



## Episode 010- "Making Love Intentionally"

**Guest: Dr. Cheryl Fraser**

Lindsey Douros:

Welcome to PeakConnection, the podcast for individuals, couples and professionals about engaging in life with vitality, deeper emotional connections, love, intimacy and authenticity. I'm Lindsey Douros and joining me today is Dr. Cheryl Fraser, an accomplished Fulbright Scholar, sex therapist, speaker and author. Her new book *Buddha's Bedroom: The Mindful Loving Path to Sexual Passion and Lifelong Intimacy* is receiving rave reviews from readers across the globe. She's been featured on Tony Robbins, Jack Canfield's *Chicken Soup for the Soul*, and has appeared on numerous other podcasts and television shows. Cheryl, thank you so much for taking time out of your busy schedule to be here with us today.

Cheryl Fraser:

It's absolutely my pleasure. If we can help even one couple or someone who wishes to be in a couple again, create something exceptional, and minimize the amount of difficulty that often comes as a big side dish to love and connection, I'm very, very happy to be here. It's an honor to be invited.

Lindsey:

We're excited. So I want to jump right in. We've got some really great questions today from some of our listeners, and then also some from myself. Right now, the world is just in a crazy point in history and relationships, I think, across the globe are being tested in one of the most extreme environments we've ever experienced. I imagine a lot of couples are feeling confused and overwhelmed. Maybe they've been trapped indoors with the same person for nearly six months and all those little cracks are starting to show through and the relationships veneer. If couples haven't done any kind of counseling or therapy at this point, where is the best place for us to start?

Cheryl:

I think it's important to say that although we are ... So we're recording this in October 2020, which of course is why Lindsey's talking about the last six months in particular the pandemic, COVID-19, very unusual times. I think it's important to emphasize Lindsey that this has been an unusual time, but that there are always pressures on our love relationship, on our sexuality, raising small children, which I know you're doing, medical crises, loss, or our parents pass away, losing a job, financial setbacks.

Cheryl:

I think what's different now, of course, is that it's affecting almost everybody at the same time, instead of more of a cyclical life stage way where three of our friends are going through rough stuff, but the other half dozen of us are not. Right now, I think part of the oppression is everybody's feeling the pressure and the pain and it's harder to turn to your friend and say, "We're really struggling," because you know your friend struggling too.

Cheryl:

So that's a preamble to your great question, which is, what would I suggest couples do now. First of all ... Also, Lindsey and I want to make clear, although I'm mainly going to use the word couples tonight, and talk about people in a romantic sexual relationship, gay or straight, trans, any one person that loves another one person. Even consensual, non-monogamy, there may be three people in a relationship. This applies to everyone across the board.

Cheryl:

I hope everything we share also applies to singles, who can think about a previous relationship when we go through things, and can also think about how they can apply this to a future relationship. So some contextualizing there. Whatever you do, if you're looking to improve anything, your fitness, the way you eat, your business skills, we need to train, we need to seek excellent advice. We need to immerse in knowledge, but now I'm going to blow people's mind and bust an old myth which is that knowledge is power.

Cheryl:

Knowledge is not power, taking action is power. Taking steps, setting goals, making executable commitments to each other is what I recommend. You can start right here. You're listening to a podcast, it's literally about and designed to help us find ways to have a more joyful, intimate, connected and worthwhile life. So start by educating yourself. Listen to positive things, read important books, about relationships, about communication, about sexuality. I send out free weekly videos. I know you've become a fan, especially of the one me driving in my car we may talk about.

Cheryl:

There's a great way that every Tuesday morning you can get a free relationship teaching. I call it a LoveByte on purpose. I want it to be digestible, about five minutes of a teaching that can give you a shot in the arm relationally or sexually once a week to say, okay, I'm going to try that piece of advice. So if people are rolling their eyes and saying, oh my goodness, Dr. Cheryl, I'm so tired. I got so much on my plate. I'm going to give a little tough love now and say I am not denying that it feels like there's little time to cultivate your romantic sexual relationship.

Cheryl:

People, all of the research on happiness and well-being and life satisfaction indicates that the number one predictor of happiness and life satisfaction is having a solid, happy love relationship and yet we tend to neglect it and it's 17th on the totem pole of things we pay attention to. So make love intentional. Treat your love life like you do any other aspect of your life, your parenting, or anything else that matters to you. Stop taking your love affair for granted.

Lindsey:

That's such great advice. Do you feel like a relationship can be salvaged at any point in time, or do you think that some relationships just do have that expiration date?

Cheryl:

I'm going to give you kind of a yes and yes, but sort of answer. I am a hopeless romantic at heart and a trained realist by training. I am a clinical psychologist, I am a sex therapist, I've had the privilege to work with thousands, tens of thousands now through my online programs of couples over the years. I tell you, Lindsey, if I was a gambling person, I would do a pretty poor job of predicting which couples are going to make it and which couples or not. I have couples that come to me that are in so much distress, such patterns of nasty arguing, complete sexual shutdown, have not made love in years, and I'm being very straightforward there.

Cheryl:

Just contempt, dislike, misery, who've jumped into the work of renovating their relationship as sort of a desperate, bloody-minded last attempt and have come out of it truly creating something new, where they're connected, they know how to resolve conflict better. They're not perfect, nor am I and my suppose and I suspect you and yours aren't perfect either but they create a beautiful, imperfect relationship. I've also worked with people who are really pretty darn happy, a little bit bored, looking to spice things up, make things more fun again, more romantic, who have crashed and burned and broken up.

Cheryl:

So I've learned in the trenches to not take distress as a predictor of breakup, and to not take apparent happiness as a predictor of not breaking up. So yeah, I would say pretty much any relationship, barring severe abuse or something like that, that would be a rule out. If you're listening, you happen to be in an unsafe environment, please seek help. Call the crisis line, find yourself some help and shelter, of course. Let's just say that to be ethical and effective. Take heart. I ran my online couples immersion program in January, just before most of us ended up in COVID isolation.

Cheryl:

I had, I'd say roughly 15% of the couples that joined my program for immersion, to renovate those three keys to passion, we're going to talk a little bit about that today, came in as a desperate last attempt. In fact, some of them only one party attended my coaching and my classes and consumed the material and they were still able to leverage what they learned and improved their relationship even though they're spouse to refused to participate. So I hope that gives hope to everybody listening who feels like they're at the end of their rope.

Cheryl:

Now, people often ask me, how do I know when I should stay or go, and barring overt abuse or something like that, I would be a fool and an arrogant fool to try to predict for you or anyone else when it was their last straw. That's a very individual journey. I can say, if we consider 10 out of 10 complete commitment to your relationship, like I'm 100% in even if I'm miserable, I'm 100% here willing to do whatever it takes. If we think zero out of 10 is completely and absolutely finished, there's no way in heck I'm going to try.

