



**Episode 287: How to Create and Rekindle Passion
& Libido in Relationships With Susan Bratton**

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Katie: Hello, and welcome to "The Wellness Mama Podcast." I'm Katie from wellnessmama.com. And today's episode, may be one you don't want your little ones listening to, so if you are a mom or a driving in the car with little ones, you might wanna listen to this one sometime when your kids are not in the same room, unless sex is a topic you've already talked to them quite a bit about. Because I am here with Susan Bratton, who is considered a champion and advocate for all who desire more passionate relationships and she's considered a sexpert. She's been called the Dear Abby of sex with her fresh approach and original ideas that have helped millions of people of all ages to transform sex into passion. She's been married to her husband, Tim, since 1993. But we hear a little bit about their story today and that it wasn't always just sunshine and rainbows.

She's an author, an award-winning speaker, and a serial entrepreneur, whose passion is to help couples all around the world. With her husband, she is CEO and co-founder of Personal Life Media. And she's authored 20

books, including, "Relationship Magic," "The Passion Patch," and "30 Romance Tricks That Work Like Magic," as well as her international best-seller, "Sexual Soulmates." And in this episode, we go deep on things like why intimacy seems to die at a certain point in marriage and what you can do to revive it, why women and men are so different when it comes to intimacy, and how women can learn to be more in touch with their bodies in a way that's really sexually satisfying. So, buckle your seatbelts. This is a fun one. But, again, maybe not one for little children's ears.

Susan, welcome. And thanks for being here.

Susan: Oh, Katie, It's so lovely to have the opportunity to share a conversation that we have with others. You're always a joy to me. And thank you so much for the conversation around our sexuality and how it manifests over the different life stages we have, as a woman. I know that's a big part of what we wanna cover today. So, thank you.

Katie: Absolutely. And I'm so excited to jump into this with you because, not only are you a friend and an expert on this, I think this is a topic that doesn't get talked about enough. We're pretty comfortable talking about all the other health topics. But I feel like this is really an important aspect of health that doesn't get talked about even sometimes among close friends, and one that can be so helpful if we have the conversation in a constructive way. So, if you're willing to get a little vulnerable, at first, I know from knowing you that you have a pretty amazing story when it comes to yourself with your husband. So, if you don't mind, can we start there?

Susan: Of course. Yeah, well, I'm a sexpert. And that is a funny thing to be. And I've really had to grow into it because it takes a lot of courage to be a sexpert because people are really triggered by conversations about sex. And that comes mostly from people's shame and traumas that have happened to them, and their parents never taught them much about sex. Their parents never were very intimate together, weren't very touchy or lovey. Many people feel like they came from what would almost be called a sex-starved environment. And then they get out in the world and things happen. You know, we get abused or we get shamed. We date and things happen. Maybe we have unplanned pregnancies or we contract an STI or, you know, it's scary. We're taught to be almost afraid, "Don't get pregnant. Don't get an STI." But nobody ever tells us about how to make love, how to connect, how to keep, you know, your marriage bed in a really happy place. And so, we have a longing and a fear around sex. And many, many people, they feel like they're not enough or they have body shame issues, or they don't think they look pretty down there. There's just so much many things that can get in the way of having that deep, connected, loving, passionate relationship with your partner.

And I think, for me, it started... Gosh, I just remembered this, I think the catalyzing moment where I...and the very beginning of what happened to turn me from a successful Silicon Valley Executive into a sexpert, was the day I was standing outside on the front step of my Silicon Valley mansion, having had incredible financial success and entrepreneurial success in business. And there I was, standing there with my little girl, and she was six years old. And she was rubbing her little blanky on her lip. She liked to take the little satin edge of her blanky and rub it on her lip when she was nervous. I could always tell when she was... It was her little, like, poker tell when she was nervous. She was rubbing it on her lip. And my husband was in his SUV, was all

packed up, and he was gonna drive down the driveway, and she said, "Daddy, are you still gonna be my daddy?"

Like, oh, and I mean, I tell you that right now, and it literally, like, my whole chest gets coated in upset feeling from thinking that I was on the edge of ruining my little girl's life and losing my husband because we had grown apart in the last 11 years. The first 11 years of our marriage, we had stopped being intimate. I didn't really want him. I wanted to want him, but I didn't want him. He was so mad at me because I didn't really like to have sex with him anymore. And he was very emotionally checked out. And he was gonna drive away and go to a hotel, and we were gonna proceed with a divorce. And I thought, "What am I doing, man? How did I get here? How did I get here? This is not right. I don't want this to happen." I loved him, I just didn't want him. And if I only knew what I know now, I could have really prevented it from happening. Really, my whole career, the last 15 years, have been devoted to helping couples not get to the point that I got to that day where he was about to drive down the driveway and out of my life, and I was gonna ruin my daughter's childhood.

