

When Sex Speaks: Hidden Realities of Sexuality in Therapy

A four-part series exploring trauma, desire, shame, and the body

With Jordan Dixon & Dr Nicole R. Prause

Zoom Webinar

6, 13, 20 & 27 February 2026, Fridays

Times:

6:00 pm – 9:00 pm, London UK

1:00 pm – 4:00 pm, New York, USA

CPD hours: 3 per workshop



Location: Online streaming only

(all our webinar tickets now include complimentary access to a video recorded version for 1 year or 3 years, depending on the ticket type)

"Desire is rarely what it seems. Beneath the surface of pleasure lie stories of fear, shame, loss, and survival. To work with sex in therapy is to listen not just to the body's longing, but to its memory."

Why This Series—and Why Now

In the therapy room, sexuality remains one of the most charged and elusive territories we enter with our clients. It is where the personal meets the cultural, where power, attachment, and trauma converge—and where the therapist's own comfort and discomfort are inevitably part of the story.

Yet while we now speak fluently about trauma, attachment, and the nervous system, sexuality still lingers at the edge of many clinical conversations—treated as a symptom, a complication, or something better left to specialists. *Hidden Realities of Sexuality* invites us to bring this material out of the shadows.

Across four interlinked webinars led by Jordan Dixon and Dr Nicole R. Prause, we explore **what happens when the erotic meets the psychological: how trauma reshapes desire, how neuroscience challenges our assumptions about addiction and arousal, how differences in wanting become battlegrounds for belonging, and how shame silently choreographs what can and cannot be felt.**

Together, these sessions offer a rare combination of science, depth psychology, and lived clinical experience—an integrative journey into the spaces where sex, emotion, and the body speak to each other in the language of longing and defence.

The Hidden Realities Framework



Rather than treating sexuality as a set of discrete "issues"—dysfunction, discrepancy, addiction, inhibition—this series approaches it as a field of relational meaning. Each session examines one of the unseen dynamics that shape sexual experience in clients' lives and within therapy itself:

- **Pleasure as Repetition** – When the body's search for connection re-enacts the sites of its own wounding
- **Belief as Diagnosis** – When moral or cultural narratives masquerade as science
- **Desire as Difference** – When intimacy falters because partners' internal worlds are out of sync
- **Exposure as Threat** – When shame becomes the quiet third presence in every relationship

Taken together, the four parts trace an arc—from trauma's imprint on sexuality, through the distortions of belief, to the relational complexity of desire and the silent grip of shame. They can be attended individually or as a continuous exploration that deepens week by week.

Part 1—"When Sex Hurts More Than It Heals"

Sex, Trauma, and the Body in Therapy

With Jordan Dixon | 6 February 2026

"I thought sex would make me feel close again. Instead, I felt empty—like I'd disappeared from my own body."

The series opens where many of our clients' stories begin—in the uneasy intersection of trauma and desire. For survivors of neglect, abuse, or relational rupture, the erotic body often carries a double message: the longing to connect and the reflex to retreat.

Drawing from psychodynamic and somatic perspectives, Jordan Dixon explores how trauma shapes the landscape of sexuality, transforming arousal into regulation and intimacy into survival strategy. **Sex that looks "normal" may in fact be dissociative or compliant, performed to maintain attachment rather than express agency.**

Through case examples and embodied clinical guidance, Jordan reframes sexual difficulties as messages from the body's implicit memory rather than dysfunctions to be corrected. He invites therapists to shift from fixing to witnessing—to listen for what behaviour defends against rather than what it fails to achieve.

Therapists learn to recognise the four somatic markers of trauma in sexual narratives—disconnection, compliance, collapse, and confusion—and to use embodied empathy and countertransference as tools for attunement. The session closes with integrative approaches for helping clients rebuild internal safety so that pleasure can become a sign of life rather than the echo of a wound.