Cheryl:

We're done. We're divorced, it's over. I'm calling the lawyer. If you're a one out of 10, there's still hope. If you're almost completely out, if you're pretty close to convince there's no chance, are you willing to invest six weeks, eight weeks, three months, in maybe a 17-year relationship, maybe a 28-year relationship to say, let's find out if there's any way to salvage this and if we cannot, we can part with more wisdom. We can part more gracefully, we can part more fairly and kindly, and take the skills that we've learned into our next relationship.

Lindsey:

You touched a little bit on this course that you're teaching online for couples. Can you ... I know you have one of those coming up soon. Can you tell us a little bit about that and what you can offer people who might be at that last straw point during that time?

Cheryl:

Absolutely. What I will do first is I'll describe the three keys to passion because the course is draped around ... I'm holding my hands up, Lindsey can see me, you guys can't, in the shape of a triangle. I'm going to very briefly explain this. We may or may not have time to go into it more deeply because that encapsulates the teachings. People sometimes misunderstand, because a lot of what I talk about on podcast is the sexual part of our life. Because a lot of experts in marriage and relationship aren't trained in sexuality, and most hosts want me to really focus on that neglected area.

Cheryl:

I would be a fool to say, come on everybody, let's create a great sex life, and ignore the fact that a sex life arises in context of your whole relationship. So I teach something called The Three Keys to Passion, The Three Predictors of Extraordinary Relationship. This is based on research in couples therapy, sex therapy, psychology, communication, et cetera. The three keys to passion, because I know you're dying to know, are what I call intimacy, thrill and sensuality.

Cheryl:

Imagine a triangle, the base of the triangle is intimacy. Now, I'm not using that word here to be a euphemism for sexuality, the way weird English people they say, "Let's be intimate." By intimacy, I'm defining it as kind of a friendship part, the emotional, psychological, maybe spiritual part of our love relationship. That is, how do we communicate? Do I feel you know me deeply? Do I feel like you have my back? When something bad happens, you're the first person I want to call. When something good or funny or silly happens, you're the first person I want to call.

Cheryl:

John Gottman, the great marital researcher calls that marital friendship. So here, I really work with couples to teach them communication skills, conflict resolution. What are the four predictors of divorce when you're arguing? It's not how much you argue or how loud you argue that predicts breakup. It's how you argue and do you resort to these four destructive ways of arguing. I teach people to make up. Research indicates not surprisingly, that most couples have conflict and fall off the wagon of closeness and love and being in the same groove, but the healthy ones get back on that track more easily.

Cheryl:

They apologize, but they don't just say sorry. They apologize in a way that is owning their part in it, taking responsibility, vowing to do better. So that's the big chunk of the intimacy part of the passion triangle, and the first four weeks of my eight week program really focus on that. So if you're already really good there, I want you to figure out why, how to strengthen it, how to get even better and how to be able to sustain it in the long term, particularly under pressurized situations like COVID, like homeschooling your children, like financial downfall, losing your job during this time.

Cheryl:

That's where you might have been good communicators before, but how do you do when the pressure is on. The second key to passion, the second side of the passion triangle I call thrill, and briefly, I'm talking about that falling in love, butterflies in the tummy excited and yeah, horny feelings that came so easily for most of us when we were falling in love. When you couldn't stop thinking about your sweetheart. I'm sure you remember that with your own sweetheart, when you were obsessed with thinking about him, waiting for the text, waiting for the message. It lit you up. It's one of the greatest feelings in the world, isn't it?

Cheryl:

I love that feeling. I love falling in love. However, we're chemically imbalanced when we're falling in love. The term crazy in love is accurate. You may not know this, but the biochemistry in our own little brains when we're falling in love literally mimics the biochemistry of obsessive compulsive disorder. So we are literally obsessed. That's why we're like, oh my God, Cheryl, I met this guy and he's so cute. He's got this really sexy name, and I think he likes me and we're going out and I can't wait for him to kiss me. You're freaking obsessed, girl. So is he and so are they.

Cheryl:

Now we all live in the real world, and most of us have experienced that that last maybe three to six to nine to 18 months off and on. Then because essentially, we're cave people, and that part of relationship is me pursuing you. I need mate, you excellent. Then I get you and the biochemistry settles down. It settles down to contentment, it settles down to nesting in the cave, making the cave nice for cave babies. Catching buffalo and learning how to make fire so you don't have to always have buffalo sushi. I mean, real life takes over.

Cheryl:

Mortgages, kids, soccer games, dog throwing up like mine did in the middle of the night, having to get up and clean it up. So sexy. So our biochemistry changes, and we lose the thrill. One of the myths I like to bust is there's an old song about it, you've lost that loving feeling, and we say the thrill can't last forever.

I say Balderdash, it can. It's just very few of us are intentional enough to recreate novelty, to recreate excitement, to recreate adventure. That's the second thing I teach in my program.

Cheryl:

We spend a week, week and a half on how do you fall in love again with the one you're already with. The third side of the passion triangle is sensuality. That's everything erotic from holding hands when you go for a walk, to the wildest craziest taboo dark energy, sex craziness, and everything in between. Sweet lovemaking, cuddling, sleeping naked. I love to get couples to shower together, and I designed my house, well, my brother designed my house. He's the builder, but at the time I was single, Lindsey, and I said to my brother, I think he thought I was a little wacky, but that's nothing new in our family.

Cheryl:

I said, "I want a shower with two shower heads," and he's like, "Okay. Why? For washing the dog?" I'm like, "No, because one day I'm going to have a partner again and I love to shower with my sweetheart," but there isn't anyone alive who likes to be the one who's standing out in the cold when the two of you are showering together and one of us hogging all the hot water. So my shower was built with two shower heads for a reason. I showered alone for a good four or five years, and now I shower with my sweetheart. That's making love intentional, that's deciding that sensuality matters to me.

Cheryl:

So the program, I debuted it this year in the beginning about a month before, as I said, COVID shut us down into our homes I mean, and because it's an online program, and it's a deep couple's immersion program, there are weekly lessons, video lessons, there's homework, I call it home play, because I like to quip. Nobody wants to work on their relationship. Homework is kind of a dirty word. So there's exercises, home play sheets. So every couple at their own. Let's say the week one material comes out, you've got time to watch the lessons, do the homework, and then every week, there's a live, extra coaching and Q&A with me.

