



# Sensuality, Sexuality, Survival

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JULY 2007



## Current SSS Events

Our SSS Consultants have been continuing to fight against cancer and its debilitating effects on female sexuality. With 44 Certified Consultants nationwide, our SSS Consultants are scheduling a presentation near you! To book an “Intimacy After Cancer” presentation for your support organization in your area, please contact us at [sss@pureromance.com](mailto:sss@pureromance.com).



## Our Expert Bio

Jennifer (Jan) Simpson is a registered nurse, who currently works at the Franklin Square Medical Center as the Clinical Coordinator for Breast Services. Jan is currently pursuing a Master of Liberal Arts degree in Ethics from Johns Hopkins University. She graduated with Honors in 1997 with a degree in Psychology, also from Johns Hopkins University. Jan has worked as an operating room nurse since 1986 and was the Clinical Coordinator for the Plastic & Reconstructive Surgery of the Breast Center at Mercy Medical Center from 2001 to 2003. Jan has also published many articles on breast surgery as well as speaking for such organizations as the Susan G. Komen Foundation. Jan is also a Certified Breast Health Specialist.

We are thrilled to have Jan as our featured “expert.” Her over 30 years of experience as a nurse and her work as a breast health specialist makes her a wonderful addition to Sensuality, Sexuality, Survival.

Pure Romance’s *SSS Program* has been involved with various organizations all over the country, including the Gilda’s Club of Western Pennsylvania, FORCE, the Wellness Community, various hospitals across the country, various Komen walks across the country, various Making Strides Against Breast Cancer walks, and Relay for Life walks spanning from Ohio all the way to Nevada.

On June 24th, Erin Hoschouer, the Director of Health Education for Pure Romance, presented a lecture *Sensuality, Sexuality, Survival: Intimacy After Cancer* at the 2007 American Association of Sexuality Educators, Counselors and Therapists Conference in Charlotte, NC. Educators, counselors and therapists from all over the country were given information on ways to help their patients and clients rediscover their intimate health following cancer diagnosis and treatment.



## Featured Article:

# Tips for Intimacy Following Breast Cancer Treatments

Great news! You'll get your groove back – it may just take some time and some creative thinking! It's true; your partner may be unwilling to initiate sexual contact because of fear of hurting you or making you uncomfortable.

And it's also true that you may not initiate sex with your partner because it's the last thing on your mind. If you are interested in initiating sex, but aren't quite comfortable with your new body just yet, there's nothing wrong with wearing a little lingerie to bed to help you feel more attractive and more in the mood. Here are some tips to help you get started on the path to newfound sexual pleasure.

**1. Act as a Team** -- Instead of combating each other about sexuality, combat the cancer together as a team. Spend some quiet time each day with your partner discussing your course of treatment, the current decisions you're facing, finances, work, etc. Talk the issues through and make joint decisions that are geared to beat the cancer out of your life. The intimacy this battle affords can actually enhance your sexual relationship simply because it's a fight you're fighting together.

**2. Take the Reins** -- Whenever you're ready, initiate sexual contact with your partner in a way in which you feel comfortable. You have to be open to new ideas and be resourceful. If you feel too tired to be intimate at night, try to find another time of day when you have more energy. Whether that means just holding one another or increasing the amount of foreplay you and your partner experience. Try a sensual massage with an unscented lotion or oil to increase your pleasurable experience. This keeps the control in your realm, rather than waiting for your partner to do something.

**3. Consult the Pros** -- In a study of over 600 women, the 15 percent who had had a discussion with their health care provider about the impact of breast cancer on their sexuality were the women with the fewest problems in their sex lives. So, if you need help, ask for it. Bring the subject up at a support group or speak openly to the person on your health care team who seems most relaxed and friendly. There are many resources out there to help you work through your intimacy related issues – a lot of times all you need to do is ask!

Remember that the more you learn about intimacy related issues following breast cancer treatments the more able you will be to handle them. If you would like additional information please contact us at [sss@pureromance.com](mailto:sss@pureromance.com).

## My Story: A Sister's Story

Never in a million years did I ever think I'd be consulting women in regards to sexuality, much less consulting women in this area that are battling breast cancer. When I received notification that I was chosen to participate in the SSS program, I put my head in my hands and wept. I am so honored and proud to be a part of this team. Not just because of being recognized, but also because I've always wanted to make a contribution to breast cancer aside from a monetary donation. Like so many, breast cancer has affected my family. My sister, Teresa, lost her 3-year fight with breast cancer on April 26, 1997. She was only 35 years old.

