

THE INTIMACY COMFORT Pyramid™ THE 30-DAY BLUEPRINT FOR UNDERSTANDING PAIN DURING INTIMACY DR. FAVOUR STANLEY

UNDERSTAND. HEAL. CONNECT. ENJOY INTIMACY AGAIN.

THE INTIMACY COMFORT Pyramid™

THE 30-DAY BLUEPRINT

for Understanding Pain During Intimacy—Even If You’ve Been Confused, Embarrassed, or Suffering in Silence.



A STEP-BY-STEP SYSTEM TO HELP YOU HEAL, FEEL BETTER & ENJOY INTIMACY AGAIN



Understand the Root Causes of Pain



Heal Your Body with Practical Solutions



Rebuild Confidence & Body Positivity



Rekindle Deep, Joyful Connection

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Chapter 1: The Smile That Hides the Pain

Have you ever smiled at your partner while quietly hoping the moment would end quickly because you were afraid it would hurt again?

If you have, I want you to know something before we go any further.

You are not strange.

You are not weak.

And you are certainly not alone.

I wish someone had sat me down years ago and told me this. It would have saved me from months of worry, embarrassment, and pretending everything was okay when deep down, it wasn't.

One thing I've learned is that many women suffer in silence because they believe they're the only ones going through it. They convince themselves that maybe it's just part of being a woman. Others blame themselves. Some even begin avoiding intimacy altogether because they can't bear another painful experience.

If that's where you are today, I'm glad you picked up this guide.

Let's talk about it honestly.

The Secret Many Women Carry Alone

Growing up, many of us were taught that some topics should never leave the bedroom.

You don't tell your friends.

You don't tell your mother.

You definitely don't tell people at church.

So when pain shows up during intimacy, many women simply keep quiet.

They smile.

They pretend.

They hope it will disappear on its own.

Weeks become months.

Months sometimes become years.

Sound familiar?

I remember speaking with a woman during a community health discussion in Lagos. She said something that has stayed with me ever since.

She smiled and said,

"I thought maybe this was just what marriage felt like. I didn't know something could actually be wrong."

That sentence broke my heart.

Not because she was alone.

But because thousands of women quietly believe the same thing.

Why We Keep Pretending

Let's be honest.

Nobody wants to disappoint the person they love.

Nobody wants to start a difficult conversation.

Nobody wants to feel judged.

So instead of saying,

"I'm hurting."

Many women say,

"I'm just tired today."

Or...

"Maybe another time."

Or they simply stay quiet and hope for the best.

At first, silence feels easier.

But silence has a price.

The problem doesn't become smaller.

The worry becomes bigger.

The Hidden Weight of Shame

Shame is heavy.

It makes you question yourself.

You start wondering:

- "What's wrong with me?"
- "Am I broken?"
- "Will my partner lose interest?"
- "Am I the only woman experiencing this?"

Those thoughts can become exhausting.

Before long, you may find yourself worrying long before intimacy even begins.

Instead of feeling relaxed, your mind is filled with questions.

Instead of looking forward to closeness, you begin expecting discomfort.

That emotional burden matters just as much as the physical discomfort.

It's Not Just About the Pain

Here's something many people never talk about.

Pain during intimacy doesn't stay in one part of your life.

It can quietly affect many others.

It can affect your confidence.

Your relationship.

Your mood.

Even how you see yourself.

I've met women who started avoiding hugs because they were worried a simple hug might lead to expectations they weren't ready for.

Others became anxious whenever their partner showed affection—not because they didn't love them, but because they feared what might happen next.

That doesn't make them bad partners.

It makes them human.

The Dangerous Advice That Keeps Women Stuck

Now here's where things get frustrating.

When women finally decide to look for answers, they're often overwhelmed.

One website says one thing.

A social media influencer says another.

Someone in the comments swears a homemade remedy solved everything.

Another person insists that pain is "completely normal."

Who do you believe?

This confusion often leads women to try random products, home remedies, or advice from strangers without understanding what might actually be contributing to their symptoms.

Some approaches may be harmless. Others may delay getting the right evaluation or even make irritation worse.

That's why this guide isn't about guessing.

It's about understanding.

You Deserve Answers, Not Assumptions

One of the biggest mistakes I see is women assuming they must either:

- ignore the problem, or
- immediately panic.

Neither helps.

Pain during intimacy can happen for many different reasons. Sometimes it's related to irritation, dryness, hormonal changes, muscle tension, infections, medical conditions, emotional stress, or several factors happening together.

The important thing is this:

Pain is information.

It deserves attention.

It deserves curiosity.

And when it's persistent, severe, or accompanied by other concerning symptoms, it deserves proper medical evaluation.

You don't have to diagnose yourself.

You don't have to carry the burden alone.

A Small Exercise I'd Like You to Do

Before reading the next chapter, grab a notebook or open the notes app on your phone.

Write down your answers to these questions.

1. When did I first notice the discomfort?
2. Does it happen every time or only sometimes?
3. What emotions do I usually feel before intimacy?
4. Have I already tried anything to solve it?
5. What worries me the most about this situation?

Don't overthink your answers.

Just write honestly.

This isn't for anyone else.

It's for you.

Please Remember This

If you take only one thing from this chapter, let it be this:

You are not weak because you're hurting.

