



Wild & Sublime® Podcast, Season 2 Episode 53
“Eavesdropping: Masturbation ruts”
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Do you feel stuck in the same pattern whenever you masturbate? How can you reset and start to form a healthy masturbation practice? In this latest Eavesdropping episode, sex writer Jera Brown sparks an impromptu convo with Karen on understanding and getting unstuck from masturbation habits that aren't bringing us joy.

Host: Karen Yates

Guests: Jera Brown

Karen Yates

What does that bring up, if I say, "masturbation without orgasm"?

Jera Brown

I think, having these conversations, I start to realize mental stumbling blocks. Like, "Oh, this isn't gonna work because I'm not going to be able to orgasm." Or, I start to think, like, what am I putting in the way that's preventing me from trying something new, you know?

Karen Yates

Welcome to Wild & Sublime, a sexy spin on infotainment®, no matter your preferences, orientation, or relationship style, based on the popular live Chicago show. Each week, I'll chat about sex and relationships with citizens from the world of sex positivity. You'll hear meaningful conversation, dialogues that go deeper, and information that can help you become more free in your sexual expression. I'm sex educator Karen Yates.

This week, we continue our Eavesdropping series — extemporaneous, no-holds-barred conversation about sex and intimacy. Today, sex writer Jera Brown and I talk about masturbation: what works and what doesn't, and how to get more intimate with ourselves. Keep listening.

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Hey, folks. I think, now that there are a few Eavesdropping episodes under my belt, this one comes the closest to replicating the conversations I actually have with the person on the other side of the mic. This is a quintessential Jera Brown and Karen Yates conversation, and that's why it tickles me so much. I met Jera maybe four years ago at, I think — at least, they seem to think it was at a polyamorous cocktails event. Not exactly sure. But suddenly, they were just in my life, and you know how that goes. When we're not talking about mindful sexuality, as we will be in this conversation, we usually are talking about guys. And that's pretty fun, too. Jera Brown is a sex and relationship columnist with *Rebellious Magazine*, a fetish provider and the host of the podcast *Left-Handed Journeys*, about sexuality and spiritual identities. They also have a few dogs, who you might be hearing in this particular episode. Enjoy.

Jera Brown, what is your question?

Jera Brown

Okay: How do you form a healthy masturbation practice? So, background: I feel like masturbation gets touted a lot as this healing thing in so many ways, like a way of getting in touch with our own bodies, or a way of accessing the divine, even, which totally interests me. Or like a way of centering ourselves. And I'm just, like, I look at porn. I've thought a lot about — and I had this awesome conversation with another therapist, a therapist in Chicago, for my own podcast, who was talking about how masturbation is this ultimate self-love practice. And we talked about how it doesn't have to be fed by narrative. You can just love your body, or be turned on by your own body. And that's totally okay. And the thought terrifies me. Well, I don't know if it terrifies me; it makes me feel like I'm missing something. Because I'll try. And ultimately, like, I just, I want the narrative. I want the story. And so I guess when I'm asking, how do you form a good masturbation practice, what I'd love to dig into is, what are ways that it can be used? And what are ways that we can get out of masturbation ruts?

Karen Yates

Oh, yeah, that's a great question. I love the potential of where this conversation could go. I think masturbation is one of those multi-functional activities. It can really be anything you want it to be.

Jera Brown

Yeah.

Karen Yates

And I think some of the elements you're bringing up, like being in a rut, or the potential for it to be some of this, like, liberating experience — that's all in it: narrative, story. I guess what I... Oh my gosh, where am I gonna even begin? You know, it's like, what is one's relationship to porn? Or what is one's relationship to "the story"? Like, if you have a favorite fantasy, and it kind of always looks certain in your mind, and there's very little switch-up in the setup and what have you, like, as you're playing it out in your mind; or if you're always looking for porn images that kind of follow the same look, or the same dynamic... I have so many thoughts in my head right now. I'm like, "Where do I want to go with all of this??"

Jera Brown

Before we start this conversation, I want to make sure it's clear that I'm very much not being anti-porn. Just because that's, like, a political value. You know, as a fetish performer, porn is good, and it has a healthy place. So when I said, "I look at porn," I didn't necessarily mean that derogatory. I meant that I feel that it's narrow.

