

Ep #36: Your Sex and Intimacy Questions Answered with Kelly Casperson



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Dr. Sonia Wright

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You are listening to *The Midlife Sex Coach for Women Podcast*, episode 36.

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 just want to introduce you to Dr. Kelly Casperson. She and I periodically get together and we do a podcast live question and answer session. And we did one together and I wanted to share this with my Diamonds.

So who is Kelly Casperson? Dr. Kelly Casperson is a urologist. She is a sex educator and expert. And she is just fantastic. She has her own podcast called *You Are Not Broken*. And she does some other services and we just like to get together and have a good time talking and answering questions. So I was a guest on her podcast and I'm sharing this podcast with you today, so enjoy.

Kelly: Thank you so much for joining me today. So we're doing a live podcast recording. And I am so honored to be joined with Dr. Sonia Wright who is the Midlife Sex Coach. Tell me where people can find you just off the bat if they want more of you?

Sonia: Yeah, please. Please want more of me.

Kelly: Who wouldn't?

Sonia: Who wouldn't?

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Kelly: Who wouldn't?

Sonia: You can always find me on my website. It's kind of the easiest way to get me. And so that's soniawrightmd.com. You can find me at Instagram @Dr Sonia Wright. And but everything, and I have a podcast myself which you're going to be on that podcast and it's *The Midlife Sex Coach for Women Podcast*. So those are the places that you can find me.

Kelly: I love it. And you are number one, physician, number two, a mom. In no particular order, it's all your things. But you're a coach and you just recently finished master coach training.

Sonia: I did.

Kelly: Could you tell me a little bit about it or is it a massive secret and I don't get to know until I get to be a master coach? Is there a secret handshake?

Sonia: Well, I don't know if it's secret or not. But it was one of the best experiences of my life. It was not easy at all. Whenever you talk to somebody that's gone through master coach training they get this glazed look in their eye and they kind of look off in the distance, it is a transformational process. The person that you go in and the person you come out on the other side. And you gain some amazing skills, and you just really have a good understanding of how to coach. And you really get to feel comfortable in your own skin as a coach.

But it's a process, everything's a process that you go through but it was excellent training. And yeah, I consider myself very, very lucky to have been trained as master.

Kelly: That's amazing. But I've got a four year timeline. I'll ask you how to do that in four years. I need to just coast on where I am transformationally right now because I'm not ready to up-level at this point. Okay, so what do we have? I've got a bunch of questions. Women just write in all the time

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now on my Instagram and I don't have enough time to one-on-one answer anymore. So I've got a bunch that I think are so perfect for what you do with sex coaching and how you would talk to these people. So if you don't mind I think it would be really fun to go through some of these scenarios.

And then we'll just see what people want to type in and contribute. We'll see if anybody wants to come on live in a little bit when they come on in. Cool, okay. So the other thing to just tell people, to remind them, Dr. Wright and I are both physicians but we're not your physicians. This is not individual medical advice. This is sex coaching advice. It's for educational entertainment purposes only.

Sonia: Exactly. It's for entertainment purposes only, yes.

Kelly: Yeah, I love it, okay. So I suffered through 15 years of marriage where he made me feel bad about not wanting sex. Where do we start with this person? I'm assuming this is a female, I think it is, so we'll use a she pronoun.

Sonia: Yes. So the first thing is I usually like to get a little bit more information. I hear keywords like suffering through 15 years, I did not want sex. I kind of want a little bit more information about not wanting sex and getting more of a context of the relationship because it wouldn't surprise me if she didn't want sex if she's feeling like she's suffering through. So we have a thought here about suffering through this relationship, suffering through maybe lack of intimacy. We don't exactly know what's going on.

But if you're in this situation, I am a sex coach for women so I take the perspective from the woman's side of things. But when we start to look at a situation we try to find a neutral circumstance. So I hear there's a marriage here or some sort of relationship. There's 15 years here and then there is an issue with libido or wanting sex. So those are the basic points that we have. There's two different viewpoints. And so we could say he says, "I don't want sex", or something like that. So we could use that as a thought.

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But the thought that sounds like what I'm hearing from this person is I'm suffering through this relationship, but not wanting sex or something about suffering through. And how she's feeling, she's feeling like she's suffering and what types of actions are happening? We don't exactly know the actions. But there's low libido and we can consider that maybe there's not a lot of sexual intimacy happening here.

So when I work with any woman that's in this situation it's important to understand what's going on and what they're feeling and how these thoughts and feelings are contributing to this lack of intimacy in their marriage. It sounds like maybe there's a lack of communication, maybe she's not explaining what she needs in order to be more interested in sex. It sounds like there is some blaming going on here.

And any time there's blame, and guilt, and shame, and that type of thing, in order to engage in sexual intimacy you have to come from a very vulnerable place and you need a safe environment. It doesn't necessarily seem like it's a safe environment for either one of them. So it's going to also be hard to engage in sex and sexual intimacy.

So the question is what exactly does she want the result to be of the situation? Does she want to stay in this marriage and this relationship? And if so, then maybe it would be more about the communication, getting the general intimacy back on track and connecting with her partner. And maybe it's about taking sex off the table until this conversation can be had and to get back to the touch and the intimacy that needs to be established and the safety, establishing safety in order for both of them to get vulnerable with the situation. So that's definitely the place to start.