I remember when she told the family the results of her biopsy. Yes, it was shocking, but we all were confident that it was caught early and she'd be just fine after having a lumpectomy. I mean gosh... she was 32! Way too young for it to be serious. Before a lumpectomy was scheduled, we got word that the growth was too large and Teresa needed to go in for a series of radiation treatment to shrink the size of the tumor first. Huh? Radiation? She was just supposed to go in and get a pinch of tissue removed and be all better. After radiation, and a lumpectomy, we all thought that was it. But we were wrong. The doctors told us that now she needed chemotherapy to make sure they got everything. Just hearing the word chemotherapy made our jaws drop and tears start to swell.

We all stayed positive and Teresa marched forward. She went through treatment and experienced all the horrible side effects that were so common back then like, losing her beautiful long auburn hair, along nausea and vomiting. Her weight fluctuated up and down from being sick to a final weight gain from the medication. But she always had her sense of humor. She would say how wonderful it was not to have to shave her legs anymore!

Teresa went into remission for a short time. During one of her check ups, another lump was found in the same breast and after much consultation, it was decided that her best course of action was to have a mastectomy with reconstruction. She came through surgery just fine and we were all relieved that things went well. It took a while for her to recover since they used her own tissue from her abdomen for reconstruction and when she walked she was hunched over like a little old woman. Soon after her mastectomy, her upper arm started to swell. It got bigger and bigger and bigger. We called the doctors and no one really knew what it was. They told us to massage her arm to keep the blood flowing, and then gave us a sleeve to put on her arm that would expand and release, with a pump. It wasn't until months and months later that we even heard of the word lymphedema. She never let on how painful it was.



## Featured Product: Ex-T-Cee

### Product Features:

- This edible heightener is designed specifically for women.
  - Ex-T-Cee is formulated with a 'pleasure tingle' mint compound, which acts as a cooling stimulant, causing greater sensation and sensitivity to where it's applied.
  - Ex-T-Cee is available in several toe-curling sensation levels, including Original, Crème de Menthe, Orange Creamsicle, and Raspberry.
  - Great for oral favors.
- Recommended heightener for first-time user, women with fair complexions, and women who are ultra sensitive, such as due to chemotherapy treatments.

**Benefits:** Heighteners, such as Ex-T-Cee, are a wonderful way to enhance arousal for many women. Ex-T-Cee should be applied on the genitalia excitement. It can both enhance and stimulate arousal; therefore it will increase blood flow, sensitivity, and sensation, allowing the female attainment of an orgasm.

**Application:** Apply a pea-sized amount to the clitoris to increase sensitivity during the state of escalating arousal.

**Shelf Life:** 1 year

**Price:** \$10.00



During the holiday season of 1996/1997 everything was good. Teresa was running around with her Santa hat on. She loved it because it covered her shiny bald head. She hated wearing her wig – it itched something terrible, she said. It was wonderful seeing everyone happy and together. Teresa took me aside and said she had something to ask me, so we went into the other room to have a private talk, which wasn't uncommon. Teresa was more than a sister to me... she was my best friend. We talked about everything. We sat down and she had told me that she had a long talk with her son, Brandon who at the time was 13 years old. She said they talked about what he wanted to do, if anything should happen to her. His response was that he would like to come and live with me. I laughed and told her that she was crazy...nothing was going to happen to her, and she wasn't going to die. But she insisted that I give her an answer. Of course, I would take care of Brandon if something should happen to her. That was her last wish.

Just after Brandon's 14th birthday, the cancer came back for a third time, and it came back with a vengeance. Teresa was hospitalized. The doctors were not optimistic. They had done all they could do - the cancer was spreading quickly and it was only a matter of time. Teresa told us that she didn't want to die in the hospital so we took her home and made her as comfortable as possible. The family was around her bed and I held her hand as she took her last breath.

There were and still are so many unanswered questions when it comes to breast cancer. Since Teresa's death in 1997, there have been huge strides in research. There are now medications to help with the side effects of nausea and hair loss. There is much more information and knowledge about lymphedema. Support groups are everywhere for individuals as well as family members for cancer patients. There are companies like Pure Romance with a Health Education Department dedicated to helping women and their partners understand the changes that they are going through and providing them with solutions. Going through the SSS certification training, I couldn't help but think to myself, "why couldn't I of known this then"! There are women at virtually every show, whose lives have been affected by cancer in one way or another.

My risk factor for breast cancer is high and since losing my sister, I have become more aware of the risk. Breast Self Exams and Mammograms are a regular part of my life now, as is with my mother and my other 2 sisters, all of whom are healthy and doing fine. Brandon is grown and is living on his own, and we are still close. We will always have a special bond.

There's not a day that goes by that I don't think of Teresa. I know she watches over us and I know she's in a beautiful place in peace where she no longer feels pain or suffers. She'll never be forgotten.

*Angela Lee – SSS Consultant*

*Hearing a personal account of someone going through a similar experience can be very helpful and reassuring. If you would like to share your personal experience with breast cancer please submit your story to [sss@pureromance.com](mailto:sss@pureromance.com).*