

Ep #155: Learning to Love Yourself: A Conversation with ACWSI Alumni



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Dr. Sonia Wright

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You are listening to *The Midlife Sex Coach for Women™ Podcast* episode 155.

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, Diamonds, so excited to be here. Dr. Sonia is back, you cannot get away from me, I will find you no matter where you are. And the reason I'm going to find you is because I just want everybody that's listening to know about this, and I just want to share this information. And I'm being joined by some amazing women today, Lisa, Coach Lisa Hatlestad, of course you know her, and I came together, and we made ACWSI.

And we had so many amazing students in our first cohort of ACWSI and we asked additional people to come on today to talk more about it. So this is kind of part two of coaches' experience in ACWSI. ACWSI stands for Advanced Certification in Women's Sexual Intimacy. So I'm going to say hello to Lisa, and she can do part of an introduction and then we're going to ask the other women that are on this call to introduce themselves again.

Lisa: Yes. Hey, so Dr. Sonia and I had a training baby together like she said, called ACWSI, the Advanced Certification in Women's Sexual Intimacy. And we started talking about this over a year ago. And then last January, it's like, "If we're going to do it, we're going to do it, so let's get on it." And it just came together so beautifully. The students have been so wonderful. So I'm so happy to have two more of our ACWSI students on with us today.

I'm a Master Coach. I've known Dr. Sonia for a long time. And I also taught coaches how to coach for several years, which is how I kind of got involved

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with this. Just because I think, Sonia, you were talking yesterday when we were talking to other alumni, that coaching is one thing and then teaching is another. And you had nothing to worry about, you are a natural teacher and a compelling teacher and wonderful. But it's been such an incredible honor and joy for me to be in this program with you, Sonia, and then all of the students. It's just an absolute joy.

Sonia: Definitely it's an experience like I've never had before. And I'm so excited that we're going to be doing this again. So that's super exciting. And so I wanted to introduce to you two new ACWSI alumni and then also Reverend Jacqueline Arnold is back again. She is in the middle of a thunderstorm watch, so she might be coming in and out. But it's kind of like an ACWSI class where we have the noon session, and we have the evening session. And each session is a little bit different from the other.

And then so Jacqueline loves to come to more than one session. And I think there's also such a bond between all of us that we just love to see each other's face. Definitely, it's just like a big [crosstalk]. Okay, so I will have the two new members introduce themselves and then, Jacqueline, if she's not in the middle of a thunderstorm, can also introduce herself as well. So let's start with Rachael.

Rachael: Hey, first of all, Sonia, and Lisa, I am so grateful to be here. Thank you for having me on the podcast. I am Rachael Cunningham and I'm a life and marriage coach for women who are totally stressed out and they just want to create more ease in their lives so that they can also prioritize their relationships again. And just create a marriage that they actually love being in is what I love coaching on. So yeah, that's what I do, that's who I am.

Lisa: Thanks, Rachael. Fritzi?

Fritzi: Well, hi to you all. I also would like to express the deepest gratitude for allowing me to come on and share what has meant so much to me. But since I've gone through this class and the power that it's given me to

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express more to other women and touch other women in a realm that I never thought I could be able to touch before.

So I am Fritzi Strowmatt. And I'm a Certified Imago Professional Facilitator and Equus Trauma and Relationship coach, a Certified Life Coach and an Advanced Certified Women's Sexual intimacy coach with 36 years backed up into the experience of a doctorate of occupational therapy. This has been something that I have dreamed to be able to be the ripple effect of women's lives for years to come. I help women who are caregivers of special needs to go from isolated to intimately powerful.

Sonia: That's so good. Intimately powerful, I love that. I love that.

Lisa: I do too, and I love that you said ripple effect, Fritzi, because we were talking about that a little bit yesterday too. Just how powerful it is to decide to show up or open up to a really, really important topic to women that where there aren't as many spaces as we would really like for women to be able to come to, to talk about. And one person showing up can help so many people and also as coaches or practitioners, as reverends as anything that we are. We can also influence other people, other professionals in our own sphere to do the same thing.

So the more we do that, the more women get help. That's amazing. And Jacqueline, so glad you're here again.

Jacqueline: Good evening. I know you all can hear the thunder because it's a terrible storm going on here right now with tornado warnings. But just wanted to be on to see the smiling faces of Rachael and Fritzi, so glad to see you all tonight. It was an honor to be here yesterday. It's good to be here today. I am a licensed minister. I am also the founder and CEO of Restoration Retreats, which is a business I've formed in order to help younger women and older women come together and so the older women could teach the younger.

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So many questions younger women have that they can't get the answers to. So in this format, we share life experiences in order to help younger women hopefully not make the same mistakes we've made. I am also a mother of three, a proud grandmother of 10 and a possible, so I am excited about being here today. Thank you.

