

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Moment 113 - Why You're Not Having Sex & How To Get It Back: Jay Shetty

We were just talking about doing hard things.
So let's talk about sex.
Sex is a huge part of relationships.
And one of the really interesting things
I wanna talk to you about is, again,
if I look at my friendship group,
my small friendship group of maybe six guys, right?
My best friends, I'd say three of them
are currently having a really, really hard time
as it relates to sex with their partner,
for a variety of reasons.
Reason number one that I've heard,
my partner doesn't like having sex,
we have sex once every three months.
Reason number two I've heard,
my partner doesn't like the way that I have sex.
On those first two points,
I'm horrified, surprised that so many people I speak to
are struggling in that department with sex.
And there's not, the conversation around sex
is either non-existent or porn influenced.
What's your take on sex and what's going on in the world?
I'm so glad you brought it up,
because I think that because of social media,
there's this image that everyone else is having sex
and I'm not.
Like I feel like that's like a very big feeling
that a lot of people have and all the stats show
that people having less and less sex.
There are more and more sexless relationships
and marriages every single year
and it's so much more common,
yet in our groups and online,
everyone feels like, oh, they're getting some
and they're getting some and they're getting some,
but I'm not.
And the truth is most people are not getting any.
And that's just, I don't have the stats off hand right now,
but whenever I've looked at the trends,
that's what the trends show.
To me, it comes back down to everything
we've just been talking about.
Sexual chemistry and attraction and connection

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is all based on, A, how someone feels about themselves.
If someone themselves is not feeling taken care of
by themselves, attractive, investing in themselves,
growing, feeling like they're becoming more and better,
it's very unlikely that they're gonna wanna share
their body, mind, emotions and heart with anyone else
in the most physically intimate way, which is sex.
It's just unlikely.
And chances are, if you don't think
you're having those conversations you wanna have
with your partner, where you are being open,
where they are working on their values,
where we do see each other striving,
chances are that you're not gonna wanna have sex
with them either.
And so what we're seeing is that the challenge
we're having in sex is actually coming
from everything else that's going on.
That there isn't a sense of growth, joy, purpose.
Like, great sex is a byproduct of great connection
and intimacy.
It's not a replacement for or a source of.
If I asked everyone who's listening right now,
put your hand up if you've had amazing sex,
but no connection in a relationship, right?
Like that's been real.
We've all used sex as a crutch.
We've had relationships where every time we argued
we had sex, it solved the problem.
Every time something was going wrong,
we had sex, it was figured out somehow.
And the studies show that the chemicals released
during sex make you feel like you're getting closer,
even though you're not actually emotionally closer.
So when you look at all of the stats,
when you look at all the research,
when you look at everything we've just described,
sex is a byproduct of a healthy individual
and a healthy individual and a growing individual
and a growing individual coming together,
sorting out their differences,
having the fights they need to have,
having the conversations they do,

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that naturally creates vulnerability,
which leads to being able to expose ourselves
at the deepest, most physical way that we possibly can.
How can you expose yourself that vulnerably
if you can't even have a vulnerable conversation
with your partner?

Because you just switch on the TV every night
and avoid that difficult conversation.

It becomes like a transaction.

It becomes a transaction.

And then sex becomes, in the best case, a crutch
and a hopeful aspiration on a special night
or whatever it may be, or something we wait for
and plan for and it never works out.

As opposed to in the worst case,
it just becomes something we're both not talking about,
comfortable about or even doing.

And so-

Or an obligation.

Or an obligation.

Yeah, yeah, it's like an obligation.

Someone's just sitting there like, you know-
Come on, three minutes.

Literally.

Yeah, all right, let's get it over and done with.

Like that mindset.

And I'm like, all, like there isn't,
because we've lost intimacy in relationships.

There is no intimacy.

And so you can't force it physically.

There's no intimacy in porn.

There's no intimacy in porn for sure.

They don't like do the small talk.

I don't pay for that.

Exactly.

There's no intimacy in porn.

There's no, and the problem is,
and this is, you know, the book starts with this quote,
but it solves this problem very,
very neatly and carefully.

And it's this idea that the Buddha was once approached
and asked, what's the difference between I like you
and I love you?

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Which is a brilliant question.

