

# How sex and intimacy coaching can help bring people closer together

April 28 2021, by Treena Orchard, Debbie Marielle Elzea

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Credit: AI-generated image ([disclaimer](#))

Despite living in a sex-obsessed society, we rarely talk about our erotic lives in ways that foster meaningful intimacy with ourselves and others. Indeed, millions of people are craving physical and emotional connection, which has surfaced in heart-breaking ways during COVID-19. Social distancing and isolation protect us from the virus, but

they can also prevent us from enjoying the vital benefits of human touch and closeness.

The denial of intimacy is a distressing outcome of the pandemic that people are responding to in various ways. [Sex toy sales are soaring](#) and there has been a rise in podcasts that explore intimacy and [sexual coping strategies](#).

Dating apps are also being used in unprecedented numbers, with Tinder recording [a jaw-dropping three billion daily swipes in March 2020](#). How we talk about dating has even changed, [and new terms](#) like "COVID-worthy," "pandemic pickup lines" and "slow dating" are now commonplace.

Although dating apps are being widely used, Canadians are having less sex, which may diminish our physical and emotional health. Instead of swiping or video dates, consider intimacy coaching. It is a mindful alternative to [sexual exploration](#) and healing in response to the connection crisis generated by COVID-19.

## Coaching connections

Sexual or somatic intimacy coaching helps people [holistically explore different aspects of their sexuality to enhance self-confidence and pleasure within the context of intimate relationships](#).

There are four key aspects of intimacy coaching that, [unlike the momentary dopamine high offered by dating apps](#), may generate lasting outcomes for people looking to enhance their sex lives.

I'm a sexuality research who studies dating apps and my co-author Debbie Elzea is [an intimacy coach](#). We present a four-step approach to sexual coaching that is intended to provoke discussion about different

avenues to sexual connection as well as healing. We focus on [women](#) given our shared expertise working with this population, but these practices are beneficial across diversely gendered groups.

## 1. Knowledge

Knowledge is power: Women need to know their own bodies, arousal cycles, dislikes and boundaries to be confident lovers. In the sex and intimacy coaching context, [the belief that female sexuality is natural and that women deserve pleasure is reinforced](#).

Coaching helps normalize women's experiences through the open discussion of sex and celebrating sexual desires as well as fantasies. This is a journey that helps gives women permission to enjoy their bodies and sensuality in a safe, supportive space.

## 2. Time

Despite the myth that sex should spontaneously happen, scheduling time for intimacy is essential to having a pleasurable sexual connection with oneself and a partner, or partners. Just as we enter our work and life to-do items into our calendars, [sex must be given space to flourish](#).

In intimacy coaching, women have the opportunity to breathe, slow down and enjoy different aspects of the sensual journey. Investing time in erotic rituals, touch and toys that relax or arouse in advance of sex, is also encouraged.

## 3. Creativity

Creativity is an important aspect of sex and intimacy coaches help women figure out what they want or what has been lacking in their

sexual lives. This involves delving into what sex means, what it signals or evokes and the various feelings women want to experience from sex. Sexologist Jack Morin describes this as as the "[core erotic theme](#)."

Whether it's a desire to feel powerful, playful, naughty or spiritual, coaches encourage women to explore vast sexual menus to cultivate the sex lives they want. Fantasy, sensation play, kink and non-monogamous relationships are also celebrated.

## 4. Connection

Strong emotional connections during [intimacy](#) often lead to better sex and improve long-term partnerships. They can also enhance new dating encounters, where anxiety, unfamiliarity and substance use can [reduce the likelihood of pleasurable encounters](#). In order to help women tap into and enhance their connective skills, sexual coaches review practices like gratitude, setting expectations, communication and celebrating good experiences.

Somatic [coaching](#) encourages women to explore what they like and provides the support needed to help them fulfill their erotic and intimate desires.

Amid the restrictive and repetitive contours of daily life under COVID-19, finding ways to connect is essential. Various toys, platforms and creative endeavors can help foster fun, meaningful interactions.

Intimacy is central to health, closeness and mutual understanding. The practices shared here are powerful ways to enhance our solo and partnered relationships. Indeed, they may be our most powerful elixir to combat the loneliness and disconnectedness many of us feel as the pandemic continues.

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