

Ep #43: Flowerside Chat Q&A: Part One



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 43.

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.

Hey Diamonds, I hope you're all having a fabulous week. Today I am sending you greetings from Hawaii. You know what? When I started my coaching business a number of years ago I had a dream to live in Hawaii and run my business from Hawaii for at least two months out of the year. And with all the things that have happened last year because of the pandemic it made me realize even more that it's so important to continue to work towards your dreams no matter what.

So, I decided this year I would go to Hawaii for about three weeks and see what it was like to run my business from Hawaii, check out the logistics, make sure I could figure out the wi-fi from the hotel and the condo, deal with the time difference of five hours from the Midwest. And also run my group coaching programs of OYSN and YES as well as coach my private clients. And most of all I wanted to enjoy spending quality time with my baby beansprout, my daughter Jamieson.

So, Jamieson is nine now and I've seen a big change in her over the last year. And I definitely want to spend more time with her because I realized she is definitely growing up. She seems to have developed kind of a bored, know it all, valley girl type of accent and attitude. And she loves to pretend that she's in high school. Just like, "Oh my God, oh my goodness mom, I just have to tell you it's so boring today." So, this is kind of how she talks now. And honestly she makes me laugh all day long really.

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So, while I'm in Hawaii with my teenage preteen or my preteen teenage, whatever you want to say. I just wanted to share with you my most recent flowerside chat and the questions and answer session for this week and for next week. You will also get to meet one of my coaching BFFs, this is Coach Donna and she handles all the general life coaching in my monthly membership program called YES. If you want to learn more about YES then check out the link below in the show notes.

Okay Diamonds, have a great week and enjoy the flowerside chat.

Welcome everybody, I'm Dr. Sonia, Dr. Sonia Wright. And you are in the flowerside chat. You might wonder why it's called the flowerside chat and not the fireside chat. But there's a flower behind me so I named my session where I do my Q&As as the flowerside chat. And so, this evening we're doing the flowerside chat and Q&A. This is when you specifically come in and you have questions and I answer whatever question that you have. And you can feel free, as you come in you'll see that we have the chat and we have the Q&A.

The Q&A is where I'd love you to put your questions, any questions that you have. The chat, feel free to put in the chat where you are calling in from. So, I'd love to know where people are calling in from for this call this evening. Welcome, so good to see you all. Alright, welcome. So just put in where you're calling in from so I have an idea of where we have reached. And while I'm – outside of Boston, welcome. Alright, so good to see you. And Minneapolis, alright.

And I am Dr. Sonia. I am The Midlife Sex Coach for Women. And Arlington, Virginia, so good to see you. And then also I have here Coach Donna. So, Coach Donna who is absolutely fabulous. Coach Donna is – well, she's one of my BFFs and we train together. And she also does coaching for women in midlife. And she is the one that handles in my Your Empowered Sexuality program. She is the one that handles the general life coaching

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calls. And so, this evening I asked her to come and hang with me because sometimes we just like to chat.

And I love the questions and answers session because that gives us an opportunity to chat about different things. So, any questions that you have feel free to put it in the questions and the answers and we will start answering any questions that you have. And I'm just making sure that – it looks like everybody's got their name updated and changed, good. So, welcome. So, while we're waiting for people to get some questions that they want to put in the chat then I will just talk to you. But just give me one minute here.

Alright, so while you're putting your questions, please feel free, there's an anonymous feature in the Q&A section. So, feel free to put any questions that you have in there. And it looks like we've got people from Arizona, Minneapolis, Virginia, Massachusetts. So, we've got a lot of people that are on this call tonight, so good to see you. So put any questions you have in the Q&A and that is open at this point. Yes, and the thing about the Q&A that I like is the fact that nobody else can see your questions.

So, you can put your questions in the Q&A. Then there's an anonymous feature and you don't necessarily have to use the anonymous feature. But that is kind of an added benefit that you could use if you'd like to. And I know that I have a question that people were asking. And I wanted to make sure that I've got that question. But in the meantime, I'm going to look for that question.

And Donna, can you introduce yourself and just tell us what you do and what you do within my program, Your Empowered Sexuality and what you do in life in general?