Cheryl:

So you get me as well. You get immersion, you get accountability. I bring an amazing guest speaker, some of the top people in the world to do bonus classes. Because I've been doing this a long time, Lindsey and the statistics on couples therapy are really actually lousy. Couples therapy doesn't generally lead people to say, I really know how to have a great relationship. No. It has great value, but I am an educator, I'm a teacher, as well as a clinician and I've been seeking for five years to create a program that I thought could help more couples, take them deeper and be replicatable because people get access to the material for the lifetime of the course and I intend to be running this course for a decade or more.

Cheryl:

So they can go back and re-watch lessons, they can go back on their anniversary, like one couple have vowed to do, and they're going to review the program every year on their anniversary. So this is the idea of a program that's accessible to everyone with an internet connection and a problem in their relationship.

Lindsey:

I love that.

Cheryl:

So that's what the program is about. I'm actually going to be offering it again in about a month and so if people are interested, they can click below and sign up for a free workshop online where I'll talk about a lot more about those three keys to passion, give everybody some actionable skills in addition to the ones we're going to cover tonight and you'll get tons of value and knowledge whether or not you feel the program is right for you or not.

Lindsey:

It's great because it's all online so it's super accessible to everybody right now. There really are no excuses right now.

Cheryl:

You have two small kids, right?

Lindsey:

I do. I do.

Cheryl:

How on earth are you and your sweetheart going to find the ability to find an excellent ... A couple therapist, which hopefully you can do where you live, but to arrange your life, the babysitter's, your work lives to get there, drive an hour, park, have 90 minutes or more with that person, drive home and then you're right back into life and you might not see your clinician for another 2, 3, 4 weeks. Don't get me wrong, I love excellent couples therapy. I am a huge fan. I still do a little bit of it myself, but I wanted to design something that was more accessible to couples and that they could go back and review because repetition is the mother of skill. As one of the great personal growth gurus, Tony Robbins says repetition is the mother of skill. We've all gone to a personal trainer, been shown how to exercise and then gone home and gone mwa-mwa-mwa and not really followed. Because we didn't have the repetition. We didn't have the coach and we didn't have the accountability. Fundamental aspects of behavior change.

Lindsey:

There's just ... There's no time. I know we've talked about this a little bit, but with COVID, what are you waiting for? There really are no excuses. I think too, right now, that couples are under an enormous amount of additional stressors. Maybe they already had some in their relationship, but now with COVID, like we said before, it's just even more so. Partners, and especially those with children, as we said, are struggling to try and balance that work home, distance learning, never getting to leave the house, financial strain, trying to share household chores. When we're isolated from our support networks, trying to find that balance can be really difficult and I feel like a lot of blame can be misplaced places which only creates more conflict. Do you have any thoughts on how couples can do a better job of communicating their needs to one another during this time?

Cheryl:

During this time and during any time, but I agree with you the pressure cooker is kind of turned up now. There's a beautiful little technique I'll offer right now. This is, I believe born from John Gottman. Other people teach it as well, but I like the way he teaches it and it's a way to ask for something when I'm distressed by something you've done. So let's take a kind of typical example, Lindsey. Let's say it's your responsibility in our relationship. We've agreed to this, that it's your responsibility to put the garbage bins up.

Cheryl:

Now where I live, I live in the country and they collect the garbage every 14 days here. They collect compost every week because they're trying to encourage people to compost more which is fantastic and to reduce their actual garbage. So here we are, and let's just say hypothetically, it's my husband's job, just hypothetically, to take the garbage up, and I say up because we have to go up a whole bunch of stairs to get to the road. We're kind of like buried in a cliff. Let's hypothetically say it was August, and it was really hot.

Cheryl:

I've got two dogs and two cats and all of the fecal matter, the kitty box matter, and all the poops that go in the yard go in our garbage. So you can imagine it gets pretty rank every 14 days with a bunch of heat beating down on the dog and cat toilet.

Lindsey:

So you're taking extra cohabited showers during that time.

Cheryl:

Yeah, exactly. So anyway, hypothetically, my husband may, hypothetically, have forgotten to take up the garbage bins and I wake up and I hear the garbage truck pulling away and I look at him and me say, "Did you?" And he goes, "I forgot." I immediately feel really irritated, and I immediately feel a story in my head about how I can't rely on you and I have to do everything and this isn't fair. Hypothetically, I may have said something along those lines. I'm sure I didn't, but here's what I should have done. I should have followed this technique, which is, when we're distressed about something, I want people to learn this, write this down, review it whatever.

Cheryl:

It's a formula. I feel X about Y and I need Z. I'm going to repeat that. We'll put it in the show notes maybe. I feel X about Y and I need Z. What does that mean? I feel frustrated you forgot to put the garbage out. So I feel X about Y. I feel frustrated. That's X, about Y, that you forgot to put the garbage out and I need Z, and I need you to be more mindful and reliable about that task. I feel frustrated, you forgot to take the garbage out, and I need you to be more mindful and reliable about that task.

Cheryl:

He's going to know I'm annoyed, but I'm not attacking him. I'm not being super critical. I'm not being unfair. Ideally, he'd receive that with grace, because it's not very attacking and say, "Yeah, you're right, babe, I blew it. I'm going to make sure to program it in my phone to give me two alerts, the night before and the morning of garbage day." "Thanks, honey, I appreciate it," and guess what, we get to then move on and have a nice morning.

Cheryl:

So when you say how can people ask to have their needs met? That may sound too simple, but often, simplicity grounds us out of the big story, and then the spiral into, all the times you're unreliable, or all the times you're so demanding, and why do I have to do all the garbage and all the pain of not addressing the simple issue, which is I feel frustrated about this, and I need you to do it differently. Okay, I'm going to do my best.

Lindsey:

That really helps, I think with holding that resentment and getting us out of that spiral. Does that help people, do you think, to break the cycle of conflict that they sometimes find themselves along the way?

Cheryl:

If they're brave enough, Lindsey, and if they do it enough. Let's be straight. It's really difficult to break repeating patterns. We've got our childhood stuff, we've got our attachment stuff from childhood, how our parents brought us up, previous relationships. We bring in some luggage to our current relationships. So your sweetheart, let's say, isn't at all a critical person, but they occasionally tease you gently, but maybe your last partner was really critical. So your sweetheart says, "Babe, you burned the toast, come on," and they're being kind of light-hearted and sweet, and you feel really hurt and really attacked by it. That's an old pattern.

Cheryl:

So saying, I feel X about Y because of Z, I feel hurt that you said something about the toast, because I felt criticized is pretty sophisticated in that moment. In that moment you feel hurt and angry. So yes, couples can transform patterns, but I'd be disingenuous and inaccurate if I implied it was easy. If it was easy, we all know how to be fit. It's not a very complex thing. We need to move our body more and probably differently, and we need to eat less and probably differently. It's a pretty simple formula. We all know how to do it.

