



EPISODE 13: SEX IN STRESSFUL TIMES WITH DANIELLE SAVORY

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Hello everyone. I'm so excited today because I have a very special guest who is not my husband joining us for the very first time since he's been on the podcast a couple of times now. I am really delighted to introduce you to my dear friend and very wise and brilliant colleague, Danielle Savory. She is very simply one of the best sex coaches on earth. She is the host of the, It's My Pleasure Podcast and she specializes in helping high achieving women have mind blowing sex lives, which is what we all want. So I'm so excited for her to be here to show us how to do that. And what I personally love about her work is how she blends neuroscience and sex. And I'm so happy to have her talk to us today about stress in stressful times. Welcome Danielle.

Yay. Thank you. That intro just totally made me blush so much, Maggie.

Awesome. Anyone listening to us is blushing about what we're going to talk about today. Bless you too. It's all good. Yeah, there's certain things that make us uncomfortable. Sex isn't one of them for me, but having somebody talk about me about sex like that makes me like, awe thank you!

That's awesome. Okay, so what I want to do is something that I do in the podcast very often, so my listeners are very used to this is I like to lay out what we're going to talk about first and then we're going to go step by step through each point. One point at a time. So just a heads up for everyone listening. These are the things we're going to talk about and then we're going to slow it down and go one by one. So we're going to talk about calming your nervous system to be open to pleasure, especially now we're going to talk about managing different sex drives and we're going to talk about something called spontaneous and responsive desire, which you may never have heard of before. And if you haven't heard of it before, this one concept is going to change your sex life forever. I am so excited to have Danielle lay it out for us. We're going to





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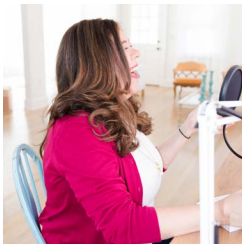
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talk about making sex a priority and why, how you think about sex is so important to have a really awesome sex life. So let's dive in. Let's talk about calming your nervous system to be open to pleasures. So Daniel, I know you're an expert at that, at how the brain affects the body. Can you kind of walk us through one or two of the most important things you think we all need to understand in order to calm our nervous system?

Yeah, well I think it's like obviously we're in special circumstances right now with everything going on and people's stress levels are high. But for most people just operating in this modern world, our stress levels are kind of at like a simmer level or, and then they get elevated above this simmer level. But we're all usually at some sort of stress level or stress in our lives. And what I like to think about stresses I like just to think about it was we have these two different tracks of our nervous system, like the parasympathetic nervous system and then the sympathetic nervous system. And the easiest way to think about this and you guys probably are familiar with these terms is like the fight, flight or freeze, and then like the rest and digest. So these two different systems, right? And really stress when that happens is that fight, flight or freeze is just way more elevated than the other rest and digest.

So when I talk about getting out of stress, I really am trying to find that balance between the two, right? We think that we're not supposed to have any of the fight flight and that's not true. That actually helps us be kind of motivated and do stuff in our lives. So it's finding that balance. That's what we mean. And at the end of the day, you know, if you've been taking care of kids or taking care of your business or just reading the news, what happens is our brain gets triggered and it just starts a stress cycle. So it's like this whole cascade of events that happened in your brain and then it affects your body and your body, like get jacked up and ready to like fight, and to like fight your enemy, it gets angry. Or maybe it's like, you know, freeze. It's just like I can't do





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anything and it's just going to go into a hole and don't touch me.

And it's just like, think of it like an animal cowering away or like run. Right. And so it's like I gotta get outta here. Like take me to like meditation center in Nepal. Like I don't have time for any of this. Yes. So these are like normal feelings that we can all have that are triggered by seeing the news and dealing with kids, needing everything from you all the time or just handling kids and making sure they're like doing their things and staying alive, your business, financial stress, all of it. So if we're in this place, which most of us are a lot of the time, and then your partner comes and like grabs your buns just like you just like might notice your body even reacting. Like get off like of me. Yes.