If it's the case that she's done with this relationship and she's not interested and it can also include boundaries. Boundaries sound like that needs to be something that's important here, boundaries for both sides. And to figure out what exactly their needs are and what they're going to tolerate in a

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relationship, and what is not necessarily tolerated in a relationship which goes back to safety issues.

And then when we're talking about sex we're always talking about consent, so that concept here that you don't necessarily have to have sex just because your partner wants to have sex. But usually I come at sexual intimacy from a place of pleasure, and connection, and satisfaction. And those are the primary things that I focus on. So I would be working and talking with her to kind of find out where is her pleasure in all of this? Is there any pleasure in all this? And how can we get back to that place of pleasure?

Kelly: I love it. I love how we can just take one sentence of a story and pull so many things out of it. It's amazing. Let's say that this was in her past, so let's say she's suffered through it but that relationship has ended and now she's still carrying this with her. I think what I'm pulling out is what she made that mean about her and how she's kind of stuck in the past with that story. Do you want to explore that?

Sonia: Yeah. It's always fun to explore. Actually that's very interesting because what we think about ourselves in relation to sex and sexual intimacy. So even when relationships end and we go into the next relationship we take so much of what was in the past relationship around sex and sexual intimacy into the next one unless we do the work. And so this would be the important part, to do the work. She has these concepts about suffering. So now there's this negative feedback loop going on here.

She might be in a new relationship and wanting to have the wonderful sexual intimacy with her new partner. But she still has this concept of how she engages with partners, how when sexual stimulation comes into play how she feels about it. And then on top of that there is this layer about how she thinks about herself in relation to sex and sexual intimacy and her sexuality. So in some ways it's great to go into another relationship.

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But I think the most important relationship is the one you establish with yourself, one you establish with yourself around sex and sexuality. So that being the case, to look at what your thoughts are at this point in time around sex. Do you think it's something enjoyable? Do you think it's something shameful? Is it something that you want to invest time and effort in? What are your thoughts around sex? And specifically you as a sexual being, what are your thoughts around that? And getting clear on what those thoughts are.

And it doesn't matter if they're good thoughts, or bad thoughts, or whatever. But just having an understanding of what those thoughts are. And then decide if those thoughts are serving you, if you want to continue to have those thoughts. And then if you decide that they're not serving you, then doing the work to release those thoughts and to get new thoughts in terms of how you want to think about sex and sexuality. The majority of people are sexual beings. It's okay to be sexual, the way our society is structured it doesn't necessarily allow women to be sexual and to want sexuality.

We're taught from an early age when we first encounter sex and sexuality with women's sexuality, it's kind of like don't touch that. That's like the stove is hot, don't touch it, you can get an STI, you can get pregnant, you can get a bad reputation. There's so many negative things associated with sexuality that we don't necessarily have a healthy beginning point of a belief in our sex and sexuality. And then all this other stuff gets piled on top of it.

So it's time to take all that stuff, all the dirty laundry off and get to that place where you're actually able to think and process, and how you want to think and how you want to think about things.

Kelly: I love that. And I think for women to kind of that click or that aha of I have this label of I'm the one who doesn't want sex. I have this label of I'm the one who wants less sex. And realizing that that might not even be a fact all the time, you've just kind of taken that role on. You had a great podcast

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about apathy and sex and it was amazing because I think a lot of people are like, "Well, this is just how it is." But they're actually unhappy about this is how it is. And so they're kind of stuck in this thinking it's a fact but it's not serving. Do you want to talk a little bit more about sex apathy?

Sonia: Yeah, sex apathy I think is, I have this concept of sex apathy and sex intolerance where sex intolerance we're just like, "Sex is the worst thing ever and it's shameful, it's really bad." And then there's apathy where you're like, "I don't really, okay, let's just get this over with. Let me just slap on some lube and get it done." And it's never going to get better, it's never going to change, I'm never going to enjoy myself. I happen to think that sex apathy is the worst presentation in terms of around sex and sexuality because it's the hardest to get out of.

And so many ways when you're stuck in this place and you're like, "Nothing I do is going to make a difference." It's so hard to get out of that. And you're trying to make a difference but your whole belief system is around nothing is going to change. So this is where the real work is needed to get to this place of belief. It doesn't have to be perfect the first time around, but you're trying to make changes. And so often you might try something and it doesn't work and then you're like, "See, I tried. I'm done. I knew this wasn't going to work."

But to try it, and to try it again and to just be like it's not going to be perfect the first time, or the second time, or the third time, but I'm getting, well, it's not going to be perfect ever. But it's getting better and things are improving. And it's okay and it doesn't have to be perfect. But to recognize that there is a little shift. Maybe there's three steps forward and two back. But there's still one step forward overall. And it is getting to that place.

And if you can focus on that it's improving and stay out of this place where it's just nothing's ever going to change or ever going to get better then you do have choices. And you empower yourself essentially to make a difference in your life.

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Kelly: I think that's it. I think it's that empowerment. And sex, it's just one topic of how women can do this in their life like eating better, having better relationships, becoming somebody who exercises. I've failed at exercising so many times I guess I'm just never, instead of being like I'm learning how to do this. And there's so much growth, people think the end point is the goal. And it's the journey is where all the magic is, learning to trust yourself, learning to ask questions, learning to fail. Where women are socialized to have to be perfect or don't try from a very, very young age.

And I think sex is just another wonderful example of this amazing personal growth opportunity.