Sonia: And we're so excited to have you here. And we should mention also that within the Lit Clit Club, Jacqueline handles the 50+ queens corner. So she and I do a coaching session once a month in the Lit Clit Club, which is geared for women that are 50 years and older, just so that we can talk about life and sexuality and make sure that our voice is heard and make sure that our experience is known as well. So thank you, Jacqueline, in so many different ways for working in this organization

Alright, let's talk more about ACWSI, Advanced Certification in Women's Sexual intimacy. How good is that? Lisa, this is where I hand it over to you because you are so fabulous.

Lisa: Alright, I totally agree. No, I just love doing this. And one of the reasons I love that Jacqueline is back today is just because we were talking about this before we started recording the podcast, how reflective this is of the group that we formed. Of all of these different women from different backgrounds doing really important work, coming together for a common interest, and really just finding so much community and joy, I think in one another's company. And yes, I'm bragging and crowing.

I don't know that I created it, but I think together we facilitated this, all of us, the students and Dr. Sonia and me as an instructor. So it's just a beautiful thing. So here's what I want to ask. Why was it important to you to enroll in ACWSI? What did you tell yourself in your head that said, I need to sign up for this, I need to do this? And please just feel free to speak up and we'll just take turns.

Fritzi: Well, I'll go. Coming from a very conservative family who believed that sex was for procreating and the rest of it was very shameful. It was

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becoming a turning point in my marriage that I've gone, my husband came to me and said, "Hey, I feel like I'm married to a nun. And I know that there's more out there. That maybe you can find a resource." And he was listening to some podcast, and he heard about Dr. Sonia and some other podcasters that were medically based.

And he said, "Why don't you look into this?" And so I did and so he encouraged me when he found out that there was a course, he said, "Hey, why don't you just take this? It'll maybe help enhance your life coaching and maybe give you some other insight." And when I started looking into it, of course, I blushed and turned red, I thought, what's wrong with me? I must be broken. I mean the shame just came all over me.

And when I started investigating and looking into it, Dr. Sonia has placed it and Lisa has placed it in such a safe container that has a lot of scientific and spiritual backup to allow the opportunity for me to explore and to open my mind with a loving heart, to embrace the power within me. And so I felt that that was so valuable that I had to take the course on. And so I was vested at that point.

Lisa: Thank you, Fritzi, that's such a powerful story. And for anybody listening, for all the Diamonds listening. This is so common for us to think that something is wrong with us and feel really alone and really a lot of shame. And this is one reason Dr. Sonia's work to me is such a light in the world, is because once we start getting together and talking, we realize that we're not alone. And that in itself can really help dissipate that shame, because shame keeps us in ourselves and quiet so often. So that's amazing, thank you, Fritzi. How about you, Rachael?

Rachael: Yeah, I have been coaching on marriage for about three years now. So I've been coaching on sex and since I've been coaching, if you just use basic relationship skills that I teach, it can often increase someone's sexual passion for each other. And they can often want to recreate that passion for each other. But there were times when I noticed that there was something I was missing, and the issue was deeper. And part of me,

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because of my traumatic background, I was sexually abused as a child, as a very young child, part of me was afraid to go there.

And so I was afraid to go to those heavier spots where they just really didn't want to, and they felt pressured, and they felt tapping into pleasure for themselves wasn't super easy. And so they felt this guilt and shame around how they were. And so I knew there was something that I was missing in my coaching. And so I just, I really wanted to be able to step into my power as a coach to the ability that I could. And that's why, when I heard about this program, I've been listening to Sonia's podcast for a while and just different podcasts.

And whenever she spoke about this program, and I went to you guys' webinar, I was like, "This is for me. I'm going to be the first to sign up." And I'm so thankful I did because it showed me just some simple areas that I could improve, that I'm no longer afraid to coach on intimacy. I can handle anything that someone brings to me.

And I know when that point is, I trust myself to know when that point is to go, "Let's make sure you're going to talk to your doctor. Let's look into some deeper therapy here." I trust myself to understand the coaching and the medical and the therapy is different. And using all three of those skills to help the person get all the help they need. You guys showed that balance so beautifully in this program.

Lisa: Yeah, that's so amazing. And, Rachael, I think I've heard you say in class before, and I've heard other students say this too. Just doing the work for yourself because that's what we did with ACWSI. We had all of the students take themselves through a module first before we ever moved to exploring how to apply this with clients. And you, Rachael, and I think a good deal of the other students already had some experience and were actively relationship coaching or talking about intimacy.

And that's the thing, we can never, I want to say we can never learn enough, but I think what I really want to say is I think we can never

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experience ourselves enough as sexual beings because whether it's every year or every life stage we move through or every new way we address it, we're always changing and bumping into old stuff that maybe needs to be worked through or released. So, thank you for saying that.

Rachael: Yeah. And one of the things that's interesting is 15 years ago I was a birth doula. And so I was teaching women all the time about their bodies and understanding their bodies and loving their bodies and how magical and beautiful they were. And for some reason after I stopped being a birth doula, I didn't incorporate that into my marriage coaching.

But with you guys, it was an aha moment. I was like, "Oh, I can use the same thing of helping a woman absolutely adore and love and respect her body in marriage coaching as well." And I don't think I've told you guys that but thank you for helping me have that aha moment. I can take those same skills that I was using 15 years ago and apply them to this as well.