I'm like, get away. Let's think about that way. Or maybe I want to fight you because we're in that part of our nervous system, not because we maybe don't want to connect. Not actually because like you love your partner and you're glad he's attracted to you, like it's not. We think it's all these things, but it's like, no, actually you're just in that part of your nervous system where anything that would come at you at that time, is going to come across as a threat. It feels like a stressor.

Even if it's like the person really actually wants to love and hold you and give you pleasure, but it feels like one more thing. Right? I see this a lot with my marriage coaching sites that it feels like a chore or, it feels like one more thing on their to do list or they're so exhausted from all the other obligations and priorities that they have that it's like they don't have the energy. So how would you say is one simple way that we can look at calming our nervous system to be open to pleasure?

Yeah, so that's a great question. I think the first thing is to acknowledge that this is actually





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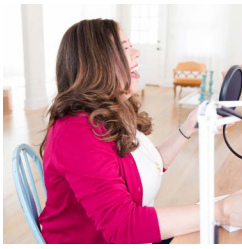
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what's going on. Like to not propel yourself into a deeper stress cycle by thinking that you're broken or there's something wrong with you or you don't actually love it anymore. That's the first thing to remind yourself, like, this is normal. This is a stress cycle. My body's in, nothing has gone wrong. That in and of itself is going to allow your shoulders just to relax and take like a deep sigh. And the other most simple thing is, is when I notice I'm in this place or where I'm coaching my clients in this place, and they acknowledge it, it's not to react or respond from that place, but to be like, Oh, maybe I do want it, but I don't even know right now because I'm in this place.

And then giving yourself space and time to calm down. So you ask like, how do we calm down first acknowledging it's happening. Then give yourself permission. Yes. So I'm going to go relax. Yeah. Yeah. And then, you know, really it's, it can be, I mean, there's so many different things. If you're a exerciser, just getting that energy, that fast energy out of your body. I particularly really am a fan of soothing things like taking really deep breaths like into your belly that immediately is going to trigger to your body. I'm safe because if you were actually under attack or being chased, you can't take a deep breath. You don't have time for it. So it tells your body like, Hey, I'm actually okay. So just closing your eyes, breathing deeply into your belly, noticing like where you're holding tension. For me it's my jaw or my shoulders. So I invite like softness to this area.

Like often my jaw soften my tongue, soften my shoulders, feel my belly like deeply breathe and just simple things like that are going to just like allow your body to relax. I tell my clients like a broken record, pause and breathe just about everything all the time ever. So my clients are listening to this like, yep, and it's still important. We sort of take it for granted like of course, but we forget when we're in those stress cycles. We forget that something as simple as pausing and breathing gives us this space to respond with intention instead of to just react without thinking.





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Right? And then when we respond with intention, we can be open to pleasure and open to loving and open to receiving and all of those beautiful things. Right, right, right. Exactly. So calming down like that. And I think those couple of triggers about asking your body that also brings your attention into your body, which is going to allow for you to connect with more pleasurable sensations afterwards. I love it.

And we're going to go a little bit out of order cause I'm seeing as I think about the list when I originally said at the beginning of the episode that there are some things that really go well together. So I want to talk about making sex a priority as imagine that we're able to pause and breathe and we're able to respond with intention. But if we haven't set an intention right, we haven't said, Oh, sex actually matters to our relationship. Sex is really important. I think that then we can give all kinds of answers that don't help us have a stronger sex life. And from my point of view, when it comes to helping all of our listeners have five-star marriages, we must have pleasure in our relationships, not just fun. Like sometimes I talk about pleasure in terms of fun and flirting and enjoying each other's company. But today we're talking about pleasure in terms of actual physical pleasure, like it's such an important part of a relationship. So how do you approach helping someone who feels maybe overwhelmed or burnt out or stressed out by all the things happening in the world right now, helping them think about making sex a priority? Like why do you think sex is so important? I've laid out some of the reasons I think it's important but what are your thoughts about that?