You are not failing because your body is trying to tell you something.

And you are certainly not alone.

There is a difference between suffering silently and seeking understanding.

Today, you've already taken the first step by choosing understanding.

In the next chapter, we're going to uncover why so many women stay trapped in the same cycle for months—or even years. I'll also introduce **The Intimacy Comfort Pyramid™**, the simple framework that will guide you through the rest of this book and help you make sense of everything you've been experiencing. Once you see the pyramid, many of the pieces that seemed confusing will finally begin to fit together.

Ready for the next chapter?

Chapter 2: Why Everything You've Tried Has Left You Feeling Stuck

I hope you took a few minutes to answer the questions at the end of the last chapter. Those answers are more important than you might think.

Now let's talk about something that often surprises women.

The problem isn't that you're not trying hard enough.

The problem is that you've probably been trying to solve the wrong problem.

I know that's a bold statement, but stay with me.

For years, I believed that if I could just find the "right" cream, the "right" soap, or the "right" advice from someone online, everything would go back to normal. Every time something didn't work, I blamed myself instead of asking a better question.

"What if I don't fully understand what's happening?"

That single question changed everything.

The Endless Cycle of Guessing

Picture this.

You search online late at night because you can't sleep.

One article says it's stress.

Another says it's hormones.

Someone on Facebook says it's an infection.

A TikTok video recommends a product.

A friend tells you to "just relax."

Now you're confused.

So you try one thing this week.

Something else next month.

Then another suggestion after that.

Sound familiar?

The problem with guessing is that every wrong turn steals something from you.

It steals your confidence.

It steals your peace of mind.

Sometimes, it even delays getting the help you really need.

Why Quick Fixes Often Disappoint

We live in a world where everybody promises instant results.

One drink.

One supplement.

One oil.

One miracle remedy.

But our bodies don't work that way.

Pain during intimacy can have many different contributing factors. What helps one woman may not help another because their situations may be completely different.

That's why comparing yourself to someone else's story can leave you frustrated.

Your body has its own story.

The goal is to understand **your** story.

The Questions Most Women Never Ask

Instead of asking,

"What product should I buy?"

Try asking:

- When did this begin?
- Has anything in my health changed recently?
- Does it happen every time or only sometimes?
- Are there other symptoms that come with it?

- Have I spoken honestly with my healthcare provider?
- Have I been forcing myself to ignore what my body is saying?

These questions don't give you a diagnosis.

But they help you stop wandering in the dark.

The Day I Changed My Thinking

I remember talking with a woman who had spent nearly a year trying different home remedies because she was too embarrassed to visit a clinic.

She finally decided to get checked.

After her appointment, she said something I'll never forget.

"I wish I had gone sooner. I spent months treating something I didn't even have."

That conversation reminded me how fear can keep us stuck much longer than the problem itself.

Sometimes the bravest thing you can do is stop guessing.

Let Me Introduce You to the Intimacy Comfort Pyramid™

Everything in this guide is built around one simple idea.

I call it **The Intimacy Comfort Pyramid™**.

Imagine trying to build a house.

Would you start with the roof?

Of course not.

You start with the foundation.

The same is true when trying to understand pain during intimacy.

Many women focus only on the discomfort itself.

But lasting understanding comes from looking at the whole picture.

The pyramid has four levels.

Level One: Physical Health

This is the foundation.

Your body deserves attention.

Persistent pain is never something to simply "push through."

This level encourages you to notice symptoms, understand patterns, and recognize when it's important to seek medical evaluation.

Without a strong foundation, nothing built above it will feel stable.

Level Two: Daily Comfort

The next layer focuses on everyday habits.

Things like personal care routines, possible irritants, hormonal changes, hydration, medications, and lifestyle can all play a role in how comfortable your body feels.

Sometimes small daily changes make a meaningful difference.

Sometimes they reveal that something more needs attention.

Either way, awareness is powerful.

Level Three: Emotional Safety

After experiencing pain more than once, it's natural to begin worrying that it might happen again.

That doesn't mean the pain is "all in your head."

It means your emotions deserve care too.

Feeling anxious or fearful doesn't make you weak.

It makes you human.

This layer is about rebuilding confidence instead of living in constant anticipation.

Level Four: Communication and Connection

At the top of the pyramid is communication.

Many couples genuinely love each other but struggle to talk openly about intimate discomfort.

Silence often creates misunderstanding.

Honest conversations, patience, and mutual respect help create emotional safety while you're seeking answers and support.

Why the Pyramid Matters

Notice something interesting?

The pyramid doesn't begin with products.

It doesn't begin with internet advice.

It doesn't begin with blame.

It begins with understanding.

When you understand what level needs attention, you're much more likely to make informed decisions instead of chasing random solutions.

That is the heart of this guide.

Not fear.

Not shame.

Not guesswork.

Understanding.

Your First Action Step

Take another look at the questions you answered in Chapter One.

Now ask yourself:

Which level of the Intimacy Comfort Pyramid™ do I think deserves the most attention right now?

Maybe you're noticing physical symptoms.

Maybe you've realized you're carrying a lot of fear.

Maybe you and your partner haven't talked honestly in months.

There's no right or wrong answer.

This exercise is simply helping you see your situation more clearly.

And clarity is where real progress begins.

