

# Done with Dieting Podcast #31: Sarah D'Andrea



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# Done with Dieting Podcast #31: Sarah D'Andrea

You are listening to the Done with Dieting Podcast Episode number 31.

Hi, I'm Elizabeth Sherman, former corporate high tech executive turn life and weight loss coach. But it wasn't that long ago that I was searching for that perfect diet, the one that would finally be the golden ticket to lose the weight that I so desired.

Fast forward past tons of failed diet attempts, exercise fads and painful lessons learned, and although I still have not reached the state of Nirvana, body love, my relationship with food exercise in my body is infinitely better than it was not only when I started this journey, but even as recently as three years ago.

The journey that has allowed me to ditch my scale, stop logging my food and exercise, eat food that I didn't prepare and easily maintain my weight - something that I never thought was possible for me.

I created the Done with Dieting podcast to give you simple, easy to do and sustainable strategies to help you do the same without all of the drama that I went through.

If you're a woman who's looking to create a better relationship with food and her body, get off the diet roller coaster and free up a bunch of headspace spent on calories, how you should look what you should eat and beating yourself up for not doing what you think you should be doing. You are in the right place.

Let's get started.

Hey everyone, welcome to the podcast.

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Now, before I start, you may not want to have tiny little ears around while you listen to today's episode. The topics that I'm discussing with Sarah D'Andrea are mature in nature.

And there are a few explicit words in there too. So, if you need to hit pause and put on your earbuds, I'd suggest that you do that now. Are we alone now? Great!

Now, Sarah is a pleasure and sex coach. She has a master's in human sexuality and has tons of experience working with folks, allowing them to explore their sexuality and what brings them pleasure.

I wanted to have Sarah on the show because as women we've been socialized to believe that pleasure is bad, let alone sex. When you look at the ways that certain products are marketed towards us. For example, foods are often sold as a quote unquote guilty pleasures, which means that it's off limits. And we know that when something is forbidden, we want it more and then instantly feel shame when we do get it.

One of the topics that I address with my clients is the idea of diversifying joy, which presents itself. When the only thing that we have to look forward to is food. And so, we eat because we need joy and pleasure in our lives.

So, by adding other pleasurable things, We can reduce our need to eat all of the things. So, with that said, welcome to the show.

**Elizabeth:** All right, Sarah welcome to the podcast. Sarah, why don't you introduce yourself?

**Sarah:** Okay. So, Hi, I'm Sarah D'Andrea. I am a sex and relationship coach. I have my master's degree in human sexuality. I never intended to be a coach, but having that degree, people would ask me questions to help them with their sex life all the time.

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So, I was working in startups around like women's health for a while. I really actually originally when I was in grad school, I was working with med students and like teaching nurses and about sexuality. So, I had this like real soft spot for people who work in healthcare and teaching them about.

But yeah, I got into the startup scene, and I was like a sex expert for a women's health product. But people would be like, yeah, that's great. But can you help me with this thing? Like, why won't my boyfriend do this? And so, I would always be giving friends and friends of friends advice whenever I could.

But then, I just went through a difficult time in my own life, just figuring out what I was supposed to be doing. And so, I started studying more Eastern philosophy, like Buddhism Taoism, and I don't call myself a Buddhist, but I love to read all about that. And yeah, got into meditation and then it then when people ask me for advice, I was suddenly showing up very differently.

Because there's something about studying meditation, you become your own genius. And so, I suddenly, when people were asking me for advice, I wasn't just telling them what to do. I was actually able to articulate how they could get their own answers. Which felt like much deeper, much more meaningful and that is where my coaching really grew, I think.

**Elizabeth:** Yeah. So, the question that I have is, when did you decide that you wanted to get into, was it human sexuality? It was that your master's degree or were you interested in that in college or what was the evolution of that?

**Sarah:** Yeah, I make the joke. I'm just like, I got my masters because I wanted to figure out sex for myself. Like, most people just pick up a book or watch porn. And I was like, no, I'm going to study this hard for three years.

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**Elizabeth:** What's funny about that is because that's exactly what happened with me. Like I was like, I need to know everything about nutrition and physical activity so that I can finally lose weight. I can look the way that I want to look. And yeah, it's so interesting.

**Sarah:** And also, we know as coaches like that is just so attacking it from the brain. Attacking it from, how much can I know. And I think that's also like where the meditation piece pulled all of that my brain, like into my body. And that's when things really changed.

So yeah, I've always been interested about sex. Always been curious about it masturbated since day one. I don't know what I haven't, I would talk about sex through dirty jokes. Like dirty jokes were like my favorite, because that's how I learned about sex.

It was just like this code, it was a secret, I was obsessed with boys. Yeah, so that's just me as a kid. But then getting my undergrad, I was studying journalism and media and of course, being in college for the first time, I'm like exploring sexuality and freedom in this whole new way.

And so, studying media made me realize how much of my view of what sex should be, how I should be, how my partners should be, was all just fed to me through media. Like, I had been such a passive consumer, like we're not told to be analyzing our media. Though, you could argue that now where it's a totally different world than even just when I was a teenager, not that long ago.

So, I would actually go back to my high school -my Catholic high school, and I would teach them about sexuality and media. And how to be critically looking at what's being told to you, not just passively, like, oh, that's how sex is, or yes that's how it's supposed to go, or that's how everybody should be.

So, I got so much, there's this women's group in my high school, that I was a part of when I was in high school, so I'd go back and talk to women's group. Because I'm like,

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I don't need to be 20 learning about this. I should have been 15 learning about this. And we talked about the word "slut" and how that was just so used, so casually to describe women and I remember saying to them.

When I was 18, I was like a senior in high school, I was like, "I'm not going to use the word sudden anymore, I had decided" and my friends were like, "well, fine." And I was so grateful that my friends were like making, not a big deal about it. And the girls that I was telling the story to, and I'd go back to my high school and talk to them.