Lisa: That is so beautiful, thank you. Jacqueline.

Sonia: [Crosstalk].

Lisa: Sorry, Sonia.

Sonia: I'm just checking in with Jacqueline if she wanted to add anything.

Jacqueline: I do because I wanted to share some things that I failed to yesterday. The importance of this class for me was learning even more about myself, but it was a part of my healing journey because I came in a broken woman from an unhealthy marriage. And a lot of women go through this and then they feel bad about themselves, they blame themselves for everything that has gone wrong. And part of my ability to help other women that I minister to, I needed to be healed.

I needed to be the whole woman who loved herself, who understood her own sexuality in the religion, and it doesn't matter what denomination, sex is a taboo subject. And I want to free women up and let them know that

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they are beautiful, and they are sexual beings and they do deserve to be loved. So this course was extremely important for me.

Lisa: Amen, and thank you, always. I think it just astounds me that sex is still a taboo subject in our day and age. And then on the other side of that same coin, it's the shock and awe factor. It's what we use to sell everything and to titillate people into making decisions and stuff.

And I have been with Dr. Sonia long enough where she can be in front of audiences of very mature, sophisticated, well educated women that have probably been in many relationships and committed and all of that. And pull out her vulva puppet or Goldie, her little gold clitoris, and all the women are just riveted because we don't hear it talked about like this. You know what I mean? We just don't hear it talked about like that. We hear it talked about as though it's taboo or naughty or something that we really shouldn't be talking about, but we're going to be naughty.

So I think there's such a value to hearing people talk about it frankly and honestly. And it was me being in ACWSI with all of you students and talking about it weekly, twice a week was my own immersion into that and just was a phenomenal experience, a life changing experience. I think about intimacy a lot differently than I used to.

Sonia: I think that it spirals down in a good way. But in terms of you experience it, you start thinking about it, you process it, and then you go to a deeper level. And I mean, I'm teaching the course and I'm still processing about my own sexuality, and I've been doing this for a number of years now. And then you kind of incorporate it and like Rachael was saying, you start to pull things from your past and bring that into your concepts now about sex and sexuality.

You're healing your relationship with yourself because so often, maybe not intentionally, but women are taught that there's shame around their sexuality in some way, and especially if their sexuality is not for somebody else, if it's a gift for somebody else, then it's okay. But if it's for themselves,

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if it's for their own pleasure, then something is wrong, and they should not go to that place. And it brings in a lot of shame and other things there. So when we have the opportunity to do this work for ourselves, it's so important because how can we talk to somebody else?

How can we talk to our clients if we're still dealing with that shame, that brokenness, whatever is there? So it is this process of healing that we do again and again and again over a period of time. And it's layers of healing, like band-aids that we're putting on top, till we get to this place where we are healing the relationship with ourselves. If our fundamental relationship is one that's based on shame with a part of our body, what is that teaching us about ourselves?

Fritzi: If we don't like something we dissociate from it, I mean, just no matter what it is. And so if you don't like something, just dissociate from it and then there is neglect within the self.

Sonia: Yeah, exactly. And then we're like, "Okay, how quickly can I have this sex and get it over with so I can do something else that's not going to put me in a place of shame or stress or whatever, that my thoughts are around sexuality? And then you've got the two seconds sexual intimacy which is not really intimate. It's amazing how you can put body parts together and it can be the most disassociated, non-intimate type of almost like a procedure if you're not in this place where you're welcoming, if you're comfortable with yourself and you feel like you have that loving relationship with yourself.

Lisa: And it's so holistic too, what Rachael said about bringing body image work back into her coaching is kind of flowing together with what Fritzi just said about dissociating from body parts that we like. Because sex coaching or working, coaching, or having conversations about sexual intimacy, I think sometimes you hear that and you're like, "You teach people how to have better sex?" But at the bottom of it, the fundamental layer is really just another part of teaching women how to have really loving relationships with themselves, first and foremost.

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Rachael: And to be able to advocate for yourself, to be able to communicate and advocate for yourself in so many, not just in the bedroom, but in all of the relationship, but mostly in the bedroom because that's the least thing we want to talk about.

Lisa: It is, I think, if you can advocate for yourself there, you can advocate for yourself anywhere. But the skill is universal and that too, it's just built on a foundation of really loving yourself. And if we're not talking about a really important function in our life, if we're not talking about sexuality and our body's sexual anatomy, our body as a whole, but also our sexual anatomy, we have something in our life that we barely even know.

Sonia: And we're walking around with for our entire life, and we don't know.

Fritzi: The brain has it, as a component of it in the homunculus. And when we don't honor that and connect it to the bottom end of the anatomy, then it feels like there's a part of its pieces missing, of the whole brain's being. So connecting it and being able to feel that whole pelvic region and to be able to feel the intimate aspect of your whole body, only brings a whole mind into perspective of whole health.

Lisa: Thank you for that perspective. I love, this is what I love when you bring people that are already educated in certain areas and how they bring aspects of intimacy coaching together. And I feel like I am through your languaging, Fritzi, learning something new or a new way to think about it and a new way to teach it.

