

Sex Outside The Lines Discussion Questions

Week 1 (Chapters 1-3)

- Q1. Dr. Donaghue opens the book by saying “in sex and relationships, ‘normal’ is a dirty word. Do you agree with him? Why or why not?”
- Q2. What do you think about the term “sexual deviance”?
- Q3. In chapter 2, Dr. Donaghue talks about the dangers of science when it comes to perceptions of sexuality. What are some of the ways that this bad science has impacted you? How do you think scientists can do better?
- Q4. Chapter 3 is about sex education in America and the many ways people in America learn about sex. Where/how did you learn about sex? What do you wish you’d been taught?

Week 2 (Chapters 4-5)

- Q1. Do you have a physician or mental health professional that you think is a good resource for your sexual health?
- Q2. What can the medical and mental health communities do better when it comes to understanding and treating sexual health and well-being?
- Q3. Dr. Donaghue says, “sexual compatibility is the most important attribute for relational success.” Do you agree?
- Q4. How do you define sexual compatibility? Do you agree with the model in this book?

Week 3 (Chapters 6-7)

- Q1: What do you think about what Dr. Donaghue calls “the fantasy of marriage” and the “flawed concept of soulmates”?
- Q2: Dr. Donaghue makes the assertion that “codependence is a functional drive from humans; autonomy is not.” What do you think about this?
- Q3: Ch 7 Is about the importance of perversion and fantasy and sexuality, arousal, and intimacy. What are some ways we can expand our notion of sex beyond “appropriate use of genitals”? Why is this important?
- Q4: Dr. Donaghue says “monogamy is one sexual-relational choice and should be selected only after partners have considered all of their choices and decided which is best for them.... Decisions about monogamy are not permanent, but should be ongoing dialogue about how well it is working and

whether to continue or try something else.” How is this in alignment with your own views? How is it different from what you think and/or practice?

Week 4 (Chapters 8-10)

Q1: Dr. Donaghue suggests that sexual dysfunction is a myth and explains why he thinks this at length. Do you agree with him? Why or why not?

Q2: Dr. Donaghue asserts that “labels around sex and identity are limiting and do not allow for the flexibility that sexual health and relational stability require.” What are your thoughts on identity and orientation labels?

Q3: Chapter 10 is about the future of sex and relationships. What is something you hope to see in your future? What is something you hope to see in our collective future?

Q4: What is one way this book changed the way you think about sex and relationships? What, from this book, would you want to share with others?