



The RISC Course

Session #6 – More Better Sex

Session Transcript

[0:00:00]

Christian: Hey, and welcome everybody. It's Wednesday again. Welcome back to the RISC Course, Relationship, Intimacy, Sex and Communication. As per usual, we are Sonika and Christian here in the living room. It's still nice and toasty in here. It's the little fire right there on the background keeping us warm. And we're thrilled to get to be with you for the next about hour and a half here.

Sonika: Yeah. Today we are talking about sex. Let's talk about sex, baby.

Christian: We always have that song in our heads when we're about to start the sex conversation.

Sonika: Before we jump in this week's topic, we want to do a quick review of what we covered so far. So first session, remember we talked about committing to feed and identify ourselves and our full potential, as our best selves. And remember, we can never give each other enough appreciation, enough acknowledgement.

Christian: And you can never do it too much at least. You never have to worry about overdosing on that one.

Sonika: Or you make a distinction between our potentiality you could say and our actuality or our essence and our behaviors, or you could say our future versus our past. And we discussed the power of our words in the creation process. And we discussed how we can reinforce what we want to see by looking for opportunities to speak that into existence. So the more we talk about what we want, look for what we want, speak it, the more real it becomes.

Christian: Yeah. In the second session, we spoke about how to move as quickly as possible from complaint and reaction to creating or having what we want. Remember the

'don't wants' to 'do wants' to the experience and then take a new action? So as quickly as possible, you want to go from whatever your complaint is -- that's what you don't want -- to what you do want and then why do you want that? What is the feeling experience you imagine you would have if you had that thing? And then you take your next action right from there. Remember we encourage you to ask this question: If I were already free, connected, loved, what could I do, what could I say right now? Not in general but right now.

Sonika: In session three, we revealed the true source of our upset. Remember, it's what we're making up, not the stimulus. The quality of our relationship is the quality of our make-ups. And when we make up positive story about ourselves and our relationship, we got a positive relationship.

Christian: Yes. In session number four, we talked about how to access the gifts in conflicts. We taught the formula that shows you how to walk from conflict and resentment towards win-win solutions that take care of what you both want to create. And remember, we showed this diagram that's like two circles that overlap. Whereas in the beginning of any conflict, it looks like we're just in each in our circle. You want to go out? I want to stay home. You want to spend money? I want to save them. You want to go abroad to live? I wanted to stay home and be with my family.

But there's always an overlap where there is a space in which we can create new potential solutions. And we had you brainstorm new solutions. Some of you put up really great suggestions on the forum. So for those of you who hadn't seen that yet, go check it out under the heading of session four. There's fabulous example up there from **[0:03:38] [Indiscernible]** that share that. There's awesome things you guys left.

Sonika: And in the last session, we explored how to use our energies to generate spark from nothing by playing with leading and following, with leading and surrendering. So just like we want to interact full potential to full potential with our words and our approach, we also want to interact full potential to full potential energetically in our bodies. So we encourage you, and hopefully had an opportunity to play with consciously playing with bringing the healthy masculine force into your relationships, you could practice leading and following at home.

Christian: Yeah. And one more thing we mentioned from the last session we did is the idea of removing the question mark that's hanging over your head. So when you come to your partner with a question mark over your head it's like, "You know, maybe you want to, I don't know--" It has the good intention sometimes of being sensitive and not being a macho dominant pig but in reality it creates insecurity. My question mark inspires a question mark in you. My self-doubts inspire doubts, not safety in my partner. So we had you practice coming in with you can

imagine like an exclamation mark over your head or an arrow instead of a question mark.

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And see what that does to your relationship and how you eventually both feel when doing that.

Sonia: You can actually, in this whole conversation that we're going to be entering into today about sex, you can actually use the topic of sex in everything we've done so far. And, in fact, we're going to start off with what we did in session one. You're looking at your full potential sexual vision. You can also look at what you don't want and what you do want in your sex life, what's the experience you're after. You're going to look at what you'd been making up and what you want to make up going forward. You can use everything we've done so far in this whole topic. But let's start here with our vision of what it is we want to create for ourselves in relationship around sex.

Christian: Yeah. And we should say that today's session is number six and the title of it is simply: More Better Sex. And as we go into it, it's great to remember the energetic piece that we did last time. Remember, even last time we started the conversation about the energy. We call it the healthy masculine. But it's very relevant to the sexual conversation we're going to have today because remember last time we started talking about how do you create spark and aliveness from nothing, even when you think it might be gone, which will use and play nicely into today.

Sonika: So, first thing we want to do, and if you have the ability to do this, we'd love for you to just take a deep breath and close your eyes. And with your eyes closed, I want you to bring in here an image of you in your full potential sexual self. So if you were the most open, the most free, the most pleasant, the most loving, the most in your power, the most in your body, who would you be? Just allow yourself to let an image of your full potential sexual self come to mind. How would you be if you were not limited in any way, if you were fully expressed?

Christian: You felt safe and confident and okay about yourself in any sexual interaction.

