

# Ep #85: Empowering Conversations: Unconditional Self-Love



## Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

**Dr. Sonia Wright**

## Ep #85: Empowering Conversations: Unconditional Self-Love

You are listening to *The Midlife Sex Coach for Women™ Podcast* episode 85.

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.

**Sonia:** Hello, hello, hello, hello Diamonds. It's Dr. Sonia. I hope you're doing well. I'm so excited for today's episode, it kind of is the second part of the last episode. And so, the last episode we were talking all about unconditional love, the lube of life. Don't you just love that, the lube of life, just sliding into life.

And today I have one of my besties, Coach Donna here to talk to us and to just kind of talk the bullshit back and forth like we do about different concepts and thoughts that I want to just expand on a little bit more and just have a regular conversation. So, I asked her to come on so we could talk about unconditional love just in general. And then unconditional love in terms of sex and sexuality as well. So, hey, Donna.

**Donna:** Hello. How you be?

**Sonia:** How you be? We are just coming off of spending time together at mastermind. So that was so much fun, Brooke Castillo, The Life Coach School had mastermind a couple of weeks ago. And we got to spend some time together. The first time we've spent together in a long time. So that was extra special. And of course, she was so fabulous to me. I came rolling in at one in the morning into the hotel and she met me. This is the true sign of a bestie. She met me at the Uber, when the Uber was there she was there and she helped me with my bags.

## Ep #85: Empowering Conversations: Unconditional Self-Love

I was so exhausted and tired, and she just has my back always. So, I love you so much, Donna. So, thank you so much for being on the call.

**Donna:** My pleasure. Thank you for having me. Well, there's just no way that I was going to be in the same place as you wide awake and be like, "No, you just go to your room and I'll catch you tomorrow some time", amongst 1400 people. No way, no way.

**Sonia:** Yeah, it was kind of crazy.

**Donna:** No, it was wonderful, thank you.

**Sonia:** Thank you. Well, thank you for having my back and that is what we're going to talk about today, unconditional love, but unconditional self-love, having our own back seriously. I think this is something, the more I learn and the more I do more of a deep dive into coaching I realize that it's really all about unconditional self-love really. That is the key to it all. It all seems to come down to not beating myself up, being kind to myself, not judging myself and being okay with whatever's going on.

And then I remember, I think about it for a second and then it's gone. And then I'm back to beating myself up. So, I think we need to talk about it. Okay, Donna, tell me your concept of unconditional love or unconditional self-love.

**Donna:** And by the way, I really enjoyed that podcast and what we're jumping off of in today's conversation. So, my concept of your own self-love. I think that it is, I mean to put words into it, or put it into words. But I think being as kind to yourself and giving yourself as much grace, and consideration, and understanding as you would for anybody else outside yourself. We are so understanding, so forgiving, so, well, they didn't mean that. And yet you're behind closed doors, or just sometimes in our own head, we are, we're criticizing and beating ourselves up.

## Ep #85: Empowering Conversations: Unconditional Self-Love

When we could just simply kind of critique, take it as data and move on. I'm a bit intrigued by where that criticism comes from, where we learned it and how do we know enough is enough? I have watched, I have had examples of different disciplinarians. And I have seen a disciplinarian discipline until they saw in the person they were disciplining, the regret, and lament, for whatever they did. And then I've seen a disciplinarian, this is the kind of the price you pay, whether that's without your dinner or whether that's, we take your electronics away for a week, love you, moving on.

And it's not about forcing somebody to feel remorse or forcing somebody to feel God awful and hate themselves. And I think that's interesting. And I'm just very curious where we get the – if the self-loathing and the beating ourselves up is learned and passed down, where we get that from. Because who gets to decide enough is enough of beating yourself up and then you can move on?

**Sonia:** Yeah. I think that that's a good question. Who gets to decide enough is enough? Ultimately you have to decide. That's what it comes to ultimately. But I think it is important for us to look at where it comes from as well. And I always think of it as the primitive brain that's trying to protect us. So, at some point it was external to us. We can all imagine a two year old running around doing whatever they want to, not paying attention to anybody, just having a great time in life.

And then parents coming along thinking we'd better socialize this one. And so, it begins. Then you're told, "Yes, you can do this. No, you cannot do that." And then over a period of time there is this expectation that you're going to internalize it and regulate yourself. So, the interesting thing is how could you regulate yourself but not from a place of criticism and berating? We're not necessarily taught that.

