

ULIANA SUNNY

DOES SEX MATTER?



PSYCHOLOGY
AND SELF-DEVELOPMENT

18+

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Аннотация

Too much sex? Too little sex? No sex? Leave the relationship? From biology and hormones, through attachment psychology and trauma, through debunking societal norms and imposed standards, through diagnosing your own scale, through negotiations with your partner and an honest look at dependency or emptiness. To the tools:

- How to distinguish your own desire from someone else's.
- How to talk about sex without fights and shame.
- How to get through a sexless period without destroying yourself.
- How to notice when "importance" has become a trap.

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Uliana Sunny, Ульяна Солнечная Does Sex Matter?

Does Sex Matter?

Almost everyone asks themselves this question—either out loud or silently.

“We have sex less often than other couples. Is that normal?”

“Sex isn’t that important to me. Is something wrong with me?”

“My partner wants sex more than I do. Does that mean we’re incompatible?”

The problem isn’t that people don’t have answers. The problem is that most of the answers our culture offers—through movies, social media, and conversations with friends—are built on the same false assumption: that somewhere there is a *correct* amount of sex, a *correct* level of desire, a *correct* standard, and if you don’t measure up, something must be wrong with you or with your relationship.

Why Does This Question Even Arise —and Why Is It So Hard to Ask?

Have you ever caught yourself thinking, “*Maybe there’s something wrong with me?*” after reading someone else’s stories about sex, seeing articles about “keeping the spark alive,” or hearing subtle comments from friends or your partner?

This question almost never appears out of nowhere. And it is almost always accompanied by shame.

Why shame? Because in our society, sexuality has become associated with health, success, and living life to the fullest. Admitting that sex isn’t particularly important to you—or that it’s important in a way that doesn’t fit the expected norm—can feel almost like admitting that you’re somehow “unhealthy.”

The fear of falling outside the norm makes people stay silent, lie to themselves, or overcompensate.

Does Sex Matter in a Relationship?

This is a question that cannot be answered with a simple yes or no.

If I say *yes*, it wouldn't be entirely true. If I say *no*, that wouldn't be true either.

Because sex rarely exists in isolation. It is almost always woven into the way people love, trust, communicate, hurt each other, reconcile, and experience emotional closeness.

For some people, sex is a pleasant addition to a relationship. For others, it is one of their primary love languages. Neither position makes anyone better or worse.

The problems don't begin because people relate to sex differently.

They begin when people pretend that those differences don't matter.

When one partner says, *"Once a month is enough for me,"* while the other longs for intimacy several times a week, the question is no longer whether sex matters. The question becomes whether their needs are compatible.

We often hear the phrase, *"If two people truly love each other, they'll work it out."*

Sometimes they do.

But not always.

Some differences allow for compromise. Others slowly turn

compromise into chronic dissatisfaction.

One partner begins living with the constant feeling of rejection.

The other begins living with the constant feeling of pressure.

Sex Is Rarely the Real Problem

Interestingly, sex is rarely the actual source of conflict.

Very often, people are trying to obtain something entirely different through sex:



reassurance that they are loved;



a sense of security;



attention;



acceptance;



feeling desired.

Sometimes someone says, *"I'm not getting enough sex."*

What they really mean is, *"I don't feel chosen."*

Another person says, *"I don't want sex."*

What they really mean is, *"I'm exhausted, hurt, anxious, or I've lost emotional closeness."*

Sex becomes the language through which a relationship tells the story of its condition.

That's why you cannot judge a relationship solely by the frequency of intimacy.

You can have sex every day and feel profoundly lonely.

You can have sex rarely and still experience deep intimacy.
Quantity has never guaranteed quality.

The Other Extreme

There is another extreme as well.

Some people say, *“Emotional connection is what really matters. Sex isn’t important.”*

I don’t agree.

If sexual intimacy is one of a person’s fundamental needs, ignoring it makes no more sense than ignoring the need for respect, trust, or tenderness.

Of course, sex is not more important than love.

But for many people, sex is the way love becomes tangible.

For some, *“I love you”* is convincing.

For others, it’s a hug.

For others, it’s building a life together.

And for some, it’s desire itself saying:

“I choose you—not only with my heart, but with my body.”

That, too, is a perfectly valid way of experiencing love.

