

Bonus Coaching #1: Women's Sexual Concerns Must Be Heard



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Dr. Sonia Wright

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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, coaches, anybody else that's out there that wants to hear this. This is going to be epic. This is amazing. My friend and my coach, Lisa Hadlestad and I have plans for you. We have amazing plans and we want to talk to you about some of those plans and how this all came about and what has been happening over the last couple of years within sexual intimacy coaching for women and the industry as a whole. We have so much that we wanted to talk to you about that we realized we needed to make bonus podcast episodes about this.

And so our minds got together and we decided that we couldn't have just one conversation. So this is going to probably end up being at least four podcast episodes but we're going to start now and here today right now talking about women's sexuality, intimacy, coaching and what needs to happen and what is going on in this area. So I am going to, well, for those of you that don't know, I'm Dr. Sonia Wright. And I'm going to be introducing you to the most amazing coach and some of you, a lot of you already know how amazing she is.

I'm going to have her introduce herself and tell us a little about herself and then we're going to have this conversation because the time has arrived and we are the ones to do this so let's start talking.

Lisa: Let's do it. Hey, Sonia, thank you. I am so excited to have this talk with you I really am. And we've been talking so much about it and the more we talk about it the deeper it goes in me, the deeper the importance of this work kind of embeds itself in everything, in my heart, my soul, my bloodstream. I love this work and I never ever thought I'd be doing it. So I'm going to come back around to that but I will introduce myself.

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For those people in Sonia's audience who don't know me, I am Lisa Hadlestad. I am a master-certified life coach. I work primarily with women and primarily with coaches around issues like shame, body image and self-love. I also do some sex coaching as a contract coach and for oh gosh, is it five or six years? I can't count but I also trained coaches for coach certification. So that's me in a nutshell.

Sonia: Yeah, that's an amazing nutshell. And I am honored to be here with you, Lisa, let's start talking. Let's talk and let our listeners know what has been going on in our amazing minds and how we've got plans to change the world. Rule the world.

Lisa: Rule the world. So I mean, and you know what's funny about this, Sonia, is I mean I have worked with you and I consider you a friend and you are somebody that I admire, that I love, that I think about. You're part of my life and I have never once considered things like becoming a sex coach or even talking about sexuality or intimacy to my clients. I don't really think of myself as a timid person. A lot of people think of me as gentle but I also am never afraid to say the truth or say hard things or pose hard questions.

But it literally and that's why I want to start here because it's almost like before the world got created there was this darkness where it's like why would I need to know anything about coaching on sexuality or intimacy if I don't plan to be specifically a sex or intimacy coach? So I never planned to be that and now, where I am now I'm thinking, God, that's so freaking ironic because I work with women, human beings who are women and sexuality is an enormous part of our humanness. So it's like wow, but never even occurred to it.

And nobody, none of my clients brought any of this into our coaching sessions. So if I even had to think about it, which I didn't I would have been like, "I guess everything's okay there. They don't need help there. If they needed help they'd bring it up."

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Sonia: Yeah. I love how you say darkness. So you as a coach are thinking that this is an area that doesn't need to be explored. And then there are so many clients that are in this place of darkness as well and they think it's not a subject that they can approach somebody with, that they can talk to somebody about this. So we know that at any point in our lives, 75% of women or more are having issues with sexual intimacy at some point in time. And we don't even know where to have the conversation. Yes, I am a sex coach. I am the Midlife Sex Coach for Women.

So people come to me and when they come to me it breaks my heart that some people have been struggling for 20 years with this issue, whatever it is. And so we are sitting there thinking that everything is fine and our clients have stuff going on in their lives around sexual intimacy and don't feel that they can approach anybody. Whenever I hear that women, it's gotten so bad and it's gotten to a place where they can no longer tolerate it, it has to get so extreme that they would even consider talking to somebody about it. And because I do this work then they come and they approach me.

But they come in so much shame, years of shame that are there and I was thinking to myself, this is just the very tip of the iceberg in terms of the people that actually come and talk to me. For every one woman that comes to talk to me, there are probably hundreds of thousands of women out there that have some of these issues that they've [crosstalk] time. And so when we talk about being life coaches and I'm not specifically talking about sex coaches, I'm talking about general life coaches. I'm talking about whatever type of coaching that we're doing.