Part 2—Porn Problems Without "Addiction"

Evidence, Misdiagnosis, and Clinical Tools

With Dr Nicole R. Prause | 13 February 2026

"I feel like my viewing is out of control, but I don't know how else to cope with my depression and anxiety."

For decades, therapists have been taught to conceptualise distress around pornography through the lens of addiction. The model feels intuitive, morally neutral, and clinically convenient. But what if it's wrong?



Neuroscientist and psychologist Dr Nicole R. Prause brings two decades of sexual psychophysiology research to one of the most misunderstood areas in psychotherapy. Her laboratory studies—using EEG and physiological measurement—consistently fail to find the neurobiological signatures of addiction in sexual behaviour. Instead, the data point to moral incongruence: distress that arises when behaviour conflicts with values, not when the brain is "rewired."

In this provocative yet compassionate session, **Nicole invites clinicians to reconsider how we conceptualise and treat distress related to pornography use.** She shows how addiction-based frameworks may inadvertently intensify shame, obscure underlying conditions such as depression, anxiety, OCD, or ADHD, and pathologise normal sexual variation.

Participants will learn empirically supported alternatives rooted in values clarification, relationship repair, and the treatment of co-occurring conditions—practical, evidence-based tools that allow therapists to replace ideology with understanding.

Based in the United States and rarely teaching in the UK, Nicole's presence in this series offers clinicians an exceptional opportunity to engage directly with cutting-edge research that challenges cultural mythologies and reframes sexual distress through the lens of science and compassion.

Part 3—"You Want It More Than I Do"

The Paradox of Desire Discrepancy

With Dr Nicole R. Prause | 20 February 2026

*"I love my partner—but I just don't want sex anymore. What's wrong with me?"
"It's always me who wants it more. It feels like rejection every time."*

Desire discrepancies are among the most common—and most painful—issues couples bring to therapy. But what if our standard explanations for them are incomplete?

In this third instalment, Nicole moves beyond psychodynamics to neuroscience, presenting a fresh understanding of desire as a motivational process shaped by attention, learning, and context rather than a fixed drive. Drawing on research in conditioning and sexual incentive motivation, she shows how desire functions more like curiosity than hunger—waxing and waning in response to novelty, expectancy, and emotional safety.

Clinically, this reframing allows therapists to normalise variation rather than pathologise it. Desire differences become not moral failings or signs of dysfunction, but reflections of two nervous systems trying—and sometimes failing—to stay in rhythm.

Nicole demonstrates how to work with couples where desire asymmetry has hardened into shame, resentment, or avoidance. Therapists will learn to help partners explore the meanings behind initiation and refusal, integrate mindfulness and novelty as tools for attention rather than arousal, and use the science of conditioning to expand, rather than equalise, desire.

This session also connects back to the pornography discussion of Part 2, examining how solo arousal patterns interact with partnered desire—reframing conflict as communication rather than pathology.

Part 4—"The Shame That Sleeps Between Us"



When Intimacy Feels Like Exposure

With Jordan Dixon | 27 February 2026

*"When I'm with my partner, I feel exposed—like they can see everything I hate about myself."
"I want closeness, but the moment they reach for me, something in me freezes."*

The series closes where the erotic and the existential meet: in shame.

Shame is the emotion that governs visibility—what we show, what we hide, and what we believe would destroy us if seen. In sexual relationships, it is both the guardian and the saboteur of intimacy, shaping how partners approach each other and how therapists approach them.

In this culminating session, **Jordan traces how shame moves between bodies: how one partner's withdrawal invites the other's pursuit; how performance can conceal self-disgust; how therapists themselves may feel voyeuristic, intrusive, or avoidant when erotic shame enters the room.**

Using psychodynamic, attachment, and somatic frameworks, he helps clinicians work with shame as a relational field rather than an individual flaw. Participants will learn how to identify its subtle somatic signatures—the tightening jaw, the collapse of posture, the flicker of dissociation—and to meet them without flinching.

