



Six Weeks to Erotic Recovery: For Singles

EASY STEPS TO EROTIC CONFIDENCE
WHEN YOU'RE BETWEEN PARTNERS

By Dr. Tammy Nelson, PhD | An Original eBook | © 2020

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SIX WEEKS TO EROTIC RECOVERY; A PLAN FOR SINGLES

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INTRODUCTION

This is a Six Weeks to Erotic Recovery Protocol. A protocol is defined in the dictionary as “a code of correct conduct, as in safety protocols, or academic protocol.” Or the “plan for a course of medical treatment or for a scientific experiment.” That’s exactly what this is. A plan for a course of treatment, with clear steps that will help you safely conduct your journey, correct your process, and experiment with your sexuality.

However, my editor really hates the word “protocol.” So much so that it sets her teeth on edge every time she reads the word “protocol.”

So, out of respect for her, and for you, we will call it your Six Weeks to Erotic Recovery Plan. A plan is something you put on your schedule, something you commit to and something you put into action. This plan is also an ongoing practice. Practice means you don’t have to be perfect at it.

The Erotic Recovery steps in your Six Weeks to Erotic Recovery Plan are designed for you, if you are looking to discover, heal or expand your erotic relationship to yourself. In this book you will go through this process over six weeks, enjoying one night of practice per week. Each practice in the plan is focused on your own healing. You will be spending time with yourself and growing into a more confident sexual person.

You can spread the nights and exercises out over twelve weeks if you want to take things a little slower. If you haven't had sex for a year or more, you may want to schedule more than one night a week, and spread out the nights to every other week, or even more, perhaps as much as six months. There is no rush here. Exploring your own eroticism is a lifelong journey.

There is no specific goal, and no end zone. The healing and the joy is in the journey itself.

Who Is This For?

For those who find themselves in between partners and want to create a new connection to their own sexuality and create or restore their relationship to their eroticism, this book is for you.

If you are not ready for sexual intimacy with another person, this is a good place to start.

If you want to create more sexual self-confidence this will help you begin. You have to start that journey at home, beginning with your own self-awareness.

You can use this Six Week Erotic Recovery Plan to begin a new way of relating to your body and to your imagination. To reconnect and create a healthier relationship with your sexuality, you can start now. You may find yourself feeling more connected and enlivened by this experience.

Note On Gender

The language in this book is intended to be inclusive of a wide range of gender presentations and bodies. To simplify the language, I have addressed my comments toward women and those in female bodies, but all bodies are worthy of pleasure regardless of their physical presentation.

Erotic enjoyment is not limited by biology. With a little creativity you can modify the exercises for your own unique body and its parts. For all of us struggling with accepting our bodies, the first step is honoring that we deserve to feel pleasure and receive touch and let go of guilt and shame.

With this Six Week Erotic Recovery Plan, you can begin by remembering who you are a sexual person. This protocol will slow this process down. It is designed to help you take

slow and cautious steps toward reconnecting to your erotic self. You can make it work for your own unique situation.

It will work for you if you give it the time you deserve.

Has It Worked for Others?

In my experience as a Certified Sex Therapist and a Licensed Relationship therapist over the last 35 years, I have helped thousands of people with their sexual healing journey. Working with each of these powerful individuals and couples has helped me to see the important connection between sexuality and happiness. People with better sexual experiences and a more comfortable body image tend to be more secure and joyful in all areas of their lives.

Originally, I created this book for couples to use as an intervention for their relationship, with weekly skills to practice over a six-week period.

The first edition in 2014 was an important toolbox for the couples who used it. They reported back to me that it worked for them. It has been an amazing and promising experiment in sexual awakening. This book is now in its second edition and I realize that these skills are important for singles as well as people in current relationships. Now, in 2020, this book has been updated to include even more skills and tools, and updated interventions, all things that I think can help, things I have learned as a clinician and want to share with you. This book is designed especially for you, as a single person, as an independent person, as someone who wants to focus on themselves.

The steps to becoming one's best erotic self are laid out, in order, in this book. These steps are designed to move you from feeling separated and shutdown from your sexuality to

appreciating a more sensual life. The steps are simple to follow and can be modified for your own lifestyle and situation.

How Does It Work?

This series of dates with yourself gives you specific instructions to practice once a week during a planned date night with yourself. Directions on how to set up the night, what to do each night, and how to use this process will be covered in each set of instructions.

The goal of this Six Weeks to Erotic Recovery Plan is to help you slowly work up to being cozy with your sexual self, one week or one date, at a time. Over the next six weeks, let these directions guide you back to erotic connection.

Prioritizing Sexuality

Many of us prioritize our every-day activities above our sexual needs. When our sexuality gets pushed to the bottom of our to-do list, we may start to feel like our relationship with ourselves is unimportant, and, in turn, it may feel that we are no longer important.

Our self-esteem is negatively affected, and we can grow discouraged or depressed.

When the focus is off of your sexuality, it is important to turn the focus back onto your intimate relationship with your self-confidence, and the best way to do this is to plan sex dates with yourself. Even if you aren't having sex with another person, it's crucial to create regular, planned sensual dates in order to reconnect with your own sensuality and your belief in yourself as a sexual person.

Crisis

If you have been through a crisis, lost a relationship, a loved one, lost a job, or had an illness, or experienced a betrayal by a partner, either recently or in the recent past, you may be experiencing intense emotions or emotional shutdown, and it may be tough to want any kind of sexuality. You might be afraid of any intimate connection and can't imagine being sexual with anyone, now or in the future. This Six Weeks to Erotic Recovery protocol can help you reconnect with your own sexuality and learn to become hopeful about an eventual sexual relationship again.

If you have never had a rewarding erotic connection with another person, or if it has been a very long time, this protocol can help you connect first with yourself and then, someday, when you are ready, move toward a completely new (and perhaps even better) way to connect.

For now, you only have to worry about connecting to yourself and your own sexuality. You can worry about a relationship with someone else later. Today your relationship with yourself is the most important goal.

Finding Time

Some people complain that in order to follow the Six Weeks of Erotic Recovery Plan, they have to plan dates with themselves every week, and they don't have time in their busy schedules. Finding time to play, to find sensuality, to appreciate your own relationship to sex means you are honoring yourself and finding respect for your personal growth.

It won't feel spontaneous. In fact, sex is rarely spontaneous. In a relationship, when there are two people in charge of your sex life, one person usually initiates, or you take turns. This means that someone, one or both of you, usually plans the sex ahead of time.

If you remember back when you were dating, you knew that sex was possible, so you prepared for those dates, if you knew that sex was an option. You got ready for the date, you took a shower, dressed up, got yourself in the mood. Sex wasn't spontaneous, not really.

The added benefit of those date nights was the anticipation of the date, you looked forward to the pleasure of being together, the intimacy.

Today, sex dates with yourself can be the same. These times with yourself can be as spontaneous as you want. But you have to think ahead in order for sexual pleasure to be possible. And then, within the confines of the time you have planned, anything can happen.

Spontaneity can happen, if you plan for it.

When you find the time, and carve it out of your busy schedule, spontaneity can be a part of your sex date. Sex happens when and if you arrange for the time. This is especially true if

you have a busy life, a job, a home, children, and like most of us, many other things going on in your life.

When a busy person tries to create a connected erotic life, the day-to-day management of work and family can get in the way. Scheduling regular sensual time allows for permission to experience it. You are giving yourself permission to sink into that time with yourself without feeling distracted by all the other things you need to do.

When was the last day you spent time free of other distractions, simply focusing on your own pleasure? Have you had time to focus only on yourself? Or do you avoid pleasure?

Planning an erotic date with yourself may sound counter-intuitive, but it is the beginning of a sensual journey that leads to a life of more spontaneous joy.

EROTIC RECOVERY

To begin your journey to a new erotic life, you must commit to the experience of erotic recovery. Erotic recovery is a means to creating desire during this time where you may have been separated from your sexuality.

Commitment starts with understanding the need for your recovery.

Ask yourself:

- How long have I felt disconnected from my own sexuality?
- Have I been in a low sex, no sex or sexless relationship in the past?
- Do I want something different for my future, a more erotic experience, focused on my needs?
- What will it take to bring me to a full sexual and meaningful connection with my body?

Connecting to your past

If you are one of the millions of people who have experienced betrayal, trauma or illness, you may need specific direction to reconnect to your sexuality, to let go of past relationship patterns and focus on your own needs, connecting you're your body, to find a more fulfilling and meaningful sensual life. It can take time for this. There are very specific steps to heal and begin to trust again. There is no rush, you can tiptoe through this book and follow those specific steps to help you both move toward your recovery and away from trauma. The important thing is to find an improved connection to your own sexuality, even if you've been severely shut down in your past relationships.

Just because you have had trauma in your past does not mean you need to avoid your sexuality. You deserve a sexual relationship. The time is now. Don't wait. Don't give up.

You can have a sexual relationship within yourself, it's time to find it, and love it back into health.

Own It

Your sexual life is your responsibility. You are responsible for creating your own sexual relationship with yourself. You can represent your own sexuality, work on your sexual self, it's your responsibility to hold it up, to build it up and to take care of it.

Don't worry about whether or not you will be sexual enough for other people. Or whether someone will desire you or want to be your sexual partner. If you own your sexuality, a new partner will find you. Let them have their own sexuality, it's their responsibility. They have their own sensuality, let them take care of it, it's theirs. It's their body, they need to take care of it physically and build a connection to their own arousal and desire, just as you do.

This is where you will have to work in order to connect to your confidence and your independence, so that you can make a strong, sexual connection internally, to what gives you pleasure. You will have to give yourself permission to let go of other people's expectations.

What's on the inside?

It's your responsibility to work on your own eroticism and your own desire. Start by investigating what makes you feel desire.

Are you aware of what turns you on and what turns you off?

What do you like or don't like?

What do you need to work on in yourself to push through your blocks to pleasure?

What do you require in order to heal any past hurts?

What questions do you need to ask yourself to process your issues?

Once you have answered these questions and feel more secure in these issues from your past, you are ready to work on the next steps.

Reminder: If you have a partner, you cannot do the work of healing for another person. Only they can shore up their side and do their own work on their erotic self. You can make suggestions and you can support them along the way. If they do their own healing work and are ready to join you on your sexual journey, you can invite them across when you are ready, but you cannot build the bridge for them.

Erotic recovery is your own personal path to rebuilding your own bridge to yourself.

SETTING DATES

Set your sex dates now. Pick dates on your calendar for the next six weeks when you will meet with yourself. Plan for at least six erotic days or evenings, times to be with yourself, when you will focus on pleasure, with no other agenda.

Erotic dates are an important and special part of your relationship to pleasure. Putting dates on the calendar shows commitment and intention to your own sexuality and adds a caring and sacred element to the experience.

It is essential to plan your sex dates now, ahead of time. Decide what day of the week works for you. To prevent disconnecting from yourself, agree on a weekly day and time that you can easily make happen. Make the date a priority in your schedule. Mark it in your favorite color and add a symbol, a flower or something to remind you that this date is yours and yours alone.