And we just didn't know what we didn't know. We said, "All right, let's not do it. Park the car, don't drive away. We can't do this." And we started to go to therapy. And then we went to sex workshops, talk about edgy. I would have a meltdown in the car on every trip to a workshop. We did these human awareness institute workshops, and ecstatic loving workshops, and orgasmic meditation workshops. And we really wanted to try to figure out how to rekindle our relationship in the bedroom because we were great friends, we were great parents, we had an incredible life together, but we were living as brother and sister. And really what had happened was I had sex with my husband for a decade, and I never had a climax during intercourse. And if you hear about this thing called... Have you ever heard of this thing called the orgasm gap? Have you heard that saying, or phrase, or concept?

Katie: I've heard the term, but I'm not totally familiar with the meaning.

Susan: The orgasm gap is that over 90% of the time, the masculine, if you will, the penis owner, he has a climax from intercourse, but less than half the time some women are able to have an orgasm from intercourse. So, you go for a decade having intercourse with your partner and never having experienced, you know, a climax from it. And how long do you wanna do that? Like, my limit was 11 years. I didn't wanna do it anymore. It wasn't good for me. It was great for him. He didn't understand why I didn't want to have sex. And I didn't know what I didn't know. So, we said, "Well, let's figure it out. Let's learn." Because what I've realized since then is that orgasm is a learned skill. So many women are ashamed or they feel not enough because they can't have an orgasm or they're not sure if they're having one, or they have one but only in a certain way, or only with their vibrator, or only once in a while. It's elusive. And what I've come to learn through all of the work that I've done is that all you have to do is know how to do it and someone just has to teach you how.

And so, I've devoted the last decade of my life to teaching women and their partners, how to have, not only one kind of orgasm, but 15 different kinds. Our bodies have unlimited orgasmic potential, and so do our partners. Men leave a lot of pleasure on the table. They don't seem to be as upset about it. They seem to be happy with their kind of go-to strategy. But us women, we have so many ways we can experience orgasmic bliss with our partner. And nobody teaches us how and you certainly won't see it on pornography. I am a very, very, very vocal detractor of pornography. I think it's degrading to women. It doesn't teach the right things. It's

not emotionally connected. And so, I really like to show people, give them techniques and ideas about, "Okay. Here's what you actually need to do to achieve that pleasure.

You just didn't know that you were missing some of these parts of the arousal experience and you weren't quite sure how your genitals worked." So, what I do is I just teach people all these different ways to do what I call bridging the orgasm gap or I like to call it "Crossing the gasm." You know, because we can have as many orgasms as our partners if we just know how to do it. But we just need to learn that there are people out there like me that can teach these things. And I give away most of this stuff for free. I love to give, give, give, give, give, give, give and do very well, just giving away lots of techniques. And so, that's what happened for us, but there was another issue, too.

And that is that, when I was young, I was sexually abused by my stepfather. And then when the first time that I lost my virginity, not the first time, the only time, the first time I had sex and lost my virginity, I got pregnant. And it was very, very... I was 19 years old and I had an abortion. And I knew that was the right thing for me, at that time, but I had a lot of loss and sadness over that. And then I had a time when I dated a boy and he almost raped me., and I felt very afraid of men. And I had a boyfriend one time who I had sex with and he kicked me out of bed and said, "Get your clothes and go home. I'm never going to call you again. You're no good in bed." Oh my God, I mean, I had so many wounds that I was carrying around, that even when I married my husband and I loved him, and I loved our lovemaking, it was so repetitive. And I wasn't really having a great experience with it, that when the new relationship energy wore off, and I had all that kind of, like, trauma I was carrying around, that between all the trauma I'd experienced and the lack of orgasmic pleasure I was having in my marriage, I just didn't wanna have sex anymore.

So, we went to therapy and he went with me, and we unwound all the trauma, I had a great therapist, and my husband was by my side every step of the way. And I was able to come to compassion about what happened and about my perpetrator, my stepfather, and I felt forgiveness for him, and I let it go. And I moved beyond it, instead of stuffing it. And I learned skills from these workshops. And all of a sudden my sex life with my husband became alive and on fire. And I found my feminine fire. I was having incredible pleasure with my husband and I. We just thought, "Oh my gosh, why doesn't anybody teach these things. All our friends are dropping like flies. They're all getting divorced. And it's not the finances, it's the sex. It's the lack of good sex." He's gonna go get another younger girlfriend and she's gonna get just as bored with him. And he's gonna have multiple divorces and re-marriages because they didn't know what they were doing because there's no place you can learn to have heart connected, passionate lovemaking.