Karen Yates

Yeah, I got that. I didn't think you were being down on it. How I took it—

Jera Brown

I just wanted to put it out there.

Karen Yates

Yeah, yeah, yeah. I guess anything you do, anything — not you, but anything a person does where it becomes super repetitive, and maybe boredom is setting in, or you kind of don't think about it. Like, sometimes for me, masturbation is just, like, I want to get off. I want to do it as expeditiously as possible. I know what works, boom, in a couple of minutes, it's done. [laughs] There's no... there's nothing added. And that's fine. And I think a lot of people masturbate that way. And I'm like, yay. Because number one, you're just having a relationship with your body. So that's good, right? And so let me say right now, some of the positives of masturbation in general. I think if you're not a regular masturbator, a person is not a regular masturbator, I think it does relieve tension. If you're a proponent of energy in the body, or you believe that there's an energetic force in the body, I think it balances you. I think it's a great balancer. I think if you're in a shitty mood, it can bring you back to a more, like, even keel. I think it is

hugely beneficial. So I am super pro-masturbation. However you can do it, go do it. Yay, masturbation! But to get to these other realms you're talking about — and I think the first thing, I was so intrigued when you said it terrifies you. And you kind of rolled back from that — well, not terrifies, you know. But I think what is interesting to me about masturbation, once you get away from — I won't use the term "get off" — once you move away from standard ideas of masturbation, like looking at porn, or you have your favorite toy, and you do it exactly the same way all the time, then you're starting to have a different relationship with yourself, right? Then it becomes you sitting with you. And your body. It becomes almost like meditation. I did have an interview, one of the early interviews we did, was with one of the teachers at the Institute for the Study of Somatic Sex Education, where I studied. And we talked about mindful erotic practice, which is this more of, like, being with yourself, and being with your body, and allowing whatever comes up to come up. And that, for me — for the school, we had to do it for 30 days straight. It was so uncomfortable. It was maddening. It was terrifying. It was all of that, because, you know, what you were sort of asked to do was just be with yourself and have a physical relationship with yourself. And however that came up. As you sat with yourself naked, or not naked, or touching yourself, or not touching yourself, and allowed something just to happen within, say, an hour period. And not everyone has that time. But I think very interesting things can happen if you create a vessel, or if you can create a container around that.

Jera Brown

Yeah. So, yeah, a lot of thoughts. First of all, I think part of what's kept me from exploring is either just feeling like I don't know where to go with it, or just thinking, oh, that sounds super boring. And probably it's not boring, right? If you get past the discomfort of it, then there's always things to explore. But I was thinking about... I went to a hot spring today, where I had a private hot spring, and it was amazing and beautiful. It's in Truth or Consequences, New Mexico, and let me — okay, let me preface this that there's all sorts of types of hot springs in Truth or Consequences. There's these tiny little rooms that you can rent for yourself for five bucks for 30 minutes. And it's just an underground hot spring. Like, you walk in and there's gravel on the bottom, and it's just this literal hole in the floor that you can soak in, and it's sort of sensory deprivation in a way, and beautiful. The one that I went to today was called Riverbend. Way fancier, way bougier. Sits on the the edge of the Rio Grande, and you have this private little area that overlooks the river and the mountains, and you're outside, and just soaking in this tub by yourself, or with lovers or whatever. I was by myself. So I've done both this week, and both times, there's something about the heat and the water and the sensuality that I get super turned on. And like, I want to masturbate. And I have two problems that I think are fairly common. One, like, I can

masturbate without porn. I can create stories in my head, no problem. But what I can't do is get off without my Hitachi. And, like, my body's become desensitized to it. And I realized what's interesting is that when I'm having some sort of erotic encounter with somebody else, then orgasm is not the goal. And I'm an advocate for not having orgasm be the goal, because I think it takes us out of the moment. But with masturbation, orgasm is the goal. I've been thinking about it as it's not worthwhile unless I can make myself climax, which is a fascinating hangup.