Fritzi: Well, if you see an amputee, because I'm an occupational therapist, we see amputees, and if somebody has a limb that's cut off, they still feel it even though it's not there. So the brain is still feeling it even though you've dissociated from it, it still longs for that piece to be connected.

Lisa: That's so poignant. I need to think about this. I am just going to be quiet for a while so I can absorb that because it's true and I have never ever thought of that.

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Sonia: So I'm going to switch gears while Lisa's processing because I think it's important that we have time to process. It's one of the things we do in ACWSI. And I'm going to ask you all about boundaries, what was it like? I know for me when I first started, I have a history of sexual abuse as well. And I wasn't sure if I was going to be able to coach around sexual abuse when I started way back when and so it seems like millions of years ago. But I remember at that time that I was so concerned that I would not be able to coach on it. I would not be able to help and also that I would be triggered.

Of course I was in therapy, and I've taken care of a lot of that aspect of things. But would any of you like to talk about your boundaries in terms of what you decided how you would coach on and what you wouldn't necessarily and how that might have changed over a period of time going through this course? What you might have been concerned about coaching around at the beginning and you're not as worried about now?

Rachael: I will say one of my favorite parts was that you guys gave us permission to have boundaries. That was one of my fears was, am I going to go into this and now I'm going to be expected to coach on everything and anything? And you guys gave us permission to say, "Look, you get to choose what you want to coach on and create your own boundaries through your own wisdom on this." And I never, not once felt unsafe in class. And you guys held that space so well of letting me feel safe to share.

I always felt safe to either share or not share. I always felt safe to ask questions. And specifically with the boundaries, my biggest fear was coaching on trauma and because I was afraid that I would be triggered. And I had done so much healing in my own life from my childhood abuse that I didn't want to be triggered anymore. I was like, "I've already been there. I've done so much healing and I'm afraid if I dig in deep, I'm going to uncover something that might still be buried there."

But I will say that throughout your program it was one more step in my healing. I didn't feel triggered. It was actually, it was one more step in my

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healing to where I can trust myself to be able to coach someone who has even been through trauma. And I'm not going to take her through a whole therapeutic thing if she's never had therapy. That's my boundary, if she's never had therapy to really unpack the trauma, I'm going to say, "You're probably not the client for me."

But if she has had therapy and she says, "This comes up sometimes," I'm not afraid to go there with her anymore. And I trust myself to know where I can coach and where I need to send her back to therapy. So I think that was one of my boundaries at first. No, I could never do that. And I remember myself, even 10 years ago, just saying, "I could never coach on sex." Because I remember someone telling me, sometimes when you heal from something, you're a great person to help others heal from it. And I was like, "But I could never do that."

But after ACWSI I'm not afraid to go there anymore because I trust myself to honor my boundaries. And I trust myself to know that line of okay, I can coach on this or okay, this is where you need to go get some other help.

Fritzi: Agree 100%. You put that safe container to provide us the advocacy for ourself. Again, it's that advocacy to set those boundaries, to say what we can and cannot coach on and what we feel comfortable and to refer. Because there are people that, if we get into a position where we feel that it's not our place. That we would be the best advocate for that client is to refer because we have a network now to refer to and we know where people have come from and how they have been trained.

Lisa: Yeah, thank you. I think before the program started, when we were doing some publicity, some polls and things on social media, somebody asked, "Are you going to teach how to address this?" And it just felt so good to say, "Yes, this is an important part." And we have Dr. Kimmerly Newsom, who is, Sonia can say more about Dr. Kimmerly because my brain isn't going to remember everything.

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But that was one of, as an instructor, one of my favorite modules too, because I think for a lot of us, and our understanding of trauma is really developing, but for a lot of us that went through coach certification, it didn't get addressed. And there's always this fear that I'm either going to trigger a client, I might get triggered myself. And that fear for sure creates boundaries that we don't even see and keeps us kind of tiptoeing around the issues. And yeah, so I love hearing both of your answers to that great question, yeah, Sonia.

Sonia: Yeah, I'd have to say for Lisa and I, when we created ACWSI, it was very clear that we wanted to make sure that we addressed this issue. That we would help our coaches, our healthcare providers know where their role is and when to refer out and not to worry about taking on too much because it's very simple. You don't have to make it complex. Has the patient or has the client had previous trauma therapy, that's the key to all of this, is to make sure that they have had something like that.

And they can bring, sometimes a person needs to be in communication, conversation with someone they trust to bring up the concept of something that has happened to them in the past. But they need to be in a trusting situation which can be provided in the coaching environment for them to start the conversation. But it's important that they do get the therapy that they need. And so that's where we're going to make sure that they get the therapy.

If they've been doing this work for a long period of time with therapy and things like that, then yes, we'll discuss more of the coaching. We don't necessarily have to go back to that exact moment when the trauma occurred, but we can help. And Dr. Kimmerly Newsom, she's a marriage and family therapist for the last 20 years. She also has specific training in trauma, extensive around sexual trauma as well. And then also sexual addiction type of things, she's had additional training in as well.

