

## Shalom Bayis Newsletter Issue 40

### What a Sex Therapist Said That Shocked Me

I am rarely at a loss for words, but this was one of those times.

While building my [ICSE series](#), I came across a research paper from over a decade ago that proposed a very specific protocol for one of the less-common male sexual struggles.



Intrigued, I looked for follow-up trials to evaluate whether or not the protocol is an effective intervention, but I found nothing.

I did, however, find the researcher's phone number.

To my pleasant surprise, he answered on the first ring.

He seemed as curious about my work as I was about his, and our discussion eventually turned to a much more common challenge: the large percentage of women who struggle to experience orgasm.

And that was when he said it.

I don't remember the exact phrasing, but it was along the lines of:

*"Female orgasm doesn't serve a reproductive purpose, so a woman struggling to experience it shouldn't really be classified as having a sexual dysfunction."*

If I had been talking to an "ivory tower" scholar – someone who deals only in abstractions – I might have shrugged it off. But this was a **clinical sex therapist**. His tone made it clear: *a woman's pleasure just isn't a big deal.*

**Hashkafas Ha'Torah**

Beyond the fact that the clinical world recognizes this condition as **anorgasmia**, what bothered me most was the profound lack of empathy.

The Torah is crystal clear: providing sexual gratification to one's wife is a fundamental marital responsibility. **Chazal do not mince words on this point**, and they explicitly refer to the female genitalia as an "*opening that [is meant to] bring ecstatic joy.*" They even declare that a man who fails to invest the time and effort to ensure his wife experiences full pleasure is like a predatory lion that begins eating the prey while it's still alive.

That is an incredibly powerful statement. I feel it is such an important point that I am going to repeat it in bold and italics, including the final words of the Gemara:

***Chazal say that a man who does not invest the time and effort to ensure his wife's pleasure in their sexual union is like a predatory lion. Just as a lion pounces and immediately commences consumption, so too does a boor hit and penetrate.***

Gedolei Yisrael are equally emphatic. The Steipler Gaon, *zt"l*, famously provided specific, practical instructions to men on how to help their wives achieve climax.

### **Complexity of the Struggle**

To be clear: a struggle in the bedroom **does not have to be anyone's fault**. Just as a man's sexual struggle shouldn't be arbitrarily attributed to his wife, so too should a woman's sexual struggle not automatically be blamed on her husband.

Furthermore, difficulties with sexuality and sexual intimacy are not monolithic; **they can be as varied as the individuals experiencing them**.

Identifying the root cause of these deeply personal struggles – and developing a strategy to fix them – is obviously beyond the scope of a weekly newsletter. But in the current context, we must begin by categorically rejecting the "nu, nu... it's not so important" attitude.

It is wrong. It is deeply wrong on so many levels.

## Can Supplements Help?

While the primary engine of true intimacy is emotional and spiritual connection, we cannot ignore the critical role and very real physical mechanisms and processes of the body. Accordingly, there are physiological tools that can support the process. For example:

- **L-Arginine (or L-Citrulline):** Much like its use for men, these amino acids promote nitric oxide production which improves vascular function. This, in turn, can improve **vasocongestion**, a crucial component of female arousal. While one well-known trial of a particular "blend" product failed to show statistical significance for orgasm specifically, the underlying physiological mechanism remains plausible.
- **Vitamin D:** Current research indicates that Vitamin D levels can impact arousal and orgasm. In studies of women who were deficient, supplementation showed a meaningful impact. For a woman struggling in this area, a comprehensive blood test is a logical first step.

## Beyond the Bottle: The Power of Awareness

Moving past supplements, research into the mind-body connection has uncovered a critical point: a key approach to overcoming barriers to arousal and pleasure is regaining **attunement**.

Even simple body scan exercises – wherein a woman spends **a few minutes in a quiet, safe space noticing physical sensations** without judgment – can reduce distraction, quiet anxiety, and strengthen awareness of bodily signals.

While this may seem almost trivial at first, the truth is that experiencing arousal and orgasm largely depends on the ability to stay connected to – **and ride the wave of** – bodily signals without being pulled out of them (“spectatoring”).

Certain types of **deep breathing exercises** may also be helpful. Beyond inducing relaxation, this type of breathing can help shift the body out of a stress-dominant state and into one more conducive to arousal.

There is also research suggesting that **reducing chronic pelvic tension** may remove key physical (and psychological) barriers that interfere with sexual response.

### **The Map for Success**

However, we must be honest with ourselves: **a particular supplement or a specific exercise is not a full strategy.**

Real-world evidence points to a confluence of factors, including the ability to feel safe and relaxed coupled with sensory awareness. It is so important to remember that **sexual function is multi-factorial**; the physiology of it is inextricably bound up with the neuropsychology of it.

This is precisely why it can feel like **groping in the dark** when one tries to remedy these things without a comprehensive – and, where needed, personalized – map.

So, as I mentioned last week, if you are dealing with ongoing frustration, or a sense that *something isn't working*, this is exactly what my [ICSE series](#) is designed to address: helping those who are struggling move from frustration and confusion to clarity and progress. And for those who want fully personalized guidance, I am available for private consultations.

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Shalom Bayis, Chinuch, & Personal Safety

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