

Dynamic Sex: Unlocking the Secret to Love

“A fulfilling love life. How can I have one? How can I get the most out of sex?” University students worldwide ask these questions. Why? Because both pleasure and emotional fulfillment are important facets of sex.

Sex is often on our minds. According to two psychologists at the universities of Vermont and South Carolina, 95% of people think about sex at least once each day.^{1} You might wonder, “You mean that 5% of the people don’t?”

One way not to have a dynamic sex life is to concentrate solely on technique. There is certainly nothing wrong with learning sexual technique—especially the basics—but technique by itself is not the answer.

A good relationship is important for good sex. Psychiatrist and bestselling author Anthony Pietropinto and coauthor Jacqueline Simenauer write, “When emotional issues involving anger or a need to control are encountered on the road to sexual fulfillment, the journey is interrupted until these conflicts are resolved.”^{2}

Many sex therapists agree that great technique does not guarantee great sex. They emphasize that the qualities that contribute to a successful sex life are the same ones that contribute to a successful interpersonal relationship. Qualities like love, commitment and communication.

Consider love. As popular speaker and author Josh McDowell points out, those romantic words, “I love you,” can be interpreted several different ways. One meaning is “I love you if—if you go out with me...if you are lighthearted...if you stay committed to me...if you sleep with me.” This type of love is given on the basis of what the other person does. Another

meaning is "I love you because—because you are attractive...strong...intelligent." This type of love is given on the basis of what the other person is. Both types of love must be earned.

There is nothing wrong with wanting to be loved for what you are, but problems can arise with having "if" or "because of" love as the basis of a relationship. Jealousy can set in when someone who is more attractive or more intelligent appears and the partner's attention shifts to the newcomer. People who know they are loved only for their strong points may be afraid to admit any weaknesses to their partners. This dishonesty can affect the relationship.

THE BEST LOVE. The best kind of love is unconditional. This love says, "I love you, period. I love you even if someone better looking comes along, even with your faults and even if you change. I place your needs above my own."

One young couple was engaged to be married. Their popularity, intelligence, good looks and athletic success made their future together seem bright. Then the young woman was in a skiing accident that left her paralyzed for life. Her fianc deserted her.

Portrayed in the popular film, "The Other Side of the Mountain," this true story was certainly complex. But was his love for her "love, period"? Or was it love "if" or love "because of"? Unconditional love (or "less-conditional," because none of us is perfect) is an essential building block for a lasting relationship.

You can probably see how unconditional love can help a sexual relationship in a marriage. In order for sex to be most fulfilling, it should be experienced in an atmosphere of caring and acceptance. Sex, viewed in this manner, becomes not a self-centered performance but a significant expression of mutual love.

MUTUAL COMMITMENT. Another quality necessary for a strong relationship and dynamic sex is commitment. If two people are completely committed to each other, their relationship is strengthened. Without mutual commitment, neither will be able to have the maximum confidence that the relationship is secure. The fear may exist that, should they encounter a trial, the other may not be there for support. This can erode their bond.

Total, permanent commitment is important in sex, too. It brings security to each partner. It frees them from feeling they have to strive to keep from losing the other and releases them to enjoy one another. It can be an important result of and expression of unconditional love. Commitment helps to breed satisfaction.

COMMUNICATION. A third quality essential for a strong relationship and dynamic sex is communication. Even if partners have mutual love and commitment, they need to communicate this to each other by what they say and do. If a problem arises, they need to talk it out and forgive rather than give each other the silent treatment and stew in their juices. As one sociology professor expressed it, "Sexual foreplay involves the 'round-the-clock relationship." Communication affects your total life; your total life affects sex. Couples need to communicate about their hopes, dreams, fears and hurts as well as the daily details of life in order for the relationship to flourish.

Sex is a form of communication. You can bet that if partners are harboring resentment or not communicating appropriately, it shows in their sex life. Psychologists, sex researchers and textbook authors Albert Richard Allgeier and Elizabeth Rice Allgeier note that "a substantial number of sexual problems could be resolved if people felt free to communicate with their sexual partners...about their sexual feelings..."[\[3\]](#)

So, how can you have a dynamic sex life? By developing the

same qualities that contribute to a strong relationship: unconditional love, total and permanent commitment and clear, meaningful communication. These qualities combine to help produce a maximum oneness and bring the greatest pleasure.

