

Ep #124: Perfectionist Thinking and Sexual Intimacy



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With Your Host

Dr. Sonia Wright

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You are listening to *The Midlife Sex Coach for Women™ Podcast* episode 124.

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, hello, hello, Diamonds, here we are. We are well into January and I am on my fourth honeymoon, for those of you that are counting along with me. And we are currently in Washington, DC at the Waldorf Astoria. Oh my goodness, this is an amazing place. It is so fabulous. It's just amazingly beautiful here. I actually have a speaking engagement in Washington, DC tonight. But I'm going to be visiting some museums today. I'm just relaxing and enjoying myself with my partner.

I'm pretty excited and it's actually a pretty short trip. We got in last night and we're going to be leaving in the morning, so just a little over 24 hours, not much really. And I'm laughing at myself because I just realized my bestie actually doesn't live that far from me. So, Donna doesn't live that far from here. And so I'm going to figure out how to meet up with her. I still think of her as living in Atlanta but she moved up in this area about a year ago. So we're going to make sure to hook up and spent some time together as well.

But I also realized that this doesn't have to be perfect. And I used to be such a perfectionist but I had to give it up a couple of years ago. And I gave it up so that I could actually enjoy my life. When I was focusing on everything being perfect all the time I was miserable. I was creating misery in the world with my family. And then I realized it just doesn't have to be perfect. What does need to be perfect is the imperfection and giving up this perfectionist thinking.

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I really wanted to enjoy experiences without being stressed all the time that it wasn't perfect. And now I just get to remind myself that nothing has gone wrong. It was always meant to be this way, that it's fine. And these thoughts allowed me to release my perfectionist thinking. Perfectionist thinking definitely has impacted my life negatively and of course, perfectionist thinking definitely impacts sexual intimacy. Nothing kills sexual intimacy faster than perfectionist thinking.

I coach my Diamonds so much on this all the time. In the pursuit of perfection in the bedroom we're having less and less sexual intimacy overall. We have thoughts that it has to be done perfectly. It has to flow in the right order, the right way at the right time. It has to be spontaneous. Everybody must have matched libidos. Body parts and minds must be synchronized and respond perfectly. Everyone must have an orgasm, and at the same time. And really there's only one definition of sexual intimacy that meets perfection.

This list goes on and on. All these thoughts are keeping us away from having fun. I am tired just thinking of all these things. The last thing I want to do is have sex, if it has to be perfect and I don't know if I'm going to perform perfectly or it's going to be perfect, and magical, and amazing every time then I'm like, "I think I'll head over here and do the laundry or brush my teeth or something. At least I could get some plaque off and I know when I floss that I've got the plaque. So our perfectionist thinking can really slow us down and stop us from having fun.

And while we're waiting for everything to be perfect in the bedroom nothing is happening. There is no touch. There's no connection. There's no pleasure because our minds, which by the way, is reinforced by what society says, has to have it one way to be perfect. Our mind says it has to be a certain way. So perfectionist thinking is robbing us of our intimacy. Let me be clear, this is not good. This leads to disconnection, procrastination, to do list-type sex, none of which we really want.

Perfectionists strive for excellence, mistakes are not allowed. It sounds like a great way to be but it's inevitably coupled with self-criticism and

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excessively high unattainable standards that people get so stuck that they become inactive. They're in a continuous buffering zone and not doing anything because they know they can't reach that potential. It often leads to just nothing at all happening. And it definitely leads to all-or-nothing thinking. If it's not done right then it's not done at all. And this my friends leads to the death of intimacy in your life.

When perfectionist thinking meets sexual intimacy all hell breaks loose. And our partners have no idea what's going on, what's going on in our minds. We have these elaborate thoughts and plans about how everything should be. And our partners have no idea, they're just seeing the results of what we're thinking but they have no idea what we're actually thinking. So they're making up their own mind, interpreting things in their own way as well.

So our partners have no idea what we're thinking but they're just experiencing the results of our perfectionist thinking which is usually nothing, they get zilch. Here are some examples of perfectionist thinking around sexual intimacy, that I spend a lot of time coaching on, I'll let you know. It's not sex if penetration does not occur. And this doesn't necessarily mean that if you're in a heterosexual relationship. There are plenty of women having sex with women that a concept that if there's not strap-on sex then penetration has not occurred and it's not really sex.

This narrow definition of sex leads to an all-or-nothing philosophy. Maybe you were originally thinking, I'm going to enjoy some intimacy, maybe a hug, a kiss, maybe a quick make-out session. But whoops, I can't guarantee that I'm going to have enough time for penetration. I don't have the time or the inclination so if penetration is not going to happen then I guess I should not even go to that place of a hug or a kiss, or a quick make-out session. I'll just pass on it altogether because it's not perfect enough, it's not good enough.

