

Bonus Coaching Ep #2: Creating a Zone of Sexual Safety for the Coach



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Dr. Sonia Wright

Bonus Coaching Ep #2: Creating a Zone of Sexual Safety for the Coach

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? Hello, hello Diamonds! It's Dr. Sonia again and we are here for part two of the bonus podcast episodes where my friend, coach Lisa Hatlestad, and I continue our discussion about making sure that there's a safe environment for coaching for our clients and that we're able to create that safe environment so that we're able to do the coaching as a coach.

What do we need as a coach in order to be able to do this work, to provide this service to our clients? So Lisa and I will be continuing the discussion in this episode. Can't wait to hear what you think about it. Okay, for all of you that are coaches, listen and we're gonna be talking about a new program that Lisa and I are starting. And for those of you that may not be coaches, please listen and also send this podcast link to your friends that may be coaches.

Okay, Dr. Sonia out. Enjoy the second episode of our bonus podcast.

Lisa: So I'm thinking, Sonia, that the coaches listening to this are probably like, "Yeah, yeah, yeah. I love this so much." And also just probably wondering how I am not comfortable talking about this. I don't even have things worked out for myself. I'm not a sex coach, all of that and wondering. This probably all sounds good and interesting and also there's still a big question mark I think for people.

Sonia: Yeah. So what we were just talking about before was creating what I call a zone of sexual safety for our clients. Recognizing that there is an issue going on and then figuring out what we can do to make it a safe space for this subject to come up. But also in order for that to come up we

Bonus Coaching Ep #2: Creating a Zone of Sexual Safety for the Coach

also need to be in a safe space for ourselves and feel comfortable that we can talk on this. Now, I am not saying that every type of coach needs to become a sex coach.

Now, that training is usually a year or more so I want to be clear I'm not certifying anybody to be a sex coach. What I am talking about is people being able to be comfortable talking around sex and sexual intimacy, starting the conversation, being able to coach on the basic level and address some issues that are coming up. And then if it needs to be referred out, can be referred out. So for all of you coaches on this call listening, you don't have to be the expert just like you don't have to be the expert on money.

You don't have to be the expert on health. You don't have to be expert on every single thing but you do need to be comfortable enough to coach on it. So how do we help you to be comfortable enough to coach on it? That becomes the question that Lisa and I have been asking.

Lisa: Right. It's a big question because here's what I think and I'll just say it and you can tell me if you agree. But I think as a practitioner and I worked as a contract coach for a long time to a really wide audience. And so I never knew what clients were going to bring to the session. But I don't know how conscious I was of it then but now I realize. I had a bias or I had a fear of people bringing sexual or intimacy, sexual intimacy issues to the sessions and to be honest with you, nobody did.

And I coached hundreds of people and to be honest with you here's what I'm thinking. Sometimes when we're afraid of it, when we're not making room for it, when we're just like it's an ah ha, it's without saying one word we're already closing the door on that issue to even come up.

Sonia: Our clients know. They can sense what they can talk about with us and what they can't talk about with us. And they might hint on it. They might be like, "There's some intimacy stuff going [inaudible] in our relationship." And that if you don't respond and you go coaching on something else, they

Bonus Coaching Ep #2: Creating a Zone of Sexual Safety for the Coach

know, okay, then I can't talk about the fact that I haven't had sex in five years with my partner. But you might be a relationship coach. How can you really be a relationship coach if your client doesn't feel comfortable enough telling you that they're in a sexless marriage?

You can have all these things that makes them even better roommates with all this conversation and everything like that but we're missing out on a major part here. And people may not necessarily feel comfortable talking about it. We have to let them be comfortable about talking about it. And part of that is allowing ourselves to look at our own concepts around sex and sexual intimacy and becoming comfortable in that regard, ourselves. And sometimes it means we – not sometimes, all the time it means that we need to look at our own biases around sex and sexual intimacy.

We need to look at what's going on in our own lives because very often we're like, "I can't even sort out my own sexual intimacy issues. How am I supposed to help my clients on that?"

Lisa: Right, amen. I mean for me it was like I still had some of the same feelings that I described earlier, just kind of the sadness and this feeling of inadequacy. And so in my head without ever saying the words to myself in some logical way there was this. I am probably not the one to talk to about this. And that probably was true at the time because I had never really examined my own life as a sexual being and what I thought about myself or even gotten any of this straight for myself.

