

Conjuring Up Courage

#120

Featured this episode: Shohreh Davoodi & Dr. Uchenna "UC" Ossai

Shohreh Davoodi: You are listening to episode #120 of Conjuring Up Courage, featuring Dr. Uchenna Ossai, also known as UC. UC is the creator and founder of YouSeeLogic, a judgment-free online platform dedicated to adult sex education and empowerment. In this episode, UC and I discuss the many causes of sexual shame, ways to improve your sex life and increase sexual confidence, why you may not always have a wet-ass pussy (among other sex myths), and more.

To access the show notes and a full transcript of this episode, head to shohrehdavoodi.com/120. That's shohrehdavoodi.com/120.

[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.

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]

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UC, how the hell have you been?

Dr. Uchenna Ossai: I've been amazing. I mean, I've been on the mend, [Shohreh laughs lightly] but I've still been amazing at the same time [laughs].

Shohreh: Well I'm happy to hear that you are on the mend and that you're still amazing, thriving, over there even with having recently gone through surgery.

UC: Yes, I've been fantastic. I think the sad thing is that it was a major surgery that forced me to rest, like really rest.

Shohreh: Oof.

UC: And I'm living my best life right now. I'm happy as a clam.

Shohreh: Right? As it turns out, like, when we are forced into rest and we get to see what that feels like, we're like, oh, maybe we should do this more often.

UC: I know! It's like, oh, there are these things called TV shows on Netflix that I can watch, binge? [Laughter] And so that's actually been really fun to hear people be like, you have to watch Outlander, you have to watch Squid Game, or all of these shows. I'm adding them to my list. And The Great British Bake Off, that's been my biggest find right now.

Shohreh: Yes. This time of year I think especially The Great British Bake Off is perfect 'cause it's just such a feel good show, and everyone is taking good care of each other, and there's feelings. It's good.

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UC: I know! Like, that's the thing that I love about it is that they're so sweet to one another. They're not mean. They're not crazy competitive. But you can tell when like, people have, like, little personality issues. But other than that, like, I thoroughly enjoy that show [laughs lightly].

Shohreh: Right. Which, like, if you're gonna put 12 strangers into a room, of course you're gonna have some personality issues. But, like, so different from American reality TV. It's just a totally different flavor.

UC: So different! Less scarring. I feel like it's less emotionally jarring and I feel lifted up. Like, I've shed a tear, too, on a few.

Shohreh: Yes!

UC: Like, they're just so good. I just love it.

Shohreh: They are so good. And for me, bingeing is, like, the only way I wanna watch TV. So, for example, Great British Bake Off, Netflix has now started putting out the episodes, like, one week at a time when it's a new series. And I'm like, well, I'm not gonna watch it until I have all of the episodes because why would I wanna wait? Screw cliffhangers. I wanna go right to the next episode [laughs lightly].

UC: It's agony. I personally found it to be disrespectful when they started doing that [laughter].

Shohreh: Yes.

UC: I was like, you know, I feel like I'm not seen or heard in my needs and wishes right now. But I'm just playing. No, I love it all. This restful space

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reminds me the things I tell people, that you need rest to kind of find your sensual energy, to kind of get into your space. And it's funny because I thought I was giving myself little bites of rest, but I mean, living the life that I live, you know, like, all the jobs that I have and the roles that I play, like, when I need rest, I need rest. Like, I get why people take months off because sometimes you need, like, two months just to just lay down, take naps in the morning [laughs]. You know? Go for a leisurely walk in the afternoon. And then, you know, have dinner at six, not at ten, and that dinner is like, a meal that you cook, not popcorn and bourbon, you know? [Shohreh laughs]. So, little things I'm noticing that enrich my life [laughs].

Shohreh: Just little things. #JustTheLittleThings

UC: Just the little things.

Shohreh: [Laughs lightly] Oh my god, how true is that though? Yeah, listeners, if you would like to contribute to my sabbatical fund so I could just, uh, take six months doing nothing, like, it's fine. Just Venmo me. It's great.

UC: Yep. I mean, I got you, my friend [Shohreh laughs lightly]. I'll contribute. I'm in it.

Shohreh: You're like, we all need this. I know, it's so true. Well, and that's a great segue, I feel like, because you're talking about the jobs and the roles. And I've had the great pleasure of knowing you in person because we share a VA. So shout-out to Ashley. Also, this is the long-awaited shout-out to Ryan, Ashley's husband, 'cause I guess Ryan loves the podcast,

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has become a huge fan. So thank you for listening, both to Ashley and Ryan.