Karen Yates

Oh, yeah. See, that's very interesting you're bringing that up, because I think that gets to the heart of the matter. With, you know, are you doing masturbation because you just want to get off immediately, if you want an orgasm, or is, like — you know, I think that's why this idea of mindful erotic practice gets away from this idea of orgasm as a goal. Right? So I think in some ways, if you don't have orgasm as a goal, maybe in sex, or what you consider sex, then that's an idea you can bring into mindful erotic practice. So that playful idea of being with body, being with yourself, exploring your body, or your genitals, which are of your body, but you know what I mean. Like explores sexualized areas of your body, non-sexualized, and then coming to new awarenesses, right? Because, like — you remember, I'm going to assume, because most adolescents are very sexually exploratory — you know, when you're starting to learn, like, I have a body that can produce pleasure, aaah! I was so, like, I didn't have any concept of anything, so I was trying all sorts of shit out when I was a young teenager. And, you know, stuff that I would never do now, right? But at the time, I was like, whoa, this feels good, I'm gonna try it! [laughs] I don't do that anymore. Except, like, with mindful erotic practice, it's like, how can I touch myself as if I'm a lover coming to myself for the very first time? And so it becomes like, wow, how... oh, wow, I've never touched myself this way. Or I haven't touched myself in this way in such a long time, and now I'm older, and how does it feel now? And what does it feel like if I use oil versus no oil, or scratchiness or not scratchiness, or whatever it is? And a completely new awareness comes in. And I'm not saying every masturbatory encounter needs to be a goalless encounter with self. Because I think that can be a special thing. Like, I've got a Saturday afternoon, or I've got a Sunday night, I'm going to try this now. What does that bring up, if I say masturbation without orgasm?

For me, having this conversation is useful, because I start to realize mental stumbling blocks. Like, "Oh, this isn't gonna work, because I'm not going to be able to orgasm." Or I start to think, what am I putting in the way that's preventing me from trying something new? I think it's just useful that the more that I can talk about it and break

things down, the more I realize, like, oh, I'm holding myself back because of these ideas. You know?

Yeah. One thing I wanted to ask you is... well, you said you come across stumbling blocks, but what are the stumbling blocks exactly? If you don't mind me asking.

Jera Brown

Yeah, I think fear of boredom, or an inability to just try things without having a plan in place.

Karen Yates

Right. Yeah. Yeah.

Jera Brown

And the feeling like I need a goal in order to explore, as opposed to exploration being the point in and of itself.

Karen Yates

Yeah. I don't know if I buy the fear of boredom as an excuse.

Jera Brown

No.

Karen Yates

Because it doesn't make any sense to me. Because you're really talking about, what, 20 minutes 30 minutes? Like, so what? Sometimes I'm bored just sitting on my couch, scrolling. The scrolling boredom.

Jera Brown

Yeah. Right. [chuckles]

Karen Yates

So why not be naked?

Jera Brown

That's a good question. So what's the deeper hangup there? I guess the deeper hangup is like, that — you know what? I think part of it is that it makes me feel inadequate. Like, a lot of this makes me feel inadequate. When I was younger, I didn't need toys, you know? I could just get myself off with my fingers. In a way, like my body

felt fresh. And then once I discovered masturbation tools, I was like, oh, now I need this thing, because my body responds more to it. And so, the thought of just touching myself and getting nowhere makes me feel inadequate in some way, you know? Or not being able to reach these planes. I mean, obviously, I've just, like, touched myself, and I'm just like, "This is doing nothing." But I've never done it mindfully, you know? I've never just given myself over to it.

Karen Yates

Yeah. Because when I hear you talking, I'm hearing so much, like, future-izing. The assumption — there's a really built-in assumption, like, "I've used a Hitachi for so long. [dramatically] I'm dead down there without it!" You know what I mean? It's like, yeah, I don't think so. Actually, I just really doubt that. I doubt it. You know, and there's so much to explore, because what I would say is, most likely, what I would posit is that the Hitachi has just become a focal point. You've become overly focused on the Hitachi as the bringer of joy. [laughter]

Jera Brown

Well, I have like — I've done Hitachi breaks, and it'll take me weeks to where I can come without it. You know, like when I use other toys or something. It's that I think my nerves expect it, in order to be able to orgasm. Yeah.

Karen Yates

Yeah.

