

Ep #7: Women's Sexuality: Debunking the Myths



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With Your Host

Dr. Sonia Wright

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You are listening to The Midlife Sex Coach for Women Podcast, episode 7.

Female Announcer: Welcome to the Midlife Sex Coach for Women Podcast, the only show that combines a fun personality, medical knowledge, sexual counseling and life coaching together. To create unique sex coaching that helps busy women awaken their libidos, address intimacy issues and learn how to express their sexuality for the rest of their days. Here is your host, certified life coach and sexual counselor, Dr. Sonia Wright.

Hello Diamonds, I hope your week is going well. I've just finished wrapping up the book club in my Own Your Sexuality Now group coaching program. And I have to say we have so much fun in that book club. It's just girl talk. It's girl time. We get together. We discuss sex. Sometimes we do get to the books. Yeah, we usually get the book in there sometime but most of the time we're laughing and giggling, enjoying ourselves as we talk about sex, sexual intimacy and what we want to accomplish in terms of our goals around sexual intimacy.

And the book that we just finished reading was Emily Nagoski's, Come as You Are. I have to say this is a great book. And I'll make sure to put the link in the show notes about this book. You're going to love it. One of the things that I love about this book is she addresses some of the myths around women's sexuality. This book started me thinking of some of the most common myths that women have around their own sexuality. And today I wanted to talk to you about these myths around women's sexuality.

First of all what exactly is a myth? One definition says a widely held false belief or idea. I like that, a widely held false belief or idea. I like this definition because it touches on the fact that it involves a belief. And you know that I am the queen of beliefs. And we know that a belief is just a thought that we think again, and again, and again. This being the case one could argue that a myth is just a false thought that we think again, and again, and again. And then we think it so often that we don't even question it.

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A lot of these thoughts are formed in our minds when we're kids or young adults. And others develop over a period of time, maybe when we're in a relationship. But now that we're in our 30s, 40s, 50s and beyond we get to question these beliefs. We get to question these thoughts. We get to question these myths and decide do they still serve us, or if they ever did serve us.

So let's look at approaching these myths. My plan today is to introduce some common held thoughts about women's sexuality that I believe are false. So I'm going to call them myths. But ultimately you get to decide if these thoughts are myths for you, are they serving you? And are they going to help you in some way? Are they going to help you get closer to your sexual intimacy? And I'm going to give you a suggestion in terms of how to approach my list of myths.

So as I go through these myths, talking about myths related to female sexuality, just notice how many of these myths that you have accepted as true. Write down your thoughts about these myths. Decide if these thoughts are serving you. And if they're not serving you, would you like to let go of these myths? Finally, spend some time adding to these myths.

Now, these are my myths. These are the things that I think are the most common myths associated with women's sexuality. But you might have your own beliefs, your own thoughts that are not serving you around women's sexuality, and specifically your own sexuality. So I encourage you, at the end of listening to my list and thinking about my list that you add to this, and add some thoughts that are not serving you around your own sexuality.

Okay, let's get started. Number one, the best and only type of desire is spontaneous desire. We've talked about desire and libido in the past. So let's recap it. There are two main types of libido or desire, spontaneous and receptive. So spontaneous libido is what people think of when they think of desire or libido. It's when your mind and your genitalia are in alignment,

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you're ready to engage in sexual acts. And you don't specifically need any additional prompting. I call it the pump is primed and ready to go.

But then there's also responsive libido. And this is where you start from a place of neutrality. You could go either way with sex, it could be Netflix and chill, or it could just be Netflix. And so you need some sort of stimulation. It could either be a mental stimulation or a physical stimulation, but something that kind of gives you that extra oomph to help you engage that desire for sex. And it may be a physical stimulation to your genitalia that helps you remember, oh, I actually like sex and sex is pleasurable.

Or it could be a wish that you're physically or emotionally closer to your partner. It may be reading erotica or watching some ethical pornography. Whatever that stimulation is it then triggers your desire for sexual intimacy, and that's desire responsive libido. So, about 70% of women actually function from a place of responsive libido. I really want you to think about this for a minute. So, about 70% of women function from this place. If 70% of women are functioning from this place of responsive libido then the majority of women are functioning from this place.