Donna: Yes, absolutely. Thank you, and so fun to be here. And I love any chance to hangout with Sonia. And as she said, yeah, we did our training together and been kind of joined at the hip ever since. So yeah, I help

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women in midlife reinvent themselves. My program's called Breakthrough to You. And it's reimagine possible.

And so, I love helping women kind of get back to who they are after all of the other identities have been kind of hung on them sort of like coats on a coat rack and so many things and then kind of forget to tend to your own needs, and your own desires, and your own wants, forgot maybe what that was like. And so, we just get back to you and reimagine what life can be like. So yeah, and so fun to hang out this evening together.

Sonia: Cool. Alright, so we have a couple of questions here. The first question has to do with lack of interest. My biggest issue is lack of interest in sex just in general and feeling like I have a really low libido. Okay, so this is a question that I get quite a bit especially from women in midlife. And I'm quite sure, Donna, this is something that you encounter as well when you're dealing with women in midlife. And yeah, let's get real. Sometimes it does feel like our libido has shifted and changed and it's different than the way it was before.

And the question becomes how do we deal with that? So, when we're in our 20s maybe we had more of this spontaneous type of libido. And now we have this libido that has shifted and changed. And it doesn't feel like it's the same type of libido. So, what do we do with that? This is kind of what I call the spontaneous libido versus more of the responsive type of libido.

And so, when we're dealing with more of the responsive type of libido instead of the spontaneous type of libido we kind of have to look at the big picture. We kind of have to look at what is the overall goal of the relationship? And what is the overall plan that you have for the intimacy in general? Because yeah, sometimes it feels like there is an effort involved. And I think part of it is that we have this belief that it shouldn't be hard, that it should come easy to us.

And maybe it came easy to us when we were 16 or 20 years old. But we had a lot less stuff going on at that period of time. So, if it's the case that

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we're 16 and we're 20 and we're thinking, we see somebody, we're interested in them. That it's kind of the spontaneous libido. And then we're turned on and then our mind and our genitalia kicks in and then we're ready to go. And now we're in our 40s and our 50s and we're not feeling the same way.

So, the question becomes at that point, what do we do when we have this low libido or the responsive libido? Well, the thing is that 70% of women function from this place. And so, when we're talking about 70% of women functioning from this place, the majority of women function from this place. So instead of how do I fix my libido, how do I bring it back to the way it was before? It's like how do I function from this place of having more of this responsive libido or kind of coming from a neutral place?

So, one of the things that I do when I work on this issue is really just talk to people about, instead of seeing it like something's gone wrong, more about this is the way you are at this point in time. And if you're premenopausal, yes, there are medications that you could look into. And I usually tell people to contact their gynecologist or their primary care doctor and to see if it may be the case.

Normally you have to be premenopausal for these medications. And they work to a certain extent but they don't work a 100%. One is a shot and one is a pill. One is a pill that you have to be on all the time. And the other one is a shot that you can take periodically. And that appeals to some people and then it does not necessarily appeal to other people. So, the other side of it is using your mind to get to that place where you're more interested in sex and sexuality.

And as life coaches this is what we do, Donna, we look at the mind, we focus on that side of things. So that being the case then it's how do we focus in on what makes us more interested in sex? How do we stimulate or kickstart our libido? So that becomes a question that we look at and a question we ask ourselves, what exactly can we do? So yes, Donna, I'm putting you on the spot, which is so much fun, right?

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Donna: Yes, depends on the spot but yeah, since we're all here chatting.

Sonia: Since we're all here chatting. So, it's what exactly is it that turns you on and makes you more interested in sex? So, I'll name off a couple which would be reading erotica, maybe sexting with your partner throughout the day or flirting by phone or whatever. So that you kind of get engaged. I have clients where it's clean sheets, sheets, like nice fresh clean sheets that make them happy and make them much more interested in sex. I was laughing, joked that for me it is cologne. It's Old Spice.

Old Spice still does it for me because I grew up in the 70s and the 80s and there weren't too many cologne. I think it's for women that grew up in the 90s it would be the equivalent of the Axe, all body spray back in the 90s. So, my all body spray, that would it for me would be Old Spice. So, what is it that does it for you? What is it that makes you more interested?