And the Buddha replied, when you like a flower,
you simply pluck it.

But when you love a flower, you water it every day.

And to me, the one night stand, the porn,
the dopamine hit, the release of chemical is the plucking.

Right, that's why we're all plucking all day long
because that's all we can do.

But the watering, the intimacy, developing intimacy,
growing from entertainment to experiments to experiences
to education to engaging in service together,
all of this creates so much intimacy
that physical intimacy is a natural byproduct.

It's not something you have to manage or engineer
or manufacture.

Like it's not this separate thing.

It's based on how close I feel to you.

And the point is when don't feel close to our partners
because we don't do anything that makes us closer every day.

Sleeping in the same bed as someone
does not make you close to someone.

Living in the same house as someone
does not make you close to someone.

The only thing that makes you feel close to someone
is when you feel you can be open
and when you feel seen, heard and understood
in your most vulnerable, darkest and open times.

If you can do that, everything else is gonna work.

But if you can't do that,

you can't just make it happen in a moment
because you're meant to be together.

You're meant to be in love.

What about masturbation?

Do you think masturbation to porn
helps or hurts relationships?

I think in the long-term, it hurts.

I think it's unhealthy

because it's an avoidance and an escape, right?

That's the point.

It's like, what is it being used as?

It's not being used as self-connection
or self-understanding.

It's being used as escape and avoidance

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of the actual topic.
And all that's doing is rewiring your brain
for false expectations, diminishing returns as well.
All the studies that I did look at
showed that porn is making you work harder.
You're gonna have to find something more extreme.
All the stats that I saw showed
that you had to watch more extreme porn
to get the same feeling.
So the most searched porn and the most watched porn
was abusive, sometimes violent, sometimes rough, hardcore.
All the search terms were more extreme
to get the same feeling because of the diminishing returns
of the chemicals that are being released.
And so now you're rewiring your brain
to not feel as much pleasure from normal sex
or more traditional conventional sex.
You're now saying that I'm only gonna feel pleasure
from sex when it's potentially abusive, violent,
somewhat rough, hardcore, whatever else it may be.
So I think that's massively unhealthy.
There's something it does to your expectations as well.
Expectations are the key of...
That's what we're saying.
Your expectations of sex become completely unrealistic.
Your expectations of intimacy
are just thrown out the window.
There must be so many people listening to this,
both men and women,
because both sexes do watch porn.
It's quite naive of one to assume
it's just men that are jacking off in there,
in their bedrooms or whatever.
I bet there's people listening to this,
who have a partner that's constantly watching it.
And they know they watch it,
potentially maybe they've caught them a few times
and they really want them to stop.
They think it's maybe killing their desire
in a relationship.
It's a difficult conversation to...
Oh, God.
You know?

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Yeah, it's really tough.
And like I said, when I was...
You know, I think it'd be interesting to look at this
and I would be fascinated to see
whether the people that are watching porn,
and I need to talk to more people than I have about it,
the people that I know that watch porn,
and that's why I'm only speaking from my experience,
don't feel good about it.
They internally, deeply at the root,
when we're in a coaching session
and we get to the core of it,
they feel guilty, they feel shameful,
they feel embarrassed about it.
It doesn't make them feel good.
And they wouldn't openly admit it in a community of people.
Now, I'm speaking about a very specific group
of people that have come to me for help
or support in their relationships.
They don't feel good about it.
That doesn't mean they don't feel good
when they're watching it.
I'm saying they don't feel good afterwards.
When they think about it, when they reflect on it,
they're like, that's not what I imagined would be my sex life.
That's not where I thought I'd turn to
for satisfaction and enjoyment.
So to me, that's again,
comes back to down the same approach.
And that's why the approach is always the same.
We're always approaching the problem or the challenge
from empathy and compassion.
We're not approaching it from judgment and accusation
of like, oh, you're such a waste.
You're such a lazy, you know, like that mindset
doesn't ever make someone wanna open up.
Like if you went up to your partner and said,
God, you just watch porn all the time.
Like, you know, you're just one of the worst guys.
Like having seen all my mates, they're doing this
and they get this from their partners
and what are you doing?
That person's never gonna tell you