There's Nothing Shallow About Wanting Sex

Some people feel guilty because sex matters to them.

As if that somehow makes them superficial.

I don't think that's fair.

We don't criticize someone for needing respect.

We don't shame someone for wanting to be heard.

So why should someone have to justify their need for physical intimacy?

Sexuality is as much a part of our identity as our emotions, intelligence, or sense of humor.

It cannot simply be declared unimportant because it carries less weight for someone else.

At the same time, making sex the only measure of a relationship is equally dangerous.

If love rests solely on great sex, it becomes fragile.

Stress.

Illness.

Pregnancy.

Aging.

Life crises.

Any of these can change sexual desire, and if nothing else holds the relationship together, it begins to fall apart.

Real intimacy can survive periods of lower desire.

What it cannot survive is prolonged indifference toward one another.

The Question That Really Matters

The most important question is not:

“Does sex matter?”

It's this:

“What place does sex occupy in our relationship?”

If it matters to both of you, protect that part of your relationship.

If it matters to only one of you, don't pretend it's insignificant.

Talk about it honestly, without shame.

If sex has disappeared, don't rush to blame each other.

Sometimes desire fades not because love has ended, but because the relationship no longer feels like a place where either person can truly relax.

And finally, if you realize your needs are so different that one partner constantly feels rejected while the other constantly feels obligated, don't rush to find someone to blame.

Sometimes love genuinely encounters incompatibility.

That hurts.

But living beside someone for ten years while convincing yourself every day that what matters deeply to you doesn't really matter hurts even more.

What I Believe

I don't believe sex is the foundation of a relationship.

The foundation is respect.

Trust.

Emotional safety.

The ability to communicate.

The willingness to protect one another.

But sex is one of the pillars that supports that house.

So the real question has never been whether sex matters in general.

The real question is:

How important is it to you, personally—and are you honest enough to admit that both to yourself and to your partner?

Does a High Libido Mean Sex Is the Most Important Thing?

People sometimes ask me:

“If you have a high libido, does that mean sex is your highest priority?”

No.

Precisely because I know the value of my desire, I'm not willing to trade it for casual encounters or relationships that lack respect.

Having a high libido does not make sex my greatest value.

Your Body Often Knows Before Your Mind

When resentment builds in a relationship, trust disappears, emotional distance grows, or constant tension settles in, the body often notices before the mind does.

It stops responding.

And it's not necessarily because love has disappeared.

It's because intimacy no longer feels safe.

We've become accustomed to thinking that good sex creates good relationships.

But very often, the opposite is true.

Good relationships create the environment where good sex can flourish.

Authentic desire rarely develops where someone is constantly criticized, controlled, or compared.

Desire doesn't thrive in fear.

It doesn't coexist with humiliation.

It doesn't bloom where someone has to spend their life trying to be convenient or "easy."

Sex Begins Long Before the Bedroom

That's why sex cannot be separated from what happens
between two people every day.
How you speak to each other.
How you handle conflict.
How you look at each other.
How well you hear the word "*no*".
How respectfully you honor each other's boundaries.
All of this is part of intimacy.
Sex begins long before the bedroom.
And it doesn't end the moment two people turn away from
each other afterward.
It continues in the feeling that you are seen.
That you are treated with care.
That you can relax beside someone instead of remaining on
guard.

Frequency Doesn't Measure Intimacy

There's something else people rarely talk about.

We often measure relationships by the amount of sex people have.

But frequency says surprisingly little about the quality of intimacy.

You can have sex several times a week and still feel lonely.

You can be together for decades and continue to genuinely desire one another because you've preserved what matters most: your curiosity about each other.

What Good Sex Means to Me

To me, good sex isn't about technique.

It isn't about perfect bodies.

It isn't about endless passion.

It's about having the freedom to be completely yourself.

That's why I don't see sex as the purpose of a relationship.

But I don't see it as secondary, either.

Because sexuality is part of who we are.

It's as alive as our ability to love, laugh, dream, or trust.

Ignoring it makes about as much sense as ignoring any other essential part of ourselves.

Sex doesn't keep love alive.

But it can strengthen the bond when respect, emotional intimacy, and mutual desire already exist.

And the opposite is equally true.

Even the strongest chemistry cannot save a relationship if it lacks care, maturity, and the willingness to choose each other—again and again.