We are encountering women that are dealing with sexual intimacy issues. And our clients think that this has to stay in the dark and we think that this has to stay in the dark. And I am like, no, this can no longer stay in the dark, we are in 2023. This can no longer be tolerated. That if you're going to call yourself a coach, whatever kind of coach that's out there, you have to be able to coach on the things that are not easy. There's no such thing

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as taboo anymore. We can't do that. People are hurting and in pain because we're like, "I can't coach on that."

And clients are sitting there in pain, emotional pain, even physical pain. At least 75% of women at some point in time have sexual pain at some point in their life. So we're talking emotional pain. We're talking physical pain. And as coaches, we could do something to alleviate that. But nobody's having the conversation. Nobody's saying, "It's okay to get coached on this." And nobody's saying, "I could possibly do this."

Lisa: Why do you think that is, Sonia, why is nobody saying this?

Sonia: No coaches or no women coming to us?

Lisa: Either one. Start with one and we'll talk about both.

Sonia: I think that society has put sex in a taboo area. You should see when I'm trying to just do my advertising, I can't even say 'pleasure' when I'm trying to do my social media advertising.

Lisa: What?

Sonia: Yeah. I have to water down things so much that it's such a euphemism, adult activities. What are we talking about? Are we playing bridge or are we having sex?

Lisa: Taking a Winnebago trip across the country, what is this?

Sonia: Right. So we're in a society where we can't talk about it. Sometimes I can't even use the word 'sex'. I have to come up with a lot of different words and I can't use words like pleasure and things like that. So our society has put us in a situation where it's taboo. It's not okay to talk about it. And so if it's not okay to talk about it then it's almost like we're also given a pass a coach, I'm not going there. Nobody else is talking about this. I am putting coaches on alert that something has to change here.

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Are you willing to come with me and do something so that our clients can get the services? Now, I'm not saying that anybody has to be an expert in this subject. I'm not an expert in money but I can do some coaching on it and then I can do a referral to another coach or to another financial advisor, something like that. But I can talk on money, I could talk on dating. I'm not the expert on dating but it's okay for me to talk on dating like a general life coach. It's okay to talk on all these different issues. Why is it not okay to talk on around sex?

Lisa: Yeah. I mean it's so ironic. You've said taboo so many times and I totally agree with you. It's a very inhibiting thing to talk about. And in this conversation, things are popping in my brain and I really want to talk about it's not just the issues that our clients are experiencing with sexual intimacy. It's how that impacts them as a whole. It's such a big part of what we're talking about. But it's so ironic that having conversations about sex and intimacy are taboo even in our industry.

Having to go to a sex coach, it's like oh my gosh, what kind of problem do I have to have before I can actually get sex coaching? But here's the thing, our culture is super hyper-sexualized.

Sonia: Exactly. So it's okay to use sex to sell every damn thing out there with marketing and stuff like that. It's okay to use this fantasy concept of what sex is based on, pornography or whatever but we're not actually dealing with reality and what ramifications there may be and how somebody might actually need some help around this area. And this makes more shame and makes women think that there's something wrong with them because they don't meet the standard of what sex should be.

If you look at shows, sex happens in about a minute and a half, from beginning to end you should be ready from the beginning, you should have an orgasm within two seconds and it's only heteronormative sex that's portrayed generally. These types of things put people in a box where they can't say it makes it, their thought is probably I'm the only one. I'm the only one that's having this problem, everybody else is having sex within a

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minute and a half from beginning to end, and orgasm and everything is perfect.

Lisa: To really good music too.

Sonia: To really good music.

Lisa: And it's totally spontaneous.

Sonia: And yeah, it happens in an instant, you're always ready and it doesn't matter if you've got 12 kids in the house and then the most stressful job. And you look across the room at your partner, they're amazing and boom, it's on. But I have to say I was in long-term sexless relationships. I am the person that went through this. And while I was looking like I had it all together on the outside, and I was a life coach at this time, I was a physician life coach. I still am a medical doctor. And I was in so much pain, emotional pain and I did not think I could talk to anybody.

I had to make it look like my relationship was perfect. I had to make it look like everything, that the intimacy was there, the relationship was perfect, I had the perfect job, I had the perfect kids, I had the perfect lifestyle. And while that was looking great on the outside I was crying in the shower. I was crying on the way to work. I was just so sad all the time and did not know where I could go to get some help. And I'm in the middle of a big city. I have more resources than a lot of people across the country and the world.