Jordan also examines how therapy itself can collude with shame when it privileges performance, goal-setting, or "normalisation." By replacing outcome-driven frameworks with relational curiosity, therapists can create spaces where erotic vulnerability becomes a doorway to integration.

This closing session distills the heart of the series: the idea that sexuality, in all its complexity, is not a domain of pathology but of meaning—and that to work with it requires both courage and tenderness.

A New Clinical Literacy

Across these four sessions, *Hidden Realities of Sexuality* builds what might be called a new clinical literacy around sex—one that moves beyond diagnostic categories and moral binaries toward embodied understanding.

Participants will leave with:

- A deeper grasp of how trauma, belief, and shame shape erotic life
- Neuroscientific and psychodynamic tools for distinguishing pathology from variation
- Practical methods for integrating sexual material without retraumatizing clients
- Greater comfort using their own embodied awareness as part of clinical attunement
- A renewed sense of curiosity and compassion when engaging with clients' sexual narratives

Each webinar stands alone as an in-depth training, but together they trace a developmental progression—from body to brain, from difference to dialogue, from exposure to empathy.

Who This Series Is For

This series is designed for psychotherapists, psychologists, and counsellors who wish to expand their clinical competence in working with sexuality as an integral part of the human experience. It will be particularly relevant for clinicians who:



- Encounter sexual themes in trauma or attachment work but feel underprepared to address them
- Wish to integrate neuroscientific insight with relational and somatic models
- Want to understand how shame, desire, and cultural scripts shape clients' presentations
- Are ready to move beyond "function and dysfunction" into a more nuanced, humane conversation about the erotic

Why It Matters

Sexuality is where theory meets flesh—where the abstract language of attachment, regulation, and identity becomes palpably real. When therapists shy away from this terrain, we risk leaving clients alone with some of their deepest sources of confusion and pain.

Hidden Realities of Sexuality invites us back into that space with renewed confidence—not to offer answers, but to stay present with what is most human: the longing to connect, the fear of being seen, and the body's endless effort to bridge the distance between them.

The Presenters

Jordan Dixon is a COSRT-accredited psychosexual and relationship psychotherapist based in London, integrating psychodynamic, existential, gestalt, and person-centred approaches with attachment theory, queer theory, and somatic awareness. Co-author of a chapter in *Sexual Minorities and Mental Health* (2023), Jordan's teaching is known for its depth, immediacy, and compassion—helping therapists navigate the most charged material in the consulting room.

Dr Nicole R. Prause is a neuroscientist and licensed psychologist internationally recognised for research on sexual physiology, reward processing, and psychophysiology. research scientist at UCLA's Semel Institute, she has conducted groundbreaking work including the largest study of male orgasm physiology to date and pioneering research on transcranial brain stimulation to alter sexual responsiveness. Elected a full member of the International Academy of Sex Research, Nicole brings rigorous science and clinical insight to examining assumptions about sexuality.

Join the Conversation

Hidden Realities of Sexuality unfolds as a progressive exploration—but it has been designed with flexibility at its core.

Each webinar stands entirely on its own, offering deep, clinically grounded insight into one aspect of sexuality in the therapy room.

You may choose to attend:

- **Individual webinars** that align with your current clinical interests—whether that's trauma, pornography, desire discrepancy, or shame
- **The full four-part series**, which follows a carefully developed arc from embodied trauma through neuroscience and relational complexity to the quiet transformations of shame

Attending the complete series offers the richest experience—a sustained, interdisciplinary dialogue between two leading voices in the field, bridging science and psychotherapy, body and mind, theory and practice.

Whichever path you choose, these sessions promise to deepen your confidence and expand your therapeutic vocabulary—helping you meet your clients where sexuality, emotion, and humanity converge.



Reserve your place today—join *Hidden Realities of Sexuality* and redefine how contemporary psychotherapy understands the erotic.

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cpd@nscience.world

UK/Europe: +44(0)2070961722