Introduction to sex education gaps

your therapist and even your urologist and your OBGYN and your doctor. None of these people have sex education training. This is not the fault of any doctor or any therapist.

It is the system that does not include sex education in any curriculum other than one class or one week of training. And of course, you know you're a doctor.

There's 10 years it takes to become a doctor. And in that 10 years, you get maybe a week of sex ed training. This is why it's so important to know not even sex therapist because a sex therapist, the word sex is in their title.

They are trained in sex or a sex coach, right? Either one of these people can be really helpful. Welcome to Dr. Talks. The podcast where every episode leads to a healthier you.

Join us as we navigate the world of optimal health, uncovering groundbreaking strategies to conquer chronic disease. In each episode, we'll bring you the latest insights from leading health experts, medical innovators, and wellness warriors.

If you're seeking to transform your health journey, or if you're looking for answers to burning questions, you've come to the right place. Get ready to unlock the secrets of lifelong health and vitality.

This is Doctor Talks.

Defining sex as mutual pleasure

Real talk from real doctors on the issues that matter to you most. Hi, everybody. Welcome to another episode of the Recharge Biomedical Podcast. I'm your host, Dr.

Ed Park. And today we're very pleased to be joined by Nadej. It's so good to be here. Yeah. So for those that don't know, Nadej has a website called pleasurescience.com.

And I met her at a hacking conference that she gave a brilliant lecture about sex. And so we're here to talk about sex. Let's talk about sex. Let's do it.

Let's talk about sex, baby. There you go. So just so you know, Nadezh is a professional counselor and she was educated at Berkeley, became very interested in sex as a science, as a modality.

Tell us, what is sex? Can you define it? You know, I feel like one of the first things I actually have everybody do, whether they work with me or even if they just find me online on Instagram or anything, is we should all have our own unique definition of sex, right?

Like, we should all start there. I'd say my definition of sex is anything that gives me mutual, energetic, consensual pleasure. And so if it's solo sex, like if it's masturbation, to me good masturbation sex or solo sex as I like to call it is a pleasure based experience that is all centered around the body and not dependent on orgasm.

And then I kind of feel the same for partnered sex or group sex where It's this mutual communicative experience that's all about pleasure. We don't focus on any one specific result, especially not orgasm.

We tend to feel like, oh, it wasn't sex, sex didn't happen if there wasn't an orgasm. And we also tend to think sex didn't happen or sex isn't sex unless something hard is sliding into something wet, if you catch my drift.

So yes, I did catch. Right? Yeah, like that's a nice subtle way of saying what I think we all, what we all assume sex to be. And I like to expand that.

It could be oral. It could be massage and foreplay. All of that. And so they say the sexiest organ is between the ears and that a lot of it is, but I like your focus on pleasure.

That's why your website is pleasuresciences.com. But, you know, when we talk about the history of sex, like people have been doing it literally since the beginning.

But then, you know, in the mid of last century, they studied sex, Masters and Johnson, and I'm sure you're familiar with their work. And then before that, Sigmund Freud made a huge cultural impact with his theories on the psyche and libido and the Oedipal-Electra sort of axis.

But, you know, there are older traditions, you know, in all religions about sexuality. So everyone knows or thinks they know about eros or sexuality, but I like your emphasis on pleasure because in this day and age where people have access to porn, everything is so performative, right?

And so it kind of is like, oh, you got like the..

Kink, BDSM, and erotic archetypes

. arousal, plateau, climax, it's all about performative marks. But I think that people can be sexually attracted and sexually flowing even without that penetrative act.

So there's so many ways that Freud would call polymorphously perverse. But I do think that some people have erectile dysfunction, they have spinal cord injury.

And so tell me what you think the difference between intimacy and pleasure, because some people derive pleasure, you know, now we went from that one song and we go to the Eurythmics song.

You know, you are dominatrix or are dominatrix. Some of them want to be used by you. Like, it's not just pleasure. For some people, it's like, there's some weird kind of childhood reenactment or trauma.

So tell me about the people that are into the so-called kink without judging. How is that pleasurable to be, yeah. Yeah. So when I was at UC Berkeley, so my title is a sex scholar and that's what I do.

I'm a pleasure scientist, but you're right. I trained to be a dominatrix while I was going to UC Berkeley. Honestly, I got the opportunity and thought, why the heck not?

And one of the biggest misconceptions about kink and BDSM is that We enjoy kink because of a trauma response or a traumatic event. Studies have shown that that just really isn't accurate.

And when we're thinking about this, what actually is super helpful to even take a step back and look at the erotic blueprint arousal archetypes. And I'll go over those really quickly because I think your listeners are going to find it so helpful.