So we made sure that she came into our program and actually gave lectures and did coursework on what can we handle, what can we not

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handle, when to refer and also to start building that network. So that was definitely something that we wanted to address. I think it's something that whether you're coaching around sex, if you're some sort of coach, trauma will come up. And we need to be able to know what to do and need to understand that we don't need to have all the answers, but we do need to be able to support the client and also make sure that they're getting the services that they need with therapy.

Lisa: Yeah, 100%. And I think sometimes as coaches because people hire us for different reasons. We may have a niche or whatever, but somebody may hire Rachael for some marriage counseling or marriage coaching, relationship coaching and not even be thinking about trauma, and it can still come up. And so a lot of times as coaches, we might be the one person that helps a client recognize the possibility that there's some trauma there, that they could work through with a therapist if they never have before.

And to me, that too, it's a gift and to be able to just know how to recognize it. And I think I can't remember if it was you, Rachael, or you, Fritz that said we have a network now. One thing that was really important to us in ACWSI is bringing the students together, of course, to network with one another, but also starting to build a network for coaches of people to reach out to, to ask questions, perhaps to refer to, if a therapist or a specialist is needed, yeah.

Sonia: And that's something that's also important for us with ACWSI is that we don't just give you a certificate and send you on your way. You're part of the family, we are connected. We have get-togethers. And we're working on monthly alumni type of calls so that we can stay connected, and we can talk about things, and we can make sure that information is still getting out and being shared and that there is this network. Which is only going to grow because we'll be having our next cohort in September, the end of September, so this is just going to get bigger and bigger.

And it gets to be part of a conversation, a larger conversation that coaches and healthcare providers get to have around sex and trauma.

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Jacqueline: One of the advantages of being in the founding class is being able to find out there's a safe space to be with women where there's no judgment. I feel like it was more than just sitting in a class, it was like sitting around a kitchen table talking to good girlfriends and asking all those questions you always wanted to know. So for anybody who ever takes this course in the future, I know they'll find each class the same way.

There's a connectivity with women that you can't find anywhere else in the world and this class, oh my goodness, it brings on that safe connectivity where you can find out who you are. And you can find out that you're not alone in existence of things that other women have gone through.

Fritzi: And it's fun. And it's fun. It's so much fun. I mean, that was one of the things that I was going to say is that my favorite part of ACWSI is that I had the ability to go from nun, the nun that I was to fun. And just in five short months, the fun I've been able to explore and to discover and to learn because there's so much vital information that each person brings to the group. And that I'm not the only one that's feeling this. That I belong to a group of people that in this age group, that I wasn't the only one that was taught this.

And we get the opportunity to choose how we want to move from here. And that's the beauty of having fun in your relationship now. I mean you've got kids, but they're raw in this age group. And we get to start exploring and having fun within ourselves, if we've lost a spouse, or if we are single or if we're just needing an intimate time with our own self. You have that opportunity to throw some beautiful petals in the water and light some candles.

And we learn that that's okay, that that is part of us as women, that we get to have that opportunity and that's beautiful. That's what ACWSI is about. It's the fun that you get to experience and learn and to know that there is a scientific medical basis and evidence that proves that we are sexual beings and that's not something to be ashamed of.

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Sonia: I'm going to cry, because to have Fritzi say that. When I think when we first started working together, Fritzi, to where you are now to be like, "Do you want to have fun with yourself? Throw some pedals." It's just so wonderful because that's kind of my dream come true, to help women just find their power, their sexual power and to release the shame and to connect with themselves in so many different ways. And of course, I'm sorry, but this marketing thing from nun to fun. I'm going to use that.

Fritzi: And it's not N-O-N-E, it's N-U-N for nun.

Sonia: There's so many different parts. It is N-O-N-E, and it is N-U-N.

Fritzi: That's right.

Sonia: And there's so much fun and I'm almost inclined to have you send me a picture of your partner and his smiling face too. All the benefits that you have just with yourself and your own relationship with yourself, which I think is the primary relationship that I'm always focused on when I'm working with women. But also, just the benefits that's there with how it may impact relationships overall and not just sexual relationships with your partner, but also you show up in this world a different way.

And the way you show up is so helpful for other people and just your comfort level because you spend 10 weeks talking about sex, 12 weeks talking about sex, that it's so much easier to just talk with friends and family or somebody else about sex without having that shame. And when you are transformed and you are talking about this without shame, that gives such a gift to somebody else.

Fritzi: Absolutely. I've had that transformative experience, sitting a mom in front of me while I had her disabled child in my lap. And to see her cry when I said, "You need to take care of yourself. What do you do to have an intimate time with yourself?" And she goes, "I don't know how to do that." That's a long journey of life to not know how to take care of your own self and to explore and just to advocate for yourself to the significant other, to

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say, “Hey, I need to take 30 minutes to take a bath with petals. I promise I won't put the blow dryer in the water.”