Does Sex Matter? Let's Look at Three Common Situations Where This Question Becomes Most Relevant.

Scenario 1: A Woman After Childbirth

The baby is three months old.

She hasn't had a full night's sleep in over two weeks. Her breasts are heavy with milk. Her body feels unfamiliar. Her stitches still ache.

Meanwhile, there's her husband, who wants sex. Friends telling her to "bring the passion back." Blogs reminding her how "important it is not to lose yourself as a woman."

Her inner voice says:

"I don't want sex. There must be something wrong with me. I should want it. Why don't I?"

But her body is in survival mode.

She is a mother and a caregiver.

Nature has temporarily turned down her libido so she won't become pregnant again immediately and can focus on caring for her newborn.

Nothing is broken.

Her body is doing exactly what it was designed to do.

Scenario 2: A Man After 45

His erections no longer obey him the way they once did.

Sometimes he can't get one at all.

Sometimes he loses it halfway through.

Years ago, he could have sex twice in one night.

Now he can't.

His inner voice says:

"I don't want sex as often anymore... Does that mean I'm getting old? Am I no longer a real man? Am I failing?"

He mistakes changes in libido and sexual function for a loss of personal worth.

Physiologically, sex may become somewhat less important.

Psychologically, however, it often becomes even more important—not because of desire itself, but because it seems to prove:

"I can still do it."

Shame leads him to avoid intimacy, invent excuses, and withdraw emotionally.

Scenario 3: A Couple Married for Fifteen Years

They haven't had sex for six months.

And—surprisingly—neither of them is suffering.

They sleep peacefully in the same bed.

They hug.

They talk about their children and mortgage.

They watch TV shows together.

Sex quietly disappeared from their relationship, and both of them actually feel relieved.

Then friends come over.

“We have sex three times a week—sometimes even five.”

Or they stumble across an article titled:

“10 Signs Your Marriage Is Dead.”

Suddenly they begin to worry.

Their inner voice says:

“We don't have sex... Does that mean something is wrong? Maybe we don't love each other anymore?”

The importance of sex came from the outside—not from within.

Their real needs—for safety, warmth, companionship, and shared everyday life—are fully met.

But society's mirror tells them they're somehow an “abnormal” couple.

These three situations have one thing in common.

The question “*Does sex matter to me?*” doesn’t arise from an internal need.

It arises from colliding with other people’s expectations.

Most people know only how things are *supposed* to be.

Not how they genuinely feel.

A Question for You

Answer honestly.

Did this question come from within you—
or did someone else plant it there?

A partner?

A friend?

A social media post?

A parent hinting about grandchildren?

A doctor casually asking,

“How’s your sex life?”

So... Does Sex Matter?

From the perspective of the survival of our species, absolutely.

Without sex, humanity wouldn't continue.

But for any individual, the importance of sex is relative.

It depends on health.

Age.

Relationships.

Culture.

Personal values.

Sex matters exactly as much as it naturally reflects your life—not when it is expected to replace it.

Your Sex Life Reveals More Than You Think

The way you experience sex says a great deal.

Do you respect yourself?

Do you truly hear your partner?

Is there honesty between you?

If the sex is technically wonderful but you feel empty afterward, then the issue isn't sex.

It's that either someone used you—or you used sex to fill a different emptiness inside yourself.

As we mature, sex without emotional and intellectual connection often starts to feel surprisingly hollow, even when everything still works physically.

Sex Should Never Become a Job

Sex should never feel like work.

The moment it becomes a duty, a transaction, or simply a way to relieve your partner's tension, libido quietly slips away.

If there's no sex, yet you feel peaceful, safe, and emotionally fulfilled, you're probably doing just fine.

If there's plenty of sex, yet you're constantly anxious, then what you're experiencing may not be passion at all.

It may be anxiety wearing passion's clothes.

And eventually, your mind learns to tell the difference.

So, Does Sex Matter?

Yes.

But not in the way we're usually taught to think.

You can be extraordinary lovers and complete strangers.

You can have sex every single day and still feel desperately lonely.

Or you can occasionally fall asleep without having sex and experience a level of closeness that many people only dream about.

Sex doesn't save relationships.

It simply amplifies whatever already exists between two people.

If there's love, sex deepens it.

If there's emptiness, sex merely distracts you from it—for a little while.

So perhaps the real question isn't:

"How important is sex?"

