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Q: How did you become interested in teaching?

A: It was a career goal of mine since grammar school. I had excellent role models and I looked at my teachers with a sense of awe. They were warm and considerate and I wanted to be like them. I think having a positive education had a lot to do with my decision to teach.

Q: Why did you choose to teach human sexuality?

A: Frequently, we go into areas which we want to know more about. The subject of sex education fascinated me, and I knew I would be much more effective teaching something that I was interested in. I discovered that learning more about human sexuality is really learning more about yourself. It affects every aspect of your life. It's a topic that will be valuable to my students both now and in the future.

Q: In what way?

A: Estimates show that 50% of all couples will experience sexually-related problems. The Masters and Johnson study indicates that one of the primary causes of these problems is ignorance. By teaching students about human sexuality and dispelling the myths commonly associated with it, we are minimizing the risk that those students will experience problems in their own relationships.

Q: What is the most challenging aspect of your job?

A: Trying to create a daily classroom environment that motivates students to be there and to learn. Students constantly challenge me by asking terrific questions. Their curiosity and interest demands that I stay on top of current developments in the field.

Q: At the time you received your specialized training, you were the youngest sex therapist in the nation. What effect did that have on your teaching career?

A: I knew as a young blonde female—stereotypically looked upon with skepticism—that I needed to be well prepared and know as much about the subject as possible. In the beginning, I read voraciously every night. I would spend four to five hours in preparation for my classes. After the first semester, I became more comfortable and felt more confident about teaching. I began to realize it was okay to say, "I don't know, but I can find out for you."

Q: What job opportunities are available to someone who chooses to pursue a career in the field of human sexuality?

A: The opportunities go as far as your imagination and interests will carry you. Family planning agencies offer jobs in sex education and counseling. There are opportunities in the communities for health educators, and sometimes industries hire health consultants. Counseling centers offer jobs in specialized counseling, sex therapy, hypnosis, and assertiveness training. There are several options a person could choose from.

Q: What advice would you offer someone considering such a career?

A: Because there are no universities in California that offer a B.A. or B.S. degree in human sexuality, a person who chooses to remain in the state must put forth the extra effort to become a competent, qualified professional. I would advise a person who is serious about choosing such a career, to pursue advanced training at an institute that offer masters' and Ph.D. degrees in human sexuality. I would also recommend self studies, internships, and membership in related national organizations.

Q: What rewards can a career in human sexuality offer?

A: I get a lot of personal satisfaction out of knowing that what I teach my students is relevant. They will use that information for the rest of their lives. In my profession, I see so much pain; people are hurting inside. It makes me feel good to think that I can have a positive impact on their lives by making them aware that there *are* solutions.