Jera Brown

But that doesn't mean, like, I'm dead down there. It just means like, if I'm expecting this very specific outcome, there's some neural pathways that are like, "What's going on?"

Karen Yates

Yeah, and what I'm also thinking is — which has happened to me with, like, mindful erotic practice, when I've given over to it is — there are other areas of the body that can bring pleasure. And it's like, putting the focus on that can then be a bit of a relief, you know? Because the mindful erotic practice can be whatever you want it to be. So you can create frames around it. Like, today, I'm not going to touch my genitals at all. I'm going to touch every area of my body except my genitals. Or, today, I'm just going to explore my butthole. You know, in whatever way I want to. And yeah, I think that can open up a lot of — that can take pressure off.

Jera Brown

Yeah, as I've gotten more involved in kink, like, one of the beauties of it is that there's so many ways of relating to people that don't involve genital contact, or traditional sex. I have loved ways that I've been able to get more acquainted with, like, my body and sensation with other people involved, through sensation play with BDSM. I've not done much of it on my own. And I do think that part of this for me is just not having prioritized it. So I think going back to my original question about cultivating a masturbation practice, the reason that I think the word "practice" is so important is it's an intentional way of — even if it's not masturbation, let's expand it out to erotic practice. It's an intentional thing that we're doing to love ourselves in some way. You know, and that is a practice.

Karen Yates

It's a physical practice.

Jera Brown

Yeah.

Karen Yates

Like, I think it's really easy for people to say, "Oh, I exercise, and this is how I show my body that I love it." But you know, I mean, a lot of people approach exercise in a very punitive way. And it's a way to kind of control the body, rather than a way to have this expansive relationship with the body. And I'm not saying everyone who exercises does that, but I think that that is one of the things that does happen a lot. And that, you know, it is a practice, because you're entering into this place where there's no expectations with your body, and that can be mind-blowing sometimes. I mean, what I've seen for myself — because I don't do a mindful erotic practice as much as I would like, by any stretch of the imagination. In fact, this past couple of weeks, I'm like, "You're not even masturbating that much. You're very tense. You need to just be doing some very basic stuff here." I don't know. I think mindful erotic practice can be super, super eye-opening. It can continually give. You know, if I don't put any expectations on my practice, I always come away the better person. But there is always this point in the beginning. I don't know, like, the 10-minute mark, where I'm like, "Holy shit, what am I doing?" I am bored, I am irritated. I'm kind of uncomfortable. You know, I'm not doing what I usually do. And then I just sit with that uncomfortableness. And then something happens, something shifts, you know? And some of the more remarkable pleasure breakthroughs I've had have been around this kind of mindful erotic practice. I think what I need to say for people who are listening, who might not have listened to the early episode we did on it, is like, what I'm saying is, you take time out in your week to

do this, and you enter into a space of, like, non-expectation, where it's just purely like, I am going to be with my body, see what impulses arise, go down that road. And I'm not saying, you know — for you, it's like, you were talking about the Hitachi. You can use toys, you can do whatever you want, you can explore whatever you want. I know, when I was at school, one of the things we did was we sort of did a gender exploration, which was totally amazing and fabulous. So yeah, you can set whatever parameters you want.

We'll return to the conversation in a minute. Did you know we have transcripts for every episode? Go to wildandsublime.com, and you'll find the link near the audio player on each episode page. Wild & Sublime is supported in part by our Sublime Supporter, Full Color Life Therapy. Therapy for all of you at fullcolorlifetherapy.com. We now return to my conversation with Jera Brown. In this half, we talk about friends with benefits, sex on the first date, wrestling with fantasy, and more.

Jera Brown

When you were talking about working out, I was thinking about how approaching everything with a mindset or perspective of self love is a constant mental switch that we can be making. What is my body telling me it needs? Or how can I treat my body well? That's a lifelong pursuit, to do better. So one idea is opening it up to say, like, what is this desire telling me about what I need? But then going back to the idea of masturbation, like not just erotic, but like, my relationship with my genitals. I think part of it, too, to me, is like, if I have a more intimate relationship with my genitals, and what gets me off, like, obviously, then when I'm in other relationships with other people that I want to touch my genitals, I've got more context for them. And I know certain things that I love to do with other people, you know, when it comes to genital play. But when I think about, like, my relationship with porn and my relationship with narratives, for me, even if I'm going to look at somebody that has a penis, like, there's so much wrapped up in my desire that I think also plays into the types of people that I'm looking for, as erotic partners. And so, I'm trying to play with those stories, too, to see, well, what can I shift in what I want from other people? Or the types of energy that I'm attracted to?