UC: Ashley and Ryan are the bomb dot com. I mean, I know that people don't say that anymore, and I'm totally aging myself, [laughs] but they are the best! The best! Love you guys!

Shohreh: They're the best. We love you. We wouldn't know each other if not for them, so they're also great connectors. But for those who haven't been graced by your incredible presence, who are you? What makes you tick? What are you lovin' right now? Just give us the scoop.

UC: I'm Uchenna Cynthia-Awelle Ossai, but everyone calls me UC. I am a Scorpio. But mostly I am—gosh, that question is, I know, a basic question, but to answer it I'm trying not to answer with my occupation.

Shohreh: That's why I specifically didn't ask what you do.

UC: Yeah. I think I'm more than that. I think I am a great daughter. I make an okay sister [laughter]. Um, I think I'm a pretty solid friend and family member. Mostly, I grew up wanting to be a leader, but wanting to be a kind leader. And I was just having this conversation with my friend Lindsey. Lindsey Mays, what up girl? She was talking about the difference between being kind and nice. And she said that, you know, being kind is like, actually like a core in someone. Like, being nice is almost like you're, you're acting in a nice way but it doesn't necessarily mean that you're kind.

Shohreh: Oh yes.

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UC: And I always wanted to be a kind and thoughtful leader my whole life no matter what I did. And I think I've been very successful in some ways in achieving that goal, and I think I've been unsuccessful [laughs lightly] in other ways because I'm very human. And I think for a long time, you know, it was my career that drove all of my decisions and kind of achieving each milestone of, like, getting my degree, getting my doctorate, doing residency, moving—I had to move cities for jobs all the time [laughs lightly]. And, you know, now that I've been in Austin for four, almost five years now, I can see the transition of what my needs are, kind of prioritizing those better outside of the work space.

But I think for the purposes of subject matter, you know, I am a pelvic health physical therapist. I am an assistant professor at the University of Texas Dell Medical School in Austin. I specialize in all of those issues that we have [laughs lightly] like urinary incontinence, fecal incontinence, prolapse, all the things. And then sexuality is what I subspecialize in and so spending my days and evenings talking to my patients and clients and the community at large with my social media platform, YouSeeLogic, about having healthy sex lives, whatever that's defined by you.

Shohreh: I love that. And especially that you have the background as well being a pelvic floor physical therapist. I didn't even know that pelvic floor physical therapists existed until the last couple of years. And I actually have had one other episode with a pelvic floor physical therapist before and that was kind of an introduction to a lot of my listeners of like, oh, there's a special person I can go to for these specific problems? Like,

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you know, I think now we're starting to hear of pelvic floor PTs more around pregnancy, finally, that's become, like, more common, where it's like, yeah, that's a regular recommendation. But I think a lot of people don't know it's not just for people who are pregnant or who have just had a baby. It's really for anyone who's having all variety of issues that you may be struggling with in that area.

UC: I agree. And I think it's important to understand that all pelvic PTs, just like not all doctors, they're not all built the same. Everyone has different levels of training, different expertise, different knowledge base. And I think that a lot of my patients, you know, I'm like, the second or third person they've gone to and say, wow, you know, like, no one ever talked to me about sex in this way [laughs lightly], you know, and acknowledged my gender identity in this way. And aren't they all supposed to be woke and dope? And I'm like, no [laughs lightly], you know, that's not how we were trained. And to get to that level of expertise and knowledge, it takes a lot of, like, mentorship and individual drive to seek that knowledge out, just like it does in any profession I would imagine, particularly in medicine and healthcare.

Shohreh: Right, and I know you specifically sought out additional training to become, like, a sexuality professional in addition to your pelvic floor PT training. Because I assume a lot of what you learned in that was not covered when you were in physical therapy school.

UC: Nope, not at all. I'm very lucky. I went to very good schools for all of my training, and I did my residency at WashU, and my mentor, Dr. Tracy Spitznagle, I went to her 'cause I was starting to get all these patients

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with like, premature ejaculation, anorgasmia, and other than my own personal experience and interest in sexual health, I didn't have the didactic training or the clinical skills to address it in a comprehensive way or in a way that I felt was comprehensive.

I went to her and I said, hey, like [light laughter]. She was like, you know what? This is gonna be one of those independent study things where you have to kinda learn on your own and seek out experts in that area. And I appreciate her for saying that. She wasn't tryin' to fake it until she made it. She was like, I specialize in this one thing, and sexuality is not a part of that.