If you let your sexuality be low on your list of priorities, you could begin to avoid the whole process. Your sexual needs will either get repressed or you may even give up on the whole thing. Notice if you are scheduling dates that are too early, too late, or too crowded into an already busy time or day. Are you sabotaging yourself?

Don't sabotage yourself before you even being. Ignoring your sexuality will deplete other life energy.

Sex is important. It means more than just physical release: it is the eros energy that gives your life passion. It holds you together and reminds you that you are fine just the way you are. If you want and choose to be, Eros helps you to remember that you are worth it. You are worth finding time, you are worth feeling pleasure, you are worth being loved, wanted, and desired.

Just because you might not want sex with another person right now, it doesn't necessarily mean that you don't want to be with another person someday. It just means you need to find time for pleasure with yourself, first. This protocol can help.

AFRAID TO BEGIN?

If you are in a crisis, such as recovering from the death of a spouse, an affair, or an illness, you may feel afraid to begin this dating process with yourself. The intensity of the emotional pain you are feeling can make you want to avoid trying.

Take it slow. Start easy.

There is nothing harder than trying to recreate what you once had after a difficult time. This is something different. You are not going back to what you had. You are creating something new.

An affair can rock your whole foundation. An illness or job loss or death of a spouse or parent can make coming back to your sexuality, to pleasure, even acknowledging that you have a sex life, almost impossible. But it can be done. Creating a date once a week will help. Give yourself permission to be with yourself just once a week. It will enable you to reconnect

with yourself and start to find your sexual self again after the experience of intensity, after the pain - any pain.

Within six weeks, if you follow this simple plan, you will reconnect to yourself. It's as easy as following these steps to begin the healing process. It's time to connect in a whole new way, to start over, perhaps in a better way.

NO EROTIC CONNECTION?

If your erotic connection has never been satisfying, or if you've never had an intense attraction to another person, or if you have never been emotionally or passionately satisfied, you may be frustrated and wonder if this protocol will work for you.

You may be recovering from a past relationship. You might not have had an erotic connection to a spouse. Or you may be wondering if you can create something you never had.

Some couples do in fact marry and commit without having an attraction to one another in a physical way. I refer to these couples as asexual or a romantic, partners instead of lovers. These types of partnerships have their roots in familial attractions.

You may have a past partner with whom you had many things in common, it may have felt really comfortable to be with them, but you realize now it was only a friendship relationship. You may be wondering why you committed to someone when you didn't have a physical attraction.

If you have never had an erotic connection to a partner, it doesn't mean you can't create one in the future, it is possible. The first step is to find that erotic relationship with yourself.

For those who don't want to find a new relationship, this is not the goal. You can have a perfectly satisfactory and passionate life with yourself, as a single person. Don't let finding another partner be the goal of your journey.

The goal is to learn to trust yourself with your own touch and with being vulnerable. It might be hard to get in touch with your own sensuality, but you can do it.

START WITH YOUR BODY.

It is important to learn to love your own body, regardless of what it looks like, or how you feel about its shape and function. This takes a lot of trust.

You may not feel totally confident right away. Confidence starts with loving your body, part by part, exactly the way it is. You don't need to lose weight, or grow taller, or have cosmetic surgery, in order to appreciate your own curves and pieces.

You don't have to feel or look like a model to feel sexual. Confidence is the beginning of eroticism. And confidence is sexy. Eroticism can be scary. The goal is to trust your own sexuality and love your own body.

It's time to go to some scary, risky places.

This may sound counterintuitive. When it comes to sex, the goal is to trust your body so that you can push your erotic edge. Take risks with your own sexuality, push your comfort zone, go to the edge of what makes you comfortable, those uncomfortable places may be exactly

what you need to grow, explore the places where you don't yet feel confident, and you will stretch into the person you want to be.

IDENTITY

Our identity as a sexual person begins with how we identify. Connecting to our identity is an important part of who we are, the beginning of who we are.

Explore your identity as a sexual person. Is there some distance between who you are and who you want to be? Who are you attracted to? When you are close to someone, do you prefer masculine or feminine energy, or a mix? What types of bodies spark your interest and catch your eye?

There is room and space for all types of attraction. Who turns you on?

You will have to approach your erotic desires with real courage, venturing into areas that feel a bit risky. Eroticism is about taking risks; finding parts of yourself that you might not have even known were inside of you.

SELF-TOUCH

Each week includes directions about self-touch. These simple and tender touches are purely for self-pleasure. Each exercise will lead to the next, some of these will be easier than others.

Each week, there are increasingly more intimate erotic self-touch experiences. You will start out gently, with soft, caring touch, in order to get used to approaching pleasure. Gradually, you will add anticipation and heightened levels of touch to each date night. As each week progresses, you will find opportunities for adding more sexual energy, sex toys and fantasy.

It is important to follow the directions of the Six Weeks of Erotic Recovery closely, without rushing the steps. Within six weeks, if you follow this simple plan, you will begin to reconnect and to have a more erotic sexual relationship with yourself. You may find that you wake up and relate to life in a whole new way.

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Journaling

Find a journal or a place to write down your feelings after every date with yourself. Keep a journal in between your weekly date nights as well. Writing down your feelings, thoughts and reactions will help you process everything that happens during this interesting process.

Make sure to write about anything that comes up, positive and negative. Writing after the date is sometimes the hardest part.

THE PLAN

Each date has an exercise that is designed to get you used to touching your own body and adding erotic anticipation to each week. You will be using atmosphere and sensual self-touch exercises. As the exercises progress, you will move into more intimate and erotic emotional moves, increasing the energy.

Each Week

Your erotic date night should be a night or day you will be able to commit to on a regular basis. Make it easy to show up every week on the same day and time. Make it a sacred time to meet with yourself. Finding a time to meet with yourself to find pleasure can sometimes be the hardest part of this process. Find the day, mark it on your calendar, and promise yourself that this is your practice time for your present and future erotic life.

Show up for yourself, regardless of how you feel. You may be tired, angry, or frustrated or discouraged, or there may be something better on television. But commit. It's important to commit to this relationship with yourself and show up.

As you get into this plan, you will find it creates consistency, and it shows that you respect and honor your sexuality. It also creates erotic anticipation. Your body will start to look forward to the times when you are exploring pleasure, even if your mind is on other things.

NO INTERCOURSE?

The goal of the erotic date is not to worry about ever having intercourse, although it may lead to that eventually, if you choose to be in a relationship with another person. Make pleasure and sensual touch your only goal, taking anything else off the table, for now, for the next six weeks. If you are in a relationship, and are following this protocol to work on yourself, make sex with a partner an option reserved for later, after the six weeks. Your goal

for now is to work on yourself, keeping the focus on self-pleasure only. This is a private time for you.

Keep your expectations reasonable.

Know that some weeks may be pleasurable, some weeks you may have very sensual experience, some weeks may surpass your expectations. It's also possible that some weeks may be disappointing, and you may feel let down. Don't let any of these feelings stop you; stick to the process.

SACRED DATE

Your erotic date night is a special, sacred time for you and you alone. You are carving time for yourself out of your busy week. It is a time for you to be with your own pleasure, without distraction, where you can focus on yourself and your relationship with your sensual life. Remember why you came to this place in the first place. And remember to take it slow.

When your date night with yourself arrives, plan on a night of sensuality. Sometimes arousal comes before desire, but don't wait for the desire to hit. You are creating an environment where desire can flourish once it is aroused.

What you will need.

These dates will be nights of self-pleasure. You can have these nights in the bathtub or in your own bed. You will need:

An assortment of the following:

candles

flowers

soft sheets

blankets

incense

something to play music on

assortment of play lists

an assortment of massage oils

coconut oil, almond oil, or apricot oil

essential oils

lubricants (no smell or taste)

feathers

silk scarves

sex toys, including vibrators, dildos, and other toys

anything else that brings you pleasure.

LEADING UP TO THE DATE

Starting a few days prior to the sex date, create an atmosphere in your bedroom that will remind you that this is a sacred, erotic space for you to play safely with your own pleasure.

Set up some candles, put out fresh flowers, and put soft sheets and blankets on the bed. Make an extra effort to pick out music that you will like.

When the special night comes, keep your expectations open and reasonable. If the evening goes as you envisioned it, then great. If it doesn't live up to your expectations, remember that this night is a success even if it makes you feel even a little bit connected to your sensuality. Massage, communication, and sharing feelings in your journal can make this an important night of sensual pleasures.

Eroticism can mean many things.

Possibilities

There is no wrong way to have an erotic date night with yourself. But there are many ways to experience an erotic connection with pleasure. When you get to the instructions for Night One, you will find the directions can be modified to fit your comfort level.

Some ways this can happen may include:

Taking a hot bath and listening to sexy music, laying naked in a soft bed, touching yourself softly, doing self-massage, touching yourself in a sensual way, watching your body in a mirror, or pleasuring yourself.

You don't want to push the sexual self-pleasuring yet if you haven't had sex in a long time, or are recovering from a trauma or an affair, or if you want to learn to slowly reconnect with yourself after a period of no sensual touch. Remember, this is not a race. Respect the process and take your time.

The next chapters will include clear direction about what to do each week to begin your new process of intimate connection with yourself.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE EROTIC DATE

The important part of making a date for sexual activity with yourself is that you set aside sacred space and time dedicated to your relationship with your own pleasure.



Although it is only a few hours per week, the erotic date is your special time that is an important aspect of your life. The rest of your week can be set for your work, your family and the rest of your interests. This date is for you.

Think of this time as a practice time, similar to a yoga practice or a meditation practice. This is the time that you will focus on your erotic practice. This is an important time, and a sacred time. No matter what, just showing up is the most important thing you can do right now.

Some nights you may have to push yourself to get into the bedroom for your date. You might feel resentful or just not in the mood. You might be tired, or not feel well physically. Show up anyway. Showing up sends a strong message to your inner self. It says that you care for yourself and that you honor the commitment that you made to this process (at least for six weeks).

Never let yourself feel that you are not important.

Don't force yourself into any behavior that doesn't feel comfortable for you. Sexual coercion, even with yourself, is never acceptable. Similarly, you wouldn't manipulate a partner with your sexual needs. However, try to accept that you want to be in touch with your sexuality right now. Honor that things will move at a pace that works for you.

This can be a way to heal emotionally. If you are feeling angry, detached or hurt, forcing yourself into a sex date with yourself won't make you feel better. In fact, it might make you feel worse.

Push yourself to show up if you can, and carefully follow the protocol for each week. It is a well thought out plan to help you reunite with your sexual self and know that you are always in control of your experience. You will be safe, because you are the one you can trust.

...you are the one you can trust.

If you have children, consider arranging for a babysitter or have them spend some quality time at a family member or friend's house. Some people arrange their date with themselves at a time when the children are at school or asleep.

RESISTANCE

Notice as you begin your date that you may feel some resistance. You might find yourself saying things like “this will never work,” or “I don’t have time for this” or “there is no night that works, I am always tired.”

Don’t take these feelings too seriously. It is normal to have this reaction. It can be scary to think about committing to going deeper into your erotic life and your erotic feelings.

If this happens, think about what might be surfacing for you.

Are you afraid that this won’t work and you will be disappointed in yourself?

Are you worried that the experience won’t be rewarding?

Are you concerned that there will be physical problems?

