

Conjuring Up Courage

#103

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Eva Bloom

Shohreh Davoodi: You are listening to episode #103 of Conjuring Up Courage. Continuing right along with our Pridepalooza series, today's guest is Eva Bloom, a queer sexuality educator and sex science communicator. I had a total blast chatting with Eva about things like how to move beyond sexual scripts that come from cisheteropatriarchy, sexual compatibility considerations, sexting privacy, navigating dating apps, and communication as an integral part of casual sex.

To access the show notes and a full transcript of this episode, head to shohrehdavoodi.com/103. That's shohrehdavoodi.com/103.

This episode is brought to you in part by Ample + Rooted, an inclusive therapy practice that provides an affirming and welcoming home for diverse individuals to reclaim their inherent worth. The folks at Ample + Rooted created a guided meditation on cultivating self-trust just for listeners, and it's available in the show notes for this episode.

[Music plays]

This is Conjuring Up Courage, and I'm your host, Shohreh Davoodi. As a self-trust coach, I help people come home to themselves, so they can be more of who they are, and less haunted by who they think they're supposed to be.

I created this podcast to celebrate what's possible when you commit to being brave. You'll hear from diverse guests who are refusing to let fear and self-doubt stop them from building fulfilling lives and creating a better world for everyone. I'll also teach you my favorite tools, strategies, and mindset shifts so you can do the same.

Conjuring Up Courage #103

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Eva Bloom

Consider this your invitation to stop living according to “shoulds” and to step into your motherfucking magic instead. Stay open, get curious, and let’s grow together.

[Music fades]

Hi Eva! I am so stoked for what will surely be a fun conversation today. How are you doing?

Eva Bloom: I’m doing great. We jumped right into chatting. I feel immediately at ease and having a great time [laughs lightly].

Shohreh: Excellent. I know everyone else didn’t get to enjoy our chatting, but now we’re gonna bring them into the fold and they can be a part of the fun too.

Eva: Yes! [Laughs lightly]

Shohreh: So let’s start by having you tell me a little bit more about you and what you’re passionate about.

Eva: Oooh. I’m passionate about queer sex ed. I’m passionate about making sure that sex research doesn’t die in academic journals behind paywalls so that nobody gets the knowledge [laughs].

Shohreh: Ugh, so true.

Eva: Yeah. I’m passionate about reading all the sapphic YA and sapphic romance ever published [laughs lightly].

Shohreh: I will be needing to get some recommendations from you.

Conjuring Up Courage #103

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Eva Bloom

- Eva:** I got you [Laughter].
- Shohreh:** I have a feeling you have a lot.
- Eva:** It's basically all I've done in quarantine. I'm like, let's get a steady flow of books. Yep.
- Shohreh:** So tell people just a little bit about your background and how you came to do the work that you're doing now.
- Eva:** Well, how did I come into the work that I'm doing now? The more I tell this, like, origin story, the more I realize that I've been a sex educator for much longer than I often think of. I founded my high school's Gay-Straight Alliance when I was, like, 16, when I was a firm and straight ally.
- Shohreh:** Oh, been there. Been through that phase [laughter].
- Eva:** I have to eventually ask the members and be like, "Y'all just let me get away with that? Nobody thought to check in [Shohreh laughs] and be like, 'So, straight... okay...?'" [Laughs]
- Shohreh:** Tell us more.
- Eva:** Yeah, exactly. Meanwhile, people were dating in the group, and I was like, "That girl is pretty, why doesn't she think I'm pretty?" I'm like [high-pitched shout], Eva!!! [Shohreh laughs] Very silly.
- Yeah, basically [laughs lightly] for the Gay-Straight Alliance, I would do, like, peer sex ed lessons. I would, like, be watching Laci Green's videos—I don't recommend Laci Green now, but, like, she was really pivotal in terms of, like, giving me feminism 101, sex ed 101, and I

Conjuring Up Courage #103

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Eva Bloom

would, like, come back to this little corner classroom at our high school and be like, let's talk about sex ed, like, let's talk about queer identity.

Yeah, and I've kind of been, like, a huge nerd in general, but, like, sex nerderdy has always been something that's always sparked something in me. Just, like, I don't know, I just think it's incredibly fun and playful, and I love learning about, like, relationships. I did my Master's degree kind of focusing on social psychology, so I love learning about, like, human interactions. And I also had, as many folks have had [laughs lightly], not the best beginning to my sexual history. So I feel like I was spurred on to learn a lot more there and very much, like, impassioned to be like, I want to help people go on this journey that I've gone on and not have the not-so-great sex that I've had [laughs lightly].

Shohreh: I love that. Also, when you were mentioning Gay-Straight Alliances, I honestly had forgotten that those were a thing 'cause I definitely went to a high school where that would not have been allowed and, like, nobody was out. And I'm sure this has changed by now, but at the time, it was very much a place where everyone who I know who went to my high school who eventually came out as queer was not out in high school.

Eva: Yeah. Talk about, like, courage. I don't know how I was so fearless in doing this. Like, I went to camp and I had a friend who went to an art school in another part of the city, and she was talking about how her school had a Gay-Straight Alliance, and my brain was just, like, well, my high school should have a Gay-Straight Alliance. And I literally, like, put

Conjuring Up Courage #103

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Eva Bloom

gay posters around the school. With all the Glee cast members on them [laughter], of course. It was interesting.

It was hard to get, like, a staff advisor to be a part of it. The, like, queer staff members who weren't totally out at the time were, like, nervous to be a staff advisor. But one of the guidance counselors pulled through to make it happen.

Shohreh: Yeah, see, at my school in Texas, like...

Eva: Oh.

Shohreh: [Laughs lightly] Yeah, exactly. All you need to know is that I went to public school in Texas and you're like, oh no, bad.

Eva: [Sadly] Oh.

Shohreh: Just having, like, a Young Democrats club at our school was, like, a big thing.

Eva: Whoa.

Shohreh: And, like, the teacher who was in charge of it was my favorite teacher and was amazing. But he got so much flack for running the Young Democrats club. And, like, the school administration absolutely hated that the club existed.

Eva: Wow.

Shohreh: So yeah, the Gay-Straight Alliance would have made their brains explode at that time [laughs lightly].