And so that was—gosh, three months, four months after, six months after I graduated from PT school that basically my whole career has been in the pursuit of getting that didactic training and expertise to comprehensively address sexual health for all my patients, even when they come in and they're saying, oh, I'm just peeing my pants. Making sure that they understand that that's part of their health framework, is their sexuality. And people who have sexual dysfunction do not view themselves as healthy as someone who does not have sexual dysfunction.

Shohreh: It's interesting the role that you play, too, because—you know this, right? So many of us hold a lot of sexual shame around sexuality in general and then maybe specifically things that our bodies are doing, the ways we think they're not measuring up to what we think they are "supposed to do." In my work as a self-trust coach, one of the first things that I help people with is, like, we have to have awareness of any

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of these things before we can make a change. We have to know, like, what are the reasons that I'm feeling like I should be this way or I have to be this way, in this case in sexuality specifically, so that you can then say, does this actually align with what I want? What works with my body? You know, with who I am?

I would love to talk to you a little bit about that and kinda this role that sexual shame plays in not only, right, in your office, literally with patients who are coming to you, but just for all of us in our ability to, like, show up fully in our sex lives.

UC:

That's the ultimate question, right, is what role does that sexual shame have? I think the first thing, honestly, that some of my patients, we have to get to, we have to define their feelings around sexuality. Because they're not necessarily aware that it's shame. You know, they may think, oh, there's something wrong with me—whatever stereotype they picked up along the way. I'm just frigid, or I'm loose, or this or that. And I'm like, what does that even mean?

One of my patients was like, I don't wanna be perceived as a slut. And I said, well, how do you define a slut? What, in your mind, is that definition? And what's interesting is when I kinda circled that back to her, she was like, oh, I haven't really thought about that. I just didn't wanna be perceived as one. And I said, well, where did that come from? What are your values around sex? When I ask the question to my patients, what are your values around sex, or what is your sexual philosophy, they look at me like I have 75 heads and they're like, what bitch? [Laughter] It's like, what you talkin' about, Willis?

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And I'm just like, what, I'm not saying that you need to have, like, this perfectly formed philosophy because it's not defined by UC, it's defined by you.

Shohreh: Ten-point bullet list [laughs].

UC: Yeah. But a lot of it, when I ask them that question, then we kinda get to the bottom of their shame, right? We get to the bottom of it, and we can say, you know, that's sexual shame. Or that's—you're defining an ideal sexual encounter around a value and ideal that you actually don't even ascribe to. And so making that connection first is actually some of the foundational work that I do with my patients and clients when I do sex counseling.

And sexuality counseling is not just sex therapy, right? So a sexuality counselor, just to clarify, can be a nurse, a healthcare provider, a physical therapist, and they're going to provide you with specific suggestions, limited information, they're going to get your permission to discuss sexuality. But they're not gonna provide you with psychotherapy. So they're not going into that deep psychological framework. Usually I tell people that you're gonna use a sex counselor as a bridge to sex therapy or if you're looking to kinda understand what the issue is.

And oftentimes for my patients, you know, they'll work with me, clients will work with me for four to eight sessions and they're like, "Oh, I'm great. Awesome. Problem solved." Or, they may say, "Oh, you know what? Now I understand what the problem is, and I need to go to

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therapy." [Laughs] And then I'm like, yay! So it's really a great position because everyone ends with a success, whether it's they're going to further investigate the deep psychological roots of what's going on with them or they realize oh, you know what? I have these specific things that I need to do for myself and they've worked, now I can kind of continue in my sexual journey.

Shohreh:

I'm glad you mentioned, too, kind of looking to what some of these roots are and the deeper things that these come from. Because all of this stuff is connected. Like, I find that a lot of my work, too, parallels with yours as a self-trust coach, where I'm maybe not doing this so much in the realm of sexuality as kind of more general overall in people's lives. The sexuality stuff does come up, but helping people connect and see, like, how the world at large and the systems of oppression that we live in can affect all these different areas of your life.

Maybe in our minds we think, oh, well, the bedroom is separate from, like, the world at large that I live in. But the reality is, if you're someone who's living with marginalized identities, that comes into your experience in the bedroom. If you are someone who has privileged identities, that can come into the role that you're playing when you're in the bedroom. And a lot of times we don't think about that. We don't really look at these dynamics, and it's so important to see, like, how it all plays out there, especially since that's such an intimate and vulnerable space.

UC:

One-thousand percent. When we think about those sexual stereotypes that really negatively impact us all, right, those sexual stereotypes get

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internalized by those who are in marginalized identities and those who are not in marginalized identities. And I was talking about this, you know, this past weekend I was lecturing at the University of Michigan because I'm also on faculty there as well. And we were talking about this very kind of interesting phenomenon. When we think about the role that stereotypes make, right, those shortcuts in our mind to assess a situation, to size up a situation, and when you think about the sexual shame and the sexual stereotypes we have, we do that all the time. Where we use these social stereotypes and put them into a sexual context and then we make all these assumptions and we move forward based on that without really examining what that means.