Sonia: Yeah. And not realizing that the joy of sex is in the trying. The joy of sex is in the experimentation, the joy of sex is in the creating what you want. It's not in getting to this perfect place, but it's like I think I might try this. I wonder what that's like. And having the curiosity, I love curiosity when it comes to sex and sexual intimacy. And just the joy of being alive when it's fun and when it's not so fun and you've got to figure it out.

Kelly: Totally and I think the important thing of getting out of your comfort zone. Because I think so many women, they're like, "I don't have desire." And it's like where does desire come from? I'd love to go into it's the thought, it's a feeling, all that. But it comes from curiosity, from the unknown. Our brain is desired to be curious about things we're not so certain about. How could this go? And if you have the same boring sex all the time and it's not even satisfying, I always say, "Don't wonder where the desire went." You do have to get out of the comfort zone for there.

Sonia: It's so true. And give yourself permission, permission to explore, permission to look and to try new things. As opposed to just the same on your back for 10 minutes and then it's done. Well, I would rather watch Netflix if it's a choices between that.

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Kelly: Totally, especially if you're saving it for the very end of the day after a long day at work, you took care of the kids. You're prioritizing it when you're exhausted. So if that's your choice or that's the only place you can fit it in, at least try to make it somewhat satisfying and interesting because now you're putting tired on top of boring.

Sonia: Yeah. And so then it definitely has to be about you and getting your pleasure. So many women come to me and sex is about making sure their partner gets what they need, making sure their partner is pleased. Yeah, so you're exhausted, you're tired. It's 10 o'clock at night. And you'd really just like to sleep and your focus is just let them have what it is that they want. That's a recipe for total disaster when there's nothing there about you in it, right?

Kelly: I know. And I think a lot of women feel like they're being nice.

Sonia: Right. They're building up resentment and your partner knows. Your partner knows when you're into it and when you're not into it. And so they get to this place where they're not necessarily that into it. Or it starts having the negative feedback loop to your partner as well. So everybody is in this place and then they start shutting down and separating out in terms of disconnecting emotionally and physically.

Kelly: Yeah, totally. Okay, here's another one for you. I have been faking orgasms for 25 years. Help.

Sonia: Yes. Only 25, it doesn't have to be 26, that's all I've got to say. Okay, well, let's do it, let's do this. Alright, Kelly, are you ready?

Kelly: I'm ready.

Sonia: Are you ready for this?

Kelly: I'm ready for being coached.

Sonia: Okay, you've been faking. Was that the whole sentence?

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Kelly: That's the story.

Sonia: Okay. You've been faking orgasms for 25 years, okay.

Kelly: Help.

Sonia: So what do we do with this? Yeah, help. So okay there's two ways to come from this. There's one way which is it's time for the difficult conversation. It's time to sit down and talk. And I always say, either way I always say, "Blame Dr. Sonia. Blame the sex coach." And I'm going to bring you in on this. Blame Kelly too, blame Dr. Kelly as well.

So you've overheard this conversation between two sex coaches. And somebody was mentioning the fact that they've been faking orgasms for years and it made you think that okay, I heard what they had to say and it's time, it's time to have the difficult conversation, what is the difficult conversation? It's a conversation that you need to have with your partner when you realize that you've been letting yourself down as much as you've been letting down your partner.

It's that difficult conversation that you have to have that has to do with truth but for the first time. Once you get past what's been going on and you get to a place of truth then you two can work together to get to a place where you're enjoying your sex. So yeah, 25 years has gone by. But the odds are she is in her mid 40s. And that means she's got at least another 25 to 40 years of sexual intimacy ahead of her.

So the question is do you want to spend the next 25 to 40 years continuing to fake your orgasms? Or do you want to be like my body is changing, things that I found were pleasurable before I'm not finding as pleasurable now. So yeah, you don't have to go into the whole thing if you don't want to. But you can say, "My body is changing and I'd really like to explore more in terms of what other types of pleasure I can have and slowing it down."

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If you're faking orgasms there's a reason that you're faking orgasms and we need to have an understanding first of all, what is that reason? Is it because in your mind you feel that you're taking too long? If you feel like you're taking too long, well, we can look at those thoughts because you get to take as long as you want to. The other thing is that you may be not getting the correct stimulation for your body. The majority of women need stimulation to their clitoris, to their vulva region as opposed to penetrative sex.

Society says the ideal type of sex is penetrative sex and that women should cum from penetrative sex.

Kelly: Thanks Freud.

Sonia: Yeah, I know. So you've got a bunch of guys sitting around talking about women's sexuality and what we should want. It's no wonder that the answer is going to be penetrative sex. But you get to realize that your body, the majority of women, 70-85% of women need some sort of clitoral stimulation in order to have an orgasm. And if it's 'taking a long time' the odds are you're not getting the correct stimulation that you need for your body type. And it's about a journey of exploration to understand your body, to accept your body, to own your sexuality.

And it involves time with yourself; with self-pleasure to learn more about your body and where you like to be stimulated. But this can also involve your husband. I have clients that go about it together. And it's a fun journey of rediscovering. They're like, "How about here? Do you like this and do you like that?" And because nobody is taking it personally to mean that there's something wrong with the way they are as a partner or anything like that. It's just about exploration.

