

Creating a Healthy Sexual Relationship



What is a healthy sexual relationship? We often speak of our “sex life” as though it were separate from the rest of our lives, as though it were something that could somehow be fixed and if we could finally get it right then we’d live happily ever after. But sexuality cannot be considered in isolation, it cannot be reduced to some sort of goal achievable by the right technique, nor can it serve as a remedy for what isn’t working in our lives. If we are not feeling close to our partner, then no amount of sexual skill, knowledge or expertise will bridge the gap. The quality that distinguishes a healthy sexual relationship is intimacy – knowing one another deeply, respecting one another’s strengths and having compassion for one another’s weaknesses. The love that develops from such a feeling of closeness and mutual respect is the cornerstone of a healthy sexual relationship.

What is the key to creating a healthy sexual relationship?

Communication is the key – communication about feelings, fears, insecurities, joys, disappointments, expectations, likes and dislikes, whatever each partner needs to share. Discussions about sexuality can be quite difficult for many people. The majority of us have not been brought up to talk about our sexuality freely, so to even begin to identify what our feelings and sexual interests are is a major undertaking. Some of us may have been raised to feel ashamed of our sexual needs, to feel that there is something wrong or dirty about them, rather than seeing this as a healthy and natural expression of our humanness.

Many women feel that their partner should know what they need sexually, and that if they express their desires and preferences directly, it will somehow take the romance out

of their relationship. However, the opposite is actually the case. Keeping secrets from your spouse is a barrier to intimacy, not an enhancement. How can a man feel close to a woman if he doesn’t know how she feels or what she wants?

How do I feel at this moment? How do I say what I want, what I don’t want? What if I want to make love and he or she doesn’t? What if he or she interprets my not wanting sex as a sign of rejection? These and many other questions claim our attention in a sexual situation, even in the company of a partner with whom we’ve had a long term relationship. It takes tremendous courage and love to move through our inhibitions and conditioning to speak the truth of how we feel. It also takes tremendous courage and love to listen to our partner express feelings that may be difficult for us to hear. But such expression leads to greater intimacy and deeper trust which, in turn, strengthens and enhances a couple’s sexual relationship.



What is the best way to communicate my sexual needs and desires to my partner?

First of all, you need to be in tune with one another. One of you may have had an