So, that's how I ended up here, 15 years later, as the trusted hot sex advisor to millions, married 26 years, never more in love, never had better sex, totally love my husband. And I teach people how to find that themselves, how to understand the anatomy, and arousal, and libido, and desire, and sexual health and it is the most rewarding thing. You know, your greatest wound becomes your greatest gift.

Katie: Yeah. Absolutely. And that's interesting that you said it was about 11 years in for you guys. It seems like there is something between that 10 to 15-year mark of marriage where... I hear this story from a lot of people from a lot of friends, that there seems to be a change that happens for a lot of people, at that point. Why do you think that is? Do you think it's just, like, for you, all those years of it not being what it could have been and

getting disillusioned? Are there other factors that come into play in that time period or why does it seem like so many people may be hit that at the same time?

Susan: Well, there are a couple of stages of abject boredom and sexual dissatisfaction. It sounds horrible, doesn't it? Yeah. The first one is about four months to four years into the relationship, the new relationship energy wears off. And then there's that seven-year Itch, which some of us can keep going until about 10 years, but it's really boredom. It's just that orgasm gap thing where it feels great to him, so he wants to keep doing it. But you get bored out of your mind and you need more... As the female, you need more seduction. You need to be moved towards your pleasure. You need more arousal. You need to feel desire. You also simply get bored and you need just more excitement. You need it to be fun. It ends up being rather perfunctory, after a while, if you're not learning new things together. Really, the interesting thing about libido is that it is your general health. And as you age, your gut microbiome gets messed up, you get more toxins in, your hormones start to decline. All those things are actually... You know, you're not producing as much serotonin in the gut. You're not producing as many hormones. If you've been on birth control pills, that's tamped it down. You know, there's just a lot of factors at a physical level that happens, and then desire at an emotional level.

You maybe have frustrations with your partner, or withholds, or you're not really being honest, or they've maybe, you know, gotten a potbelly, or they're not grooming themselves like they used to, or they're dressing sloppy, or things like that, that make you less...you desire them less. So you've got kids and you're tired. And your husband's a little, like, I don't know, rough around the edges. You know, he's not showing up for you the way he did when you first got together. He's not romancing you. Sure, you might have date nights, but he's not putting the effort in on the romance side of things. You know, when was the last time he brought you flowers or, you know, things like that.

And so, that kind of pulls down your desire. And then because he doesn't understand how to arouse a woman, because testosterone starts out already. You know, he wakes up horny, and you don't. He's got this morning wood and he would just be happy to have sex every morning, just intercourse. It would be great for him and he'd go on his merry way, but that's not really what women want. We wake up in the morning, gaving to get the kids off to school, and a million things to do. And quickies, honestly, I am against the quickie. I stand for no quickies because our genitals, our female genital are urogenital structure. We have as much erectile tissue inside us, as our partners do on the outside. If you think about it, he's an outie and we're an innie. And he gets almost instantly aroused because the blood flows into his penis and he gets that erection, so his visual signal is, "I'm ready to go." And that's the thing with testosterone, it's full speed ahead. It thinks it knows what it's doing. It's overly confident. It has more certainty. That's why it never asks for directions, right? Even when it's lost, it just thinks it knows. It's overconfident. It's cock shore, right? And estrogen is more eyes on everything. It sees flaws. It has more anxiety, naturally. It has trouble getting in its body. It's in its head. And it's bothered by things, that the room is too cold, his beard is scratchy, the sheets aren't snug on the bed, the lighting is too bright, the music isn't right or it's too loud. You know, we notice everything. And so, we have a harder time settling in. It takes us longer to get aroused. Our husband doesn't realize this because he's full steam ahead. And he's kind of immune to the little things in the room that take us out of our body and we notice.