Be honest with yourself. Write down the things you are concerned about before you begin. Journal about any thoughts or emotions that come up for you. Know that all of these thoughts are normal. Go through with the date anyway.

What are you most afraid of? This is probably the area where you are most vulnerable. Pushing through your fear can help your relationship with your sexuality grow. If you can, share your fears in your journal.

Make the erotic date night an exciting experience. Write down and process some of your resistance. Write down some of what you are excited about as well.

ANTICIPATORY EROTICISM

It is fine to have fear as well as joyful anticipation. Anticipation can feel like fear, or nervousness, but it may also be excitement. Many times these feelings all are experienced in the same way.

One of the reasons your erotic date night should be at the same time every week is after the first few weeks you will begin to anticipate your erotic time. You will notice by week three or four that you are starting to feel what I call Anticipatory Eroticism.

You may find that you begin thinking about your date with yourself several days before the night arrives. This erotic anticipation can create arousal and then, eventually, desire, even if you have not had sex in many years.

As you start to reintegrate sensual and erotic experience into your life on a regular basis, the “practice” of an erotic date will train your body, mind and spirit to expect and honor this new intimate time you are sharing with yourself.

If you can move through the initial discomfort, fear or awkwardness, you will begin to look forward to this sacred time. As you begin to explore your erotic connection you will not only regain your sexual confidence but you may start to anticipate some new ideas of what you can eventually add to your erotic life with another person.

SEX AS A PRACTICE

A good sex life is a practice, just like playing the piano. Engaging on a regular basis means you will get better at it. You are committing to the practice of an erotic, intimate relationship with yourself.

The more you invest in this practice the more you will gain as a sexual person.

An erotic date is dedicated time carved out of your life where you can close out the world by closing your bedroom (or bathroom) door, turning off the TV, shutting off your phone (an important part of the evening) and setting up your room as a sacred, erotic space to practice your new erotic recovery.

This means lighting a candle, turning on music, and adding any additional aspects that make you feel sexy. It could mean taking a bath or being in bed naked.

It may also mean following specific and guided practice, a set of exercises like the ones that follow.

Since you have chosen a particular day and time of the week and committed to it, prepare the space and...

Prepare your mind for sensuality.

When the night arrives, you will have some type of erotic experience, even if you don't feel like it in the moment.

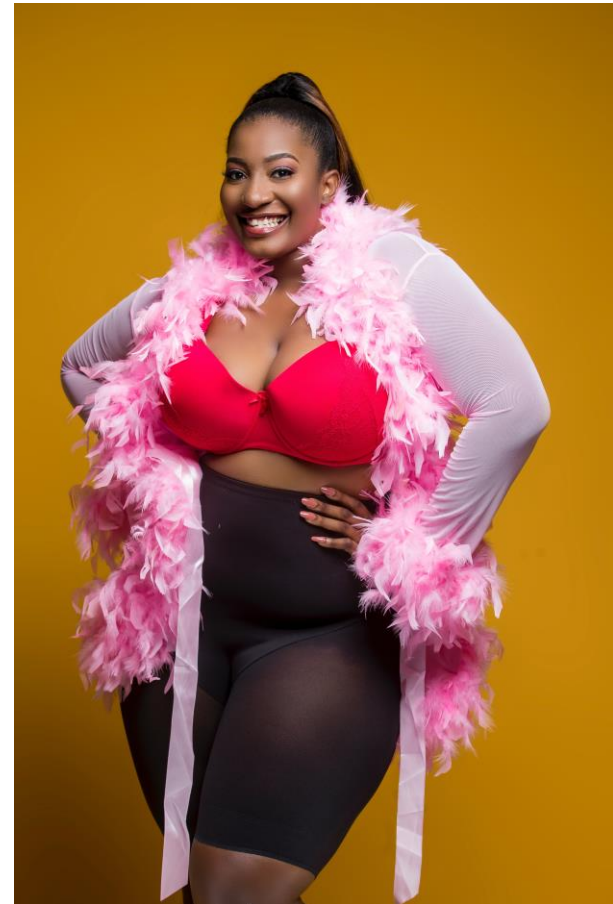
LOVING YOURSELF

Find something sexy to wear.

What makes you feel sexy, what makes you feel good about your body?

Try to think about what you want to wear to please yourself, not to please someone else. You want to be comfortable and feel sexy.

You want to feel beautiful and/or handsome. Find something to wear that makes you feel incredible. This might mean finding lingerie or a dress or a suit to start off the night, knowing that you might want to undress later; you may not stay in these clothes. For now, show up for yourself.



SET AN INTENTION

If you have an intention that you want to set before each date night, it can be important to set the intention. Write it down, say it out loud, say it in front of the mirror.

Go slowly and take your time. Remember that this night is a success if it makes you feel connected to yourself.

An erotic date might be an intimate night of lying in bed and touching yourself softly. It could mean watching a sexy movie and stroking your skin. There are many ways to experience sensual and erotic pleasure.

For now, it is enough to start with self-massage. When we get to the descriptions of each night, there will be clear directions of what to do.

If you are in a differently abled body, or have an illness or chronic pain, this protocol is important. Take each date as it comes and modify for your own experience. Notice what feels like and if it's not working change positions, notice the temperature and the timing and adjust as needed so that you are comfortable.

Notice the thoughts that arise in your mind and challenge the narratives that you have about your disability or your illness. Do you feel like you deserve this time? Can you sink into it and relax, letting yourself experience pleasure? What does pleasure mean to you? What do you make up that it might mean to a partner? Can you focus on your own desire for pleasure?

A CHANGE FROM “GOAL-ORIENTED” SEX



Many times, the focus of sex is on getting to the “finish line” or the orgasm. If we take away the goal of getting to the end zone, sex can be more about pleasure and experiencing erotic as more joyful because it is less stressful.

There is benefit to being focused on the moment and not on the end result. Sex should be less about performance, more focused on pleasure, and less on achieving orgasm.

Performance anxiety only creates more anxiety. When the stress of performing is taken off the table (and out of the bedroom), pleasure can be the ultimate experience.

PAST PAIN

If there has been infidelity, or other loss, the goal of having to achieve during sex can add extra pressure to a situation that may already feel tense. For nearly everyone, trying to approach sex in a less “goal-oriented” (i.e. “orgasm-oriented”) way can bring a more rewarding experience of sensuality.

It is important to slow down the process and re-learn what touch, pleasure and sensuality is really about.

EROTIC INJURY

When there has been hurt, distance, loss, betrayal, or rejection, the betrayed or rejected person can feel deceived and angry, and experience what I call erotic injury.

An erotic injury means that your sexual ego and your identity as a sexual person has been challenged. You may ask yourself, “am I still attractive?” or “do I still have what it takes?” and other more personal things that relate to your sexual self-esteem. After you have experienced rejection, it may take time for you to recover your own sexual power.

One way to recover that power is to reconnect to your own sexuality. You must do this slowly, in a sensual way, without the pressure of sexual performance. Don't worry if you get it right and you don't have to do it perfectly. This isn't about reaching the ultimate orgasm or giving yourself multiple orgasms, at least not now.

For now, slow it down, take orgasm out of the equation, and learn to touch yourself. Remember what it feels like to slow down, feel your own skin, touch your body, and be with yourself in this very intimate way. Sharing your body with someone else is a very generous act. Know that at some point, you may be open to this in whatever way feels comfortable. For now, trust that you can slow this process down and be connected with yourself.

Focus on the experience of touching yourself and working on making touch feel positive and healthy, especially if there has been ambivalence or insecurity in your sex life.

AROUSAL AND DESIRE



For some, arousal often comes before desire. Don't wait for a feeling of desire to hit before you start this process. You may not feel desire first. Once you are physically aroused and turned on, you might then feel desire. Or it might take a while for it to hit.

Some people recognize this experience when they say things like, "I'm never really into sex and I have to push myself to

do it, and then right before I orgasm I tell myself wow, why don't I do this more often? This is wonderful!" This means that the desire for sex may not be there prior to the physical and sexual arousal in one's body.

For many people in female bodies, the higher platform or levels of arousal just prior to orgasm reminds them that they are sexual, they do like and want sex, but it is difficult sometimes to remember that feeling when they are not aroused.

Difficulty with Orgasm

If you are feeling physically aroused, but find that you cannot reach orgasm, it can feel like your body is betraying you and it can be confusing. Don't let the feelings in your body decide for you either way. Your arousal or lack thereof can make you feel confused by your own sexuality.

You may be upset that you feel nothing when you really want to, or you may feel the opposite – “How come I am turned on and I don't feel connected to my own body?” Try not

to be frustrated with yourself for either reaction. Your body is responding in its own way and you are feeling the feelings that are natural to you in the moment. Neither is “right,” they are just different ways of experiencing your body.

Continue with your commitment to your weekly erotic date with yourself and eventually your desire, your feelings, and your sexual arousal will catch up to one another.

Difficult Emotions

By week five or six of your erotic date night, you will have firmly established your schedule. You will be focused on pleasure and letting go of any anxious or negative feelings and thoughts that may come up during pleasure.

For some people feelings of anxiety, anger, sadness, or grief may come up during self-pleasuring. This may trigger all types of reactive behaviors. You may feel averse to the

pleasure you feel and do things like begin to cover your body, wear clothes that hide your body, you might resist touch, have bad dreams, over eat or start to drink.

You may want to quit, turning the lights off and pulling the covers over your head.

Other times you may find yourself crying before, during, and after any type of sensual self-touch. These are all normal reactions to experiencing sensuality. It can also mean that you have things to work through. All of this is fine.

It may also depend on how long it's been since you have been intimate with another person. How much of your past is influencing you now? Have you weathered neglect? Have you survived trauma?

As long as you are not hurting yourself or anyone else, make space for all of your feelings. You are okay the way you are. You need to do this on your own. Come back to yourself, to your own bed and to your own arms.

Your rejection or abandonment in the past can be hurtful. But your unhappiness does not determine your future. Come back to the intimate place inside of you.

You can create this erotic part of you, give yourself what you need. It's okay to feel intense feelings. Breathe. Lie quietly and the feeling will pass. Feelings will always pass, even the positive feelings pass, they move through like waves on the ocean. If you let yourself experience them, they will pass.

These exercises give you the time and space to focus on receiving pleasure and allow you to slow down the process of sensuality and erotic connection, taking the focus off of the pressure to perform in bed.

NIGHT ONE

Tonight, you will use massage as your sensual touch for your date night. If you aren't ready for naked intimate touch, you can start with clothes on.

If you are ready to self-pleasure, you can start with naked massage. This night, for date one, you will not be touching any bikini areas – which means anywhere that would normally be covered in a bathing suit.

One. Dress in something sexy and beautiful.

It's important to show up for yourself, in something that makes you feel sexy and gorgeous. Now go ahead and check yourself out in the mirror. You look amazing! Don't judge yourself. Don't focus on the things you don't like. Look at yourself and notice what how great you look.

Thank yourself for being here.

Tell yourself, “Thank you for showing up, and you look great!”

Say it out loud to your reflection.

Two. Set the atmosphere.

Light some candles or turn on some electric or battery powered candles. Pick out some music and turn on a favorite song.