So I always like to relate it to the love languages where, you know, like, oh, words of affirmation or quality time. We're all familiar with the love languages.

And if you're not, just Google it. It'll come up right away. And we also have these erotic archetypes that are very much the same, that show us how we show up sexually in the bedroom.

So there's the sexual archetype. This is someone who can go from zero to 60 very quickly when it comes to arousal, sex itself is arousing. There's the sensual archetype.

This is someone who, if the sexual archetype is the microwave, the sensual is the oven. They need some massage, they need sensuality, they need where they're at, like the bed should be comfortable, the bedroom should look nice.

They're very much about everything from the touch, the physical touch, to the outside aesthetic to have this sensual capacity in order to experience arousal.

We have the shapeshifter. This is someone who organically, naturally kind of shape shifts into their lover's archetype. They can kind of do it all, which is different from people pleasing in the bedroom.

Those are not the same thing. The way to distinguish if you're people pleasing versus a shape-shifter, if you shape-shifting in the bedroom gives you energy and excites you and you leave sex feeling energized, then you're a shapeshifter.

If you leave a sexual experience feeling drained and down, you are people pleasing. Just a quick thing there. Next we have, to answer your question, the kinky sexual archetype.

These are people who are turned on by taboos. So you may not actually be kinky in the sense that you want to go to a dungeon or you want to be a dominatrix or a dominant or a submissive.

That definitely does fall into the kinky archetype, but more so this is defined by people who are turned on by the taboo itself of something. So this looks like people who only date, you know, someone who's older than them because that is a taboo and it's sexy.

It turns them on to do something that maybe they're quote-unquote not supposed to do. Another great example of this can be people who step outside of their relationship but not in an ethically non-monogamous way.

Basically, we're seeing people who what's sexy is a taboo, right? If I'm not supposed to do it, I want to do the thing. And the fifth, and I always do this where I always forget the last and final archetype we had.

Oh, energetic. That's the final one. The energetic arousal archetype is a person who is really turned on by things not happening right away, delayed gratification.

We go on the first date and we don't kiss. Ooh, that's yummy. We wait for sex, you know, and it doesn't have to do with any type of religion or traditional outlook on waiting for sex, but it's more so don't give it to me right away.

I want the energy, the sexual tension. I want to beg for it. That's the energetic. And so I go through that to answer your question because when it comes to kink and BDSM, why do people like kink and BDSM?

Well, there's a huge part of the population that has this taboo kinky sexual archetype. And so what we find is more people are kinky because that's just inherently natural and yummy for them.

And now with BDSM being normalized, which by the way, I studied the history of sexuality at the biggest sex library in the world. I was the scholar in residence last year at the Carter Johnson Library.

So I was actually tracing this through history. We can trace BDSM back through centuries, but it wasn't until the 19th century that BDSM got a name and kind of became an active subculture that has now grown into the mainstream.

What's great about BTSM is now we have language and frameworks with which to act out taboo arousal archetypes. And then there's also the layer of, like you were saying, shame or maybe abuse or trauma, kink when it's done correctly with someone who is trauma-informed and has a psychology background.

kink can be a way to heal trauma, but it definitely is a myth that, oh, you were traumatized and now you're kinky. And another thing to think about with trauma is sexual trauma happens in so many different ways.

So what more often I see and I've seen as a dominatrix and as a sex scholar is people are so traumatized sexually because of the culture we live in. And then they find kink, and they might think, oh, you know, my father abused me, or I was molested, and now I like kink, when in fact there are hundreds of thousands of people who've been abused in the same way, but they're not kinky.

We made this assumption, and I can totally understand why we did, because it can be confusing to reconcile with the fact that pain and sex put together, or humiliation and sex, or all of these, again, taboos, can simply just be a turn-on, but actually they are.

Yeah, it's fascinating. I mean, people, and I think, you know, I like how you broke it down into different archetypes. And yeah, I guess when we talk about the love languages, there's like service, which kind of parallels one of your archetypes.

There's giving gifts, there's presence, there's words of affirmation, and there's physical touch. So someone could probably draw a diagram how those parallel.

But so in what way can we separate sexuality and intimacy and pleasure from attachment. Like, so people are navigating polyamorous relationships, consensual non-monography, they call it.

But I think that, you know, I have a good friend who opened up her marriage and then the husband fled with the third party. So are people naturally on a spectrum of being single pair bonded or can some people truly be more polyamorous?