Cheryl:

The question is, are we doing it, and are we doing it in a fairly consistent way that is fairly reliable, until we become ingrained in the new pattern of making healthy, intelligent food choices most of the time and moving our body in a way that's wellness-oriented, fitness and balance and strength and cardio-oriented reasonably often? So yes, absolutely, couples can ... They can move from being verbally abusive spiral monsters, because they never learned any better. They may have come from a verbally abusive home, et cetera, et cetera, to really learning how to communicate well, fairly and when they blow it, like I mentioned earlier, they know how to repair quickly.

Cheryl:

They know how to say, "Look, sorry, that was not cool. I apologize. I take it back. May I begin again?" That's basically the first half of my program is really helping us do that. I always learn from couples. The so-called expert is a student as well, always and if not, if you find an expert who doesn't want to be a student as well, run the other way is my advice. So what some of the couples in my last program, the first time I ran it taught me, a nice cohort of them, maybe 20% said, "Well, we don't argue, because we avoid anything that might be hurtful or hurt each other's feelings."

Cheryl:

So then we had to work with having the bravery to actually say, "Lindsey, honey, I feel X about Y and I need Z," because that was a giant step forward for the ones that just brushed it all under the carpet and had what I think you've referred to in this conversation, the more simmering resentments. They truly did, they were afraid of conflict, they were afraid of hurting each other, they were afraid of unpleasantness. So they were kind of burying all sorts of bodies in the living room of things that they were afraid to talk about.

Cheryl:

So my work with them was to take them metaphorically by the hand and heart and teach them techniques and skills and exercises they could use to make difficult relationship topics safe enough, that afterwards they might go phew, that was kind of challenging, but it was really worthwhile. I feel closer to you now.

Lindsey:

Right. It's so important, I think, to just get the skeletons out, just don't keep anything hidden. It just creates, at least for me, personally, way too many problems down the road. So is there a way for couples to evaluate a relationship and discover areas that they may be weaker or stronger and apply ... Do you have any specific exercises that you would encourage them to maybe-

Cheryl:

Sure. There's a number of beautiful books and teachings and people can go snooping around and find ways to evaluate themselves, but I created a free quiz that people might get a kick out of taking, especially if they listen to this podcast where you can rate yourself on that passion triangle. You can rate your relationship currently, and if you're single, you could rate your past relationship if you like. Where

are you strong and weak? Are you strongest on intimacy, but weak in thrill and sensuality? That's a very common pattern.

Cheryl:

Are you strong and sensuality and thrill, you've got a great sex life, you do a lot of adventuring things but you're weak in intimacy. You find it hard to talk about difficult things. You kind of stay on the surface, you kind of say, hey, honey, how was your day? Good. How was yours? Good. You want to go to bed? Sure. You don't have necessarily intimacy. So people can do that, we'll link to it below. Takes under 10 minutes, it's free. You get an email from me and a little video teaching after you complete the quiz that tells you what it means if you're strong here and weaker here.

Cheryl:

So it's a great way to get started. Because if you don't measure where you're at, at the beginning of a journey, you don't really have great odds of getting to where you want to get to. One of the best things we know from the world of fitness and weight loss is if you measure and weigh yourself, take photos of yourself when you're beginning a journey, and get real clear and visualize and understand where you want to get to that's realistic and healthy, you're much more likely to have success. So I love people to measure where they're at now and then talk to their sweetheart about it.

Cheryl:

You can both do the quiz independently, and then say, hey, I got this. I got something different. Well, where are we at, and what do we want to do about it? How can we focus in improving and strengthening these three areas that have shown to predict relationship happiness and a well-rounded, exceptional relationship, and exceptional means not typical. It saddens me that exceptional isn't typical. I'd like everybody to have an exceptional relationship, but anyone who's willing to really put in effort, intentionality, care, heart and not take their love affair for granted. Oh my goodness, we've fallen in love. It seems easy. It's all good.

Cheryl:

Then we kind of move into our lives together and ignore our erotic and intimate and relational and communication life as though we expect it to just thrive on its own. If you did that to a plant, it would die people. I'm sorry your ficus is less important than your love affair. Could we use some fertilizer and intention and give it some sunlight and water and maybe sing nice songs to it?

Lindsey:

It's so true and I think too, it's just perpetuated in the media. We see it so much with all of these shows that we watch and these movies that we watch, and it's setting up everybody for, I feel like unrealistic expectations.

Cheryl:

Yes. I may get sued for this. I sure hope not, but I often say we should create a class action suit against Walt Disney for the whole happy ever after myth. Hallelujah. Word.

Lindsey:

I will back that up.

Cheryl:

Basically, those prince and princess people, they get to have all the lust and fun and falling in love stuff and they surmount the obstacle, and then they get to live happily ever after. I'm like, oh, hell no. I have no doubt that Cinderella and Prince Charming ended up on my couch or someone like it about a year later saying, she leaves her glass slippers all over the place or whatever. Let's make it real. That doesn't mean you can't indulge in a romantic comedy to have a feel good moment, but it's about as real as

science fiction movies set in some planet run by giant man eating tigers or something. We can enjoy fiction, but please remember it's fiction.

Lindsey:

So a question that recently came up from one of our listeners was whether or not socially lubricating white lies run the risk of eventually damaging a relationship. What are your thoughts on that?

Cheryl:

It's interesting, I would love to speak to the person that put the question forward to find out exactly what they mean, but I'm going to have to hypothesize and I'm going to hypothesize, let's say your sweethearts put on a few pounds. They're not feeling so great about themselves and he says, "Babe, do I look chubby?" They look a little bit chubby. Maybe they mean a social lubricating lie as, "Well, honey, maybe you're not quite as slim as you used to be, but I love you. You're super sexy." If it's a compassionate comment that isn't an outright lie, like, oh, no, you're super skinny. That's just a lie.

Cheryl:

I don't care if it's socially lubricating. That's a damn lie. If what they mean is saying kind of kind things instead of, well yeah, I've been thinking you're a jiggle monster, babe. You look kind of gross. That's not really nice. So if our social lubricating ... I don't like the word lie there, but our social lubricating kindness is to be thoughtful and kind when we reply when we're asked something, especially if our sweetheart is feeling insecure, worried or concerned or down about it is say, "Well, babe, the truth is, you're not as fit as you used to be and I understand why. You've been working like a demon supporting us all, and I really want you to go easy on yourself but if you don't feel great about it, I'm happy to start going on long walks with you and try to help motivate you on your fitness goals."

