

## Ep #95: Revisiting To-Do List Sex: What It Is and Why It's Not Serving You



### Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

**Dr. Sonia Wright**

## Ep #95: Revisiting To-Do List Sex: What It Is and Why It's Not Serving You

Well, hello, Diamonds, this is Angela, Dr. Sonia's podcast producer and not the voice you expected to hear today, I know. We're going to show a couple of throwback episodes over the next few weeks that I think are foundational to understanding Dr. Sonia's work. Even if you've listened to these episodes before, I know I always hear a new gem of wisdom when I go back to listen and I hope you do as well. Enjoy.

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

Hello Diamonds, I hope you're all doing well. This is Dr. Sonia. This week is going pretty well for me I have to say. And the reason for that is that I got to talk to my son.

My son is a nature boy. I should say a nature man because he's 21 years old. I actually can't believe that my son, my baby is that age, but he's 21. And he likes to do things that kind of drives mom crazy. He likes to go on camping trips and backpacking trips for four or five days and go off the grid. And I'm always holding my breath. I always let him do whatever he's going to do because that's what life is about, is making your dreams come true. And for him his dreams are going off into nature and looking at birds all the time.

He just sent me a picture about a bird, I'm not exactly sure what kind of bird it is but it was really gorgeous. Let me see if I can find the name of it. It is an Eared Quetzal, a male and a female and it was really gorgeous. But he just got back from backpacking in Arizona somewhere and I'm always happy when he calls and he says he's okay and then I can kind of relax a little bit and breathe. So, I am super excited that my son is doing well and he's nice and safe and I'm also super excited to be here.

## **Ep #95: Revisiting To-Do List Sex: What It Is and Why It's Not Serving You**

And this is going to be just a perfect week and I just want to talk to you about sex, yes, once again we are going to be talking about sex, it's so much fun. But we're not just talking about sex. We are talking about to-do list sex, yes. And I know a lot of you are wondering about what exactly is to-do list sex. Well, let's take a look at my hypothetical client called Helen and to get a better understanding of what to-do list sex is about.

So, let's talk about Helen. Helen is a combination of the majority of my clients and what they come to see me and what I help them with daily. So maybe you'll find something in common with her today. Every day I talk to women about what they're struggling with in their lives and how they can improve their sexual intimacy and their relationships. So, let's look at our hypothetical client, Helen.

So, Helen is a 42 year old oncologist living in San Antonio, Texas. She's basically a doctor. It's hot in San Antonio but Helen is not feeling so hot right now. She's been married for 10 years to a wonderful partner named Cam and he is a computer programmer and also has a very demanding job. They have two kids together and a puppy called Rex. Helen and Cam engage in sexual intimacy and penetrative sex on average about once or twice a month. When Helen has sex she enjoys it but it takes a lot of her mental energy to turn off all the thoughts that are in her mind.

It's hard for Helen to just get in the mood, plus is the fact that she feels that her body does not look as attractive as it did 10 years ago and two kids ago. So, her partner Cam enjoys sex and he would love to have sex any time, night or day. But remember, this is Helen's life that we're looking at. And Helen is feeling the demands of her busy life.

And here's her to-do list, it's got kids on it, it has work, it has chores and there's not a lot of room for sex on it. She doesn't have a moment to breathe, let alone to think about sex and it tends to be on the bottom of her to-do list right after taking out the trash.

## **Ep #95: Revisiting To-Do List Sex: What It Is and Why It's Not Serving You**

She's found herself in the situation of avoiding Cam, kind of going to bed early, maybe masturbating quickly to fall asleep and feeling a lot of guilt over the situation. Eventually she feels so much guilt that she slaps on some lube and she and Cam go at it for about 15 minutes. She feels relief because she can check off her list that they've had sex and she doesn't have to worry about it for another two to three weeks. But it doesn't really solve the problem.

Cam has even gotten to the point where he is not that excited about to-do list sex and would rather watch Netflix, so Cam says, "Things need to change." But Helen's not sure how exactly they're going to change. But then Helen has a presentation by an incredible sex coach called Dr. Sonia and she decides to work with her. However, Helen is still into this analytical efficiency. She has this mind that will not stop. So, Helen comes to the first session with Dr. Sonia with a goal list already.

Helen's goal is to increase the frequency of sex to at least four times a month in order to keep Cam happy. And she wants to increase the frequency of sex while becoming more efficient with sexual intimacy and more effective overall with the rest of her to-do list. So, she already comes to me with this list that she wants to do. And the focus is on efficiency, getting things done and making Cam happy and it's all about efficiency. So, Diamonds, does this scenario sound familiar to you?