Set your intention for the night. Write it down, journal about it, write it on a piece of paper and put it on your mirror or lay it out next to your bed.

When you're ready, find a place to lay down on your bed, or get comfortable on sheets or towels, or if you are lucky enough to have one, a massage table.

Have massage oil or moisturizer set up and ready to go. Take a deep breath.

Undress, or if you are not comfortable being naked, keep your clothes on to be in a safe level of undress.

Three. Self-Massage

The goal of Night One is to massage yourself without touching the “bikini” areas. Start with your hands. Pour a little massage oil into your palms and rub your hands together, creating some heat.

Rub your hands together in a soft, gentle, massaging touch, using any way that feels good, massaging your whole hands. Smooth your touch over the hands and arms, smoothing either moisturizer or massage oil over your skin. Notice what it feels like to touch your own skin and take a deep breath. Just enjoy the touch. Let yourself have this moment. Take it

slow. There is no rush. Notice the soft bed and cool sheets, and the blankets spread out underneath you.

Move to touching your legs, and move the oil and moisturize your legs, down your knees and down over your thighs and calves. Let your hands drift and create a journey over your body.

Four. Notice your feelings.

Notice the areas you feel comfortable touching and let your hands travel, and notice what feelings come up. What are you thinking, what are you feeling?

Take a deep breath. What are you wondering? Where are you feeling pleasure?

Touch the rest of your body, particularly vulnerable places, including your neck, and around the back of your shoulders.

Avoid any touch of the genitals and definitely eliminate orgasm as the goal. In fact, orgasm is off limits on Night One. (This is one area I strongly recommend not to vary. In time, you'll appreciate why.)

Five. Notice What feels Pleasurable.

Your responsibility right now is to *notice five things that feel good* right now.

What five things feel pleasurable right now?

Your massage oil should be non-perfumed, so as to avoid irritation. You can start at the extremities and move toward the center of your body or begin at your neck and shoulders and move down to your hands and feet. Does the oil feel good on your body? Does it feel warm on your skin? Do your hands feel good on your arms and legs, on your belly, your face? Your neck?

Continue to touch yourself in a sensual manner... in a way that your skin can appreciate. Let your massage moves be sexual, sensual, or erotic, but keep in mind that your bikini or bathing suit areas are off limits.

You may be surprised how this restriction, no bikini areas, takes the pressure off of you and allows you to explore your body in a way that is simply pleasurable with no other goal. It may create some nice erotic tension, when you realize you can't touch places that you might want to touch.

You may long to touch yourself in places where there are restrictions. Focus on this lovely feeling of sexual tension and hold on to it, feeling its energy. Do not try to change it, evaluate it, or judge the feelings. Just notice them. Notice what is pleasurable about the tension.

Notice what feels sensually pleasurable under your hands. Revisit the landscape of your own body, remembering that this is a very sensual experience, this is your only goal.

Six. Notice what you are thinking.

Perhaps you feel numb. You may not enjoy the strokes, or you may welcome them. Feel and notice all your feelings without judgment. See how much pleasure you can allow yourself in this moment without worrying about what it means or where this is going.

Notice any thoughts and let them pass through without holding on to the thoughts. Don't try to change your thoughts. You may notice resistance, anger, or frustration.

Ask yourself, is there sadness, love, or longing? Let the feelings come through, and do not judge or hold onto a desire to accomplish anything.

There may be frozen or resistant parts of your body as you feel the massage strokes, or you may not feel anything at all.

Seven. Use numbers only.

Using words can be tricky, even the words you use with yourself. You run the risk of judging or critiquing your own sexuality. Therefore, there is another way to think about how touch feels. You can use a 5-point feedback scale.

By using this scale, you can think about what feels pleasurable and what makes you feel uncomfortable. Think about how touch feels on a 1 to 5 scale.

This will take the pressure away and can help you to understand what you really appreciate about pleasure. Using only a scale of 1 to 5, your goal is a 4 or 5 but the goal of a 5 is not necessary. This is simply a way of expressing a feeling, without words.

1. One means that you are not comfortable, or it feels almost painful, and you want to move away from that particular stroke or touch.
2. A two is somewhat uncomfortable, but by no means is it unpleasant.
3. A three is very nice but is a more neutral feeling.

4. A four is very good and feels wonderful.
5. A five means that you are experiencing intense pleasure and that you want the touch to continue. It feels marvelous and you want more of it, perhaps even on other parts of your body.

Using this 1 to 5 scale to describe the experience of the sensations you are experiencing is a great way to avoid using words that might have a history of other meanings. Using numbers will allow you to fully experience the sensations without the added complications of thinking about how to respond. This will free up your brain to just feel the experience instead of trying to make sense of it, assign it meaning, and trying to translate it into language during the sensual massage.

Noticing feelings is the most important part of this exercise. Is there pleasure, relaxation, resentment, guilt, or wonder? What is going on inside? Can you translate this experience

into a number on the scale of 1 to 5? How does this reflect how you are feeling during your self-massage?

Eight. Change up your Strokes

How can you get even more comfortable? Can you roll over and get flat on your stomach? Lay your hands on your stomach or your lower back. Let your hands warm up slowly. Start to move your hands. Begin with a light stroke your skin with your fingertips. Move your hands over your belly or your chest, avoiding your breasts, and stroke back and forth, varying the strokes, changing them so that they feel pleasurable. Notice how you are reacting to the touch. Think about your feelings and rate your feelings from a 1 to 5 response.

Without judging your thoughts, let yourself take in as much pleasure as you can. Continue your movements, noticing how the stroking, the giving, the receiving, feels to you.

Feel your skin and the smooth, cool texture of your body. Change the way you touch your skin and your hands feel on your skin. Stay focused on the moment. If your mind drifts,

refocus on the feelings your own massage brings. Remember, the only goal is to be as much in the moment as possible. See how much pleasure you can allow yourself to enjoy at the moment without worrying about where this is going.

Notice any thoughts in your head and let them pass through, without holding on to them. Change your firm strokes and go from slow to faster, or softer to harder.

Nine. Breathing.

Work on your breathing. Take a deep breath and inhale into your belly. Exhale all the way. Repeat several times. Notice what feelings surface. Is there resistance, anger, or frustration? Is there sadness, love or longing? Just notice the feelings without trying to change them. Let the feelings come through and do not judge or hold onto a desire to accomplish anything. Just BREATHE.

If you have music playing, try to move with the rhythm of the music. Move your hands and your massage along with your breath, breathing in and out as you move your hands over your body. Try and time your breathing with your breath. Breath is an important part of this exercise.

As your breathing goes in and out, move your hands with the rhythm of your breath, this will give you more power and strength in the massage. It will also help you to connect to yourself, allowing a deeper and more intense awareness of the experience.

Connect to the rhythm of your breath as you are inhaling and exhaling. Feel the circular rhythm. Breathe out, and breathe in. You may feel that the massage is a meditative experience.

Notice as your heartbeat begins to slow. Feel your pulse slowing. Sigh. Let yourself make small noises of pleasure. Feel your muscles relax, and your whole body settle into the bed.

Can you relax even more?

Ten. Receive

Can you receive? Can you simply lie back and experience your own strokes without shifting too thoroughly into the part of your brain that judges? There is one part of your brain that controls language, but it's another part of your brain that is in control of emotion.

Try not to think too much. Enjoy. Adjust your strokes and listen to the language of your body. Do you like hard, deep strokes or light, caressing strokes? No words are necessary. Only receiving is important here. Feel the sensations. Can you change the strokes so that they feel better? Are you surprised that you are reacting to the strokes in a more positive way?

If you have music playing, try to move with the rhythm of the music. Move your massage with your breath, breathe in and out as you move your hands back and forth on your body and now add the movement of your breath with the rhythm of the music. You may find you want to sit up now or even stand up and dance or continue to lie down and just move any way that feels good to you.

Eleven. Appreciation

Let yourself inhale all of your feelings and feel their power. Notice how you appreciate yourself in this moment, for your soft skin, your beautiful curves, or your strong body, and let yourself bathe in your own pleasure. Love yourself in this moment and send those feelings of appreciation through your hands and into every cell of your body.

Appreciation is a very powerful energy. It's not just a thought or an emotion, it is an energy that can feel like heat or tingling. Feel it throughout your whole self. Feel it coursing through

your arms and down your fingers and down your legs and into your feet. Find where it feels the most intense in your body.

If appreciation were a color, what color would it be? If you could see it, what would it look like? Use your imagination, your mind's most powerful tool, and visualize the appreciation as energy that washes inside and outside of your body and clears your mind.

Tell yourself, "I appreciate that you are here, doing this. I appreciate you just the way you are."

Twelve. Mindfulness

Mindfulness is a form of awareness. It can be a very powerful addition to the appreciation exercise and to your sensuality journey. Try with this exercise and ask yourself this question:

*Be aware of something right in this moment that you have not
been aware of prior to this?*

Can you notice something unseen? Something in your body or outside of it? Feel an emotion you haven't felt before? Try not to decipher its meaning. Just hold the awareness in your mind for a moment, and then let it go without analyzing it. Be curious, but nonjudgmental. Have fun with it. Find how intuitive your hands can be in the moment, where do they want to go?

Slow down your strokes and deepen your breathing. Take a deep breath and close your eyes, to seal the experience. Breathe deeply and slowly for at least three minutes or take ten deep breaths. Lay one palm and lay it flat on your heart and one hand on your belly. This will seal your energies. Take a last deep breath and let yourself drift into sleep.

Thirteen. Appreciation in your Journal

Journaling your appreciation will be an important part of integrating integrate this experience. When you wake, write in your journal what you appreciated about this experience and what you learned, about yourself and about pleasure.

After the date with yourself and experiencing this deeper connection with your own pleasure, write down a list of what you appreciated about the night.

List three things you appreciated about the date and about yourself. This noticing and receiving of appreciation is a practice that can seal in the experience and add even more to the appreciation. This also helps with any shame and guilt you may feel about masturbation and self-pleasure.

When you say three things you appreciate about your life every day, this can bring the experience to a whole new level, and it help to build the sensations and happiness over these six weeks.

NIGHT TWO

The directions for night two are almost exactly the same as night one. You will set the stage for the date by lighting candles, and putting out flowers, turning on music that you like, and making the bed in a way that feels sensual and soft for your practice.

This week, however, you will expand on your exercise by adding in more touch and perhaps a new massage oil or cream. You can also clear out some of the clutter in the space around you.

One. Set Up the Room

Set up the room in the same way you did for Date One, or add something new, perhaps a new scent. Or clean out some of the clutter in your room. (See the last part of this book for information on how to clear out the clutter in your space to make things more conducive to

romance, whether you have a partner or not...for now, know that you're doing this just for you.)

You can start by clearing up any electronics on your side tables. Electronics like laptops, iPads, or even clocks. Too many electronics can take the sexiness out of your environment.

Magazines and piles of paper can also look messy, although books are comforting to have around. Clear the spaces around you and add a candle or flowers in the spaces that might normally be covered in clutter.

Two. Try New Scents.

When your date begins, turn on the music and light the candles. Lie down in a comfortable place. You might start this time by being totally naked, or you may be wearing something that makes you feel sexy and gorgeous.