As we move into the next chapter, we're going to start at the very bottom of the pyramid—the foundation. I'll show you why your body often gives quiet signals long before it starts shouting through pain, and how learning to recognize those signals can help you make better decisions about your health. Everything else in this guide rests on that foundation, so don't skip it. It's one of the most important conversations we'll have.

Chapter 3: The Foundation – Your Body Can't Whisper Forever

Now that you understand **The Intimacy Comfort Pyramid™**, let's start where every strong house begins—its foundation.

If you build a house on weak ground, cracks will eventually show.

Our bodies work in a similar way.

When something isn't right, your body rarely starts by shouting.

It whispers first.

A little discomfort here.

A little dryness there.

A strange feeling you haven't noticed before.

Maybe some irritation that comes and goes.

Many of us ignore those whispers because life is busy.

There's work to do.

Children to care for.

Meals to cook.

Bills to pay.

Before you know it, another month has passed.

Then one day, the whisper becomes impossible to ignore.

Your Body Is Not Your Enemy

I wish every woman could hear this.

Your body is not trying to punish you.

It's trying to communicate.

Think about when you accidentally touch a hot pot on the stove.

Pain isn't there to make your day miserable.

It's there to protect you.

The same is true with many types of pain.

Pain is often a signal that deserves attention—not something to simply push through or ignore.

That doesn't automatically tell us the cause, but it tells us something important:

Your body needs you to pay attention.

Stop Calling It "Normal"

One of the saddest things I hear is:

"Maybe this is just how marriage is."

Or...

"Maybe all women go through this."

Let's clear something up.

Occasional discomfort can happen for many reasons, and not every experience means something serious is wrong.

However, **persistent, worsening, or severe pain during intimacy is not something you should simply accept as your normal.**

Your comfort matters.

Your health matters.

You deserve to understand what's happening.

The Body's Early Warning Signs

Before pain becomes a regular problem, your body may give other clues.

These don't automatically point to one specific condition, but they are worth noticing.

For example:

- Persistent dryness
- Burning or stinging sensations
- Itching that doesn't go away
- Unusual discharge
- Bleeding that isn't expected
- Pelvic discomfort outside intimacy

- Pain that keeps returning
- Difficulty relaxing your pelvic muscles
- A noticeable change from what has always been normal for you

None of these signs should be ignored if they continue or concern you.

Instead of guessing, it's wise to discuss them with a qualified healthcare professional.

The Biggest Mistake Women Make

Can I tell you something I've seen over and over again?

Many women wait until the discomfort becomes unbearable before asking for help.

Why?

Because they hope tomorrow will be better.

Then next week.

Then next month.

Sometimes they spend hundreds of thousands of naira on products they found online before spending one hour talking to a healthcare provider.

I understand why.

Fear is powerful.

Embarrassment is real.

But delaying answers often increases worry.

The "Maybe It Will Go Away" Trap

Have you ever told yourself:

"I'll just wait one more week."

Then one week became two.

Then two became six months.

It's easy to fall into that trap.

Life keeps moving.

You get busy.

You adapt.

You tell yourself you're managing.

But adapting isn't always the same as healing.

Listen Without Panicking

Now, I don't want you to become frightened every time you notice something different.

That's not the goal of this guide.

The goal is awareness.

There's a difference between ignoring every signal and panicking over every small change.

Healthy awareness sits in the middle.

It says,

"I'm paying attention. If something doesn't improve or worries me, I'll get it checked."

That's a much healthier place to live.

Your Personal Body Awareness Checklist

I'd like you to complete this exercise honestly.

Take your notebook and answer these questions.

Comfort

- ☐ Does the discomfort happen every time?
- ☐ Only sometimes?
- ☐ Has it become worse over time?

Timing

- ☐ Before intimacy?
- ☐ During intimacy?
- ☐ After intimacy?
- ☐ At other times too?

Other Changes

- ☐ Have I noticed unusual bleeding?

- ☐ Have I noticed unusual discharge?
- ☐ Have I noticed itching or burning?
- ☐ Have I noticed changes after childbirth?
- ☐ Have I noticed changes after menopause?
- ☐ Have I recently started any new medication?

My Emotional Response

- ☐ Do I now feel anxious before intimacy?
- ☐ Am I avoiding intimacy because I'm afraid?
- ☐ Have I stopped talking about this with my partner?

Don't worry if you answered "yes" to several questions.

This checklist isn't diagnosing you.

It's helping you organize your thoughts so you can better understand your experience and have more productive conversations with a healthcare professional if needed.

When Should You Seek Medical Care?

This is one of the most important parts of this chapter.

You should arrange to see a healthcare professional if:

1. The pain keeps coming back.
2. The pain is severe.

3. You notice bleeding that isn't expected.
4. There is unusual discharge, fever, or a bad odor.
5. The pain is affecting your relationship or quality of life.
6. You're simply worried and want answers.

You never need permission to ask questions about your own body.

Seeking help isn't overreacting.

It's taking care of yourself.

And if you ever experience **sudden, severe pelvic pain, heavy bleeding, fever, or symptoms that feel like an emergency**, seek urgent medical care immediately.

My Advice as Your Older Sister

If we were sitting together over a cup of tea, this is what I'd tell you.

Don't be embarrassed by your questions.