Well, that could be like a five hour episode because it's like my purpose in the world is to spread sex and the pleasure of sex. So, you know, I think for me it goes, it goes so deep. There's so many things like you kind of, you know, laid out there like connecting with your partner. Like the thing to remember is when you're in a partnership or a marriage like sex is the only thing





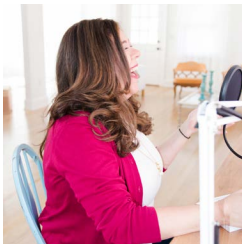
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that's only that you can do with this person, right? I mean maybe you have an open marriage, something like that. But for, for most people in their marriage, they can't experience this kind of connection in this way with anybody else in the world. Yes, it is sacred to your relationship and your partnership. The other reason that I find it to be such a priority is all of the reasons that it's a benefit for us.

You know, physiologically speaking. But I like to just think about like the effect that it has on the brain when you prioritize pleasure, when you tap into physical pleasure in order to do that, there's all these other systems that kind of have to be on, right? And so you're developing the type of traits that you would want or the type of qualities that you would want to have in your mind anyway. You're developing, you know, compassion for yourself, compassion for your partner, you're developing communication skills, you're, you know, leaning into desires, wants and needs. You're being able to create safety, your able to work on just like being kind like kindness to yourself and you're calming your nervous system down. It helps create resilience. It helps tap into creativity. I mean power, like, it's just like, it's everything. It's like everything that you could ever really want to create in your life can be created when you dive in and become empowered and own your sexuality. I love that so much and I think that that's a conversation that more and more people need to be having because I think we talk about these things sort of behind the scenes in our sort of girlfriend chats. I'm like, yes, it's still important, but what so many people don't realize they're depriving themselves of one of the most powerful parts of being human when they lose touch with their sexual self. Yes. Right? Yeah. And then when you're in a marriage and one you is very in touch with your sexual assault and one of you, isn't it then also becomes a compounded problem of like how do we handle this as a team, which brings us to managing different sex drives. So I've seen both scenarios. I've seen women who have a stronger sex drive than the husband and they're kind of like, I don't know what to do. He like





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never wants to have sex. And I've seen the opposite where it's like my husband always wants to have sex, and they never want to have sex. And I think that might also go into spontaneous and responsive desires. If you want to go ahead and talk about that, we can mix those, but just tell me what are your thoughts in approaching that?

Yeah. So yeah, we'll just start with the spontaneous desire and the responsive desire. And I think this is such an eye opener for a lot of women, and I'm going to say put it into the categories of women and men here, but understanding that they both, women and men can have spontaneous desire and both women and men can have responsive desire. Generally speaking in the studies out there show that most women are in the camp of responsive desire. They might have episodes of spontaneous but they're mostly responsive and then vice versa. Most men can be spontaneous and most women will be responsive. Now what it means is spontaneous is just like it says, it's like, like all of a sudden like strike of desire just hit your loins and you're like, I want to have sex. And it feels great and you're like down for it anytime.

And you can really see this even how like in the media men's sex drive is depicted, right? They're like, yeah, anytime any drop of a hat, I'm ready to go. Totally. And a lot of women, they're like, what's wrong? Like why don't I just want it like wants it all the time? Why don't I want to? And think of desire as an eagerness, like you're wanting something, right? Yes, and responsive desire. That really just means that you're actually already maybe starting to kiss or make out or feel touched and then all of a sudden your brain's like, Ooh, this actually sounds like a good idea.

This is good and this is so important to keep in mind because when it's responsive like this, like if you're like, let's go back to the scenario I was talking before and like your husband comes up and grabs your buns and you're like, no way, and then you're going down this thought of like, I





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don't actually want it.

Or even if you calm your nervous system down and you're like, I still don't want it, what's the matter with me? Yes. If you just are prioritizing sex, if you have already committed and decided ahead of time, maybe scheduled at something like that and you start kissing and you start making out or you feel your naked body on the sheets and you're like, Ooh, LA LA, then your body starts to get aroused. Like you start to like, it feels good and like pleasure feels good. And now your brain is like, Oh, Hey, maybe this is actually something that sounds good, let's go ahead and do it. So that's when the desire kicks in is after you already started feeling good.