Cheryl:

It's a very slippery slope, though, because ... I don't know exactly what the person means, but I suspect they mean something good-hearted like what I mentioned. I also want to point out that the illusion of radical honesty is an illusion. Because people lie for all sorts of reasons. I know you did a podcast recently on ADHD and marriage, for example. A lot of persons who struggle with ADD as adults, they lie a lot, but they're not even aware they're lying. It's a way to not get in trouble that they learned as kids.

Cheryl:

So if you say to your kid or your teenager, "Hey, did you feed the dog," and they didn't, they'll often say yes, because they're so used to getting in trouble because they're forgetful, because they're not great with detail that they're conditioned to just ... To lie, and then maybe they'll go feed the dog after. So it's not that they're dishonest psychopath, it's that it's a way to avoid trouble and I cannot tell you how many 30 and 40 year olds I've worked with whose partner is scandalized, because their partner lies about something like that.

Cheryl:

Like they'll say, "Oh, did you get the milk and the eggs?" The partner will go, "Yep," and they know damn well they forgot the eggs. Then the spouse is like, "Why didn't you just say you forgot the eggs? Are you a psychopath? Can I trust you?" Then I hear this fateful phrase right after that, Lindsey, which is, "If you'd lie about eggs, what else would you lie about? How can I trust you on the big stuff? Would you cheat on me, and I wouldn't know?"

Cheryl:

I've worked with a lot of couples to try to help that person who lies not because they're dishonest, but because it's an ingrained, habitual pattern to avoid getting in trouble and then they're going to go get the eggs. So I like to ... We can say, radical honesty is really a beautiful idea, but you've got to take into account your partner's history and their style. If they tend to say, yep, when they mean, maybe, if they

tend to say, I did that when they mean, I forgot, but I don't want you upset with me. So I'm going to run and take care of it right now. So you have no stress. That's something we need to discuss amongst each other, and come up with a way.

Cheryl:

I have one couple, where the ADD, in this case, the husband's ADD, I work across all spectrums, and they've realized that he doesn't mean anything by it and it is so automatic, he doesn't know he does it. So they've developed sort of a code where she says, "Hey, did you get the milk and eggs? He says, "Yep," and she said, "Did you get both the milk and eggs, babe, or is that an ADD yep?" Then he goes, "No, I actually got both of them." She said, "Okay, cool," because she needs to know whether she's going to offer eggs to the kids tomorrow morning or not.

Cheryl:

Sometimes he's like ... The yup literally means I heard you and I registered you've asked me a question, for him. It doesn't mean yes, I got milk and eggs. So we need to, a case by case basis, find out what these things mean. This is where kind of communication expertise is eluding most of us. What I just said probably helped a bunch of people listening.

Lindsey:

I'm nodding my head along because that's me. I'm the ADD yup.

Cheryl:

Are you a deliberate mean, liar-

Lindsey:

No, I just don't want to get in trouble and I'm juggling 500 things and it's the exact like, I heard you. I'm recognizing that you said something and I'm recognizing it in that yes. So I identify.

Cheryl:

I may be married to someone who's a bit like that as well, and I'm someone, for the most part, if I say yes, it means I've heard you. I get it, 100% executed. It's done. You can count on it. You can go to your grave knowing I've done it or will do it. There is no question. So my yup means something different than his.

Lindsey:

Yes, we struggle with that.

Cheryl:

[inaudible 00:35:07] figure that one out. [Went 00:35:09] a few rounds.

Lindsey:

So I think the intention behind this question was somebody was asking, do we need to be worried about this developing into something greater, potentially a relationship deal breaker. Where do they draw the line? So I think that is kind of like the background behind this, that they were concerned. Does this mean that you're keeping bigger things for me? I think you kind of answered that with, some of us just process things differently.

Cheryl:

Right, and that's where communication is like ... the C word is like a scary word, because we think making noise with our mouth while the other person's ears are in the room and them doing that back is communicating. It's not.

Lindsey:

It's really listening.

Cheryl:

It's talking. Whether we're actually understanding each other is what I help people do a lot of exercises around, oh, gosh, that's what you meant? Tell you a real brief story. You may have seen this in one of my LoveBytes recently. Went on a wilderness kayaking trip with my beloved about three weeks ago, and he's about eight, nine inches taller than me and we've done a bit of kayaking, but only in single kayaks and for the ocean adventure, because it was much rougher seas, they put us in a double kayak because it's more stable.

Cheryl:

He's in the back, I'm in the front. Now the person in the back has the foot pedals that helps turn the kayak port or starboard, or left or right. I'm in the front, so I can see where we're going, but aforementioned, he's eight or nine inches taller than me. So I'm assuming he can see over my [inaudible 00:36:34] little blonde head and see where we're going. Well, the third time we crashed into a rock when I told him go this way, go this way, I got pretty testy.

Cheryl:

The relationship expert, she got a little grumpy. I'm like, for God's sakes, you're not listening to me. Not practicing what I preach in that moment. The only saving grace was that night at the campfire, we went with two other couples, all in the same situation, all with the guy in the back and the woman in the front. The other two women had the exact same complaint as me, he kept not steering the right way and he wasn't listening to me and we had the biggest laugh, because then my sweetheart said, "Honey, the way the kayak seat is I'm sitting so low down, I can't see over you. I couldn't see a dang thing."

Cheryl:

I wasn't being very clear with which way he should go. We weren't communicating. We were flapping our gums and our ear holes were present, but we weren't communicating. So we then got on the same page when I realized my perspective is different than his, one of the biggest things I ever teach couples. Perspective taking. I can see things he can't, he can see things I can't and we need to figure out how to communicate that effectively so we don't crash into more rocks, sea lions, or goodness gracious, an orca who then eats us and that's our karmic revenge, I don't know.

Lindsey:

So we're all learning to juggle completely new sets of wild circumstances. Maybe we are in that kayak and nobody can see where we're going, but it can be especially challenging when you have a partner who maybe worked long office hours to begin with, and now they're working even longer hours, but they're from home. So a lot of couples might be feeling like, how do I curb this building resentment that I might be having of my partner putting in more office hours than relationship hours?

Cheryl:

Well, this may sound flippant, it's not meant to be. Make love. Making love, orgasms release oxytocin and dopamine and you're going to feel a lot less stressed, a lot more relaxed and a lot better. A lot of people are going to say, well, we can't possibly do that. Yes, you can. You've done it before, but your head gets in the way. You call it building resentment and I'm in my head, you're in your head, and we're in two different planets, even though we're in the same living space. What can you do to ... Believe it or not, the word based therapist is going to say what would happen if you shut up, and I mean that kindly.

Cheryl:

What would happen if you didn't talk about, you just require it together. What would happen if you just hugged each other and breathed in and out for what I call it, three breath hug? Many variations on that.