Sonia: Yeah, exactly. We need to have a safe place for us to go to be able to do that training, that coaching, when we become comfortable around issues in sex and sexuality. And so that's what we're also talking about is that creating that space so that you can do a deep dive into your own sexuality which let me just tell you is a lot of fun too. And maybe it seems a little scary as well. Wouldn't it be wonderful if you could come to a coaching training space and be able to work on your own stuff?

Bonus Coaching Ep #2: Creating a Zone of Sexual Safety for the Coach

Because ultimately we are our first and best client. And so we have to be able to do this work before we go and engage with our clients and hold space for them and give them that zone of sexual safety. So what I'm talking about is creating that zone of sexual safety for ourselves first. And then expanding it to include our clients as we do this work.

Lisa: Yeah. And Sonia, when you say zone of sexual safety I love that particular term. One thing for me, I'm going to move this conversation outside of just sex and intimacy for a moment. So if I join, this is going to sound a little wacky but I think you're going to know what I mean. If I join a business coaching mastermind or something let's say, there are certain things that I want the knowledge, I want to understand, I want to understand myself as a business person. But there are certain things that I hold as very important and integral to me.

I hold an integrity that I don't want changed. In other words I have certain boundaries. I'm willing to question them and play with them. So looping it back over to the zone of sexual safety, I am thinking of the practitioners, the coaches that are listening to this and saying, "Yeah, but I want to have my boundaries. Does that mean giving up all of my boundaries and all of my where I want to be around sex?" Does that make sense, are you understanding what I'm saying here?

Sonia: Yeah. The mischievous part of me is, no. Part of me wants to say no just so that I can see what Lisa's going to do but it definitely makes a lot of sense. And so what we're talking about when we talk about the zone of sexual safety is understanding that that's part of it. We get to know what we are comfortable coaching on and what we're not necessarily comfortable coaching on. Some of you know that I have sexual abuse in my personal background. So when I first started doing this work five years ago I knew that that was going to be something that would trigger me.

And I've since done a lot of trauma work and things like that and I continue to do the work so that now I'm comfortable training and talking and coaching on that. But at one point in time I was not there and so that was

Bonus Coaching Ep #2: Creating a Zone of Sexual Safety for the Coach

part of my boundary. That was my zone of sexual safety. And so it gets to evolve first of all but you also get to say where it is that I'm comfortable and where it is that I'm not comfortable.

And it's fine to be talking to your clients and say, "You know, I'm not comfortable coaching on this subject or I don't think that I have enough skill set in this one. Here are some resources or places that you might consider or maybe you should look up this." So it is okay if we have boundaries, if we say, "There's areas that I am comfortable coaching and areas that I'm not necessarily comfortable." But I do love that you're willing to do the exploration.

And so that's what I would suggest for any coach that's interested is yes, you can set those boundaries and you can stretch them over time. And then come be with us so we can explore the biases and explore your attitude and do a reassessment on it. And just look and see what it is that you are interested in learning more about, what it is that would still be some difficult situations. And I am not a person that is focused on changing people's minds.

I have trained some coaches around these issues. And I have one that she has a lot of Christian values and beliefs and so she doesn't necessarily want to coach around sexual intimacy with unmarried couples. Now, that's her thing and she gets to say what's important. It's not for me to say.

Lisa: No, you've got to drop it all, you've got to go for the, yeah.

Sonia: Yeah. And that's what also makes it important that we have more variety of coaches that are willing to coach on this subject.

Lisa: Well, and right, there's a big difference in having, you can have your boundaries but if you haven't explored this issue with yourself as a practitioner you have one big boundary and that boundary is no sex, no intimacy comes into this coaching container at all. And that's a pretty wide field that cuts off a lot of interaction with the client, potential interaction and

Bonus Coaching Ep #2: Creating a Zone of Sexual Safety for the Coach

help for your client that you certainly could help them with without pushing out or violating your own boundary.

Sonia: 100%, yes. Now, let's say you're a health coach and your client is afraid to talk to you about a sexually transmitted disease that is impacting her health. So all she needs is to have a space and you just, if you're willing to work on being comfortable to just be able to have a conversation. You don't need to know everything about the sexually transmitted disease. You're not giving medical information. You're asking, "How does this feel? What are you talking about? Does this lead to shame?"

Asking about the person's emotions and things like that, making sure that they're seeing a doctor over it or something like that. But sometimes the doctor's not going to be able to sit there and talk to them about the impact it's having in their life emotionally and their thoughts, actions and feelings. Whereas a coach can come from that perspective but if the client doesn't feel comfortable and if the coach doesn't feel comfortable no conversation is had. And you're sitting there as a health coach but there's a major part of what that's impacting this woman's health that nobody's talking about.