Perhaps it's this:

What remains between the two of you after sex is over?

Sex Is the Tip of the Iceberg

Sex is only the visible tip of the iceberg.

Beneath the surface lie your self-esteem.

Your trust in the world.

Your relationship with your own body.

Your sense of safety.

Your capacity for vulnerability.

If everything beneath the surface has fallen apart, no amount of sex can put it back together.

And when what's beneath the surface is healthy and whole, sex becomes something natural, beautiful, and deeply meaningful.

Sex matters because it is one of the ways life expresses itself.

But it stops serving us the moment we ask it to replace life itself.

Where Does the Sense That Sex Is “Important” Come From?

Chapter 1. Biology: Age and Our Built-In Program

In Your Twenties

In your twenties, your hormonal system is at its peak.

Testosterone and estrogen drive exploration, reproduction, and the development of courtship and bonding behaviors. Sex matters because it serves both as a biological imperative and as a way of discovering yourself and another person.

The brain rewards sexual experiences generously with dopamine, making desire feel natural, exciting, and highly motivating.

In Your Forties

By your forties, hormone levels often begin to decline, though they rarely disappear altogether.

The biological program gradually shifts from “*reproduce at all*

costs” to “preserve the partnership and protect your resources.”

The importance of sex begins to move away from quantity and toward quality, intimacy, and emotional stability.

If, at twenty, sex could be an end in itself, by forty it often becomes one part of a much larger relationship system.

For some people, it remains deeply important.

For others, sleep, work, raising children, or simply having peace of mind take priority.

At Sixty and Beyond

Sex hormone levels decline significantly—especially for women after menopause and, more gradually, for men.

The biological program centered on reproduction largely shuts down. The body no longer invests energy in a process that no longer serves a reproductive purpose.

This isn't deterioration.

It's energy conservation.

The body redirects its resources toward maintaining health, preserving vitality, and perhaps caring for future generations.

At this stage, the importance of sex becomes highly individual.

For some people, it quietly fades away without regret.

For others, it remains a source of tenderness, physical pleasure, and emotional connection—free from the pressure of reproduction.

The importance of sex naturally changes throughout life.
Understanding this can free us from many unnecessary fears.

Chapter 2. Psychology: Attachment, Trauma, and Self-Esteem

At first glance, sex appears to be purely biological.

Psychology tells a far more interesting story.

So, does sex matter?

Yes.

But not simply because it feels good.

Sex isn't only about the body.

Very often, it becomes the language through which our attachment patterns, fears, emotional wounds, and self-esteem express themselves.

For someone with a **secure attachment style**, sex is one way of creating closeness. It matters, but it isn't the only proof of love.

For someone with an **anxious attachment style**, the absence of sex may be experienced as:

"They don't love me anymore."

"I'm being rejected."

"I'm not enough."

In that case, the need for sex becomes a need for reassurance and validation.

With an **avoidant attachment style**, the opposite often happens.

Sex may be used without emotional intimacy.

Or emotional intimacy itself becomes so frightening that sexual desire gradually disappears.

Trauma also shapes our relationship with sex.

For some people, sex becomes a way to regain a sense of control.

For others, it becomes a way of earning love.

Still others begin avoiding intimacy altogether because the body remembers pain long after the mind has become ready for a relationship.

Self-esteem plays an enormous role as well.

Sometimes what a person truly longs for isn't sex itself but the feeling:

"Someone desires me."

"I'm attractive."

"I matter."

"I'm being chosen."

In those moments, sex becomes a temporary solution for an inner sense of lack rather than an expression of genuine intimacy.

So the real question isn't whether sex matters.

The real question is:

What psychological need does sex fulfill for you?

When sex becomes the only source of self-worth, relationships become a constant search for external validation.

But when someone has inner stability, trust, and emotional closeness, sex stops being a test of love and becomes its natural continuation.

What Do People Really Mean When They Say, “Sex Is Important to Me”?

1. The Need to Feel Desired

Sex becomes a measure of attractiveness and personal worth.

Orgasm is secondary.

The primary need is:

“Someone chose me.”

“Someone wants me.”

“I exist in another person’s eyes.”

This is especially common among people with fragile self-esteem.

When sex disappears from the relationship, it can feel as though they’ve lost a part of themselves.

