

Conversations Around Invisibility: Why It Stings, Why It Feels Heavier, and How to Rewrite the Script

Lately, my TikTok has been blowing up with women chiming in on something raw and real: *feeling invisible*.

Some say it cuts them to the bone, that they feel overlooked, disregarded, irrelevant. Others? They're grateful for it — like invisibility is freedom from the male gaze, freedom from judgment, freedom from having to perform.

It's a conundrum: how can the same experience feel like a curse to some and a gift to others?

Hormones, Sensitivity, and the Weight of Dismissal

Here's the truth: invisibility isn't new. Women have been pushed to the margins for centuries. What's new is how sharply many of us *feel* it now.

As estrogen and progesterone decline, they don't just tug on our bones and waistlines — they change our brain chemistry. Estrogen in particular modulates serotonin and dopamine, the neurotransmitters that buffer mood, motivation, and resilience. When that buffer thins, we don't brush things off the way we once did.

That throwaway comment. That being talked over. That sense of being disregarded. It lands heavier. It feels louder. It's not in your head — it's in your *neurochemistry*.

The Brain Science of Feeling Invisible

Your brain is a pattern-recognition machine with a built-in negativity bias. That means it will notice the one person who ignored you more than the ten who smiled. Couple that with hormonal sensitivity, and you've got a system primed to feel invisible even when you're not.

But — here's the good news — brains are plastic. They can change until the day we die. And with practice, we can train them to reframe invisibility, reclaim agency, and stop handing our worth to other people's recognition.

Under-the-Radar Brain Hacks

- **Name the Alarm, Don't Obey It** — When you feel that sting of being overlooked, that's your amygdala doing its thing, scanning for rejection. The hack? Literally name it: "Thanks, brain. I see you. But I'm safe." I take it a step further and give her a name, Amy. This simple pause recruits your prefrontal cortex, the part of your brain wired for reasoning, not panic. I've gone so far as to clap my hands and yell, "Amy, take a seat!" Talk about a pattern interrupt!

- **Micro-Moments of Agency** — Studies show that when you take small, intentional actions like speaking up in a meeting, making eye contact instead of looking down, even adjusting your posture, your brain registers agency and pumps out dopamine.
Tiny acts of visibility snowball into bigger confidence.
- **Reframe the Story** — Instead of asking, *“Why didn’t they notice me?”* ask, *“Where do I want to be seen?”*
The brain is suggestible. When you swap out passive questions for empowering ones, you shift blood flow from the amygdala (fear) to the prefrontal cortex (solution), and I swear you can feel it!
- **Belonging Audit**— Your nervous system is wired for connection. If you’re spending time where you feel dismissed, your brain codes that as chronic stress. Swap out one draining circle for one energizing one, and your whole system recalibrates.

From Rosebud to Full Bloom

Here’s the metaphor I keep coming back to: a rosebud is pretty, sure. But the roses that painters immortalized — the ones that fill a room with fragrance — are the full blooms.

This season of life is our full bloom. It's not about fading into the wallpaper. It's about being impossible to ignore, but on our own terms.

Final Thought

I wrote in my last Substack about the brain science that flipped my whole world at 60 — how understanding fixed vs. growth mindset cracked me open to what was possible.

That piece is getting a ton of attention, and it's the perfect companion to this show.

<https://thebloomingera.substack.com/>

Because once you know your brain is changeable, invisibility stops being a destiny and starts being a choice.

So yes, some women may embrace invisibility. Others may despise it.

But either way?

The power is in your hands and your brain, and YOU get to decide what that means.