

Ep #46: Fiction vs Reality



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 46.

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 am finally back from Hawaii and I have to say I am so excited to be home in Minnesota. It's just nice to be home. Of course, when I got home I discovered my sprinkler system had malfunctioned. And I basically came home to a dry and very, very crisp front lawn. All the other front lawns in the neighborhood were beautiful, and lush, and green. And then there's mine which is very dry and toasty tanned. But it just made me laugh because it seems like a reflection of me in so many ways. I'm definitely different.

And I've come to that place where I'm 100% okay with being different. I'm 100% okay with the fact that in so many ways I don't meet society's concept of normal. I've gotten to that place in my life where I just love who I am and I embrace the fact that I'm very different from society's concept of what is right, or good, or beautiful and sexy. And I don't compare myself to others standards because I know that I do embody all of these things.

And I really, I attribute this self-acceptance to the self-coaching work that I have been doing over the last couple of years. Really doing this work to embrace me and embrace my uniqueness. And I like to say when I compare I actually negate me. And honestly, that's not something that I'm willing to do. I want to tell all of you Diamonds that your uniqueness is what makes you special. It's what makes you, you. So, embrace you and celebrate you in this world just as I celebrate my tanned crispy lawn in an ocean of Minnesota green.

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So don't compare, Diamonds, celebrate you in the sea of others. And I actually want to talk to you about comparison, and about something that I'm seeing is happening over the last couple of years. Women keep coming to me talking about these romance novels and how amazing the sex is depicted in these romance novels. And how they want their real life sexual intimacy to be more like these romance novels. Honestly, I would kind of like to throw these romance novels across the room and out of the window or something.

Let's start by saying that I like a good romance novel as much as anybody else. When I was 16 years old I was the queen of romance novels. Obviously romance novels are much more explicit and fun than they used to be back in the 1980s. Yeah, I can see why people are really interested in these racy amazing sex scenes. But I would caution you against comparing anything in a romance novel with reality. I think the best use of a romance novel is to utilize it as basically erotica, kind of like an accelerator for your libido. I certainly don't have a problem with that.

But we need to really recognize that what's going on in these novels is all fiction. For those of you that need me to say it again, I want to be really, really clear. This is not reality. In most cases sexual intimacy and reality does not start and finish over a five minute period of time. It's usually not a two to three page interlude. It usually doesn't occur in the middle of a storm or at sea with the sun glistening on your partner's chest and their sixpack abs exposed beneath the ruffled cotton shirts.

Generally, your partner doesn't know exactly what to say at the exact moment to melt your heart and your loins. And usually, women are so quickly lubricated in these books, it's kind of like they're a leaky faucet. Usually, penetration in real life is not achieved within a minute of initiating sex. And sexual intimacy does not normally culminate in simultaneous orgasms like it does in these romance novels. Once again, Diamonds this is not reality.

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If I have another woman come up to me and tell me that she wants sex and her relationship to be just like it is when she's reading in these romance novels, I'm just going to scream. I'm going to pull out my hair, there just needs to be an understanding that this is all fiction. This is a form of erotica created to sell books and make money. This is a lot of things but it's certainly not reality. This is similar to me saying that I want my sexual intimacy to look exactly like the sex that I'm seeing portrayed in pornography.

Pornography is created for entertainment and for dopamine hits and so is a romance novel. A romance novel is essentially a tool that can help you and which could turn you on but it's also something that can be used detrimentally against yourself. If you feel that your sexual intimacy needs to look like what you're seeing in these romance novels.

I want to make sure that we talk a little bit more about what's happening if we continue to keep this idea that the sex that we read in the romance novels, or the idealized version of the sex that's in our minds is the best type of sex or the correct type of sexual intimacy. Let's look what happens if we continue to compare our sexual intimacy to this idealized version of sexual intimacy that we find in the romance novel, as pornography or wherever else.

Once we start comparing and we have thoughts that our sexual intimacy is not as good as the sexual intimacy in these romance novels or pornography then we start thinking that something has gone wrong with our sexual intimacy. And all these thoughts eventually lead to us experiencing emotions such as frustration, anger, resentment, maybe sadness and depression. So, we need to kind of think about are these thoughts serving us. This is an important question to ask yourself, are these thoughts serving you?

If we continue with these thoughts and these feelings we're going to end up taking actions that just continuously compare our sexual intimacy to this idealized version. This in turn is ultimately going to lead to being

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disconnected more from our partners, maybe blaming our body like something's gone wrong. And maybe even giving up on working on our intimacy in reality. And I've seen it happen. I've seen it happen where people prefer to stay in the romance novels as opposed to in the real world working on their issues.

So, whatever you decide to do overall, the result is going to be dissatisfaction with our current sexual intimacy and probably not a whole lot of work actually going on in that intimacy. And do you know why that is? Because romance novels, although they're fun and entertaining can also be used as a form of buffering. So, what exactly is buffering? And we've talked a little bit about buffering in the past. Buffering is when we use external things to distract us so that we avoid feeling uncomfortable emotions.

More commonly utilized buffering strategies include binging on Netflix, eating food, which usually are the carb type of foods, and sugar laden types of foods, maybe shopping online or cruising through Facebook for hours. Basically, whatever we're doing in order to get a quick dopamine hit and to feel better about life without actually dealing with the underlying issues that are causing the problems in life, without actually working towards the solution.