They were so inspired. They're like, "I'm not going to use the word slot anymore!" Like, "yeah, you shouldn't use it; the boys use it all the time; and they shouldn't be saying that; and what does it even mean?" And that was just like such a cool moment because seeing young women feel like they had some control over their sexuality. And how people spoke about them, was like just the coolest moment in my entire life.

Yeah. I just knew that it was important to have to feel like sexuality was something that you could take ownership of. Like not just something that happens to you. Also, my college, my university, I went to SUNY purchase, super queer. Like the LGBT club is like the biggest club on campus, all gender neutral bathrooms.

I had trans-roommates and I'm coming from a Catholic high school. So, there's also that level of sexuality where I was like really blown away by sexual diversity. And me, I'm a CIS woman, mostly straight, pretty monogamous, going into the college like that was also just like eye opening in a lot of ways too.

And I'm like, why is this my first time, like understanding trans-identity as a 20 year old person instead of a teenager? So, I don't know, I guess that's like a long-winded way to say, like that's the foundations for me. And then getting my master's in sexuality, clearly, I've been in the dark for a long time, I need to catch up.

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So, let me study this in a real way. I had no idea what jobs were out there. It turns out there aren't any, nobody cares if you have a master's in sexuality, nope.

**Elizabeth:** So, yeah, that's just fascinating. And I want to go back to the whole, how women are portrayed in terms of sexuality? Like, how we are fed that information? Because there's a lot of mixed feelings that I'm sure many women who are listening right now have; that I know that I had, now full disclosure. Sarah was my coach for three months just recently. We just recently ended our coaching program and I've learned so much from her.

But yeah, let's go back to how media portrays sexuality in women? How are we enticed to buy products through the appeal of sexuality? And this is something that we talked a lot about is how expressing our sexuality feels very taboo and shameful.

**Sarah:** Yeah. Oh, so much there. So, yeah. Like, when you have something that you're not able to talk about, that automatically, it distills the power into the few places that are talking about it.

So, if like you and your friends aren't talking about what sex is after being married for 10 years. You're just going to go to the movie and see this is depicting a marriage of 10 years. And this is what sex looks like, cause I don't have this right, real, back, and forth with actual people about it.

So, the thing, when it comes to media, I say, is this a window or is this a mirror? Is this a window into a different world? Or are we looking at a mirror that's trying to reflect something back in our world? And it's not black and white, sometimes it's a mirror, sometimes it's a window, right?

Harry Potter is a window into a fantasy world. But then you have something like, I'm not desperate housewife was at that show. People might be taking that as a mirror. Like, oh, this is how it's supposed to be. But like most of them are windows.

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**Elizabeth:** Yeah.

**Sarah:** So, asking yourself that question, am I treating this like a window of our tree and it's like a mirror?

**Elizabeth:** So then, would you suggest that pornography is a window?

**Sarah:** Yeah, oh God! You really just went for the rope on that one, well, diving into porn. Your sexuality is your creative energy. That's actually like an Eastern concept, it's the same thing. And so, think of it as like a blank canvas or like a slab of clay that's completely unmolded. And that's your masterpiece that you get to work on, that's your sexuality.

Porn is like a coloring book. The outline is there, the figures are there, the theme is there, you just colored in a little bit. So, I never would make someone feel bad for kicking back; color or your coloring book; take a break from your masterpiece for a second. But I don't ever want someone to think that their coloring book is their masterpiece.

So, I'm not really black and white about anything that includes porn. I don't encourage people to watch porn if they're not interested in it. But, if they do have some sort of relationship to it, like seeing it as just a side project that maybe in some ways has parallels to their greater masterpiece but shouldn't be invested in too heavily.

So yeah, I think it probably is a window in a lot of ways. And now also porn is just so available, it can be so homemade, I don't know, there's a lot. And also, and I will say this one thing is with anything, right? Like when you purchase clothes, you want to be purchasing from people that are ethical, right? Same thing with porn, your clicks and your dollars are worth something to somebody. So, that's also something to keep in mind.

**Elizabeth:** Yeah. So, going back to like media.

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**Sarah:** Yes, media. So, when we're silenced about it, then the few people that are talking about it have all the power. So that's why talking about sex, it's even in the playing field a little bit. I can raise my hand and be like, "no, I've never orgasm that quickly from penetration alone," that was wrong.

But if we're all feeling a lot of shame about that, no one's going to say anything. And so, we're going to think that's the right way, and then that we're wrong. Or it's like, " sorry, I need oral before anything else." So, this whole thing that doesn't resonate with me. And then I run out and be like, "oh yeah, me too!" But we don't talk like that, so we're all like, "oh, well there's the nasty thing that I like."

And then, this is like another thing too, when it comes to shame around sex. And this is a very, I don't want to say advanced, but it's like an it's an in their concept. But the thing that makes us a little bit nervous is sometimes the thing that is really connected to our turn on. So, when I say sex 101, don't feel no shame, shame is not helpful. Do not use shame in your sex life.

But sex 102, just listen to what shame is trying to say. Because it might actually have some interesting information for you. Because something that's taboo is inherently erotic. That's what makes things exciting, you're paying attention. Roller coasters are exciting because they feel dangerous, as opposed to a trolley ride. So, we go on roller coasters for a reason cause it's exciting.

So, like when we have something that's shameful; we don't want to indulge, we don't want to make ourselves wrong, or feel terrible, but maybe it's saying something. Like, Ooh, maybe that's scary, maybe it's exciting, I don't know. Just say for example, somebody who just talking about sex is like so shameful for them. Like, maybe it's because the idea of having sex is really exciting and they're like, oh God, if people knew how it's related to the animal brain, I guess. If I knew, if they knew, yeah.