Yes. And I have to say one of the things, it just came up this week, I was talking with my clients about responsive desire and my guidance to her was allow yourself to have enough of an experience for that response to kick in. Yeah. So it was very simple. It was just say yes more often and let yourself, you know, kiss, caress, have a little bit of that experience for that responsiveness to kick in, instead of just saying no, because at the drop of a hat, I'm not ready. That doesn't mean you can't actually enjoy yourself and have really enjoyable, pleasurable sex.

Right, exactly. Exactly. And that's exactly how I coach my clients too, is, is actually I have this idea, it's like never saying no and, it doesn't mean like you're not allowed to. We always have permission to say no, but it's not no right away. It's like, Oh, maybe I didn't think about that. Let's see. And also knowing that even if you do give yourself that space to like warm up and it's not there, you can still shut it down at any time just because you're naked and you said yes. Doesn't mean you can't say no later. Like we have to have that. We have that permission. Yeah. Agency. Yeah. You have a right to say no at any time and reminding yourself that that's actually the case.





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Yeah. I think that that's so important. That's so important. And I think when you really understand spontaneous and responsive desire, it becomes so much easier to manage different sex drives because you can play this episode for your husband and your wife. You could say, Hey, listen to these ladies talking. I think this is what's happening with us. Why don't whoever needs to say yes more often? Say yes a little more often. Try it like an experiment, right? Like just experiment with it and see what happens. And it's highly likely you're just going to enjoy sex so much more.

Yeah, and this is why I really talk with every single person that I'm coaching to schedule, especially at the beginning schedule, sex and schedule self-pleasure sessions, especially if I'm working on like desire with women, right? But just scheduling sex. So if you're talking about scheduling sex and you have this conversation, it doesn't matter who has the high sex drive or who has the lower sex driver or whatever. It's a conversation. We're committing to this together because it's important to us. Just like you would put date night on a calendar, you can put like sex time on the calendar and then it gives you guys both have chance to work in your mind. I know this is coming, right? It's getting in the way. And one of your other questions I know on this podcast is why we think about sex, right? Yes.

So if you believe that sex is going to happen, you're not in this place of is it or isn't? Do I say no? Do I say yes? Is he going to say no or is he going to say yes, you both can feel safe that you know this is happening and then what you can do is go to work on how you want to think about it. So do you want this to be like an obligation? Like yes, I committed to it, but I also have a choice to think about it that this is possible for it to be really fun or it can be super pleasurable or I can't wait or he's so sexy and you can start to just get those juices flowing in your mind that allows you to then go to like sexy time in a way where you've already been starting to do the mental work around it.





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Okay. I love that you brought up scheduling sex because I could feel the wave of listeners throughout the planet saying, but if we have to plan it, then it's not romantic or shouldn't it be spontaneous? Like I could just hear the people. Hogwash, all of that. I know I am like drinking the Koolaid, but please share a little bit about, because I totally believe in scheduling too. I think it's absolutely like this is what happens on the other side. It's like, um, I was talking to someone this week where they were like, Oh well if it isn't his idea in the first place, then does it even really count? And it wasn't even about sex. It was just about, I don't know, going out to dinner or whatever. But like, yes, it counts. Ask for what you want. You want to go out to dinner, go out, schedule it. Right? Yeah, totally counts. It doesn't have to be anybody's idea for it to count. Tell us from your point of view why everyone needs to think about scheduling sex differently. Like let's have a before and after on planet earth that now people understand scheduling sex is not just a great idea. We need to really like have everyone thinking along these lines because it's so important. So tell me a little bit about the hogwash. So I mean this is one thing that I make sure all of my clients do. Like you're going to work with me, you're scheduling sex and you're scheduling self-pleasure like it's nonnegotiable because the thing is is if you just wait for it to happen then the likelihood is not very high unless you have somebody in the relationship that is like always asking and really, really eager for it. Even when that happens, like I just said, it doesn't give you like let's say you're the one with the lower sex drive and you have a partner who asks for it all the time. It doesn't give you a chance to actually like work your mind, work your body, get in touch with yourself ahead of time and you feel pressured and you feel, you know like I don't know if I want to and all of these other sort of things when you have it on the calendar. Number one we just said that we want to prioritize it. Right, right. Put things on a calendar that we prioritize, duh. Yup.