Focus the same amount of attention and direction as you did last time on your body. This time you can add a new twist - try a new massage oil or moisturizer. (Remember to use one that has no scent or heating or cooling effect inside of the oil or cream. These can cause rashes or infections.)

Start with your extremities. Rub your hands and your arms, going slowly, and enjoying the experience, and letting yourself experience as much pleasure as possible.

Your new massage oil is not your only new addition to the exercise, however. This week you will add more touch. Take deep breaths and remember this is only practice. It's only you. No one else has to know what you are doing or how you are doing it. You own your body. It's yours. Listen to it. It misses you and it wants to be touched.

Three. Adding More touch

This week involves touching even more of the sensitive areas of your body. It is important to note that your touch should be gentle, progressing into more firm massage. The self-massage should be about indulgence and gratification. Try to create the most sensual touch you can tolerate. This is not necessarily an erotic massage; it can be purely sensual.

Initially, focus your attention and touch to every part of your body except for the breasts and the genitals. When the rest of your body is relaxed, slowly move to the more sensitive areas of your chest and in between your legs. You will know when your body seems open to further touch. You will feel drawn to touch these areas and with pleasure, be ready to continue.

Four. Breast Massage

You can add in more touch now and include your breasts. (Note: this massage applies to bodies of all genders.)

Using massage oil, slowly massage your chest and breasts starting on the outer edges, using two fingers or your whole palms, moving from the outer edges, and sliding your hands closer to the nipple area. Keep the pressure soft and gentle.

Now move away gradually from that area to the rest of the body. Do not focus on your breasts for a long amount of time, but use your whole hands on your whole chest, your heart space is very sensitive. Respect your heart area and thank yourself for the pleasure you are receiving. Move back to the breasts and spend time on the nipples, teasing and pulling gently, perhaps flicking the nipples, anything that feels enjoyable to you.

Five. Touching your genitals

If you are feeling comfortable, move your massage down your body to your genital area. Explore slowly, moving on, if there is no resistance. Ask yourself if you feel pleasure on a scale of 1 to 5. With each touch, what do you feel? Is it a one? That means move away and touch somewhere else on your body. If you get closer to a 4 or 5, that means there is little

or no struggle with feeling the pleasure and its okay to keep going. If it feels good, expand and explore.

To expand the touch between your legs, hold your hand still for a moment and let yourself feel the warmth of your palm against your most sensitive parts. Slowly begin to move your hand and let the heel of your hand press against your whole pubic area including all of your sensitive skin and tissues.

With massage oil or lubricant, slide your fingers around the outside of the area, and if that feels good, a 4 or 5, begin to slide your fingers around the inside of the labia or around the penis.

At this point avoid all insertion or orgasm.

If you are experiencing any inner conflicts, you will notice that you are at a 2 or a 3. If you are at a 2 when you begin to massage your genital area, you should back away and try again later in a gentler and less intrusive way.

The goal is not to touch yourself to orgasm. Try to avoid it if possible. You are moving toward that and enjoying the process and you are going to take your time.

You are going to avoid penetration of the vagina or anus at this stage. There should be no insertion or orgasm. This week is only about massage, and the massage should be for sensual pleasure. The goal is only touch.

Of course, if orgasm happens accidentally or as a matter of course, then it is fine to stay with it, let the orgasm happen. Enjoy, and listen to your body and have a pleasurable experience.

Six. Let go of expectation

Let go of any expectations for orgasm. This is the most important directive.

Enjoy any type of sensual touch, hard or soft, deep, or gentle. Make no judgement as to what should feel like a pleasurable type of touch. Any touch is totally fine and should be acknowledged.

Relax after your massage and let yourself drift off into sleep. For this week, it can be nice to sleep naked, but it is not a requirement.

NIGHT THREE

In this week's assignment, the same directions apply as in Weeks One and Weeks Two. You will set up your room with candles and flowers and clear up the clutter that may be in the area around your bed. Find a comfortable place to sit or lay down and have massage oil and lubricant close at hand.

This week, there will also be an added focus on massage of the genitals and chest, and whatever parts of the body are the most rewarding to touch. For example, if you enjoy massaging your breasts, you can spend extra time giving pleasure to that area this week.

One. The Mirror

This week there is one more addition to your experience. It's time to look at yourself in the mirror.



Find a full length and slowly take your clothes off. Stand in front of the mirror. When the candles are lit the room light will be flattering and help you to appreciate your own beautiful reflection.

Start at the top of your head and notice one thing about your hair and face that you like.

Then move to your neck and shoulders and then your chest and try to appreciate at least two or three things about these parts of your body.

Move down to your belly and hips and look over your legs.

If you find yourself covering up any part of your body, covering yourself with your hands, or hiding yourself and feeling shy, take a deep breath and relax.

Now concentrate on finding several more things you appreciate and like about your body.

Touch yourself with both hands, sliding them over yourself and touching your breasts and genitals as well as the rest of your body. Take a deep breath and let yourself feel pleasure.

When you are ready, you can lay down and experience more, sending love to yourself and to the wonderful body you are experiencing.

Two. Appreciation for your Body

Be aware as you touch yourself of all the feelings that come up and the voices in your head. Are you judging yourself? Be nice. Let's change how you feel about your body so that it

knows you love and adore it. Tell yourself, either out loud or in your mind, that you appreciate your body, exactly as it is. You can say,

“I appreciate you,” or

“I appreciate my body,” or

“I appreciate this part of my body.”

Three. Make Noise

While moving your hands around your genitals and your breasts, touch yourself and let your breathing get deeper, faster, or grow more shallow. Let yourself moan, groan, or make any other sounds that may indicate you are enjoying the experience of being touched.

The key this week is to enjoy an intense and pleasurable self-massage and practice acceptance and appreciation of your body, without needing to bring yourself to orgasm. If

you do find yourself getting close to orgasm, let yourself come to ejaculatory inevitability - the pleasurable plateau right before orgasm. Try not to bring yourself over the edge. Your goal is to stop right before orgasm. It is important that you do not bring yourself to the place of no return, only to the threshold. And, remember, penetration of any kind, a finger or sex toy, is not allowed at this stage.

Pay attention to the 1 to 5 self-reporting and remember that words are less important than experiencing the pleasure of the moment.

Four. No Guilt

The key this week is to appreciate your own body without shame or guilt. Loving your body means appreciating the capacity of your body to be in pleasure, without having to get to a finish line, the full orgasm. It may seem like it is difficult to put off pleasure and hard to pause at that pleasurable plateau right before orgasm, but try to notice how nice it feels to hesitate and experience the moment without letting yourself go over the edge.

NIGHT FOUR

You have reached a crucial stage in your six weeks of erotic dates.

Thus far, you have practiced engaging in sensual touch, feeling pleasure, and appreciating your body in a mirror, exhibiting restraint, and experiencing feelings in a new manner using the 5-point feedback scale.

This week, you get to add something more. For this exercise, you will repeat all of the previous massage exercises and the accompanying steps, and you will also add orgasm, if possible or desirable, but without penetration of any kind.

Only non-penetrative orgasm and manipulation are permitted in this week's exercise.

We will add another assignment as well to the exercise; the close up.

One. Close Up

If you have a vulva, it's likely that you have never seen it up close. In fact, seventy percent of women have never held a mirror up to this hidden part of the body. Many people with a penis have never seen their genitals up close either. It's time to check out your body, close up.

For this week, set up your space. You might find you are adding silk scarves over your lamps, or bringing in new, more exotic plants to your room. You also want to add a bottle of lubricant by the side of your bed. Find a lubricant with no scent or flavor. Have it ready.

Now, find a mirror. Use the same mirror or a smaller, handheld mirror, one you can comfortably sit in front of with your legs spread apart. This can be very uncomfortable if you've never seen yourself, just notice the thoughts that come up. Make sure you have a

pillow to lean on and you are physically settled. This is an important part of loving yourself, seeing what you actually look like and how beautiful you are.

Two. Touch and Watch

Sit where you can see your genitals close up. If you have a vulva, touch yourself while you watch and slowly spread your labia apart, both the inner and outer lips. Look at your vagina and its soft folds. Notice how the vulva is like a flower, with its soft petals and its shades of pink, its depth.

If you have a penis, touch yourself and slowly move your shaft and balls around. Look at your penis and its changing shapes, the soft folds of skin. Notice what is underneath the testicles and behind them.

As you watch in the mirror, begin with soft self-massage, using oil or cream. Let yourself be relaxed and aroused and enjoy the touch. Relax, get into the mood. You can stay in front of the mirror, continuing with genital massage or you can move to the floor or bed.

Using lubricant, continue with a soft genital massage, beginning at the extremities and move in toward the clitoris if you are a woman. Continue with the clitoral massage, around the whole area of the clitoris, until you feel your pleasure growing.

If you have a penis, start with a light stroke and move to a firmer stroke, and repeat.

If you can, continue until you bring yourself to orgasm manually.

Three. Come down slowly

Breathe into the moment. Enjoy the feeling as the pleasant sensation, the sexual energy, moves up and through your body. Take more deep breaths. Move slowly, rocking your pelvis to shift and move any remaining feeling throughout your whole body. Take more deep breaths. Enjoy the moment, this moment.

Before you move or get up, or take a shower, stay still. Hold yourself in the same place, be still.

Come down slowly from the heightened sexual feelings and let them flood you with pleasure throughout your body. There is no pressure to do anything in the moment.

It is okay to drift off into sleep and let the pleasure of the moment be what it is without trying to make more of this experience.

Congratulations. You have reached a crucial stage in your Six Weeks Of Erotic Recovery Plan. So far, you have practiced sensual touch, you have practiced restraint, you have also practiced a new form of self-love.

NIGHT FIVE



What would expand this night into an extra special pleasure date? Do you want to start this week with a long bath A hot steamy shower? Can you use extra bubbles, extra bath salts, maybe candles around the bathtub?

One. Splurge on sensation

Enjoy yourself. Splurge on sensations that would make tonight more sensual; smells, textures, things that feel good against your skin. Make it fun and delightful. Put your hair up, wear something sexy, or just put on a silky robe. When you are nice and relaxed, find a comfortable place to sit or lie down.

Remember to have massage oil and lubricant handy at the side of the bed, or next to you on your floor. This time add a sex toy if you have one.

Settle deeply into a comfortable place to give yourself a massage.

Two. Sex Toys

Sex toys range from small bullet size vibrators to extra-large vibrating anal plugs, and everything in between. You can order online now, so there's no need to go into a store. If you're shy, you can find anything you want without having to stand at a counter with your pile of purchases.

There are lots of sex toys made by and for women now. Dildos are shaped to fit in the vagina (or anus) and vibrators can be any shape. Vibrators are usually battery operated and can vibrate at a multitude of speeds. Finding one that works for you is going to take some trial and error.

Let's start tonight and try on something that might be fun. Remember they call them sex toys for a reason. They are supposed to be things you play with.

Three. Edging

Now that you are more comfortable with touch you know more about how to relax and you are more comfortable in your body. Let's continue with genital massage.

If you have a female body, put your hand between your legs, gently. Be gentle and start at your legs, touching slowly. Start at the folds of your legs, your extremities, and move in toward the vulva, opening it slowly like a flower, approaching the clitoris slowly. Start touching with a light stroke and move to a firmer stroke.