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**Elizabeth:** Yeah. And so, what I hear you saying is that the reason that we have shame is because it's something that we want, or we like. But yet there's some layer or some messaging that we're getting, that's not okay.

**Sarah:** Yes. It's that resistance, but craving and resistance at the same time, that creates the tension. If there's something you don't like, and you don't want, there's no shame there, yeah. So, that's I think worth, that's what we get to explore in coaching. We get to take off like the pressure of am I going to say the right thing or offensive thing, or right?

Offensive is also a big thing that comes up, especially with like women who are like, they're very high achieving, very smart, they're good at their jobs. They're like kind of power women, and then they're like; I just want my husband to do it; I just want him to take care of our sex life; I want him to show up and be this and what I'd be the man.

Like, they have these, but they're shamed there cause they feel like, "no, I run everything." How could I just be so passive in my sex life? How could I become such a little princess? When usually I'm just like the power boss babe, whatever.

And I'm like, that's exactly why that can be so appealing to you. Your whole life is run in this one way. Like, our sex fantasies are sometimes at odds with who we are like our morals.

I had this one woman; she was a friend, and this was like years and years ago. We were just talking, and I was like, it sounds like you just really want to be totally adored. That sounds like a real turn on from what I was hearing. And you're like, oh no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no! I like to take care of people. I think she even said the words, I'm a good person as if being adored made you not a good person.

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And I love to just give people like full permission to be like, "what a hot fantasy, yes!" Just lavished me in a tension, and touches, and kisses, and tell me I'm hot. I don't even care if you believe it, this is my fantasy, yeah.

**Elizabeth:** And I think what you're talking about is really de-stigmatizing. What it is that we want and desire? One of the things that I came to realize in working with you is that; the physical touch or what makes us feel good physically is different for each of us because we have nerve endings. And that's all it really is, it's stimulating nerve endings. And so, what feels good to one person may not feel good to someone else?

And yet, as young adults or teenagers, however, young we were when we started our journey of sexuality, that we were taught, someone else was responsible for knowing, what it is that you like? But how could anyone else know what it is that we like?

**Sarah:** And that is also, why I'm having this background in sexuality, figuring out how I was going to help people. Sex toys, selling sex toys came up a lot and I'm just like, "that is not how you fix someone's sex life!" It's just not it. It's like you want to lose some weight, diet, and exercise.

But you and I know, it's so much more than that, right? I'm like, "oh yeah, you want to orgasm?" Clitoris is pretty sensitive, so are your nipples, so stimulate that. But no, there's so much more to it.

To me, to sell a toy, that is the last stop. The first stop is like, where are you? Where are your thoughts? Where is your body? Bringing again, I think that this is why for you being in like more of a health nutrition background and sexuality, they're so connected because it's about bringing you back into your body, right?

There's no information that you can't learn from google. Even say that I have a master's I'm like, you can Google everything I've ever learned. My dad's a doctor, you can google anything he's ever learned.

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But the difference is that we can help you get to that self-inquiry to be like, where is your body? Nobody else can tell you that, that's why I think coaching is so amazing. It gets you back to yourself. It's not about being an authority and we get to bestow sacred information that doesn't exist anymore. Information is no longer locked behind doors. You're looking for somebody who understands you and who can get you back to your own wisdom.

The difference between food though, and sex is you can't live without food. And you can go a long time without sex and go your whole life without sex. And so, people feeling like they're allowed to want that and crave it and bring it back into their life, that is often a big step for me. Whereas for you, people have to eat every day, it's just the choices, that's happening. I went on a bit of a tangent there, sorry,

**Elizabeth:** No, it's all good. So, let's go back though, to body image, you just basically touched on it and let's talk about the relationship, that body image has to pleasure.

**Sarah:** Hmm, I've never said this before, but just you saying that I think about when we say, cause I was a client had testimony, she was like, "Sarah, help me with body image." And it was actually funny, cause when I think about my work with that client, I'm like, "oh, did I help her with body image cool? But it's not the first day. But you think of the word, body image, it's your eyes, it's your head. It's bringing it, how does it feel? How does it feel? Always bringing it back to that?"

So, there's a concept called "Spectatoring in sex," Masters and Johnson talked about it. And it's basically the idea that when we're doing sex, we aren't in our bodies, we're looking at it from the outside. As if we were shooting a porn, does this look cool? Yes? Great and it's hot. That's a good position to be in sexy, great. Do I look skinny in that position?

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And so, when you're saying body image, I'm thinking of spectating. When I look at my body, do I feel good? But you're still starting from the looking at, not starting from the; how do I feel? And just loving that.

So, yes. I live in this world; I grew up in the same planet as all of you. I'm not saying I don't, I'm above it. Like, I had my own journey around that too, we all have. But I'm so locked in to how I feel now above anything else, that there's just no going back. No, I don't even care, the look doesn't matter.

Also, I will say, I think you know this too, I used to work selling wedding dresses.

**Elizabeth:** What?

**Sarah:** Yeah, I sold wedding dresses for a while.

**Elizabeth:** Okay, we're going to have come back to that.

**Sarah:** I will say, I would work with six women a day, seeing them all naked, every single "~~fuck,~~" sorry, I shouldn't swear. Every single woman had something to say about her body, some apology to give about her body. It didn't matter what she looked like, and I worked in Los Angeles, I would dress literal models sometimes, and everybody had something.

And suddenly, I wouldn't be getting dressed in the morning. And then I have a thought about my body, and I'd be like, so sick of it. I'd be just sick of it. That for me, that was actually really helpful in my own journey with my body image is just being so I'm like, "oh God, I don't even want to be part of this anymore."

**Elizabeth:** Yeah, and it goes back to the work that I do with my clients. If you're not happy with your body and you think that being a smaller size is going to fix. Whatever

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it is that you're unhappy with, you need to start on the backend first and become happy with that thing. So that you're not beating yourself into submission.