And so therefore there is nothing wrong with a responsive type of libido. It just means that we have to understand ourselves and what we need in order to give us that oomph to kind of push us over the edge where we're interested and we get that desire for sex and sexual intimacy. That's all it means. It does not necessarily mean something has gone wrong. And so the best and only type of desire cannot be spontaneous desire.

So let's look at number two, the myth that there should be a focus on an orgasm as opposed to the focus being on pleasure, connection and satisfaction. So let me just start by saying I love, love, love orgasms. They are so much fun, they're enjoyable. They're a release of tension, just good in so many different ways. So I'm not saying that you shouldn't have an orgasm, but I'm just saying it doesn't necessarily need to be the end goal of any sexual intimacy act.

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Often if the focus is placed on orgasm, then women start to judge themselves. They start to think that they're taking too long to have an orgasm. They're not doing it right. Maybe their other partner in the past did it better, and faster, and stronger. Sometimes they think that something's gone wrong. And all of these things lead to performance anxiety and it detracts from sex, so women start to not want to engage in intimacy.

If you're judging yourself and you're thinking there's something wrong with the way you have an orgasm, or how long it takes, or whatever. Then you're going to get to this place where you start fearing the thoughts in your mind. Who wants to judge themselves during sex? And it gets so uncomfortable, that then you just think, I don't necessarily need the sexual intimacy. So I'm suggesting instead think about the fact that nothing has gone wrong. Drop into your body, experience the connection. Focus on the overall pleasure and the satisfaction.

And then normally what happens is when you're not so intense and worried about everything, then you relax and often you have your orgasm. But it does not have to be the main focus. Get back to the fun, that's really what I want to – the message that I want to deliver with this one. Get back to the fun. If your partner feels that there must be an orgasm every time in order for them to feel like they've succeeded in some way, then it's okay to have a discussion with your partner.

Your partner just wants you to have pleasure. And they think that the way that they can tell that you've had the pleasure is if you've had an orgasm. And then they feel like they've accomplished something, they have helped you, they have given you this love and this pleasure. But you can have a conversation with your partner and discuss that maybe you're a little tense and worked up around the concept of orgasm.

So you want to make that optional at this point in time and give yourself the freedom to just focus on the satisfaction, and the pleasure, and the connection. And then maybe the orgasm will come on its own and it'll be

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part of it. But it's not the end all and be all of it. And you can get back to just enjoying yourself.

Okay, myth number three. The best kind of sex is penetrative sex. Let's look at this myth, ladies. Here I go again, I like penetrative sex. That is fun. But when we look at women and how they masturbate or self-pleasure themselves, if we look at the Hite Report it shows that the majority of women stimulate their clitoris and vulva regions in order to experience pleasure. They don't necessarily have penetration when they're going for pleasure in masturbation. I'm not saying that you can't have penetration. About 1.5% of women were shown to masturbate with penetration alone.

So the majority of women will be masturbating with stimulation to their vulva region or there's some sort of combination with penetration. But if we're talking solely penetration, that's 1.5% of women that self-pleasure will solely utilize penetration. So the best kind of sex does not necessarily have to be penetrative sex. We can definitely include that, but we don't have to have this concept that the only thing that defines sexual intimacy is penetrative sex.

And I talk a lot about this in terms of the Sexual Smorgasbord, which is just using your creativity to figure out different ways for sexual intimacy. And it may be that the main course is the penetrative sex and that's just so much fun and you enjoy it. But it could also be other ways to have sexual intimacy might include cuddling, making out, oral sex, you get to decide all the different ways you want to express your sexual intimacy acts. But it doesn't necessarily have to be penetrative sex all the time.

Here's another myth, a sexual woman looks and acts a certain way. This myth taps into society's beliefs that what is acceptable to be sexy and attractive. Only women that look a certain way, or are of a certain age, or act a certain way, are allowed to be labeled as sexy. And you know what? This is just plain false. You don't have to be a size two. You don't have to be aged 25. And you don't have to run around in lingerie and be flirty all the time to be sexual and to be sexy. You get to define your sexy for yourself.

