, celebration, and magic — but many women in peri- menopause and post find December overwhelming in a way they never did before.

Your energy is different.

Your sleep is different.

Your emotional bandwidth is different.

Your needs are different.

And yet, the demands often increase:

- Family expectations
- Children's activities
- Work pressure
- Hosting
- Shopping
- The invisible mental load
- The pressure to “make it all perfect”

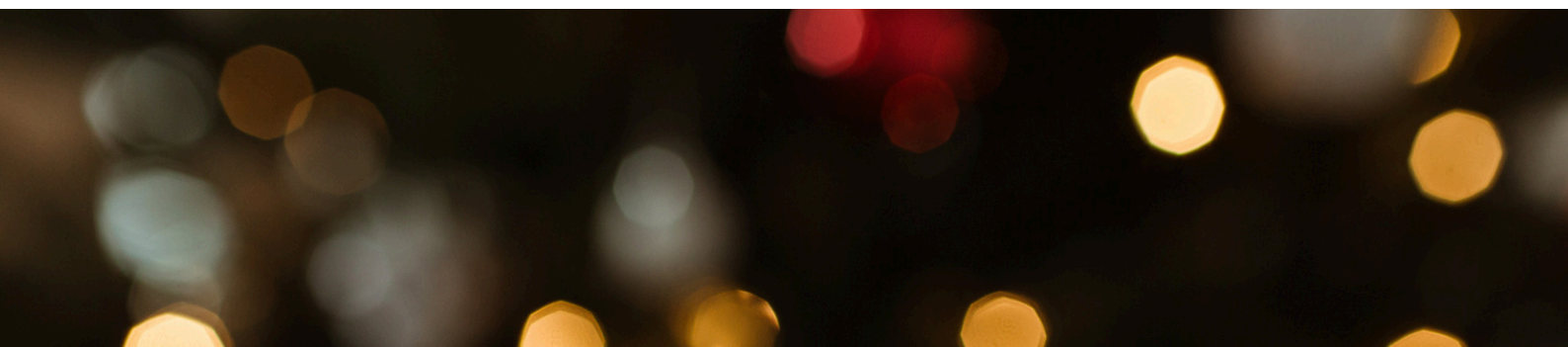
This workbook is here to remind you of something important:

You are allowed to support yourself through this season.

You are allowed to make December easier.

You are allowed to choose peace over pressure.

This is your gentle guide to navigating Christmas in a body that needs more care, more space, and more softness — without guilt.



Section 1: Understanding Your Holiday Stress

Stress hits differently during peri/menopause. Hormonal fluctuations can heighten anxiety, reduce resilience, lower your stress tolerance, and make even small things feel bigger.

Before you plan for the month ahead, take a moment to understand what's behind the overwhelm.

1.1 What's actually stressing you this December?

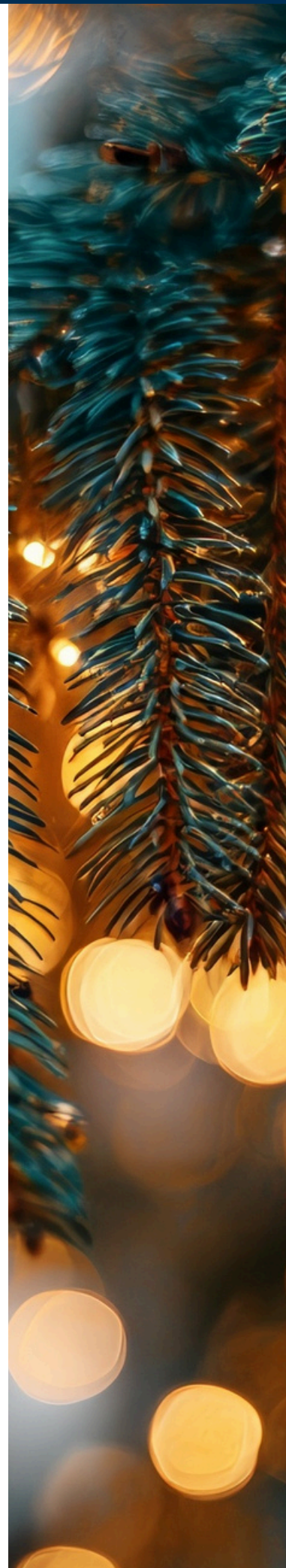
Tick any that apply or write them down in your journal:

- ☐ Low energy or fatigue
- ☐ Poor sleep / night sweats
- ☐ Mood changes
- ☐ Feeling overstimulated (noise, crowds, kids)
- ☐ The mental load
- ☐ Trying to hold everything together
- ☐ Hot flushes in social settings
- ☐ Feeling behind or not "enough"
- ☐ Family dynamics
- ☐ Money or gift pressure
- ☐ Feeling responsible for everyone's happiness
- ☐ Not enough time for yourself
- ☐ Something else: _____



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Section 1

1.2 Reflection prompts

What usually makes December difficult for you?