Sonika: Just let yourself connect with this image of you as this free safe confident sexually expressed being. How are you being? How are you feeling? What are you doing? And now in this vision of you as the sexual being, I want you to bring in an image of a full potential partner. So if you're in a relationship, you want to bring in an image of your partner in their full potential sexual self. And if you're currently not in relationship, bring in your fantasy future partner in their full potential sexual self.

And allow yourself to imagine how you would be together. If you were both in this perfect dance of full self expression and freedom and confidence and power and sensuality and love and playing that energy dance of wild, both wild and passionate and fiery as well as loving and soft, just allow yourself to imagine this perfect picture of your ideal sexual encounter, your ideal sexual experience. What would it look like? What would it feel like if you were free to have your ideal sexual experience? All right, take a nice deep breath. And bring yourself back to wherever you are. And if you're with your partner, bring yourself back here with your partner.

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Sonika: Go ahead and open your eyes when you're ready. So we want to give you an opportunity now to share with your partner your ideal sexual vision. If you could have it any way you wanted it, if you could wave a magic wand and have it be however you wanted, what would it be like? What do you see? What the experience you're after? And if you're doing this here on your own, you can either speak it out loud, your vision, which is probably the best actually or you can write it down. Either one, you just want to express this vision. Because what's important about acknowledging what we want to create is it's setting the stage or it's setting the destination where do we want to go, what is it we want to create?

Christian: Yes. Comment for those of you who are doing it together, if you're the one listening to your partner share their vision, just remember that them sharing their vision doesn't mean you're the one who has to deliver everything or that it's an order catalogue that you are now obligated to do. Not at all. Just listen to it as their vision. And remember that no matter what they share, they're out to create an experience for themselves that is good and positive and innocent and loving. So listen from that point of view.

Sonika: Yeah. And one more thought about that too. Be careful not to listen to it like you're not doing all that right now. This is what wants to get created.

Christian: Right. All right? So, we'll give you a few minutes each and we'll tell you a half time signal. So one of you, go ahead and start and share your vision. Go ahead. That's about half time. First person, go ahead and wrap up. And person who's been listening, say, "Hey, thank you so much for sharing that vision. I appreciate hearing that."

Sonika: Thanks for wanting all that.

Christian: Yeah, thanks for wanting all of it. And then go ahead and switch. Other person now shares. If you're on your own, you get a little more time to share or write it down. Go ahead. Start wrapping up your shares. And person who's been listening, say, "Thank you so much for sharing that. Thank you for wanting all that." And stop talking please and turn your attention back over here.

Sonika: Now, you might notice as with all visions that there is a gap between where we are and what could be. No matter how great we're doing there's always room for improvement. There's always room for more, better in sex. So the first part about this little visioning is to realize that there is a gap and really to have fun filling in the gap. Sometimes where we go with the gap is a little bit like what we talked about in the first session. We got a tendency to feel sort of stuck in complaint, like it's never going to work out, and why bother? And when we go down that road, there's no possibility.

Christian: And one of the things that we make up, as you'll remember from session three, is basically we say the quality of your relationship depends on how you fill this gap. So if you fill it with, which many of us tend to do without really thinking just unconsciously with "I'm never going to get what I want, this is too much work, we should be there already, what the heck happened, oh my god, we got to be incompatible because this is not flowing anymore", If you fill the gap with that kind of make-ups, it's not going to be very fun to say the least.

That's putting it very diplomatically. But if you fill it up with, and this is one of our make-ups, is wow, something new wants to be created. Wow, this could be better still. We can definitely figure this out. We're going to get what we want. We'll find out a way to have what we want. I will find out a way to have what I want. To fill it with make-ups like that, the gap, it becomes fun to fill the gap and feeling good.

Sonika: Yeah. As we already said, you could do the same thing we did in session two as well. Look at what I don't want, what do I want, what's the experience I'm after. Because there's good stuff that you want in all of this. Now, we're going to play with here in the session another way to get at the positive intent or the positive desire behind our desire for sex. Why do we want that anyway?

[0:15:06]

Christian: Yeah. Why even bother reviving it?

Sonika: Why does it matter? So to set the stage here, I want to say, we want to say a couple of things. One is in the beginning of relationship, we don't have to put much attention on making sure sex happens. There's so much hormonal, chemicals running through our bodies. There's so much attraction and tension in

the uncertainty of where our relationship is going and the mystery of the other person.

Christian: The sheer newness of it actually floods our system with endorphins and great things that just feel good just because it's new.

Sonika: So we want to have sex. In the beginning it's just this, like we can't get close enough to each other and sex is the expression of that spiritual desire to get as close as possible.

Christian: Granted not every single relationship ever starts off with that kind of attraction and fire in the beginning but most of us can relate to having had that experience in the beginning of our relationships.

Sonika: And then, of course, as we all experience, those hormones abate over time, the chemicals quit running through there as we replace the uncertainty and mystery with safety and security and commitment.

Christian: Familiarity and comfort and routines and things like that.

Sonika: The tension drops. And coincidentally, so does our desire for sex drops and we have a tendency in our relationships to wait until we want to have sex. We wait until we feel like it to have sex.