Conjuring Up Courage #103

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Eva Bloom

- Eva:** Daaang. That's so tough. Yeah, that's true. I am definitely very lucky to have grown up in Toronto in Canada. It's a little bit easier to start a Gay-Straight Alliance [laughs lightly].
- Shohreh:** [Laughs lightly] But that allyship thing, it's so real. I think I was talking to Erica Smith about it recently, who has been on the podcast a number of times. And she was calling it, like, the super-duper ally phase that most people go through, where you're just, like, no, I'm just, like, really strangely passionate about this cause [Eva laughs] that has nothing to do with me. No, just, like, I just really love the people in my life who are in this community. Which is not to say that you can't do that, but it can be a symbol of something more going on [laughs lightly].
- Eva:** Yeah. I had a Pride poster in my freshman dorm room. I just didn't question it at all though, which boggles my mind [laughs lightly].
- Shohreh:** And why would you? Because of course in this cisheteropatriarchal world that we live in—
- Eva:** Ohhhhhhh.
- Shohreh:** —right? The whole point is that you wouldn't question any of that [laughs lightly]. So—
- Eva:** Oh yeah. That's true.
- Shohreh:** —can't be blamed.
- Eva:** No. I was in the grips of comphet [laughter]. Very tightly in the grips.

Conjuring Up Courage #103

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Eva Bloom

Shohreh: Oh. Oh, we will get to comphet [laughter]. We will get there. So this is a Pridepalooza episode, super exciting.

Eva: Woohoo!

Shohreh: It's going to come out during Pride Month, so to all listening, happy pride to you.

Eva: Yay, happy Pride!

Shohreh: And we're going to be talking about sex and dating from a queer focus. And I think much of what we'll talk about will also be applicable to all of the straights listening as well [Eva laughs lightly]. So don't worry, y'all, like, you're gonna learn tons of great stuff too.

Eva: Yeah.

Shohreh: But we will be skewing more towards the queers today, which is always fun [Eva laughs lightly]. So speaking of cisheteropatriarchy, I think one of the things that would be great to talk about is some of the, like, sexual scripts and rules that come from cisheteropatriarchy that a lot of us find ourselves getting stuck in. And this especially is true because I think queer folks are more likely to realize this and start getting out of it. But straight folks can also majorly benefit from realizing what these scripts and rules are and trying to redefine them.

Eva: Yeah, 100%. That's definitely, like, a huge ethos for me in terms of my sex education. That, like, it is queer focused but also can benefit the heck out of straight people too. Oooh, I'm currently in the middle of diving into, like, reading about scripts and stuff. A huge one that, like,

Conjuring Up Courage #103

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Eva Bloom

messed with me was around, like, sex drive. That men just naturally acquire sex drives and that women have lower sex drives, which is not true. I mean, for one, the gender binary is a social fabrication. We made it up [laughs]. But that there's actually more variation, like, within these gender categories that we created than there is, like, variation across it.

Shohreh: That's a big one. I think for me, one of the things that I've really had to unlearn is sex as performance, especially as a woman. When I look back at the earliest days of my sex life and the partners that I had at that time, like, it's not that I didn't enjoy it or it wasn't pleasurable. It was. But it certainly wasn't focused on my pleasure.

And so much of what I was doing, even, like, subconsciously, was about, like, what will make the cishet male partner that I'm with feel good? And how do I look? And how do I make sounds and act that are for their benefit, instead of being like, is that really what I want to do in this situation?

And when I stripped away the performance of it to be able to figure out what I actually want, that's been an extremely empowering thing to do. But it was also very difficult to make that shift.

Eva: Yeah, 100%. I think the, like, scripts and rules are so, like, anti-women having sexual desire, or, like, being horny, like, wanting things sexually, which is, like, super terrifying, especially in terms of, like, a rape culture perspective that, like, oh, you think, like, it's not okay for women to actually want sex, basically. The messages are, like, so little about, like, what do women actually like sexually? It totally becomes about, like,

Conjuring Up Courage #103

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Eva Bloom

that sex is about to catering to, like, the cis-male gaze and the cis-male pleasure.

I saw this term in a sex research paper and it made me so happy—happy-angry—but like, the phallogentric [light laughter]—happy rage—but like, the phallogentric imperative.

Shohreh: Mm, yes.

Eva: Yeah. That, like, so much of our society is cisheteronormative. The idea of sex is that, like, all hail the phallus. We must all bow down to this phallus! That's, like, the center of what sex is.

Shohreh: Yeah, it is, and it's like you have this juxtaposition growing up—again, it depends where you grow up—but, like, me growing up in Texas, right, I didn't get any real sex ed. Like, we had health class as freshmen, and the only, like, sex education parts of the health class were about very stigmatizing STI stuff, about look at these photos of people who are having these outbreaks. And then also, don't have sex, abstinence-only education.

And then you compare that to what you see in movies and media and porn, if you're watching it, and it's like you're getting a very skewed idea of what sex is. And it's been put into this very narrow box where you're like, okay, sex is this thing. And if you don't know where to look for other information, then it could take a long time to realize, oh, sex could be a whole lot of things and it doesn't have to be that one thing that I learned.

Conjuring Up Courage

#103

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Eva Bloom

Eva: Yeah. It's so interesting that, like, yeah, you grew up in Texas, I grew up in Toronto, but my sex ed wasn't that much better. I would say that, like, it didn't have that, like, active, like, shame-y abstinence as much, but, like, legitimately, the only thing that I remember from sex ed was that my gym teacher, at the time, just happened to be away on sports engagements. Jury is still out on whether they didn't want to teach the sex ed unit [Shohreh laughs lightly].

But I remember, like, a substitute teacher, like, slammin' down, like, a diagram of, like, the penis, or like, vulva anatomy for us to label. And I'm like, cool. Cool, cool, cool, cool, cool. [Light laughter] This is very helpful for me as a sexual being and navigating, like, all that sexuality is.

But, yeah, like, it's so wild to me. The media representation of sex is so, so, narrow. And I'm so frustrated with it at this point. I don't know whether you watched Bridgeton?

Shohreh: I did not [Eva laughs lightly] because I heard such fascinating things about it that I was like, I cannot [laughs lightly].

Eva: Me neither. 'Cause honestly, at this point, I'm like, this is straight propaganda [Shohreh laughs] that I do not wish to consume. We have surpassed the need for sex scenes to only be three minutes, penetration only, simultaneous orgasm. I'm like, no! [Laughs lightly] I refuse.

Shohreh: I agree completely. It's like, I get so frustrated when I see that in media now. And, honestly, I'm at a point in my life now where I'm trying to watch, like, as much queer media as possible. I'm, like, ignoring most

Conjuring Up Courage #103

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Eva Bloom

things that are, like, really straight-centered where I'm like, I'm bored with this. I don't want it. [Laughs lightly]

Eva: Well, like, in terms of oral sex and what body parts are acceptable to be shown, there's still like these holdovers of, like, guidelines, where like sex outside the cishetero norm is rated more explicit.

Shohreh: Correct.

Eva: Or, like, certain body parts aren't allowed to be seen. In terms of, like, queer representation too. Like holdovers from, like, the Hays Code, like, they still exist. I saw a clip from [!] May Destroy You, I think.

