

ESTABLISHING INTIMACY & REIGNITING PASSION

The term intimacy is often used interchangeably with sex; but there's a lot more to it than that. In fact, there are eight types of intimacy and three types of sex.

Eight Types of Intimacy

1. Affectionate Intimacy (non-sexual physical)
2. Sexual Intimacy
3. Emotional Intimacy
4. Spiritual Intimacy
5. Intellectual Intimacy
6. Social Intimacy
7. Recreational Intimacy
8. Aesthetic Intimacy

The idea is to connect on multiple levels, so you can reignite passion in glorious ways!

Three Types of Sex

1. Sealed off sex – which is just about getting off.
2. Solace sex – which is just about emotions, feeling desired/loved/etc.
3. Synchrony sex – which combines the two. No relationship can survive with just one or the other; you need both.

If you feel you've drifted apart, and you can't even begin to think about being intimate, try the following "commandments", to recapture that connection.

Ten Commandments of Reconnecting

1. Take an electronic-free hour together every night, to listen to music, play a game/cards, plan romantic things, go for a walk, watch a sunset together, or indulge in romantic rituals.. When you do watch TV together, hold hands, and try to chat during commercials.

2. Whenever you leave your home or return to it, hug each other for at least 20 seconds – full body, heart to heart, staring into each other’s eyes.. Kisses are wonderful as well, for forging that intimate connection – remember the earlier reference? So add those to your hugs, since they’re both an important part of nurturance.
3. Tell your partner what one thing you did to honor the relationship each day; and honestly think about what it would be like for someone to be your partner.
4. Respect each other’s authenticity without taking things personally – that includes respecting “yes” and “no” sexually, without feeling defeated.. The idea is to listen without getting defensive, or reacting to your partner’s point of view.. And calm your anxieties in the face of your partner’s upsets – don’t use your discomfort as an excuse to avoid engaging sexually; that’s like throwing out the baby with the bath water.
5. When you’re with your partner, stay present and mindfully focus on staying connected.. If something urgent is distracting you – like a deadline – let your partner know, so they don’t perceive a lack of interest, or feel disconnected.
6. Discuss the purpose of the relationship from each party’s perspective and see how you may be able to negotiate the differences.. Beyond those differences, try to have some common goals and dreams.
7. Explore sexual potential by having deep conversations about what’s possible.. This should include what each of you wants and doesn’t want – i.e. sexual limitations – within respectful boundaries, but with a willingness to meet each other’s needs when possible.. This is the only way to move past intercourse – which should never be the be-all-and-end-all.. If you need suggestions to add to your repertoire, check out the sexual “yes-no-maybe” list online.. Finally, when you do pursue an idea, begin foreplay hours before you get to the bedroom, and be very deliberate in delighting in and connecting with your partner.
8. Try to gaze into each other’s eyes at about a twelve-inch distance, uninterrupted for 4-6 minutes, at least once a week – it builds the connection at a neural level that can reignite passion.

It's a commonplace saying that "the eyes are the windows to the soul." It turns out that the eyes are also the windows to our nervous system, that allow us to “see” into each other’s brains and connect.. Small wonder mothers “fall in love” with their babies when they cradle them and look into their eyes, with about twelve-inches between them – the optimum attachment distance.. As lovers, we need to do more of that as well.. Some say intimacy is really “into-me-you-see” – makes infinite sense according to this theory.

If you recall your first love, you probably gazed into each other's eyes as you giggled and swooned.. Adult relationships require that you risk moving emotionally – not just visually – closer, in order to create the novelty that the brain needs for sexual stimulation.. Your close attention to your partner's eyes is a way to re-stimulate mutual attraction.. Your challenge is to be willing to "see" him or her, and be "seen" by him or her, in new and different ways..

9. Teach each other what you like.. Sit on the ground or a bed, facing each other, and take turns touching yourselves in ways you like to be touched, over your entire body, as a way of showing your partner in a non-threatening way; because suggestions must never feel like demands, put-downs, or complaints against what isn't feeling good – they're to be only requested as additions to what's already working.. Besides, watching each other can be very erotic – something you should nurture anyways.
10. Take the time to experiment with and communicate what it's like to move faster or slower; stronger or softer; be more focussed or diffused.. Bring different touches into the bedroom, from how you use your hands to cook, garden, drive; to make your touch more deliberate and varied.

Once you're ready to be intimate again, try to mix things up, capturing all eight types of intimacy, to enjoy synchrony sex. From there, you can add adventure – the sky's the limit. A great guide for that is the yes, no, maybe list – many types available on line – that makes suggestions from mild to wild, to combine your sexual palates. Even the adventure of reigniting passion can be exciting in and of itself, and bring you closer together.