Christian: Yeah. And I want to add one more thing. Many of you will also recognize it. But that it seems like just your -- as you get older, your natural sex drive might feel like it's less and less and less and less. Even more so if we grow older together we might very well have the experience that there's just less of that 'let's go for it.'

Sonika: Because we're accustomed to in the beginning of our relationship wanting to and that being the reason for why we have sex, later, when there is less compelling tension and inside that familiar, or at least we're talking about, there is less desire and so we have less sex. And one of the things that we say is that waiting until we both want to, the schedules line up, the kids are not at home or busy, sleep, busy doing something or they're asleep. It's a little bit like waiting for the moon and stars to line up. And truthfully, our sex lives are too important for us to lead to our changing cyclical hormonal logistical challenges in life. If we wait until we both want to, we're not going to have as much sex as would really be good for the relationship.

Christian: Yeah.

Sonika: So instead of waiting until we want to, we're more interested in looking at how do we inspire us to want to? And one way to do that is to explore together what sex provides? What is it sex gives? When we have sex, who does it allow me to be? Who does it allow you to be? Who does it allow us to be together as a couple? And what is missing for us when we aren't sexual with each other?

So we want to actually play with exploring together here in this next little bit what sex provides? Because it creates a very different context inside of which you have this sex conversation. I got to say when I first discovered what sex gives men, for example, I was totally blown away. Because the general makeup out there about men and sex is that they just want it, they don't really care about me, they only see me as a symbol, all they want is my body.

Christian: Just trying to get off.

Sonika: Right, just trying to get off. They don't really care about intimacy and connection. And I was blown away when I got to hear from many, many hundreds and hundreds of men about what sex actually provides for them. So we want to give us an opportunity here in this time to explore together what sex gives men?

Christian: And we'll give you a sample. Before we have you guys share, we'll give you a sample, one spoken from a man's point of view and one spoken from a woman's point of view. And this is from a book by Alison Armstrong called *The Queen's Code*. First, this is a couple, Mike and Karen, and first you'll hear what Mike says about what sex provides for him.

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So he says: Physically, the act of sex fills a need, a hunger, a distracting ache that grows unbearable over time. The hunger grows more slowly as I get older, taking maybe days instead of hours but it's still a strong physical need, a yearning to feel her, frankly to be inside of her. There's also the release that comes with the climax when all the tension that's built up in my body over time floods out of me leaving my body spent and relaxed. Like someone pushed a reset button.

I can't prove this but I swear intercourse supplies essential nutrients that can't be found in any food or beverage. It gives me the fuel to be a man, to be protective and to provide. Without it, I'm inevitably emasculated. Emotionally, sex is the one time when I can let go. I don't have to be careful or consume myself. I'm not on guard. I can be vulnerable and it's okay. When these small soft hands touch my shoulders and my back and my face, I am moved beyond words.

When she gives herself to me, I melt. As I hold her and feel her holding me, all of me, I am safe. I can just be. Almost everything great about sex depends on her

feeling secure with me and letting herself experience my love for her in this way. When she surrenders to me and lets me give her pleasure, my entire spirit is altered. I am lifted to another dimension. The boundaries blur. I flow into her and sometimes I feel her flowing into me. Afterwards, the connection I feel to her nurtures me for days. Truly, I am not exaggerating. That is what sex provides for me. All of that. There's no substitute. Nothing even comes close. That's what Mike said.

Sonika: So we'd love to actually open it up to the men here in this class to share with everybody. Because there's value for all of the women here and the men actually to hear from the men what sex gives you. So if you are open and willing, we'd love to hear from every man on this call what does sex provide? Who does it allow you to be? What does it give to your relationship when you are able to be sexual? Actually, why don't I read the woman's part too and then we'll just them share with each other? Let's do that.

Christian: Okay. And then we'll open it up afterwards.

Sonika: So here's what Karen says from *The Queen's Code* about what sex gives for her: Sex makes me physical. When he touch me for an extended length of time I get in my body inch by inch, caress by caress, tingle by tingle, my body wakes up and becomes alive and vital. You make me feel beautiful. When you're inside of me, every time I'm surprised at how it feels. It's like I'm whole. I'm home.

The damnest thing is that I can never remember that feeling for more than a few minutes afterwards. If I did, he would never be lacking for sex. And if I didn't, he might never get to work. I can -- On the other hand -- Oh, here, here. I'm sorry. I can be kinder, wiser and more generous when I'm having sex regularly. I feel more feminine and useful, more silly and more serene. Sex makes me more myself. Sex reestablishes my spiritual connection.

So I'll just say for me, just to be give again some more ideas and kick start you here in this conversation, when I have sex with Christian, I feel open. I feel open in my heart like I don't feel any place else. I feel like I am love itself. I am giving. I am present. I'm in the moment and fully in my body and in my heart. I get out of my head, which is a really great thing. Like I get into my body.

And I feel connected to god in that place. I feel connected to pleasure, to all things good. And I feel fulfilled. I feel satisfied. I feel at peace. It's almost like I remember who I am and I remember who we are together, that we're these spirit beings dancing in these bodies, that I get to reconnect with this incredible love and passion that I feel for him.