Lisa: Yeah, like me up here. I'm in the middle of nowhere. But I mean, Sonia, I got married when I was 20. I had just turned 20 years old and I had been dating the person who's now my husband since I was 17, on and off. He wasn't the first person I had sex with but my first sexual experience was extremely unpleasant. And although I consented it was I was drunk and I was a teenager. So I didn't even have any experience. And what do we have around us to compare how 'we're doing' except for TV and movies?

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So of course as young people, we watched a lot of shows with young thought sex on it and a lot of movies with that. And I just remember always, you know how you just kind of pretend that you're loving something, that movie's so good and how about that sex scene? But in the middle of it, I was like, have I even ever orgasmed? I don't even know what one feels like. And I don't have a clue, like me say something that I want done to me. What? And this wasn't exactly something that I got over as I got older.

It just actually became even more embedded like I must be doing it wrong. My sex life doesn't look like that. I am too tired for sex half the time. I had all kinds of problems with my uterus. And so I had anemia, I had pelvic pain. I had a lot of things. And so my default was to do things whatever I could to avoid sex. And even though I wanted to have it and it killed me having this obstacle in my relationship with the person that I loved. And the other thing about that was that when the only way that I could participate in sex and enjoy myself is if I knew it was going to happen so I had time to prepare.

And that's really unsexy. I don't want to be one of those people that schedules sex. So yes, and I just have to wonder as we're kind of both sharing our stories how many women listening to this are going, "Yeah, me too."

Sonia: Yeah, me too. So you highlighted some of the major things that I coach on as a sex coach which is women asking for what they want in the bedroom. And when I can get women to understand that it is okay to give themselves permission to use the words and to communicate it works so much better in whatever relationship they're in. But then it has a compounding effect. When I do this work with my clients and let me be very clear. It's the clients that are doing the work, they are the amazing ones. They are finding their voices.

They are empowering themselves in the bedroom and it extends so far beyond the bedroom. They find their voice in every aspect of their life and they empower themselves. And they shift their whole life. So what we're

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saying is, however, you're showing up in the bedroom is kind of how you're showing up in your life in general. And this is definitely how I was showing up. I had as many degrees as I had and it looked like I could rule the world type of thing. But at the same time, I was silent. I was in so much shame and sadness.

And then that's the other thing that you brought up is the sadness and the shame and women have a tendency, the way we have been trained and raised in this society, in this patriarchal society we blame ourselves. We take on all that instead of saying, "Hey, this system is not made for women and their sexuality. This is mainly made for women as sexual objects and not for us to be able to give ourselves permission to enjoy this and to ask for what we want and to talk about what feels good and what doesn't feel good."

So we're blaming ourselves, we're not talking about this, we're not empowered in the bedroom, there's so much. And then you brought up the issue of consent. You're 17 years old and you had been drinking.

Lisa: I was drunk, I was at a party and I was drunk.

Sonia: Yeah, so consent is not exactly there. But we don't even have an understanding about that. We don't even know about that. And we haven't even begun to talk about when you are coming into your sexuality. We are learning about sexuality from a perspective where there's a lot of fear and anxiety around it. We're told that it can impact our relationship. We're told it can impact our reputation, you could get an STI, a sexually transmitted infection. You could get a reputation. There are so many things. You could get pregnant. So where is the word pleasure in any of this?

Lisa: Right, exactly. And I mean I think there's not enough emphasis in our society on pleasure in the first place. It's kind of like it's one of those things that some of the language around it is if we're looking for pleasure, doing things that give us pleasure, we're being too indulgent or whatever. I can't come up with a distinct example right now. I'm sure you can, Sonia. But

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there's not enough emphasis on that in society. And also not enough emphasis I think on how that is part of liberating ourselves as women, patriarchal oppression if you will.

Sonia: Yes. So I'm going to talk to you about something which is when you're talking about pleasure, we're definitely talking about a pleasure gap. So if we're talking about a pleasure gap we're finding that if we are talking about heterosexual encounters, men are having pleasure about 90/95% of the time. And women are having pleasure about 60/65% of the time. That's a huge difference that's going on here. And we're allowing this to continue. And we say that this is okay but it's not okay.

And I also want to say that our partners, male, female, non-binary are amazing individuals that care for the most part. They're people that really care, would want us to have pleasure. They don't know how to start the conversation either. So the myths that are out there are myths for everybody involved that are saying that we can't talk about this. We don't exactly know what to do. We're all in this place but I know that when the work is done with the women it shifts their perspective, it shifts their life and it also positively impacts the relationships in life in general.