Walk up to your sweetheart, embrace deeply, wrap your arms around each other and then together, take a deep breath in and a deep breath out and repeat twice more. It's going to activate your parasympathetic nervous system which is your calm down system.

Cheryl:

It's going to bring your blood pressure down, it's going to slow your heart rate it's going to connect you and it's extraordinary, Lindsey if people, particularly working at home in the same space and lives in a small space, an apartment et cetera, with a couple of kids. You might still be homeschooling depending where you are in North America or the world right now. What if you set your dang phone or a beeper on your computer or your kitchen timer to go off once every hour or once every two hours and you took a five minute break together and you had a hug or you brought your sweetheart a cup of tea or you had a stretch together and did a couple jumping jacks, anything to change your mental, emotional, physical state.

Cheryl:

I'm snapping my fingers there to indicate change your state, make a change, make a change. We crawl up into our heads, we get all intellectual and then I'm mad at you. We're having stories in our head, these conversations that are often unpleasant all day long, in our head, with our partner who may be blithely unaware or having even worse conversations about us. What if you bypassed all that nonsense and just hugged each other? What if you gave each other a three-minute foot rub? It's amazing what nonverbal contact with intimate touch, caring touch can do.

Cheryl:

Anyone who's ever held a baby, a puppy or a kitten, anyone who's ever cuddled a stressed toddler to calm them knows the calming nature of nonverbal touch, and yet we forget to do it with our sweetheart. So there's a simple action I challenge all of us, not just now when we might be home with each other more often, but for the rest of our lives, is to use nonverbal touch. A hug, a touch, a snuggle. Put your hand on the back of your sweetheart's neck when they're at the computer and just give them a little stroke to connect you away from these sort of ... I think, Lindsey the way one can feel the most alone and lonely is to be laying in bed one or two inches from the person you love and feeling 100 miles away.

Cheryl:

If we can bridge that gap by reaching out and tangling our toe and their toes ... One of my friends, he's now passed away, was a beautiful writer. He talked about he and his wife would lay on the couch reading books and holding feet. I never heard that phrase before, but we can all imagine holding feet. They would tangle their feet together, and it just grounded them and connected them when they each read their own book. So shut up, meaning don't talk all the time. Don't get at each other.

Cheryl:

Oh, we're this, no, we never have any fun. That may be true, and my heart goes out to all of us, but what if you just held out your hand and gestured with your head towards the coach and invited your sweetie to go have a snuggle for five minutes. These small things can make a big difference.

Lindsey:

You have all these wonderful little bytes that you've kind of referenced that you send out and I love them. I think they're really helpful, and one of them that I really enjoyed was about how a relationship is ... A new relationship is like a new car. It's exciting. It's fun. Everybody inside the car or everything inside the car, it's clean, and it has that really nice new smell, but after a while that all fades. The kids come and stuff gets on the floor and it gets messed up.

Cheryl:

Dog here, everywhere.

Lindsey:

A lot of people are feeling burned out right now. Long-term relationships pose their own challenges for keeping that romance and intimacy alive, but you add careers and children dogs on top of that, and sometimes it feels more like a partnership than a passionate romance. So how do you help couples that have been in long-term relationships? I'll be honest, my husband and I've been together 14 years? 14 years. We just had our 12 year wedding anniversary this year. How do we keep that sexy, you were saying like horny passion alive amidst the demands of daily life and parenting small children and now we're navigating a pandemic together too.

Cheryl:

You bet, you bet. So I'll bring us back to my core teaching which is there for a reason to remind us that we are normal, that there's intimacy thrill and sensuality. I suspect you may at times feel you fall into lots of intimacy and friendship and what I call marriage incorporated. Marriage incorporated is where we're running our family like a business and we're doing a damn fine job. The mortgage is getting paid, the kids have shoes on their feet. Everybody's getting enough vegetables here and there, even if you have to hide them and stuff the kids like. The dog is getting their teeth cleaning, the car brakes get fixed when they get squeaky.

Cheryl:

We're doing really well and you and your sweetheart high five each other as you pass ships in the night. He's taking one of your kids here, you're taking the other ones there, but you've lost the coupledness. You've lost the specialness of you and I, the thrill and the sensuality part, the romance and the adventure. I alluded to it earlier, but I'm going to say a little bit more about creating adventure, creating novelty, because if someone new meets you or your sweetheart, they find them fascinating because they're new. That's that same person that we think oh, yeah, whatever we know all their jokes.

Cheryl:

A, you don't and B, if you had the eyes to see your beloved fresh right now, you'd realize ... I don't know if it's Walt Whitman, but there's that beautiful quote, I am vast. I contain multitudes. So does your partner. So do I. So do you. So really, I push people here, I get a little ass kicking and I say, if you're bored with your mate it's because you're allowing your mind to be bored. Your mate is fascinating. That's how affairs happen. Someone finds us or our mate fascinating, new, exciting, and we come home and then it was like, "Hey, did you pick up the chicken?" We're like, oh my God, I hate my life. I'm being very facetious and a bit funny, but I'm speaking about a major pain point. Please don't misinterpret my humor for being cavalier. These are major pain points.

Cheryl:

So what can we do to create novelty? Sounds like a funny idea. You can do something new. There's kind of a cool study. It was done up here in British Columbia a long time ago by a psychologist called Don Dutton like 25, 30 years ago. Outside Vancouver, there's a big long scary suspension bridge. The kind of like scary, like wiggly, wobbly feel like you're going to plunge to your death. They did this really cool experiment. I'm going to explain it quickly. They got single men, and they told them the experiment was you have to measure adrenaline and fear and their job was to walk across the bridge.

Cheryl:

Then at the other end, there was an attractive female, this was heterosexual men, attractive female, research assistant asked them a few questions about their level of heart rate and whether they felt one to five on the anxious scale. Then she said, "If you have any follow up questions about the study or anything, you can call me. Here's my number." What they found was ... They did the same experiment at the beach, like just some guys walking along and they said, "Hey, we just want to ask you some

questions. There's a research study. What's your level of anxiety or heartbeat and then here's my phone number, if you want to ask any questions about the research."

Cheryl:

What they found was the guys who were in the scary situation, were something like, I don't remember exactly, but seven times more likely to call the woman because when we're in a state of excitement, or adventure, or a little bit of scariness or something new or interesting, we find people more attractive. You can see where I'm going. Why do you think I went wilderness kayaking with my sweetheart? Well, A, because I live in a beautiful place. We can't travel right now safely and so we explored our backyard.