**Sarah:** Yes! I am nodding vigorously to those of you listening on the podcast.

Yes! And even like the number of women who were like, I need to get good at my body, I need to feel comfortable in my body and then I can have great sex. And I'm like, what if you're having great sex is how you get comfortable with your body.

And then they're like, oh no, I couldn't possibly. I'll say to them. I'm like, "is there anybody that you could point to in the world and be like you cannot have good sex yet?" No, you would never say that to anybody. But we say it to ourselves all the time.

**Elizabeth:** That's brilliant.

**Sarah:** We do that to ourselves, I'm like, "I'll say that. I'm like, "who could you tell me that isn't ready to have good sex just yet?" They're like, "oh, I don't, but I'm like, "oh, but you're the magical one out of a 7 billion who isn't needed to do something else before they can have good sex. Okay, sure got it."

**Elizabeth:** It's the same thing with body love, right? Or body acceptance that we're like, oh yeah, everyone else should be able to accept their body no matter what their size. But you know what, I'm the unicorn, I'm the different one, that's not up for me.

**Sarah:** I mean, to me, that's when, I don't really coach necessarily on spirituality. But for me, getting spiritual was how I changed. Suddenly, when I realized the way, I treat myself is how I'm going to be treating other people. Point blank, no exception. It did give me that like fire under my ass and be like, oh right, you're not going to be a good friend, a good partner, a good human, if you're doing this to yourself.

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Because then there's always that one person, me; who's the exception to the body acceptance, who's the exception to sex positivity. If you're doing that to yourself, you're not doing a service to the world.

And I think that is the biggest mistake or biggest lie that we've absorbed as women is that, beat yourself up so everyone else can be happy, and it's just the opposite. When you treat yourself well, you are a better person. When you're having good sex, you're a better person, I promise. When you like your body, it's everything's better.

I don't know, there's 50 million ways to say this, that's why we have a job based around it. But, yeah, that's like off the subject of sex specifically. But, like loving your body does not come later.

**Elizabeth:** Yeah. So, what are some first steps that folks can take?

**Sarah:** Yes, to get in touch with their body and their sexual life.

Okay, so you know that my big thing, practicing pleasure in your everyday life is so important. So, the way I like to do it is I have my hand on my chest or my stomach cause I live so hard in my head. So, like bringing it back to my body, and ask yourself, what would feel really good right now?

Because you do a couple things. You say feel, so you're getting into your feelings really good, right? Not what would feel productive and not what would feel smart or right. It's what would feel just good, right now. And that's mindfulness, pleasure does not care about the future, pleasure doesn't care about the past, pleasure is right now. And then doing it.

So, one of two things will happen. Sometimes your brain will offer you something very-very small. Like you say, what would feel really good right now? And your brain is like,

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go stand in the sun, you're chilly. That would offer it, didn't happen to me cause I'm always cold, so standing in the sun.

And you might tell yourself that's too small, that's a stupid thing. Like you're expecting some sort of grand, whatever. When it's small listened to it, just follow it. The second thing, that sometimes happens is that your brain offers you something huge. Quit your job and move to Europe. And when your brain does that, it's because it knows that you don't listen to it anymore.

When pleasure says gives you something so outrageous, it's because she knows that you don't do it. So, she's just like, yeah, you won't do it. Think about it though, picture that picture that Paris in France or whatever. And what I say to that is, you don't say no, you don't feel like, "Ugh, terrible idea." We can't afford that right now. What are you talking about? Don't talk down to yourself; say, yeah, that would feel really good, what else?

So, it's like that concept to hear about an improv. So, you, yes and those big ideas they go, "yeah, it would feel so good to quit my job and move to Europe." What else would feel really good? And then closers like, "oh wow, maybe just sell your car; yeah, that maybe would feel good, but what else? Give me another thing; okay, how about you, I don't know, eat a piece of cake; sure, do it." get to the thing that is like you can absolutely do is like full pleasure and not like a ton of fear.

So, ask yourself what would feel really good right now is super important. People will come to me being like, but I have problems with my sex life, Sarah. I froze my sex life, how is that going to help me? And I just tell them, you cannot go through your day, hating your job, hating your body, angry at your partner, taking care of everybody, putting yourself last, and then expect to get naked and have amazing sex. Does not happen, doesn't. I'm sorry, but you got to start, you got to walk before you run.

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So, that is step one, I would say of getting in touch with pleasure. Because then you're in bed, you're naked, you're like, "oh, what would feel really good right now?" And maybe your brain is like, "I really want him to go down on me. And your brain is like, "oh no, that's too crazy! I don't know if I could ask that." By then, you've built up that muscle of like my pleasure to safe. My pleasure is look out for me, it's okay. And then maybe you're getting what you want, I don't know.

**Elizabeth:** So, okay. Going back to the thoughts that our brain offers us, what would you say to the women who immediately, because this is where I went.

**Sarah:** Yeah.

**Elizabeth:** What would feel good right now? And of course, we're all thinking cookies.

**Sarah:** Oh yeah, this is a good one. Oh, that was such a good one! Yes. Okay, so firstly I will say, when you're actually doing the pause and ask yourself, what are you so good? It's junk food isn't always as in the forefront as you might think? Because we're just so used to resisting; because we think, "oh no, if I live in pleasure, I'm going to eat cake every day and cookies and I'm going to get gain a million pounds," and right?

So, if you asked us about what would feel really good? Maybe a cookie, maybe two cookies, but at some point, pleasure exits and you're just eating. Because then you're like, "oh no, I shouldn't have." You're eating to numb, and that's a big part of understanding our relationship to pleasure is, when am I in pleasure and went into my numbing.

And that I think is something people who are in food and diet, like really understand that your body really doesn't want that much junk food. You're doing something else at a certain point.