And so, we get this disconnect, where over the years, you haven't taken, or insisted upon, or known to make sure that you get enough physical stimulation, that you take a slow arousal and let your body, and let your desire come to you. We don't start out horny. We need to be turned on. We need to give ourselves the

opportunity to first relax, which is the beginning of arousal. And then to build our turn on and our engorgement, which is the blood flow to our genitals. We need to kiss and be held, and stroked, and loved first before our husband grabs our breasts or grabs our Yoni. That's not right for us. But he doesn't know because the first thing he wants you to do is grab his manhood. That makes him feel calm. And like, "Okay. This is good for me. I'm being touched where I wanna be touched." If he grabs you that way, it contracts you. It's not right for the woman. And so, most husbands don't know these things. And so, you go on for a decade, getting manhandled by a guy, you know, who thinks he's better than he is. Eighty-percent of men, think they're above average in bed. Okay. That math doesn't compute. So, if you don't have someone showing you how to turn on slowly and giving you the chance to do that, how many times are you gonna wanna have sex? You're gonna want to stop that after a while. And that's what I think happens to a lot of marriages. And the fun goes away. You're not learning new things together. And I'd love to tell you more about that, too, the way to kind of, like, rekindle it, if you will.

Katie: So, I definitely do wanna jump into how ways you can try new things and rekindle in the bedroom. But first, I just wanna drive home a point. You mentioned that, for you in that phase, you had trouble reaching climax from intercourse alone. And I think that this is probably a pretty common thing for women, but it's not one that's talked about very often. And I wonder if maybe women feel like alone or, like, something's wrong with them when they're not able to that because it's a common theme, that they probably think that's something normal to happen. So, I'm curious, is that common for women to have difficulty with that? And if so, are there ways to learn that or to make it still very pleasurable, even if that's not the case?

Susan: Yes. Most women don't orgasm from intercourse, only the lucky ones. It's actually a learned skill. So, we are biologically wired to learn how to make babies. That's slot A into tab B. And that works pretty well without anybody teaching us what to do. But what we're not taught and isn't easy to understand or doesn't come naturally to us is having orgasms. There are 16 types of female orgasm by my count right now. And what I would call orgasms from intercourse or penetration orgasms, or PIV, is what a lot of sexperts call it, penis-in-vagina orgasms. I don't like that one as much. That is one of the most learned types of orgasms that there are. And the best way to do it... Well, I'll tell you that I have a series about how to do it. I explain all of the details of exactly what to do in a series of YouTube videos on my Better Lover YouTube channel. So, I can't get into all of it on this podcast because there's a lot of things because it's different things for different women. But generally, the biggest issue is two things.

The first is lack of proper genital engorgement, which means, not enough time with getting your genitals massaged, and/or pleasured prior to intercourse. And then the second thing is lack of his skill in the thrusting and lovemaking side of things. He will tend to go immediately inside you. You won't have enough engorgement. You won't have enough blood flow. You won't have enough turn on. You won't have enough lubrication. And he'll go too fast, he'll go right in. And then he'll go in and out, kind of like the piston in a car motor, rather than the teasing, short, shallow strokes, combined with longer, slower strokes, hip drops and pelvic fluidity instead of a stiff pelvis. He'll do too much, too hard. He won't give you breaks. He's not really conscious of what his penis is doing inside your vagina. You're kind of just holding on, if you will, unable to relax. There's probably a lot of vaginal rigidity. There's probably a lot of missing terms of endearment, and verbal appreciation, and encouragement. There's probably lack of kissing and full-body touch, and things like that. The positions may not be comfortable for you. It might be that you're rushing into it and you're not propped up with pillows. The environment might not be right. You might not have enough application of good organic nut oil. I like coconut oil or avocado oil, organic oil added to the situation so that you've got a good

glide. There's just probably a lot of components missing that are preventing you as the woman from really surrendering to your pleasure and it feeling very good to you. But I can tell you that, if you lay in all of these types of things... And there's nothing wrong with the desire for your husband, you love him, you're not mad at him. He's meeting you're outside of the bedroom relationship values, that the two of you can learn how to make love in a way that is much more orgasmically satisfying for her and not just him.

Katie: That makes perfect sense. Yeah. So, what are some of the ways...? I'd love to hear both from your experience and now what you teach, just a few more ways that people can rekindle that. You gave some great suggestions on how to make sure it's beneficial for both. But when people hit that time, where like that seven-year itch you mentioned, what are some ways to rekindle that and to make things feel alive again for couples?