To this point we've been saying that sex is designed to work best within a happy marriage. "But," you ask, "what about premarital sex?" This is, of course, a very controversial topic. While wanting to convey respect for those who differ, it's best that couples wait until marriage before having sexual relations. Why? Consider three reasons.

WHY WAIT? First, there is a practical reason for waiting. Premarital sex can detract from a strong relationship and a dynamic sex life. All too often, premarital sex ends up a self-seeking, self-gratifying experience. After intercourse, one partner might be saying "I love you" while the other is thinking "I love it."

Very often premarital sex occurs in the absence of total and permanent commitment. This can bring insecurity into the relationship. Both short-and long-range problems can result, especially with the breakdown in trust. For instance, while the couple is unmarried, there can always be the nagging thought, "If s/he's done it with me, whom else have they slept with?" After they marry, one might think, "If that person was willing to break a standard with me before we married, how do I know they won't now that we are married?" Doubt and suspicion can chip away at their relationship.

POOR COMMUNICATION, POOR SEX. Premarital sex can also inhibit communication. Each might wonder, "How do I compare with my lover's other partners? Does s/he tell them how I perform in bed?" Or perhaps they think, "Should I be totally honest and vulnerable and share my heart with this person when I don't know if they'll be around tomorrow? Can I entrust all of me to them if I don't have all of them for me? There will be part of me emotionally that I'll hold back." Each becomes less open;

communication dwindles. And poor communication makes for poor sex. Bad feelings result, communication deteriorates and so does the relationship. In short, premarital sex can put people at a disadvantage because it can lessen their chances to experience maximum oneness and pleasure.

One young woman at Arizona State University expressed it like this: "I understand what you're saying about unity or oneness. I've had several premarital sexual experiences with different men. After each one, I've felt like I've left a part of myself with that person emotionally. What you're saying is that it makes sense for a person to save themselves so they can give themselves completely to their spouse."

There is a second reason for waiting: None of the arguments for premarital sex are strong enough. Of course, it's always easy to rationalize in the heat of passion and say it's right. But that is why it is important to decide beforehand—to think with your brain instead of your glands. Consider several common arguments.[{4}](#)

The Statistical Argument: "Everyone else is doing it." Oh, no, they're not! Some studies have shown high statistics, but never one that says 100%. Besides, even if "everyone else" were doing it, that is a lousy reason for doing anything. Suppose 90% of your friends developed ulcers. Would you try to emulate them? Should you? This is not to equate sex with sickness. The point is that just because "everyone else is doing it" doesn't make it advisable or right. You need a better reason.

The Biological Argument: "Sex is a biological need, like the drive for food, air and water. When I have the impulse, it needs to be satisfied." You can't live without food, air or water. Believe it or not, you can live without sex. (It's been documented.)

The Contraceptive Argument: "Modern contraceptives have

removed the fear of pregnancy.” Don’t kid yourself. There’s always a chance of pregnancy. No contraceptive is 100% foolproof. Even many marital pregnancies are unintended. A lot of married couples have had “little surprises.”

Even with all the modern contraceptives, there are one million teenage pregnancies in the U.S. each year.[{5}](#) And if one chooses abortion as a “solution,” there can still be emotional scarring and, for many people, a guilt burden. Incidentally an estimated 55 million people in the U.S.—about one in five—have a sexually transmitted disease (STD). Each year there are twelve million new STD infections in the U.S.[{6}](#)—an average of over 20 new cases every minute.

HIV, the deadly virus that causes AIDS, has focused world attention on sexual risks. About 6,000 people around the globe become infected with HIV daily.[{7}](#) In the U.S., AIDS is the leading killer of people ages 25 to 44, according to the Centers for Disease Control.[{8}](#) So-called “safe sex” is not really safe at all. Condoms can slip, break and leak.[{9}](#) Johns Hopkins University reports research on HIV transmission from infected men to uninfected women in Brazil. The study took pains to exclude women at high risk of contracting HIV from sources other than their own infected sex partners. Of women who said their partners always used condoms during vaginal intercourse, 23% became HIV-positive.[{10}](#)

The Hedonistic Argument: “But it feels so good when I do it—and afterward, too!” The question is, “How long after?” What feels good for a few seconds may leave you feeling miserable for years. Self-fulfillment is hard to come by without self-respect. Also, don’t forget the other person. Sometimes one partner’s pleasure is another partner’s misery. How would you like being used as nothing more than someone else’s pleasure machine?