Bring yourself to the edge of orgasm manually by stroking the outer edge of the clitoris and then hold the orgasmic edge. Feel that place of heightened sexual experience, letting the flood of pleasure in your body build and feel it settle for a moment. Let go of the pressure to orgasm in this moment. Just feel and experience the sensation.

Bring yourself back up to your orgasmic plateau. This process is called ‘edging.’ Edging means bringing yourself up to the edge and then let yourself relax, release, sink back down, and then go back up, touch yourself, exciting yourself back to the edge of orgasm once again. Practice this until you can teach your body to have longer, deeper, more expansive orgasms. Or you can make the pleasure more intense without worrying about reaching orgasm. ¹

Four. Penetration with a Sex Toy

Now it’s time to add manual penetration to this sensual and erotic experience. If you want to include your sex toy, make sure you include lubricant. Any time you use a sex toy, you can’t have too much lubricant. When things are slippery, they are just more fun. Lubricant can cut down on pain and discomfort as well. If you want to include penetration, do so slowly, and only after you have brought yourself to the edge of orgasm a couple of times.

¹ (For more detailed description of how to give an orgasm through manual manipulation, please see [Getting the Sex You Want; Shed Your Inhibitions and Reach New Heights of Passion Together](#), 2008, Quiver, Rockport, MA).

Then include the sex toy. And if you don't orgasm at all THAT IS OK. Orgasm is never the goal. Pleasure is the goal.

It is important to ensure that there is enough arousal prior to insertion so the vagina is prepared to receive, and if anal stimulation is desired, that there is enough relaxation and preparation. As always, stimulation and insertion must be desired, it is not mandatory.

Five. Feelings

What happens when emotions start to surface? It is not unusual for people to cry after orgasm. A good orgasm brings up issues that are stored in our bodies. Trust issues, grief, and emotional pain can all be released with a good orgasm and it's totally fine to break down and let yourself have a good cry.

Both crying and orgasming are a release. Let yourself do both. There's nothing wrong with letting it out.

Make noise. Scream and cry and thank the universe that you are letting yourself having this time to feel all of your feelings.

Six. Clean up

A water-based lubricant is also best for cleanup. (Note: If you are using the sex toy for anal penetration, start very slow and with a slim dildo or vibrator or anal plug. Make sure you wash the toy before attempting any contact with your vagina or labia after it has had contact with your anus. You don't want to risk spreading the bacteria from one place to the other, this way you can avoid any Urinary infection problems.)

Before you start, always makes sure your hands are clean before you touch or manipulation your genitals or insert fingers or toys. Make sure all toys are clean as well. Also, know that water-based lubricants are best for sex toys (or condoms) and that silicone lubricants can break down the material of sex toys.

Afterward, clean your toys, clean yourself and then let yourself have a good nap or sleep for the night. When you wake up or in the morning, journal about what happened and what you experienced. It's all good.

Seven. Journaling

Remember to journal about your experience in the morning. What was it like to use a new toy? To play? To let yourself explore parts of yourself that perhaps are new in your sexual repertoire? What were the emotions that came up? How did you feel afterward?

NIGHT SIX

Good for you. You have reached Week Six. Once you reach this Sixth stage in the Six Weeks to Erotic Recovery Plan, a lot of things have changed.

More things are now permitted on your Date night. This date night will include sensual touch and self-pleasure. You can also include touching your breasts and genitals, and sensual massage, penetration with your fingers or your sex toy, and orgasm, these are all permitted – and encouraged.

The key to this week is that it's time to also include fantasy.

One. Start with Massage



As usual, start with a long bath or shower and find a soft place to begin your relaxing massage. Start by touching your hands and arms in a sensual way. Let yourself sink into the sensations and enjoy touching yourself.

This week you will give yourself a longer, even more sensual massage. You can include a more expanded orgasm at the end of your massage as well.

Two. Add Penetration with Lubrication

If you want, you can add penetration. This can involve your own fingers or hand, and/or your sex toy. Let penetration occur only after your massage and you are relaxed enough to enjoy it. Use lubrication to make the penetration as slippery and easy as possible.

When there has been enough manual stimulation to ensure that penetration of the vagina and/or anus is welcome, proceed slowly, and do whatever feels good.

Three. Don't Stress

If you have a penis and lose your erection, don't worry. It's fine. There is no race to get to the end and an erection is not mandatory. Let yourself lose your erection. Notice how

pleasurable things can feel even if you aren't erect. Isn't it nice to not have to have an erect penis to feel pleasure?

If you have a vulva and you can't get to an orgasm, don't worry about that either. Don't stress about getting to the end zone. Enjoy the moment, be in the pleasure.

If you aren't lubricating naturally, don't worry. It's fine. Totally okay. You can use the lube next to you and enjoy pleasure even if you aren't lubricating on your own.

Four. Add Fantasy

This week we add in the element of fantasy. During this last erotic night in the series, let yourself be aware of any thoughts that come up during the self-pleasuring.

Thoughts that turn you on are called fantasies. Fantasies fall on what I call the Erotic Curiosity Continuum. A continuum is a sequence, where things move up along the

continuum to something more intense. The fantasy continuum runs from ‘curiosity’ to ‘fantasy’ to things you want to take into ‘action.’

Curiosity -----Fantasy-----Action-----

Erotic Curiosity means these are thoughts and ideas and visuals in your head that you are wondering about. You might wonder how certain sexual things feel, what they would be like, or how they would look. You are curious about them not necessarily totally hot for them. Maybe you are curious about something you’ve heard about or seen on the internet and you’re thinking “I wonder what that would be like?”

But these are not your totally hot, go-to fantasies for stimulating yourself, or when you are trying to turn yourself on.

Your fantasies are in the middle of the fantasy continuum. They are the sexual scenarios and stories that are totally hot for you, the things you desire and that arouse you, the scenarios that you think about when you self-pleasure or when you have sex with another person. Fantasies are not necessarily what you want to take into action, you may just want to imagine the scenarios in order to get into an erotic mood.

The fantasies you want to take into action are the things you crave, the scenes you want to act out, the roles you want to play. You may actually want to do these things; these are fantasies that are important to you and part of your vision for the future or your sex life.

What are the things you think about that you find alluring? Sexy? Hot? Erotic? Exciting?

In your journal: Name three things that you have thought about that you think are sex.

1

2

3

Five. Use your Fantasies

Try connecting at a whole new level with your fantasies, thoughts and desires and combine this new level of fantasizing with sensual touch and self-massage. Using your fantasies and sexual thoughts, combine your self-massage, and let yourself relax into the combination of touching yourself and connecting with a visual story in your mind or a memory of something that turns you on, something that brings sensation into your body.

No one has to know about your fantasies. This is your private, secret garden. It's all yours, so it's fine to fantasize about whatever you want. Try not to judge yourself about what your

fantasies contain. The goal is not to change your fantasies, it's to make the experience more enticing.

After your orgasm, take a moment, and relax. Ask yourself the following questions:

What are you feeling now?

What are you thinking about?

Six. Research your Fantasies

If you need help to discover more of your own fantasies, or if you can't figure out what your fantasies are at all, you can do some research. Look up erotic fantasies for women. Read some erotica, or even look at pornography or erotic films. Porn has changed and includes the idea that all kinds of people are viewing it, and there's a lot of feminist porn out now as well. Find something you like that you think is sexy.

Explore your fantasies and find something that works for you.

(See the extra handout at the end of this book for a list of fantasies to help you find your own turn ons).

Seven. Appreciation

Appreciation is an important part of this protocol. You always get more of what you appreciate, which is why it is so important to integrate appreciation into your erotic date nights.

After these evenings of sexual pleasure, remember to write down what you appreciated about the night.

You might answer the following:

“One thing I really appreciated about this night was...” “

See if you can find three things you appreciated about each date night and make a list.

You might share these appreciations with a close friend or practice saying them out loud every day to yourself, or to your mirror.

Saying three things you appreciate every day can bring your sexual self-esteem to a whole new level and keep the connection to your new sexuality alive.

CLOSING

You did it!

Appreciate yourself right now. You are a sexy, sensual, and fully alive person right now. And you deserve joy.

This process has been a six-week plan. You may spread it out to make it a twelve-week plan to more fully concentrate on your sensual pleasure.

You can also make this a lifelong practice; practicing self-pleasure every day, and finding joy in your relationship with yourself.

You can use these exercises over and over throughout the year in order to establish a deep and connecting base that brings your body and heart into alignment.

You can come back to these exercises anytime you want to feel connected or re-align with yourself.

The Future

When you are ready to, or if you want to start dating, to move into a shared erotic life with another person, this plan can help you share your deepest sexual desires and perhaps help your partner experience their own sensual selves as well.

No matter how you work this Six Weeks Of Erotic Dates Plan, remember this is a way to honor yourself, your body and your own personal relationship to your sexuality. You are the owner of your sexuality and you come first.

Holding onto your Space

Working on this plan is the beginning of clearing the space between you and your past. It enhances your sexual self-esteem. Whether or not you want to be with someone else is up to you. Right now you are ready to be with you.

Clearing your sexual space starts with a desire to be sexual. Whether you do so with hesitancy or with full enthusiasm, it will eventually lead you to the true meaning of intimacy.

Try not to judge yourself for the ways that you have approached this plan.

You may have made mistakes; you may have pushed yourself too fast or too soon. Be compassionate and patient with yourself and act always kindly toward the person in the mirror.

If you need it, talk about your feelings with a friend or a therapist in order to work through anything that may have come up as a result of these exercises. And remember, what matters the most is that you showed up for yourself.

SEX AS A PRACTICE

This sexual pathway is a practice. This is the beginning of a longer journey toward a more spiritually fulfilling sexual life. The more you practice, the better you will feel about your intimate and erotic life. Have some fun; try not to take any of it (or yourself) too seriously. And most of all let yourself have moments of real joy.

Let yourself feel pleasure and even joy in these moments of deep connection with yourself. Hold onto those feelings of joy. See if you can feel them for at least fifteen seconds longer than you might normally allow yourself to experience them. Allow your brain to integrate your emotional experiences of appreciation and pleasure. Come back again and again to the same feelings of love, joy, and connection. Let yourself be happy.

Imagine that you could feel this way all the time – whole, in love, relaxed, joyful. You can if you practice!

THE END

Congratulations to all of you who have completed this program. If you would like a certificate of completion for the Six Weeks of Erotic Recovery Plan, we are happy to send you one to hang on your wall; this is something you should be proud of. Although the certificate is

only a small sign of your achievement, it can be fun to have something to hold onto that says you stuck to the process and really committed to your erotic recovery.

Thank you for purchasing this book and trusting that this process works.

Best of luck to all of you and stay sexy!

CONCLUSION

This Six Weeks Of Erotic Recovery Plan for the Individual is your guide to a lifelong practice of sensuality, intimacy and connection. For a spiritual practice that begins with a once a week erotic date, this six weeks of exercises can guide you back to yourself and maybe eventually to a partner, if you so choose. It for sure can arouse a sexual awareness within you that needs shaking awake.