Lisa: Yeah. And I have a question I want to ask you and I will, about what kind of coaches this training could really benefit. And I think both of us already know the answer's all of them. But we'll talk about that more specifically. But here's what I want to say and I think we know this as coaches. There are not many people that are professionals that have the kind of relationship that we have with our clients. You go to the doctor, you're in and out of there as fast as – and it's not the doctor's fault.

It's the medical system in general. We exist in this very special industry where most of us are giving at least one hour a month, if not one hour a week to our client and opening that container for anything so we have this special...

Sonia: I think it's the connection and bond and trust and opportunity.

Bonus Coaching Ep #2: Creating a Zone of Sexual Safety for the Coach

Lisa: And opportunity. And so sometimes whether we are comfortable, whether we've ever thought it or not we are the client's doorway into getting specific help they need, into dropping the shame around the issue they think that they should be ashamed of so they can get the help. This is huge.

Sonia: Yeah. Imagine if we have all the different life coaches out there were to take the material that we would give them and say, "Hey, this is a workbook on sexual intimacy that I just learned about. I'm just going to share this with you so that you have this. If you want to talk further about this let's have a conversation, let's do some coaching on it but I want to make sure that this is being addressed in all different areas. So I'm just going to send this out to you and take some time to review it and go over it. If you want to discuss it further. Hey, if you'd like to tap into this resource then go ahead and do that."

But if we could just send that material out, how much would that be just for your clients to know that you had this training, that you can start a conversation and that you've already given them the zone of sexual safety for them to step into if they have a concern they'd like to talk to somebody about.

Lisa: Yes, amen. So even though we already decided and said and believe that this is for every coach. I was just thinking, like you've said, relationship coach. You've said health coach. I am thinking also body image coaches.

Sonia: You don't know how many women talk to me about how they hold their breath and hold their bellies in while they're having sex. Try to imagine having an orgasm and having pleasure if you're worried about your belly. First of all your belly is beautiful and amazing. And I'm so happy that people do this, coaches do this work on body image. But there is a whole area around our society saying that we have to look a certain way for sex which is bullshit. And yeah, so keep going on your list.

Bonus Coaching Ep #2: Creating a Zone of Sexual Safety for the Coach

Lisa: Yeah. No, I mean I started getting I went down this wormhole where I heard this, I don't know who it was. It was somebody on television saying, "The other person is just happy to be with somebody who is naked and wants them to be naked."

Sonia: So that's so good, exactly, yeah. And little do they know, our partners might have big bellies and we're like, "That's okay, we can work with it, we can figure it out. It is okay." Or what is it, the dad bod? That has become a sexy thing. Why is the mom bod not equally sexy?

Lisa: And it will become sexy when we as women allow it to be sexy. That's the thing, nobody in society is going to give us permission.

Sonia: No. But if you look at those deity things for the goddesses back millions of years ago and they're full bodied. And that was the epitome of beauty. But now it has to be about as thin as you could possibly be. Why is that? Why do we not see the beauty? And if you look at what most women that have body image issues, which is every woman in this society, very few evade that. It's always, if I ask people, it's, "I don't like my breasts they're too big or they're too small. I don't like my stomach. I don't like my thighs."

It's everything that makes a woman a woman. It's basically from above the breasts to the middle of the thighs is the problem area in some way or another. And otherwise we're just left with shoulders, some arms and a couple of calves.

Lisa: Toes. My toenails look cute today. No, it's so true. Also I am thinking midlife and menopausal women coaches. I just don't see how you cannot touch on these issues.

Sonia: Please yes. There's so many coaches, it's easier to say a coach that it would not be. And I'm not quite sure who that would be, even if you were a men's health coach, imagine taking this course and being able to get an understanding of what's going on with a lot of people's partners. Not

Bonus Coaching Ep #2: Creating a Zone of Sexual Safety for the Coach

everybody's partners because we all have different configurations for our relationships. But if you have a man that may be like, "My wife does not want to engage in sex with me anymore and it's because I'm not doing a good job", or something like that.

If we had an understanding of all the thoughts that are going on and all the things that pressures that women are under. So I can't even imagine, I'm trying to think.

Lisa: I mean I think you're right. The only thing I can think of is somebody who is already a full-fledged sex coach. And listen, there's never a time in our lives, in our careers when we can't learn something new, so even then.