I'll use myself as an example, right? You know, here I am. I identify as a cisgender, heterosexual, plus-sized Black woman with short, natural hair [laughter]. And there are lots of things that I carry with me, right? The archetype of, like, this superwoman, or the angry Black woman, or the jezebel, or the mammy. And then imagine taking that into professional spaces. And then taking that into sexual spaces.

And we know with research—there's so much research out there talking about how these sexual stereotypes actually play out in one's decision making when it comes to the sexual activities they engage in. And the negotiating power one has, right? So if you're in a marginalized group, you're more than likely to be having less negotiating power. Especially if you're in a relationship where your partner is not sharing your racial and ethnic identity, right?

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And those are things that people don't necessarily talk about but can be internalized and then play out in sexual play. And then the outcomes can be kind of these, like, microaggression dynamics. And then over time, they're like, I don't know why I'm feeling what I feel. [Shohreh laughs lightly] And I'm like, okay, let's back this up and break this down. You know, and that's just, like, one sliver of this kind of intersectional sexual wheel that we all engage in.

It's really complicated. So, you know, sometimes when people say to me, you know, what's the best vibrator out there? Or what's the best lube? [Shohreh laughs lightly] And I don't even know what to say. I'm like, uh...so tell me about yourself [laughter]. I need a little bit more. Like, what are you seeking, right? You know, what are you truly looking for? Or what do we have to address? Or what myths do we have to work through to get to the route of what you actually need? 'Cause it may not be the biggest, baddest vibrator. It might be. But it may not be.

Shohreh:

Yeah, it is often not. It's interesting to me because sex is such a complex and multilayered area but we don't treat it that way, like, in society at large. Like, I'm even thinking about media depictions of sex, right, and like, sort of the simplistic nature where it's just like, two people have no conversation at all about what anybody wants or likes. They, like, have frenzied sex. They both orgasm at the same time. Everyone's happy. Like, the end. That's, like, 90% of media portrayals of sex.

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And that seeps into our brains, where we're like, alright, um, surely there must be a simple solution for whatever sexual struggle I'm having 'cause it's supposed to be like that.

UC: Right. And I think it's really funny because I was having this conversation with a colleague of mine the other day about, you know, this concept of sexual pleasure and, like, how are we supposed to define for our patients low libido? Because it's highly subjective. And there's multiple factors that are involved in that. And so if someone comes in saying, "My libido is low," I'm like, is it? Or is there a discrepancy or a difference between your partner's libido and yours? And why is your libido the one that has to be addressed? What about their libido? [Laughs lightly]

You know? Like, this immediate internalization and ownership of—particularly for, like, cisgender women and non-binary vulva owners—kind of, like, this ownership of what's going wrong in that sexual framework. And depending on the dynamics of your relationship and who you're engaging with, that can actually really have long-lasting impact.

Shohreh: Oh, absolutely. I mean, just using myself as an example, like, for years, I thought that I just had really low libido and I just tried everything I could to fix it only to find out, no, the problem was that I was gay, UC.

UC: Right.

Shohreh: And so you can't really fix that with, um, your standard things to talk about with that option. Nope.

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- UC:** Right? It ripped it. Like, all that internalized shame and stress. You're like, why is my libido in the toilet? Ooooh. Like, I'm not into this situation.
- Shohreh:** Right, exactly. I needed to go a lot deeper than I was willing to go at the time, to be fair. But, you know, instead of, like, oh, let me go to the gynecologist and I'm gonna, like, we'll try this, we'll do this thing, and whatever. But, yeah, I think it is very common for us to just take that on as, like, I am at fault. Something is wrong with me. My body is broken. Instead of, like, maybe what your body is doing is trying to tell you something as well. Or maybe, like, the way you are is just fine and you need, just need to renegotiate around the situation if you and your partner are, like, not in the exact same place. Like, there's so many places to go that aren't, it's me. I'm the worst. I'm the problem.
- UC:** Absolutely. And it's actually hard to teach that, especially hard to teach that not just for patients and clients but also for healthcare providers and, you know, mental health providers and body healers, is to kind of give people those frameworks.
- And, like, when we talk about biopsychosocial framework, where instead of just kind of blaming the genitals, or like, oh, I have endometriosis, oh, I have vulva linea, it's more like, okay, that's actually one piece of the pie, right? That's that biological piece. But there's the psychological piece, there's the sociocultural piece, like, how you were raised, religion, your race, ethnicity, right? Your sexuality. And then of course the interpersonal components, like, how is your relationship with your partner? How is your relationship with yourself? Are you working

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in a toxic work environment? Right? Like, all of those pieces do play a part in how your brain kind of receives sexual stimuli.