Find yourself, your sexuality and maybe create your own erotic self, using these slow and simple exercises. Whether you have wondered if you can ever feel desire again, these

exercises can help you recover your eroticism in the ways that matter, for the relationship of your dreams - a long term passionate and connected loving relationship with yourself.

You deserve it.

FOLLOW UP

Now that you have completed your Six Weeks of Erotic Dates and maybe even stretched things out to twelve or sixteen weeks to make it last longer, I am hoping that you take this experience and make it last a lifetime.

This is what some people have said about how these dates have affected them:

“I have used this book to heal after the loss of my husband. I had forgotten what it meant to be a sexual person. It wasn’t long before I remembered who I was.” Lorelie, NYC, NY

“I did this 6 Weeks to Erotic Recovery, ..., and sure, I had my doubts. But it was a practice, like meditation, like yoga, and, darn but it wasn’t a revival to my sex life.” Pia, Atlanta, GA

“After my husband died I cut myself off from sex for years. Thank you for helping me find my way back.” Alicia, Taos, NM

CHECK IN

Are you ready to take inventory? What is working now that you have begun the practice of Erotic Recovery? What still needs work? What new ways do you need to keep growing and changing in your life?

Take a few minutes to answer the following questions and see how you score your answers.

EROTIC RECOVERY QUIZ

HOW ARE YOU DOING NOW THAT YOU HAVE COMPLETED THE DATES?

- 1 Did you practice the Erotic Recovery Dates once a week for six weeks?
- 2 Did you experience a shift in your life?
- 3 Do you feel differently toward your sexuality than you did before you began?
- 4 Do you have new feelings about intimacy and about finding a partner?
- 5 Do you feel more connected to your fantasies?
- 6 Do you have a practice sex date with yourself now at least once a week?
- 7 Have you had an orgasm since you have begun this practice?

- 8 Do you sleep better since beginning these practices?
- 9 Do you feel better about sex since you started practicing?
- 10 Do you imagine having sex in the future with your partner or someone new?
- 11 Do you plan on having new sex dates going forward?
- 13 Have you changed any sexual behaviors in your repertoire?
- 14 Have you ever talked about your sexuality to anyone?
- 15 Are you having good sex with yourself?
- 16 Are you looking forward to having more fun in bed?
- 17 Do you imagine a new sexual relationship with yourself?

- 18 Have you felt more sensual now than you have in the past?
- 19 Do you feel that you are beginning a new stage of your life?
- 20 Do you feel your self-esteem has improved?
- 21 Do you feel more relaxed and less stressed after your sex dates?
- 22 Do you have more sexual fantasies?
- 23 Have you decided what you would like to add into your sex dates?
- 24 Do you feel more open to using sex toys and sexual lubricants?
- 25 Do you use a journal to write down your fears and appreciation?

Yes to 20 or More

If you answered “yes” to more than twenty of these questions, chances are very good that you are doing great and are well on your way to forming a new and satisfying intimate life with yourself.

You are heading toward erotic recovery through positive practice and focus on sexual connection with pleasure. You are working through your issues. It may take some counseling sessions with a professional sex therapist to determine how to move forward in the future, but for now, you should appreciate the work you have done to get this far.

11 to 15 Yes's

If you answered “yes” to eleven to fifteen of these questions then chances are you are moving through erotic recovery and, although you may still be struggling, you are connecting with your erotic self. You may be enjoying the practice and, at the same time, still want a deeper, more passionate relationship in the future. Continue to work on your erotic dates and enjoy the process. You may need some outside help and support to learn to connect to your

sexuality at a deeper level. Or you may feel stuck at a sexual level and it is time to begin to connect to your sexual fantasies. You might find that an online class that can help you connect to your own sexual desires, or try my book, *Getting the Sex You Want* which can help you explore your fantasies with another person and eventually move into the next phase of your erotic life.

6 to 10 Yes's

If you answered “yes” to six to ten questions you have had some good experiences since beginning this Erotic Recovery process. This is a good sign and can be an indicator of some positive strengths. You have a strong connection to your sexuality but it's important to continue your focus on a weekly date.

5 or less yes's

If you answered “yes” to five or less of these questions, you are definitely struggling. You may have had trouble with the exercises or have had difficulty showing up for the date night.

Maybe when you did show up for the date nights, nothing happened, or the evening was tainted by fear or hurt feelings. This is only a phase. Continue the exercises. You can practice for many more weeks before you feel ready. Some people have more difficulty in their relationship with their bodies and eroticism than others. Take your time. The fact that you are reading this right now means that you are trying and that you are practicing. Congratulations that you are continuing the process of Erotic Recovery.

If you need extra help, reach out today for individual therapy. It is possible to get counseling as direct crisis intervention that can help you make some decisions and move your life forward. For more info go to <http://www.drtammynelson.com/>.

WANT MORE?

If after these six weeks you find there is more to do, and you want even more connection and passion, or you are still not comfortable with your own sexuality, you may need to move into a more advanced practice. You have done an amazing job so far. And there are even more places to go. If you are interested in a more passionate and connected and sensual life, there are options for you.

Desire and arousal are part of the natural process of sexuality. Getting in touch with your fantasies about what you desire can increase arousal for you.

In any intimate interaction if you are choosing to be awake and present then you are emotionally and sexually involved, and that can build the pieces you want in your desire and arousal. Anyone can increase the level of connection, arousal, intimacy, and desire that you feel.

When people are asked to describe qualities of “great sex” or “optimal sexuality,” there is one prominent theme that emerges – and that is being present (Kleinplatz et al., 2009). Regardless of how you have operated in your relationships in the past, your sexual life going forward is less about your sexual function, and more about being mindfully present - which ultimately leads to passionate and great sex.

For more, try the BONUS material at the end of this book for MORE great sex and check in with me anytime. Find me at tammy@drtammynelson.com or www.drtammynelson.com.

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BONUS

FANTASY CHECKLIST

DIRECTIONS: Below is a list of common sexual fantasies. These fantasies fall on both ends of the erotic curiosity spectrum. They include a wide range of erotic interests. Go down the list and see what turns you on. Notice what gives you sexual energy, and what is intriguing. At the end there is room to add your own fantasies to the list.

Mark each item with a Number One (1) through Five (5)

One (1) means you are not at all excited by or interested in the idea

Two (2) means it holds almost no or some interest for you

Three (3) means you are somewhat or very erotically curious about it

Four (4) means you have or could have fantasies now about it

Five (5) means you want to take this fantasy into action

EXAMPLES OF FANTASIES:

Kissing _____

Kissing a stranger _____

French Kissing _____

Making love in water _____

Hugging with clothes on _____

Holding someone naked _____

Being naked _____

Touching your own body _____

Bringing yourself to orgasm _____

Sex with yourself _____

Sex in the shower _____

Having sex in the morning _____

Daytime lovemaking _____

Eyes wide open sex _____

Sex with a partner on floor _____

Sex on a chair _____

Sex with someone other than your partner _____

Sex with a movie star or rock star _____

Watching two women have sex _____

Having sex with two women _____

Having sex with two men _____

Watching two men have sex _____

Having sex with a man and a woman _____

Watching couples have sex _____

Multiple partner sex _____

Stripping in front of a room full of people _____

Watching someone masturbate _____

Receiving oral sex _____

Receiving oral sex from your partner _____

Having sex with a sex worker or stripper _____

Sex with a celebrity _____

Sex with someone you know (not partner) _____

Being dominant with a woman _____

Dominating a man _____

Having anal sex _____

Being in your own porn movie _____

Sex while wearing shoes _____

Sex wearing a costume _____

Being filmed during sex _____

Talking dirty _____

Using a vibrator on self _____

Using a vibrator with partner _____

Making love on a bed of rose petals _____

Sex blindfolded _____

Sex in a pool _____

Sex in a hot tub _____

Watching pornography _____

Acting out pornography scenes _____

Anonymous sex with a stranger _____

Sex with someone famous _____

Sex with an ex lover _____

Sex with a woman _____

Sex with a man _____

Sex with a man and a woman _____

Sex with two men _____

Sex with more than one woman _____

Watching group sex _____

Being spanked _____

Watching pornography _____

Having toes sucked _____

Sex with vegetables or fruit _____

Sex with vibrators and dildos _____

Masturbating in front of partner _____

Sex outside or in public places _____

Dressing up in leather _____

Role playing with costumes _____

Wearing boots or high heels _____

Sex with feet _____

Putting handcuffs on your partner _____

Putting a collar on your partner _____

Wearing collar or handcuffs _____

Pinching your partner _____

Blindfolding your partner _____

Sex doggie style _____

Dressing up in plastic _____

Being urinated on or urinating on another _____

Having hair pulled _____

Being spanked or spanking _____

Being seduced _____

Imagining your partner having sex _____

Watching a woman masturbate _____

Watching a man masturbate _____

Receiving oral sex _____

Giving oral sex _____

Talking dirty _____

Sex with an ex _____

Candle wax on skin _____

Throwing food on one another _____

Stockings _____

Dressing in lingerie _____

Being suspended _____

Doctor or medical fantasies _____

Rose petals on bed _____

Long hot baths _____

Holding someone's face and making eye contact _____

Rubbing someone's ears _____

Foot massage _____

Washing someone's hair _____

Touching _____

Making love for hours _____

Tantric breathing _____

Rocking and yab yum breathing _____

Left eye gazing _____

PLEASE ADD YOUR OWN EROTIC THOUGHTS AND FANTASIES, RATE THEM 1 - 5

BONUS

DISCOVERING YOUR S IQ – YOUR SENSUAL IQ

Your Sensual IQ is the measurement of how well your space is set up for love. Are you living in a sexy, sacred space that makes you immediately want to take your clothes off?

Or does your bedroom floor need a makeover? Do you struggle with kids toys and homework spread in a map across the carpet? Or are you the type to do all of your online meetings from the center of your bed, with your pillows piled on your lap?

It's time to look at your bedroom and take an honest inventory of your surroundings. Is the room where you are meeting for your sex date sensual enough to sustain a lifetime of erotic play? Is this the place where you want to spend all of your sacred time? Is this a fantasy lair where you can enjoy some fun, sexy fantasy time?

Your environment and its romantic feng shui definitely reflects your attitude toward your home, and to your sensual life. Setting the right mood sends a clear message to yourself about how much you cherish your own sexuality.

What is the message you are receiving about how important you are when you look around your sleeping space?

What is your Sensual IQ?

Are you creating a space where you can focus on feeling sexy? Do you immediately want to take your clothes off and dance naked in front of a mirror? Do you want to run a hot steamy bath and get in that bedroom, play soft music (or loud) and get into some hot self-pleasuring?

Or is the clutter in your room interfering with your romantic atmosphere?

Let's take a look at the things in the way of your sensual space.

Trying to get yourself in a sensual place is so important for your erotic relationship with yourself. Your bedroom might be blocking you from moving on in your own life.

It's time to get smart about your romantic surroundings. We can measure how sensual your surroundings are by checking a list of important considerations. Then we can see how high or low your romantic IQ is, and make some simple adjustments. This will change the way you view your room and your life.