Shohreh: Oh, yes, it's an HBO show I've been meaning to watch.

Eva: Yeah, I saw a clip of the period sex scene and the guy removing this person's tampon, and I was like, wait! I don't think—I've never seen this!

Shohreh: Yeah.

Eva: I've never seen this in the media.

Shohreh: Yeah, I don't think I have ever seen, like, an actual scene. Like, I've watched shows where they talk about it. Like, Crazy Ex-Girlfriend is one of my favorite shows and they have an entire song about period sex [laughs lightly] in it, which I will link to in the show notes because it's great.

Eva: Yes!

Conjuring Up Courage #103

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Eva Bloom

Shohreh: But they don't ever actually show the act. And now that I'm thinking about it, I don't think I've actually ever seen that. And period sex is one of those things that we're taught is very, very shameful. And that, like, you know, if you think about this idea of, like, sexual preferences, right? That like, a lot of partners, particularly cishet male partners, will be like, well, I'm okay with it in theory, but I just don't prefer that. And I'm like, yeah, but would that be different if you hadn't been taught your whole life that, like, period blood is dirty? And that, you know, women shouldn't be touched when they have their period and things like that.

Eva: Yeah, a billion percent. When it's, like, literally just this, like, bodily function.

Shohreh: Right.

Eva: [Laughs lightly] That's so funny that you bring up Crazy Ex-Girlfriend because I literally asked on my Instagram yesterday for people to, if they're passionate about the show, to urge me to watch it. And I have had so many DMs of people being like, "You must watch this show immediately!" So it's going on the top of my to-watch [laughs lightly].

Shohreh: Put it on the top. I'm on my third watch through [Eva shrieks]. It's become one of my comfort shows when I just, like, need to watch something I've already watched. It's so great. So many of the songs are amazing. Like, and I love musicals in general, so like, it does not bother me that people are breaking out into song. But, like, this show is raunchy, it's super sex-positive, it's mental health-positive. Like, I just cannot recommend it more highly.

Conjuring Up Courage #103

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Eva Bloom

Eva: Yay! I also love musicals too. Honestly, I don't know what's taking me so long to watch it. But, clearly, this will change in the very near future [laughs lightly].

Shohreh: Alright, back to the subject at hand.

Eva: Yes.

Shohreh: Sexual scripts, sexual rules. So, I think we talked about a few of them. How can people start to recognize that those exist and try to break out of them in their own sex life?

Eva: Oooh, that's a great question. I feel like sometimes, because they really are, like, ever-present, it is helpful to, like, listen to a podcast [laughs lightly].

Shohreh: For sure.

Eva: Like, get some information where they are just like naming that these sexual scripts exist. And then once you start to see them, you can't un-see them [laughs lightly]. And, like, you start noticing them. And, yeah, the movies that you watch, like, the music that you listen to.

I would really say, like, take some time to reflect on, like, what were kind of the formative pieces of media around sexuality that you consumed growing up? Like, what types of scripts existed there? And, like, see if you can notice patterns. Or, like, are there ones that still are popping up in your sex life? And I would say, like, consuming media that, like, rebukes those scripts is incredibly powerful.

Conjuring Up Courage #103

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Eva Bloom

Shohreh: I think, especially that, like, find somewhere to get that better sex education if you didn't get it is so important. Like, there's so many incredible sex educators on Instagram, in particular, on TikTok, that are just amazing. So if you're like, wow, I didn't even realize these scripts existed, like seeking out that information is so helpful.

And it's so funny how you said, like, media and how the media perpetuates them. 'Cause something that I always thought was really funny is how in so many songs written by, like, cishet male artists [Eva laughs lightly], there's, like, this obsession with the idea of, like, we're gonna go all night long, right? And what they're, like, specifically referring to, penetrative sex all night long, like, she's gonna ride it all night long and these kinds of things.

And, like, look, I went the, like, straight to bisexual to lesbian pipeline, so, like, [Eva laughs lightly] I may not be the best person to think about this. But in talking about friends who do enjoy having sex with people with penises, they have all expressed that, like, no, it is not fun to just ride a dick all night long.

And so, I find it hilarious that so many songs are just like, yeah, we're gonna go, like, 'til midnight 'til the sunrise and all this stuff. And I'm just like, do we know about the anatomy of the vagina and the vulva and how just, like, constant, like penetration actually starts to not feel that great if you don't take breaks from it? [Shohreh laughs lightly]

Eva: No, that is so funny. We do know statistically that queer sex, in general, lasts longer than cishet sex.

Conjuring Up Courage #103

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Eva Bloom

Shohreh: Yes.

Eva: It's because the obsession with, like, such a limited definition of sex. I'm like, sex can last all night long if you're doing a whole bunch of different things. If you're having like penetration you might not be able to last all night long, but, like, if you're having, like, a full-body experience, takin' turns, like, sure. But are cishet men doing it?

Shohreh: This is what I mean! I'm like, this is not what these songs are describing. 'Cause like, queer folks are like, oh hells yeah, I'm gonna go have sex for like six to eight hours. They're also gonna like, take breaks and have snacks and like, do all kinds of great things during that time period because queer folks have really expanded beyond the idea of penetration—or many have, at least—as, like, being the center and the only thing that you do in sex.

But like, the language that's used in songs is specifically always about, like, penetration. And if you think that she likes that, that you just, like, keep going and keep going and keep going, I'm like, some people might [Eva laughs]. But I'm just gonna go out on a limb here and say that most women that I've talked to are like, yeah, it reaches a point where it's just like, k, can we end this? Checkin' the watch [Eva laughs lightly]. We're ready to be done with you pumping into me [Shohreh laughs].

Eva: Yeah, no. I'm also like, you talk a big game, but I think you're full of crap.

Conjuring Up Courage #103

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Eva Bloom

Shohreh: Mhm. That too, where I'm just like, are you able to go for six hours, sir?
I don't know about that. [Laughs].

Eva: I don't think so.

Shohreh: [Sighs] Oh my gosh. Well, this actually is a surprisingly great segue—

Eva: Yeah.

Shohreh: —to talking about sexual compatibility and communication.

Eva: Ooh.

Shohreh: You actually had a great post recently about how there's kind of, like, this base-level sexual bar that you want your partners to be able to meet in terms of consent and, like, things like that. But that we can actually go beyond that to look at, like, alright, are we actually compatible in the things that, like, we're interested in?

And so I'd love to talk about that concept. And, like, what are things where it's like, this is fine, like, we don't necessarily need to be a match on this, versus things where it's like, oh, maybe these can't be worked on, and, like, sexually a partner who is more aligned with you on that might be a better match.