And so, as we look at socializing a child, if you're able to socialize them with love and attention in a certain way, maybe that would make a difference where they wouldn't necessarily have that self-critical voice. But

## Ep #85: Empowering Conversations: Unconditional Self-Love

most of us, we're not raised that way. And even if we tried to, we don't necessarily always raise our children that way. And then there's just this concept of survival. So, then we're also coming from a place where the primitive brain is like, we need to survive, we need to stay safe. And so, it turns the volume up on the criticism.

It turns the volume up on all of this. And so, we're having that kind of mixed in there. So even if it's just a minor thing that we've done, we might turn the volume up because we're so afraid of being kicked out of the tribe and not surviving that. And so that's kind of playing a part too. So, the interesting part is when we are criticizing ourselves and we're not coming from a place of love. And so how do we come from this place of unconditional love now?

When I started off the podcast episode, the last one, podcast 84, I was talking about unconditional love for other people because it's easier for us to get that concept of unconditional love for other people. And you're coming from this place of love without conditions, without expectations, without a manual or a book of instruction as how we want somebody else to act in order to make us feel better. So, what do you say about that conditional versus unconditional love for other people?

**Donna:** Yeah, because what is the motivation behind that? To make us feel better. So often it's, so we are not embarrassed.

**Sonia:** Or we feel loved. Or we feel some sort of emotion that we want to feel. Either we're trying to avoid an emotion but often we want somebody to act a certain way so that we feel better about ourselves.

**Donna:** Exactly. Absolutely right. So that we feel better about ourselves instead of giving them the freedom to be themselves. And yet all the while I tend to think we are inside yearning to be free, to be ourselves. And yet there is this conditioning about how you should behave, how you should look. The societal expectations. And there comes a point, when you – there's a balance there. When the point of our lives, I think, is not about

## Ep #85: Empowering Conversations: Unconditional Self-Love

people pleasing then we could have a more genuine assessment of why we do what we do, why we behave the way we behave.

Why we want what we want, or choose to not want something, and choose to not go after something. And I like to think there's something that for me is kind of – I have adopted this as a belief and it has allowed me a lot of grace with myself and other people. I would say also life coaching was transformative in me really at the core being allowed to be forgiven. And that may sound crazy to other people. But I spent decades like I should not be angry at this person. I should be able to forget. I should be able to forgive and forget.

And yet it's as much energy as I spent trying to not think about it, and no, no, no, it's okay, it's okay. It was just a reminder of how offended I was and I couldn't let something go which then for me, if I would let it, heap on more judgment on myself that apparently I'm not a very good person. I'm not a very good person.

**Sonia:** There's so many different levels of people pleasing that are going on there. There's people pleasing because you wanted the person to do something else to please you. But then there is the people pleasing in terms of in order to be perceived as a good Christian or a good person, or whatever, you have to act a certain way. So, you have expectations about somebody else but you also have expectations about how you should act. So, a manual for yourself.

And so, when we're doing that there is that inner critic that says that it has to be a certain way and you're not doing it a certain way. So, when you're ready to let go of the people pleasing, it's like a matter of letting go of pleasing other people. But ultimately here is something, ultimately we don't really know if we're pleasing another person or not. So, we're taking our concept of what would be pleasing to another person, projecting it on that other person and then projecting it back at ourselves.

## Ep #85: Empowering Conversations: Unconditional Self-Love

So, we also need to recognize at the core of whatever's going on, people pleasing is ultimately trying to please ourselves and our own concept. So, when we get rid of this concept of people pleasing of others, we also need to recognize that we need to get rid of our concept of people pleasing of ourselves as how we should go. And so, when we're talking about sex, people pleasing, unconditional love, all these different things. I'm trying to think of how do you just distil it down. It's about acceptance, and it's about non-judgement, and it's about love.

If you can put those three things in there I think for everybody involved, for yourself, acceptance, non-judgment, love and acceptance, non-judgment, love for a partner if you happen to have a partner, for yourself if you're solo-partnered, whether or not you have a partner it's for yourself, definitely, so yeah.

**Donna:** I tend to think for me there's a kind of a belief that I have adopted and choose to live by and that is that I believe everyone is doing the best they can with the resources they have at the time. And that doesn't mean they can't do better. And that doesn't mean that we shouldn't hold them accountable for any offence that they cause. But it has allowed me to release my expectations of they shouldn't be that way. And it allows me to release myself from expectations of I should be better than that. I shouldn't be that way.

This is how I was in that moment, let's glean from it, if I owe somebody an apology, I'll apologize. And I can't undo that. There's really always only now. There's only now.

