



Enhancing Sexual Intimacy

Couples are often bewildered and frustrated by a loss of passion in their intimate relationships. Why do sexual relationships that start as raging torrents so often slow to frustrating trickles?

There are many reasons why sexual passion and desire may ebb as time goes by. Stress, fatigue and the natural

decrease of hormones as we age can certainly contribute to a loss of libido. Once children enter a family these factors increase sevenfold. After a day of meeting the unceasing needs of little ones we often crave nothing so much as a few moments alone. Physical contact with another human being may be the absolutely last thing on our minds.

Another common reason for avoiding love making lies in the complex emotional relationships that evolve over time: hurt feelings, anger, breaches of trust, feelings of rejection or isolation can build upon each other, creating layers of misunderstanding until neither partner wants to make the first move.

Finally, as we grow older we become acutely aware of our many physical imperfections. Each extra pound, wrinkle, gray hair or stretch mark is compared to an idealized vision of what it means to be beautiful, handsome or sexy. Inevitable we find ourselves wanting and begin to wonder whether our partner also perceives us as unattractive.

The good news is that these issues are often easily addressed. Indeed research shows that **the older we get the greater the potential for highly satisfying sex lives**. The formula for a healthy passionate sex life is simple: **self-awareness, self-care, good communication, and making your relationship a priority**. At the *Wissahickon Center for Relationship Therapy* we help you talk about your needs, your fears, and your dreams in a safe and supportive atmosphere. Here are a few simple tips to get you started:

- Address structural blocks to intimacy such as different schedules or sleeping arrangements. Make sure you go to bed together at least twice a week. If one of you sleeps in a different room for some reason (i.e. snoring) at least start the

night together. (if you do have a snoring problem get medical advice – there is much that can be done for serious snorers and it may indicate a more serious medical problem). If pets or children share your bed gently help them to find somewhere else to sleep.

- Pay attention to your personal hygiene. You would never show up for a date without taking a shower or brushing your teeth. Your spouse deserves the same consideration. **Treat each time you are together with the same wonder and excitement as the first time.**
- Make an effort to increase nonsexual physical contact with your partner such as hugging, hand holding, massages, snuggles on the couch.
- Always greet your partner at the end of the day with a smile and a hug no matter how out of sorts or busy you may be. Those first few minutes will set the tone for the rest of the evening.
- Spend time talking about sex: your early experiences, your fantasies, and your favorite memories as a couple. Stay away from complaining or criticizing.
- Have regular date nights – preferably at least once a week. They don't have to be expensive – a walk in the park, a cup of coffee, a good movie will do the trick – but leave children and conflicts at home. **The time you take to let your love know how important they are to you is never lost or wasted.**

For more information take a look at *Hot Monogamy* by Dr. Pat Love and Jo Robinson available in our [bookstore](#).

[For more ideas consider attending one of our workshops or contact us for a private consultation.](#)