Now this is another thing, because you're being mindful, and I know that word is like a loaded word. But that is what you're doing when you're asking yourself what would feel

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good right now. When you're being mindful, maybe there's pleasure in that first cookie. And maybe you have the second cookie; maybe you're like, "I'm not sure if this is pleasure, but I think I'm going to go for it." And then afterwards you're like, "I actually don't feel good."

You're putting that pathway in your brain being like, "I don't feel great." And you're going to remember it next time. Now, may I'm not saying you're going to be perfect next time either it might take a couple of times.

But I think of it as like, it's not that you switch from numbed out to pleasure, like with a click. It's like an old fashioned radio dial. Sometimes you're going to overshoot and you're going to get static. Like, "oh wait, actually that didn't feel good." And that's okay, it's just information.

So then, when you're asking yourself again, what would feel really good? You're like, "oh right, I just really want one cookie, or you know what, actually maybe I just want that crunch." You'll get more and more specific, the more you do it.

Yes. Elizabeth, that is the first thing that people are terrified of, when I tell them to the pleasure practice. They're always afraid of food and that is always their first win with me. Which is weird because I don't coach about food or anything. But they're always like, "oh my God, I had a salad because I wanted one." I'm like, "yeah, salads are delicious, that's not just to punish you." We don't have vegetables to be terrible to ourselves. Like we have them because they're good, we crave them.

**Elizabeth:** Yeah, and I think that people are also terrified about the whole body image thing. Again, like if I eat all of the cookies, then you know, those are forbidden. And it's so interesting, saying cookies are forbidden, but then also sexist forbidden.

What pleasure isn't forbidden socially for women.

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**Sarah:** Oh my God. Oh, you know what, I think when you just said that I think of; get your nails like self-care, get your nails done. Get your hair done by that pretty dress, like consumer massage. Or massage, like the lists of self-care.

That to me is like the sex toy for like, it's putting it's the top layer. I for a long time did not like taking baths. But on those lists, it's always like, take a bath. I'm like, I sit, and I sweat, I hate that. I don't like them, but if you're telling me, "oh, do that, that's self-care."

Also, getting your nails done, I do not find that to be an enjoyable experience. I love the feeling of having my nails done. But like sitting there you're like frozen and it's like uncomfortable. And this sounds so princess of me to be saying, I'm like, everybody listening knows exactly what I'm talking about. Like it's not getting them done is not fun, but then like the way it looks is nice.

But anyway, so yeah, like socially acceptable ways of being air quotes in pleasure. It all is around what you're consuming and how people can perceive you.

**Elizabeth:** Yeah, that's actually really interesting. Like all of those things that we just mentioned except for the massage is really about appearance based, isn't it for women?

**Sarah:** Yeah.

**Elizabeth:** That's crazy.

**Sarah:** Yeah. Yes, we package it. It's like, it's for you and I'm not going to say it's not, like it is for sure. But it comes from the way I describe how I receive information about myself. It used to be like rain coming down and this is who you can; need to; like it's from the outside.

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And now, it's like a route that's inside of me. And then I'm like, "that is what I want." And when it comes from you, like, who am I? It just feels so much more secure, safe, and good. When it comes from outside, it bounces off and I think I'm doing it wrong. And I feel really lately, it's been coming up, like, I don't have a ton of clothes because I just moved from LA. And I'm in New York now and there's more seasons here, people have more clothes.

But also like I'm not a person who shops a lot for clothes. I've just never been really into it. And I've had a couple of people comment because the way my closet is, and this apartment is open. So, people are like, you don't have a lot of clothes.

And I then feeling self-conscious about it. It feels like I'm not feminine enough. Like, I'm into sexuality, people know this about me. Shouldn't I have this like beautiful, sexy wardrobe. It's like a lot of t-shirts and like flowy dresses because I sweat in this heat.

Because that's like the outside being like, you're not doing this right. But then, I have to be like, no this feels really good. I feel good with everything. I feel good with my choices, it's okay.

**Elizabeth:** Yeah, and what you're saying is exactly what I do in my practice is, going to the internal. So, how do things feel inside? What is your inner wisdom versus going to the outside?

Going to the diet, people, and the health and fitness industry to tell you how much you should be eating; what you should be doing instead of looking at how your body feels; what you want to do; and discovering that; and then having your own internal compass to direct how you should be eating; how you should be working out?

**Sarah:** One other thing about pleasure that I want to say, and I actually wonder how you think about this is, because there are things we don't want to do. I'll have a client is like, I have to go to work, how could I possibly be in pleasure?

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So, like, when we have that moment of freedom, of free time where we can ask ourselves anything; what would feel really good right now? Do whatever you want. But then, sometimes we have to do stuff. I don't love working out, like I never really have. So, then I have to ask myself, if I'm always living in pleasure, how do I get there?

So, the way I describe it to clients is think of it like you're at the head of a big conference room table, and your thoughts are always barking at you. You say, what would feel really good right now? That's just inviting pleasure to the table and has a say in what's going on. And then I think of it as there's an agenda. It's like, okay, here's the agenda, we're going to go to work today. What would feel really good right now with the backdrop of work? What would feel really good right now in a form of exercise? And so sometimes, I tend to like bounce between either yoga or running, that's like my saying.

And so sometimes I'll be like, what would feel really good right now? Sometimes I'll be like, is it yoga? Yes or no. Sometimes you're also allowed to ask yourself yes or no, if you like want to present something or would running feel better? Yeah. It's how to do hard things in pleasure is also as a muscle, as a skill.

**Elizabeth:** Yeah. I actually did a podcast on that. I forget what episode; it's called discomfort now or later.

**Sarah:** Yes.

**Elizabeth:** It's all about self-care. So, the way that I look at self-care is, it's taking care of the future version of yourself. So, the person who you are going to be in maybe two minutes, maybe next hour, tomorrow, next week, next month.

