



**intouch**  
INSIGHTS

# Can we talk about the M word?!

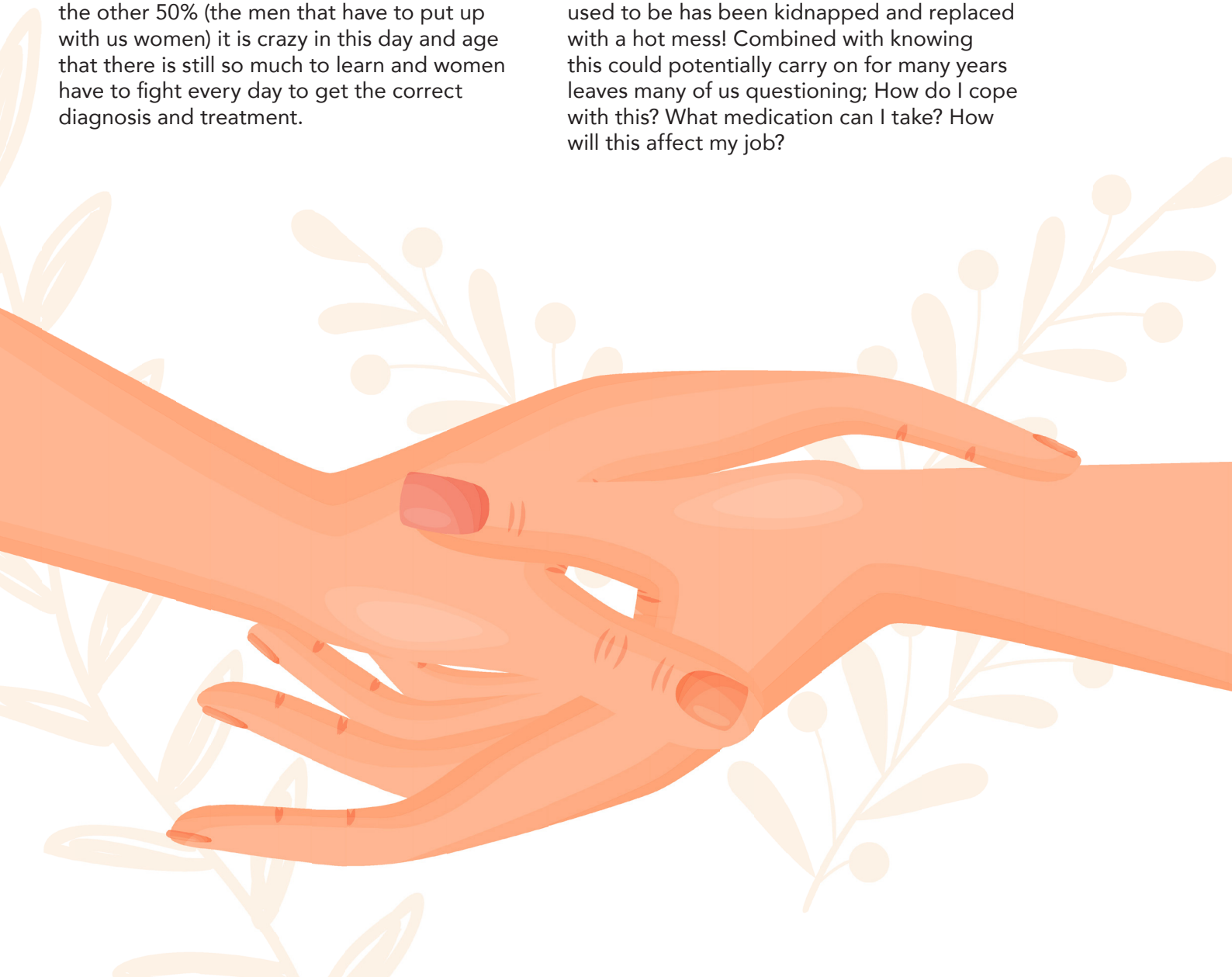
By Kim Frazer-Hogg



Taking inspiration from our lovely Sophie Dervan who recently wrote a touch insights piece on 'going out of your comfort zone', I wanted to push myself out of my comfort zone and talk about something that is still very taboo... men tend to turn and run when this subject is mentioned and women whisper it under their breathe like it's a swear word... yes people, I want to talk about the Menopause!

It's finally becoming a topic that is starting to be talked about, doctors are getting educated on it (slowly...) and women are learning what to expect and how to deal with it. Considering it is something that happens to 50% of the world population and affects the other 50% (the men that have to put up with us women) it is crazy in this day and age that there is still so much to learn and women have to fight every day to get the correct diagnosis and treatment.

Most people think menopause = hot flushes and night sweats - if only these were the only symptoms.. from crippling anxiety, low moods, heart palpitations, sleep problems, joint pain, alcohol intolerance, memory loss, brain fog and many more.. the person you used to be has been kidnapped and replaced with a hot mess! Combined with knowing this could potentially carry on for many years leaves many of us questioning; How do I cope with this? What medication can I take? How will this affect my job?



Working in the events industry where we work hard and play hard I have had to consider my own menopause journey and how to make it work alongside my career. Nearly 1 million women have left their jobs due to their symptoms and I certainly don't want to be added to that number, I love my job and I want that to continue!

It's probably a good time to mention that some women get away with no symptoms (you absolute legends!) and we are all on a unique journey but for the ones that are being affected, what can we do about it?

Well, aside from getting the appropriate medical advice, we need to talk about it!

Let your boss know how you are feeling and what you need from them to support you. Don't be embarrassed of what is happening. The more we talk about it the easier it will be to cope with your symptoms.

The menopause doesn't just affect the over 50's – many women are thrown into this path whilst still in their 30's and it is quite a shock to the system! Especially working in events where there is a high % of females working long hours, needing high energy levels, hosting guests and needing to be on form at all times.

You may have lost your confidence in your role, thinking you can no longer do your job to the fullest, forgetting the simplest of words or the name of the person you have worked with for 10 years – the brain is playing tricks on you! Remember, you are not alone, ask for help and work out any adjustments that can support you.

To all the lucky people not going through it; educate yourself and be comfortable with the 'Menopause' word – us women need you to be ok with it - mental health is a huge focus and this shouldn't be any different.

I am fortunate to work for touch who have a great workplace culture. I am surrounded by people who care and are very supportive. The flexibility that we are given means that we can still carry out our job to the fullest even if we need to make some adjustments.

I haven't written this piece to give any medical advice, I'm certainly not qualified for that but what I wanted to do was share insights from my own experiences so far in the hope that we can all help push the Menopause word out of the unspoken into the spoken.

Now where is that fan? It's blimmin hot in here.



MEN  PAIISE