Okay, so this is just like something we do because you just said it was a priority so if it's a





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priority, put it on a calendar. Yeah. Second thing is, is we have to like work at like prepping yourself in a way where we want this to be a pleasurable situation and a pleasurable experience. It's not just about showing up. It's like, how do I want to show up? And that might take some time. Like creating desire in your body, creating eagerness can begin by thinking sexy thoughts about your partner throughout the day. It can begin by like already seeing when you're starting to trigger and calming your nervous system down like you have time, then yes, prep your mind and prep your body so that pleasure can enter. So the idea once it's scheduled is that like, well, let's also make it mind blowing.

Let's make it amazing, that's my whole thing, right? Let's make it good. Yes. So in order to make it good, we have to do a little bit more work than we would think or thinking about and all of the blocks getting in the way of pleasure and starting to remove those so we can show up, like fully ready to like do it. To go for it and make it amazing and make it five star. Absolutely love it. And while I was listening to you, here's the thought that came to my mind is earlier today I was talking to a client about planning a vacation and we were talking about the importance of anticipation as a powerful emotion. So I know we're both research nerds and we both love all the research and there's this great research on when you plan a vacation, the anticipation of the vacation gives you actually more pleasure than the vacation itself. The looking forward to it, the picking the hotel or wherever you're going to stay, whatever you're going to do, all of those little details that lead up to it. So I don't think this has been researched yet, but if we can extrapolate that planning for a vacation, you have even more pleasure from the planning it then being there. Imagine if you schedule sex, like you schedule your vacations right? Just much more often. And then you get to enjoy not just the sex that you had, but the anticipation of looking forward to it and planning for it and all of that. It's almost like scheduling. It helps you create your mental foreplay to having it. What do you think about that? Yeah,





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I really agree. I think it can be both though. Because I think more of the consensus is vacation is awesome and a lot of people that haven't had awesome sex experiences that can change it a little bit because they're like, actually I'm not looking forward to it. Right. You know? So I think it's, it's good though, but because you actually have time. Yes. Work on those thoughts before it gets time to have sex. Right. You know, like I, so I think it can go both ways and I've seen it goes both ways, but it is on purpose working on those thoughts and those beliefs ahead of time that are going to create connection that will actually create pleasure versus, you know, anticipating something horrible.

Absolutely. And also if you plan it and you anticipate it, you can start asking yourself, how can I make it awesome? How can I make it better? If we weren't having fun before, how can I add fun or playfulness or lightheartedness to it? What can I do to make it easier for us to enjoy our sex life? Right.

Totally. Totally. And when you think back to like when you first started dating your person, and this is what I love talking about with my clients and I'm like, well what did you think about when you first started dating him? Was your sex great then? They're like, Oh my God. Yeah. And I was like, well how often did you think about it? They're like, all the time. Like if I was working or if I was at school, like I couldn't wait to get out of class cause I was thinking about it during class. Like they're gonna like rip off my shirt or they're going to do this thinking all of these like fun, dirty thoughts and we're not doing that in our day anymore. So when you schedule it, you get to start like helping your brain think about it more. Think about your partner, think about them in a sexual way, which is going to prime your body.

I absolutely love it. I think that that's so important and I think that we sort of talked about why,





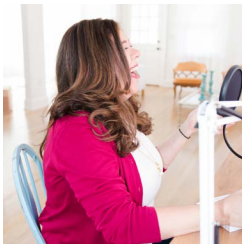
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how you think about sex is so important to having good sex throughout this whole segment. Yeah. What would you say to someone who just has never really had great thoughts about sex? Like what's a great place for them to begin if they've just sort of always either had lackluster experiences or just felt stressed about it or just, you know, they're coming from a place maybe in their marriage, they've had a couple of hard years and it's just like to access, how can I think better about sex right now? What would be some words of guidance you would offer? Yeah, I guess it depends on how like where they're at on the scale. So I like to think of like there's always this large spectrum of things and each time we're just trying to take it up a little bit. Like take that up, right. So it's not like we're trying to be like sex is awful. It's like its something I don't want to do to like, Oh my God, I can't wait. This is amazing give it to me now ,this is a big jump. So depending on where you're at, also thinking about like what's just one small upgrade right now. Even if that might seem quote unquote I and I hate to use positive negative, but even if it might still seem like it's not really positive or really on a positive scale, it might be getting closer to neutral. Right? So we at least want to move from it being this horrible thing to more neutral.