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And the other thing I'll say is that we noticed too that sex kind of syncs us up. When we don't have sex for a long period of time, we'll notice that we get more irritable and we just -- things don't quite flow as easily. Somebody once said actually when they don't have sex for a long time and they go to do a high five, they can't even hit each other's hands.

Christian: That's how it's said. That's how we know it's time to be sexual again, is when we can't do a high five on the first one.

Sonika: Right. So anything you want to add?

Christian: I could talk about this for the rest of the course how, what it gives me but a few really important points is when I have sex regularly with Sonika, it's like it puts color on my world. I have the kind of mind and personality that left to its own devices, you could say, or in the times where I had been single periods of time and not engaging in sex, I tend to create a pretty rigid and sometimes even barren landscape. It's like it doesn't have color.

When I engage in sexual activity and feel that connection, it's like it puts life back, it puts color back in my life. Like I get plugged into the life source of the universe. Yeah, I feel expanded and open and I feel confident as a man. It is much easier for me to, after having had a lovemaking session, on the day after, it's much easier for me to go out in the world and feel like I can walk with a confident bounce in my shtick. I can take on the challenges that face us every day, that face me every day.

As opposed to when we don't have that for longer periods, it's harder for me. It's easier for me then to access doubts in my head, to have that question mark show up. But when we do, I also wanted the one -- The last thing I'll say about that is it's probably the strongest place where I feel my connection to the divine is through the connection I feel with her and where I let my heart open in the sexual encounter in a way that I probably don't do anywhere else.

Sonika: Yeah. I'll just add one more piece there and then we'll let you guys share. I actually recently read this whole idea that a lot of where we're trying to get out intimacy needs met and relationship is through talking. And that there is just as much intimacy to be had through sharing and lovemaking session, like allowing us to share our touch and our openness and our vulnerability without words particularly in sex, in sensuality, in just being in the silence together.

Christian: So where to start here is for you now to have that conversation with each other. We encourage the men to go first and share first. We'll give you several minutes each. And what we want you to share is just this: What does sex provide for you?

What does it give you when you get to have sexual interaction? Who do you get to be when you do that? Okay? And we'll give you a very clear time signal for when to switch in the sharing. Again, if you do this on your own, either speak it out loud, even though you might think that's a little silly if you're all by yourself there, we totally encourage you to do that. Or write it down. You can journal it if that works for you as well.

Sonika: All right. So, what does sex give you? Go ahead.

Christian: First person, start wrapping up. And person who's been listening, say, "Thank you so much for sharing that. I appreciate knowing that." All right, take a deep breath. And then go ahead and switch roles. Other person now shares. What does sex provide for you? What does it give you? Whom does it allow you to be? Go ahead. Start wrapping up your shares. And person who's been listening, say, "Thank you so much for sharing all that." Everybody take a good deep breath. And turn your attention back here.

Sonika: So what we would like for you to share next here is what happens for you or what's your experience when you don't have sex for a while? What is your experience?

Christian: And you'll notice when we modeled it before, we actually kind of mixed it but we separated it for you.

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So, Eric, if you bring up that second bullet point here so everybody can see that as well? What happens when you don't get to engage in sexual activity for a while?

Sonika: Yeah, what happens for you? So, a couple of things that we already shared and I'll just embellish on a little bit is we feel really disconnected. We feel more caught up in our individual selves. We're less compassionate, less understanding, more reactive, more irritable, more tense.

Christian: More tense, yeah. It's easier to be stressed. It's just like things don't work as well. I have this general experience in a sense that things just aren't quite working. We bump up against each other and run into each other into the kitchen and it's weird but it's very feelable. And another thing I shared was that I tend to get -- it's easier for me to get into a dark mood and get kind of rigid and analyze everything and getting headaches. So, head case. Instead of moving with an open heart and feeling connected both to life and to you.

Sonika: And sometimes I will get more caught up in my masculine, more caught up in doing, doing, doing, activity, activity, activity, distraction, distraction, distraction. It's like I get lost in the world of doing, less sinking into my open feminine heart.

Christian: Yeah. And the same is true for me. I have a tremendous capacity to just keep moving, do, do, do, next task, next task, next task, next task, next task. We just keep going. The old adage of not stopping to smell the roses on the way. So turn back to your partner or to yourself if you're doing this by yourself or if you're writing it out, and then go ahead and share what happens to you when you don't get to have sexual interactions?

Sonika: Yeah, and just be honest and vulnerable with each other. What goes on for you when you don't get that kind of human connection, that human interaction? Go ahead. We'll give you half time signal.

Christian: First person, start wrapping it up. Person who's been listening say, "Thank you so much for sharing all that." Deep breath. Go ahead and switch roles. Other person now shares: What happens for you when you don't get to have sex? Go ahead. Start wrapping up your shares. Person who's been listening say, "Thank you so much for sharing all that. I really appreciate it." Everybody, deep breath. And turn your attention back here. Cool.