Karen Yates

Is what you were saying just now that, like, you have defaults in porn, in fantasy, that you see played out then in real life? Or just in fantasy?

Jera Brown

Like, I'm super-attracted to masculine energy. And I tend to end up falling harder for — right now I fall harder for cis men that have traditional masculine energy, although it has

not traditionally served me well. And I love rough sex. And I love porn that matches that aggressive energy, or something about that. Lately, I've been watching more FtM porn, because like, I'm so sick of just cis men that I'm just like, I want masculine energy in another way. And that's been working for me. Then my mind strays to, like, how easy is this going to be to find in real life? But I do think, yeah, I wonder if I can start shifting things that I'm interested in, in person, or in real life, or like, what I search for by saying, actually, watching this as pleasurable. Because I've definitely had these experiences — like, playing with my gender has made me feel differently about my gender, and has ultimately made me express it differently. You know? So there are relationships between what we fantasize about, and where our confidence in how we interact with the world, how it shifts. So...

Karen Yates

Oh, yeah, absolutely. And I think your idea of like, playing with your fantasy life, opening up your fantasy life... Because this gets back to this thing we started talking about in the beginning, of just sort of ruts. And we know what works... But I don't I don't know about you — I've also seen in my life, as I have changed over time, like, as certain wounds have gotten healed psychologically, I see my fantasies changing. You know, when I was young, I went for certain types of fantasies that were much more, like, where I was, I don't know, maybe more in a position of non-power. And over the years, I'm not interested in those fantasies anymore. I haven't actually attempted to switch them. They just have, like, started changing, you know? And it's really fascinating. I also think about fantasies I had that were super fun, that I just sort of forgot about, that were just like, oh, yeah, that was a great fantasy, I need to bring those back! Those were awesome. [laughs] Because I'm just like, "Okay, this particular fantasy always works." So I'm just gonna — this is my go-to, and I'm, whatever. So this idea of working with fantasy in order to expand your mind, your relationships. I love that. I love that idea.

Jera Brown

I think maybe instead of thinking about what I want, you know, that there's this time to retreat inward and say, like, "What can I offer myself?" I mean, I'm taking a break. Like, I'm pretty happy right now just having a lot of solitude and experiences by myself. And I'm open to — I've had a lot of trysts lately, that just randomly occur, but nothing that's really stuck. And so I think that what I would like to do is figure out how to fill myself more so that when somebody comes that sticks, it's because I'm full, and they're arriving in this overflow, you know? So...

Karen Yates

Yeah, yeah. You're having a relationship with yourself that is enough. And by the mere fact you're doing that, you attract different people, right? You're able to make different choices, I think, because there's not a need, you know?

Jera Brown

We read a lot about how, like, you know, sex is legit need, and like, there's... I feel like there's common advice from friends, like, just go have sex, you'll feel better! Go have sex! Which is super empowering and positive, it's super sex positive, and I'm for it. But when I think about sex being a need, or like, when I'm horny, and I'm like, well, it's time to go find a lover or something, I think traditionally what I've missed is, like, what am I not filling in myself first? I shouldn't just default to needing somebody else. Like, it's good to need other people, we need other people. But there has to be a relationship with ourselves that goes along with needing other people.