Like even a thought like, well, sex is something I do with my husband versus I hate sex. Like something. Sex is something that we do as a couple that can be neutral. Yes. Can be a factual thing that you're saying that will help lead into like sex is like so amazing or I really love like introducing even from a place no matter where you're at, that it's possible for sex to be pleasurable for me. I love it. Possible for me to feel this way, like just inserting little seeds of possibility as it relates to your sex life when you're thinking about it. I absolutely love that. And as you were talking about making an upgrade and reminded me, and I'll link to this in the show notes, we have the five-star marriage is one of the metaphors that I use for for having a relationship.





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And it's like, a one star is like a motel, right? Like three stars, we get the free breakfast and then four stars is like a Hilton, Marriott, and then FiveStars like ultimate resort, Bali, you know, whatever. And if you think about sex from one star to five stars, like if you're at one star right now and you just move up to free breakfast level, you're making progress, you could have some really great sexual experiences, right? It doesn't all have to be five star. You could have three and a half star and be making so much progress compared to one star. Right. Yeah. I love that. Yeah. So if you could leave our listeners with one thought or perspective to take on about sex, what would you most want them to take away from today?

It's an amazing question and really hard for me cause I have so many. But for especially for the listeners out there that are women, one of the ways that I believe that sex has often been depicted to us is that like we are an object of pleasure. Our comes in seeing our partner pleased and we forget that pleasure can also be for us. Yes. And for me, I mean that's kind of just my whole soapbox with all of my sex coaching is that it's your pleasure. And when you start to think of it as like pleasure is possible and sex is a possibility to be pleasurable for me and it's not a chore because it's doing something for you to fill you up, to nourish you, to light you up. It is in service of you as a human being and as a woman in this world. And that is so huge because we have not been given that message. So all of you ladies listening like remember it's for you, it's for your pleasure and it can be for you. Absolutely. Yeah. I love that. It's a gift that you can give to yourself to really unleash your sexual self. So I was thinking as you were saying that of Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Like if we think about us as humans, we need food and safety and shelter. And as we go through the hierarchy of needs, we absolutely need maximum self-expression. And you can't be fully self expressed as a human unless you self express sexually as well. So important. Okay everyone, listen up. Danielle Savory's podcast is called, It's My Pleasure. And if you enjoyed listening to her now she has amazing episodes on all kinds of





EPISODE 13: SEX IN STRESSFUL TIMES WITH DANIELLE SAVORY

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different questions that you have. Any sexual questions that can cross your mind. She has an episode that will help you with that. If don't hit me up. Yes, and if you don't go to Daniellesavory.com and you'll be able to get on her mailing list. Just hit reply on any of her emails, tell her what you want to know. She will either send you the podcast or she will record what with that topic and so Daniellesavory.com is where you can find her. It's My Pleasure is her amazing podcast that I highly, highly recommend that you all subscribe to. Is there anything else that you want to share with our listeners before we wrap up today?

No, I just think that, you know, really take in what Maggie and I talked about here, because I think there's so many different messages about sex and when we can start to see these sentences kind of going through our minds or the beliefs that we have and see how they're blocking us from, like you said, this full sexual, you know, full expression. Yes. And being sex, like allowing yourself to question them, allowing yourself to lean more in, to be curious, and to really tap into that possibility that pleasure is possible.

I love it. Thank you so much for joining us today. I'm so happy to have you on and I just love you so much. Thank you, Danielle.

I love you too. Thank you. Bye.