Doctors, nurses, and other qualified healthcare professionals talk about these concerns every day.

You are not the first woman to walk into their office with this problem.

And you won't be the last.

The sooner you stop carrying the burden alone, the sooner you can begin replacing fear with understanding.

One Small Step This Week

This week, I want you to do just one thing.

Start paying attention instead of making assumptions.

Notice patterns.

Write them down.

If you've been putting off a medical appointment because of fear or embarrassment, consider making that call.

You don't have to know all the answers before asking for help.

Sometimes the bravest sentence you can say is,

"I've been experiencing pain during intimacy, and I'd like to understand why."

That one sentence could be the beginning of a completely different chapter in your life.

Now that we've built the foundation of **The Intimacy Comfort Pyramid™**, it's time to climb to the second level. In the next chapter, we'll talk about the everyday habits, hormonal changes, and comfort factors that many women overlook. You might be surprised to discover that some small daily routines can make a bigger difference than you ever imagined—and just as importantly, you'll learn when those routines are enough and when they're not.

Chapter 4: The Second Layer – When Comfort Starts to Disappear

By now, you've started paying closer attention to your body instead of brushing off what it's trying to tell you. That's a big step, and I'm proud of you for making it this far.

Now we're climbing to the second level of **The Intimacy Comfort Pyramid™**.

This layer is all about **daily comfort**.

Sometimes, women think pain appears out of nowhere.

But in many cases, little changes begin happening long before the pain becomes noticeable.

These changes don't always point to a serious medical problem. Sometimes they're related to hormones, medications, skin irritation, or everyday habits. Other times, they're signs that it's time to see a healthcare professional.

The important thing is learning how to notice them.

Small Changes Can Add Up

Think about a small leak in your kitchen tap.

At first, it's just one drop.

You barely notice it.

Days later, there's a puddle.

Weeks later, your water bill has gone up.

The leak didn't suddenly become a problem overnight.

It was there all along.

Our bodies can work in a similar way.

Small changes may build gradually until one day you realize intimacy doesn't feel the way it used to.

That's why paying attention early matters.

Hormones: The Quiet Influencers

Hormones affect many parts of a woman's body, including tissues that contribute to comfort during intimacy.

Hormonal changes can happen:

- After childbirth
- While breastfeeding
- Around menopause
- During perimenopause
- With certain medications
- After some medical treatments

These changes can sometimes contribute to dryness or discomfort.

Many women blame themselves without realizing their bodies are simply going through a transition.

Understanding this doesn't replace medical advice, but it helps explain why your experience may have changed.

Everyday Habits That May Affect Comfort

Let's talk about something we don't discuss enough.

Sometimes, our daily routines can irritate sensitive areas without us realizing it.

Examples include:

- Strongly scented soaps
- Harsh body washes
- Certain feminine hygiene products
- Tight clothing that traps heat and moisture
- Staying in wet clothes for long periods
- Skipping lubrication when it's appropriate
- Not drinking enough water throughout the day

Not every woman reacts to these things in the same way.

But if your body is already sensitive, reducing unnecessary irritation may help improve comfort.

If you're unsure which products are appropriate, ask a qualified healthcare professional instead of relying on internet trends.

The Internet Doesn't Know Your Body

I know how tempting it is.

You type one sentence into Google.

Suddenly you're reading hundreds of opinions.

Someone says,

"Use this oil."

Someone else says,

"Never use that oil."

One person recommends vinegar.

Another recommends baking soda.

Before long, you're more confused than when you started.

Here's my advice.

Be careful with homemade remedies or social media trends that promise miracle results.

Just because something worked for one person doesn't mean it's safe or suitable for you.

Your body deserves better than guesswork.

Let's Talk About Lubrication

This is a topic many women avoid because they think using a lubricant means something is wrong.

That simply isn't true.

For some women, especially during certain life stages or while taking certain medications, an appropriate lubricant can improve comfort.

If you're considering using one, choose products designed for intimate use and follow the instructions on the packaging.

If discomfort continues despite using a lubricant, or if you have ongoing pain, it's important to seek medical advice rather than assuming lubrication alone will solve the problem.

Stress Doesn't Stay in Your Mind

Have you noticed that when life becomes overwhelming, your whole body feels different?

Maybe your shoulders become tight.

Your sleep gets worse.

You feel exhausted.

Stress can affect your body in many ways.

While stress isn't the cause of every case of painful intimacy, it can influence how we experience discomfort.

That's why taking care of your emotional wellbeing is part of taking care of your physical health.

We'll explore this much more deeply in the next chapter.

Your Comfort Journal

This simple exercise has helped many women notice patterns they would otherwise miss.

For the next two weeks, write down the following each day.

What to Record

Your Notes

Date

Pain level (0–10)

Before, during, or after
intimacy?

Other symptoms?

Menstrual cycle stage (if
applicable)

New products used?

Mood or stress level

Questions for my healthcare
provider

Don't worry about making it perfect.

The goal isn't to create homework.

The goal is to gather useful information.

Many healthcare professionals appreciate symptom journals because they can make it easier to understand what's been happening over time.

A Few Healthy Comfort Habits

Here are a few simple habits worth building into your routine.