So if we can get beyond the words and the thoughts that something is wrong with you or the way your body works or something like that. Or if you get beyond the being afraid that your partner's going to think that they're

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not a good partner or something like that. If you could just be two people responsible for your own sexual pleasure, not responsible for your partner's sexual pleasure then you can get to this place where you could go on this magnificent journey and figure it out together. So that's one thing is my body has changed.

The other thing is just blame Dr. Sonia and Dr. Kelly. And just say, "Okay, let's get on with this and let's figure this out."

Kelly: Totally, I love it. I think most people want the intimacy. Sex is an intimate act, people want the intimacy and it's actually exploring that with each other is incredibly vulnerable. That's where all the intimacy is. It's not actually in the I had the orgasm. It's the figuring it out to get to the orgasm. And certainly faking orgasm is kind of fake intimacy, right?

Sonia: It is. It is definitely 100%. So it's figuring out first of all why is the faking of the orgasm going on? Is it because there's body image stuff and you don't want somebody around you and seeing your body for a period of time? Is it because you feel like you're taking too long to cum? Is it because you have a lot of underlying resentment and you just want that person off of you and out the door? There's so many reasons that could be there for the faking of the orgasm.

So it's so important to take the time and figure out what is the underlying thoughts and feelings that are going on with that and then you can really go from there.

Kelly: I think so much of this too is just never getting sexual education. And as soon as women get sexual education and they realize I was faking the orgasm because I thought I was supposed to be having an orgasm with this physical activity. And you're like, "Most people don't. Okay, why am I playing this game?"

Sonia: Right, exactly. And then that feeds into realizing you're normal. And then you're like, okay, yeah.

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Kelly: Totally. And not disappointing their partner or wanting to get it over with. There's so many different reasons for it. But you don't have to fake, it's so exciting. You can choose to stop.

Sonia: No more faking. No more faking allowed.

Kelly: No more faking orgasm apathy. Alright, are you ready for another one?

Sonia: Let's do it.

Kelly: Okay, let's see. I am 50, I have been through menopause. I have minimal hot flushes. Some vaginal dryness but Uberlube is very helpful. My issue is I never feel like having sex but I can be talked into it. And I feel like my vagina is broken. I feel like it's not tight and my husband doesn't complain but he has a difficult time reaching orgasm with intercourse. He needs a lot of manual assistance. Again, he doesn't complain. But my vagina never let me down like this before. So my lack of sex drive could be driven by the fact that my vagina just doesn't feel as good to him anymore.

Sonia: I love this because of you're not taking into consideration, if you're 50, how old is your partner? Let's get real about this. So things are changing on his body too. And he may not be giving you information about this. I mean his sensations might be changing. There's a lot of things going on here. Women are so fast to blame themselves.

Kelly: That's what this is. He's not even complaining but now you think you're the problem which is making your sex drive go down.

Sonia: And he's probably not complaining because he knows what the underlying issue is why it's taking longer to cum. He has an understanding of what's going on. You don't necessarily have the understanding. So women assume that it's a problem with themselves. If your partner was not taking an extended period of time and needing additional stimulation or something like that, would you think your vagina was broken?

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Kelly: No.

Sonia: Probably not. This has nothing to do with you or your vagina. It sounds like you use Uberlube so this is not necessarily that there's something wrong with your vagina. I'm not hearing that there's pain with sex. So the atrophy, or need for dilation or anything like that. I'm not hearing that that is specifically here. What I'm hearing is my partner does this, this, this and this. And so therefore he's needing more stimulation, it's taking longer. And all that might be true.

But that's saying $A + B = F$. We don't know what's causing what's going on with your partner, but to make the assumption is because your vagina's broken, it's too loose or it's not giving him the stimulation that you want. No.

Kelly: No. And I think this is a slippery slope into spending thousands of dollars on O-Shots and lasers and labial lasering, all these things that women do to try to fix their sex life when it's like communication's free, people.

Sonia: Right, yeah. And it's so hard to say those words like, "Do you feel something has changed? Is something different here? Can we really talk this over? I'm noticing." And I always say this, your partner's allowed to say, think and do whatever they want because you have no control over that. It may be the case that he has a problem, maybe erectile dysfunction, maybe some delayed ejaculation, whatever it is. And he's not ready to talk about it.

And so he may be blaming you because for men, if there's something going on with sex and the function of their penis it's like their identity as a man has ended. It's so much more than what's going on in the bedroom, it's part of their identity as a man in terms of financially support their families and to make sure that they can perform whenever necessary.

But what we also need to think about is, as you get older sexual intimacy may change. If you're not willing to change along with it your function of

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your body may change. But sexual intimacy, you get to have sexual intimacy, good, amazing sexual intimacy until the day you pop off. It may not include penetration at some point in time. But as long as you have the satisfaction, the pleasure, the connection there you can still have amazing sexual intimacy.

So I'm not saying it's all over at all but I am saying that there's one, like you're saying, Kelly, communication has to be there. There needs to be some sort of discussion going on. But there also needs to be a place where you're not blaming yourself, whatever is going on, not blaming yourself because this is so important, that these are two separate things that are happening.

Now, separate from what's going on with your partner, if you still feel like your vagina does not feel the same, your pleasure does not feel the same as it did previously then that's a different thing to explore but not necessarily from a place that it's broken. Our bodies are changing. And the body that we had when we were two years old is certainly not the body that we have now. The body we will have next year is not the body that we have now. So it is always shifting and changing. But at the same time we get to grow and allow it to be as it is.

