

# The Pleasure Plan

One Woman's Search  
for Sexual Healing

**Laura Zam**

*Book Club  
Kit*



Dear Book Club Members,

Thanks so much for selecting THE PLEASURE PLAN for your book club pick. I love book clubs. In fact, I wrote my memoir with you in mind. I wanted a way to open up conversations about topics that society does not always give us language—or skills—to discuss. I imagined the world might change once groups of women (and people of all genders) got in a room and talked about the importance of female pleasure and sexual health.

To make the most of our time together, I've put together this Book Club Kit. I hope you find it, well, pleasurable. As you peruse, please know that I'm available for visits, especially through Skype, FaceTime, Zoom, or any virtual platform you prefer. I'd honor the chance to get to know your group. To set up a visit, simply follow the guidance on my Book Club page: [LauraZam.com/bookclubs](http://LauraZam.com/bookclubs).

As a fellow lover of books, I know there's never enough time to read everything we'd like to, or to get through the awaiting nightstand stack! So I am truly honored that you chose my book to read. I don't take that for granted.

I hope my book offers you some comfort, validation, information, inspiration, or maybe just a laugh. If you'd like to use my book as a catalyst for a more personal exploration of pleasure and sexuality, please look [here](#) and [here](#), or check out other resources on my website.

Thank you again for the time, thought and energy you are putting into THE PLEASURE PLAN.

Yours in pleasure,

*Laura*





# Five Sexual Healing Tips



Sexual healing can be extremely rewarding, but also complex. Here is a cheat sheet for how to get started.

## **Let Go of No**

These days there's a lot of talk about saying No in the bedroom (setting boundaries, including those associated with consent). WE NEED TO KEEP THIS IN PLACE. And yet...There's another kind of No we might place upon ourselves. It's the No of despondency. It sets in, too easily, if sex has been bad for a long time. We might feel isolated in our experience, believing others are knocking over the furniture. In order to begin a sexual healing journey, we need to believe it's possible. One way you can trick yourself into hope is by making a commitment to healing, even if you don't know where it's going, even if you doubt it will work.

## **Diagnose THIS**

After you decide to go on your journey, it's time for a proper diagnosis—from a doctor, a mental health professional, or both. My best advice is to seek out providers that specialize in human sexuality as well as your particular issue. Here's how to find a provider:

[LauraZam.com/findingprovider](http://LauraZam.com/findingprovider)

## **Go Off-Script**

Long-term partnerships, or even new encounters, often fall prey to a pattern of lovemaking that feels stale or doesn't match the female body—our own authentic pleasure and satisfaction. One way to reawaken a sleeping, or malfunctioning, love life is to re-conceptualize it. Try replacing a regular sequence—like a little oral followed by some penetration (sound familiar?)—with a loosely-structured improv that makes room for mutual pleasure

## **Take a Pleasure Hour**

If sex has been non-existent or bad, it can be helpful to reconnect with Eros while no one else is around. I recommend something called The Pleasure Hour. This is a one hour, solo, self-love session (defined as you wish). Sexy time alone takes the pressure off having to perform. For that reason, it's a great laboratory for recovery and discovery. If alone time is not possible, or you feel far away from sensual experiences, take yourself for a walk, trying to connect with your body and all your senses.

## **Create a Pleasure Plan**

If the thought of getting sexually unstuck feels overwhelming or hopeless, try thinking of your healing as a project. In other words, frame your progress as a long-term endeavor unfolding over time. For more ideas, check out [LauraZam.com/mypleasureplan](http://LauraZam.com/mypleasureplan).

# Discussion Questions



- 1.** In *The Pleasure Plan*, Laura tells a story, from her twenties, about wanting to be sexy versus wanting to have sex. She explores how these desires intersect throughout the book. What is your understanding of sexiness? What is your understanding of sexual desire?
- 2.** In Chapter 9, Laura visits the house where she was sexually abused as a four-year-old. Was this a wise move? Have you ever done anything daring, or unusual, to face your own demons?
- 3.** In Chapter 10, Laura sees a trauma therapist who tells her that as long as she has agency (a sense of personal empowerment), she doesn't have any significant trauma residue. Do you agree with this assessment?
- 4.** In Chapter 17, Laura learns that she has vaginal atrophy. Is atrophy (or Genitourinary Syndrome of Menopause, also known as GSM) something you were aware of? Is it an issue you speak about with your friends, family, or others in your circle? Why? Why not?
- 5.** Laura's mother plays a crucial role in this book. Would you have enjoyed having a mom like Harriet, Laura's mom? Why? Why not?
- 6.** Laura explores two naked treatments toward the end of the book: a private Tantra session and Betty Dodson's Bodysex workshop. Did you find these adventures intriguing? Extreme? Could you see yourself doing something similar? Why? Why not?
- 7.** In Chapter 19, Laura invites her sexual problems into bed with her, in order to understand what they all require. Do you think this was a wise move? Could you see yourself doing something similar?
- 8.** Laura takes a circuitous route to healing and does not always follow through with treatments. Did you find this frustrating at times? If you were her friend, what would you have said to her during this journey?
- 9.** Which curative adventure do you think helped Laura the most, in terms of healing? What about in terms of her relationship?
- 10.** What is your biggest take away from *The Pleasure Plan*?



# *Pleasure Enhancements for your Book Club Event or Pleasure Brunch*



Whether or not you decide to hold an official Pleasure Brunch, you might want to ramp up the delight factor of your meeting. This is to encourage your group to make pleasure a priority. Here are some ideas:

## **Food**

- For nerves, choose carbs, melted cheese, and too many kinds of cookies
- Aphrodisiacs are another way to go: phallic asparagus, juicy watermelon, anything else you find sensual or sensuous
- Chocolate
- More chocolate



## **Flowers**

- Fresh flowers (size matters little here)
- Dried flowers, scented with essential oil (place them away from your allergic friend)
- Plants displayed around the apartment (for ambiance and added oxygen when the laughter starts)

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## **Music**

- Here's your chance to make that sexy playlist
- Piano music is sure to offer calm
- Jazz is cliché but also retro and cool

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## **Beverages**

- Booze is a winner: wine, mimosas, cocktails...
- For alcohol-free gatherings, try whipping up a mocktail made from seltzer, fruit juice, and a splash of ginger beer
- If the time of day allows, caffeine can also help get people talking





# About Laura Zam



Laura Zam is an author/speaker, Sexuality Educator, Certified Trauma Professional, and women's health advocate. In addition to her memoir, her writing appears in *The New York Times*, *Salon*, *HuffPost*, *Sheknows*, and additional publications. In 2013, Laura's autobiographical comedy about healing from child sexual abuse was presented Off-Broadway. Media outlets that have covered Laura's work include *NPR*, *The Washington Post*, *PBS*, *ABC-TV* and many others. Laura speaks regularly on women's sexual wellness and healing. Venues include universities, non-profits, and conferences. She's taught at Brown University, UC Berkeley, George Mason, and other others.

Laura loves visiting book clubs as well as presenting to organizations in person or virtually. For more information, feel free to contact her using the contact form on her website. Or you can find her on social media:

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