Eva: Ooh, I love this. I do really think that we, like, perpetuate that there is an ideal type of sexuality and that, like, if you learn all these skills and you, like, work up whatever, you put all the pieces together, that like, eventually there's, like, one way to be sexual that is ideal for everybody. And that's just not true [laughs lightly]. Like, truly, like, everybody likes

Conjuring Up Courage #103

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Eva Bloom

different things and has a different perspective on sex and intimacy. And two people can have such different preferences and perspectives.

The inspiration for that post was I was doing an interview series with Honey Play Box and my wonderful friend and colleague, Gabby, @GabAlexa. And we got the chance to interview this amazing group of sex-positive men, which was, like, almost, like, a powerful experience for me to just be, like, in a room full of men that, like, have a certain level of, like, sexual competence, and just, like, understanding and sex positivity. And we were talking about, like, what does good sex mean to you?

And it just became so apparent to me that, like, all of these men had very different things in what they valued in good sex, and like, what good sex meant to them. Like, for some people it might be like that emotional intimacy. For the other it might be, like, level of exploration and novelty. For somebody else it might be like, having a level of, like, reciprocity and exchange. And I think, like, maybe we have this idea that, like, we need to value all of these things equally. Or that, like, the best sex has all of these things all of the time. But that's not true.

Like, if really sexual intimacy is the intimacy, emotional intimacy is what makes sex really exciting for you, you don't need to care about novelty. But, like, if novelty and excitement and exploration is really what makes sex cool [laughter] and like, a positive experience for you, just because you don't value that emotional intimacy as much, it doesn't mean that you're wrong or broken either.

Conjuring Up Courage #103

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Eva Bloom

Shohreh: It's almost like an over-correction, where like, because we are wanting to move in a more sex-positive direction that there's almost this pressure on people to be like, oh, well, you should be open to liking anything. And like, if you don't, it's on you, like, to figure that out, and like, your preferences are wrong. Whereas just like with anything, whether it's the kind of coffee that you like to drink [Eva laughs lightly], or the clothes you like to wear, you're gonna have preferences. And there are gonna be things where you like what you like.

I am a make-out slut. I fuckin' love to make out like a high schooler.

Eva: Yeah! Right?

Shohreh: And some people hate kissing. That's not a good sexual partner for me because I love kissing. And, like, I'm not gonna be like, oh, well, the, like, woke sexual forward version of me should just like not care about the fact that I love kissing. Or I should expect my partner, like, you have to start being really into this thing that I'm into. Which is not to say that, like, two people can't come together and find a middle ground that works for them. You absolutely can. *And* if there's something that's really important to you, you don't have to give it up to appease somebody else if you don't want to.

Eva: Ugh, I love that so much. And yeah, I think it really goes back to, like, the centering of, like, cishet, like, penetration. And like, the pressure on, like, women especially to like penetration and have that be, like, the top of your ultimate sex hierarchy when it's like, yeah, no. Like, makin' out, that is, like, it. Or, like, grinding, that is it. Or, like, eatin' ass, that

Conjuring Up Courage #103

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Eva Bloom

is, [Shohreh laughs lightly] like, top pick. Like, that is totally amazing and okay.

Shohreh: Yeah, and it's seen as, like, not evolved. You know what I mean?

Eva: Yeah!

Shohreh: Like, I literally was like, makin' out like in high school because people think of making out, like, oh, well that's because you make out ferociously when you're younger 'cause you're not having sex yet. And I'm like, fuck that viewpoint.

Eva: No! It's like a full-body experience. I'm so about it. [Shohreh laughs lightly]. It can be so playful. Like, it can be so passionate. I love it.

Shohreh: Mhm. Yeah, I think the bottom line with all of these things is, like, you should have the space to explore what works for you and what you enjoy, whether that's solo or it's partnered. And I think that can be really scary for people. Especially if they're used to following different scripts and things where they're just like, oh god, well, if I'm not doing that, what am I doing, right?

Eva: Yeah.

Shohreh: Like, what else is out there? And I think people also tend to have a lot of shame sometimes about what they like because it's not seen as the mainstream thing. And really trying to get rid of some of that stigma around the fact that, like, again, if there's consent and you're not hurting anybody else, like, you don't have to be ashamed of what it is

Conjuring Up Courage #103

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Eva Bloom

that you like and enjoy. And there are people out there for you who are gonna like and enjoy that same stuff. It's just a matter of finding them.

Eva: 100%. Yeah, and I feel like the conversations, like, that queer sex educators have, like, within the queer community, I found to be, like, especially empowering about this. Just being, like, truly there are people who are into so many different things. And all of the different things that you are into are not shameful. And they're actually wonderful and hot and I love that for you [light laughter].

Shohreh: We love it. We love it. Get after it. Go live your best sexy life.

Eva: [Laughs lightly] Absolutely.

[Ad break]

[Music plays]

Shohreh: Hey y'all. Let me take a moment to tell you a little bit more about Ample + Rooted, an inclusive therapy practice that is directed by my dear friend and colleague, Neathery Falchuk. The awesome practitioners at Ample + Rooted not only serve folks locally here in Austin, they also serve folks online all over the globe. Through therapy, mindfulness practices, courses, trainings, and events, they support, guide, and hold space for folks to feel valued and nourished.

We talk a lot about systems of oppression on the show and how they can disconnect you from your inner knowing. And the Ample + Rooted group believes it is your birthright to both inhabit and trust your physical and emotional self without shame. Luckily for y'all, the kind

Conjuring Up Courage #103

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Eva Bloom

folks at Ample + Rooted created an exclusive guided meditation on cultivating self-trust for listeners of Conjuring Up Courage.

You can access the free guided meditation and learn more about Ample + Rooted in the show notes for this episode.

[Music fades]

[End ad break]

So, speaking of living a sexy life, I wanna talk about some specific sexual stuff. First of all, I'm obsessed with the fact that your Master's thesis was on sexting [laughs lightly].

Eva: Yeah!

Shohreh: I was like, now we must talk sexting because how can we not?

Eva: Mhm.

Shohreh: So, I have done minimal sexting in my life because I just got out of a ten-year relationship. I recently got divorced. And it was sad, but it was good. It's all the things, all the feelings. Ultimately heading in the best direction in my life and so is my ex-partner, who I'm still really good friends with.

Eva: Yay!

Shohreh: But, you know, we were together for a long time. And I think maybe at the very beginning of our relationship there was a little bit of, like, sexting. But it wasn't, like, the way I think people treat sexting now,

Conjuring Up Courage #103

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Eva Bloom

where, you know, a lot of times—almost like there can be a mutual masturbation element to sexting and, like, kind of taking it further. Where we would do it in kind of like a flirty way where it's like, fun, but we weren't kind of taking it to that level or taking it more graphic.