1. Stay hydrated throughout the day.
2. Wear breathable underwear whenever possible.
3. Avoid strongly scented intimate products unless recommended by your healthcare provider.
4. Don't ignore recurring symptoms.
5. Keep your healthcare appointments.
6. Give yourself permission to ask questions.

These habits won't solve every problem.

But they create a healthier foundation for understanding your body.

Stop Comparing Yourself to Other Women

One mistake I see all the time is comparison.

A friend says she never experiences discomfort.

Someone else says she did after childbirth.

Another woman says menopause changed everything.

You start wondering,

"Why is my experience different?"

The answer is simple.

Every woman's body is unique.

Your health history, hormones, medications, childbirth experiences, stress levels, and medical conditions are different from someone else's.

Comparison often creates guilt.

Curiosity creates understanding.

Choose curiosity.

Something I Hope You'll Never Forget

Please don't measure your worth by what your body is experiencing today.

Pain does not make you less feminine.

It does not make you less lovable.

It does not make you a failure as a wife or partner.

It simply means something deserves attention.

And asking for help is one of the strongest things you can do.

As we've climbed the second level of **The Intimacy Comfort Pyramid™**, you've seen how everyday habits and physical comfort play an important role. But there is another layer many women never expect—the one that lives in the mind and heart. In the next chapter, we'll talk about why your body can begin expecting pain after difficult experiences, how fear quietly

changes intimacy, and the gentle steps you can take to rebuild confidence without blaming yourself. That chapter is often where women say everything finally starts to make sense.

Chapter 5: The Third Layer – When Your Mind Starts Preparing for Pain

We've already talked about listening to your body and paying attention to the small changes that can affect your comfort. Those first two levels of **The Intimacy Comfort Pyramid™** give us a strong foundation.

Now we're stepping into a part of this journey that many women misunderstand.

Let me say this right away.

If fear has started creeping into your intimate life, it does not mean the pain is "all in your head."

Your feelings are real.

Your experience is real.

And your body and mind work together more closely than most people realize.

The Night I Couldn't Relax

I remember talking with a woman who said something that many others have quietly admitted too.

She told me,

"Even before my husband touched me, I had already started worrying that it was going to hurt."

Nothing had even happened yet.

But her heart was racing.

Her shoulders were tense.

She couldn't relax.

That conversation helped me understand something important.

Sometimes, after repeated painful experiences, the mind begins preparing for pain before anything even starts.

That isn't weakness.

It's a very human response.

Why Your Brain Tries to Protect You

Think about touching a hot pot by mistake.

The next time you walk past that stove, you're naturally more careful.

Your brain remembers what happened.

It wants to protect you.

The same thing can happen after painful intimacy.

Your brain remembers.

Your body remembers.

Without you even realizing it, you may become tense, anxious, or fearful because you're expecting another painful experience.

This doesn't mean pain is imaginary.

It means your body is trying to protect you based on what it has experienced before.

Fear Can Become Part of the Cycle

Let's go back to our pyramid for a moment.

Imagine this cycle.

Pain happens.

↓

You begin worrying about the next time.

↓

Your body becomes tense.

↓

Relaxing becomes more difficult.

↓

The experience becomes more uncomfortable.

↓

Your fear grows stronger.

Can you see how the cycle feeds itself?

This doesn't happen to everyone, but for many women, repeated painful experiences can create this pattern.

The good news is that once you recognize the pattern, you can begin working toward breaking it—with patience, support, and, when needed, professional guidance.

Please Stop Blaming Yourself

One of the saddest things I hear is,

"Maybe I'm just not trying hard enough."

No, my dear.

This is not about effort.

You cannot force yourself to relax the same way you cannot force yourself to fall asleep.

The more pressure you put on yourself, the harder things often become.

Healing starts with kindness, not criticism.

Speak to yourself the way you would speak to your best friend.

Would you call her broken?

Would you tell her she's failing?

Of course not.

Offer yourself that same compassion.

It's Okay to Say, "I'm Scared"

Many women think admitting fear will make them look weak.

I believe it does the opposite.

It shows honesty.

You don't have to pretend everything is okay.

If you're afraid, say so.

If you're worried, admit it.

Your feelings deserve space.

Sometimes simply saying,

"I'm feeling anxious because I don't want to experience pain again,"

can open the door to understanding and support.

Gentle Ways to Calm Your Mind and Body

There isn't one magic exercise that works for everyone.

But many women find these simple practices helpful in reducing overall stress and helping them feel more present.

1. Breathe Slowly

Before intimacy—or anytime you feel anxious—try this.

Breathe in through your nose for four seconds.

Hold for two seconds.

Breathe out slowly through your mouth for six seconds.

Repeat this five times.

Slow breathing can help calm your body's stress response.

2. Relax Your Muscles

Notice where you're holding tension.

Is it your shoulders?

Your jaw?

Your stomach?

Take a deep breath and gently relax those areas.

Sometimes we carry tension without realizing it.

3. Focus on Safety, Not Performance

Instead of asking,

"What if it hurts?"

Try asking,

"What do I need to feel safe and comfortable today?"

That's a much kinder question.

4. Don't Rush

Intimacy isn't a race.

Take your time.

Communicate.

Pause if something doesn't feel right.

Remember, comfort matters.

Talking to Your Partner

This conversation can feel scary.

I understand.

Many women worry their partner will feel rejected.