Another concept around their perfectionist thinking is if there is an erect penis in the house, penetrative sex has to occur. Let's be real, for some men, if the wind blows a certain way they have an erection but somehow

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society says that it must be used at all times. So that being the case if you're in a heterosexual relationship the woman might be saying, "Well, I'll just avoid anything that might lead to an erection."

So once again we're in this position where there's no intimacy, there's no connection because we don't want to stir and awake the beast if we're not going to use it for anything. It's okay for there to be an erection and there's not penetrative sex. It's not the end of the world. Your partners are pretty much of an adult and can take care of business if business needs to be taken care of.

And can I just say, there's something called the masturbation sleeve which is a woman's best friend? You can put that thing into the mix and have a lot of fun with it, look it up, masturbation sleeves, a lot of fun. Look up Tanga, T-A-N-G-A, I love that site.

Alright, here's another one and this is kind of an extension of the last one. If I touch my partner in any way then they're going to think that they want sex or I want sex. And that's not going to happen right now. So let's just not touch them at all. Don't allow them to touch me. Just avoid touch altogether. Or how about this one, responsive libido is the wrong kind of libido. I don't know how I'm going to respond. I might be interested in sex. I might not be. It might take a long time. Once again it might not be perfect and I can't guarantee results so I'm just going to avoid intimacy altogether.

Do you see how this goes? I could go on and on and on but do you see how this goes? I want you to ask yourself this week where is perfectionist thinking impacting my sexuality, my sexual intimacy in my life? And you can also just ask yourself, where is it impacting my life just overall, not specifically in the bedroom, but also outside of the bedroom? Perfectionist thinking does not help anybody. It might have been a tool that helped you at one point in time and unfortunately, I feel like this is something that's reinforced from an early age in school.

We reward the people that get all A's. We reward the 100%. We reward things that are 'perfect'. But life is not perfect. And so I don't think we

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should reward the 100% only. I think we should reward kids from an early age that make mistakes and learn from the mistakes and realize it's not the end of the world. And that mistakes are part of life and that it's okay for it not to be perfect.

If we could give them those concepts from an earlier stage in life then this perfectionist thinking that's impacting your sexuality or impacting your life just in general would not have as much of an impact but it would not be as important. And you can get on with living your life. And you can get on with having mini make-out sessions. What would it be like to talk to your partner about mini make-out sessions? Be like, "Yeah, I'm not in the mood for penetration." Is it the end of the world if you say, "I'm not in the mood for penetration right now?"

Or, "I'd really like for some handholding and some cuddling to be part of this." Is there a problem asking for what you want? I have a client that called it false advertisement if she gets a cuddle or a hug, or a make-out session and it doesn't lead to penetration. It's not really false advertisement. That's perfectionist thinking. And that's the kind of thinking that leads to absolutely nothing. So that being the case, I'm going to challenge all of my Diamonds this week. Where is perfectionist thinking impacting your life?

Let it out, get out your journals and start writing on this and think about this. Where is it impacting your life? Where has it led to lack of intimacy in your life? Because sometimes we need to write it out to really see what's going on. How this perfectionist thinking is negatively impacting our life and our sexual intimacy. And it would also be kind of fun to write down your perfectionist thinking thoughts just in general. If it's not this then it's not this other, all-or-nothing thoughts going on for you, other thoughts that I have to do it the right way, I have to show up the right way. My body has to look the right way.

What are your perfectionist thinking thoughts that are negatively impacting sexual intimacy? Write it all down because next week we're going to talk about what to do with those thoughts. But I want to give you some time to

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really think about how it's impacting. And have a conversation with your partner as well. They probably don't even know what you're thinking. They're like, "Really, that's what you're thinking?" "I would take a make-out session at any time and any day", is what they would probably tell you.

But instead, nobody's getting the sexual intimacy that they want and deserve, so let's do this together. Let's look at where perfectionist thinking is negatively impacting our lives. Let's see how it's negatively impacting sexual intimacy. Let's write it down. Let's look at the thoughts that are leading to it. And let's talk to our partners as well and see if they have any idea of what we're thinking. And also it would be kind of interesting to ask them, "Do they have perfectionist thinking?"

They probably do have their own ideas about perfectionist thinking like if this isn't there then this is a problem. Once we identify what the thinking is, we can change the thinking and we can lead to increased sexual intimacy. Okay, so I'm actually giving you all some homework which is to identify your perfectionist thinking and also identify how it's negatively impacting the sexual intimacy in your life. Okay, this is Dr. Sonia, I am out for now. And we will talk again next week about perfectionist thinking. Take care.

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

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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.

You can get that consultation call by going to 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.