But if there's something that you're not getting any pleasure at all or if you're feeling pain, yes, there is definitely a place to talk to your physician about this and to get the help that you need. But to just make assumptions and assume that there's something wrong with your body, because something else is happening with your partner. That does not go together.

Kelly: Yeah, so many assumptions. The data on low libido for women, this is kind of where I got my aha moment of low libido is not actually a thing because it usually just means something else is going on. A number one reason for low libido in women is their partner's erectile dysfunction. So to me I'm like, let's not say all these women have low libido without really digging into what it means to them to not want sex. They're like, "I don't

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want to embarrass him. I don't want to ask him if he needs something else besides the vagina penetrative intercourse."

But to me it's like low libido very commonly when you look at the data is the partner's sexual function. The woman takes that on.

Sonia: Well, I think that it can be. But I think also society has a concept of what libido is. And that is spontaneous libido where it's like you have to be in the mood. You look at somebody and you're wet already and you're in the mood. And we look at what our libido looked like when we were 20, when we had an hour and a half to do our hair. We had no children. We didn't have a stressful job. And what we had to spend our day was how good can we look and we're going to be going out on this date.

And your life was so different then and it's not a shock that your libido has shifted into a more responsive libido which 70% of women are in this responsive type of libido. But we're expecting that libido means that we had to be spontaneous and ready, and just going for it at any moment. And so if we're not in that place we think also that something has gone wrong and we are wrong. And so it's not about that. It's about that we have shifting responsibilities, our lives are different, we have different stressors. There's a lot that has changed in our lives.

And so yes, you're right Kelly when you say we need to look at what's going on in a woman's life and we also need to recognize that nothing has gone wrong, nothing has gone wrong. It's just society has a concept of what libido should be and society has a concept of how we should be responding at all times to the sexual stimulation. We honestly get to respond whatever way we want to.

Now, if you want to get to a place where you're enjoying yourself more and having more sex, and you want to want it because you want to want it, not because your partner wants you to want it, then let's talk and let's work on this.

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Kelly: Totally. I believe in the word 'low' with libido. It's so arbitrary; we're just like I'll take that on. I'll take the low libido, I must have it. It's low compared to what?

Sonia: Compared to what, right. And then there will be times in our life where it's lower and it's higher, if we're just comparing it to ourselves. And that's okay, it's alright that there's this ebb and this flow. I mean I'm 54 years old, when I went through menopause I was like I'm good, I don't need any of that. But you can come back from it. You can decide that you want to do the work to get more interested in sex and sexual intimacy. And honestly, I don't know if anybody cares but my sex life was a hell of a lot better at 54 than it was at 24.

So it does, you get to decide that you're going to put energy and an effort towards doing the work and doing what you need to do. We also have this concept in society that it should be easy, that sex should be spontaneous and it should be easy and we should not have to work at it. And if we have to work at it there is a problem. There's no problem, it's just anything that's worth doing you're going to have to work at.

Kelly: I love it. And I think there's so much empowerment in the discussion of sex of you get to make the decision. You get to decide how much you want to put into this. You get to decide to be curious. It's all empowerment.

Sonia: All of it.

Kelly: It's so beautiful. I just want to open up for the attendees that are on. If you want to either come on for live coaching with two coaches, how lucky is that. Or if you want to just type in questions, feel free. So if you want to come on we'll have you raise your hand. And if you want to type in a question just type in the chat box and we'll see if we get any curious brave souls. Otherwise we will keep talking. So I'll give them a minute to do that. Well, let's do another one while we're waiting for our brave souls to show up.

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Here's where I feel I'm really broken, I hear all these stories, this is a woman's story, not Kelly Casperson's story. Here is where I feel I am really broken.

Sonia: It would be cool coaching you, Kelly.

Kelly: Thank you. I hear all these stories about women trying to fend off their husbands or get them to tone it down. And whenever I try to initiate it completely backfires and my husband rarely initiates. And if I try to broach the subject his takeaway is that I'm not satisfied. And he gave me a big disclaimer when we got married that he felt that he had a higher drive. They're not even getting off the runway.

Sonia: I know, seriously. Okay so there's probably something going on with the husband. His testosterone may be dropping. He may be stressed out. We don't exactly know what's going on here but something has shifted. I don't know how long you've been married. I don't know if he just said he had a higher drive. But he didn't actually have a higher drive or he thought he had a higher drive and then he realized that it wasn't quite as high as yours. And maybe he enjoyed that fantasy and then the reality was a little much for him. We don't know exactly what's going on with the partner.

We have no control over their thoughts or whatever but what we can do is kind of break down different things. So I'm hearing that if you try to initiate and it doesn't sort itself out the way you want it to then your husband thinks that he's not satisfied. And in some way you're probably trying to protect him so you're not initiating.

But if you're able to isolate the fact that he feels like he's not satisfying you and if you're able to have a discussion about this that this is not about you satisfying, or one partner being responsible for another person's sexuality. But this is just we've got to figure this out together in order to have the sexual intimacy that we both deserve then that's a better place to come from.

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And then I always have this discussion with people that are interested in bringing toys to the bedroom because often partners are like, “I’m not satisfying you enough so you need a toy.” And I’m like, “It’s not that.” If we want to have the sexual intimacy that we all deserve then there’s a certain type of stimulation that you need and that you’re deserving enough to have that stimulation so that you both can enjoy it because ultimately if you both enjoy this more you’re going to have more sexual intimacy.