Which menopause symptoms tend to flare this time of year?

What would your ideal, calm, realistic Christmas look like — in THIS season of life?

1.3 One step for this week

What is one simple, gentle step you can take this week to support yourself and move toward a calmer December?

1.4 Your 4-week plan (Choose 2 small steps per week)

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SECTION 2: A Menopause-Friendly Nervous System Reset

Hormonal shifts can keep your body in a constant “high alert” state, making it harder to relax or regulate emotions.

These simple tools help lower cortisol, ease overwhelm, and bring your system back to balance.

2.1 The 60-Second Calm Reset

Put your feet flat on the floor.

Unclench your jaw. Drop your shoulders.

Inhale for 4 — hold for 2 — exhale for 6.

Repeat 5 times.

Notice how you felt before: _____

Notice how you felt after: _____

2.2 Sensory Grounding (For Overwhelm + Hot Flushes)

Name: _____

- 5 things you can see
- 4 things you can touch
- 3 things you can hear
- 2 things you can smell
- 1 thing you can taste

What changed in your body after doing this?

2.3 Cooling the Heat (Flush-Friendly Technique)

When a flush rises or anxiety spikes:

Place one hand on your chest, one on your stomach.

Slow exhale down the front of your body.

Or try:

- Cool water on wrists
- Step outside for fresh air
- Sip cool water
- Turn your face toward moving air

Notice how you felt before: _____

Notice how you felt after: _____





SECTION 3: Boundaries for a Calmer Christmas

Women in peri/menopause often overextend — not because they want to, but because they always have.

Your energy is precious. It’s okay to protect it.

3.1 December Non-Negotiables

These are the promises you make to yourself — and honour.

1.	3.
2.	4.

3.2 Gentle Boundary Scripts

You can say:

- “Evenings are harder for me now, so I won’t be able to do that this year.”
- “I’m keeping December simple. I hope you understand.”
- “I need to prioritise rest right now.”
- “I can’t commit to that, but thank you for thinking of me.”
- “I’m focusing on a calmer Christmas this year.”

Boundaries are an act of care — for you and your family.



SECTION 4: Managing Your Social Energy

Your capacity is different in menopause. This is not a weakness — it's wisdom.

What drains you most in December?

- _____
- _____
- _____

What restores you?

- _____
- _____
- _____

Your Social Battery Plan

Events I want to attend

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Events I am choosing to skip

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
- 4.. _____





SECTION 5: Money, Planning & Expectations

Many women feel stretched thin — emotionally, physically, and financially. This is an opportunity to simplify.

5.1 Budget clarity

Gifts: €_____

Events/outings: €_____

Food & extras: €_____

5.2 Expectation resets (gentle reminders)

You can:

- Choose the traditions that actually matter
- Simplify everything else
- Delegate tasks without guilt
- Create one do-nothing day
- Say “not this year”
- Protect your emotional and physical energy





SECTION 6: Emotional Check-Ins

Your body and emotions are more sensitive during menopause.

Checking in helps you respond instead of react.

Journal prompts

I feel most overwhelmed when:

Something I'm proud of this year:

Something I need permission to say no to:

Daily Check-In

Today I feel...

- ☐ Calm ☐ Anxious ☐ Tired ☐ Overwhelmed
☐ Flat ☐ Hopeful ☐ Irritable ☐ Emotional
☐ Warm/flushy ☐ Other: _____

One thing I need today: _____

One thing I can let go of: _____



Section 7: Kindness to Yourself

You deserve gentleness — not because you've earned it, but because you're human.

7.1 End-of-week check-in

Something that was hard:

Something that went better:

One thing I'm grateful I did for myself:

7.2 A small reset ritual

One 10-minute task that will bring ease:

One thing I can prepare now to help tomorrow go smoother:

A 15-minute “me” break — just for me:





SECTION 8: Looking Ahead to Christmas 2026

You'll complete this in January — with compassion, not criticism.

What worked for you this year?

What could you soften or simplify next time?

Your ideal Christmas 2026 looks like:

One step for next week:

Your year-ahead steps (one per month):

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____
7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

11. _____

12. _____





SECTION 9: Final Thoughts

Thank you for taking this time for yourself.

As you move through the season, remember that food is not something you need to earn, work off, or feel guilty about — especially during peri/menopause, when your body is already working harder.

Allow yourself to savour, enjoy, and nourish without judgement.

You are not meant to carry everything.

You are not meant to be perfect.

You are allowed to rest.

You are allowed to have needs.

You are allowed to enjoy food without guilt.

You are allowed to make this Christmas kinder, quieter, and more aligned with the woman you are today.



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