Donna: Yeah, so we do, yeah, so flirting throughout the day is definitely one thing that we do. And it's also kind of a way we put your toe in the water and temperature check the other person. You get a sense of where they're at. And I'll tell you one of the things that's fascinating it, it was really cool to watch and enjoy it afterwards. When he is moved. What I mean is we watched a movie. We were having a lazy day Sunday but he needed to get in some work as well ahead of the week.

And so, we watched a movie and it was just an ordinary kind of feel good movie. But the end of it just kind of really touched us. And he had gotten up and dressed to go into his office and stood there watching the last bit of it. And he choked up and I was moved, he was moved. He kissed me and started walking away. I got out of it and grabbed him and said, "Come on back in." And he did and the office will be there. And it was just that emotional bonding. So that did it and we do a lot of flirting during the day off and on and stuff. And definitely notice a difference based on stress level.

Sonia: Stress level, yeah, definitely.

Donna: It really decompresses.

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Sonia: I brought up the stress level thing because that's really important. And people will talk about context. We think that we should be willing to just be ready to go at any moment. But we also have to recognize the context in our life. And especially for women, this is something that's really important for us is that if we don't feel safe, if we're stressed out, if something's going on, there might be financial stresses, there might be emotional stresses. The relationship is not going the way that you want.

All those things are considered context. And women are very sensitive to context. And if you think about it, we're the ones that if we're engaging in sex and we actually get pregnant, we're the ones that have to make sure the environment is safe. If we go back millions of years ago, and if we think about cave times, cave people times, if there was a saber-toothed tiger outside the cave then it probably wasn't the best time to be engaging in sexual intimacy. So that might be a reason why.

Or if there was a poor harvest and there wasn't going to be crops around then that might be, you know, there might be other things that are stressing us so that we're not as interested in engaging in sexual intimacy. So maybe today it's not a saber-toothed tiger. Maybe it's stress at work.

Donna: Yeah, but it's still stress.

Sonia: It's still a different type of stress, it's still. Our body doesn't know if it's a saber-toothed tiger or if it's that there is a deadline at work. We're still going to be stressed out and we're still going to be responding to that. And it's interesting because the stress hormones, cortisol, it has the same building blocks as our sex hormones. So, if we're using, we're shifting all the building blocks away from our sex hormones into our stress hormones. Then we're not really going to have a lot there for the antigens, the estrogen, the testosterone. It's going to be going to make cortisol basically.

Donna: Yeah. It sucks the life out of the...

Sonia: It sucks the life out of it.

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Donna: Sucks the sex out of you.

Sonia: It's going to suck a lot of things. And not in a good way. It's killing the sex.

Donna: I wanted to say I learned from you the distinction between the spontaneous and the responsive libido which was very eye-opening. And helped shape expectations because we have a question here. Can you tell me more about mismatched libido? And I just want to say that that really helped me not make a big deal out of maybe not being into it to get started but joining on in the process and then I got there.

Sonia: Yeah. It's interesting about mismatched libido. It's interesting that you talk about that because I mean it is real. And if you think about it, what are the odds that you're going to be in a relationship with somebody where your libido is equally matched to that of your partner? It's just not necessarily going to happen. There might be different times where you're in a phase where you're kind of at the same level.

But for the most part, one person's libido is usually higher than another person's libido. And that being the case then it becomes an issue of okay, what do we do in that circumstance, what do we do in that situation? And to answer that question but just, I see that people are starting to put more questions in the Q&A. Feel free to put questions in the Q&A, there's a feature for the anonymous feature. Feel free to ask whatever question you need to if you want to ask it in the anonymous feature. It's easier if you put it in the Q&A and we will go ahead and answer the questions.

But when we're talking about mismatched libido I come from the perspective of we are responsible to meet our own sexual needs. So, it's not that you come into the relationship where you're expecting your partner to meet all of your needs because that – you can't control another person. So, when you get to that place where you're looking for another person to meet your sexual needs, that's just kind of a prescription for frustration.

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You're not going to ever, like if they're here and you're up there and you're like, "Why can't you come up and meet me at this level and we can just have lots of sex." I talk to people quite a bit where one partner would like to have sex every single day and the other partner would be fine with having sex once a week or once a month. And so, what do you do in those situations? Well, you kind of get creative in those situations. At that point you're like...