So part of it is isolating these thoughts around I’m a good lover, I’m not a good lover, I’m satisfying you, I’m not satisfying you, and putting the responsibility back on yourself. You’re responsible for your own sexuality and getting your needs met first and foremost through yourself and so that’s self-pleasure. And then with the added benefit of your partner. If it’s the case that he doesn’t necessarily want to have sex all the time then you talk and see if it’s possible for you to have different types of sexual intimacy.

Maybe he cuddles you while you use the vibrator, or the dildo, or whatever. But not coming from a place where he’s going to say, “She has to use a vibrator or whatever, so therefore I’m not satisfying her.” Or he gets to hold the vibrator or the dildo, you figure out how you want this to work. And then so that’s one set of thoughts that need to be evaluated.

Another set of thoughts that need to be evaluated is around the initiation and rejection. This is something men are taught by society that they’re going to ask for sex, keep asking, keep asking, keep asking. And then a certain percent of the time they’ll get lucky. That’s why this whole concept of get lucky. So men are trained on society to ask for sex and not necessarily to expect to get it all the time but they just keep asking because they know they’re going to get it.

Women on the other hand expect if they ask for sex that they’re going to get it a 100% of the time. And if they don’t get it a 100% of the time then they’re upset about it.

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Kelly: Or something's wrong with them.

Sonia: Yeah, they always put it back on like they're upset about it and they think something's wrong with them. They take this rejection to mean that there's something wrong with them and it's not the case. So if you were to increase your percentage of initiation, once you had the conversation with your partner about initiating and what he may need to be in the mood and things like that. Then you deal with your issues around this concept of initiating. If they say no it just means no. It doesn't mean no, you're ugly, no, you're not sexy, no, I would never want to have sex with you.

It doesn't mean that if it's no, it probably means no, I'm tired, no, I'm having erectile dysfunction issues right now, no, I am stressed out at work and no, maybe I would like to try but I don't want to be too vulnerable. There's a lot of things after the no but usually it's not no, you're not sexy enough for me which is this is what women have been trained about it. And then this goes to something completely, like when we look at society we are trained as women to be sexual objects and not the sexual subject, the one taking the action.

So we are sitting here living our life through what they call the male gaze or somebody else's gaze instead of our own gaze. If we could get to that place where our own gaze says that we're beautiful no matter what, or sexy no matter what, we're amazing no matter what. It really wouldn't harm us to the point that we're devastated if our partner says, "No, not tonight."

Kelly: That's beautiful. There's so many good takeaways there. And I think going back to these people just need to start talking because it's what everybody's making everything mean. But men are allowed to have low libido and men are allowed to be tired, and men are allowed to have their penises not work tonight. And women don't have to take that on to mean anything about them.

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Sonia: And men don't have to take it on to mean anything about them either because our society says that a man always has to be ready. If a man looks down and he happens to have an erection, suddenly he's got to find a place to stick it in. No, it doesn't. It just means that you're having a muscular reaction to something. It's a reflex. But our society says that men are not men unless they're always ready for sex. But men are people, men are human beings and they've got a lot going on in their lives. They're handling a lot of situations.

And in all honesty try being your partner for a day. I love coaching women but try to be a partner for a day. They're like, "Is she interested? Is she not interested? Is she ready?" We don't talk, we don't communicate like, "Are they ready? Are they stimulated enough? Maybe they're not, should I do a little bit more?" It's a big testing ground because we might say, "Ooh, ah." But we're not saying, "Yes, I'm ready." Or, "This is what I need right now." Or, "Could you shift it a little to the left." So it takes a lot to be a partner trying to figure out how to please you.

And sometimes some people will opt out, but it's not necessarily because of you or you not being sexy enough or whatever. There's a lot of stuff going on there.

Kelly: Totally. And it's so beautiful. It's so beautiful to be able to consider the other person as a human too. And I think we kind of default to we've got them figured out. We know what they mean. We kind of think we know what's going on without actually ever checking in. Tell me, how do you unstick a woman who is doing a lot of, let's call it obligatory sex? She's just going through the rhythm. This is what moms and wives do. And she's just kind of like, "Ugh, how do I get out of that?"

Sonia: Yeah. Well, first of all does she want to get out of it? So it's not for me to look at the situation and say, "You're not doing this right, let's unstick this." So it's first of all there's that consent there. So the first thing is, is this fine for you, are you happy with this? Or are you not happy? If you're

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not satisfied, if you're not getting what you want out of the situation then let's change it. But if this is working for you and you don't think there's a problem then I'm not here to tell you that there's specifically a problem.

So that's the first thing is that it's not up to me to say if there's a problem or not. But if they come to me and they say, "I'm just doing this out of duty. I'm not getting any pleasure. And I know that there's women out there that are having a great time and I see them having a secret smile on their face when they talk about their partner or they talk about sex. And I would really like that secret smile." Then yeah, then we work at it. And so the first thing that I work on is the thoughts around duty. Why is this a duty? Let's get back to that. And where do you fit in, in this duty?

And yeah, marriage at one point in time used to be a contractual type of thing. It's not necessarily now, we try to tend to think of it. But it's more of a love contract that we have gone into. 100 years ago was one family and another family coming together and more contractual. But now it's kind of like a love thing. So where are you in this scenario? Is this just a duty for your partner? Or where do you fit in there? And these are the questions. Do you deserve pleasure? How can you prioritize yourself? What exactly do you need? These are the things that are important to ask and to figure out.

