

## Opening Lines

*"I regarded my doctor in a new light when he asked about the most precious part of my life. He became a human being"*

Julie

Here are some starter suggestions that may prove useful — though every practitioner will probably want to develop their own.

### **Opening the Door**

To understand what's going on for you and help you, I'd like to ask direct questions about your sex life... is that OK? If there are any questions that you don't feel comfortable with, just let me know.

### **Giving permission**

It's fine to talk about any worries you have.

Everything you tell me is confidential.\*.

I may want to pass you on to a consultant/specialist, but I will ask your permission first.

### **Asking not Assuming**

Is your partner/do you like people who are... male or female? How is it going?

Although I know you're not partnered, you may still have a sex life — is that going well?

Are you finding you're able to continue your sex life, if you have one, after the operation/since you've been ill?

It's fine if you don't have a sex life, but if there's anything you want to discuss regarding that please feel free.

### **Reassuring**

Lots of my clients do have sexual questions, so I often mention the issue.

Some people with a condition like yours find it gets in the way of intimacy. Are you finding that?

There are lots of solutions to sexual problems. I'd like to refer you to a specialist.

### **Thanking the client**

Thank you for telling me that. It helps me to see options to explore with you on how to move forward.

It's really fine to mention your intimate/personal/marital/confidential/ private life to me whenever you want to in the future.

Sex may or may not be a concern for you, but I want you to know that I'm happy to talk with you about this kind of thing at any time.

\* Health professionals may need to breach confidentiality if what the client confides contravenes the law.