It's almost thinking about, like, the role that the impact of racism or microaggressions or just minority stress has on the brain. And you're teed up when you have those experiences. And so your brain is like, oh, stranger danger? What? [Shohreh laughs lightly] So even if you seem like, consciously you are fine, but your brain is like, no ma'am. No, nope, that's not what we're doing right now. Like, no, no, no way. But when you have that brain response but then you don't have the awareness of all the contexts and all the factors that play out, it's really complicated to address sometimes.

Shohreh:

Yeah, it's very complicated. And it can just take a lot of time and experimentation, I've found, to, you know, get to that place. I think some of it is learning to approach these things with a sense of more curiosity and more openness instead of automatically going to this place of shame, like we've been talking about, or guilt or blame. And that's hard because we learn that that should be our reaction that we need to have.

And this is why people, you know, work with someone like you or work with someone like me or go to therapy, all of these wonderful things, is 'cause this shit is hard. So just for anyone out there struggling, like, you're not alone. So many people are dealing with this stuff all the time. And there are things that you can do and things that you can explore to try to help improve the situation.

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UC: One-thousand percent. There's hope, right?

Shohreh: Yeah.

UC: It's not hopeless. There's always a path, right? And then we just have to understand our expectations and design a plan that helps to manage those.

Shohreh: Right. And I know the path is different for everyone depending on your needs. It's kind of like when someone's like, what's the best vibrator? They ask you that and you're like, that is not something that I can tell you, it's going to be an it depends. But generally speaking, across your work, I'm curious what your thoughts are on if people are trying to build up more sexual confidence, more sexual self-esteem and they're struggling with that, do you have any recommendations for things they can start doing to improve in that area?

UC: Yeah. So I always say that it's going to have to start with, like, that first initial deep dive. But also that—I say there's three basic questions that you want to ask yourself: What do you love about sex, what do you like about sex? What do you not like about sex? Like, what is scary about sex? And then, what is shameful about sex? Like, what do you internalize as shame?

And then when you have those three answers, you want to think about creating your own biopsychosocial framework. What are the biological things that are going on in your life right now? Hormonally? Back pain? Incontinence? Just general fatigue? What's going on psychologically? Are you a little stressed? Do you have seasonal depression? All those

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things. What are the inner sociocultural components in your life? And what are the interpersonal factors?

Getting that baseline assessment and just saying, oh, well, dang! Okay, so it looks like I'm always constipated. Right? [Light laughter] And I know that sounds, like, not, like, a sexy intervention, but it can be because if you're full of poop all the time, you're not gonna feel sexy. You're gonna be like, I don't want you touching me. Right? And so maybe you'll say, I may want to work with a nutritionist or a dietitian. Or I may want to start with, like, just understanding what my body needs so I can have regular bowel movements so I don't feel gross all the time or feel full of poop all the time [light laughter]. And that will increase my bandwidth to respond to the sexual stimuli that I get from my partner.

Or you may realize, oh, you know what? Let me—let me figure this out because my partner always kisses me on the ear and I actually don't like that. I need them to kiss me on the shoulder because that is actually more sexual to me and that actually stimulates me in a different way than being kissed on the ear 'cause it feels like a wet willy. Right? [Light laughter]

Little examples that I literally just created as I'm speaking, but those types of concepts and looking at it from that perspective can give you a lot more information. Because sometimes if someone's like, "I want to get the biggest, baddest vibrator," but their problem is actually, like, a constipation problem, or their problem is actually a sexual communication problem, that vibrator is just \$100 you spent to kind of stimulate you in a way that you're actually not gonna respond to.

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But if you address all the other factors that actually calm your nervous system down, that get your brain activating in a different way that's not stranger danger, then the stimuli that you were using before you're actually going to respond to it positively. And so that's how we want to look at it.

Shohreh: So yeah, it is really about understanding—getting to know yourself better, at the end of the day. And figuring out all these questions that we don't ask ourselves because, again, the model is like, you just know! You know what you like and what you want, and you go out and you do it, and you and your partner should be perfectly enmeshed in what you want all the time, and you never have to talk about it. No, why would you do that?