Kelly: I love it. I think it's the latter, how you're describing is a lot of women are kind of like, "Back in my 20s and my 30s, or when I was in college or whenever, it was so great and I loved sex. I was a woman who loved sex." And now they're kind of like, "Sex is just another thing on my to do list." And so they've kind of found themselves in this place in life and they remember how it used to be. And I see a lot of women kind of stuck there. They don't want to be there but they think it's so much work or it's for other people to then experience pleasure again.

Sonia: Yeah. And it comes down to this not willing to do the work. Everybody wants it to be easy. It's simple, it's not easy. It's going to require some work here. Yeah, it's going to require vulnerability. It's going to

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require getting into the nitty gritty and going places you don't necessarily want to go. So you have to assess. Are you willing to look at your thoughts? Are you willing to look at emotions like shame, and guilt, and judgment, those types of things in there?

And let's get down and do this work because ultimately I always remind people that they have 20, 30, 40 more years of sexual intimacy, how do you want that to be? And then there's people that are spending time feeling bad about the last 15 years that they wasted or whatever. And I'm like, "But look, look at everything you've got still in front of you, let's sort this out."

Kelly: Yeah. I did an Instagram post because I was talking to a woman about this and I was basically like, "If you do this work it will change your life. I truly believe if you do this work it'll change your life." And so she's like, "I currently think that sex is a waste of time." And so my Instagram post was, if you think sex is a waste of time we've got some work to do because you can't beat yourself up for having low desire if your belief is sex is a waste of time. So can you talk briefly about just our beliefs about sex and how that affects our desire, and arousal, and enjoyment?

Sonia: Yeah, it's a 100% everything, honestly. The simplest thing to say is yes.

Kelly: Yeah. I mean that concept is basically why I went into Life Coaching School because I believe in this so strongly that I need to know how to teach it. Because everybody's like, "It must be my hormones. That's the reason why."

Sonia: Right. Everybody would like it to be your hormones because then you could get a shot, or a pill, or something like that. And sometimes that does work. It works for 10% of the population that's dealing with low libido issues. But the majority of it is you do have thoughts around it. You think it should be a different way than it actually is. And then also thoughts that

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something has gone wrong. It's like a combination of a number of different things. Yes, our body is changing.

Yes, our lifestyle has changed and yet we still think that libido and sex should be a certain way it was when we were in our 20s. We need to update what that concept is. And we need to recognize that the longer we hold onto these thoughts the worse our future is going to look in terms of sexual intimacy. If we're willing to let go of these thoughts and we're willing to allow it to be a different way, allow it to be harder to deal with, allow it to have the vulnerability there, allow it to look at these thoughts, then our future improves. And you're right, our life completely changes.

Kelly: Totally. I think so many people are kind of stuck on the mourning, not morning like a.m. but mourning like sadness. It used to be this way. It used to be that way. It used to be this way and realizing that those thoughts don't serve us going forward.

Sonia: No. But I do believe that you should have that time to grieve. I think that, yes, your sexuality and sexual intimacy and what your sex life looks like has changed and it's going to continue to change over your lifetime. So yeah, take that time to grieve if you need to but just don't get stuck in that place. Spend your time that you need to grieve. And then be like, "Okay, this is the situation I'm dealing with at this point in time. In this situation what is it that I want? Ultimately what is the result that I want out of this?" And then go from there.

Kelly: Beautiful. I was listening to Ian Kerner on Sex With Emily yesterday, who's amazing and is coming out with a new book. And he talked about kink in a whole different way. That kind of made it very approachable for people who are like, "No, not for me. That's for what other people are doing." Could you introduce people, maybe people who have never even thought about hearing about what kink is, what is kink?

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Sonia: Yeah. Kink is basically, it's exploration, it's creativity, it's fun. That's kind of how I look at it. Obviously in the parameters of there has to be consent there which means discussions. There should be safe words in place to make sure that if you don't like doing something you have a word or a way to let somebody know that you're not enjoying this. There shouldn't be any focus on unwanted pain. So consent is definitely important. That's the top priority, making sure you're not to hurt yourself and not to hurt others.

But if we are dealing with those situations and there's a lot of trust, there definitely has to be trust there. And there has to be this communication there. If we have those things set up then we get to talk a little bit about the kink side of things, creativity, fun, imagination. Sometimes it has sex involved, sometimes it doesn't, a lot of times it doesn't. There is a power exchange. That can be a power exchange dynamic that could be involved.

But this has to do with a lot of consent and communication back and forth in terms of dom, sub or something like that, if you want to get involved in those types of things. But basically it's just about exploration and just giving yourself the opportunity to engage in sexual activities and kink activities in a different way, just to explore what turns you on and what you have fun with. And it doesn't necessarily have to involve sex at all.

Kelly: Yeah. And the way you described it, which thank you, you kind of extrapolated on it, it's not this crazy thing that if we're like those people. That it's really like, it's playful, it's curiosity, it's having fun. It's kind of all these things. And especially with the data of women being bored in the bedroom and how do you get out of that repetitious boredom, it's not working for you way? You have to get creative, you have to get playful. You have to try new things and kind of exploring it from that standpoint.