I personally don't love exercising either, but I do it every single day because I know that it makes me feel better later on. When it comes for everything that we decide for every decision that we make, there is going to be discomfort now or discomfort later on.

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And so, for exercise, you are having the temporary discomfort so that you can have pleasure afterwards. When we're overeating, we're experiencing pleasure. And then we're going to have the discomfort later.

**Sarah:** I agree, but I also don't.

**Elizabeth:** Okay.

**Sarah:** Okay, I totally agree. But I think that, when I hear pleasure later, that is like a huge alarm for me because that's what we tell ourselves all the time. I'm going to kill myself at this job, so I have pleasure later on vacation. So, I think that's like a slippery slope to hang your hat on.

**Elizabeth:** Yeah.

**Sarah:** And I think what it is though is like, in the same thing too, like exercising when you have an injury versus exercising and pushing yourself, right? Like, how do you have that distinction?

**Elizabeth:** Yeah.

**Sarah:** Okay, so here I'm going to bring it about sex. So, orgasm is the release of tension. And so that building of arousal, there is a lot of pleasure in that. But you can also think of it as discomfort. That's why we want the orgasm so bad. That's what we go, we're like, "oh, I want that release!" And so, arousal, you could be keen to the workout; like the hard, the buildup, the tension that your muscles are going.

And then like orgasm is like, "oh, fine," like release from that tension. And maybe exercise, like when you're done with the exercise, my body feels like kind of tingly and calm. I tend to run a little bit anxious, and I feel so relaxed after.

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**Elizabeth:** Yeah.

**Sarah:** Yeah, I just don't want to say pleasure later. I don't want to say it. How can we enjoy the tension? Right? It's like enjoying the journey or something, I don't know. Because also if we're saying, "oh, pleasure later, are we saying pleasure later when I've lost 10 pounds?" Or are we saying pleasure later when the run ends and I'm like, "relax."

**Elizabeth:** Yeah, that's a good question. And I think that it depends like, yeah, there's the whole lying to yourself about; I need to work really hard now, so that I can maybe go on vacation or get this thing later.

The problem with discomfort now and pleasure later is that we are less motivated the longer term that pleasure is. So, going back to the ice cream, if I eat ice cream, it's pleasurable now. The discomfort maybe that I can't fit into my pants in a few weeks. And so, depending on how important that is to me, I may just go for the ice cream.

But if I'm lactose intolerance, it's more eminent. That discomfort is going to be more imminent. And so, if I eat the ice cream in an hour or two, I'm going to feel bad. So, it really depends on, again, how motivated you are to do the thing or what your motivations in general are?

**Sarah:** Also, in sex is, I talked to so many women who are going through the motions of sex. Maybe they're even having orgasms, but they're doing it. They're powering through sex, that's the thing. So then, my marriage is okay because we had sex, or he's calm, he's fine, he's not going to be grumpy today.

**Elizabeth:** That's interesting, tell me more about that; they're powering through sex.

**Sarah:** It's like, they'll do the set and I'm going to just say to, I have zero tolerance for like coercion or convincing. But sometimes we are consenting to having sex that we

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don't really necessarily want to be having. So, I want to say that's what I'm talking about here.

So, like, "oh, he's kissing me in the way that means you want sex, I can tell; all right, okay, let me just let me get myself there; all right I can have sex; I'll do it; yep, all right we'll have sex; okay, no, I don't want to come again; yep, that's fine; just finish, okay." and we had sex.

So, it's like the thought process that they go through and then they're like, "okay, now I don't have to do that for a week, I'm off the hook," right? It's like if I do it now. So, when I think about that, that's when I'm like, "no, your whole life can be in pleasure," right?

You don't need to power through the workout even. Can you be in pleasure in the workout? Like the pleasure if sex is there, you don't need to just get through the sex. So, then you can have a good marriage. I will say when I have clients like that, I don't love to be like super public with this, but I'm just going to say it.

Often, the first thing that we do is tell them that I'm like, we decide I don't tell them anything. That they're not going to have sex for a little while. Let's take sex off the table because it has been a chore for you. Whereas if you're following pleasure sex, we'll get we'll come back, it'll come back, don't worry.

But take it off the table for a minute, because it's been a chore and we don't want to have that relationship to sex anymore. So that's just from my seat of people just do a hard thing so they get to their side, we don't want it to that thing to be sex.

**Elizabeth:** Right. Yeah, because then you just feel resentful and like the whole reason why you're doing it is just to get it over with. And that's not really creating a good relationship for one, it's probably not very pleasurable for your partner. And second, the energy behind that is just picky, right?

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**Sarah:** Yes, and I want anybody listening who relates to this, I want to validate that you're doing the best you can with the tools you have. You're doing the best you can to keep your marriage. You love your partner, they're a good person. They totally deserve the sex that they want and you're just trying to give them that.

But like your relationship is probably safe. It's safe to say no to sex for a little while. Like, you're going to be okay, and when you're ready to invite it in, it's going to be there. You don't lose it, it doesn't go away if you want it, it's always with you.

So yeah, a lot of people are having sex like that.

**Elizabeth:** Yeah, absolutely. Well, but it does socialized, right? Like it's always the joke that, what goes through a woman's mind when she's having sex, "peach," I think I'll paint the ceiling peach.

**Sarah:** Makes me cringe, I hate it! Yes. And going back to commodification, right? The women's bodies have been commodified. So, if you think of a woman and being like, "let's get her sexy!" We could think of a whole montage of the lingerie and the haircuts; and like we were talking the nails, and maybe getting a sex toy, all the things.