**Sonia:** Right. And the acceptance of the situation. But there's also, when you spring up the word 'offence', somewhere in there there's also people pleasing too because if you want to label it an offence then there's this concept that there's a right way and a wrong way.

## Ep #85: Empowering Conversations: Unconditional Self-Love

**Donna:** I think I would think about larger things such as somebody runs into me and has an accident. Or somebody gets angry and physically hurts me, or something like that. That really is outside of societal norms, this is the beginning of my nose, which is the end of your space. You shouldn't hit me and now I will take measures to protect myself. More of those kinds of things versus some of the other kind of more nuanced about behaviors.

And I mean you can even talk, you know, even bring up a lot of social issues we're dealing with in our culture today, and our nation today. You shouldn't be that way. Well, I am. And okay, then you get to be.

**Sonia:** Yeah. So ultimately it does come down to pleasing yourself and figuring out what it is. So, if we get back to the unconditional love, the unconditional self-love, how does that show up in your life now?

**Donna:** Yeah. So, I had a history of just really piling things on and feeling like I should be able to do a lot of things. My plate would get really full and get to overflowing. And I would stretch myself like crazy to try to do everything for everybody. And now I will take something off my plate. I will call and say that, "Hey, that's not going to happen." And in fact, we did that, we rescheduled. Because it just wasn't a good time. And we made it work.

And I often find that a lot of times when that ends up happening, the person or people that I'm interacting with, they had issues too and it's not going to work for any of us. So, it's amazing. But I'll be kinder, gentler to myself, my schedule, instead of shoving tons of things in, and being crazy busy, there's more space, I'm getting more rest as opposed to just pushing half the night and thinking, yeah, just get up in the morning and keep going.

And then that voice in my head, I can tell, I can feel the difference of when I'm being judgmental and when I'm wanting to learn. We call it learner and judger mindset. I can tell when I'm in learner mindset. I'm curious. I'm allowing. I am accepting. And then I can drop down into judger and it's just a heavier feeling. And the language, the language leaves breadcrumbs.

## Ep #85: Empowering Conversations: Unconditional Self-Love

And I know I'm not being kind to me. And I have decided that I want to be a kinder person to myself and to others.

I have decided that that kind of judgment is not serving me. That there are better ways to serve myself and others than just being judgmental and critical, critiquing, learning and growing versus critical, judging and just pounding away on how so many ways that's wrong.

**Sonia:** Yeah. Why do we think that that's going to help us? I mean every time you look at a situation it doesn't help, the criticism. Why do we think it's going to help?

**Donna:** Great question. I don't know that we do it because we think that it's going to help. I would love some feedback from listeners on this. I don't think we do it because we think it will help. I think we do it because it's learned. And there may even to some degree be some sense of loyalty that this is how my mama did it, this is how I do it, or this is how my grandma did it, this is how my mama did it, this is how I do it. As if we dishonor those individuals by deciding, you know, I want to learn from this and grow from this instead of just flogging myself.

And so, I think that it's a learned behavior that we just don't stop to capture and question ourselves and say, "Wait, I don't enjoy doing this to myself. I don't have to keep doing this to myself. And how is this playing out? How do I do this to others?" And that can be challenging when we've got some of those old relationships where we still maybe have some open wounds and we're figuring out how to let some stuff go.

**Sonia:** Yeah, a lot of the times, yeah, it's a lot to look at how we might have treated other people. But I think it is easier to see how we treat other people and then bring it back to ourselves, how are we treating ourselves? If I'm talking to my Diamonds around how they're treating themselves, they don't see it. I'm like, "Well, why are you beating yourself up over this? Why are you so mean to yourself?" Damn.

## Ep #85: Empowering Conversations: Unconditional Self-Love

**Donna:** Yeah, that's brutal, isn't it?

**Sonia:** Why? Why do you think that you have to have an orgasm in three minutes and if not there's something wrong with you and you're broken? Maybe it's just the way your body is, which is completely normal and fine. But there's so many times that we critique and judge ourselves. And then we start beating ourselves up. Oh, my goodness, yeah.

**Donna:** I love the example that you used in your previous podcast of the individual who had an STI, sexually transmitted infection. And I love how you took that because here's the fascinating thing is we don't yet know that it's a bad thing to happen to them. Generally speaking, we are not wanting to contract an infection. But it's too soon to tell where their life is going to go as a result of this.