But first of all, you have to take the responsibility for your sexual needs. And if that means that sometimes you have sexual intimacy with your partner and sometimes it's self-pleasure that you're engaging in. Or you can engage in self-pleasure with your partner in the room and you can hold each other and cuddle. But you can add in toys, you can add in all sorts, there's tons of vibrators out there for women. And at the end of this call I'm going to go over a few vibrators and things like that.

But there's more and more toys that are out there for men as well. There's the Tenga Egg and that's a masturbation sleeve. That's Tenga T.e.n.g.a. So, there's a lot of different toys out there to help you. And there's different options as well but in terms of relationship structures and things like that.

But just because you have a mismatched libido does not necessarily mean that it has to be the end of the relationship, nor does it mean that the person that has the higher libido dictates whether or not sex happens all the time. It's not on the higher person's libido's schedule. They're in charge of their own libido, making sure their own needs are met. But not to the place where they're trying to bully somebody else to get theirs met because that's not going to lead to intimacy. That's just going to lead to people being upset about things.

Let's see. It looks like we have another question.

Donna: There are two more, yeah. One who talks about what if I'm not attracted to my husband anymore? And you really probably could go spouse, partner.

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Sonia: Yeah. So not attracted to your husband anymore. Well, then there's a number of different things. You have to decide what is it specifically that you would like in that instance. And I always say look at the results that you actually want to get out of this situation. Is it you're not attracted to your husband but you would like to become attracted to your husband in the future? Is it specifically you're not attracted to your husband and you don't want sex ever again with your husband? It's kind of there is the situation or the circumstance that you're not attracted to your husband.

And then there's the end result that you want in this overall relationship. And so, you get to decide do you just want a platonic relationship? Because you can have a platonic relationship. Do you want to figure out how to find your partner attractive again? Because that's kind of shifting around thoughts and we can work on that. Are you happy just the way things are at this point in time? I would imagine with this question you may not be happy. But I always come from what is the final result that you want to get? And then kind of work that way backward.

If the final result is that you just want to live with the person and you don't want to engage in sexual intimacy any longer then that being the case then you kind of look at the actions that you want to take in that instance. And then look at the feeling that you want to have. Maybe you want to have a feeling of mutual respect or something like that. And then you can have a thought, if you want to have respect, if that's what you want to do. Or if you want to have love but not necessarily have sex then you'll decide what thought you need to think in that instance. Alright, what is the next one?

Donna: So, we have a similar situation somewhat to mismatched libido. But they're having, the schedules are different, there seems to be different interests. Now there is overcoming self-consciousness with initiating conversations about lovemaking when there's never a good time. And there are schedule issues. And now there is some added stress of other family members being ill. And so, starting a hard conversation seems unsupportive to him since he's the low interest partner. I'd be happier with

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more sexual connection. We are affectionate always so I struggle with trying versus letting it go for now.

Sonia: Okay. So first, thank you for submitting this question because I see that there's a lot of different levels of things that you're dealing with here. There's a question about the communication there. There's the mismatched libido that's going on. There's family members that are having recurring cancer. So, there's other stressors in the relationship. And then you have a low interest partner. I guess one of the questions would be to know is, is the low interest partner, has it always been the same level of one person has the lower libido and you have the higher libido?

Or is it new in terms of the low or no interest in the partner? Because if it's a new thing where there's no or low interest then one thing to rule out is to make sure depression isn't there or other things that are happening specifically with the partner. Then to make sure if there's any mental illness, or depression, or dysthymia, whatever may be happening that they are getting some treatment or care if they need that. Because it sounds like there's a lot of stressors.

Okay, so if this has been something that's been chronic or something that's been going on for a long time, so starting hard conversations seems unsupportive to him since he's the low interest partner. Okay, so in terms of starting the hard conversations it's always one of those things of a balance. Part of is you cannot control other people's thoughts, actions, or feelings. So, on the one hand you can't force another person to have more sex with you if you want to have more sex.

And as I said before with the mismatched libido, the primary concern is to make sure that you are meeting your own needs sexually. And if that means exploring with different toys or different outlets then that's one that you need to do, to make sure that you're not going into these hard conversations really frustrated and annoyed. So, when it comes to having hard conversations I always talk about mutual respect and coming into the situation where it's kind of like a partnership.