Sonika: I wish we had two hours to just keep hearing from everybody here. I hope that you can get that there's so much depth to this conversation when we take the time to listen.

Christian: Right. And I hope also you can begin to see that when we just think that my partner just wanted to get off or it's just another thing to do on my long list and we are not connected to what it gives then we don't have a really good reason to revive it or to make it a priority. And here we want to give you a really great and well spoken quote from an international sex expert. This is from Dr. Kerner. He has a Ph.D. and sex therapist and an author of a whole bunch of bestselling books about sex.

Eric, you can put the slide up here with this quote so you can also see it. He says: Sex seems to be rapidly falling to the bottom of America's to-do list. But in my experience -- and in ours too -- when couples stop having sex their relationship become vulnerable to anger, detachment, infidelity and ultimately divorce. I believe that sex matters. It's the glue that keeps us together. And without it, couples become good friends at best or bickering roommates at worst. That's from Dr. Kerner, Ph.D., therapist.

Sonika: So, the basic declaration we have is that sex matters. And I'll use this analogy actually. What is it that inspires us to do dishes? It's dirty dishes. What inspires

us to do laundry? It's the fact that it needs to be done. It's not because we want to particularly.

Christian: Not because you wake up and you just are filled with passion and desire to go take out the trash or do the dishes or drive your kids to school. You do it because it's important.

Sonika: You do it because it needs to be done.

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And we would say, and why we're starting with this conversation is because when we know what sex provides and what it gives, we're connected to that we need to be sexual with each other. Our relationship needs it. We need it just as we need food and water.

Christian: My heart needs it. My peace of mind needs it. The relationship, the union here needs it to be soft and open and pliable and pleasant and in flow and synced up. Basically it could be well oiled functioning unit.

Sonika: So we're going to talk here in this last little bit is give lots of ideas here for how can we inspire wanting? So instead of waiting for the want, for us to want to have sex, to inspire us to have sex, we're going to play with shifting it around. So instead of waiting until we want to, we're going to have us want to. What does it take for us to want to have sex? How do we inspire wanting? So instead of waiting for it to come, we create it.

Christian: And let me just insert an important piece here which we could also easily do an entire course on is when we say inspire us to have sex, we talk about having sex. One of the reasons we often stop doing it is because we associate having sex with the only thing that means is having intercourse, with having time enough to be naked in bed and have half an hour, whole hour to do the full blown intercourse.

That is not what we need. Having sex can be any number of activities. It could be laying fully clothed in bed just cuddling. It can be laying next to each other naked. It could be touching each other with their clothes on. It could be me touching myself while she is just with me or the other way around or any number of activities. So we want you to when you start playing with any reengaging or engaging in sexual activity and being a yes to it, don't think it has to mean okay full blown intercourse because it totally doesn't.

Sonika: And I think why we're starting here is it makes a difference. So when Christian initiates sex with me, I know now out of this conversation about what sex gives, what he's really asking for. He's asking to open his heart. He's asking to soften.

He's asking to have more color brought into his world. He's asking to know that he's loved. He's asking to connect. He's asking to find that place in relaxation that we're talking about. He's asking for much, much more than just getting off. It's much broader, this whole desire to be sexual. And so I hear that now when he initiates sex. And same vice versa.

Christian: Yeah. And on the other side of that coin, if she says no or I say no, I know that what she's saying no to is not what we get out of sexual encounters because I know what she gets out of it is tremendous and I know that if she says no it's because she's connected to something else and there's some other concern that's overshadowing what we get out of that. And then I'll dance with that just like I would any other conflict you might call it or disagreement.

Sonika: So we have a couple of ideas that we want to run through here for how we can inspire wanting and we'll make a couple of other points here as we go along. So first one is you got to feed each other's full potential with appreciation. It's a little bit like making deposits in the bank. The more I appreciate, the more likely you are to be responsive to my request or my desires for affection and deeper intimacy.

Christian: It's one of the things that might not lead directly to having sex, but without it you can pretty damn sure that no sexual activity will happen. The second thing is the importance of connection and foreplay. You could say foreplay is connection all day every day. Consider yourself -- we want to take on the, like an experiment. Pretend for this next week that you are a connected sensual sexual being and have foreplay all day every day.

Create what we call touch points. We talked about that last time. Leave love notes for each other. Bring each other flowers or cards, the kind of things you did automatically in the beginning. That's a great way to get ideas for what to do. You just think about what did I do ten, 20 years ago when I was first getting to know you?

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Well, actually, I did leave you love notes. I did bring you flowers. I made elaborate meals. I booked a ticket for the movie theater and got a babysitter, all that kind of stuff. And the touch points and the connection you do during the day is like foreplay. So, for example, when Sonika walks through the door from having been out on business or errands or whatever and I'm at home, I'll get up and come greet her at the door and take her hand and say, "Hi, honey." There's a touch point. There's a physical touching touch point.

It's not just -- So if we go all day without any kind of sensual activity or sensual touch points, it's not so realistic to expect that come 10 o'clock at night, I can just say, "All right, ready, let's do it." That's way too big of a transition to **[0:41:03] [Indiscernible]** to become a gap to cross right there. So we want to keep the sensuality alive all day.