UC: Exactly. Exactly. 'Cause even if it's just a matter of like, hey, babe, like, you know, text me what you wanna do with each other this weekend. Like, you might be a person that you're like, oh, I like sexting. Or, I like listening to sexual stimulus. Or, I like feeling different textures. Or, I like smelling different things. You know, those are all things that we wanna consider in regard to that, like, creating that sexual context and creating that landscape that actually is more likely for us to respond positively or in a way that we deem as positive when it comes to sexual interactions with our partners.

Shohreh: I love the word creating too because I think that's how I like to think of a sexual relationship, whether it's, you know, between two people or multiple people, that you're co-creating the experience together. And in order to co-create anything, you're gonna have to communicate

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about it. And I know that's fucking scary. For most of my life, like, talking about sex made me want to, like, run and cry in a corner and I just would have done nothing to not do it.

And it's like, turns out that when you actually communicate about sex, you have better sex. It's more enjoyable. So now I'm like, you couldn't stop me from communicating about it because I wanna be having great sex. Who doesn't wanna be having great sex?

UC: I know! But we just aren't given the skills.

Shohreh: No.

UC: Like, I mean, we are not given the skills to talk about sex in this way. I grew up watching "When Harry Met Sally" and "Pretty Woman," and nowhere were Richard Gere and Julia Roberts and Meg Ryan and Billy Crystal, even though I think they actually talked more about sex than, you know, Julia Roberts and the other dude's name, I think we just saw them laying on top of each other having sex on a piano, orgasms happened. She goes shopping on Rodeo Drive [laughs lightly]. And that's our perception of, like, sexual health and power

There's no, hey babe, so I'm in this really stressful time at work and I actually need more, like, words of affirmation. Or, I need more support in that way for me to kind of receive the sexual stimuli in the way that I need to, you know, and I need your help with that. And I think no one's ever modeled that.

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Like, you don't see that in shows right now, you know? But you also don't see anyone saying, this is how you have these conversations. You know, this is what you need? Oh, okay, great. It's not just about, like, more pressure on the clitoris or anything like that. It can be but it's not just about that.

Shohreh: And I think that's really tricky, especially if you have a partnership that's already established and you haven't had that communication. I think, you know, in my experience, for me, like, I got out of a long-term relationship after I got divorced. And in getting into a new relationship, I basically got to start over with here's how I want to show up communication-wise about things in my life, here's how I want to be in this relationship. And that was really cool for me because my previous relationship I got into when I was 21 years old, versus getting into one when I'm 31 years old. It's a whole decade's worth of different experience and tools and skills that I've picked up. And so for me, that's been really amazing.

But I know that when you have been with someone for a long time, changing that dynamic when you've both gotten used to it can be really tricky. And being like, well, how do I start this conversation when we've never had these kinds of conversations before?

UC: It's almost like making that decision to go see a financial advisor as a couple. Or [light laughter] to see a couple's therapist. And you see a lot of people resist it because they're like, no, we're good. Because it is a practice of vulnerability. And, like, what—it actually is quite a minefield for some people because when you get partnered with someone, when

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you marry, when you're in a committed relationship, when you're in a long-term relationship, you don't always know their sexual hang-ups even though you both are engaging sexually.

And so when you have these conversations, it actually pulls the rug up on things that you did not realize were there. And so sometimes, you know, having—it might even be easier for some people to get working with a sex therapist to kind of help them prepare for what might come of these conversations and to manage the outcomes of these conversations, which I think is actually fabulous. And it should be normalized.

Shohreh: Yes.

UC: Because then it's really about skill building, and it's a beautiful opportunity to be like, man, we're going to take our sex life to a level where we're just, like, poppin' off on each other in a positive way. We can design a whole new sexual salad bar, landscape, all of the things that will really feed us in a deeper way. And so I find that to be exciting. But I've also done a lot of work on myself and I understand where my hang-ups are. I'm not a perfect person. But if I match with someone who has that openness and willingness, then it can even be an easier process in terms of getting to that sexual sanity.

Shohreh: Yeah, it is that reframe of, you know, we're not doing this because we're broken people and, you know, everything is not working. I think when we put it in that negative light it does seem like, well, why would we want to do that? But if you're like, no, like, collectively we have the

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same goal, right? It's like, looking at it and being, like, we, as a team, want to make this better, and so we're going to use whatever tools, whether that's therapy or something else, to make that happen. Like, that feels like a much more empowered stance to take than, like, oh, we're broken, we have to bring someone in to "fix" it.

UC: Right. It's not anything to fix, it's more of just something to explore and grow.