Karen Yates

Yeah. I mean, it's interesting, I'm just listening to you about, you know, this whole, like, "go have sex, you'll feel better" thing. And, you know, I'm all for that. And I also know, there's situations that I used to put myself in, around like, quote-unquote, easy sex, that I don't do anymore. Or I don't do it as much anymore, I should say. That's a better way of putting it. Because I have some self-imposed rules, of like, hmm, am I in consent with myself? As some scenario unfolds with someone? Like, where am I starting to be like, [prevaricating noise] ehhehh... And like, then really give myself the power to like, hold. We're going to hold here for a moment. Or, you know, sometimes there'll be rules in place for myself, like, yeah, I'm not gonna sleep with someone on the first date. You know, I'm just not gonna do that. I just don't. Because, I mean, I'm never gonna say never, I should say, that's not a hard and fast rule, but it's like, pretty much, probably not gonna happen. For a lot of reasons. I mean, if I want to continue having a relationship with someone, I think having sex with someone on the first date, if it's not just a hookup, if you're not — I'm not talking about hookups. I'm not talking about, like, I'm going to see once or twice and that's it. I'm talking about like, do I want to have a relationship? Eh, I'm probably not gonna sleep with someone on the first date. You know.

Jera Brown

I feel like my default for a long time has been to look for friends with benefits. Because I don't want to rush into a romantic relationship, and I like being on my own. And I like those relationships just developing organically, or leaning into them when it feels right. The problem with looking for friends with benefits is there's implied that like, well, this is the point, you know. So we should do this, we should figure out if this works. And

I've also found that no matter how much talk we talk, around what friendship means, in this friends with benefits relationship, there's always different opinions about what kind of friendship you can have with somebody. And polyamory — like, folks that are poly-minded will have a little different opinion of this than folks that are just not thinking in terms of like, multiple long-term, committed relationships. But I want to bring this back to — no, actually, you had a thought. Go ahead and say your thought first. I feel like you're like, yes, there's something there.

Karen Yates

The first thing I want to say is, I want to go back to my thing of like, I want to explain why I usually don't have sex with people on the first date, because this might sound like I have some sort of morality — like, it's very bad. It's the idea that, like, if I'm really looking for a longer relationship with someone, the earlier I have sex with someone, it's like throwing a flame on gasoline. It's just like, too much too soon. I want to develop some sort of relationship with a person before sex enters the picture. That's the only reason. That is really the pure reason. So the Friends with Benefits thing, I think, again, it gets back to this idea of when sex is in the picture — not always. I mean, there's always exceptions to the rule, but when you were like, what kind of friendship do you have? It's like, yeah, what kind of friendship do you have? I mean, I'm saying this for myself. I'm saying this for myself, and what I have noticed in my life, and that becomes that, for me, where I'm at now, it's like, I'm having to dig into these questions of, like, is this working for me? You know, what do I want? And I love casualness? I really do. I like flowing, casual relationships very much. When I'm really into the other person. That's great. And then I also have to ask myself, well, are you flowing so much that you're kind of losing yourself? Are there bottom lines that you're not kind of adhering to, in the desire to just have this sort of easy-peasy relationship? Does that make sense?

Jera Brown

Yeah. And I think part of what that gets to is the fact that we can have a pretty firm idea of what we're looking for and what we think would feel good, or what would fit into our life well, but relationships don't work that way, you know?

Karen Yates

[laughs] Well, exactly so, Jera. Exactly so!

Jera Brown

Yeah, like you develop feels, or people aren't available, or like — it's not gonna fit into a tidy box, like fucking ever. It doesn't mean that, like, friends with benefits don't ever

work, because they can. Sometimes they can work surprisingly well. But I think it's more like, thinking that we can control it, you know.?

Karen Yates

Right. Right. And let's get back to masturbation, because that was what I was thinking of earlier in our conversation. It's like this control aspect of masturbation. I think porn is control. I've always had this really deep-seated idea that earlier, like, when I was — I mean, I don't know. Like, I think this was pre-grad school. I was writing a play, and looking at Apollonian and Dionysian concepts. And I think people always look at, like, all forms of sexuality as sort of Dionysian, and like, the chaos and the unfettered, right? But there's this aspect, for me, of porn, that is all about control. It's about repetitive images, and staged images, and manicured images, that feed a particular desire.

Jera Brown

Yeah. Maybe in both interpersonal relationships, as well as a masturbation practice, or an erotic mindfulness practice, that growth happens when you're getting outside of your comfort zone, no matter what. But any sort of exploration — what I was thinking of is this trope where it's like, "Oh, you just need to get laid." Like, there's this idea that getting laid will fix our issues. And sometimes it does. Sometimes it's wonderful. Sometimes it's exactly what we need. But we never say, like, "You just need to go home and masturbate." Maybe if that was just built up as a more normal thing to soothe ourselves, or love ourselves, or get to know ourselves... I just, I don't know. There's a mental switch there.