So, when we choose to escape into these romance novels and use it as a form of buffering then we're not working on the sexual intimacy issues that we need to be working on. Basically, what I'm trying to say is that there is a price to be paid for these buffering activities. It's one thing if we use the sex within the romance novels as an accelerator to kickstart the libido, or something to get this gas pedal moving forward. And then we connect with ourselves, with our bodies or with our partners and then engage in additional sexual intimacy.

But it's a whole other thing if we're just escaping into the romance novel and we never come back out to actually work on our sexual intimacy. If you go missing in action and you're off in a corner reading your romance novel you're not actually working on the sexual intimacy.

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So, I'm going to ask you to really look and tell me what are the reasons that you're reading these romance novels? Is the real reason that you're currently engaging in buffering activity? If it's just for entertainment then enjoy yourself. If it's to use as an accelerator to get more interested in sexual intimacy with yourself or with your partner, I'm celebrating.

But if it's used as a way to escape and avoid your emotions and avoid working on the sexual intimacy in your life then as your sex coach I'm here to tell you that you might want to look at this a little further and decide if this is overall serving you. Ultimately you get to decide your reasons for reading the novels. And you get to continue these activities no matter what you decide and no matter what I say. But I would like to suggest that ultimately you make sure that it's serving you in some way and serving you kind of on a positive realm in some way.

So, if you find that these novels are not necessarily serving you and that they're more of a retreat from reality then it might be time to switch things around and decide to do something differently. And I'm not talking about a couple of minutes of entertainment, or even a couple of hours. But I'm talking about an extended retreat where there's a hiding place, where these books are used as a hiding place to escape instead of working on what really needs to be worked on in your life. Then you might want to choose a different path.

You might want to become the author of your own life and create your own romance, and your own sexual intimacy in real life. So once again I'm not saying that romance novels are innately evil. I think they're a lot of fun and they could be very useful tools. And they could possibly be used to kickstart your libido and have some fun and interesting sexual intimacy in your life. But if you use it as an escape chute, and then you decide you don't want to come back to reality then that's what I'm talking about.

So, like anything else that we use to get a quick dopamine hit and anything that we use for buffering then it can lead to possible overuse. So, if you're trying to get a sense that there is an overuse issue going on with these

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romance novels, or if this is a buffering activity, take some time to evaluate, take some time to observe what's happening. When you get the urge to read your romance novels is it in the context of maybe you fighting with your partner?

Or you're starting to think about sexual intimacy issues that need to be dealt with and suddenly you just want to escape into a romance novel, is that something that's going on? So just take some time to observe what's happening in your life when you decide that you want to jump into these romance novels. And this actually goes for any buffering activity, just in general. There's definitely an element of escapism with buffering.

So, if you observe a trend with these buffering tendencies such that you always want to escape into a novel, or eat a doughnut, or shop online when thoughts come up around sexual difficulties. Then maybe it's time to take the next step which is generally allowing the feelings, or the thoughts, or the urge, let it come into your mind, whatever the thoughts are and don't try to jump into that romance novel. But just wait it out and see what happens. It will be a little uncomfortable at the beginning, not jumping in and reading your romance novels but over time it will get easier.

And you will actually have more time to work on the sexual intimacy issues since you're not jumping at the romance novel every time. And then the next step is actually to feel whatever discomfort is coming up for you. Write down your thoughts and write down your feelings in the moment. And this will actually give you an idea of what you really have to work on in your life.

When you take the time to stop, when you sense the urge, when you make time to identify the thoughts then you actually open up the time, and the energy, and the opportunity to work on the issue. Because you'll finally discover what's underlying the actions and what's really going on in your life.

So, Diamonds, enjoy your romance novel but stop comparing it to the sexual intimacy that you're currently experiencing in your real life. And

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recognize that this is just an idealized version of sexual intimacy and it's not reality. And while you're focused on reading about the perfect sex scene in your romance novel, you are missing out on all the fun and all the connection that you could be having in your own life with yourself, with your partner.

So, if you notice that you're running to grab your romance novel, to get a quick dopamine hit and that you're avoiding thoughts, and feelings, and circumstances then it's time to put down the romance novel and to deal with your reality.

But whatever you choose to do, at least stop comparing the sex and the sexual intimacy in these romance novels with the sexual intimacy in your life today because that sexual intimacy in the romance novel is not real. And the sexual intimacy that you're trying to create in your life is real. And that's the only place where you have the opportunity to create the amazing sexual intimacy that you want. So, realize sexual intimacy can be a 1,000 times better than any romance novel.

Okay Diamonds, that's all for today. A little bit of a rant, not too much of one. Enjoy your romance novels, don't compare, recognize that that's entertainment and go about creating the sexual intimacy that you deserve in your life. Okay, I love you all so much. I will talk to you next week. Dr. Sonia out.

Diamonds, how is your sex life? No, really, how is your sex life? On a scale of one to ten 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 eight then we need to talk, sister. I'm personally inviting you to check out my new program, Your Empowered Sexuality 30 day kick starter. 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.

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Come work with me for 30 days to kick start 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 to 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 at soniawrightmd.com and come join me for Your Empowered Sexuality aka YES, Your Empowered Sexuality 30 day kick starter. I cannot wait to see you Diamond, talk to you soon. Take care.