Cheryl:

B, we like to plan to do things that are new, that are out of our comfort zone, that we've never done before, that are a little bit challenging for us, because it enhances our interest and attraction to each other because we're doing something new together, which makes us new again. So there's a simple, profound teaching and I can hear people crying, yes, but we're stuck in our house right now. We're not allowed to leave because depending where you are in North America and elsewhere, you might have some pretty tight restrictions right now.

Cheryl:

I'm going to share a story of a couple, and they've given me permission to use their real names. Their names are Kent and Susan. They live in Florida and they were part of my first group of couples in my program here starting in January. So they ended up in serious Florida lockdown. They live in a condo in view of a beach but you were not allowed to go to the beaches or walk on the beaches in Florida or anything. They came up with this. I challenge all the couples in my program to create through the program, what I call a passion plan.

Cheryl:

All sorts of daily, weekly, monthly and annual commitments to relationship and Kent and Susan blew my mind and they came up with the following. They created the most romantic weekend away for themselves in their own apartment, but this is what they did. This is high level stuff. I bow to Kent and Susan. What they did. They set up their own home like an Airbnb. They set up the spare room as a bedroom. They put massage tables in it. They set up their living room like the beach. They put down a cream color drop clock and sand and seashells and they stocked their fridge with wine and champagne and their favorite foods and then they wrote up a thing, left it on their table. They got in their car, they drove to the local airport. They got out, walked around their car, drove back to their Airbnb.

Cheryl:

If you're following, their own apartment, went into their Airbnb, read the beautiful welcome letter from their host saying, "Welcome, Kent and Susan. We so hope you enjoy our space. Please have an erotic massage. There's champagne, here's a few menus. We've got all the food for you and the snacks. It's all in the fridge." They made love in the spare room, novel, different. They gave each other erotic massages. They made love on the beach, which was their living room, looking out at the ocean that they weren't allowed to go to right now. They had champagne, they had food, they rested. They watched movies, they had a profoundly erotic romantic weekend.

Cheryl:

Do not tell me none of us can create passion, here and now. By the way, Susan and Kent in their 60s, they've been together about 33 years. So if you're thinking oh yeah, they're probably 21. Nope. So yay, Kent and Susan. The best example I can give of making love intentional regardless of our circumstance, that creating romance and connection and interest is right here. I'm pointing to my head. Lindsey can see me right now, you guys can't. It's in our mind, it's in our imagination. That's where eroticism lies. That's

where romance lies and that's where falling in love with your dear sweet partner after 14 years happens, is in your head. By choosing, by putting in effort, by not taking love for granted.

Lindsey:

Well, my follow-up question to that was how do we have a spicy date night in but I think the answer to that is just be Kent and Susan. Just channel Kent and Susan.

Cheryl:

Exactly. They're my heroes, man. My sweetheart and I took a vow and we said we're going to have a Kent and Susan weekend in our home coming up in this next month as well, because I bow to greatness. That's what I said. I may be the expert, but I'm always a student.

Lindsey:

That's truly amazing. My husband's over here doing sound and taking notes.

Cheryl:

That's right. You can send me a thank-you card later, sister.

Lindsey:

I will. So the other question I had along those lines is, I'm a mother of two and I'll be honest, sometimes at the end of the day after being the main caregiver all day and they just want to touch you all day. Everybody wants to touch you, I feel touched out. I know I'm not the only mom, or main caregiver who feels like this. Do you have any advice for people who want to keep their romance alive, who want to experience this passion, but are feeling touched out maybe at the end of the day?

Cheryl:

Yeah, it's such a beautiful and important question and such a real question, particularly of the main caregiver who is, as you've just said, being touched all day and just kind of wants body integrity at the end of the day, like please don't touch me. It's so hard for the partner that might be coming in for a three-breath hug after a work day to connect with you, their beloved to just feel close to you and you're like, get for me. It's a very painful dynamic.

Cheryl:

I've spoken about silent, non-demanding touch, like the three-breath hug, like giving each other a foot rub. A foot rub can be an awesome one. I haven't met many mean caregivers who won't accept a foot rub. Oh, I'm getting a thumbs up from Lindsey. Because it's like your body, your breasts, your belly, your butt, your arms have been hugging, holding little sticky-fingered people all day who you adore. You're just like, please no, but a foot rub or sometimes a scalp massage can feel really beautiful. It's a way to receive a different type of touch, that is a non-demand touch and that's on a part of your body that your beautiful little people probably haven't been mauling all day.

Cheryl:

I mean that with all love, of course, and a touch of humor. What I really loath to see is a caregiver who shuts down his or her sensuality, and by that I literally mean the senses. I don't mean sex alone. I mean the sense of touch, the sense of sound, of taste, of smell, of seeing, because they feel sensory overload. So another thing I would suggest, so the first is to find a way to be touched that you can share with your partner. Say hun, at the end of the day, my body ... I'm just kind of worn out, but if you could just rub my feet a little bit while we watch a show and I can wind my mind down and kind of come back to my body, that would be really helpful. I love, love, love as you can tell, because I built my shower that way, to shower or bathe together and just be naked together.

Cheryl:

It doesn't have to be sexual per se, but it's sensual. I also love to give caregivers or anyone else that needs it, a lot of people come home or finish their work day and they're very mentally wound up. They need time to decompress in between work and engaging. So whether that's because you're touched out, because your minds work worn out or whatever else, it's perfectly okay but you need to communicate it to your sweetheart and come up with a plan you can both live with to have alone time in between.

Cheryl:

So primary caregivers at home and secondary caregivers out of the home more, when secondary caregiver comes back, if they can take over and tag team out and you can just go. You can go read a book in the bath with your headphones on. Basically a self-imposed, self-isolation tank or whatever and get a chance to regroup, to reconnect to you, to get your grounding back and then potentially ease into later in the evening being able to enjoy touch with your partner as well as sexuality at times.

Cheryl:

I also want to encourage people don't wait around till you feel horny or turned on to have sex. That's a longer question for another day, but sexual desire that is spontaneous, those lust feelings I mentioned in the cave, decorating days tends to die down. Then there's a different type of sexual desire, that first one's called spontaneous desire. This is based on sexuality research. The second type of desire is called responsive desire and a research for example, Dr. Rosemary Basson, here at UBC in British Columbia. Her research indicates that the majority of long-term couples start making love from a place of sexual neutrality. Now what does that mean?

Cheryl:

It means they start making love when neither of them is at all turned on. They start making love because they think sexuality is important and it's been a couple weeks. They start making love because it's Tuesday and they decided they'll have an erotic time each Tuesday. They start making love because it's our anniversary and we probably should. They start making love because they're stressed and they know that that might calm them, but they don't start making love because they're spontaneously aroused or horny.