So this is kind of the work that we do is so that we can make a difference. So we're in this place where there are so many women that are not able to express what's going on with them. And this is only a couple of examples, I can honestly talk to you for hours about all the different thoughts that women come to me, perfectionist thinking about how it has to be perfect. How they have to have an orgasm. I could just, honestly it's surprising that anybody has any sexual intimacy but it does show why there are so many people that are in the avoidant state.

You were a young wife and you had a lot of things on your plate. And you were in a position were avoiding it a lot of times but you found out what worked for you. If you could figure it out and then, but then society says it has to be spontaneous which you knew if you could schedule it and figure out and get your mind in that place and make sure your [inaudible] in a

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good place then you could enjoy it and it could be good for your partner. But now society says, "No, it has to be spontaneous."

Lisa: Yeah. And you know what else society says and I mean this feels obvious but I'm just going to say it. Society says that if you don't have an orgasm through vaginal sex, through penetration, if you need 'extra' clitoral stimulation or something that somehow or another that isn't the same.

Sonia: Oh my goodness, don't even get me started.

Lisa: I know.

Sonia: If we go back to Freud in the 1920s they started talking about clitoral orgasms were immature orgasms. And as a young girl became a woman then she needed to have vaginal orgasms. This is bullshit. But you could also see how would want the focus to shift to the vagina in this society. Let's be clear, men have penises, women have clitorises. That is the analogy, embryologically that is the origin where the clitoris is analogous to the penis, not the vagina.

The vagina is, let me just say it, it's a potential space. It is something that is utilized in order to have a birth canal for a baby to come out. And if you think about it, the nerve endings, the clitoris has over 10,000 nerve endings. They just recently did a study and found that it had 10,270 on average. And more than the penis in all actuality but it's the clitoris. If those nerve endings were in the vagina you would never give birth. Or if you did it once you would never do it again. Our species would die out.

Lisa: Yeah, it would hurt like hell.

Sonia: Right, exactly. And then it's in this beautiful wishbone-shaped structure in your vulva area that just spreads out of the way and you give birth and then you can just snap it back and it's healthy and things like that. But we put so much focus on the vagina because women are also trained to be sexual objects and focus on somebody else's pleasure. Doesn't seem to be a problem talking about men's pleasure around sex. And I do want to

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be clear that this is not men against women or any of that, we [inaudible] men.

And I see my clients' partners just in so much sadness because they want to be there for their partners, supporting their partners. I do couples coaching as well and I see these are just amazing, amazing partners that are out there. So this is in no way me separating, saying men are bad or something like that, not at all. But I do want to be clear that the way our society is structured there is an emphasis on women being like the vagina is everything. But in all actuality, 85% of women need clitoral stimulation in order to have pleasure and an orgasm.

But society says that if you can't have a vaginal orgasm there is something wrong with you. So once again women are at this place of shame and think that there's something wrong with them. And once again there's no place to just talk and get this information and just find out, yeah, there's nothing wrong with you. And we haven't even started to talk about libido. But essentially what is going on here is there's so much information that needs to get out there. And I have a team of women and we're determined to get that information out there to people.

But it does require that other coaches help in the process because there are billions of women out there that need this work, need this information. And you don't have to be an expert but you do have to be willing to have conversations.

Lisa: Right. The point is not everybody has to become a sex coach. That has nothing to do with it. But everything that we've been talking about, Sonia, all these myths and misunderstandings and then the taboo-ness, the dirty little secretness of it is just one more thing that makes us feel so alone as a human individual. And to kind of bring this conversation into why you and I and our whole team think that this is so important to bring into the world is that the bedroom doesn't just stop at the bedroom.

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Our pain over what we consider problems might be a problem for us but sex doesn't just stop in the bedroom. We carry it with our body, we bring it into all of our experience of ourselves, our experience of ourselves as a professional. An experience of ourselves as a friend, as a daughter, as a sister, as anything it comes with us.

Sonia: Yes, definitely, 100%. It's something that is so important that it impacts every aspect of our lives. And we just have to be clear with that and do this work knowing that we're going to make a difference, not just in the bedroom but in all aspects of a woman's life, yeah, 100%. So then the question is where do we go from here? What can we do so that we can have a positive impact? And you know I had that audacious mission which is to positively impact the sex lives in over our lives of over 100 million women.