But silence often creates more misunderstanding than honesty.

You don't have to make a long speech.

Sometimes a simple sentence is enough.

For example:

"I want us to talk because I care about our relationship. I've been experiencing discomfort, and I'd really appreciate your patience while I figure out what's causing it."

Notice the difference.

You're inviting your partner into the journey instead of shutting them out.

A caring partner may not have all the answers, but they can still offer understanding and support.

When Fear Begins Affecting Daily Life

If anxiety about intimacy starts affecting your sleep, your mood, your relationship, or your daily life, don't keep carrying it alone.

Talking with a qualified healthcare professional can help.

In some situations, they may also recommend speaking with a counselor, psychologist, pelvic floor physical therapist, or another specialist as part of a comprehensive approach to care.

Seeking support is not a sign of failure.

It's part of taking care of your whole self.

Your Confidence Journal

This week, I'd like you to answer these questions.

- What am I most afraid of?
- What would help me feel safer?
- What would I like my partner to understand?
- What questions do I want to ask my healthcare provider?
- What small step can I take this week?

Remember, progress doesn't have to be dramatic.

Sometimes confidence grows one honest conversation at a time.

A Letter From Me to You

If I could sit beside you right now, I'd hold your hand and tell you this.

Please don't let one difficult chapter convince you that your whole story has already been written.

Many women who once felt hopeless eventually found answers.

Some discovered a medical condition that could be treated.

Others learned healthier ways to care for their bodies.

Many found tremendous relief simply because they finally stopped suffering in silence and sought the right help.

Your journey may not look exactly like someone else's.

And that's okay.

The important thing is that you're moving forward instead of standing still.

That is courage.

Now we've reached the top of **The Intimacy Comfort Pyramid™**. In the next chapter, we'll talk about one of the most powerful tools of all—communication. We'll discuss how to talk openly with your partner, prepare for healthcare appointments, ask the right questions, and build a circle of support that helps you feel respected, understood, and empowered. This final level ties everything together, and it's where many women begin to feel truly hopeful again.

Chapter 6: The Top of the Pyramid – Rebuilding Safety, Communication, and Connection

We've come a long way together.

You've learned how to listen to your body instead of ignoring it. You've looked at your daily habits and explored how fear can quietly affect your experience.

Now we've reached the very top of **The Intimacy Comfort Pyramid™**.

This final layer isn't about medicine.

It isn't about products.

It's about something just as important.

Connection.

Because no woman should have to carry this burden alone.

You Don't Have to Pretend Anymore

For many women, pretending becomes a habit.

You smile.

You say you're fine.

You avoid the conversation because you're afraid of hurting your partner's feelings.

But here's the truth.

A loving relationship isn't built on pretending.

It's built on honesty.

Your partner cannot understand what you never tell them.

I know that's easier said than done.

Many women worry that speaking up will create arguments or disappointment.

In reality, silence often creates more distance than the truth ever could.

Choosing the Right Time to Talk

One mistake many couples make is trying to have an important conversation in the middle of an emotional moment.

Instead, choose a calm time.

Maybe after dinner.

Maybe during a quiet evening walk.

Maybe on a Sunday afternoon when there are fewer distractions.

The goal isn't to blame anyone.

The goal is understanding.

You might begin with something as simple as:

"Can we talk about something that's been on my mind? This isn't because I don't love you. It's because I want us to be closer, and I need your support."

Those words can completely change the direction of the conversation.

Speak About Your Experience, Not Their Mistakes

When emotions are high, it's easy to say:

"You don't understand me."

Or...

"You only think about yourself."

Statements like these usually make people defensive.

Instead, try saying:

"I've been feeling worried because intimacy has become uncomfortable for me."

Or...

"I'm trying to understand what's happening with my body, and I'd really appreciate your patience."

Notice the difference.

One creates a fight.

The other opens a conversation.

What If Your Partner Doesn't Understand?

Let's be honest.

Not everyone understands painful intimacy.

Some partners may assume you're rejecting them.

Others may think you're exaggerating because they simply don't know what you're experiencing.

That doesn't automatically mean they don't care.

Sometimes they need education just as much as you do.

If they're willing to listen, consider sharing what you've learned in this guide.

Explain that pain during intimacy can have many possible causes and that you're working toward understanding yours with the help of qualified healthcare professionals.

Sometimes knowledge replaces misunderstanding.

Healthy Relationships Make Room for Boundaries

Here's something I wish every woman believed.

You are allowed to say, "Not today."

You are allowed to pause.

You are allowed to ask for more time.

You are allowed to protect your wellbeing.

Setting a boundary isn't rejecting your partner.

It's respecting yourself.

Healthy intimacy should never depend on fear, pressure, or guilt.

A caring partner will want to understand what you're experiencing and support you in finding answers.

Preparing for Your Healthcare Appointment

Many women finally decide to seek medical advice—and then forget everything they wanted to ask once they arrive.

That's completely normal.

Here's a simple way to prepare.

Before your appointment, write down:

- When the discomfort started.
- Where the pain occurs.
- Whether it happens every time or only sometimes.
- Any other symptoms you've noticed.
- Medications you're taking.
- Major life changes, such as childbirth or menopause.
- Questions you want answered.

Bringing this information can make the conversation more productive.