So I'm about to head back out into the world of dating for the first time in a very long time. I feel like sexting is, like, a really popular thing right now. So tell me about this. Tell me about the sexting.

Eva: Yeah. Well, I mean, definitely, like, in terms of, like, COVID, when we couldn't, like, be having physical intimacy with each other, I feel like sexting was a really amazing way to, like, get that connection. And, like, yeah, sexting can be, like, a whole broad spectrum of things and there are so many things you could do. Like, yeah, from, like, that flirty texting to sending, like, videos or, like, voice notes, or photos, or like, phone sex. There are so many different ways to express yourself sexually, connect with another person, talk about what you like, what you don't like. And, if you wanna do, like, video sex, phone sex, sexting, mutual masturbation situation, it's a great way to feel connected to other people.

Shohreh: I feel like the nudes and the lewds have become a really big thing with the technology that we have. And it's funny 'cause I used to be a lawyer and so I'm very terrified from, like, a privacy perspective.

Eva: Yeah.

Shohreh: Especially if it's someone who you're just, like, starting to meet and get to know. Like, I have a lot of friends who are pretty chill about it and

Conjuring Up Courage #103

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Eva Bloom

they trust other people. And I'm more, like, distrustful of like—which I also find hilarious because I literally have so much of my life on the internet [Eva laughs lightly] that, like, of all people, I'm surprised that I care as much about this. But I think it's very much that lawyer brain where I'm just like, oh god, how do I protect myself—

Eva: Yeah.

Shohreh: —and, like, make sure this stuff doesn't end up in the wrong hands?

Eva: No, that's totally legit. An app that I recommend is Signal. It's funny because it's technically used a lot by tech bros who know that your data is being collected by, like, [laughs lightly] all the, like, tech giants, like Snapchat and Facebook and Instagram. I mean, like, Facebook is Instagram.

Shohreh: Right?

Eva: Yeah. But Signal is like, super, like, double-secure, like, lockdown. So it's like a more secure way of sending photos.

Shohreh: I totally have Signal and I never thought to use it for that purpose. That's actually really smart.

Eva: Yeah. I mean, I think it's also, like, a good filtering technique if you're, like, talking to someone, and you're like, hey, actually, like, I kinda feel more comfortable doing, like, sexting or nude sharing on this different app. Like, would you feel comfortable downloading this app and, like, exploring it? 'Cause I think people who are gonna be respectful of your boundaries and, like, consent and just more knowledgeable about how

Conjuring Up Courage #103

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Eva Bloom

the world works are gonna be more down to be like, yeah, it's no problem, I'll download an app. That is cool for me.

There's also, like, Photo Vault, where you can put photos that are, like, behind a password.

Shohreh: Oh.

Eva: If you have any, like, family going through your phone [light laughter] or, like, teenage, like, I don't know, children in your life that are, like, scrolling through your photos, it can be good to be like, they're here behind a password so I can protect them that way.

Shohreh: For sure, 'cause I definitely use, like, the hidden image thing on my iPhone, but anyone that knows it exists can go find that folder. It's not like it's password protected. So that seems like a safer bet for sure.

Eva: Mhm. Always good to have more tools. And there's also the, like, keep your face out of the photo, like if you have any, like, recognizable tattoos, blur them out. Or, like...

Shohreh: That's hard when your whole body has tattoos on it, Eva! [Laughs lightly]

Eva: No, and also tattoos are so wonderful! It's just a great part of the sext.

Shohreh: But, yes, I have heard that as well, that any kind of features where they could for sure know it was you could be good to take out of it. So if you're someone who maybe has less tattoos, or just like, a tattoo [Eva

Conjuring Up Courage #103

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Eva Bloom

laughs lightly], definitely something you could consider to blur those out of the photo [laughs lightly].

Eva: Yeah. I've also heard to watermark your nudes or your photos with the name of the person you're sending them to. So if anyone ever leaks them, you know who leaked them because it'll have their watermark name on it.

Shohreh: Oh, that's super smart and sneaky [Eva laughs]! I love that.

Eva: Yep. Yeah.

Shohreh: I love that.

Eva: All of the harm reduction and all of the tips.

Shohreh: Perfect. We're basically just like, using the fact that I'm about to start dating as the case study for this episode here because, like I said, we want to have a queer focus today. So this will be my first time getting to do queer dating because as I mentioned, straight to bisexual to lesbian pipeline. And I had come out as bisexual when I was married to a cis het man in a monogamous relationship, so I have not had an opportunity to explore that yet.

It's terrifying 'cause I'm like, oh my god, how do I flirt with girls? Like, how do I have casual sex? Like, I don't know what I'm doing. So, help me, Eva! Help me and the baby queers listening who are like, oh shit, we're comin' out of this pandemic, we've learned things about ourselves. Now what do we do?

Conjuring Up Courage #103

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Eva Bloom

Eva: Oh my gosh. That's such a big question. Okay, now what do we do?

Shohreh: I mean, we could break it down, right? Step one is I've gotta find people to flirt with or have sex with or date with. So like, you know, my thought was get on the apps 'cause that seems to be what people do. That wasn't really a thing when I started dating my ex-husband. And so now I'm just like, okay, I guess I have to go on some dating apps and see what happens, right?

Eva: Yes. Great place to start. I would say make a couple profiles. I mean, it's regionally also different in terms of what apps are popular, but like, Tinder, Hinge, Bumble. I like Bumble because you would think it might be a little bit counterintuitive because the whole gimmick of Bumble is, that like [laughs lightly]—

Shohreh: [Laughs lightly] Right.

Eva: —the guy has to message first. But basically, like, it kind of avoids the problem, of, like sapphics, neither person messaging each other forever, or like, being too shy, that, like, once you match, you literally have to, like, start a conversation within the first 24 hours.

Shohreh: Oh, interesting.

Eva: Yeah. Bumble is also really great because it has a lot of functionality on their app to list a lot of information about yourself. Like, what type of relationship you're looking for, your political leaning [laughs lightly], your horoscope, your zodiac sign.

Shohreh: Very important if we're doing queer dating.

