Relationships and Intimacy After Cancer

Shannon Solie, MAP LMHC
Agenda

- What to expect after treatment
- Communication techniques
- Treatments
- Intimacy building
Helpful Terminology

➢ **Desire/Libido**: Thoughts, fantasy and feelings that can lead one to seek sexual experiences. Differs person to person. No “normal”.

➢ **Arousal**: Physiological and psychological response to sexual stimuli

➢ **Sexual Satisfaction**: The feeling of being satisfied with a sexual experience. With or without orgasm, organic desire. Can include emotional gratification or physical.
Helpful Terminology

• **Sex:** Either this refers to the biological /physiological characteristics of typically male/female/intersex or
  
  − Sex is an umbrella term for the things we do to cause sexual pleasure (not limited to intercourse)

• **Sexuality:** Sexual interests, attraction to others and capacity to have erotic experiences and responses

• **Intimacy:** Emotional, physical connection with another being
What to expect...

• Sexual Response

• Physical Response

• Emotional Response

• Relationships
Key to a healthy/happy sex life= Willingness to experiment and strong communication.

• Wants, needs, desires, fears, apprehensions...
• Go on a Sex Date
Communication

• Barriers to Communication
  – Emotions/fear
  – Beliefs/Socialization
Treatments

- Medical
- Over the counter
Putting Into Action

- Re-connect
- Maintain simple intimacy
- Re-write
Concluding Thoughts

- Become educated
- Re-write the script
- Set realistic goals
- Seek support