Monogamy, non-monogamy, and libido mismatch

I think a lot more people are more polyamorous or non-monogamous than the culture allows because we have been taught that there is a hierarchy of romantic success and that ultimately looks like lifelong monogamy and anything outside of that, which can simply even include divorce, right, is a failure.

But I do think there is a lot we, I think relationship styles are on a spectrum. I think we're all on a spectrum with it. And there, but that means there are also people who are naturally authentically monogamous.

There's kind of this false. Like this myth, I think, especially amongst polyamorous or non-monogamous circles, where if people just became woke enough or emotionally, you know, intelligent enough, everyone would be polyamorous and non-monogamous.

I don't think that that's true. I think non-monogamy and monogamy are both like people can be one or the other. People can also be almost like someone can be bisexual where they like men, women, or non-binary people.

There's also something called being ambiamorous. This means you could be in a monogamous relationship or a non-monogamous one and be completely fulfilled and happy.

And now to your point of that, what I like to call kind of the horror stories of opening up a relationship where you open it up and it all just falls apart in flames.

I also want to normalize there's a lot of amazing proof of non-monogamy being really beautiful. I work with a lot of couples and some of them come to me because they're exploring non-monogamy or they've been curious about it, especially people who've been together for a long time and want to feel alive again in the way that sex can make us feel alive.

And I have found a lot of the times while yes, opening up your relationship can result in a breakup. I often find if non-monogamy leads to a breakup, it isn't the fault of non-monogamy.

It is because the relationship was going to end anyway, one way or another. And the other thing is I often find a lot of times when you open up a relationship and you go and date other people, one of the first things that happens is

you realize, wait, dating is hard, and now I'm so grateful for the love that I have at home.

I'm so grateful for my spouse or my girlfriend, boyfriend, partner, what have you. It's really hard to be grateful for what you already have, right? It's not wanting what you have, or it's not having what you want, it's wanting what you have.

But, you know, I just was at my 40 year reunion and talking about their marriages coming apart and there can be a mismatch of frequency and desire. Like some people, I mean, if you do studies, it's really, the curb is very shocking as to how often people will have sex, maybe once or twice a year, maybe once a month, maybe five, six times, you know, a week, maybe more.

So if there's a mismatch in that libido, how can you navigate that? Because one guy told me, my wife and I, we were great, but she just wouldn't let me have it when I was wanting to have sex.

So we're still friends and whatever, but that was a deal breaker. And then vice versa, you know, there can be a mismatch, right? So how do couples negotiate that?

Absolutely. Well, if non-monogamy is not on the table, because non-monogamy can be a great framework. I had a couple that I was working with who were married for seven years and the wife became ill.

not terminally ill, but chronically ill. And it completely destroyed her libido for a few years, as that would. And they opened up their relationship.

He never left her. They were very happy. However, it was really helpful for them because she no longer felt the pressure to show up sexually when she couldn't.

And he had the… And of course, you have clear boundaries, you have check-ins, you know. But I'd say to your question, if non-monogamy isn't on the table, we return back to communication.

And I also like to say, let's start exploring sex by doing erotic play dates. Now, what this means is you set aside time on your calendar where you have a play date, but sex is not guaranteed or, or even expected because if we start expecting sex from our lover, that is going to really kill libido because now we're stressed.

instead of anticipating excitement. So step one, let's schedule a playdate. What are some things that you two can do together that are erotic but aren't necessarily sexual?

And the key part of these playdates is you both verbally agree sex is not expected. We're just here to play. Now here are some examples, because I've asked this to couples and they're like, well, I don't know what to do.

So one thing that can be really helpful is watching a movie naked in bed together and just holding each other. Your oxytocin, the bonding hormone, will spike and release when you eye gaze, when you're naked with each other, and when you hand hold.

So it's actually really healthy for you and your lover to be naked together and just hugging, cuddling. This can also look like being naked in a jacuzzi together.

This can look like taking a nice shower or a bath together. This can look like getting couples massages. I worked with another couple where after having three kids, the wife had gained a lot of weight and her husband was still attracted to her.

He had no problem. But for her, the idea of being naked in front of him was something that she was actively avoiding and had been avoiding for years. So for them, they started with bubble baths where she could be naked, but she's in a bubble bath.

She's completely submerged. He would come in after she was totally in the bath and he would just give her

shoulder massages, scalp massages, affirming her.

So there's a lot of different ways that we can explore these erotic play dates. It can also simply look like play. Let's go on a bike ride together. Let's go horseback riding.

Let's paint, do a paint and sip, you know, where we drink some wine or maybe smoke some weed, whatever your leisure of choice is, and we paint together.