It says that on the label, you don't put electrical devices in the water. So it's very important that women know that they can advocate for themselves to take time to be intimate with themselves, because those neurochemicals will change their mindset so much that they can go from that disorganized, chaotic, overwhelmed place to a place of being okay.

Sonia: Yeah, I mean, if we bathe the brain with oxytocin and dopamine then the world doesn't seem so bad.

Fritzi: Oh, no man, you can cut a big fat fill in the blank, just getting me going. You can take care of so much more when you're in a great place in your mind. And sometimes it just takes time to take care of yourself for that moment.

Rachael: Yeah, I think that's so important too. I had a client come to me a few months ago and she said, “I want to work on my sex life but I'm not ready to go there yet. Are you going to make me schedule sex and stick to it?” And I said, “No, we're going to chuck the schedule right now and we're going to work on your relationship first.” And when I say work on your relationship, I mean first of all, work on your relationship with yourself and then with your partner.

And that's before we schedule sex or any of those tools that we hear about, we have to deal with the heart first and making sure you're connected first and feeling safe with yourself and safe with your partner and connected in all the other ways. And it's fun when someone comes to me and says, “Oh, my gosh, my relationship is amazing. We just need to work on our sex life.” That's fun, but it's not often. We usually have to work on some nuances in the relationship before we get to that incredible sex life.

But knowing it's possible, knowing that it can start with you is so beautiful. You can start feeling your own pleasure while you're learning to connect

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with yourself and then trusting that that's going to overflow when you want it to if you want it to.

Sonia: Yeah, I love so much about what you're saying, Rachael. I mean, consent is such an important topic that we talk about. And then the zone of sexual safety, we were talking about making sure that you, yourself and your clients, everybody in this feels safe. I've coached women where they have come from other programs where their relationship coaching where somebody had this brilliant idea, not going to say, but had this brilliant idea that if you had scheduled sex every single day for 30 days, at the end of the 30 days you'll be in such a great place that everything will be better.

And so what you're essentially doing is making people stay to a schedule. Consent is not necessarily there, by the end of the 30 days, the woman was just so miserable, and her partner didn't really want to ever have sex again.

So more damage was done as opposed to just saying, "Hey, if you're not wanting to have sex at this point in time, that's fine. Let's work on you. Let's work on your connection with yourself. Let's work on setting up that trust, that connection, the communication again. And let's focus on you and your body, learning about your body and pleasure, and then we'll see where we go from there." As opposed to this pressure where it's artificially set up.

Lisa: That's just it, I mean to-do list sex is something that I would never want to encourage. I can clean my toilet bowl every day too for 30 days and I'll have a really clean toilet bowl, but I will not enjoy cleaning it any more than I did in the first place. But I can just imagine too, what you just said, Sonia and Rachael, how women's shoulders must drop in relief when we can give them the space to have their real experience.

If you are avoiding sex or feeling like you need some help there. Let's drop all of the pressure to perform to whoever is saying whatever needs to be done and let's just work on you, to me, that is the way to improve anything in your life is giving yourself permission not to have to. When you take that

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pressure away and just start, I always tell my clients, “Sometimes we just need to get around or get underneath something and not try to bulldoze it out of the way or go over it.”

Rachael: Yeah. And giving yourself permission to not have sex, there's so much shame there that that we have to as women drop because we're taught so much that our bodies are for other people. And it's our duty, especially if we're married to a man, it's our duty to pleasure him. And so dropping that shame and allowing yourself to say, “I'm not going to do this out of expectation or duty.” That's the first step in actually wanting to.

Jacqueline: I think also the advantage of this course is that it reaches out to women in all walks of life, in all stages. When you get to the queen's corner, you're with women who may be widowed or separated. They may be single all their lives, but this course reaches every aspect of a woman's life. And so teaching her that she can enjoy her own body, that it does not necessarily have to be a partner there to do it, but she can take care of herself and love herself sexually.

Lisa: Yes, to that.

Sonia: Yes, 100%. That's something that's so important is that our sexuality, our body is meant for us, and then we choose if we want to share it with somebody else. But fundamentally our primary relationship is with ourselves, and we deserve sexual pleasure whether we're partnered or not.

Fritzi: Right. And I think that those are very valid points, and that sex is not just about penetrative sex. That sex is, there's so much more to it that everyone thinks that it's just about the penetration. But to have sex you don't even have to have penetration. It's about pleasure. There's so much intimate connectedness that that's just the icing on the cake if that's what you prefer but there's so much more to that intimate space.

And that intimate space, there's so much that can be explored and to be learned and things that we don't know about ourselves, which is a shame

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that we need to learn more about. Because if we can advocate for ourselves for what we want then that statement of you've got to be an eight to penetrate makes it even the best above.

Sonia: So good, yeah. And I'm just thinking about this statement, I have not heard this statement so I'm going to ask.

Lisa: No, I know, I was like, what was that? I need you to repeat that statement.

Sonia: I need to hear about this, more about this you need to be an eight to penetrate. Tell me more about this.

Fritzi: The woman has to be able to advocate that when she has to be an eight to a ten before you can come in.