Basketball superstar Magic Johnson shocked much of the world when he announced he was HIV-positive. Now married and an

advocate for premarital abstinence, Johnson recalls that his former sexploits—a parade of one-night stands—left him empty: “I was the loneliest guy on the face of the earth...I didn’t have anybody to share with who loved me for me. For Earvin (his given name, i.e., his real self), not for Magic (the sports legend).”[\[11\]](#)

The Experiential Argument: “Practice makes perfect and I do want to please my partner when I do marry.” As previously mentioned, communication and commitment—not just technique—are keys to dynamic sex. Why not learn with your own spouse—together—instead of on someone else’s wife or sister or husband or brother? Remember, too, that good sexual adjustment takes time, love and understanding.

The Compatibility Argument: “We need to experiment to see if we’re sexually compatible, especially since marriage is such a big step.” Some express it like this: “You try on a pair of shoes before you buy them!” The “try-before-you-buy” idea breaks down because the human plumbing system is very flexible and almost always works. Again, premarital sex can erode trust and communication. It’s wiser to test your compatibility as persons. Even happily married couples often need several years to adjust sexually to each other.

Besides, sex can cloud the issue. Sex is not the key to love. Love is the key to sex. Couples who approach marriage thinking that “We’re in love so it’s OK to have sex” or “We’ll use sex to determine if we’re in love” may be sorely disappointed. They may discover that what they thought was love is only charged-up sex sensations. Waiting until marriage does not guarantee that you’ll be emotionally compatible, but it does help create a less confusing environment in which to find out before you take the step of a marriage commitment.

The Marital Argument: “If we’re really in love and plan to get married, why all the fuss over the license and date?” Plans don’t always end up in reality. (Chances are you know

someone—perhaps yourself—who suffered a broken engagement.) The public declaration at a wedding can be an important evidence of commitment. Why? It takes a certain level of conviction to be able to state a commitment publicly. Affirming marriage vows in public helps give each partner greater assurance that each really means it. It can also act as a deterrent to future departure. The desire not to be publicly perceived as a promise-breaker can help dissuade partners from seeking supposed “greener grass.” Of course a wedding is no guarantee one won’t leave in the future, but it can be a preventive.

Third, there is a moral reason for waiting. According to biblical perspective, God clearly says to wait.[{12}](#) You might be thinking, “See, I told you God didn’t want me to have any fun.” Many people think this initially, then they realize that the reason God, as a loving parent, gives negative commands is for our own good. He wants us to experience something better!

Waiting until marriage can help you both have the confidence, security, trust and self-respect that a solid relationship needs. “I really like what you said about waiting,” said a recently married young woman after a lecture at Sydney University in Australia. “My fianc and I had to make the decision and we decided to wait.” (Each had been sexually active in other previous relationships.) “With all the other tensions and stress of engagement, sex would have been just another worry. Waiting till our marriage before we had sex was the best decision we ever made.”

THE GREATEST AID. One final concept that is perhaps the greatest aid to fulfilling sex concerns relating as a total person. Human lives have three dimensions: Physical, mental and spiritual. If communication on any of these levels in a marriage is missing, the relationship is incomplete.

Some are surprised to learn that sex and spirituality can mix well. A highly-acclaimed University of Chicago study of sex in

America found that among women, conservative Protestants were those most likely to report they always had an orgasm during intercourse. While that finding does not prove causation, the high correlation between spiritual commitment and sexual pleasure prompted the researchers to note that the image of Christians as sexually repressed may be a myth.[{13}](#)

Certainly biblical writers support a healthy view of sexuality. For example the Hebrew Song of Solomon, a beautiful and passionate love story, has been called one of the best sex manuals ever written.

Consider this perspective: Relating on a spiritual level centers around the most unique person of history, Jesus of Nazareth. Evidence backs up His claim to be God[{14}](#) and as God what He offers can affect everyone in a personal way, including the area of sex.

One first century follower of Jesus described the quality of love He offers: "Love is patient, love is kind, and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered...bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails..."[{15}](#) What man or woman would not want to love or be loved like that?