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I like that song; it's coming into my head. I'm too sexy for this shirt, too sexy for this. You get to decide that you are sexy. You can decide that you're too sexy. You can decide whatever you want to decide. But one thing that I have noticed about women that come in all different sizes, shapes, races, heights, all different packages is that there is a sense of confidence and ownership of her sexuality, her own unique brand of sexuality. And everything else is optional. You get to be sexy at any age, at any size, at any look, you get to be sexy. You get to own your sexy and express your sexy.

Here's another myth. A woman is here to please her partner sexually. This is just a flat out lie, unless you're solo partnered. So yes, if you are solo partnered you are here to please your partner sexually. Otherwise a woman is responsible to make sure that she pleases herself and your partner is responsible to make sure that their sexual needs are being met.

And when both of you come together with this understanding that you're both responsible for your own sexual needs being met, in the context of a sexual intimacy experience together, it's so much better. You're not thinking I have to make sure that my partner gets everything they want. And they're not thinking I have to make sure that she gets everything she wants.

You come together, there's communication, you recognize the responsibility to express what your needs are. You take care of them if you need to add in a vibrator because you know you need that stimulation to your vulva. Then you go ahead and do those things. Communication becomes important. You're not coming from a place where you're expecting somebody else to meet your needs. And it gets to be fun. This gets to be a lot of fun. There's not the guessing part of it anymore. You get to just express yourself.

So that myth ties in with the other myth that your partner is responsible for your pleasure. So you're responsible for your own pleasure, your partner is

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responsible for their pleasure, you come together and then you have a lot of fun.

Myth number six, to do list sex is okay, to do list sex, my old nemesis. How are you doing? Let me say, not today to do list sex, not on my watch. Engaging in sexual intimacy from a place of obligation and efficiency will never lead to increased intimacy. So if you're putting sex on your to do list then the odds are that you're not taking care of yourself and your self-care is pretty low.

Basically what I'm saying is if you feel that you need to put something on your to do list you're not coming from a place of pleasure. You will eventually deplete your energy stores and after a while you're not going to be interested in engaging in sex, because for you sex and sexual intimacy is about efficiency and it's not about pleasure. Eventually you're going to stop with the to do list sex because you're not getting much out of it. And then you're going to wonder why and think that there's something wrong with you because you're not engaging in sexual intimacy.

Let me tell you that efficiency is a poor bed fellow. Diamonds, just don't go there, stop with the to do list sex.

Myth number seven, you should not have to work at sexual intimacy. It should all just come naturally. This myth leads to a lot of misunderstanding and miscommunication. Anything that is worthwhile is going to require effort, that's just the way it is. It's a false notion to think that you get married and live happy ever after without working on your marriage. It's the same false notion that you don't have to work on your sexual intimacy.

And this myth, this thought, it's just not serving anybody. Let me just tell you that it's going to take effort, demands in your life, the stress in your life, over time things change. The stress in your life changes, your work environment might become more stressful. You might have more kids. Things are going to change and it's going to impact your sexual intimacy.

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The trick is to understand that effort will be required to maintain good sexual intimacy.

And you know what? Even more effort is required to make your intimacy amazing. Just because it requires effort does not mean that there is a problem. Effort is in the form of communication, being open to new ideas and a willingness to explore. And above all, it does require vulnerability and the ability to not be offended when you're having these conversations and communication.

Myth number eight, so there is this phrase that just drives me insane. And I find that a lot of clients come to me with this phrase and it's a good blank should. They're thoughts that might have been planted a long time ago and it's still in your head. So it could be a good girl does not engage in sex. A good girl does not do oral sex. A good mother does not have sex with her children in the same house. I encounter that one quite a bit. Or a good woman does not ask for what she needs in the bedroom. Or possibly a good wife does not engage in BDSM.

Everybody has their own concept of that they can plug in, a good blank does not blank. Well, I have news for you, there's no such thing as a good or a bad girl, a good or a bad woman, a good or a bad wife, a good or a bad mother. Those are just all thoughts. And you know what? You get to release these thoughts. You get to give yourself permission to let it go. You're just a girl, a woman, a mother, a wife, you're just you and you get to be you, neither good or bad because that's not serving you in any way.