Your Personal S IQ

Your Sensual IQ is a rating that measures how smart you are when it comes to setting up a romantic space for love. Some people seem to have an easy time of creating a sensual space. They throw a scarf over a lamp and choose a couple of casually strewn throw pillows and the bedroom goes from a utilitarian sleeping room to a magical mystical red tent of love. Other people can barely figure out how to light a candle without having to clear away a week's worth of paperwork piled up on the top of every surface in the room.

The laundry is piled up on top of the unmade bed which is scattered with plates of uneaten food, and the television blares sports, or worse, the evening news. That is not a sexy room.

Is there unnecessary clutter, laundry or technology that could be killing the mood?

You don't have to Maria Kwondo your bedroom to have a high S IQ. No one is asking you to fold your shirts in four parts and slide them in sideways in your drawer. But there are some simple ways to declutter and get things moving, from messy to sexy, in no time.

The Three Measures of S IQ

Your S IQ is the number or score that will reflect three things: the sensuality, sexiness, and relaxation of your bedroom environment. A higher S IQ means your bedroom looks and feels more romantic, sexier, and more relaxed than a lower S IQ space.

Completing and scoring the following PRE-TEST before your SENSUAL IQ QUIZ will help you understand what area you need to work on.

PRE-TEST for the SENSUAL IQ QUIZ

Answer the following questions:

- 1) Is your bedroom set up for only two things – sleeping and love?
- 2) Does your bedroom remind you of a sexy, sacred space for love?
- 3) Do you feel relaxed and hopeful in your bedroom?
- 4) Do you want to be in your bedroom space?

OR

- 5) Do you feel stuck, depressed, or hopeless in your bedroom?
- 6) Do you think the clutter in your bedroom is zapping your energy?
- 7) Are you drawn to work or go online when you are in your bedroom?
- 8) Do you prefer to watch television when you are in your bedroom?

Now, ask yourself honestly, after looking at your answers: Does your bedroom need a romantic makeover?

If you answered NO to questions 1 to 4, you definitely need a S IQ makeover.

If you answered YES to questions 5 to 8 you are in a sensual emergency. You most definitely need a S IQ makeover.

What's your S IQ?

Find a piece of paper or a journal and something to write with and get ready to jot down your answers to the following questions. After you have answered these questions and total your scores, you will see a scoring section. Be sure to review the **ADVICE** and **GENERAL TO DO LIST** that follows the S IQ Quiz and scoring section. Most of the advice is practical, affordable and can be done right away to transform your space into a more romantic and sexier place for your weekly sex dates. You may find that the smallest changes lead to the greatest results. Are you ready? Dig out your pencils now!

THE S IQ QUIZ

In this S IQ (Sensual IQ) questionnaire you will find questions that ask you about the quality of your sensuality, sexiness, and the relaxation of your bedroom space. Go over the next 20 questions and answer each True or False. True answers have a point value of 1. False answers have no point value.

TRUE or FALSE:

- 1 My bedroom is for sleeping and lovemaking only.
- 2 My bedroom has no TV or the TV is in a cabinet with doors that close.
- 3 My bedroom has no desk.
- 4 My bedroom has no computer.
- 5 My bedroom has soft lighting.
- 6 My bedroom has candles.
- 7 My bedroom has beautiful colors on the wall.
- 8 My bedroom has soft sheets with at least 1000 thread count.
- 9 My bedroom has extra soft pillows – more than 2.

- 10 My bedroom has colorful throw pillows on the bed.
- 11 My bedroom has a feeling of calm.
- 12 My bedroom feels sexy.
- 13 My bedroom has massage oil on hand.
- 14 My bedroom has sex toys in a convenient place.
- 15 My bedroom has lubrication handy.
- 16 My bedroom has erotic reading material handy or sexy movies.
- 17 My bedroom feels safe and relaxed.
- 18 My bedroom has music.
- 19 My bedroom feels romantic.

20 Give one extra point for anything special or erotic in your bedroom.

BONUS

21 Add a point if the bedroom is neat with no clutter.

22 Take away two points if your bedroom is cluttered or crowded.

SCORING:

16 points and above: your S IQ is EXCELLENT

This means that your bedroom is primarily for lovemaking and sleep. You have created an environment that is primarily romantic, relaxing, and sexy. You are working hard to make this a sacred space for your erotic relationship with yourself.

To do: Create a sex date once a week. Make it the same time every week. Set up your space to create a romantic environment for self-pleasure. Add things that you find sexy. Buy a new candle or scent, or flowers and a new CD.

11 to 15 points: your S IQ is VERY GOOD

This means that your bedroom is a good space for sensuality and sleep, but you could use some focus on bringing it to a more erotic space for self-pleasure. Make some changes now and the sensual experience will only get better.

To do: Can you change the lighting in your room by softening your lampshades and making them a more natural color? Can you clear out the corners of your room and under your bed, letting the energy of the room flow freely? Can you find a cabinet to store your television and hide all of the cords and plugs in the room?

6 to 10 points: your S IQ NEEDS WORK

Your bedroom is out of balance. You have some things in place for eroticism and have some romantic elements here, but your sexiness and relaxation elements are missing. Focus on the vision of your sensual space and create the space you want by making small changes or even bigger changes if you need them.

To do: Paint the walls a warm color, bringing heat into your space. Hang photos or paintings of pairs or couples, adding the element of partners to your bedroom. Bring in red candles and orange pillows, and blankets with soft textures. Candles with scents can add an element of sensuality to your space as well. Clear out any children's toys or work mess that you have in your bedroom.

0 to 5 points: your S IQ is DESPERATE

It's time to make some much needed changes to your space. Your sensual-self relationship may depend on paying attention to what you change now in your bedroom. It is time to put

the focus on your relationship with your own eroticism. Make some changes immediately and create your sacred space. This will help you move toward a sexier future and help you focus on your inner erotic life.

To do: Use a designer or an S IQ advisor (Email me to find an S IQ Advisor in your area) like the ones I recommend, who can help you plan small changes in colors, decorations and movement of your furniture that don't have to cost a lot but can change the feel of the room dramatically. You may not have time to do this yourself and having an expert come in and change things around may help you to change the things you need in the drastic ways that you need it. And think of how fun it will be when you are standing in your new space with your eyes closed, and then, voila, you open them to your new sexy bedroom, made for pleasure.

ADVICE AND GENERAL TO DO LIST:

Here's a quick to-do list based on your S IQ needs. If you scored anything below a 20 on your S IQ, take a look at what you need to do and use this list as a checklist or a shopping list. Make your S IQ changes today and create a sacred, erotic, and romantic space today.

1 Make sure if you have a TV in your bedroom that there is a way to close it off when you are not watching it. It should not be the central focus of your bedroom. Put it in a cabinet or on a shelf that has doors or shutters that close over it to hide it from view when you are not watching it. All wires and electronic boxes should be hidden from view as well. As few electrical cords as possible should be showing at any given time, particularly at or near your bedside.

2 Try to keep a working desk out of your bedroom, if space allows. Work should be kept separate from the bedroom if at all possible. Don't stack papers or bills in your bedroom or

near your bed. If you work on a laptop, try and keep the laptop separate from your regular bedroom equipment.

3 Find soft lighting for your bedroom, with several levels of light if possible. If you can turn down the lights with a dimmer or lowering device, use this when you want a more romantic mood. Use candles either sparingly or light lots of them for a totally different effect. Make sure they are safe and blown out before you fall asleep.

4 Find a color that works for your bedroom and paint at least one wall with fresh paint in a warm, sensual color. Allow that to represent your new romantic beginning. Freshening the room can feel like a brand-new start.

5 Put soft sheets on the bed, and a soft comforter. Surround yourself with things that feel good on your skin and on your body. Treat yourself like you were in a spa or a five-star hotel. Invest in one or two sets of sheets and rotate them often; it's more important to have one set of good sheets than six sets of bad ones.

6 Have good pillows on the bed, and many of them. Use throw pillows for color. This is a fast and inexpensive way to recreate your whole bedroom. Throw pillows don't have to cost a lot and they can change your whole color scheme. Plus, they add dimension, sensuality, and softness to any style bedroom.

7 Notice what makes your bedroom feel calm. Is it new shades or light white curtains? Is it a small fountain in the corner or the sound of a forest from a sound machine? Create something calming in your room. Gather seashells on a nightstand or burn incense. Smudge with sage sticks to clear the energy. Set up an altar in a corner. What will make you feel calm in your own space?

8 Create a sexy room for pleasure. Have sex toys, massage oils and sexy reading material and other things to view that turn you on in a drawer by the bed or a locked closet (if you have children). Having something sexy to wear can help you feel like you are sexy.

9 Clear out the clutter. Don't have anything under your bed if you can help it. Clear off the tops of dressers and have as much space as possible for special photos or belongings.

10 Find something to hang on the wall that represents yourself – either a photo of you or an object that represents your sensual and erotic relationship with yourself.

Notice what feels sensual to you. Rose petals for the bed sheets, soft music in the background? Don't wait to have a partner to become sexy or romantic. Create the environment that you want today. Your Sensual Quotient will determine how romantic your relationship can become.

With a few small changes in your S IQ, you can improve your love life today.

Contact me for more information on how you can have a personalized S IQ assessment in your home. As a romance and relationship expert, I can come to your home to assess your S IQ and help you search for clues about what isn't working and how I can help. I may come to your home with a checklist and a camera or I will bring my design consultants; my whole S IQ decorating team and a videographer if the room (and the couple) really need help. Together, we take your Sensual IQ.

For an R IQ design consultant contact me directly at tammy@drtammynelson.com or go to www.drtammynelson.com today.

For More Information

For more information or for more books on increasing your intimacy, please contact tammy@drtammynelson.com or go to www.drtammynelson.com. You can find Tammy Nelson's books: *Getting the Sex You Want: Shed Your Inhibitions and Reach New Heights of Passion Together* and *The New Monogamy: Redefining Your Relationship After Infidelity* at Amazon.com or Barnes & Noble. Or buy a signed copy at www.drtammynelson.com.

To find a workshop, retreat or set up a session or intensive contact Tammy at tammy@drtammynelson.com. For more books, mini-books, worksheets and sign up for Tammy's monthly newsletter go to www.drtammynelson.com

Thank you.

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Comments? Corrections? Send them to us. Feel free to write us with comments about how this book helped you.

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Tammy Nelson, PhD is a sex and relationship expert, an international speaker, an author, and a licensed psychotherapist committed to global relational change. With over 35 years of experience she shares her clinical knowledge and research here for couples to reach new heights of passion and connection. She is a Board Certified Sexologist, a Certified Sex Therapist, a Licensed Professional Counselor, and a Certified Imago Relationship therapist. She is the host of the podcast [The Trouble with Sex](#) and a [TEDx](#) speaker.

Dr. Nelson is author of “[Integrative Sex & Couples Therapy](#)” (2020) and “[When You’re The One Who Cheats](#)” (2019) and “[Getting the Sex You Want; Shed Your Inhibitions and Reach New Heights of Passion Together](#)” (2008) and “[The New Monogamy; Redefining Your Relationship After Infidelity](#)” (January 2013) “[What’s Eating You? A Workbook for Anorexia and Bulimia.](#)(2004)” as well as the forward to many books including “*Partners in Passion*”

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