And like you said, they may just, as you mentioned, find a dating site with other individuals that have STIs and may have the same STI, so they'd find themselves more compatible and less concerned about getting that from each other because they've already got it. And they may end up being the love of each other's lives. And so, the idea that something bad happened, maybe something not preferred happened. But then if we do take time to allow and to accept then okay, what is there from this? How might this serve me?

And I know that is a hard question for people who are maybe not accustomed to being coached and who don't really capture their own thoughts. Because so often with my clients, the knee jerk response is, well, nothing, this doesn't serve me at all. I believe it does. And I believe that we can turn it into that.

**Sonia:** Well, I think that we can because I mean I think that we influence, and to a large part control what happens as a result of these things. So, if you have an STI, a sexually transmitted infection and you decide, your thought's going to be that this is going to ruin my life and my life is over.

## Ep #85: Empowering Conversations: Unconditional Self-Love

The odds are yes, you'll contract into a state where you're not going to extend yourself out into the world. And probably your life will not be as rich as it could possibly be. But is that because of the STI or is that because of the thoughts around what your life is going to be like now?

But I also want to understand from a place of unconditional self-love that we don't Pollyanna it and we go straight to, it's going to be wonderful. We can feel the shame, we can feel the guilt, we can feel the anger. But can we do all of that from a place of self-love, to be kind to ourself? We are the ones that hold and cradling us, and loving us through this whole time. Yes, there is a time of grief, if you have an STI, there is probably going to be a time of grief as you adjust to how this might impact your life.

But berating yourself is not necessarily going to make it any better. And is it better if you don't know you have an STI? That's another question because you still have the infection either way but your mind is not aware that you have the infection. And so, it has a whole different outlook on life than it might otherwise have. But it doesn't change the situation or circumstance and in fact if you have the STI it's better because you would not necessarily be transmitting it to others. And you can take care of your health from right now as opposed to delaying care and things like that.

So, there's a lot of better things to be had from actually knowing that you have an STI. But just coming from a place of unconditional love where you accept what's going on, accept your feelings, your thoughts, you accept it all. And show up authentically and show up with love for yourself, and be that soft spot, be that place where you can be kind to yourself and protective of yourself, and have your own back. That's what I think of as unconditional love. And I think that is what makes it the lube of life, unconditional self-love. And I also just like saying the lube of life.

**Donna:** I know you do.

## Ep #85: Empowering Conversations: Unconditional Self-Love

**Sonia:** The lube of life, unconditional self-love, the lube of life. Yes, you heard it here. So how can you be kind to yourself, Diamonds? How can we do this, that we are kind to ourselves through whatever is going on in our life? And I think that it is coming from a place of that acceptance, that non-judgment, and that love for ourselves and for others.

**Donna:** Yeah. And what are the simple ways? First of all, I think just asking that question of ourselves. Wait a minute, how can I be kind to myself today? And your brain is going to answer that question. For me, one of the ways that showed up, one of the first ways that began to show up was several years ago when I had started to become familiar with life coaching.

And it seemed so simple but I just decided that I'm not going to wear anything against my skin that doesn't feel good. Just because I spent good money on it, just because it fits, just because it's in my closet doesn't mean I have to wear it. And that seems like such a simple thing but the upside of that is it's not a big challenge. It's not a big issue. And there's not a lot of energy or high charge around that so it's easy for me to start picking out some of these things out of my closet and pass those on to people who it may feel good on their skin or they just don't care.

And because that said to me, I deserve to feel good. I deserve to enjoy the clothes I'm wearing. I deserve to enjoy what is against my skin [crosstalk].

**Sonia:** I'm going to shift that around because I do a lot of work and you know because you do this work with me, that there's a lot of Diamonds that come to me because they're having sexual intimacy difficulties. But they come from a perspective of wanting to make their partner happy. It's kind of like wearing the itchy clothes that you're talking about, but wearing it because it fits, focusing on your partner and to make your partner happy.

And I ask them always, "Where is the self-care, the self-love, the pleasure, where is the being kind and thinking about yourself and having your own back in this situation?" And they so often just look at me with blank stares,

## Ep #85: Empowering Conversations: Unconditional Self-Love

they're like, "This isn't about me." And I'm like, "This is 100% about you. So, let's figure out the pleasure, and the joy, and the fun, and find that for you, whatever your version is."

And I think that that's part of the unconditional self-love when we're talking around sex and sexuality is the loving kindness of yourself as a sexual being and how you get to express it, and how you get to find pleasure in this.

**Donna:** Yeah, good sex and pleasurable sex is not just for men. And sex is not just for men. It's not just a duty for us to just kind of be some functional machine or whatever, that can just totally disconnect, and not be present, and not be engaged. It gets to be fun and pleasurable for you too.