Susan: The best way is to schedule erotic playdates. So, I didn't say schedule sex because that's one more thing to do, which is the last thing we wellness mamas need, right? The last thing we need as one more thing to do, "Service, my husband, boring." And not to have any lovemaking out of shame, or mercy, or feeling like you have to, or duty, or anything like that, instead, scheduling erotic playdates where you learn new things together. Because your old dog needs to learn some new tricks. But because he's testosterone dominant, he thinks he knows everything and he's great in bed. So, you can't tell him he's not, but you can tell him, "Let's try some new things." And new things might be, "Let's do a little role play." Maybe it's, you know, "Let's play doctor and nurse," and I'm gonna wear some little nurse outfit that's super cute because that can be fun for some women. They like to dress up in sexy things and that makes you feel sexier. Or, "Let's try a new position that we've never tried," or, "Let's make love in a different place," maybe out in the backyard or something that feels a little naughty like, "The kids are all gone, let's try the dining room table." That can be really fun. Or, "Let's learn a new skill together." So, maybe an expanded orgasm practice or something like that. There are so many different ways that you can think about learning new things together. And the couple that plays together, stays together, especially in the bedroom. So, moving from, we're having sex to we're having erotic playdates, really gets you back into that new relationship energy that's gone missing. And it helps your guy learn some new techniques that will make sex better for you. So, it's a really good kind of ninja female technique that invites new learning without any blame game.

Katie: Another great tip. And I'm curious, though, I think that there's probably another side to this as well, which is that whether it be through childbirth or, for my own experience, when I had Hashimoto and was really in the thick of it. Those things can really kind of tank your libido. And I know that there's... I've talked on this podcast before a lot about that testing that needs to be done and definitely getting thyroid checked, and things like that, the physical side of libido. But what about for women who don't even have, maybe, that desire to really do that? They don't feel like their libido is there at all.

Susan: Yeah. Libido, desire, and arousal, they're the three interconnecting circles. I like to think about it as the three circles. It's called a Venn diagram, technically, the three circles, and then in the middle is a little heart, where all of that connects. Libido is, you're feeling your physical body and its interest in making love. And when you're ill, your vitality is diminished, and your sexual vitality is the same as your life vitality. You can't feel passion for your sex life if you don't feel passion for your general life. So, anything that's essentially crunching down your physical vitality is also dampening your sexual vitality. So, ground zero for you is your gut, getting your gut moving, making sure your microbiome is working, making sure you're pooping really easily and well every day, making sure you're well-hydrated, making sure that your vaginal microbiome is in good

condition. You know, a lot of women suffer from everything from like, and sclerosis to yeast infections to bacterial vaginosis to cystitis and UTIs and all of those kinds of things. We're very delicate, our vulva region, our urogenital complex is very delicate. And so, we have to be in good health to have a libido. Your heart is beating, your libido is a beating heart too. And then desire is, are you in good shape with your partner? Are there any withholds, anything you're mad about? That needs to get fixed before you can want them again. If you're mad at them, you don't want them. And then the arousal pieces, what I was talking about, giving yourself enough time to get fully engorged and turned on, and use good lube and, you know, learn new things, and actually learn some techniques, and things like that, that's like the care and feeding of your intimate life.

And so, really, those three things have to come together to feel good. There's another interesting piece that is, vaginal restoration. For a lot of women, after having a child, if they've had a severe scar or an episiotomy, some women get fistulas or varicoles, or things like that. They've had wounding or damage from a bicycle or horseback riding, or they're starting to have incontinence, or they feel vaginal laxity, lack of tone. All of these things affect the vast amount of us females. And there are many, what I would call, vaginal restoration technologies coming to the fore now that are available to us, that are not surgical in nature. They're not vaginoplasty or labiaplasty. They are almost what you would call lunch break treatments. Using CO2 lasers and RF devices intravaginally, up inside the vagina, that are similar to what you would do if you were having Fraxel or BBL, or an IPL or any of those kinds of things on your face, any kind of like... You know, you talk about photobiomodulation a lot on your show. So, you know, you're using essentially, light to stimulate new growth. So, the laser is light that does subcutaneous damage to your vaginal mucosa, which is hormesis, which creates new growth in the tissue and re-colleganate the tissue and tightens and tones the vaginal canal, and helps stimulate the musculature to rejuvenate the musculature tissue to help with incontinence. And then there's also RF devices on the outer labia and inner labia that can be done for older women who are getting a lot of loss of tone. And then there's, of course, the O-Shot. Have you ever heard about the O-Shot?

Katie: I have. And I actually had someone who does it on the podcast a while back, and I have actually tried it myself. But please explain what it is for anyone who hasn't tried it.

Susan: Oh, great. Who did you have on? Robin?

Katie: No. I had someone from GAINSWave down in South Florida.