Sonia: In terms of her level of pleasure?

Fritzi: Yeah. In her level of pleasure, she has to be an eight to a ten to be able to come in because she needs to have that opportunity to go to that next level.

Sonia: 100%. I love that. Yes.

Rachael: As a former nun, you know a lot more lingo than we do.

Fritzi: Learned a lot from Dr. Sonia.

Lisa: Nun to fun.

Fritzi: Nun to fun, here we go. Lots of exploration now because it's been fun through ACWSI and learning so much, there's been more exploration. And I really didn't know that there were so many different podcasts that are scientifically based medical podcasts on this kind of stuff. And learning more about the body, my body and knowing all the different things about what it can do and what it enjoys.

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Sonia: And I'm going to ask, sometimes we think that sex ends at a certain stage, after your 30s and into your 40s, somewhere around there, when we start hitting into our 50s. But we need to understand this is really only the beginning. In fact, we are focused on this heteronormative concept around sex and sexual intimacy. And then we actually start to expand and think of it in so many different ways. And there's no limit to how you get to define sexual intimacy and how you get to be sexually creative around this. So yeah, it's just the beginning of it all.

Fritzi: And how many toys there are, that's something you taught us, Sonia, is that how many toys there are to enhance our pleasure no matter what stage of life we're in or what stage of life our partner's in.

Sonia: Yes, it does not matter because if we happen to have a partner that is a penis owner and having some difficulty with his penis then traditionally, the concept is it's all over, it's at an end, but it's really only at the beginning. There's so many different ways to interact sexually and to have pleasure around this. All we have to do is just drop these concepts and give ourselves permission and explore and create. And I always put the focus on pleasure and satisfaction and connection. That's all that's required for sexual intimacy and then it's kind of go, you get to create it yourself.

Fritzi: And we've got to remember about desire, that the desire changes as we get older. Because there we have to be responsive, as opposed to reactive in our desire. Because little bunnies running around, young, young bunnies, I mean that's all about procreation. And all those hormones, but as the hormones start diminishing as we get older, I mean there's responsive. We have to kind of rev the engine a little bit and get it to going and start having thoughts and little tweaks.

And it's a beautiful thing to receive a text that just says, "Hey, there's a gift on the way. Hey, bring the box." "What box?" Just those kind of things, that kind of just gets the engine to rev and just think, you're thinking, or I'm thinking of them, and I want them to be excited about coming home or whatever. So there's so many different things that can go into, but it starts,

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there's the desire but that has to be kind of primed, when it comes to our age, but that's okay because we can prime our own, our motors.

Sonia: Yes, so good. Yes, you get to prime in the pump, you get to just take responsibility for your sexuality from a place of joy as opposed to shame.

Fritzi: Absolutely, 100%.

Sonia: Alright, Lisa, any more questions we have here?

Lisa: I have so many other questions, but like you said at the beginning, this is the second part to talking to the students. And as Jacqueline can also attest, this conversation was totally different than the one we had yesterday. And this is what I love about the dynamics of just meeting with people on different times in different combinations and what we all have to bring to the table.

So here's what I'd like to ask in wrapping up, and really you all, this is for any women, any of the Diamonds listening to this particular show who work with women in some way and might be at this point asking, "I wonder, is this training for me?" What would you tell them?

Fritzi: I would tell them 100% this training is for you. If you are a woman, this training is for you no matter what your background is in, no matter what your profession is in. No matter where you're coming from, this course is for you because it gives you that one night a week to come together and belong to a group of women that you can explore in a safe container, who you are.

Lisa: Thank you, Fritzi.

Rachael: Yeah. And I would just add to that, I love to kind of just tap into your body, I'm not a high pressure coach like, "Go join this." I love to just give yourself permission, just like we would teach for sex and give yourself permission to say, "Do I want this?" And if the answer is yes, it is absolutely worth it to go get it.

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So it's a program that is going to meet you where you're at, that is not going to pressure you. That is going to teach you, that's going to inspire you and help you feel connected to a part of you that might want to come alive, whether it's just in yourself or in teaching others. And it's such a beautiful program and Sonia and Lisa do such an incredible job of letting their hearts lead in teaching this program. So yeah, I would say if you want it, go get it.

Lisa: Thank you, Rachael, yeah, Sonia and I, neither of us sell based on FOMO. That's just feeling pressure to come into a program. There's positive pressure of challenging ourselves when we kind of have an idea that we might like it, but we feel kind of like I don't know if I can handle it. That's one thing, but yeah, to pressure oneself to get something because you're afraid if you don't have it. But I just think that the skill of having conversations about women's sexual intimacy is never something that we can't use.

And we can continually strengthen it and use it in our business and use it in our own lives. Yes to everything you've said, thanks Rachael.

Jacqueline: And I think also the fact that the course covers so many aspects of a woman who teaches you to love yourself. It teaches you about the parts of your body that you never knew about, period, not less ask anybody about. It works with your spiritual, your mental and emotional health. So it covers every aspect of a woman. So it's important for every woman who has the opportunity to take this course, if it's just for her and she doesn't have clients or anybody to minister to, but just to make a change in her own life, that's important.