And don't feel embarrassed.

Healthcare professionals discuss intimate health concerns every day.

Questions Worth Asking

If you're not sure where to begin, here are a few questions you can ask your healthcare provider.

- What might be causing these symptoms?
- Are there tests I should consider?
- What treatment options are available?
- Should I avoid anything while we're figuring this out?
- When should I come back for a follow-up?
- Are there lifestyle changes that may help?
- Should I see another specialist?

Remember, asking questions isn't being difficult.

It's being informed.

When Should You Seek Urgent Medical Care?

While many causes of painful intimacy are not emergencies, some symptoms should never be ignored.

Seek urgent medical attention if you experience:

- Sudden, severe pelvic or abdominal pain.
- Heavy vaginal bleeding that isn't expected.
- Fever with pelvic pain.
- Fainting or feeling like you might faint.
- Severe pain after an injury.

- Symptoms that rapidly become worse.

If something feels seriously wrong, trust your instincts and seek prompt medical care.

Building Your Circle of Support

One of the biggest lies shame tells us is:

"You have to deal with this by yourself."

That's simply not true.

Your support system might include:

- Your partner.
- A trusted friend.
- A sister.
- Your doctor.
- A nurse.
- A counselor or psychologist.
- A pelvic floor physical therapist if recommended.
- A women's health support group.

You don't need a crowd.

You just need people who listen without judging.

Your Seven-Day Confidence Challenge

For the next week, I want you to do one small thing each day.

Day 1

Read through your symptom journal.

Day 2

Write down three questions you want answered.

Day 3

Practice slow breathing for five minutes.

Day 4

Have one honest conversation with someone you trust.

Day 5

Review your daily comfort habits.

Day 6

If needed, schedule a healthcare appointment.

Day 7

Celebrate yourself.

Not because every problem has disappeared.

But because you stopped hiding.

That matters.

What the Intimacy Comfort Pyramid™ Has Taught You

Let's look back at the journey you've taken.

The Foundation reminded you to listen to your body's signals instead of ignoring them.

The Second Layer showed you that everyday habits, hormonal changes, and physical comfort deserve attention.

The Third Layer helped you understand how repeated painful experiences can affect confidence and create fear.

The Top Layer taught you that healing isn't only about your body. It's also about communication, support, and making informed decisions.

Together, these four levels form **The Intimacy Comfort Pyramid™**.

Notice something important.

This isn't a quick fix.

It's a roadmap.

It helps you understand your experience, ask better questions, and know when to seek appropriate care.

That's much more powerful than chasing one miracle product after another.

One Final Conversation Before We Finish

If you've read this far, I want you to know how proud I am of you.

Not because you've found every answer.

But because you've chosen understanding over fear.

You've chosen courage over silence.

You've chosen hope over shame.

That decision alone is life-changing.

In our final chapter, we're going to put everything together into a simple **30-Day Comfort Action Plan**. You'll have a clear roadmap for what to do during your first month—how to track your progress, build healthier habits, prepare for medical care if needed, and continue moving forward with confidence. By the end of that chapter, you won't be wondering, "*What do I do now?*" You'll have a practical plan you can start following the very same day.

Chapter 7: Your 30-Day Comfort Action Plan

We've reached the final chapter of our journey together.

Take a moment and think about where you were when you started reading this guide.

Maybe you felt confused.

Maybe you felt embarrassed.

Maybe you were searching for one magic answer.

Now you know something much more valuable.

You know how to understand your body instead of fighting against it.

You know how to use **The Intimacy Comfort Pyramid™** to look at the whole picture instead of focusing on only one symptom.

Most importantly, you know that you don't have to walk this journey alone.

Now it's time to put everything into action.

Remember, this isn't a race.

Your goal over the next 30 days isn't perfection.

Your goal is progress.

Week 1: Stop Guessing and Start Observing

This week is about becoming curious.

Don't try to fix everything at once.

Instead, pay attention.

Your Goals

- Complete your daily symptom journal.
- Notice patterns without judging yourself.
- Write down any new symptoms or changes.
- Stay hydrated and prioritize rest where possible.
- Avoid introducing unnecessary new intimate products unless advised by a healthcare professional.

Ask yourself every evening:

- How did my body feel today?
- Did anything seem to make me more comfortable?
- Did anything make me feel worse?
- What surprised me today?

Remember...

Observation comes before action.

Week 2: Build Better Comfort Habits

Now that you've gathered information, it's time to strengthen your daily routine.

Focus on simple habits you can actually maintain.

This Week's Checklist

- ✓ Drink enough water.
- ✓ Wear breathable underwear.
- ✓ Avoid strongly scented intimate products if they irritate you.
- ✓ Get enough sleep.
- ✓ Eat balanced meals.
- ✓ Keep recording your symptoms.
- ✓ Practice five minutes of slow breathing each day.

Don't underestimate small improvements.

Little habits repeated every day often create the biggest changes over time.

Week 3: Build Confidence Through Communication

By now you've learned something important.

Silence rarely solves problems.

This week is about opening healthy conversations.

If You Have a Partner

Choose a relaxed moment.

Talk honestly.

Share what you've learned from this guide.

Explain how they can support you.

Remember...

You're asking for understanding, not permission.

If You're Single

This week is still important.

Talk to someone you trust if you're comfortable doing so.