Sonika: Another really important thing, and this is something you're going to have more conversation about here after this call, is you want to know your sexual signals. How do you initiate sex? What works for you to initiate sex? Like I know for me, I don't always like being asked, "You want to have sex?" It puts me in my head.

Christian: It gives that experience that Cindy was talking about often, just another thing to do. Man, I got so many things I'm trying to be good at and trying to accomplish before I go to bed, I don't need another one.

Sonika: So, it's really helpful for me to be able to say, "You know, that doesn't really work for me." What works for me more is the physical thing. Like if you kind of grabs or if we're in bed, just like laying on top of me or kiss me passionately or just kind of pull me close to him. It's a physical something. And then from there, he'll say, "Want to make love with me? Can I be inside of you?" He'll say something along those lines but it's connected to a physical sensation. For me, how I initiate sex is I just start kissing him passionately. And it's really useful to know what our sexual signals are because sometimes we can be initiating sex and our partner has no idea. Or we're not initiating sex and they're thinking we want it.

Christian: We have one thing that it kind of it spontaneously grew out of us being together, not like any of us thought it up, is at night time, when it's night time, I would light a candle sometimes for the ambiance or the romance of it. So now it has become one of our signals is I'll light a candle, that's my plea for, "Hey, would you like to get sexual?" Remember, that doesn't mean we have to have full blown intercourse. It's cool if we do. Sometimes we do. But sometimes we don't.

Sonika: Let me actually take a moment to talk more about that. So I once heard Alison Armstrong say that our parents actually had more sex than we are having. And one of the things she made a point about, which was really freeing for me actually is with this whole women's liberation feminist movement and our desire for this equality, what we tend to bring to our sexual interactions now is we have to make sure we're both satisfied.

Christian: We have to get the same out of it

Sonika: We have to both have orgasms. We have to both feel all the way. We have to both make sure we go to the end. And so now, our sexual encounters or sexual

initiations are really these big long things. Like, okay, it has to be half an hour. It has to be an hour. It has to be this whole big long blown out thing. And one other thing she made a point about which I really appreciate hearing actually is that we don't allow drive by anymore.

Christian: That's how she said it.

Sonika: You get to come inside. You get to have an orgasm. I don't have to. I don't necessarily want that every single time. I enjoy quickies just as much as I enjoy longings. As Christian said earlier, there are 20,000 different ways if you want to have sex and I don't, for you to be able to have sex and for me not to and for us to still create that sense of intimacy and connection.

Christian: It's the same with the examples we talked about in session four, when you want something different than me, you want to move abroad and I want to stay at home, you want to spend money and I want to save them. It's the same thing. If we start with I want to have sex and you are not really up for that, okay, great. What can we create in the overlapping middle here that would take care of both our desires?

[0:45:06]

Sonika: So Christian and I actually have an intention, I would say, kind of an operating intention that we want to be able to give that to each other when we wanted. And so if I don't, for example, really feel in the mood for sex, sometimes I will say, "Hey, just come inside me. Have a great time. I don't feel a need particularly to have an orgasm." And I often change my mind from there but not always. Or we play with other things. Like I'm just going to touch you or I'll just go down on you or how about--

Christian: I'll just touch myself while you hold my hand or share the space just through eyes. That's very intimate.

Sonika: Or we have a little time of me touching you in the shower. There's always a way for you to get what you want and for me to get what I want when we play this finding that middle ground.

Christian: And for us as an us to keep this sensual physical sexual part of our relationship alive because as we've heard from you and from us and from what Dr. Kerner said it's like the glue that keeps this union together.

Sonika: And I can be just as satisfied and just as open and just as connected if I don't have an orgasm or two or three or four. I can be just as connected and just as present. How Alison said it, which I really love, she's like, sometimes having

orgasm is a little bit like trying to catch a slippery fish and I don't always want it. I'm not always in the mood to try to catch a slippery fish but I can be in the mood to give to you, I can be in the mood to be here with you in this experience and come up with a way for us to both still have that connection even if we're not doing it the ideal way every single time.

And so one thing we really got to free ourselves up from is feeling like sex has to always look a certain way, that attachment to form. There are many ways for us to give ourselves the experience that we're after. And still if you are like or the person who shared earlier, if you feel like it's just pressure to perform that is not an experience you want to be creating in the sexual encounter. So how, what is the experience you want to create and how could you work together to create that?

One way might be, "You know what, I'm not, I don't feel the need to have to be pleased in a particular way or to have any particular result. I'm happy to be here for you in whatever way." You look at where are ways that you can create a different experience for yourself.

Christian: Yeah. And we've had like some of you can relate to, we had one couple, for example, who had been married for 25 years and they had not engaged, they hadn't slept in the same bed for more than ten years for various reasons. But they still had the desire to revive their sex life. And for them also it didn't feel safe for them. They weren't ready to just jump in again naked and have full blown intercourse. That was fine. So where they started was just, okay, let's meet once a week on Saturday morning and we'll start by sitting next to each other fully clothed, just connecting eye to eye and we'll just touch each other on the hands or foot rub. We'll just touch. Simply just sensuality in here. That's how they started. Then they would expand it little by little every week.