Helen is engaging in what I call to-do list sex. Other people might call it mercy sex. But far too many women are engaging in this activity, basically they're trying to juggle their busy life and they're trying to fit sex into their schedule in order to get it done and please other people. But my mission, my mission as your sex coach is to put an end to this to do this list sex and go back to for you sex.

So, let's talk a little bit more about to-do list sex. To-do list sex is more efficient but not necessarily leading to more increased intimacy, connection or pleasure. And for us women it reinforces our tendency to be in our logical minds. We may even be thinking about our list during sex and

## **Ep #95: Revisiting To-Do List Sex: What It Is and Why It's Not Serving You**

getting more excitement, or the fact that we get to check a box off of our list than actually the pleasure that we're having in sex.

And we're so excited that we can check this box off and that we don't have to have sex for another month. Efficiency becomes a focus of to-do list sex and not intimacy, to-do list sex over time decreases sexual intimacy. And 10 years later you might look around and find that you have a roommate and not necessarily an intimate loving partner. One day the kids are going to be gone and you'll be left staring at each other wondering what exactly happened.

So how does one end up with to-do list sex? How do you end up with this lifestyle? What factors contribute to, to-do list sex? Here are a few of the most common things that my clients come to me and say result in lack of intimacy and to-do list sex.

The survey says number one, is a demanding job. If you're working 40, 60 or even 80 hours a week and then you're coming home exhausted, you don't have anything left over. But you do have to do something more for your kids maybe and then after that you don't have anything left for your partner. So, this is how we get into to-do list sex. It could be the case that you're also taking work home.

So, most working women don't just leave their job at the office. They end up bringing the stressors home, they end up bringing other work home. So, it's not just they go to the office, they're done, they come home and they're finished. They're actually taking their work home and they're bringing that stress home and that's making them less inclined to be interested in having sex and to be sexually intimate with their partner. And this also leads to, to-do list sex.

Let's look at women's overall inability to say no. It could be saying no to job demands or it could be saying no to life demands. But we find ourself people pleasing and taking on more and more things than we need to take

## **Ep #95: Revisiting To-Do List Sex: What It Is and Why It's Not Serving You**

on. And so, then we're once again exhausted and we're not able to engage in sexual intimacy.

How about parenting stress, especially now in this time of Covid. We're in the middle of a pandemic. Your child has so much going on, whether your child is going to school, or whether they're staying home and doing virtual schooling, there's so much that you're dealing with at this point in time. And their schedules are pretty complex and you're just kind of stressed out as a parent right now. There's elaborate routines and activities that you have to deal with. And even after the kids go to bed, as parents you're still talking about them.

And then I have a certain percentage of my clients that can't actually wrap their minds around having sex with their kids in the same house with them. So, well, guess what ladies, kids are not leaving. When you think they're leaving, they come back again. So, this is something we definitely need to figure out. And then sheer exhaustion, sheer exhaustion from everything that's going on, this is definitely contributing to, to-do list sex.

Then there's lack of communication with your partner. Sometimes when this happens we start to feel disconnected from our partner. We feel like we don't have much in common with them. And then we start to think that it's hard to connect sexually if we're not even communicating. And I always say that sexual intimacy is built on a foundation of general intimacy. And that is definitely built on a foundation of communication.

If the communication has gone it's hard to have intimacy overall, and definitely sexual intimacy. So, this is how you get into that to-do list sex where you're like, well, I haven't done anything in a month, I guess I'll just have to figure out what to do here.

Okay, this one is one of my favorites, Diamonds. Okay, let's get real with this one, the grabby partner. I think we all are familiar with a grabby partner. And you're like, "What exactly is a grabby partner?" Let me describe this scenario.

## **Ep #95: Revisiting To-Do List Sex: What It Is and Why It's Not Serving You**

So basically, you get home from work, it's been a long day. You look in the kitchen, there's dishes to do and you think to yourself, I could actually get something off my list and feel like I've accomplished something. So, you get the water in the sink, the suds are going, you're enjoying yourself, you're feeling like you're efficient and you're going to get something done, your hands in the water and you're washing up your dishes.

Here comes your partner from around the corner and they look, and they see you, and they're thinking you're working hard. And they're feeling loving towards you and they're just like look at all the work she's doing, I just want to touch her and let her know how much I appreciate and love her. So, they come by and they want to spank your ass maybe, or maybe they want to just give you a hug, or maybe they want to squeeze something on your body. But they don't know that this is just the wrong time and you're the wrong woman to be touching at this moment.

You've had an exhausting day; you just want to do something. You just want to take care of something and actually accomplish something. And here they come, you've got your hands in the water, you can't even fend off them touching you. And then they go and grab you and it's just you start yelling, they're just like, "I just wanted to show you that I loved you." And you're like, "Just give me a minute's peace."