THE POWER SOURCE. During His time on earth, Christ explained that everyone is born physically alive but spiritually dead. In order to properly relate on a spiritual level, He said, one must be spiritually reborn.[{16}](#) He later rose physically from the dead to make this new life possible. Jesus offers a life that has power. Power for living, power to love others less conditionally, power for self-control in one's sex life. Even after having experimented with premarital sex, one can find in God the strength to stop, to resist future temptation and to wait for one's life partner.

Jesus also offers forgiveness from every wrong—no matter what—that we’ve ever done because He died on the cross in our place, bearing the punishment we deserved. Anyone can be completely forgiven if he or she will come to Christ. God can cleanse a person’s mind of all past guilt. He can restore the freedom of mutual love and trust in a relationship.

All you need to do to begin this spiritual journey is simply to believe that Christ died for you, ask for and accept the forgiveness He offers, and invite the living Christ into your life. It’s saying in faith, “Jesus Christ, I need You. Thanks for dying for me. I open the door of my life and receive You as my Savior. Give me the fulfilling life You promised.”

Christ’s entry into your life will enable you to begin living with an added spiritual dimension and to have eternal life.[{17}](#) As you grow in your new relationship with Him, you’ll find your attitudes and actions changing and becoming more fulfilling. Life certainly won’t become perfect. There will still be struggles and discouragements, but you’ll have a new Friend to help you through. The maturing Christian experiences the most challenging and rewarding life possible.

Two marriage partners having growing relationships with God will grow closer to each other: spirit to spirit, mind to mind, body to body. Their love, commitment and communication will become increasingly dynamic, and so will their sex.

Notes

1. Kathleen Kelleher, “Entertaining Fantasies? Don’t Worry, Everyone’s Doing It,” Los Angeles Times, August 15, 1995, E1. She cites Harold Leitenberg of the University of Vermont and Kris Henning, “now at the University of South Carolina Medical School.”

2. Anthony Pietropinto, M.D. and Jacqueline Simenauer, *Not Tonight, Dear*, New York: Doubleday, 1990, p. 79.

3. Albert Richard Allgeier, Ph.D. and Elizabeth Rice Allgeier, Ph.D., *Sexual Interactions*, Fourth Edition, Lexington (MA): D.C. Heath and Company, 1995, p.236.
4. Most categories and names for these arguments are taken from Jon Buell, "Why Wait Till Marriage?" (lecture outline) and Jim Williams, "The Case for Premarital Chastity" (cassette tape), both produced by Probe Ministries International, Dallas, TX.
5. Barbara Dafoe Whitehead, "The Failure of Sex Education," *The Atlantic Monthly* 274:4, October 1994, p. 73.
6. Sandy Rover, "United We Stand: The U.S. Isn't Alone in Its Ignorance About Sexually Transmitted Diseases," *Los Angeles Times*, October 10, 1995, E3. Rover cites as source Peggy Clarke, president of the American Social Health Association.
7. "Speaking Of: World Health," *Los Angeles Times*, May 2, 1995, H2; citing "The World Health Report, 1995 – Bridging the Gaps."
8. Bettijane Levine, "The Changing Face of AIDS," *Los Angeles Times*, June 16, 1995, E1.
9. For documentation on condom risks, see the references in Rusty Wright, "Safe Sex?", *Connecticut Medicine* 59:5, May 1995, pp. 295-298; reprinted from Lambda Chi Alpha Fraternity's *Cross and Crescent* 81:4, Winter 1994-95, pp. 19-21.
10. Mark D.C. Guimaraes, et al., "HIV Infection among Female Partners of Seropositive Men in Brazil," *American Journal of Epidemiology* 142:5, 1995, pp. 538-547.
11. Bruce Newman, "The Business of Being Magic Johnson," *Los Angeles Times Magazine*, September 10, 1995, p. 35.
12. I Corinthians 6:18, I Thessalonians 4:3.

13. Robert T. Michael, et al., *Sex in America: A Definitive Survey*, Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1994, pp. 127-130.

14. Josh McDowell and Bill Wilson (ed.), *A Ready Defense*, San Bernardino (CA): Here's Life Publishers, 1990, pp. 187-267.

15. I Corinthians 13:4-8, New American Standard Bible.

16. John 3:1-16.

17. I John 5:11-13.

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