Susan: Oh, great. Yeah. From GAINSWave. Right. So, that's what you do. You get a GAINSave for your husband and a P-Shot, and use a vacuum erection device to reverse his natural atrophy because as men age, their penises shrink, they atrophy. We're shriveling up as we age. And so, to reverse the natural atrophy, especially, if there's been any health issues, you use the GAINSWave to knock the plaque off and then you get the blood flow again. And then you use the penis pump to open and pull that tunica albuginea up so that the chambers can fill with more blood and the P-Shot does that restoration of the tissue. It's the same with the female, only, when we shrink, we get bigger, more open. Our vaginas get lax, they lose tone. So, his penis shrinks as your vagina gets bigger. It's the cruelest cut, Katie.

And so, the O-Shot is actually PRP, platelet rich plasma from your own blood, same as the P-Shot for him, spun in a centrifuge and then the white blood cells are taken off, and the red blood cells are taken off, and you're left with this healing broth, this golden broth of platelet rich plasma that has cytokines and healing factors that get injected. It doesn't hurt. You're numbed, injected into your clitoral structure, your clitoral structure being erectile tissue, and your urethral structure, which is your G-spot... It's not a spot. It's an area. And it's actually a tube of erectile tissue that surrounds your urethra canal, which is where the urine flows out. Those structures, you inject with this PRP, and it rejuvenates that tissue. It regrows new clitoral tissue because over time we get sensation loss. By the time you're 50, you've probably had 20% or 30% sensation loss from when you were 30 years old. It's just a natural part of aging. But now, we have these regenerative therapies that we can use to bring back full function to our genital system from injury, childbirth, trauma, and aging. And they work really, really well.

Katie: Yeah. That's super fascinating. And I've noticed even just, in my own life, like you said, that whole body approach, all of those things have to be in line. I don't think maybe, for a lot of people, especially, people my age, those things may not even be necessary yet. But I do know this, for sure, when I eat clean, and I get enough sunshine, and I get enough movement, and I get enough sleep, those things all line up better, and my libido is definitely stronger. So, I think that's really sage advice to really focus on all of those factors and, like any aspects of health, not look at libido as a thing in isolation, but look at it as part of your overall health. And that makes perfect sense.

Susan: Yep. It is just part of our life force.

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Katie: I also wanna circle back and go a little deeper on the trauma aspect because I really appreciate you sharing so openly about that and about the pain in your past. And I know that, statistically, a lot of women have some form of sexual trauma in their past. I do have sexual trauma from when I was in high school. And I know that this is a very common thing. I have many, many friends who have been through some type of sexual trauma. And I know that that also may be a very personalized thing. And you mentioned therapy and things that help you. But are there some general steps if someone has that in their past and is maybe willing to face it, that are a good starting point?

Susan: Yes. First of all, know that trauma has happened to probably 60% of men and women. Men are definitely equally traumatized. And trauma comes in many forms. It can come from someone doing something to you or shaming you. Trauma can come from lack of knowledge and the fear that comes from not knowing. It can come from health procedures, and not even necessarily gynecological procedures, but just general health procedures, where people are touching your body in ways that you did not give them permission to. It can come from, obviously, the dating world and the shame of things that happen there, whether it's STIs or unwanted pregnancies, or mean people, or aggressive people. There are so many ways that trauma can happen.

And what I can tell you is a couple of things. The first is that, your partner is your greatest healer, that most people heal their traumas together as a couple. The second thing that I can tell you is that trauma is not just rational and that it's primarily in your body, not as much in your mind... It's in your mind, it's in your psyche. You can talk about it. You can talk therapy out of some of it, but most of it is actually caught in your enteric nervous system. So, we hold a lot of our sexual wounding in our pelvic area, in our sacral chakra, in our womb, in our tissue, all that tissue that we have in us, in our pelvic area. And it needs to actually be touched to be released. That's why G-spot massage is one of the most common somatic healing technologies, that we use body healing technologies when our partner can give us a general massage and stroke that G area right inside the vagina, right on the roof of the vaginal canal, right up in the top of the cave. It likes pressure and it needs release.

For many women, their vagina is very rigid and hard because it's been traumatized and it's kind of locked down. Their pelvis is locked down or they're having painful sex. And every time they think about sex, it hurts before they even are entered. And all of this is just trauma waiting to be loved and released into and let go. So, there are things that trigger us. We get triggered. We feel unsafe. And that's why having a lot of these kind of loving touch modalities are very important.