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If it's the case, what often happens is that people have been holding back and holding onto this feeling, they really want to have a conversation for an extended period of time. And then they get to this point, they can't handle it anymore. And then it kind of explodes. And the partner's coming home from work and suddenly they're like, "I need to talk about sex now." But that might not be the most appropriate time. They might be tired. They might be stressed from a long day. They're being blindsided.

So, when it's these hard conversations it's usually better to come from a place where you're like, "Can we talk about this? I'd like to talk about the intimacy in our relationship because I think it's important to continue to have that sexual connection and that intimate connection. But I also recognize you've got a lot going on. Can you tell me what might be a good time to sit down and have a conversation about this?" And give them the opportunity to suggest a time that works for them, maybe the weekend, maybe an hour for now, whatever it is. So that's the first thing.

The second thing is as I said before, you don't control their thoughts, or feelings, or actions. So, if you're not specifically controlling their thoughts, feelings, or actions you have to recognize that they can have whatever response to your request that they want to have. And this might be hard to realize it. You have an idea of how you want things to go. And it may not necessarily go that way, at least not at the beginning.

And it's kind of like you have to be willing to have it go whatever way the conversation is going to go. Realizing that this is not going to be the only conversation, the only time. But whatever comes out in the conversation is going to get you closer to some sort of resolution and to some sort of response or result. But it doesn't have to be like let's have a conversation. Okay, we have a conversation, this is the result I want and this is what's going to happen.

We have all different people and different ways that people communicate. And so, it may be the case that people need to process the information, people need to talk about what's going on with them. People need to

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process and have some downtime in between. And also recognize that this is – it's usually not a one and done conversation. It's usually a conversation that you start and then you continue it and then you get back to it at a certain point. And then you get to this place where you are able to maybe compromise, maybe come to this place.

But also recognize it may not go your way, but the important thing is to have the conversation, even though it's a difficult conversation. It's something that's important to have.

Donna: Yeah, thank you. And I'm just going to say, I'm going to – we have somebody really just making a comment. And it's connected to your whole explanation here to that last question. That's such a helpful concept to not store up the frustration and exploding. I am grateful for prior coaching about tending to my own pleasure and to the idea of giving my partner grace to talk about it or not when or if they're ready and letting go of the outcome.

Sonia: Yeah, because you can't necessarily control the outcome. As you say, you can control your thoughts, your feelings, and your actions but you cannot control the outcome. That doesn't necessarily mean that it may not resolve the way you want it at some point in time or it may resolve some other way. But if we are not grasping that it has to be a certain way and it has to have a certain outcome then we can actually get to a place where it's actually a mutually beneficial outcome for both people, for all people that are involved in the conversation.

So, it does become helpful to recognize it doesn't have to go the way we want it, but we want to – how do we want to approach this conversation? How do we want to show up for this conversation? That is something that's definitely an important question to ask. And so that being the case we get to decide how we, because we do control ourselves, and our emotions, and our feelings. So, we get to decide how we want to show up for this situation. So, thank you, thank you for that comment.

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Diamonds, how is your sex life? No really. How is your sex life? On a scale of 1-10, how would you rate it? You know I'm all about the intimacy for women in midlife. If you rated the passion in your life as less than an 8, then we need to talk sister.

I'm personally inviting you to check out my new program, Your Empowered Sexuality 30-Day Kickstarter. I am so excited about this program. Most of you know that I have an impossible goal to positively impact the sex lives of over a million women and I am just getting started.

Come work with me for 30 days to kickstart that intimacy in your life. Let's create that amazing satisfying intimacy that you deserve. Let's face it, if you're in your 40s, 50s, or 60s, you could have 30-50 more years of intimacy ahead of you. What do you want that intimacy to look like? Let's get real and talk about what's going on with your body, your libido, let's see what we can do to kickstart this intimacy.

This program is for you whether or not you have a partner. If you are a woman who wants to enjoy all aspects of her life, then this is the program for you. It finally gets to be your time. So click on the link in the show notes or on my website soniawrightmd.com and come and join me for Your Empowered Sexuality, aka YES, Your Empowered Sexuality 30-Day Kickstarter. I cannot wait to see you Diamond. Talk to you soon. Take care.