Sonia: Yeah. And I would like to encourage women to – traditionally society thinks of kink as doms that are male and subs that are female. But women can be equally as much of a dominant personality in the bedroom if

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they wish to. And so there's nothing that says it has to be along gender lines at all. So if it gets you excited to do something where you're more dominant in the bedroom then go ahead and have fun. Of course consent always, do no harm in consent. But there's nothing that says that kink has to be along gender roles.

I mean the fun thing about kink is that you can do all the fun things. So it doesn't necessarily have to be that way. And a lot of women do initially get into kink thinking that they were going to do the sub role and they try it out. Maybe they like it, maybe they don't, and if you don't then check out some other roles that are available to you.

Kelly: I love it. One person typed in a question, we'll do your last five minutes with this if you wouldn't mind. How do you get past the awkwardness of trying to reinitiate intimacy after a long dry spell or parenting where you kind of feel like roommates with your partner?

Sonia: Yeah. So we're in the long dry spell. So if you've been feeling like roommates, you don't have to go back to switch, one day you're roommates the next day your fuck bunnies or something. There's time in between that we have to get there. And start by initiating the touch. Find the connection there.

So let's see what we can do to initiate the touch because that's usually what's going on is that you stop having the penetrative sex and you stop having the sexual intimacy, then you stop having the intimacy. And then you're looking around and you're like I'm a roommate. And I don't really have a marriage here.

So let's start with the intimacy. Communication, discussions, touch, get to that place, you can use what they call sensate focus which it reintroduces touch to you and then over a period of time, with your clothes on generally when you start. And then over a period of time when that trust is there

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because you need that trust for the vulnerability then you can start taking off your clothes and get down to just your underwear and continue to touch.

And then at some point in time you can take off your underwear but you're still not necessarily touching your genital area, you're just touching your arms and your legs. And then you can kind of progress from there to touch at the genital areas. And then slowly, it's almost like going back to your teenage years, go to step one where you're kissing a little bit. But there's nothing that says that just because you've had sex in the past with this person that you have to go boom, right back into it.

And then if you're a woman that's perimenopausal or postmenopausal and has not been engaging in penetrative sex you might want to check out in terms of if there's any issues with atrophy or of anything, because your vagina can shrink in diameter and in length as well. So those things that you may need to check on and you might be surprised that when you're ready for sex, it doesn't pop right in there.

So get that checked out because there may be something that requires dilation, not usually if you're younger than perimenopausal, menopausal stage. But it is something to be aware of, so you don't want to add on top of all this awkwardness when you're figuring out the intimacy, you don't want to add pain into the situation, whatever you can do to avoid pain.

So make sure all the plumbing is working properly before you decide to use it essentially because we don't want to add pain to this scenario where you're just trying to get comfortable with each other and reestablish that touch and that intimacy. And start with your words, communication is the way to start to regain that intimacy.

Kelly: Awesome. Yeah, and I think just thinking it's all or nothing, we're doing nothing and now a penis has to go in my vagina. It's so overwhelming and quite possibly not even pleasurable for the female, of we just go on a lunch date, we need to just hold hands in the park. I need to

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just touch your butt through your jeans in the kitchen. Whatever people want to do to kind of get that intimacy back in and not go straight to the predestined heterosexual sex, that really is so limiting for so many people.

Sonia: Yeah. And it might be one and done if you just go straight to that. So what you want to do is to preserve this intimacy so that you can have a long sustained pleasurable sexual intimacy relationship. But if you go prematurely and you just go straight to penetrative sex, that might be the first and the last of another couple of years before you try to do anything again. So you want to avoid that.

Kelly: Beautiful. Thank you so much for joining me today. I want to respect your time and let you exit. And I'd love to do this again.

Sonia: Alright, sounds good, thanks so much.

Kelly: Take care.

Sonia: Take care. Bye bye.

Diamonds, do you feel like you're missing out on passionate intimacy and amazing pleasure even though your life looks fabulous to everybody else? Or maybe you feel like sex is just an obligation that's on your to do list right after taking out the trash. Perhaps you would love to get rid of the story that plays again and again in your mind that sex is shameful. Or maybe you just want to want to want sex again.

Well, Diamonds let me tell you the time has come. My Own Your Sexuality Now 90 day program to greater intimacy and pleasure in your life is open for enrolment. In fact I've actually reorganized the structure of Own Your Sexuality Now so that you can join at any time. You don't have to wait for a three month increment anymore. Just think, you can talk to me weekly and get all your coaching needs met in my anonymous weekly group coaching calls. And we have so much fun with these calls and we get the work done.

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Best of all, you get a community of other women that are dealing with similar issues. You get to know that you are not alone. So this amazing program, Own Your Sexuality Now includes 12 self-paced modules that lead you on a journey to create the sexual intimacy of your dreams. You start from exploring concepts of you as a sexual being. And then you progress all the way to the point where you're creating a pleasure plan, a unique pleasure plan for you that ensures that you get the pleasure and the sexual intimacy that you deserve.

And I'm so excited about this, and as a special bonus, Own Your Sexuality Now is going to include an additional three months of weekly group coaching calls and support from me, Dr. Sonia. So click on the link below, Diamonds, or visit my website www.soniawrightmd.com to find out more about Own Your Sexuality Now and to join. I can't wait to see you all.

Alright Diamonds, that's it from me, Dr. Sonia out.