Sonika: So you want to have a conversation with each other how do you initiate sex? What works for you? Try it out. I remember another book I read was a book called *Forty Beads*. And so this woman gave to her husband for his birthday 42 beads having 42 times, something like that. And he had, every time he put bead in a bowl, it meant "I'd like to have sex with you." And her intention was to get to him, to be sexual with him within 24 to 48 hours, I can't remember what it was. Or she would make herself available to be intimate with him that way. And that was their little signal that they came up with for initiating sex. So definitely have that conversation with each other. How do you initiate sex?

Christian: And these points we're going through, I just want to say on your homework sheet, the PDF that you have access to afterwards, we have all these listed by number.

Sonika: So another piece you want to play with is what quick starts you from zero to 100? So we were kind of playing with that a little bit last week? What is it that gets that energy going?

Christian: So I know for example, for Sonika and I, we can be just doing our business when she comes up to me way up close and she looks at me with that -- I don't even know what to call that -- wonderful, loving, open look in her eyes and has her arms around my waist, oh boy, I'm just ready. That works for me so much.

[0:50:12]

Sonika: Yeah. And for me, it's when he grabs me when I'm walking through the hall or lays on top of me or kisses me passionately. Something that's like I want you, I choose you. That revs me up from zero to 100. It gets me much more interested. For some people, it's a hand on the crotch. For some people, it's romantic dance in the living room.

Christian: For some people, it's a certain piece of music. For some people, it's a certain arrangement of candles and flowers over the fireplace. Or any combination thereof.

Sonika: Yes. Somebody whispering in your ear or taking your hair a certain way. So, have a conversation with each other. How do you initiate sex and what really works for you in terms of revving you up from zero to 100 so you inspire that desire? And I'll tell you there's usually some healthy masculine in the mix.

Christian: And if you can't remember, because it's been a long time since you've had that experience, see if you can think back to what used to happen when I had that experience? Maybe you can go, "Oh, yeah, I remember we used to always hold my hand really tightly, firmly and just pull me to the bedroom." See if you can remember what was whenever you did have that experience. And by the way, when we tell you the homework, some of these will be part of what we're suggesting you to do for homework this week.

Sonika: If there's any experience that isn't working for you, use that, okay this is what I don't want. What do I want? What's the experience I'm after? What can we do together to create a different experience for you so that you get to feel relaxed instead of tense? You get to feel fully expressed instead of constraint. What is the experience you're after and what can you do to help create that experience for each other? So explore that as a possibility as well.

Christian: And the next point we want to make is to have the attitude of -- Sorry.

Sonika: I was just **[0:52:22]** **[Indiscernible]** but go ahead.

Christian: So to have the attitude of 'yes, I want us to have this.' And my stance is 'yes, let's find a way to do that.' Even if I don't quite know yet but have the attitude of yes.

Sonika: That's actually my intention at relationship, is to be a yes to his sexual desire. And even if I don't want it, which sometimes I do and sometimes I don't. Again, if I just went with what I felt like, we would not be having as much as sex as is good for our relationship. So when he -- generally, in our relationship, he initiates more than I do. And when he initiates, I use that as an opportunity for me to connect in with what I really want, which is to be open hearted, to be in my body, to have him have all of those wonderful experiences, for me to have all of those wonderful experiences.

So I remember to go for what I really want which is that feeling of connection and love and presence. And so I will just like what it is that has me do the dishes. I do it for the experience of having a clean kitchen. What is it that has me do the laundry? It's the experience of getting to wear clean clothes. What has me say yes to sex is the experience of connection and love and pleasure and presence.

Christian: And vibrancy and aliveness and everything works out and we're fully connected and it's so much easier to go out in the world and feel like a good person.

Sonika: So I'm doing that not for him, well for him, but I'm doing it for myself. I'm doing it for us as well as for him. And before, I think, I used to feel sort of pressured or obligated to provide for the other person. And now it's much more, for me, like this is for me too. So remember from the conflict workshop, even if there's one person in relationship that doesn't want sex and one person that does, both of you want it and both of you don't. Look deeper at why you don't and why you do and then come up with a place in the middle, how can we take care of all of the concerns we're trying to take care of? So that now your yes becomes mine and your no -- it's almost there's a good reason for no in there too. There's a no to kind of what you are speaking to, Cindy. There's a no to tension. There's a no to pressure. There's a no to--

[0:55:05]

Christian: Just another thing.

Sonika: -- another failed experience. There's a no to going through the motions. There's a good reason for that no. And when you can drop down, find out what that is and what the experiences you're after and what you want to create differently, good things will come.

Christian: Yeah. And I want to say the spirit of yes and the commitment to keeping our relationship the best possible version of itself, just like Sonika will say, sometimes I want to, sometimes I don't but I have the spirit of yes to it. I always take on initiating. I like playing the, you could say the masculine initiating role. But as I've grown older too, when I was 20, I would just have automatically initiated that three times a day. I don't have that same drive anymore. That's okay.