Nobody is perfect but when you add these labels of what a good person does and what a bad person does in terms of sexual intimacy then you get to this place where you're not enjoying your sexual intimacy. You just get to be a person that deserves sexual pleasure and you get to define how you would like to experience that pleasure.

As long as you're not hurting yourself or hurting somebody else and as long as there is consent involved with all parties engaging in the sexual

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intimacy. Judgment just doesn't need to be a part of sexual intimacy. Judgment usually detracts from sexual intimacy; it detracts from connection, satisfaction and pleasure.

Here is one of my favorite myths, women's sexuality mirrors that of the male sexuality, or the female sexuality mirrors that of what the overall male sexuality, if we were to label that. When I say male sexuality I am talking about components, that just spontaneous desire, penetrative sex, orgasms being the main goal.

And then of course I'm going to add in another myth that drives me crazy. Simultaneous orgasms, how many women out there have faked an orgasm because their partner thinks that in order for the ultimate sexual experience to have occurred it requires simultaneous orgasms? No, it does not, it does not require that. But let me go back to the overall myth which is a woman's sexuality or a female's sexuality reflects the male model of sexuality. Or a woman's sexuality is a mini version of the standard model of sexuality, which is based on people with penises.

Okay, so this model involves the spontaneous desire, this penetrative sex, and orgasms. So let me tell you, you get to express your sexuality and to experience your sexuality in whatever way you want to. It can look any way. You can choose to have your sexuality reflect a focus on pleasure and connection, coming from a place of neutrality is fine, and orgasms are optional.

What is not optional, what, what? What is not optional, women? Pleasure is not optional, if this model of spontaneous desire, and penetrative sex, and orgasm works for you, then that's great. But if it's causing you to be upset, or to judge yourself, or to feel that there's something wrong with you then it's time to let that concept go. And I want you to celebrate that nothing has gone wrong. If your concept of sex and sexuality does not necessarily mirror the standard concept, nothing has gone wrong, it's all okay.

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And finally myth number 10, this is the all encompassing myth, that you are somehow broken because you do not conform to somebody else's standard of sexuality. Nothing has gone wrong, there's nothing wrong with you. You're not broken. And I want you to understand that you are whole, and you are beautiful, and you are sexy, and you're amazing right now.

If you want your sexuality to improve in some way that's completely alright. But it's harder to focus on your sexuality and improve it if you're starting from a place where your belief is that there's something wrong with you, that are you are broken in some way. That's not really going to help you be interested in working on sexuality. So come from a place of self-compassion, don't necessarily think that there's something wrong with you or that you're broken.

Take some time to accept where you are right now and how you express yourself sexually. Start from that place and start from a place of self-compassion, do not be judging yourself as to something's wrong, you're broken or you can never be fixed or anything like that. Start from a place of neutrality and don't worry, things can get better. And you know that I'm always here for you Diamonds.

So there you have it Diamonds, my top 10 list of myths associated with women's sexuality. So as I mentioned at the beginning of this podcast, go back and review the list. And when you're reviewing this list just notice how many of these myths that you have accepted as true, write down your thoughts around them. Decide whether these thoughts and myths are serving you, and if you'd like to let them go.

Finally, add to your list; look at your own sexuality and what your thoughts are around your own sexuality. And then ask yourself are these serving me? Are these thoughts serving me? Are these actually myths? Am I okay letting them go? Alright, Diamonds, that's all for this time.

To celebrate the launch of the Midlife Sex Coach for Women Podcast I'm going to be giving away a \$50 Amazon gift card to five lucky listeners who

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subscribe, rate and review the show on Apple Podcast. It doesn't have to be a five star review, although I would really love it if it were a five star review. But more importantly, I want your honest feedback so I can create an amazing show that provides tons of value.

Visit www.soniawrightmd.com/podcastlaunch to learn more about the contest and how you can enter. I'll be announcing the winners on the show in an upcoming episode. Okay, that's all for now, see you next time Diamonds.

Female Announcer: Thanks for listening to this week's episode of the Midlife Sex Coach for Women Podcast. If you enjoy Dr. Sonia's fun and caring approach to sexual intimacy, head to soniawrightmd.com to learn more.