Let's be playful. Let's do things we wanted to do as kids. I love that. Yeah, that's great. So date night doesn't always have to be a guarantee because that can be a point of contention oftentimes, you know.

to the point where it used to be legal to have sex with your partner against their consent, which was kind of nuts too, yeah. But let's talk about, because you talked about pleasure hormones, oxytocin, eye gazing, you know, obviously nipple stimulation, that's how the mother-infant pair bonds, but you know, a long hug can release oxytocin.

So there are people who take drugs. They can take oxytocin. They can take things to decrease their refractory period before they can orgasm again. And then there's people who take MDMA, which kind of fires up that bonding sort of activation circuit.

And then there's people who do other drugs and or alcohol. So where are we in terms of that being a good thing or that being a hindrance or even an addiction?

Yeah, you know, I will say there's a big difference between dopamine and oxytocin. So we know dopamine is that like super fun hormone. We get dopamine.

You could get it from being on Instagram, right? Or social media will give you dopamine. Having a crush will give you dopamine. Dopamine isn't bad, but oxytocin is definitely the hormone that we're going for here.

And so if you notice yourself like having a lot of dopamine addiction to connection, I'd say this is a great period to take things to one, take a fast, maybe like take seven days off of anything that you feel gives you dopamine.

Maybe that's a social media cleanse. Maybe that's an alcohol or other substance cleanse.

Erotic play dates and reducing pressure

I will say with alcohol, you know, liquid courage is real where like, in fact, studies actually show if you're holding a drink, your nervous system gets more soothed and you are actually a little bit more confident.

So liquid courage works in two ways. One, drinking alcohol can make you more relaxed, but actually physically holding a drink can do the same thing. So if you're trying to drink less, which I do, if we're thinking strictly libido science data, Drinking too much alcohol will lower your libido.

Well, it's so interesting because, you know, I've been binged over the last, speaking of dopamine, six weeks I've been listening to all these second date updates.

I don't know if you've ever seen that. They're hilarious. They call people up and they try and figure out why the other party is ghosting them. And you can see the interplay of alcohol a lot.

And because there's like this internalized slut-shaming, you know, a lot of people just want to hook up. They're young. There's no consequences. But then they get so surprised when the hookup doesn't turn into a relationship.

And then they blame it on the alcohol or they blame it on the partner. But yeah, I mean, I think that when you look at intention, like what is the intention of pair bonding, a lot of it is very different.

Like if you look at Japanese culture, they don't consider sex work to be cheating because there's no emotional attachment in most cases. So I think young men, young women, young people, they don't have that same development of their neocortex.

So they do a lot of just casual sex, which I think is an oxymoron. I think there couldn't be anything less casual than having sex. But they blame it on the alcohol, as Jamie Foxx would say.

But how do people get into a securely bonded relationship if they're going through partner after partner seeking love in all the wrong places and too many faces?

Like, can there be a number, like your body count they call it, can it be too high for you to… you know, establish normal, like, lifelong relationships?

Like, is there a number above which young people should not go in terms of sexual experience? No, no, the body count isn't actually really the thing. I am actually a big fan of sexual exploration and experience that makes you more confident, that makes you more knowledgeable.

So I wouldn't say it's body count. I would say it is lack of communication. and intention and assumption. And what's interesting is studies are actually showing while Gen Z and Millennials are more sexually aware than previous generations, they're actually having less sex than previous generations.

And I agree with you that casual sex is in itself an oxymoron because sex will activate, again, it activates oxytocin, the bonding hormone, whether you're ignoring it or not, you're going to be having feelings when you have sex with someone.

Now, casual sex, I think, can be very healthy and great. We just need to normalize communication, talking about expectations and intention. What are you looking for?

Oh, you're looking for a relationship? I'm not. Do we want to keep talking and dating, or not dating, but talking and having casual sex if we're on different pages here?

And I'd say if someone is feeling, because I actually worked with a client like this, a young man in his 20s. He had had sex with over 100 women, but never had a girlfriend.

And he's not the first story I've heard about this, by the way, but and he was just so heartbroken because he was like, well, I obviously want connection.

I don't know what's what's not happening. And really the missing piece was communication and just this fear of talking and opening up. checking in with the lover afterwards or trying to step up and be a little bit nurturing after the fact you know and and so I'd say communication is a big thing and just taking the risk but with him specifically what I encouraged him to do because if we're having a lot of sex, but we're not getting an emotional result or the relationship result we want.

The first thing I say is let's go on a 30-day just cleanse because what's happening is you, because you're having so much sex, you now have a behavioral psychological pattern associated with what's happening.