Beyond that, true intimacy happens when we love our partner in their unique “Love Language” and “Sex Language”.

Five Love Languages

If we don't speak to someone in their language, they won't understand us – and speaking louder won't make a difference.. So let's discuss loving and making love in a way that's meaningful to our partner!

A couple came into my office not that long ago.. I asked them, what brought them in.. The wife (let's call her Rachel) responded that it was because the husband (let's call him Daniel), didn't love her.

Daniel blew out a frustrated breath and said, “Why the hell do you think that? I wake up at 5am, after having worked until 11 pm the night before, to shovel the snow, scape the ice off

your car windows, make sure you have enough gas in the tank, and warm up your car so you don't have to. ... If that isn't love, what is?"

Rachel said, "That's really sweet, but you never tell me that you love me."

Daniel responded, "And you keep telling me that you love me, but how about showing me for a change? Actions speak louder than words."

I could tell they both loved each other but weren't feeling it.. My guess was that they probably had different "love languages".. Dr. Gary Chapman, author of "The Five Love Languages" identifies five different languages in which we give and receive love.. The reason he calls them languages is, because unless you express love in someone's love language, they don't get it.. Here's what that looks like:

1. Acts of service: These people show love by doing nice things for those they love; and they only feel loved when someone does nice things for them – think Daniel.
2. Words of affirmation: These people show and receive love by saying and hearing the right words, including, "I love you!" – think Rachel.
3. Touch: These people love hugs, kisses, cuddling, and yes intimacy – both giving and receiving – it isn't just about sex.
4. Quality time: These people give and perceive love by having quality time together.. If you don't make time for them, they can feel unloved.
5. Gifts: These people love to give and receive gifts.

Can you see what happened with Daniel and Rachel? They just weren't expressing love in a language that their partner could comprehend.

With another couple, he bought her jewelry for her birthday and took her out for dinner; she made him his favorite meal for his.. Both parties were really upset, because her language was acts of service; his, gifts.. So neither one of them felt loved or made a fuss over, on their birthdays.. The problem was, each party showed love to the other in the way that they felt loved, not the way their partner did, thereby missing each other.

I urge all of you to find out your own as well as your partner's love language – it can be one of the biggest eye openers, especially if you're not feeling loved.. And when you love yourself, make sure you do so in your own love language.. While some retail therapy as a pick-me-up after a hard week may be fun, but since that's not my primary love language, it won't necessarily make me feel loved!

Five Sex Languages

Beyond love languages, Dr. Doug Weiss has identified five sex languages. Finding out your partner's sex language, and incorporating it into intimacy can take sex off the charts!

1. Fun: These people hate planned sex, because they'd rather be spontaneous – different places, positions, experimenting with different things, creatively exploring all elements – as long as it's fun.. As such, they can take risks, and push the right buttons to get their partner to do the same.
2. Desire: These people want to be desired, craved, wanted, pursued, every which way – sexy texts through the day, playful voicemails, intentional come-ons – because affirmation is important to them.. They don't do rejection very well, so don't tease them if you don't mean it.
3. Pleasure: These people will pursue pleasure to the nth degree, chasing new ideas, getting creative, exploring different ways of giving and receiving pleasure, to expand their sexual repertoire.. When they make love, they're all in.
4. Patience: These people place a high value on finding a safe, secure place, with loads of time – so don't rush them.. They take their time, teasing with the lightest touch, but lots of it.. They're not into anything rough, or being spoken to harshly, because gentleness is their middle name.. After orgasm, they like to lay around, cuddling, spooning, lightly touching, chatting in a meaningful way – “pump and dump” is highly unacceptable to them.. If you're not into slowly taking your time, laying around, this person is not for you!
5. Acceptance/Celebration: For these people, the pleasure of sexuality is holistic.. They make love with their heart, and desire all of you to make love to all of them.. They need a high level of acceptance and intimacy, even in non-sexual parts of their relationships.. Sex starts long before the clothes come off, because they have to get everything right.. They tend to be givers, and love to be valued for mind, body, and soul, in a meaningful way.

Final Word: It's all about what feels most authentic to you, and what reaches your partner just so.. Give yourself the permission to indulge both, without any shame or reservations. I hope your journey ahead is full of joy, love, and laughter!

If you want to truly connect, heal intimate wounds, and get the road map to successful intimate relationships, please join us for Hold Me Tight weekend intensives. Your relationship will be transformed forever!