Conjuring Up Courage #103

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Eva Bloom

- Eva:** So all the queers can be like, no, Eva's a Scorpio, I don't wanna—
- Shohreh:** [Laughs lightly] I can't—I can't do it.
- Eva:** I don't wanna, stay away! But yeah, it like, prompts kind of those, like, key things, like values that you wanna share, which I think is helpful. So I would say do a bunch of 'em.
- Shohreh:** I've heard, at least here in the U.S., that HER is a very popular one for sapphics, so.
- Eva:** Yeah! I've heard kind of like mixed things about HER, but give it a go. Throw it all at the wall, see what sticks.
- Shohreh:** Right? [Light laughter] What other choice do I have?
- Eva:** In terms of like, messaging, to combat the sapphic nervousness about messaging, I've messaged first immediately once we've matched to kind of, like, prevent myself from overthinking.
- Shohreh:** Mm smart.
- Eva:** Yeah, and I usually do, like, a compliment in the flirty zone to kind of help with also the sapphic problem of being like, are they just being friendly even though we literally met on a dating app? [Shohreh laughs] Do they just wanna be friends? So I try to set the tone kinda early and then ask them a question about something on their profile to kinda get the conversation going.
- Shohreh:** And I feel like there is this fear, and I've heard of this and I'm starting to think about it myself, of, like, one, most queer folks, and especially

Conjuring Up Courage #103

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Eva Bloom

women who are about to start dating women are like, alright, well, I know what I don't like when men do it to me. So, you know, not wanting to fall into that, like, am I overstepping? Am I being inappropriate? Could make people kind of pull back too much, where it's like, there's a big difference between, like, being really rude to someone and flirting.

And then because so many of us are used to straightness as the norm, there's the fear of, like, oh god, but if I'm out at the bar and I'm flirting with a straight woman, like, it's gonna be really awkward. And, like, what am I gonna do? You know, I feel like I see that a lot from baby queers too, from both men and women of just like, oh, god, but what do I do if they're not gay? Which I also find funny because, like, of course, while it may not happen as much just from a sheer numbers thing, you can also be out at a bar as a straight person and accidentally flirt with a gay person.

Eva: That's true.

Shohreh: So, like, that possibility is always there, but I think there's just, like, this extra sense of fear and rejection if you're queer.

Eva: Yeah. No, totally. Oof. 100%. I feel like consent can be a part of, like, the solution to kind of both fears. Like, the fear around the idea of, like, being a predatory lesbian, or like, falling into the, like...

Shohreh: Bro tropes.

Conjuring Up Courage #103

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Eva Bloom

Eva: Yeah, bro tropes. The, like, sexist, like, ways of flirting. Like, consent can be a big part of that. Just being like, hey, like, are you open to being flirted with right now? [Laughs]

Shohreh: Yeah, and this, like, does happen. I was at a bar once and a woman grabbed my ass, and I was like, I wouldn't like this from a man and I don't like it from you. We were, like, not in conversation prior to that, and so it's like you still need to be considerate of the other person.

Eva: 100%. And I mean, asking someone, like, can I flirt with you, or do you wanna dance with me, or like, can I buy you a drink? Like, maybe that feels a little bit awkward, but I honestly feel like that sets up such a sense of, like, safety, and like, open communication that people are gonna dig in general, even if it is a little bit awkward.

Also, that was how I first started flirting with the girl that made me realize I was gay. I genuinely slid into her DMs and was like, can I flirt with you? So...

Shohreh: Aw, I love that!

Eva: Proof it can work.

Shohreh: It can work, for sure.

Eva: I mean, I think doing the flirting and like, existing in queer-specific spaces can be a way to help avoid that. And I would say, that was also going to be my suggestion on top of, like, downloading all of the apps, would be to, like, go to queer spaces. Like, whether that's like online or in person, and just start meeting people too. Just, like, openly meeting

Conjuring Up Courage #103

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Eva Bloom

people as friends, making those connections, because you never know, like, who might introduce you to someone, or just, like, getting comfortable in the space and knowing who's who. That can just, like, increase your comfort and also increase your range of potential partners.

Shohreh: Yeah, and I think, like, the next step in, like, the fear pyramid of queerness [Eva laughs lightly] that I'm creating here—that's a great post idea. We'll make the Baby Queer Fear Pyramid [light laughter]. Is like, okay, so you're talking to people, maybe you finally get some dates going. And, like, there's this weird thing where, you know, I'm 31. I'm sexually experienced in straight sex. And it's like, now, I'm gonna go out there and have queer sex. And there's this feeling of, like, being a bumbling teenager of, like, oh god, I don't have experience in certain things. Almost like that feeling of, like, being behind, which I logically know is not true. I have a wonderful therapist.

But, I'm throwing that out there because I know I'm not the only one who has felt that. And I'm sure there's people listening who are like, oh god, yeah, I've really worried about that. And I know some people worry about like, oh, do I need to disclose that this is my first time or first couple of times doing this? And I'm just curious what you think about all of that.

Eva: Yeah. My feeling about this is that, like, every new person that you sleep with, you're basically starting from scratch anyway. Because like, how we talked about that people like totally different things, that having some previous sexual experience can be helpful. You're like,

Conjuring Up Courage #103

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Eva Bloom

okay, I'm working with, like, a general knowledge set. But it can kind of only take you so far when you're with a new partner 'cause you have no idea what sex acts they like, how they like to be touched. How you're going to have good sex is by communicating with that person and, like, them teaching you what they like in bed.

For example, like, if you have been sleeping with a bunch of different people but they really like oral sex, for example, and then the next person that you sleep with really likes grinding, none of your other partners liked grinding. It doesn't really matter that you've had all of this sexual experience because you're still going to be learning it like new again. So that's really my philosophy, that like, as long as you're taking into these experiences, like, an openness to communicate, and play, and experience the give and take pleasure with the person that you're sleeping with, you're kinda always going to be starting from scratch anyway, so you're not behind at all.

Shohreh: I'm so glad that you mentioned the communication piece because I think when we think about casual sex in media, there's almost never any communication, right? It's like the instant attraction, ripping each other's clothes off, having sex thing, where it's like, we didn't need to talk about it and it was amazing. And, like, I think that might be just a little rose-colored glasses version of, like, having casual sex with strangers [laughs lightly].

Eva: Yeah. I would even say my philosophy is like, the opposite of that. Because if you're having casual sex, kind of the main purpose of doing that is to experience pleasure and to have good sex. The stakes are so

Conjuring Up Courage #103

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Eva Bloom

low in terms of, like, awkwardness and communication. Like, we both know why we're here. Why don't we cut the crap and just, like, get it out on the table, like what do we like? What do we not like? Like, give me the TLDR so we can start having, like, great sex as soon as possible [laughs lightly].

Shohreh: Oh yeah, that's the thing. It's like, if the ultimate goal is to, like, feel better, then communication is only going to help that. And I hate that we have this idea in our society that, like, talking and not, like just going straight to the banging is unsexy. And it's like, oh, it's going to interrupt the flow. And I'm like, no, it's gonna make things better.

Eva: Well, it's so upsetting to me. It is kinda like rape culture-y that talking during sex, or like, saying what you like ruins the mood, where it's like, not that at all. I would also say that, like, sexting could be a great tool to use in terms of this 'cause it can be nerve-wracking to just be like, what do you like [laughs lightly]? But, I mean, also, maybe not necessarily. Like, what are you into? Like, what type of stuff? But, yeah, sexting can be a great way to do that.