Shohreh: Honestly, like, exploration is just, like, the key to fun sex, I think [laughs lightly]. It's just, like, you just have to have this willingness to be like, you know what? We're gonna try stuff and some of it's probably gonna be weird and it's not gonna work for us. And sometimes, also, like, the embarrassment factor of sex I think is so huge. 'Cause it's like, we have so much body shame, too, around, like, oh, god, like, if I make this sound or, like, this thing happens, like, it's gonna be so embarrassing.

And I think really, like, working in your partnerships to be like, nope, we're not gonna say mean things about each other's bodies or their fluids or be grossed out or whatever. And, like, just be accepting that, like, things happen during sex, and it's okay, and you can go through them together also makes a big difference.

'Cause I've had way too many stories of, like, bad partner reactions to, like, normal bodily functions happening during sex that have, like, fucked people up during their sex lives for years, just constantly remembering that.

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UC: Years! And I think that's something that we all should carry this kind of loving, radical acceptance of people's bodies and what their bodies do and how their bodies react during sexual play. Like, that should be rule number one is we don't shame people for how they express their pleasure or displeasure or for queefing or for pooping or, you know, something's coming out of this orifice, right? [Shohreh laughs]

It's just kind of, like, oh, okay, this happened. Like, oh, we'll just clean up. Or, we'll just do that and move forward. Right? And maybe needing to shift gears a little bit. Maybe needing to address it later, maybe. But not shaming people in how they react or how their bodies react to stimuli. I think that that's something at the core. It's almost, you know, when we're talking about that kindness discussion we had at the beginning—

Shohreh: Right.

UC: —that actually has to live in the fabric of every sexual encounter, is that you actually do need to come forth with this level of kindness and acceptance. And I think that actually is what great sex makes. Because if I judged every sound or liquid or whatever that happened in my previous partners, like, it wouldn't be a fun sexual experience. If I stopped every time a funny sound was made, like, I would have lost out on really positive encounters.

Shohreh: Oh, absolutely. And I think, too, in all relationships, like, being able to laugh about things is, like, so important. Because also, sometimes, sex is hilarious.

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- UC:** It's so funny.
- Shohreh:** Shit's fuckin' funny. Weird shit happens, and it's like, you just can't help but laugh. And at this point in my life, like, I wouldn't be with someone who couldn't show up in that way in terms of, like, being kind, of course, and then, like, being able to laugh about stuff and be respectful. 'Cause like we were saying earlier, there's so much sexual shame coming from other places that we all have to deal with. I should not also have to deal with it from my partner.
- UC:** No, not at all. That's a trust space. Like, if y'all try something new and someone pulls a muscle [Shohreh laughs lightly] and they have to ice their back for a couple days, that's how it is. And you should laugh about it. It should be fun. You should be like, okay, I have to lay on a heating pad right now. [Laughs lightly] That's just life. And I think that's just how we have to kind of roll with the punches. With sex it doesn't always have to look a certain way, it doesn't have to be a certain way. You just need to feel honored, respected, received, and have your eyes wide open and be willing to explore. I think that's the adventure of it all.
- Shohreh:** Well you've had some great recent posts about, like, some of the specific kinds of things that we have in our heads about, like, oh, it should be this way. Like, I particularly have been enjoying the things you've been talking about about how, like, everyone needs to have a wet ass pussy and, like, have to orgasm every time, and all this stuff. 'Cause I think those are some of the top ones right now.

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Of course there's many of these that people are just like, oh, like, if I'm not, like, super wet, then I guess something must be wrong with me. If I don't cum every time, then, like, something's wrong with me or something's wrong with my partner. Like, all these things that continues to add more and more pressure, where it's like, well, yeah, of course you're not, like, having a good time or, like, having any pleasure 'cause you're not actually in your body during this experience. Because all you can think about are these ways that you're like, I'm not measuring up.

UC:

Exactly. And I think, you know, too, especially when you're in newer partnerships, it's hard for you to totally be in this experience. It just depends on the connection you have with this person and their comfort level with being sexual and their comfort level with themselves, you know, because you're just figuring each other out, right? You're still working it out.

But then when you have people in longer term relationships where, like, you know each other inside and out, it's really about exploring new pleasure tracks to experience different sensations and new things and managing those expectations of a wet-ass pussy, a tight asshole, or all those things [light laughter]. It's just like, come on. You know, where, you know, like, just get some lube ready, like, have that on the side table. Have the things that you want to explore ready to access. Just, I think that there's so much pain that people take in if they don't have that wet-ass pussy.

I mean, I love that song ,[Shohreh laughs] but I'm just like, ugh. No. It's, like, the beat is so good. But I [laughs] think that the message is so

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fraught. It's just really tough to kind of tell people, like, okay, this is not the only thing, but then Cardi B and Meg Thee Stallion are like, nope [laughter].

