

CONNECTING TO YOUR SEXUAL SELF

Do you feel satisfied and connected to your sexual self? Are you bonding to your partner in a deeply intimate physical way? Do you have a passion-filled life that includes connection, creativity, self-nurturance and love? Are you getting your sexual needs met on a regular basis, whether you are with or without a partner? Sex is important AND let me say upfront... it is not my job in this column to judge, regulate or put rules around morality- that is up to you and your belief system. However, as a Life Coach, I assist others in discovering how to achieve the most fulfilling life possible while maintaining equilibrium. When thinking about life balance, the physical, sexual, sensual needs are part of that formula.

As humans, physical intimacy is not only needed, but critical for survival. The need to be touched, caressed and desired is real, and it is essential to be aware of the sexual part of yourself that is good, natural and powerful. Your sensuality is given the chance to come alive when you are in your body while allowing your emotions to be present. By understanding this part of yourself, you can tap into your own passions and desires as well as channel your sexual energy - whether it's having sex to deepen the connection with your partner; to procreate and have children; or to give birth to a new way of living or a creative project.

Being in charge of your sexual self gives you freedom and independence, especially when you realize you are in control of your decisions and what is right for you. Most pleasure for women takes place above the waist, as we are highly emotional creatures, so it is important to be intellectually turned on. Physical cravings are often dictated by factors such as body image, mental and emotional stability, safety and trust in your partner, balanced hormones, a stress-free life and fulfillment in other existing areas. Making healthy choices not only creates physical pleasure and passion, but is also a form of empowerment, self-expression, imagination, and, more importantly, can deepen the spiritual intimacy not only with your partner but also yourself.

One of the biggest problems I have observed regarding sex revolves around a person's self-worth. Too many times, I see people who give their power away sexually by not expressing their true desires, don't have the confidence to ask for what they really want, compromise themselves for the sake of keeping a relationship that is not right for them rather than be alone, have completely shut down their sexual selves, or use sex to feel validated, powerful or self-important. Perhaps past messages about sex such as "sex is bad" "good girls don't enjoy sex" or "having sex outside of marriage or a committed relationship is sleazy" add to the lack of worth. However, re-creating a strong self-esteem will give you sexual freedom and allow your passion to easily flow.

HERE ARE SOME WAYS TO RE-BUILD A ROBUST SEXUAL SELF-ESTEEM:

understand what you really want and desire both sexually and in other areas of life
discover as many of your passions as possible
deepen your understanding of your sensual self by tapping into your 5 senses of smell, taste, sight, hearing and feeling
choose a healthy lifestyle in order to be your physical best
make eye contact, smile and exude confidence
build a safe and trusting relationship where sex can flourish
learn what you do not know and are curious about
become an expert at saying no and creating boundaries
express yourself with powerful communication skills and actions
foster self-confidence by feeling as good about your inner self as you do your outer self
follow your urges and be playfully spontaneous. Make love... A LOT
strengthen your spiritual connection
value a richly purposeful life with or without a partner

You have the right to a fantastic sex life. If you are currently satisfied, keep the flames burning. If not, and you desire sexual happiness, then re-gain your sexual confidence by putting the focus on yourself first. Sex can be an area that can either build you up or break you down... get to know your sensual self and the empowerment that exists within.

QUESTIONS TO PROVOKE THOUGHT ABOUT YOUR SENSUAL & SEXUAL SELF:

1. By answering the following questions, learn about your sensual self and sexual needs:
 Are you satisfied with your sex life? Your partner? What is the distinction between feeling good and being fulfilled both sexually and generally?
 Are you using sex to feel better about yourself and build a false sense of security or to be expressive and create a connection?
 What are your beliefs about sex? What messages were you given while growing up that may no longer serve you?
 Are your actions authentic by aligning with your values and who you really are? Are they life affirming or life numbing?
 Create your own definition of sexual integrity.
 Do you withhold yourself or settle for less in not only your sexual life but life in general? How?
 Who are your favorite bewitching men/women, and what qualities do they possess that you could emanate?
2. Now, "right-size" sex in your life. In other words, assess where you are now, decide what you need, what's normal for you and give yourself permission to ask for what you want from yourself and others.
3. Choose three strategies that will strengthen your sexual self-esteem and start implementing those today.

For deeper discussion of this month's column, join Jennifer for the Wired & Inspired series this month titled "Sex and the Sensual Woman" at 6:00 pm on Thursday, May 28th at The Kentucky Museum of Art & Craft. For more details, see page 24.

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