2. Confirmation of Attachment and Safety

For someone with an anxious attachment style, sex becomes an anchor.

“We’re intimate. That means they won’t leave me.”

Sexual rejection immediately activates fears of abandonment.

For someone with an avoidant attachment style, the opposite may be true.

Sex can become the only form of closeness that feels safe because it requires less emotional vulnerability.

3. Repeating or Compensating for Trauma

Hypersexuality is often rooted in early experiences of emotional neglect, invalidation, abuse, or emotionally distant parents.

Sex becomes a way to maintain control, create an illusion of closeness, or even punish oneself through compulsive sexual behavior followed by shame.

Complete avoidance of sex can be just as much a psychological defense.

4. A Ritual for Escaping Stress and Boredom

When someone lacks a genuine connection with themselves, sex can become a quick dopamine fix.

The partner becomes secondary.

Relief is the goal.

Afterward comes emptiness.

Then the cycle begins again.

5. Living by Someone Else's Script

“A healthy couple should have sex three times a week.”

“If there’s no sex, there’s no love.”

Sometimes people aren’t following their own desires at all. They’re following someone else’s rules.

The importance of sex has been assigned by culture, family, social media, or a previous relationship.

Whenever sex feels overwhelmingly important, it’s worth breaking that importance into its individual components.

Ask yourself honestly:



Do I actually want sex, or do I want touch, warmth, and acceptance?



Am I looking for an orgasm, or am I trying to feel valued?



Is this truly my desire—or is it habit, fear of loneliness, or an attempt to silence my inner critic?

The moment people stop using sex to regulate their self-esteem, its place in life often settles into a healthier, more realistic proportion.

That leaves room for many other forms of intimacy to grow.

Chapter 3. Society: Who Is Really Telling You That Sex Matters?

You think you want sex.

Sometimes, what you actually want is to fit in.

1. Media and Advertising

Magazines.

Television series.

Perfume commercials.

They all send essentially the same message:

“A normal adult has frequent, exciting sex. If you don’t, something must be wrong with you.”

Lists of “the best lovers.”

Articles about “bringing back the spark.”

Headlines proclaiming:

“Sex once a week? Your relationship is in trouble.”

Very few people stop to ask a more important question:

Do you actually want that “spark” back?

And if so, whose desire are you trying to restore—your own, or the one you’ve been taught you should have?

2. Pornography

Real-life sex—without exaggerated moaning, endless position changes, or highly choreographed performances—can start to seem boring or somehow inadequate.

People begin comparing everything:

Duration.

Technique.

Bodies.

Performance.

The script itself.

The importance of sex quietly shifts toward the importance of putting on a convincing show.

The goal is no longer pleasure.

It's looking desirable.

That is where anxiety, body dysmorphia, and the inability to relax often begin—because you're watching yourself from the outside instead of experiencing the moment from within.

3. “My Friends Said...”

Once a month your friends compare how often they're having sex.

If your number is lower, you feel abnormal.

Your friends boast about how many partners they've had.

You feel embarrassed because your number is smaller.

Without realizing it, you've entered a competition in which almost nobody is telling the whole truth.

Everyone exaggerates.

4. Psychologists and Self-Help Coaches

“A healthy person naturally wants sex.”

“Libido is a measure of emotional balance.”

“If you don’t feel desire, you have a problem that needs fixing.”

Perhaps the most liberating thing you can do is separate two very different questions:

What does my body actually want?

An orgasm?

Touch?

Sleep?

Food?

Movement?

And separately:

What does my mind need?

Safety?

Warmth?

Acceptance?

Playfulness?

Solitude?

The answers are not always the same.

Chapter 4. When One Partner Wants Sex More Than the Other: Is It the End of the Relationship?

One of the most uncomfortable questions in any relationship is this:

What do you do when one partner wants sex more often than the other?

Many people immediately start looking for someone to blame.

“You want sex too much.”

Or the opposite:

“There must be something wrong with you if you don’t want it as much as I do.”

But the truth is that no two people are required to have the same libido.

We’re all different.

We have different nervous systems.

Different temperaments.

Different ways of experiencing intimacy.

A mismatch in sexual desire is not, by itself, a problem.

It only becomes a problem when people stop talking to each other and start demanding, blaming, or silently enduring.

If one person wants sex more often, that doesn’t make them sex-obsessed.

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