When I was on dating apps before, I used to ask people three questions. I used to ask people, what do you think is the most overrated sex act, what do you think is the most underrated sex act, and what do you think is the most correctly rated sex act? I feel like that starts, like, a very flirty conversation, but you get a sense of, like, what people kind of like.

Conjuring Up Courage #103

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Eva Bloom

- Shohreh:** That is a very fun dating app opener [Eva laughs lightly], or like, conversation continuer if you're like, starting to be interested in somebody. That is very clever.
- Eva:** Yeah.
- Shohreh:** There was someone I saw on TikTok whose, like, entire account is based on one of her openers on, I think Tinder. And it was like, three things, and this is a straight person and it's a straight woman. So she, like, lets the men pick one of the three things.
- Eva:** Ooh.
- Shohreh:** It's, like, one was compliment, two was dad joke, and three was, she used different terminology, but basically read them for filth [laughs lightly].
- Eva:** [Audibly gasps] Oh, that's wonderful. That's super fun.
- Shohreh:** It's so great. And so she, like, puts the conversations up, and she'll pull up the photo that she, like, dragged them for [laughter]. And I'm like, this is amazing [Eva laughs lightly]. And it's so smart because you can immediately see, does this person have a good sense of humor or not [laughs lightly].
- Eva:** Yeah.
- Shohreh:** Like, are they going to take offense to everything?

Conjuring Up Courage #103

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Eva Bloom

- Eva:** Oh my gosh. My immediate thought is, like, the TikTok audio from the musical Six, that [singing] "This is modern feminism talking." [Shohreh laughs lightly] Just roasting them on TikTok. I'm like, that's it.
- Shohreh:** One of the other things that I was thinking about was this idea that we expect any, like, sexual partner that we have to just know what feels good for us. And like, there's this idea that, like, ooh, well the best partner is just one that can guess what I like and do it, and that's so hot.
- Eva:** Oh my gosh, yeah. Or, like, that indicates, like, the strength of the relationship, or like, the level of intimacy.
- Shohreh:** Mhm.
- Eva:** I don't know anybody who could mind read. If you know anybody who could mind read [laughter], let me know, but...
- Shohreh:** We have questions for them.
- Eva:** I haven't met anybody like that.
- Shohreh:** No, and I think that, again, so much of this is because of the sex scenes that we see in media and we see in porn and other places, where it's like, so much of that is just fake. It's bullshit. It's not a true showing of, like, what's possible during real-life sex between actual non-actor humans.
- Eva:** Yeah.
- Shohreh:** And I think opening ourselves up to the idea that there's like, no one right way to have sex, and there's no one right way to talk about it, that

Conjuring Up Courage #103

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Eva Bloom

allows people to be like, okay, I can figure out what works for me. And I also think it takes off so much pressure. Like, if you go into every interaction with a lover [Eva laughs] being like, oh, well, you didn't know I like it this way? I guess it's over. Like, you're nixing so many potential partners that way by not being like, oh, like, let's talk about it.

Oh! I know, the other thing I wanted to say was someone had a post about this recently, and I'll try to find it. I can't remember which sex educator had put it up. But the post was about, like, in the moment when you're having sex with somebody, the very open-ended question, "What do you like?" can be really scary.

Eva: Yeah.

Shohreh: And it can be hard to answer, especially if you're not used to talking about your sexuality. And so trying to break it down into some more specific questions, or even being like, trying something and being like, do you like this, can be a little bit better for people in the moment.

Because I think for myself, if someone just out of nowhere was like, "Yeah, so tell me what you like," that could be really scary for me if I'm actually in a sexual interaction. Like, maybe if we weren't together and we were just having a conversation it would be different. But it's like, if your clothes are already off and someone's just like, "Tell me what you like," sometimes I could be like, [panicked voice] oh god, I don't know! How do I answer this question?

Eva: Yeah, that's a really good point. Both the, like, maybe have that conversation over text, or like, during a conversation when you're both

Conjuring Up Courage #103

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Eva Bloom

clothed, or, yeah, like giving options. Like, do you want to do this or that?

Shohreh: Yeah, options are super helpful. Or, again, like, different areas. So it's like, okay, in terms of kissing, you know, what do you prefer here? Like, how would you like me to touch this part of your body? Like, that can be a little bit more like, oh, I know the answer to this. Versus, like, in the whole possible realm of sex, tell me what you want. And it's just like, ahhhh, I don't know!

Eva: Yeah. 100%. Do you like being touched like more roughly or gently here? Or, like, are there parts of your body that you like to be touched or not to be touched? That's always a good one to do in advance [laughs lightly].

Shohreh: We've talked a lot about exploration and figuring out what you like over the course of this conversation. And so, I'm wondering if you have any thoughts for people who are like, okay, well, maybe I want to start exploring sexually with myself because I don't really know the answers to this and I wanna see what happens. Do you have any advice for people about, like, how they can actually do that? How they can learn, you know, different ways or like, ideas for touching themselves or trying different things that they could then potentially take to partners? Or just keep it with themselves, you know? There's some things that people do solo that they really like that they don't want to do with a partner, which is totally fine too.

Conjuring Up Courage #103

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Eva Bloom

Eva: Ooh. Good question. I think giving, like, dedicating some time to yourself where there's no expectations or pressure to like, either, like, have an orgasm, or, like, try X thing, where the goal is just to, like, explore how different touches feel on your body, different positions. And, like, really leading with pleasure, following like a trail, or like a path, and like, you just follow where the pleasure path leads you.

I think sex toys are also a super cool way to, like, try different sensations and you can, like, try sex toys, like, in different ways, on different parts of your body. Porn, if you're watching, like, queer porn [light laughter], if you're watching more, like, independently-created porn, can be a great way to get different ideas, with the, like, knowledge in mind that porn is meant to be, like, entertainment. It's not meant to be instruction.

But yeah, I really love audio erotica. Reading erotica can also be a cool way to get ideas and suggestions.

Shohreh: I think there's some great educational materials out there as well. I know I had a conversation about this once with Erica Smith, again, about, I was like, okay, are there any great resources out there for women? And one of the things she recommended, but the title is not great, is a book called Girl Sex 101—

Eva: Yeah, yeah.

Shohreh: —by Allison Moon, so I think that could be a really great one. I always love and recommend OMGyes, which is, like, the online educational platform. Like, you pay to have access to the series within it. But like, I

Conjuring Up Courage

#103

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Eva Bloom

honestly didn't know all the different ways that one could touch a vulva until I got OMGyes. No one's teaching you this necessarily, and so if it's only ever been one way your whole life and you haven't had that thought to explore or like opened yourself up to that, sometimes it can help to have suggestions.