And so you have sex and then the pattern takes over. And so you might be good at getting a lot of people in your bedroom, but you're not good at keeping them around.

This is because you've developed a habit. Now, habits can be broken, patterns can be broken, and the best way to start is by just going on a cleanse. Okay, for 30 days, I'm just, I'm gonna go out, I'm gonna have fun, I'm gonna live my lifestyle, but I'm gonna challenge myself to not have sex with other people so I can kind of reset this pattern.

Now when we're thinking of changing a habit or a pattern, it does take, there is that like old saying of, oh, it takes 21 days. It really takes between 60 to 90 days.

So I would recommend someone, you know, start with 30 days minimum, but try and go to 90 days and just give yourself a cleanse. Like, hey, I have permission for the next 90 days to not date and not have sex with other people.

This is not because you're doing anything wrong or having a lot of sex is wrong. It is because we want to reset a pattern so that way when you go out in the world again, you can be a newer person and capture your behaviors before your behaviors take over.

And then the other thing I'd say is this is also a great time to work with a sex coach or a sex therapist. Fun fact that it is very fun to hear. PleasureScience.com.

Reach out if you want. I do sex coaching, clearly. But your therapist and even your urologist and your OBGYN and your doctor, none of these people have sex education training.

This is not the fault of any doctor or any therapist. It is the system that does not include sex education in any curriculum other than one class or one week of training.

And of course, you know you're a doctor.

Hormones, alcohol, and sexual bonding

There's 10 years it takes to become a doctor and in that 10 years you get maybe a week of sex ed training. This is why it's so important to have a sex therapist because a sex therapist, if the word sex is in their title, they are trained in sex or a sex coach, right?

Either one of these people can be really helpful. We age because our telomeres shorten and our stem cells deplete. But what if we could support both? I've been taking TA65 for 17 years.

It's the only supplement I trust to support better mood, better sleep, and exercise recovery. And at age 57, I don't have any gray hair and I don't need reading glasses.

TA65 is available now. Go to rechargebiomedical.com slash TA-65 and enter promo code RECHARGE10 to save 10% off. Yeah, I mean, as an OB-GYN, I think, you know, the extent of it, there really is no extensive sexuality training, but, you know, women have problems with obviously infections, acidity, vaginosis.

So, you know, we would treat these things. It's shocking how little people really understand about the normal flora and why they might be having a fishy smell.

So, and then as you hit menopause, you have the challenges of loss of estrogen and dryness. But I do think, I do see successful people throughout, even post-menopausal that are sexually active.

To me, the thing I always kind of, when they see couples touching each other, always coming in together, checking in, like there are some people that are just good at pair bonding.

And so they tend to continue to have sex. I agree with you. My suspicion is that the bad sex, the lack of frequency and the lack of pleasure is pointing to something inherent in the relationship.

Yeah. Or the relationship with yourself, right? Like it starts with you. And, you know, for anyone who is menopausal or periomenopausal or even post-menopausal and they're still struggling, some things I recommend, one is vulva massage, self vulva massage.

Put your hand in like a pincher type of position and gently massage all the tissue and the muscle. This will really help stop micro tears. This will just help kind of relax and renew all the muscles down there that are changing as you age.

Another thing that can be really helpful instead of using normative lube, So normative lube isn't the most helpful, but something that is more helpful is suppositories.

So these are lubes, but they're little suppositories of oil or silicone, and you actually insert them and they melt inside of you. Now, of course, if you are someone who is experiencing micro tears, That isn't something to start off with because any type of insertion could cause a micro tear.

However, the other thing that I think all couples should be doing, but especially if you are just struggling with any type of penetration, take that off of the table.

Again, going back to like, what is your definition of sex? It can be so much, it could be anything that you want. Let's take penetration off of the table.

Yeah, no, absolutely. So people can be sexual with toys, with talk, with, you know, imagination. But yeah, I always found as an OB, the estrogen really is a key fact for keeping the vulva and vagina healthy.

And that's a very easy, low risk thing to do, but. Let's pivot a little bit to the kinds of things that people don't like to talk about. You know, I know I've had patients in my practice that were involved in incestuous long-term relationships.

A lot of times they get body dysmorphism and morbid obesity. Like there are things that people encounter that are so traumatic and yet on the other side you see people that have had multiple traumas and they somehow bounce back.

And we touched on this on our very first podcast with the psychedelic assisted therapy. There was a woman who was in therapy for 35 years and she spent six hours outside of her story and was healed.

So are there pathways for people who've had some kind of ruminating trauma from early development that they can escape? Like, is it the somatic thing?