If you say to, a man, "hey, get sexy, what's your montage?" We were told that men are inherently the keepers of sexuality. They're the inherent sexual energy all the time, they just want it whenever. They don't have like things to do to sell them, although more and more there are. But women were like, "oh no, no, no, no, no," your sexuality is all outside of you. It's all in your outfit, it's all in everything else.

**Elizabeth:** Which is really interesting because something that I really learned from you was about sexy thoughts.

**Sarah:** Yeah, oh yeah.

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**Elizabeth:** So, talk about that a little bit.

**Sarah:** I'm a pro at sexy thoughts. All my thoughts are really sexy.

**Elizabeth:** All right, sexy thought.

**Sarah:** Yeah, to be a woman does not teach you to have sexy thoughts. Like my first lessons around sexuality was, how to not get raped, like how to avoid sexual violence. And there was no malintent, the adults in my life just wanted me to be safe. But that was like my first understanding of sexual contact.

So, that does not set you up to be like, "sex is fine, for sure! Sexy thoughts: no, sex is dangerous!" That was the message, right? That was like the early message, it's dangerous, don't do that, you can get pregnant, you can get STD, whatever. I was under this impression, I should really think about like, "what gave me this thought?" But like, from TV and movies about losing your virginity and I'm using air quotes because virginity is a concept, it's not real, I got a lot of that later.

But losing your virginity would make you emotionally just so attached to the person that you gave your virginity to. That's how it was like portrayed, when you lost your virginity, you were going to be so attached to that person. And so, I was like really afraid of that, I felt there was like some magical power that happened. It didn't by the way, like, I don't know, my first boyfriend was a wonderful person and whatever. But I don't know, he lives in Oregon now.

But I thought that there was going to be, yeah, like something chemical, very intense thing. As a woman, when I didn't get the impression that men had that same reaction. I don't know where that came from, but I just had that idea.

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**Elizabeth:** Well, it's just that your virginity is so perfect and whatever then you will always then be tied to that person because that person was the first and only person that could ever have that "memoirs of a geisha" is all about that.

**Sarah:** Oh my God, yeah. Listen to me right now, you asked me about sexy thoughts, and I immediately am telling you all the trash thoughts that I had to unlearn first.

**Elizabeth:** Isn't it funny how we do that?

**Sarah:** Okay, so what are sexy thoughts? And the people listening, because I know you know this Elizabeth, it's not a mantra. Because mantras can just be like words that you say, but you have to feel it. So, I'm at the place with my relation to my body where I'm like, "God, I am so cute! Damn!" I gained some quarantined weight; I'm like, "I am adorable!" Look at this squish; yeah, get big; I want to be naked all the time and in the mirror."

So, these are like sexy thoughts. Now, not everybody, maybe they're right, maybe your sexy thoughts are just like, "oh God, my hair looks great today was that tassel look." Maybe, and then now I'm making that about your body, but maybe it's also just like, "oh, this feels so good, I bought this like silky pajama set, this feels luxurious."

Daniel favorite talked about this relishing. It's not just like feeling good, but like just focusing on it for an extra second, not just like, "okay, God new pajamas," great next thing. But "Ooh, these finishes are nice. I can't wait for my husband to like to rub up on me when I'm in these."

Or even just like rubbing up on myself, like relishing. That pleasure is a sexy thought. Even like flirting, right? Like, I am such a flirt. If you make eye contact with me for two minutes, I'm like giving you eyebrows like, "Hi!" because people are so beautiful, people are like juicy and interesting.

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**Elizabeth:** And I love what you're saying, because when I was thinking about sexy thoughts, I was thinking about your partner, but not everyone listening has a partner. And so, I think it's really important to point out that you're talking about sexy thoughts about our self.

**Sarah:** Yes.

**Elizabeth:** Which is way more important.

**Sarah:** Yes, you're right. Because that is a big piece of the work is working with my clients on; what are sexy thoughts about your partner, for sure. But yeah, if you have zero sexy thoughts about yourself, start there. Get yourself and be like, "I am a hot." And then you can look at, you're like, I am the hot; this is sexy; this is sexuality oozing out of me. My partner is so ~~fucking~~ lucky, sorry again for swearing.

My husband, he is the luckiest guy, he gets this. And then you're going to be showing up in a way, that is totally different; then, "oh, he's so hot, I hope he likes my body; I gained a little bit of weight; or I just had this baby." Like, "oh, he's so great."

Sometimes we do that too to our partners, we put them on a pedestal. And I like to come from the place of like, "I'm hot! This is the person I picked because they're hot too." And this is how it goes, I'm clearly very excited and worked up by it.

I want to see me, and my partner is like a power couple. I don't want either of us to be above the other, that's so unappealing to me. And so, thinking sexy thoughts about your partner, that is a really good antidote when you have a lot of resentment. It's just you have a bucket that says, "oh, he has no confidence."

And you've been filling that bucket real hard ever since whatever happened. And you're just collecting all the evidence. And so, we're like, "okay, there's another bucket in there." That's like, "he knows exactly what he's doing." Or maybe the bucket is he adores me.

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Like I have so many clients, they're like, "oh yeah, no, no, no, he loves me, he's totally into me."

And I'm like, "so why are you insisting that he also has to orgasm every single time you do too?" Or the orgasm ratio, people get really hung up on them. And I'll say to them, "what if you came and then you were done?" And they're like, "no, I could never!" I'm like, do you think your marriage could survive, you having an orgasm and your husband not having an orgasm one time?" And when get worked up when I suggest this.

**Elizabeth:** Well, yeah. Because we're taught that we're supposed to please our man.

**Sarah:** And our sexuality is based off of their place.

**Elizabeth:** Exactly! Yes.

**Sarah:** So, the same women having that kind of freak out, and then they'll talk about their partner and they're like, "oh, but he's amazing, he's so great, he loves me so much." I'm like, "yeah, he loves you so much, get yours girl and then tell him you can get them later."