**Sonia:** Yes. And I'm going to interrupt because I always bring it back, we don't want heteronormative. I definitely want, it's not necessarily about men as the only partner. So, the women, non-binary partners as well. But it's not about your partner. It's about you as well in this whole situation. So, sorry, I interrupted, so continue.

**Donna:** No, that's okay. But what you want, matters. And the fact that you can create – there can be, and again I'm all in favor of asking your brain a good question to lead you in the direction of answers versus just sitting on what's not working so to speak. And so, it's possible that you and your partner could have fabulous sexual experiences. And when we begin to open up to that, and we might say, "Yeah, but that's painful." And so, I just stop thinking about me and I just want them to hurry up and get done.

Well, how about we find a solution to what's behind the pain. Because you are deserving of being taken care of, whether it's treating the STI that we talked about. You deserve care of yourself so get it taken care of. You also deserve to find solutions so that it's maybe not a painful experience.

## Ep #85: Empowering Conversations: Unconditional Self-Love

**Sonia:** Yeah. So definitely as we wrap up this call, all my Diamonds that are listening to this podcast and this episode. I just want you to ask yourself, how can I be kind to myself in this situation, whatever the situation is. How can I have love for myself? How can I have my own back? How can I show up for myself? How can I show up for myself in this situation? How can I find pleasure? How can I find love for myself? Whatever question you want to ask. But somehow that brings you back to the unconditional self-love.

**Donna:** I love those questions. I love those a lot. How can I? How can I?

**Sonia:** How can I?

**Donna:** Ask and your brain will give you the answers.

**Sonia:** Definitely. Definitely. Okay, Coach Donna as always, it's always fabulous fun to have a conversation with you. So, I'm so excited about that. And we're going to be opening up Own Your Sexuality Now starting at the beginning of May. And you will be in that program as well doing your coaching. You always do my general life coaching as well. So, I'm always so happy to welcome you into that program with me as usual.

So, if you want more of Coach Donna and Coach Monet, she's been on the podcast as well, then you're going to find this all in Own Your Sexuality Now which will be opening for enrolment at the beginning of May. Actually, if you go to my website you can see the information and enroll even sooner than that. And also yeah, we get started with our orientation call on May 18<sup>th</sup>. Okay, it's so wonderful having you on this call, Coach Donna and looking forward to seeing you all in Own Your Sexuality Now. Take care. I love you lots.

Hey Diamonds, do you want to reignite the passion that's gone missing from your life? Do you want to want to want it again? You know I'm on a mission to end the emotional pain and isolation that women experience

## Ep #85: Empowering Conversations: Unconditional Self-Love

associated with sexual difficulties. And many of you also know that I was once in that place where I was experiencing little to no sexual intimacy in my life. And I kept thinking that there was something that was wrong with me, that I wasn't enough, I wasn't attractive enough, I wasn't good enough, I wasn't smart enough to fix this problem.

And I was worried all the time that my relationship was too far gone because of this lack of intimacy. Well, you know what? I was right about one thing, the relationship didn't last. But even though the relationship didn't last I committed to doing the work that I needed to do to own my sexuality. And now I have this amazing sex life and it's everything that I wanted it to be. And I'm also committed to helping my Diamonds by teaching them the same strategies that I figured out in order to revitalize the intimacy in their life.

So, if you want to stop feeling broken, if you want to stop feeling shame and guilt about sexuality, if you want to feel more comfortable with your sexuality and tap into that pleasure then I'm here for you, Diamonds. First of all, know that there's nothing that's gone wrong with you. You're not broken. And you know what? You can solve your intimacy issues. You can let go of that shame and guilt, and you can tap into that passionate person that's just waiting to come out. Let's get on a strategy call together and let's discuss how we can work together and how I can help you.

And know that a strategy call, it's 100% a safe place, there is no judgment. We'll talk about your intimacy situation, which is what's going on right now. We're also going to talk about your intimacy goals, what you would like your intimacy to look like in the future. And then we'll talk about how we could possibly work together to come up with a personalized strategy plan for you so you can get the results that you need. So, Diamonds, I'm here for you, don't wait another minute. Book that consultation call with me today and I can't wait to talk to you.

## **Ep #85: Empowering Conversations: Unconditional Self-Love**

You can get that consultation call by going to [soniawrightmd.as.me](https://soniawrightmd.as.me). And the link is also in the show notes. Okay, have a great day. I can't wait to talk to you. Take care.