Is it psychedelic? Is it talking? What's your opinion? I think what's great is a cocktail of everything. Talk therapy is incredible, but it can only take you so far, but it's a great place to start.

One of the best books, I'm sure you're familiar with it, The Body Keeps the Score. Something I also like to say is The Voice Keeps the Score. So you wanna start talking about what happened to you or even talking about sex in general as a healing modality.

That's kind of step one. The next thing that I would recommend is trying to see someone who's body-based. And this can look like different for everybody.

So this is what's a somatic healer. Now, something I do in my practice is somatic re-experiencing. We kind of figure out what are the core memories that are holding you back.

Body count, communication, and cleansing patterns

And then we go back doing meditation into these memories figuring out where it's stored in your body so we can release it. And it's very esoteric, but it works very, very well.

I've also seen hypnotherapy be great at this because that's another way where you kind of get into your subconscious, go back to these memories, and again, are able to reimagine, re-experience, really heal.

Yeah, that's amazing. Yeah. Like I said, psychedelics is also good. I've done guided mushroom journeys to heal some of my past, and it was so profoundly helpful.

So use a cocktail, explore. I often find it helps to give yourself a few years and try a few different things. Start with

therapy, maybe get a sex coach, maybe find a sexological body worker, and just give yourself the space and time for grace.

Isn't that amazing? Yeah. I mean, I, I think a lot of it has to do with power, right? So you can play the role. Like I know that some women that are very assertive and alpha and controlling in their job life or own life.

They're some of the most submissive and they like to be dominated sexually because it's like a relief. And I think people can be, without being shapeshifters, enjoy different kinds of things to spice it up.

So people are on a spectrum. And, but I think that the power dynamic is so interesting. Like I remember, you know, some people. want to be dominated and other people, I mean, what is that exactly?

It's just submission? Is it the release of the ego and the whole, or is it sometimes harkening back to something else? Like there's that country Western song, he hit me and it felt like a kiss.

Like there's something about the intimacy of aggression that is somehow involved with sex, right? So like an orchestrated aggression or exchange of that polarity, what do you think about that?

Because nowadays they even have like women who are using prosthetics to dominate men. And it's like, what is that? Like, I think we probably reincarnate as men and women, but there's something about that top bottom dynamic, like that sort of, speak to me about that.

Are people one or the other or can they swing all different ways or what is that? Yeah, so there's in BDSM, there's the dominant or the submissive or the switch.

So a switch is someone who can definitely switch between both roles and that's really authentic. But thinking of what you're saying with power dynamics, I think the eroticization of power goes back It's almost as old as time in a sense, but if we're thinking of what we can actually trace.

So patriarchy, the creation of patriarchy and the rise of the dominator model that we are currently in in our society is about 12,000 years old. This is when we started to see men dominating over women and leaders.

stopped slowly becoming non-binary or gender ambiguous people or women because before patriarchy really was created and became mainstream over thousands of years of human history, before that we were living in partnership models of society where oftentimes the leaders in society were either women or people who combined both genders.

And obviously words like non-binary and transgender, these are very connected to the modern time that we're in. But transgender and non-binary people are as old as time, and we're often the spiritual leaders or the political leaders of different societies in this partnership model.

And so when we're thinking of the eroticization of power, I do think it really came to be in the last 12,000 years because we are In every area of life, we are internalizing this dominator model of culture and hierarchies.

And we've really learned that hierarchies are the only way to exist in society, when that's not true. But that is the model that we're in. And you're also right about dominance and submission in terms of it turns us on in different ways.

There's actual studies that show that if you have a lot of responsibility, maybe you're a CEO or a parent and you have a bunch of kids, you'll be really turned on by being a submissive, and this is because you can, in one area of your life, release control and surrender that to someone else, and that can feel really yummy and nice.

And again, we just want to normalize being kinky, enjoying power play, dominance and submission. It also is, I think, just inherent in human desire. especially now after living in patriarchy for 12,000 years and where our culture is now.

I think even people who wouldn't identify as kinky, I have seen really enjoy power play and having power be a part of their sexual erotic experience. So it is really something that's interesting to see.

Well, let's end with a sort of interesting case study. And, you know, I have no judgment about this. It's just a person that was, you know, interested in my work.

And so he came down from Bay Area. We had a two martini lunch. I don't even know what pronouns. So, you know, in the last 15, 20 years, there's a lot of gender dysphoria and there's a lot of thought about patriarchy.