Cheryl:

This is a profoundly important bit of information in the you are normal camp, that I don't feel like making love. I encourage couples don't stop there. Instead, can we change that to, I don't feel like making love but I'm willing to get together and see what happens. Can you turn me on? Can we use a toy or a technique? Can you arouse me in ways that usually wake my body up so we can have that intimate pleasure, that connection, that beauty and that celebration of life together on a more regular basis. Don't allow not wanting to to stop you. Look, both you and I work out. I have a torture monster called Simon. He's my personal trainer. I go see him three days a week. I hate that man, and I love him. I love him. I love him. I just hate him too.

Cheryl:

I never wake up, Lindsey going, yay, I'm spontaneously horny to go to the gym. Never. It's never going to happen. I wake up and go, oh, crap. It's Monday, I got to go see Simon. I go because it's important to me. I've made a commitment to it. I know I'll feel better afterward and I know I'll feel better after all. I never leave the gym for my short drive home saying, gee, I wish I didn't do that. Let's ... I don't care if it doesn't sound romantic. I'm being real. Let's treat sex like the gym. You go because it's important to you because you've made a commitment. You get some sweat on, do it regularly and you'll never be sorry you did.

Lindsey:

I think you should have that printed on a coffee mug or a T shirt or something. It's so true. Love it. You'll never regret it.

Cheryl:

Love it. I'm going to do it. I'm going to send it out to the couples who join my program next. I'm going to get a swag bag.

Lindsey:

I love it. So what are the resources you would point couples to towards right now you mentioned ... I mean, you've got this really exciting workshop that's going to be coming up. You've got your website, which is full of so many valuable little gems. Can you talk about some things that you might share with couples right now?

Cheryl:

Absolutely. I'm going to start with my own offerings then I'm going to mention some other resources and books I think are fantastic. So the lowest level for entry, the easiest way for people to keep love alive, keep their learning alive is to sign up for my free weekly videos and the LoveBytes that come to your email box. You can do that at my website, [drcherylfraser.com](http://drcherylfraser.com). I encourage everybody, partnered or not, to take the quiz. Less than 10 minutes, it's free. So you can start to rate your passion triangle right now and get that on your mind stream and maybe start to draw up your future.

Cheryl:

Where do you want your relationship to be three months from now? Where do you want your relationship to be one year from now? If you're single and you're wanting to be in an inspired relationship, who do you want to bring to the next person? People ask the wrong question. They asked what partner do I want to get? Who do you want to be? Who is your new partner going to get? That's the important question. Plus, you can work on that one. You can learn more about sexuality. You can learn more about communication. So you bring mad skills to your lucky next partner.

Cheryl:

I gave a big talk today to Jack Canfield's group. I did a Facebook Live Q&A for them. I had about five singles say, "Can we join your program, even though we're single?" I'm like, "Heck yes. Learn how to be great now." I said, "What's more, if you're single, and you join the program," this is just arose two hours before you and I talked. I said, "I'm going to call in some of my expert colleagues who really work on dating and single life, and we're going to do a special training just for the singles."

Cheryl:

So join the LoveByte list if you want. Do the quiz if you want. If you're at all interested in the immersion program, we're going to put a link below to the free workshop you can join where I'm going to talk about it a lot more, do some deeper dives on some of the topics you and I talked about and then tell you about the program and you can choose to join it at that time. The next group will begin on November 1, and I'll probably just be teaching it once in 2021.

Cheryl:

So be great to join now because then you get nine more months to work on your relationship before the next one. I've also written a book called Buddha's Bedroom where I integrate the teaching of Buddhist philosophy and sex and love therapy, sort of my two sides [inaudible 00:58:46] I have that secret life where I don't say anything for three months at a time because I do three month meditation retreats. People can never believe I ever shut up but I do. Other researchers and writers I think are brilliant. Some of the best books or resources out there I would recommend, I think I mentioned it tonight and if not, I'm renting it now.

Cheryl:

There's a woman called Emily Nagoski. Her book, *Come as You Are* is probably one of the most important sexuality books to come out in the last 10 years. Tremendous read for women and anyone who loves a woman sexually about lot more about responsive and spontaneous desire which I introduced in our

conversation and other super important things. So you can understand your sexuality and realize how normal you are and there's some wonderful exercises in there. My book also has exercises and techniques. You don't just need knowledge, you need practice.

Cheryl:

A great book for men struggling with any sexuality issues is ... If you have premature ejaculation Barry McCarthy's book, coping with either ED, he's got a book on erection dysfunction or premature ejaculation are great books. Ian Kerner has a great book called, She Comes First to help heterosexual men be great lovers to a woman. There's more but there's a lot of great resources out there. If you're a reader, read but make sure you apply the techniques and podcasts, listen to podcasts when you go for a walk with your dogs or a jog or you're, I don't know, vacuuming the floor, listen to a podcast on relationship, on communication, on sexuality, on how to resolve conflict.

Cheryl:

Make your love life a hobby, I teach that a lot. Because I mentioned before, we don't want to work on our relationship and if you think of the elements of a hobby, a hobby is something we do for fun. We do it because it matters to us. We prioritize it, we don't get paid for it. We don't have to do it, and we strive to get better at it. We want to improve our golf game, we want to become a better putter or a chef of Thai food.

Cheryl:

With our love life, again, as mentioned, we tend to take it for granted and expect it to take care of itself. That's a terrible way to improve anything. So make your love like a hobby. Create time to study, to learn, to spend time together, go kayaking, or run across a suspension bridge and then have wild sex afterwards. Like make love intentional. I said that before tonight. I say it a lot. Don't take love for granted. Life is short. Things happen and we get far less time with our loved one than we sometimes think we will. Make the most of the time we've got. Invest in love with the person. As I often say, fall in love over and over again with the one you're already with. The perfectly imperfect person standing right in front of you right now.

Lindsey:

You've been listening to PeakConnection with our guest today, Dr. Cheryl Fraser. Dr. Cheryl is a sought after media psychologist, a relationship expert. She has helped thousands of couples jumpstart their love life and create passion that lasts a lifetime. She can be reached at [drcherylfraser.com](http://drcherylfraser.com). If you'd like to know more about the resources she spoke about, they'll be on our website [peakconnection.net](http://peakconnection.net) as well as the transcripts for this podcast. Cheryl, thank you so much for joining us today. I have really enjoyed our discussion and I hope you have too.

Cheryl:

Oh, it's been wonderful. Thank you so much. Lots of love to you and yours and tell your sweetie Dr. Cheryl says he needs to give you a foot rub.

Lindsey:

I will. Thank you, Cheryl.

Cheryl:

Bye for now.

Lindsey:

Bye.