Where it's like, OMGyes is literally broken down into lessons of different kinds of techniques where there's, like, a written description, audio description, a video that you can watch, and they even have, like, a little interactive thing you can do on a tablet where you can practice it on, like, a vulva image on the screen. Not even kidding.

Eva: I love that!

Shohreh: Yeah, it's super cool. And honestly, OMGyes was one of the first times that I saw, like, naked people doing sexual things outside of, like, a porn context. Where it's literally like, this is educational. So at first, it was a little bit weird. I was like, oh gosh. And now I'm like, oh, well, this makes perfect sense, of course we would want to have these kinds of resources out in the world where it's literally, like, different people talking about, oh yeah, I like to do this and this feels good. Or, oh yeah, my partner taught me this.

And I'm like, oh, I never even would have thought about this. Now I can try it and it's like, maybe you like it, maybe you don't. But sometimes it's nice to not have to just, like, create it on your own and to have options to try instead of being like, okay, let me see if I can invent something, which can, again, feel scary when it's very open-ended.

Conjuring Up Courage #103

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Eva Bloom

- Eva:** Yeah, I think that Beducated also has similar courses with like, demos, and kind of like, walking through.
- Shohreh:** I will put them into the show notes so everyone has access to those really easily. I think that sometimes we treat sex very differently than other things in life, whereas, like, sex is just like anything else. Practice is helpful. Playing around and figuring out what you like is going to be really helpful. Like, for some reason, sex is painted as this thing that, like, you just do. And I think if people could be more intentional about sex—and dating, to be honest—like all these things that we see as like, oh yeah, it's just that you know how to do it and you do it, then you could really make it something that works for you and that feels a lot less, like, frustrating or like you're failing for doing it the wrong way when there really is no wrong way.
- Eva:** Yeah, 100%. There is so much pressure on, like, sexual performance. And it gets, like, tied up into our worth in a way that, like, other skills in other areas of our lives, like, aren't tied up in when it's true, sexual performance is not, like, this finite, like, quantity that either you have or you don't. Like, it is really, like, you develop different skills, like, overall, in terms of communication. But also, like, specific skills with, like, each partner that you have. And there's no shame in learning [laughs lightly].
- Shohreh:** No, there's no shame in learning. You know, I think that an insult that's always thrown around is like, oh yeah, they're bad in bed. And it's like, well, that person may have not met your needs. And yes, it's definitely possible this person is lacking some of the skills that would make them better in bed. But that's not like, an innate thing. It's not like, oh, you're

Conjuring Up Courage #103

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Eva Bloom

just a person who's bad in bed and you're screwed—LOL, pun unintended [light laughter]—forever. Um, like, you know, these are all things that can be improved on, assuming that a person wants to.

And so if anyone's listening out there and they just are like, oh god, I'm just, like, not good at this. This isn't my thing. Like so many other things in life, truly, you can learn and grow in this area and it doesn't mean, like, you're stuck, or that you will never get better. Also, bad is subjective, good is subjective, right? Everyone likes different things as we've talked about through this whole episode. So just because one person wasn't as compatible sexually doesn't mean someone else won't absolutely love what you've got going on in terms of your style.

Eva: Yeah. Oh my gosh. I've like started writing notes for different posts from our conversation now. I'm like, ahhhh! [Light laughter]

Shohreh: I do that all the time from my podcast episodes, so [light laughter] do it!

Eva: So much good info the world needs to know! [Laughs lightly]

Shohreh: There is, and I'm so grateful that you are one of the lovely humans that is out there putting this info out there. I especially love that it's queer-centered and queer-inclusive coming from you because we do need more of that. There's plenty of straight-centered sex education out there, and like, in this point of my life, that's just not what I need.

Eva: Yeah! Well, thank you so much. [Laughs lightly]

Shohreh: Of course. I really appreciate you making time for this conversation. And to wrap up, I have been asking all of my Pridepalooza guests to fill

Conjuring Up Courage #103

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Eva Bloom

in the blank because the theme of Pridepalooza is: Queerness is... So if you could just fill in that blank for you in terms of what queerness is, I would love to hear it.

Eva: Queerness is power, authenticity, community, joy. Yeah, all of those things.

Shohreh: All of those things. Queerness is so multi-faceted, which is what I love about it.

Eva: Yeah.

Shohreh: For folks who want to find you online, where can they do that? And also, how can people best support you at this time?

Eva: Yeah, so folks can find me, I'm mostly on Instagram @WhatsMyBodyDoing. Um, I also have a back catalog of sex ed videos on the YouTube Channel What's My Body Doing. I would love folks to follow me on Instagram and subscribe to my newsletter. If you go to my website at EvaBloom.ca and scroll down to the bottom, you can join the email newsletter. I've got lots of generally, like, monthly newsletters with updates from me, and ponderings, and resources. I also just finished launching my first online cause called "Fuck the Patriarchy, Fuck Yourself," which is—

Shohreh: [Laughs lightly] Fabulous name, by the way.

Eva: Thank you! [Laughs lightly] Which is totally related to everything we talked about today. Like, really the purpose of the course is, like, unlearning all of these scripts and all of these, like, cisheteronormative

Conjuring Up Courage #103

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Eva Bloom

frameworks for sexuality that we grew up with. And then building the foundation to figure out what you like and to create a sexual relationship with yourself that feels really authentic and sexy. So the cohort for the summer, we've already started, it's all full. But if that sounds interesting to you, there's a page on my website under Fuck the Patriarchy, Fuck Yourself if you want to learn more and join the waitlist for hopefully the fall cohort, that is also available.

Shohreh: Sweet! I will put those things in the show notes so people can access all of that.

Eva: Yay!

Shohreh: And everyone, go follow Eva, you will not be disappointed [Eva laughs lightly]. So much great stuff there to learn. I learned a lot from this conversation, and I can't wait to share it with everyone.

Eva: Yay!

Shohreh:

[Music plays]

And that's our show for today. If you're enjoying Conjuring Up Courage, don't forget to subscribe through your podcast provider of choice so you never miss an episode. Additionally, if you haven't left a rating and review in the Apple Podcasts app yet, you can do so from any Apple device to help more people find and benefit from the show. I also love hearing from listeners, so feel free to take a screenshot from your podcast player, post on social media, and tag me. My username is

Conjuring Up Courage #103

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Eva Bloom

@ShohrehDavoodi on all platforms. Finally, you can sign up for my email newsletter, The Sunday Share, and get more details about how to work with me by going to ShohrehDavoodi.com. Thank you so much for listening, and I hope you'll join me for the next episode.

[Music fades]