But even if longer periods of time begin to go by without it, I'll take it upon myself to initiate it. And I'm okay with her saying no to it because I know we had the tools to work that out and I know I'm not going to give up on us just because her first answer is no, I don't really want that because I know we'll find a way to do that.

Sonika: I actually want to make one more point here which is another interesting thing to bring out here about sex is if we're in relationship and we have a commitment to be monogamous, for you to not be sexual elsewhere, and I also am a decline to be sexual, then I put my partner who wants sex in an integrity bond about how are they going to take care of their sexual needs. They can't do it anywhere else and they can't do it here.

And one of the things that's been interesting in our work with clients is that out of integrity shows up as a question mark in our partners or in the person who like I want it but I have no place to go, I want it but I have no place to go. And it encourages that question mark. So one way to play with creating more integrity is again that win-win. How do we move here to take care of your concerns and my concerns? We're not by any means saying have sex if you don't want to. We're saying inspire the desire by being attentive to what sex gives and come from that giving place.

And I'll say that one of the things that really that I love about that's present in our relationship is when Christian initiates, for example, I tend to move like a yes, like I want to give that to you. Christian will also be in the mood to give to me and say it's okay if you don't want to. And that has me want to even more, which has him want to give me the space to say yes or no, which has me want to say yes now, which has him want to grant more space, allows him to grant more space because he knows the yes is coming even if there's a no there now. So you can kind of see the upward spiral that comes from this desire for us to both give to each other in that way.

Christian: Cool. So, Eric, if you would put out the slide that has the 'what to do', we'll just give you quickly the five bullet points of what we just went through.

Sonika: And then we'll open it up for the questions.

Christian: And just know that on the homework PDF Sheet there's actually ten points. So just put up the first one here, Eric. This is just a quick review. See and feed your own and each other's full potential. Next one, connection and foreplay all day every day create sensual touching touch points. That's the third one. I just give you the second one. Third one, know your signals for being sexual. Fourth one.

Sonika: They don't want to miss those.

Christian: You don't want to miss those. And you want to know what yours are, what we call it quick starts you, what is it that really works for you to open your heart and to be putting that mood or get you kicking from a zero to 100 in no time? And the fifth one, yes to sex. Have that be your initial attitude. Or another way of saying that is don't let no be the last answer. Just like in any conflict, just because we want different things to start with, it doesn't mean we're going to let it sit there. We're going to work it until we find a way to do it.

Sonika: Yes. Stay in there until you come up with win-wins. Go for the opening. If you don't want to have sex, for example, what would you be willing to do? You always can find an opening. Always find a place to go so that it's not just a slam door shut. What would you do? I'd be willing to cuddle with him on the couch, I'd be willing to rub your feet, I'd be willing to be there for you in shower. You look for where you are willing to go.

[1:00:03]

Christian: If you put out the last slide, Eric, that is your homework assignment for the week. From this list, and as we say in the PDF list, that will be ten points, from this list, pick one or two that you can really practice. Click one more time, Eric. So practice generating this desire and wanting by using one or two more -- as many as you can actually -- suggestions from this list, which you just saw half of, and take on the experiment for a week. You're a sensual person and that you will revive or strengthen an already existing part of your relationship.

Sonika: All right. We will close then. And I just want to say and by way of wrap up is be gentle with yourselves. Sex is a little bit like offering the most vulnerable parts of ourselves. And we do feel vulnerable in that particular area. When I ask for sex, it's like, "Do you want me?" So a really important thing to remember is that we're all vulnerable. Some of us have a lot of hurt and a lot of stuff from the past around sex, to be able to just say thank you to our partners of our relationships, thank you for wanting to go there with me, thanks for wanting to have sex with me, thanks for wanting to create all those wonderful experiences with me.

Christian: Even if I don't want to right now, my first sentence is still thank you so much for wanting me, for wanting back.

Sonika: Yeah, it's a lot better than if you didn't. And now how do we work together as partners to find the next opening, the next step we can take? As Christian said earlier, some of you are not going to be at a place where you can just go from nothing to something, totally fine. What would you be willing to do? And hopefully, some of these conversations that we're inviting you to have will begin to open up some new possibilities for you about what sex gives, how you can initiate, what works for you, what's the experience you're after, what do you want to create more of, how could you create some kind of win-wins? There's always place to go even if it's just a really good foot rub.

Christian: Yeah. And please use the form to ask us any questions. We know sometimes it can be a little daunting. Some of you might feel a little shy about putting questions out. But we invite you to go for it. Get your value. Get the support you came here for to begin with. You've already invested your time and money and energy so you might as well milk it to the last drop.

Sonika: Thank you very much for being with us today. Thank you, those of you who risked sharing. Thank you, Eric, for managing--

Christian: Making everything work.

Sonika: -- controls for us. And we all look forward to being with you next week our last session. Take care and be gentle with yourselves meanwhile.

Christian: Yes. See you next week.

Sonika: Bye, everybody.

[1:03:17] End of Audio