

Rekindling Intimacy with Contemporary Sex Therapy

Helping clients navigate emotional, societal and financial roadblocks to satisfying sex

Video Course

Cate Campbell

Video Course
CPD/CE credits: 6

Price: £145



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As therapists, we understand that a satisfying sexual relationship is rarely only about the physical aspect – indeed, it is a delicate blend of the physical, mental and emotional connection. Often the **barriers to a satisfying sexual relationship can be mental, emotional, financial or societal** – issues which one or both partners find difficult to share and express. Clients who are transitioning/coming out/ questioning their sexual identity or those who have suffered sexual trauma, can find it even more stifling and painful to discuss their sexual dilemmas or issues without feeling ashamed or judged.

Issues with sex affect people's sense of identity, well-being and relationships, with many developing performance or response anxiety and/or sexual avoidance as a result. For example, a single episode of erectile difficulty can cause so much anxiety that erectile problems persist indefinitely. **Intimacy can be lost between couples who avoid closeness in case it is perceived as a sexual overture, especially in those who believe there is a discrepancy in their levels of desire.** Their inability to find comfortable levels of sex and intimacy can lead to considerable distress and a belief that the relationship itself is flawed.

In addition, all cultures and societies have views about sex which affect people by encouraging or deterring them from sexual behaviours. These, often contradictory, influences can result in issues with sexual identity or even physical sexual problems. Sexual trauma is also relatively common in all cultures, with victims often feeling blamed for what happened to them. Pressure to conform to sexual norms or manage personal trauma are consequently common, yet many therapists feel ill-prepared to tackle sexual matters.

The training will, therefore, **address ways to talk about sex, how to assess our clients' needs, what interventions can be safely offered, plus when – and to whom – referral should be made.** Simply providing permission to discuss sex can begin a healing process which reduces shame, offers hope and can improve our clients' sense of self – this is especially so for clients questioning their sexuality or gender identity. At the



workshop, our conversations which **explore sex and sexuality from a societal, cultural and historical perspective will be supported by systemic, social constructionist and feminist approaches.**

The longer problems exist the more difficult it can be for individuals and couples to find solutions, and the more likely they may be to blame themselves for failing to live up to cultural and personal expectations. Some people may also experience hostility related to their sexual or gender identity, or feel misunderstood, particularly when the way they identify is not immediately evident - such as with polyamory, bisexual or asexual identities. Many clients who believe they have 'dealt with' sexual abuse remain profoundly affected; indeed, **any kind of trauma can affect the ability to be sexual, with many clients failing to see the link between their trauma and their sexual problems.**

Moreover, even when a clinical reason for a sexual problem has been addressed, residual or psychological issues may remain. Whatever the causal factors, sexual roadblocks can be tackled by:

- Exploration of cultural, societal, religious, familial and personal beliefs and discourses which may be affecting sexual identity and behaviour
- Psychoeducation and non-judgemental interest in clients' lived experience
- Experimenting with behaviour changes, such as establishing an intimacy routine, and simple exercises which have the potential to improve someone's self-identity, sexual relationship(s) and sexual satisfaction
- Treatment for traumatic experiences and exposures which may be influencing someone's ability to be sexual or comfortable with their sexual/gender identity
- Referral for specialist sex therapy

The workshop endeavors to empower therapists with:

- **Narrative Facilitation:** Techniques to initiate and navigate productive discussions on sensitive sexual topics
- **Deeper Exploration:** Skills to delve beyond surface issues, comprehending clients' struggles holistically and offering tailored psychoeducation
- **Recognition and Referral: Acumen to recognize sexual dysfunctions, knowing when to refer to specialized psycho-sexual therapy**
- **Behavioural Insights:** Insights into simple yet impactful behavioral changes and exercises that can catalyze significant transformations

By embracing these interventions and learnings, therapists can equip themselves with the skills necessary to address clients' sexual issues, fostering an environment conducive to healing and self-realization.

Learning Objectives:

- **Discuss ways to talk about sex and how to assess our clients' needs**
- Apply techniques to initiate and navigate productive discussions on sensitive sexual topics
- Explain how to offer tailored psychoeducation
- **Explain how to recognize sexual dysfunctions**
- **Explain when to refer clients to specialized psycho-sexual therapy**
- Discuss the behavioral changes and exercises that can catalyze significant transformations

About the speaker

Cate Campbell is a psychotherapist specialising in trauma, sex and relationship therapies. Accredited with the College of Sexual and Relationship Therapists, EMDR Europe and the British Association for Counselling and



Psychotherapy, she has written and delivered long therapy training courses and CPD for many years and is a supervisor as well as a practitioner. She co-presents *The Real Sex Education* podcast and is the author of *Sex Therapy: The Basics, Contemporary Sex Therapy, Love and Sex in A New Relationship* and *The Relate Guide to Sex and Intimacy*.

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customerservices@nscience.co.uk

US: +18337161044

UK/Europe:
+44(0)2070961722

Australia:
+1800861953



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