Karen Yates

I'm getting back to this idea of somatic exploration as a type of meditation. We're always talking about "meditation is a good thing, because it helps you get centered." And if you have — I have been engaged at various points in my life, in, you know, long-term meditation practices. And there is a huge change in me, right? I am not as reactive and what have you. And I am sorry to say that I've not been so engaged in mindful erotic practice that I can tell you the long-term benefits of doing it, like, once a week for, you know, years. I can't tell you that, because I have not done that. But I suspect. I suspect there are huge benefits. And getting back to, you know, being with lovers. It's one of the ways that mindful erotic practice, goallessness, in body exploration, does allow you to become more in touch, so that you can be more communicative with lovers and say, you know, this really turns me on, this particular thing really turns me on. I've been really getting into this lately. Want to check it out with me?

Jera Brown

Right, right. For sure.

Karen Yates

You know?

Jera Brown

That body sensitivity to — part of the joy of meditating, right, is that it's supposed to make us more aware of our circumstances, period. So we can be more perceptive. And I assume that the same is true: the more we explore our body, the more we'll hear it talking to us, in ways that... Yeah,

Karen Yates

It's more sensitivity. Like, "I want this, I want more of this. I don't want this. Stop that. I don't like that." And also, I do want to say, because I'm not anti-porn, either, as you declared at the beginning of the thing, you know, one thing I talked about with Captain Snowden on the mindful erotic practice show, is Joseph Kramer, who was who is the godfather of sexological body work, has this thing called porn yoga — I hope to have him on the show, actually, to talk more about it — where it's like, you look at porn and you look away from porn. You look at it, and then you masturbate without looking at the images. You come back, you look, and then you go have a relationship with your body. So you can kind of pendulate between these, like, I'm looking at the image. Now I'm relating to myself. Instead of, I'm just looking at the image, and I am sitting in a chair, and I'm kind of locked in, and it's not super pleasant.

Jera Brown

I feel like I can get lost in my brain in a good way. But I'm still getting lost in a story, which is not being present with my body. I think that's the thing that I want to work on. It's like, I feel like narrative puts me in my mind, not my body. No matter what form it is.

Karen Yates

Mm hmm. Yeah. I guess I'm not pro- or anti-narrative. I'm always kind of amazed when a new... I mean, I think there's something really healthy about, like, harvesting new fantasies, you know? That can be very joyful and fascinating. And yeah, I've started doing it more recently, because I'm like, wow... Again, getting back to this like, when I was a kid, I had all of these really exotic, fantastical fantasies. And then suddenly, it was like, "No, this is the one that always works." [;aghs] Over time, it was like, "No, this is the one." So I've been into that lately. But if you do want to have more of a

relationship with your body and get away from narrative, yeah, I think that's fantastic, too.

Jera Brown
Okay! [laughs]

Karen Yates
Are we here? Have we ended?

Jera Brown
I think so...

Karen Yates
Is this the ending point? Yeah, I think so too.

Jera Brown
Okay, good. [laughs]

Karen Yates
For more info and Jera Brown, go to our show notes. If you'd like to work with me to help get unstuck and add more ease to your life, consider a biofield tuning session. Like acupuncture except using sound, biofield tuning gently restores energetic flow and shifts emotional patterning in the body, bringing greater awareness of yourself and the choices you can make. And it can be done remotely. Go to karen-yates.com, or the show notes, to learn more about individual or group sessions.

Well, that's it, folks. Have a very pleasurable week. For the next three weeks, we'll be doing an end-of-year recap. Join us for the best of Wild & Sublime. Thank you for listening. If you know someone who might be interested in this episode, send it to them. Do you like what you heard? Then give us a nice review on your podcast app. You can follow us on social media @wildandsublime and sign up for newsletters at wildandsublime.com. I'd like to thank associate producer Julia Williams and design guru Jean-Francois Gervais. Theme Music by David Ben-Porat. This episode was edited by The Creative Imposter studios. Our media sponsor is Rebellious Magazine, feminist media, at rebelliousmagazine.com.