Fritzi: And you can go from nun to fun.

Rachael: And it's so fun to just see how many different types of people are in here. When I joined I thought, this is just for coaches, but no, it's for coaches and therapists and doctors and teachers and mothers.

Fritzi: And spiritual leaders and I mean, yeah, reverends.

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Rachael: And ministers and it's so fun to see, and it's so important to remember that if you are talking to women, this coach is going to benefit you. If you're talking to women on a regular basis you are going to learn so much in how to help them more, no matter what you do.

Jacqueline: Even if it's just a good girlfriend.

Fritzi: And I mean even we went on a girls' weekend retreat with my cousins and my sister, it was just family. And I was telling them things that they had no idea and no concept, and they were like, "Where are you coming from?" And they were like, "You're the nun." And I was just like, "Yes, but do you realize, and do you know?" And that was the fun part of just sharing, just sharing. It's that ripple effect of sharing, that they can be all that they want to be no matter what.

Lisa: Yes. And I think this all, what I think is so beautiful is just that this all came from Sonia's dream of impacting the sex lives and the lives of 100 million people is what she said. But just every woman or as many women as possible and there's no way that one person can be the center of that or do it all by themselves. It takes all of us. And so I am just sitting here getting chills as you're all sharing what's relevant to you about this program.

Fritzi: And it's an amazing program and if you have a chance and you feel the calling, you don't have to be a coach. You can share it with just yourself, but what about your daughters? What about your loved ones that you really want to impact their lives from here on out that you missed out on, that you are now picking up the pieces to try to start having that fun at this age? It may save a lot of marriages. It may save a lot of connections and relationships.

Sonia: Well, I want to thank all of you from the bottom of my heart for being here for talking about ACWSI and coming on and just explaining what your experience was with ACWSI. And thank you for the work that you're doing out in the world. And I just love the fact that you take the information that

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we gave you in ACWSI and you go with it. And you are part of the ripple. You are out there impacting other women's lives. So thank you so much for all you do. And Diamonds, I don't even have anything else to say, these women are so amazing, Lisa.

Lisa: Yeah, I'm like why am I here? It's so wonderful.

Fritzi: Well, that's because of you all and your insight and your heart and your vision of what you wanted to create because you saw a need and you didn't take no for an answer. You said yes to making this happen. So I appreciate everything that you all, all the hard work and the hours and the dedication, for providing us with the opportunity.

Sonia: Thank you so much.

Fritzi: My pleasure.

Sonia: Alright, so Diamonds, this is ACWSI. We would love to have you in the next cohort which is September 29th we start and in the show notes there will be links to get on our waitlist and we'll let you know when ACWSI is open for enrollment. And thank you all for coming once again. And I love that, thank you all for coming, yes.

Fritzi: No pun intended.

Lisa: Some of us came twice.

Sonia: Alright, Diamonds, Dr. Sonia out. And Lisa and Rachael and Fritzi and Jacqueline, thank you so much.

Fritzi: Thank you very much.

Rachael: Thank you.

Hello, hello, hello, Diamonds, have you heard the amazing news? Dr. Sonia, that would be me and my amazing team has started a sex coaching and life coaching monthly membership program called The Lit Clit Club.

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The Lit Clit Club was made just for you. It's a safe place where women can come to create the lives that they want, the lives that you want. It's a place where you get to talk openly about your sexual concerns and be heard. There's no judgment, no reprimand, no labels, just acceptance, knowledge, and freedom.

It's a place where you get to ask all the questions that you ever wanted to ask about sex and about life too. You get to dream big and create your life your way inside and outside the bedroom. You know I love the concept of creating the life that you want inside and outside the bedroom, that soul bursting life that you deserve. So come to the club for the sexual intimacy coaching and stay for the empowerment and the freedom.

Do you have questions about libido, menopause? Lord help us, menopause is no joke. Sexual health, relationships, sexual orientation, pleasure equality and orgasms, religion, and intimacy? I am not finished with this list yet. Maybe you have questions about toys, maybe about non-monogamy. Perhaps you're interested in BDSM, maybe self-love, self-pleasure. Maybe you have questions about self-orientation. Maybe you need to work on healing from trauma.

Maybe body image is something that you want to focus more on and definitely embodiment. Perhaps creating the life of your dreams or journeying to your authentic self. Maybe you just want to stop people pleasing. Whatever questions you have and concerns you have, we have the answers and the coaching that you need. In all actuality, you have the answers inside of you. And the coaching will help bring that out. And you know what? You get to choose how you want to be coached.

You can be coached by video, by audio only or you can use the questions and answers session, it's whatever works for you. You get to sit back and relax and get the help that you need, and your cameras are off. And every month we have a new workshop in addition to our regular coaching sessions. So click on the link below in the show notes and find out more about The Lit Clit Club. We can't wait to see you there in the club, come

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join us. Things are just starting to heat up. Alright, Dr. Sonia out. Love you all, Diamonds.