Sex therapy, menopause, and vulva care

And, you know, I have three nieces that are gender fluid, whatever. So it's very much a derogare language at the time. But. This person is still married to the love of his life, his former wife or her former wife, but he had surgery or she had surgery and had gender reassignment after 50. so it was so funny because he she he or z they were mad at me because they're like doctor you're so ignorant like what's between my ears is my sexuality what's between my legs defines my gender i'm like i'm still confused so two martinis in he's like yeah i'm married to my wife you know still but now i'm a woman and i only like women but then after the second martini he's talking about how he likes men too which is fine and then you know by the third martini he's like well to be honest with you i was having erectile dysfunction at 50 and i was like i couldn't get it up i thought it would be so fun to spend the rest of my life as a woman so it wasn't clearly like you know bi it's like ambisexual like you said And he just said, oh, it's just about living my best life and experiencing.

So I was like, okay, if you came down on me for not understanding the difference between sexuality and gender. So I think there are a lot of people in my generation or older, ex and boomer, that are just confused.

And we're, we don't want to hurt anybody with the wrong pronouns, but we, we just don't know where the landmines are. Can you help us navigate all this stuff, the pronouns and the trans and everything?

Yeah. I think one thing just right off the bat that's really helpful is like, if you're messing up someone's pronouns, it's nice to just try to use the gender neutral, they, and just make the effort.

You know, I, a lot of folks who are in the trans and non-binary community, and of course I'm cisgender, so it's important to, you know, I'm, I learn actively too with everything.

But what I've noticed is a lot of folks you know, their gender and their life is under constant attack, whether it's your existence confuses us or your existence threatens us.

And so there's a lot of wounding here. And so it is true. Like I have noticed that well-meaning people will say something and they're trying to be supportive and they say the wrong thing and then, you know, their cousin who's trans is like, how could you say this to me?

And I often like to remember, like, we really talk to people through the lens of our wounds and what isn't healed. And so if you're someone who is older, you're not quite understanding what's happening culturally with transgender folks and non-binary folks, but you're well-meaning, I think take the slap on the face and just apologize, right?

And just say, you know what? I'm sorry. I didn't get that right. I'm learning. And give the other person the space to be hurt, to be angry, to be upset.

Because when we don't do that, that just festers. And transgender people and non-binary people have every right to feel upset and angry right now. All of, in our current, this year, like our current historical moment, they're politically under attack in ways that are just, don't even make sense.

Why are we attacking 1% of the population and telling the trans and non-binary population, 1% of the population, we're attacking them, taking away their rights.

How on earth does that help the culture? It doesn't, right? I think that in the culture war, generally, things have moved a great deal. I don't know if it's modern family or what, but the idea of homosexuality has really been normalized to a great extent in modern American life.

Trauma healing through somatic and psychedelic work

Like to the point where if an NFL player comes out of the closet, like what closet? Like no one even cares anymore. Do you feel that as a shift? I mean, we're not living in Sharia Saudi Arabia anymore.

It's not like 15, 20 years ago. I mean, there definitely has been incredible shifts, but I think that it's all incredibly fragile at the same time. And we're also, if we're thinking of the Midwest in America, if we're thinking of small towns, like I'm both French and American.

I have a citizenship for both countries. I've lived in both countries. If I'm in Paris, it's a very liberal city. If I'm in Los Angeles, very liberal city.

But if I drive five hours south of France to visit my grandmother, I'm in a small French town. that has a very different view on all of these things and might not be as accepting of gay people.

And same with California. I live in Los Angeles. If I drive three hours up to the Inland Empire, that's a completely different political climate. It's true.

We're better than we've ever been in the last few centuries, for sure. And it's so profoundly fragile. And I think if you want to support people in the LGBTQ community, especially the trans and non-binary people who are the most fragile of all right now, You know i think it's about listening checking in how i got that wrong how could i get it right or do you even have the emotional capacity to educate me on this or would you rather share a book with me cuz i think that's the other piece that can get really draining especially for trans and non-binary people is.

the emotional labor of having to prove or explain why your experience is valid. And it's interesting because thinking back to the personal story you shared with your friend, I do find that when we really are able to have a heart-to-heart with our transgender and non-binary brothers, sisters, siblings, these people that we know in our lives, we do find that underneath the person who's fighting for their identity is someone who's like, yes, maybe I am a little bit more fluid or it is a little bit more complicated than meets the eye.

But it's almost frightening to admit that because we're fighting so hard just to be seen as humans who are valid that to admit that there's more underneath the surface almost feels like you're giving someone ammunition to take all of your validity away from you.

It's very interesting. I think people are all on a spectrum of ambi, omni, sexuality, and culture as you state clearly determines how safe you feel coming out.