Sonia: Yeah, because we're all different types, if you happen to be a sex coach we're all different types of sex coaches. There's not just one type of sex coach. So even that you can benefit from. And I have been doing this work with coaches individually that come to me and they'll take my Own Your Sexuality Now course and they'll get the information from there. And then they'll figure out what to do with it. But I'm like, "Why don't I just help you directly and help do the work directly so we can really make a difference for the clients." Yes.

Lisa: Yeah, so good.

Sonia: This is such a good conversation that we're having. So we've talked about the fact that we want to create a space for the clients so that they know that it's okay to talk about sexual intimacy. And we've also talked about the fact that you get to do a deep dive into your own sexual intimacy and your own sexuality and your own identity as a sexual being and do that work and have a space to do that work that's a safe place for you.

And so you had those things and we're going to talk further about the industry as a whole, the coaching industry as a whole and even more about the program. But we just want to let you know that we have created a program and we are going to be starting at the end of March in this

Bonus Coaching Ep #2: Creating a Zone of Sexual Safety for the Coach

program and that we are going to be having an informational webinar for you to get even more information about this. And so definitely we are just telling you about it now. We want to let you know that the course starts on March 31st.

And then we go there, it's a 12 week course. This is one of the important things that I think is important is that it doesn't have to be a year or two. I'm not asking you to become a sex coach. What I am saying is that we can do this work within a 12 week period of time where you can start to be able to know the questions to ask and have a better understanding around women's sexuality and the issues that impact us.

And we have sessions in there as well, we'll talk more about that on our partner stuff that's going on and diversity and inclusion and a lot of different things that we are including when we look at this work. I am so excited about this and just so happy that we are going to make a difference, that we are going to be making a difference on this.

Lisa: I am too. And when I think of that 12 weeks, it's so accessible and it's so doable. And I guess what's kind of blowing my mind right now is the impact that a training within that time container, how big of an impact and difference that could start making in the world. And I'm just thinking, Sonia, about your mission to impact, positively impact the sex lives of 100 million. I don't even know how to write that in zeros. And that there is no way that just a handful of people can do that on their own no matter how good they are, no matter how many clients they have, you can't.

Sonia: And no, I can't but I'm going for it. I'm 56 years old, I bet I get to live to close to 100, most of the women in my family do so that gives me at least 40 something years to do this work and I'm starting it. And I'm asking you to come along on this journey as we have this mission and we change the conversation, change the way it looks, make this more comfortable. Right now, most of the information out there about sex and sexuality is coming from pornography. People are trying to learn from pornography.

Bonus Coaching Ep #2: Creating a Zone of Sexual Safety for the Coach

That is just a fantasy, that's a story, that's not reality, no matter what you think, if it's good or bad or whatever. Is this really where we want to get our information from? Is this what we want to continue to have our clients see and compare it to what they're experiencing right now and blaming themselves and shame? So if our clients are in shame, if we're in shame over this, we get to change. We get to change the narrative. It's really what we're talking about. Let's change the narrative around sex and sexual intimacy for women.

Lisa: And that is being a coach. It's not just doing work with client after client, it is changing the narrative of things that are deeply embedded. That's what we're here for.

Sonia: And I'm so happy Lisa that you're with me on this journey because you've had some amazing skills as a person that trains coaches. You have done the work. You know how to train on this information. I have the information, yes, but you also know how to plant the seeds in coaches' minds and to get them to that place where it's okay for them. So we are an amazing team all of us together. You'll be meeting even more the team but we are here and we have a mission and we're not going away. And are you bold enough to join us on this mission?

Lisa: I'm not going away. I love it. This is so good, Sonia.

Sonia: Let's do this work. Who would have known that when we started a couple of years ago that we would be doing this? But I believe the universe knew.

Lisa: Well, exactly and that just brings us right back to the starting point of this conversation where it just never entered my mind because I didn't know it needed to. If you understand. It never comes up so it's not a thing. And it's such a thing, it's a thing.

Sonia: Yeah. And we get to make it the thing, yes. Alright. Well, thank you so much for joining us and we are going to be having even more podcast

Bonus Coaching Ep #2: Creating a Zone of Sexual Safety for the Coach

episodes and they will be being released in this next month as well. And we have a link in the show notes where you can sign up to find out more about the training and also our masterclass that we're going to be doing on this. So how you can effectively coach in 2023 and provide all the services that you need to, to your client. The time has arrived. Thank you so much for being on this call, so appreciative.

Lisa: Thank you.

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 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

Bonus Coaching Ep #2: Creating a Zone of Sexual Safety for the Coach

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.

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