I also have a really nice series on recovering from sexual trauma on my YouTube channel with Arielle Giarretto. Arielle runs an organization called fullembodiment.org. And she is, to me, the preeminent sexual trauma healer in the world today. I have very good connections. And we did a series about releasing trauma, being the partner of someone who's been traumatized, supporting your partner through healing. What somatic healing is, somatic healing modalities, how to release enteric upset and shame. And so, you know, we can't go into all of it in a less than an hour of a podcast, but that's a resource that I would send you to. It's at betterlover.com. And you can just search trauma on my YouTube channel. And you'll find a beautiful series that we did together on healing trauma together as a couple.

I mean, we went to therapy, but it was my husband that healed me, as he began to massage me and release all the things that I had withheld and buried in my womb. Sometimes things would erupt out of me like... It would sound like the Wicked Witch in the scary cottage of "Hansel and Gretel," where I would go...and make all these weird sounds that just erupted out of me as he was stroking that G-spot area. Or I would squeal like a hyena or I would roar like a train was coming through the room. I mean, and I would cry. He would hold me after that massage. And I would cry, and cry, and release, and release. But he just held me in his safe masculine container. And he just let me let all that go. And as I let all that go, then I began to feel pleasure. And that was really what allowed me to begin to have those orgasms from intercourse because now I'd lost all that armoring that I'd had, all that emotional armoring that had shut me down, and locked me down, and I released it all. And I began to release and release, and then I could connect with them. And when we made love, I didn't dissociate. I didn't leave my body. He's kept me, "Look me in the eyes, baby, I'm right here. Everything's okay, I've got you. Do you need me to stop? Do you need me to slow down? Let's take a break." And he just healed me from all of the injustices that had happened to me in my lifetime.

And that's how I got from shut down, about to lose my marriage, to lose my wonderful husband and to ruin my daughter's life, and my life, and to be alone, to start over, and to not have that happen, and to go on, to heal, and to go into the upward pleasure spiral where lovemaking just got better and better. And we so changed that we wanted to bring this change to other people. We wanted to make all this information available to everyone in the world who could find us. That's the beauty of the internet. I mean, I'm not able to put these things on Facebook because Facebook, they're just, like, nothing about sexuality. Even sexual health, no, no, no, nothing, nothing, nothing. It's actually hard to find this information. But YouTube luckily lets me keep a channel that I can teach people things. And my sexual vitality summit is available to people for free because the healing is out there. The knowledge is around. And I just really appreciate you giving me the time to come on to "Wellness Mama" and touch the people in your world with the possibility of healing, and connection, and pleasure.

Katie: I'll make sure we find those links as well and put them in the show notes at wellnessmama.fm. So, if you are driving or exercising, don't worry about trying to write that down or keep it in your phone. Those will all be at wellnessmama.fm, so you can find Susan more. Before we wrap up, there's another topic that is just timely for me right now as I'm under a month away from having a teenager myself is just the thought of how do we hopefully teach our children a healthy and positive attitude when it comes to sex? Because I think a lot of people... Like, I know I went into marriage with a lot of interesting attitudes about sex, but in including ones I had to work through about all the early childhood ones about sex being bad. That was taught, you know, when you're young and you're not supposed to be quite having sex yet. Like, I had to work through that at marriage, once sex was wonderful and good. But do you have any tips, especially, for the moms listening, and especially

for our daughters of how we can raise them with a healthy, and realistic, and wonderful attitude towards sex and toward their bodies?

Susan: Yes. And thank you so much for asking about that. I actually have quite a bit of knowledge and experience in how to talk to our children about sex. And just to give you some kind of highlights about the approach. Yeah. We are traumatized by people scaring us about sex, "Ooh, don't get near any semen, it's bad for you. You'll get pregnant," and you know, "You're gonna get STIs and it's dangerous." Our heads are filled with all these negative things. And then we don't have names for our genitals and we're not taught our anatomy and, you know, everything is just the negative, negative, negative. And so, we have to teach ourselves.

So, the one thing I'll tell you is that, forgive your parents for not teaching you. They didn't have the tools. It wasn't the time. And when they tried to, if they tried to, you probably gave them a big eye-roll, and it was hard for you to talk to them about it. So, forgive them and move on, and know that it's actually your responsibility, just like personal growth is your responsibility, just like continuing to always work on your health and making sure you are saving money and, you know, you're getting your exercise and eating your vegetables. Your job is to open and expand your sexual potential yourself. It's not your parent's job, so let that go. Because what I find is people hold a lot of bitterness about that with their parents. And that's unnecessary, so forgive your parents.