Thinking sexy thoughts about your partner comes right after sexy thoughts about yourself. And I don't know, I don't talk to, I haven't taken a survey of the population, but a lot of the women I work with often have good relationships. They have cool partners.

I'm usually the biggest fan of their partner in our conversation. I sometimes wish he couldn't be listening because I'm like, "dude, I am standing so hard for you right now," while she's tearing you down; talking about how you don't know this; and you can't do that; and you have these attachment issues and your mom issues; I'm here for you and your sex life, right?

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**Elizabeth:** Yeah, that's awesome.

**Sarah:** Yeah. Once in a while, right? Somebody's partner maybe going through something. And so then sometimes the work is like, "how are you taking care of yourself?" That is the best thing for your partner, too; we were in these long-term relationships; we have ups and downs, that's okay.

But if you are like, loose sail in the wind, just flapping around. That boat's not going anywhere, how can you really anchor yourself? When things are tough, because we're not pretending that things are great all the time and sex is always perfect.

It's how could we be like, "yeah, this is totally manageable and okay; he could be where he is; I'm where; I'm at."

**Elizabeth:** It's just like the ebb and flow of health and life and everything. There are going to be times that things are going to be amazing. And there are going to be times that there's the ebb and flow; they're going to be a little bit more sticky or difficult.

**Sarah:** And the meaning that we put to it, so it's like, when people haven't had sex for a long time, "oh, what does it mean?" If that happens every time stuff goes wrong, you're just going to be whiplash from it. It's like, how can we just not make a ton of meaning when things aren't going great in your sex life.

Actually, I think recently you had a post maybe it's on Instagram about not weighing yourself after vacation or something. It's the same thing, yeah, don't measure the health of your relationship right after one of you has gone through a major life change.

**Elizabeth:** That's a really good point. Is there anything else you wanted to talk about?

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**Sarah:** Oh man yeah. You got me on a roll there with some different things. I already said this, but like your sexuality is with you from the day you're born to the day you die. It doesn't go anywhere. Don't throw in the towel, that's what I want everyone to know. No matter where you're at, start, start right now. Like, it's never too late to be in touch with your sexuality.

It doesn't matter all the crazy religious stuff you grew up with; parents stuff; TV and movies stuff. There's not a single person in the world that I could point to and be like, "your sexuality is probably not an option." No, I would never say that to anybody, it's all good.

**Elizabeth:** I think I laughed a little too loud of that.

**Sarah:** So, yeah. I just want everyone to know. One of the best classes I ever took in grad school was about sexuality and aging. And I really thought it was going to be, and it was somewhat from the perspective of working with elderly populations. But a lot of the work we did was unlearning our own baggage around getting older and our sexuality.

And one of the exercises we did was like, if you did not have; I don't know if the word is power of attorney, or like power your body, like autonomy or something. If that happens when, well, our bodies get old.

**Elizabeth:** Basically, oh okay, I was going to say Britney Spears, but maybe not.

**Sarah:** I mean kind of, but if you physically are maybe like incapacitated. If you had like a living will for your sexuality, and we had to write that out for ourselves.

But there are stories of people who I knew who worked in sexuality. They were working a long-term care facility for older people; the door would always be open. This the doors would always have to be open, and this guy would get in trouble for masturbating. And they'd be like, "oh, he doesn't behave or whatever."

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And the woman she's like, "he's an adult, man, give him privacy." He can't close the door; you close his door; give them a moment. Or older people having sex, like being segregated by gender, and like trying to have sex with each other. They get in trouble, and I'm like, "they're adult, they're allowed to have sex, we treat them like children."

So, all I'm saying is when we wrote this living will for like our sex life, how we want that to be? For the way I did mine was like; I went through all five senses. If I could only see things; how do I want to experience sexuality through sight?

And if I could only like feel things. One of my best friends, I have for hearing, she knows all my favorite sex stories of like; people I've hooked up with; and my partners; and I was like, I just want her to tell me those stories. Just like, "remember that time in that car," whatever.

I want to hear that I never want that to go away. Even if I can't be having intercourse the way that I couldn't now. And just thinking of sexuality and a really deep, full-full way in that class was just the greatest gift I could have ever had. And I'm just so grateful for it.

So yeah, like your sexuality is with you forever and ever.

**Elizabeth:** That's amazing. I love how you brought that back because I feel like we've talked about pretty much everything and I'm sure that there's tons of stuff that we left out.

**Sarah:** I know we started from like kids to all the way.

**Elizabeth:** Yeah, that's amazing. All right, so Sarah tell everyone where they can find you.

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**Sarah:** Yeah. So, I am mostly on Instagram, I'm @sarahthesexcoach, Sarah-SARAH, the sex coach. And I do one-on-one coaching. Right now, as of this recording, it's a free pleasure course. So, it's five days of like little bits on how to incorporate more pleasure into your life and like little bonuses on how to apply it to sex.

I plan on actually adding to that. So, depending on when this gets released. I also have a course in August which may not be running for then, but I don't know. Yeah, follow me on Instagram, that's the best place, and I do one-on-one coaching over zoom.

**Elizabeth:** All right, thanks for being here.

**Sarah:** Thanks Elizabeth, this was so fun. You're so fun. I love you.

**Elizabeth:** So, there you have it. There was a time that I wouldn't have been able to have this conversation that talking about sexuality or even hinting at the topic of SEX was a taboo subject. And therefore, made me completely blush and embarrassed.

But as humans, we are sexual beings. It's just another dimension to who we are. And the more we accept that aspect of ourselves; the less shame that we can have about it; the less shame that we can have about what gives us pleasure. I hope you enjoyed the episode and everything that we discussed.

Have a great week everyone and I'll talk to you next time. Bye-bye.

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AND it helps other women who are done with dieting and want to get off of the diet roller coaster to find it as well. See you next week.