And so when you have a big goal then you have to think in big ways. And that's essentially what's happening at this point in time. And we just recently got together, our team of these amazing women and put all of our minds together as to how we can do this, how we can make a difference, how we can have women's voices be heard on this topic and no longer keep it in the closet or taboo or whatever. It has to be just a normal thing. Imagine if we could just normalize this whole conversation.

Imagine if one day this conversation doesn't even need to happen because people are just like, "Yeah, I'm having some issues here. [Crosstalk] talk to my coach, my doctor, my whomever, my friends. This is just a normal part and we don't have to be in shame. What if it were the case that our partners can just say, "Yeah, there's some stuff going on right now. We're working out, we're having conversations, we're getting together, we are figuring out how we can come at this as a team."

Imagine if that were the case and it didn't mean that they were not a good lover. It didn't mean that their whole identity had shifted and somehow they had failed as a partner, right?

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Lisa: Yes. Well, I am just imagining what it would be like because some of the things that my clients have brought and I just think that this is a common theme, and I admit that this was a common theme for me. This is how deeply embedded this is, is not wanting to learn how to be 'better' at sex or want sex more solely because our partner wants it more and we feel inadequate. If we could eliminate that mindset we should be able to want more or whatever amount of sex and enjoy it for ourselves.

Sonia: You're talking about what I say when I say, let's get rid of to-do list sex. Sex is not duty. It doesn't have to be a duty. We get to look at it. And you can have many reasons for engaging in sexual intimacy. Hopefully, one of them is for your pleasure but not specifically, oh goodness, looking at the calendar, it's been two or three weeks since I have had sex with my partner. I'd better put it there before they start complaining. And you have it on the list right above taking out the trash. And you're more excited about checking off the list and being like, "Don't have to do that for a couple more weeks."

Then you are about actually engaging in sexual intimacy, can we start this conversation? Can we do something about this? Can we change this for women so that their lives are better?

Hello, hello, hello coaches, and I mean all the coaches. You are fabulous. Yes, you. You are fabulous. Okay, hear me out. You got the training, the practice, the experience and the knowledge. Your clients trust you and they know that you know how to help them but there is something missing, something very important and it's not your fault. We don't talk about Bruno, no, no, no, no and we don't talk about sex either. The coaching industry like society at large isn't talking about sex.

It's not providing thorough and comprehensive training on a significant part of our lives sex and sexuality, and this is a problem. We are all sexual beings. It's part of our core identity. Sexuality is a basic human right. Your clients, no matter what they're coming to you for are coming to you as sexual beings. And let's not forget you're also a sexual being. Sexuality is

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an essential part of our lives but it's not being addressed. It's not even being acknowledged.

When we leave this intrinsic part of ourselves and our clients off the table in our coaching containers and conversations because we don't think it belongs there, we're uncomfortable, they're uncomfortable. But what is all the result, what is the result of all this discomfort? Your clients can't show up in their wholeness. They cannot show up authentically and you, you can't show up authentically and in your wholeness either. You can't help your clients holistically when there's a piece missing.

It's time, it's time to overcome our inhibitions, our awkwardness, our reluctance when it comes to talking about sex. It's time to lift the prohibition on talking about sex with our clients. It's time to revolutionize our beautiful coaching industry and it's time to take sex out of the shadows and bring it into the light of our coaching practice, no matter what we coach on. I'm taking the lead because I see the need. I am on a mission, this needs to change and I want you to join me. Let's positively impact the sex lives and the overall lives of over 100 million women together.

My colleague, Lisa Hadlestad and I are hosting a free masterclass just for coaches where we're going to unpack why all coaches, no matter what their niche is, need this training. How creating a zone of sexual safety for yourself and your client will transform your work with your clients. And how to unlock your full potential to be open, comfortable, confident and highly skilled in conversations with your clients around sex. You're ready for this, I know you are, you're ready to do this work for yourself and for your clients.

So get on the yes advanced certification of women's sexual intimacy email list today for all the information about this webinar that's coming up and for free registration. I can't wait to see you all there. Coaches, let's revolutionize this industry. Let's go back to authenticity and wholeness, let's take this into the future. Conversations around sex and sexuality are not optional, they are necessary. If you're a coach in 2023 and beyond you need to be able to have these conversations. Come and find out how.

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Get on our email list and find out all the information. Can't wait to see you there. Take care.