But yeah, I do think that all people have both the yin and the yang, the male and the female. Everybody's non-binary to me, and everybody can be attracted to anyone, but I do see that the struggle is real for them.

Anyway, so it's really great discussing all this. And so at the end of the day, sex can be about intimacy, emotional bonding. It can be just about pleasure.

It can be whatever you want. I guess it's a reflection of where you're at, but the most important thing is to have that self love so you have something to share.

Yeah, and I'd also say the other important thing is find supportive, non-judgmental people to surround yourself with. People who support your sexuality, whether it's, oh, I'm exploring non-monogamy, find non-judgmental people to support that.

Whether you're trans, you know, and you're struggling, find people in your community to see you and support you.

Power dynamics, gender identity, and pronouns

Self-love can sometimes be so hard to achieve when the people we're surrounded by can't see us or are judging us. And so sometimes self-love starts with, let me find one person who doesn't judge me or see me.

It's okay if you are almost like feeling like self-love is out of reach for you. It's okay to start there. You're not doing something wrong. find people who will support you.

And there's actually this incredible community app called Plura, P-L-U-R-A. It's a sex positive community and there's always they're promoting events.

It's great for meeting new friends or even going on dates. but I always recommend that to clients especially who are folks in a small town who may not have people, you know, and again use the internet.

I also recommend like social media can be toxic but you know what is great about social media is if you are living in a small town in Iowa and no one around you understands you, go and find influencers who are living the life you want to live and then look through their list of people that they're following and try to add a couple people and reach out and You know, like find ways to connect to people.

Use social media to your advantage because sometimes self-love doesn't feel like the first attainable step and that's okay. And then of course, if you are at a place where I do want more self-love, well, that is beautiful too.

It's all good. Yeah, I mean, there's some people who say they're sapiosexual, some people, I forget the term for emotionally sexual, and some people who are demisexual, and there's some people who are asexual.

So I think it is like a spectrum. It's like anything else. It's just an aspect of the complexity and the richness of human experience, right? Yeah, and I agree with you.

Yeah. So do you think porn is always a negative for people? No, not at all. No, I'm very pro porn and studies actually show, especially women, if you watch more porn, you'll have more orgasms.

I don't think porn is a bad thing at all, especially with the creator economy where porn stars can now produce their own work and are no longer in a predatory system.

I think porn is great. I'm very pro porn. We could totally go down a rabbit hole, but just some incredible like if you are looking for porn and you've been on Pornhub or all these other places and that just isn't the porn that feels good to you.

I love Erika Lust. This is porn made by women for everybody. It's better representation of porn. Balessa has great porn. The Crash Pad series, if you're queer or trans, that's a wonderful company and they make great porn.

There's a lot of ethical feminist porn. If you are interested in watching porn and reclaiming that, just Google feminist porn. Find these people. Okay, cool.

I mean, I think even when we look at the word porn, it's from Latin porni, which is like common. So the so back in the day, as you well know, you could go to a priestess to have a higher addict sort of sexual bliss experience, it would be spiritual, or you could pay to have a common street prostitute.

But the conflation in modern times, and I do think it's interesting, romantic love, idealized love with long-term bonding and sex, it's a lot of hats to wear.

I mean, they used to be like eros, erotic love, like filiae, like friendship, agape, unconditional love. There's a lot of ways to love. So I think that how could you really expect one person over the many seasons of a life to be everything to you?

You know, you're not even sure who you are, man. It's just a lot to ask for, romantic love. And like you said, if people define divorce as failure, then I think it's a little unrealistic to have a family, business, lover, friendship, whatever, baseball partner fan.

Porn, relationship models, and closing remarks

Like it's a lot to ask of one person, right? Yeah, absolutely. And I just, I love all your questions. It has been so fun chatting with you today. Absolutely.

Yeah. I got to let you go because you have a client to help and, but if people want to connect with your work, there's self education, evergreen modules, and it's pleasurescience.com.

And they can also book one-on-one sessions, which don't have to be indefinite, but you can address a problem and find a solution. Absolutely, and feel free to follow me on TikTok or Instagram or YouTube at Pleasure Science to learn more, hang out on the internet.

And thank you again so much for having me. What are the name of your books, please? My book is called Sextrology. If you're interested in that, you could find it on Amazon.

And I'm actually in the process of writing my second book right now that's going to come out next year, which I'm super excited about. Fabulous, fabulous.

All right, Nadesh. Thank you so much for all your wisdom and experience and hopefully people will connect with you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you for tuning in to Dr.

Talks. We hope today's episode has enlightened and inspired you on your path to optimal health. Each day is a new opportunity to make choices that empower your well-being.

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