Shohreh: You're like, you guys...

UC: This is what we aim for. [Laughter]

Shohreh: Well, and to that one specifically, I think it's worth mentioning 'cause I know you had a great post where you were basically like, by the way, there are a bunch of different factors that determine, like, how much wetness you have if you are a vulva owner. And it's not just, like, you know, we have this idea that, like, if you are turned on, like, you will always be, like, super wet. And just for anyone listening, because you probably haven't seen this post but I'll put it in the show notes, of UC's, like, there's a lot of different factors that go into it and it can literally change from, like, day to day.

UC: Hour to hour. It can be meds. It can be your mood. It can be your food. It can be all—so many factors that play out. And sometimes people say, like, man, I'm, like, always dry. And it's like, well, what are the factors at play? Oh, are you using a condom? Oh, you're using a latex condom? Oh, you have a slight latex allergy? Maybe you want to try a different condom texture, right? And so things like that, like, that can dry out your vagina very quickly, right? Are you using the wrong type of lube? All of those factors play in.

Shohreh: And I also want to highlight too what you're saying about how sometimes the questions that we ask ourselves at the beginning of a

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relationship are gonna be different than, like, two years down the road, five years down the road, ten years down the road. Because I think another one of these big sexual myths is that, like, you figure it out and then it just stays the same forever. Whereas it's actually something that's constantly being renegotiated, constantly co-creating.

Like, your sex life isn't something you can just, like, sit on and be like, alright, it's running, and now it will just work perfectly forever. Like, just like the rest of your relationship, like, it requires a continued effort and paying attention to it and intentionality.

UC:

A thousand percent. I think that, like, from a healthcare perspective, patients are saying, oh, my pelvic floor just needs to be tighter. Or, this needs to be better. Or, I just need to be thinner. Or this or that. Like, no, that's really not the case. When we're defaulting to that, really then it's just about educating people and then getting people to not assign sexy or desirable to these sociocultural norms that have been placed on us.

Sexy doesn't necessarily mean skinny. And plus size doesn't necessarily mean unattractive, right? Like, we have to kind of pull all these factors and little things that we're saying to ourselves and internalizing and recognizing that we've internalized them. And then take the steps to dismantle that.

Shohreh:

Which is challenging work everyone, so... [Laughs lightly] This shit is hard, but also, I think, worth it if this is an area of your life that feels really important to you. Which, to be fair, sex is not important to some

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people. And, you know, if you're on the ace spectrum and, like, it's not for you, that is also great. But if this does feel important to you and it's a part of your life that you want to be thriving in, it requires work and some deep internal work a lot of the time and some unpacking that's uncomfortable. But with a really great ultimate goal of getting more pleasure, which I'm all about all the time.

UC: Right, right.

Shohreh: Lovely. Well, UC, this has been such a great conversation. Before we go, is there anything that you wanna leave people with? Any message? Little pep talk for them about their sexiness that they can take away with them?

UC: I always tell people that your sexiness is not defined by anyone else but you. People don't give you confidence, they just may affirm what you already know, that you're fly as fuck.

Shohreh: Preach.

UC: And that's that. [Laughter] That's what I want to leave with everyone.

Shohreh: Alright UC, this was awesome. So for folks who want to find you, where can they do that? And also, what is the best way that my listeners can support you right now?

UC: Yes, so you all can find me at www.youseelogic.com. You can find me @youseelogic on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and TikTok. And the best way to support me is I also see private clients, so feel free to send me a message, DM me, or on the website, let me know, we can work

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together. And I do have my e-book, my Sexy Swagger e-book, A Guide to Redefining Your Sex Life. And this is a book designed for cisgender women and non-binary vulva owners to just reimagining their sex life, and it's 30 pages of fun and workbooky-ness. And I'm just really proud of it and excited. And there will be a special code for your listeners, it's called TRUSTME—

Shohreh: Yes!

UC: —to give you all a very nice discount, um, so, you know, get into it.

Shohreh: Yay, amazing! Y'all, I'll put all of that in the show notes. I will also put that discount code and the link to that for you so you can go grab this e-book. If any of the things we've talked about today that you're like, oh, I've been struggling with that and I don't have any guidance, it sounds like that e-book might be a really wonderful place to start doing some of that deeper work and asking these questions to change your sex life. So yay!

Alright UC, thank you for joining us. I can't wait to get this conversation out into the world.

UC: Thank you. It was so fun and I can't wait to have dinner again.

Shohreh: Yes, please [laughs lightly].

[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

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[Music fades]