That could be:

- A sister.
- A close friend.
- Your doctor.
- A counselor.
- A women's health professional.

Sometimes saying your worries out loud makes them feel much smaller.

Week 4: Take Your Next Step

This is where everything comes together.

Look back through your journal.

Ask yourself:

- Are my symptoms improving?

- Are they staying the same?
- Are they becoming worse?
- Have I delayed making a medical appointment because of fear?

If you haven't already spoken with a healthcare provider and your symptoms continue, this is an excellent time to arrange an appointment.

Bring your journal with you.

It will help you explain your experience clearly.

Your Personal Comfort Plan

Take a blank page and complete these sentences.

My biggest concern is...

The pattern I've noticed is...

The support I need is...

The questions I want answered are...

My next action is...

Keep this page somewhere safe.

It's your reminder that you have a plan.

Five Mistakes to Avoid

Let's finish by talking about a few common mistakes.

1. Waiting Too Long

Don't spend months hoping the problem will disappear if it's persistent or getting worse.

Seeking help early can make a big difference.

2. Believing Everything Online

The internet contains helpful information.

It also contains myths.

Always be careful about miracle cures or products that promise guaranteed results.

If something sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

3. Ignoring Your Feelings

Your emotional wellbeing matters.

Fear, frustration, and sadness deserve attention too.

Looking after your mental health is part of looking after your overall health.

4. Comparing Yourself to Other Women

Your journey is unique.

Another woman's experience doesn't determine yours.

Stay focused on your own progress.

5. Thinking You Must Handle Everything Alone

You don't.

Support is strength.

Whether that support comes from your partner, your doctor, a trusted friend, or a counselor, you deserve it.

A Few Things I Hope You Never Forget

Before we say goodbye, I want to leave you with a few reminders.

Your body deserves kindness.

Your questions deserve answers.

Your comfort matters.

Your health matters.

Your voice matters.

Please never believe that pain is simply the price you must pay for intimacy.

If something doesn't feel right, listen to your body and seek appropriate medical advice.

There is hope.

There are people who care.

And there are professionals who are trained to help.

A Letter From My Heart to Yours

Dear Beautiful Woman,

Thank you for trusting me enough to read this guide.

I know this may not have been an easy subject.

Many women spend years carrying these worries in silence.

You chose something different.

You chose knowledge.

That takes courage.

I hope this guide has given you more than information.

I hope it has given you confidence.

Confidence to ask questions.

Confidence to speak up.

Confidence to stop blaming yourself.

Confidence to seek the care you deserve.

Please remember that healing looks different for everyone.

Some women find answers quickly.

Others need more time and support.

Neither journey is wrong.

Be patient with yourself.

Celebrate every small step forward.

And whenever fear tries to convince you that you're alone, remember this:

You aren't.

There are countless women who have walked this road before you.

Many of them found answers.

Many of them rebuilt their confidence.

Many of them discovered that the future held far more hope than they imagined.

I believe the same can be true for you.

With warmth and encouragement,

Dr. Favour Stanley

Your Personal Promise

Before you close this guide, make one promise to yourself.

Write your name below.

I, _____, promise that I will stop ignoring my body, stop suffering in silence, and take the next step toward understanding my health. I deserve answers, respect, and compassionate care.

Sign: _____

Date: _____

Keep this page somewhere you can see it.

Every time you look at it, remember the journey you've started.

Not a journey toward perfection.

A journey toward understanding, confidence, and hope.

You've already taken the hardest step.

You began.

A Personal Note

Thank you for allowing me to be part of your journey.

If this guide has helped you better understand your body, then it has achieved its purpose.

Remember, asking questions is not a sign of weakness. Seeking help is not something to be ashamed of. Your health matters, your comfort matters, and you deserve to be heard.

I wish you good health, peace of mind, and confidence as you continue your journey.

With warmth,

Dr. Favour Stanley

What to Do Next

Finishing this guide is only the beginning.

Knowledge becomes powerful when you put it into practice.

Here are your next steps:

✓ Continue Using Your Comfort Journal

Keep tracking your symptoms, questions, and observations. Patterns that aren't obvious today may become clearer over time.

✓ Put the Intimacy Comfort Pyramid™ Into Practice

Whenever you notice discomfort, pause and ask yourself:

- What is my body telling me?
- Have my daily habits changed?
- Am I carrying fear or anxiety into intimacy?
- Have I communicated openly with my partner?
- Is it time to seek medical advice?

✓ Schedule a Healthcare Appointment If Needed

If your pain is persistent, severe, worsening, or affecting your quality of life, don't delay seeking professional medical evaluation.

Bring your symptom journal with you. It can help your healthcare provider better understand your experience.

✓ Keep Learning

Women's health is a lifelong journey.

Continue learning from reliable healthcare professionals and trusted medical organizations. Be cautious of miracle cures and unverified health advice shared on social media.

✓ Share This Guide

If you know another woman who is quietly struggling with pain during intimacy, consider sharing this guide with her.

Sometimes the greatest gift we can give another woman is the reminder that she isn't alone.

Remember This

The goal isn't perfection.

The goal is understanding.

Small steps, taken consistently, often lead to the greatest change.

Thank you for reading.

I wish you strength, confidence, and good health on your journey ahead.

