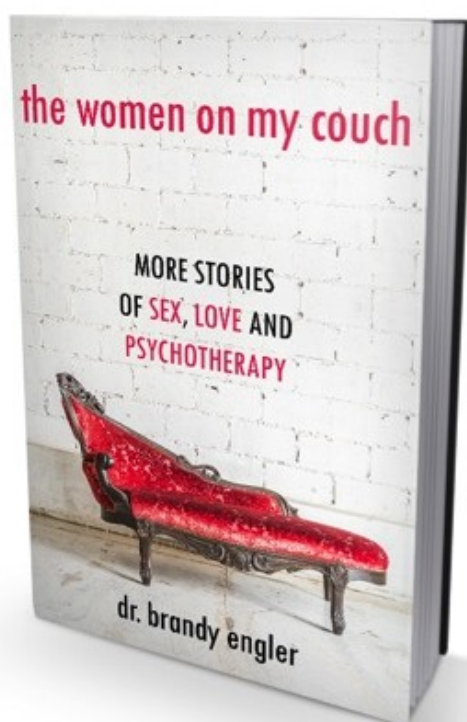


Relationship Author Dr. Brandy Engler Breaks Down 'The Women on My Couch'



By [Whitney Johnson](#)

We met sex therapist and [relationship author](#) Dr. Brandy Engler after she released her first book *The Men on My Couch: True Stories of Sex, Love and Psychotherapy*. Now, she's back with a new self-help relationship book that focuses on tales from her female clients. In *The Women on My Couch: More Stories of Sex, Love and Psychotherapy*, Engler examines common issues that women deal with in the bedroom and beyond and hopes to help her readers tackle their own sexual insecurities. In our exclusive interview, the relationship author opens up about her marriage, life in Los Angeles, and what women really want.

Since we last spoke, you moved to L.A. and got married – congratulations! Do you feel like becoming a wife has changed your view on marriage and work as a therapist?

Yes, absolutely! It really tests all of the grand ideas I have about relationships and love. It forces me to put them into action and shows me how difficult it is. The guy who officiated our wedding told us that marriage is one of the greatest spiritual disciplines, and I totally get it now.

Related Link: [Dr. Brandy Engler Says, “‘The Men on My Couch’ Taught Me that Love is Hard and Complicated”](#)

Self-Help Relationship Book Focuses on Female Sexuality

Now, let’s discuss your book! Did you always plan to write *The Women on My Couch* as a follow-up to *The Men on My Couch*?

It actually came first. I originally wanted to work with women and wrote my college dissertation on their libido, particularly for married women – I was trying to understand this unsolvable problem in the world of sex therapy. So I had some ideas and started writing a book, but I was still a student and didn’t really know what I was talking about.

Later, I decided to take that material and turn it into *The Women on My Couch*. The book isn’t only about libido though – that’s just one of the chapters. What I wanted to do was address the most common things women were bringing to sex therapy rather than choose cases that were deviant. I wanted readers to see their own struggles or issues reflected in the book.

What is the theme of *The Women on My Couch*?

The theme of *The Men on My Couch* was more about love, while the theme of this book is about women’s sexual choices. We

have a sense that we're free sexually, which presents to us an existential crisis, this vast gray area with no clear right or wrong answer. The book doesn't really tell women what to do, but it shows them how to walk through the process of making a decision when it comes to things like having a threesome or cheating on their spouse.

Is there a particular story that you think readers will most relate to?

There's two of them. One of them is about a woman who was so in love with her fiancé and so excited to marry him, but she then dealt with major disappointment after they got married. In therapy, we call that the "post-marriage adjustment period." Soon after you get married, all of these differences show up, and you have to deal with them right away. How you deal with it sort of makes or breaks your relationship and sets the tone for the rest of your marriage. I have to walk the character in the book through developing realistic expectations and explain to her that she has a chance to be better at loving once she faces this challenge. I also share with her some of the lessons that I learned as a newlywed.

The other chapter deals with a woman who is married to a really hot guy but has low libido. I wanted to show that that problem doesn't just happen to older, unattractive people; young, attractive couples who still love each other deal with it too. There's nothing crazy in her background; it's just sexual shyness and a lack of erotic development. That's really one of the most pervasive things that I see. She gets challenged to push the edges of her comfort zone and try new things. I expose some of the reasons why women get shy in the bedroom and what to do.

On the flipside, is there a story that you think will surprise readers the most?

There's a chapter about a woman who uses sex to pay off her

college loans, and I think it'll be shocking to learn how many women actually do that. I've had a few female clients who have done it, and I've had a few young, male clients who have used a service like that. I had to read up on it – I didn't even know it was going on! It's a trend now that's popular on college campuses, especially in L.A. Super educated girls are doing it. They're taking a feminist empowerment approach, like, "College is expensive, and I'm taking it into my own hands." That whole chapter is a debate between me and my client about equating feminism and sexuality and the different ways to look at it.

Related Link: [The Independent Woman: Do We Need a Do-Over?](#)

Relationship Author Shares Love Advice

Lastly, do you have any love advice for someone who's afraid to open up about her struggles in the bedroom?

I'm really hoping the book will help with that by giving a voice to what a lot of women go through. I hope it starts to normalize it and take away some of the fear or embarrassment. One of the underlying themes in the book is that women are often in a more passive, reactive sexual role. We let the men be in the charge. So it's about finding our voice in a world where everyone wants to tell us what to do.

You can purchase The Women on My Couch on Amazon. To keep up with Brandy, follow her on her website and Twitter @TheMenOnMyCouch.