

Sex in Marriage

The process of discovering “mutual fulfillment” and “mutual pleasure” is a key aspect of setting couples up for great sexual intimacy in marriage. In most cases, counseling individuals or couples with sexual difficulties is short-term with a very high success rate.

Action Steps

1. *Seek Mutual Fulfillment*

- Husbands and wives must consistently practice the concept of mutuality—mutual respect and mutual responsibility—in their sexual relationship. When there is a spirit of mutuality, passion will be expressed, sexual freedom discovered, and true “oneness” fulfilled.
- Sexually speaking, men and women are different. Women function on two tracks—the emotional track and the physical track. For a woman to be sexually aroused, these two tracks must intersect.
- Essentially men function on one track or they have the emotional and physical reversed. This means that when physically aroused, men will almost always be emotionally ready to have sex. It is also true that (in general) women open up sexually when they feel connected with their husband, while men connect emotionally and open up through sex and physical touch.
- Because of these differences, a husband must start the process of discovering mutual sexual fulfillment by connecting with his wife. A husband’s love, adoration, and connection will help ignite his wife’s sexual passion. He feels loved by her positive response to his advances and they both end up fulfilled.
- A woman’s responsibility is to receive her husband’s affirmation and lead by invitation, as did the bride in the Song of Solomon. For a woman to do this, she has to believe she is worthy and has a right to be sexual. She has to know that her body was designed for her sexual satisfaction.
- When the husband connects lovingly with his wife and the wife embraces her sexuality and shares it with her husband, a platform for mutual fulfillment is created.

2. *Seek Mutual Pleasure*

- To experience long-lasting passion in marriage, couples must focus their sexual times together on delighting in each other’s body. Arousal, intercourse, and orgasm do not measure sexual satisfaction, but result when pleasure is the focus.
- If pleasure is the sole focus of sex in marriage, instead of marital intimacy or mutual happiness, the couple misses the mark.
- The couple has to accept their differences as a man and a woman—the husband’s more predictable constancy and the ever-changing complexity of the woman. Then sex will be more interesting, less goal-oriented, less pressure-filled, and more deeply satisfying.
- Western culture glorifies spontaneity. However, for most couples, the anticipation of planned sexual times builds quality, and the secure scheduling of those times increases quantity. Put simply, setting aside specific times for pleasure means more great sex.
- True passion and great sex do not just happen. Yet by affirming God’s design and pursuing mutual pleasure and sexual fulfillment, couples will discover the sexual satisfaction God intended for them in marriage.
- Trying the following “true” aphrodisiacs will add some spice:
 1. *Show Some Heart*: Noted author Ingrid Trobisch says, “The greatest erogenous zone in a woman’s body is her heart.”⁷ We think this should be true of women and men alike. Sex was never meant to be a single act of expression or feeling. On the contrary, gentleness, understanding, acts of kindness, and self-sacrifice all combine to become the building blocks of sexual satisfaction. Sex is about joining with your partner, as God designed, for warmth, intimacy, and bonding. Study Song of Solomon 7:10–13; Proverbs 5:15–19; 1 Corinthians 7:3–5; Hebrews 13:4.
 2. *Take Some Time*: African writer Ernestine Banyolak illustrates beautifully the concept of time in lovemaking. Husbands and wives must take the time—not just during sex—to show their spouse they care and love him or her.
 3. *The Lost Art of Touch*: Most sex therapists agree that meaningful touching is the gateway to helping couples bond emotionally and physically. Unfortunately, after the

marriage vows, many forget or don't take time to simply touch one another—give back rubs, hold hands, kiss, hug, and caress. These acts, if remembered often, will serve to draw you closer to enhance intimacy.

4. *Communication*: Great lovers are great communicators. Good sex speaks clearly and gently about caring for, accepting, and valuing your spouse. Be sure to express your heartfelt needs and feelings. Openly share your love before, during, and after lovemaking.
- God made us sexual beings and has placed within us the capacity to enjoy a healthy, physical bonding relationship. He doesn't prevent it—we do!
 - When expressed as God desires, sex can be one of the most romantic and loving experiences a husband and wife can share.

Biblical Insights

The husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband. The wife's body does not belong to her alone but also to her husband. In the same way, the husband's body does not belong to him alone but also to his wife. Do not deprive each other except by mutual consent and for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer. Then come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.
1 Corinthians 7:3–5 NIV