The second thing is, children wanna know very early on what the anatomical parts are between boys and girls. And so, it's very nice to tell them about, "This is called your vulva. These are your labia. You have inner and outer labia. You have something called a vaginal canal. You have something called a clitoral structure. A boy has a penis. He has testicles. They're in a sack called a scrotum. You know, he has something inside called a prostate. There are lots of interesting parts, but we all started out the same. We all started in the womb as little girls, but then about 8 to 16 weeks during gestation, half of us became boys, girls have innies and boys have outies. They fit together to make a baby." What you do is you start with the simple things, "This is called your vulva. You have different parts. Boys is called a penis. He has different parts." And then you layer in extra pieces, "And then here's how babies are made. The penis goes inside the vagina and something called semen comes out that has sperm inside it, that fertilize a little egg inside the girl, that grows inside, her belly gets big, it comes out her vagina, and that's how you get a baby." Right.

So, you teach them those kinds of things. And then later you talk about, "Sex is a beautiful thing between adults. It's something that you share. It can be a really sweet emotional connection. It's like your best friend with benefits." So, you know, you start talking about the emotional aspects. And then you start saying, "You always wanna honor that you should only do what you wanna do. You're in charge of your own sex life. You never do anything you don't wanna do. If someone's pressuring you, here's what you do, you call me or you leave immediately. No one owns your body, but you." You do the body safety pieces. And then as they start to get a little older, you say, "There are some things you have to watch out for in sex. You wanna be careful not to get pregnant. When you're ready, we'll talk about contraceptives. I recommend non-hormonal contraceptives. I'll teach you all about that when we're ready. And we'll also talk about safe sex and setting your boundaries, and having agreements about what you're willing to do and what you're not willing to do. And I want you to feel comfortable talking about sex. And then, you know, you go into more and more details

about all these things. And what I find is that, over the years, if what you do is you just drip, drip, drip, you know that...

What's that phrase about how the river always finds its way? It goes under, it goes around, it goes over, drips, drips, drips to find its way to the ocean, that's what you're doing with your child. You're taking them on a journey, one drop at a time, so that... Their sexuality isn't something where you sit down and have the talk, you've just always been having those conversations with them. You're just layering knowledge. And then you also get some good books and you put those books in your family library, and you say, "I bought some books about human sexuality. There is a resource for you. Anytime that you're curious, you can always ask me, but you can always refer to books as well. And they're there when you're ready." And then the kids can go take them and look at them when they're ready, when they have the curiosity in the knowledge. So, I think the combination of always layering in more info...

And when your kids are teenagers, when you're driving them someplace, just drop one little thing, and then be done. Let it soak in for them and don't expect to have a conversation about it. Just give them a little interesting fact, without them having to talk to you back about it. So, it's not a two-way conversation unless they wanna make it that way. That's also good advice for how you talk to teenagers who are resistant to everything you say because that's their natural process of individuation. It has nothing to do with you. That's how the individuate. So they have to. They're compelled biologically to negate what whatever you say. That's just them growing up, so you can't take it personally. So, those are some of my little tips and techniques about that.

Katie: Those are great. And I can't believe our time has already flown by so quickly. But a couple of quick things I love to ask at the end, the first, is there a book or books that have really impacted your life. If so, what they are and why?

Susan: I would highly recommend the "Women's Anatomy of Arousal" by Sherry Winston. Sherry is one of my mentors. And she talks a lot about that piece that I want all women to know more, which is how we experience arousal as different than the masculine, the pussycats versus the puppy dogs. And learning about that, a "Woman's Anatomy of Arousal" by Sherry Winston is an amazing book.

Katie: I will make sure that is linked in the show notes as well. And any parting advice you wanna leave to all the women listening today?

Susan: Yes. Demand the time that you need and the sensation that your body craves in the moment when you have connection with your partner. Stop doing what you think you're supposed to do and listen to your body, and clue your partner in about what she needs and honor your Yoni.

Katie: Awesome. And Susan, you mentioned quite a few of your resources, but I'll make sure those are all again linked in the show notes at wellnessmama.fm. So, anyone listening, you guys can find Susan, and

continue to learn from her. But thank you so much for being here today and sharing your story so vulnerably and openly, and sharing what you've learned with us today.

Susan: Thanks, Katie. My pleasure.

Katie: And thanks as always to all of you for listening and for sharing your valuable asset, your time, with both of us. We're so grateful that you did. And I hope that you will join me again on the next episode of "The Wellness Mama Podcast."

If you're enjoying these interviews, would you please take two minutes to leave a rating or review on iTunes for me? Doing this helps more people to find the podcast, which means even more moms and families could benefit from the information. I really appreciate your time, and thanks as always for listening.