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when they watch porn or what their challenge with it is
or how embarrassed they feel or whatever it may be.
Was if you went up to them and said, hey, you know,
I know that you watch porn
and I wanted to know when it started.
Like when did you get into it?
Like allow yourself to be an interviewer about it,
not an interrogator.
And I feel like one of the biggest mistakes
we make in our relationships is we interrogate our partners,
not interview them.
Let's be curious.
Let's actually try and understand it.
Let's look at it because it's human.
It's natural.
Like we said, 99% of people are doing it anyway.
So why are we pretending like it's only in our relationship?
Why are we pretending that, oh, no one else does this,
but only my partner does this?
That's not true.
So if it's that widespread and it's that common
and there's this huge industry that's been built off of it,
why are we judging our partner
and why are we making them feel less than?
Do you watch porn?
I don't.
I mean, when you, you know,
I mean, three years of being a celibate monk
with no access to the internet or phone
gives you some good training.
I feel like, so I grew up and I'll explain why too.
I feel like I started having sex early.
And so early in the sense for me,
so I felt that when were the years
where most of my friends were watching porn,
I was having sex.
And so I didn't get into it as a habit early on in life,
which is where I found it formed for most of my friends.
And then by the time they were having real sex,
I became a monk.
And so it was, it was a really weird order of stuff.
Does that make sense?
Yeah, it makes perfect sense.

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I think it was that idea of like, yeah, it was just,
I think I had, I had the real thing
when my friends were watching porn
and then by the time they were having the real thing,
I was on such a different path.
Three years of celibacy.
Three years of celibacy would do it to you.
It was one of the hardest.
No, thanks.
It was one of the hardest and best things though,
because one of the things we don't realize,
and I want to address this
and celibacy is a really interesting thing to address,
I would love to see more people.
And this may be not a popular concept
and I'm good with that.
I would love to see more people date people
without having sex for a committed number of months.
So committing with a new person that you're dating
to not make sex a connection point.
So one of my good friends did this recently as well.
And he found that it gave him the ability
to make better decisions
as to whether there was real intimacy,
whether there was real connection
and whether there was something real here
that could be built upon with sex
as opposed to, God, I'm just so attracted to her
and she's so attracted to me
and we just have the best sex ever or we don't.
And then that's what it's all hanging on.
And so I actually would go down that route
and say that celibacy doesn't have to be practiced
how I practiced this through as a monk.
Celibacy can be practiced in small doses,
not because you're trying to be celibate
and you're trying to repress yourself.
That's not what I'm encouraging.
What I'm encouraging is why not use it
as a way of making healthier decisions?
Because studies show we don't make good decisions
after we have sex.
And studies show that we don't make good decisions

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when we've had sex with someone for a long time
because that's completely rewiring how we feel about them.
So that's one way of looking at it.
And the other way I'd say even more extreme
is being celibate as a monk allowed me to redirect
all that energy and the word for monk
in the tradition I stayed in is brahmacharya or brahmachari.
And what that means technically is proper use of that energy.
So celibacy is not a repression or a suppression
or a closing off, it's reutilizing that vital energy
in a different direction.
If you think about how much money, time and energy
you've spent chasing someone that you liked,
the amount of time in your head,
the amount of time on your phone, text, messages,
dating apps, the amount of money you spent.
I would have been so rich
if I never took anyone out on a date before 21.
Like think about all the money I wasted on showing off
to women before I was 21.
Like that Don Perion's not cheap.
Yeah, exactly.
Take all of that energy,
think about what you could achieve creatively.
If you used all that energy used to pursue another person,
if you use that energy to create,
because it's creative energy.
So to me celibacy was far more about
I got to use three years of creative energy
in doing a lot of self-work
that I otherwise could have taken years to do
because of so many distractions and pursuits
that kind of spread that energy across.
My girlfriend came upstairs yesterday
when I was having a shower and she said to me
that she tried the Heel Protein Shake
which lives on my fridge over there.
And she said, it's amazing.
Low calories, you get your 20 odd grams of protein,
you get your 26 vitamins and minerals
and it's nutritionally complete.
If you haven't tried the Heel Protein product
do give it a try.

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The salted caramel one,
if you put some ice cubes in it
and you put it in a blender and you try it
is as good as pretty much any milkshake on the market.