And so, the grabby partner scenario usually does not work well. And this is another thing that your partner just ends up annoying you and then you end up engaging in to-do list sex a month later after you get over the grabby partner situation.

And then how about body image, my body does not look the same way it looked 10 years ago. It doesn't look the same way it looked before I had kids. And body image can be a major part and a major concern for women. When you're thinking about your fat roll you're not really thinking about the fun roll in the bedroom. You're worried that your partner might be seeing your fat roll, but your partner could not care less. And they're probably

## **Ep #95: Revisiting To-Do List Sex: What It Is and Why It's Not Serving You**

thinking she's not enjoying herself again, so all these things contribute to, to-do list sex.

So how can we coach ourselves about this? I am a life coach, so I do bring the coaching back in. So, I would like to suggest that we do have control over certain factors. And as I mentioned before, you have control over your thoughts, and your actions, your feelings, and the results.

And so, we're going to look at this a little bit more. So, you may have encountered this concept before. I call it a thought cascade. And there's different elements that occur here. So, a thought cascade is made up of a neutral circumstance. And we talked about this in the last podcast. So, you have a neutral circumstance then you have your thoughts about that circumstance. And these thoughts generate a specific feeling. And that feeling in turn leads to certain actions which ultimately lead to a result.

So, let's look at a thought cascade and a certain circumstance and see what happens here. So, we're going to begin a scenario where we don't really have control over our thoughts. We're just allowing our thoughts to run free without supervision, kind of like a toddler with a knife, or hopefully, maybe scissors. Knife is a little really scary. Or since I'm a radiologist we often see toddlers with a lollipop or with a straw and they fall down and it pokes the back of their throat or something like that and then we have to do x-rays and things.

So, it's basically something is running amok, your thoughts are running amok and nobody is controlling them. Okay, so let's look at a neutral circumstance. So how about a 60 hour work week. So, some people might say a demanding job. But if you use the word 'demanding job' then it's not specifically neutral, so it's better to use the descriptors. And so, a descriptor would be 60 hours a week job, and your thought might be, this job takes so much out of me that there's no time left for sex. And then that will generate a feeling. And maybe that feeling is that you feel overwhelmed.

## **Ep #95: Revisiting To-Do List Sex: What It Is and Why It's Not Serving You**

And when you feel overwhelmed then you take some action from feeling overwhelmed. Maybe the action that you take is you watch Netflix. Maybe you scroll through Facebook. Maybe you overeat. Maybe you yell at your partner and the kids. And then finally you fall exhausted into bed around midnight. And then the result is that you have no time, no sex and you may have a pissed off family as well. So, this is not the best situation, it's not the best scenario.

So, let's look at a scenario where you have control over your thoughts and you're guiding your thoughts, and you're evaluating them and you're figuring out which thought serves you. So, the circumstance stays the same, it's still the neutral circumstance, which could be working 60 hours in the week. And then you're going to have a thought, but this is a thought that serves you, so you're going to write down all your thoughts and then you look at some thoughts that serve you.

So maybe a thought is there must be a way to do this job and have more sexual intimacy. So, if you're starting from a place of that thought, then you're going to feel curious. Whereas the other thought generated a feeling of being overwhelmed, this thought generates a feeling of being curious. So, when you think this thought, there must be a way to do this job and have more sexual intimacy then you have this feeling of being curious.

And then from this feeling of being curious you can come up with different actions. Maybe you could look at your schedule and plan out your work time and talk to your partner. Maybe you guys could plan a date night. Maybe you could just talk and increase the overall communication with your partner and that could lead to increased intimacy. So, then your result would be increased intimacy, you'd have more time together and then maybe you have a chance to have increased sexual intimacy.

So, do you see how when you don't have control of your thoughts and you just let any thought come out, you can get to a place of overwhelm, which is going to lead to some negative results? Whereas when you have more of a control over your thoughts and you're thinking thoughts that serve you,

## **Ep #95: Revisiting To-Do List Sex: What It Is and Why It's Not Serving You**

then you can come from a place that doesn't feel overwhelmed. But you can feel curious and that can lead to different actions. And then that can lead to different results.

So, this is how we use coaching and this is specifically how I use coaching in order to figure out how I can help my clients and deal with this problem. So, I think that that was a pretty good example. And we can see how we can switch from to do sex to what I call for you sex.

Okay, well, that's all I have for you now, Diamonds. I want you to join me in my next episode of The Midlife Sex Coach for Women where we are going to be talking about self-care and for you sex. Okay, that's all for now. See you next time, Diamonds.

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 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

## **Ep #95: Revisiting To-Do List Sex: What It Is and Why It's Not Serving You**

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 like a 100% a safe place, there's 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. 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.