

Helping Troubled Marriages: Beauty and Brokenness

The Bible's rich teaching on the beauty and brokenness of sexuality is very practical and there is much helpful common grace wisdom from recent research on sexuality. Knowledge of the causes of common sexual problems in marriage can be a great help in pushing back against unhealthy patterns. Patient exploration of possible psychological, relational, and physical problems at the root of any problem is necessary to bring about healing. Some couples can do this on their own, some with a pastor or friend, and some need a professional counsellor.

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I. Sexual Difficulties for Women

- a. Finding energy for sex 42%
- b. Feeling sexual desire 35%
- c. Reaching orgasm 22% (- 48%)
- d. Becoming sexually aroused 20%
- e. Pain most or every time 12%
- f. No sexual difficulty 25%

II. Sexual Difficulties for Men

- a. Ejaculate too soon 22%
- b. Finding energy 16%
- c. Maintaining erection 12%
- d. Desire 9%
- e. Getting erection 4%
- f. No difficulty 50%
- g. Want more 60%

III. Creating dialogue/Listening well

- a. Eph 4:15,29 "Building up in love"
- b. Comfort
 - i. Ours and theirs
- c. Language
- d. Help reduce shame and anxiety
- e. Get talking and touching again
- f. Empathy with hard and different stories
 - i. Sadness, grief and anger
- g. Expectations

IV. Frequency in marriage

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|-----|----------|
| a. Age | 25 | 50 years |
| b. Not in past year | 2% | 9% |
| c. Monthly | 9% | 22% |
| d. Few times/month
or 1/week | 46% | 51% |

- e. 2-3x/week 37% 21%
- f. 4 or more/week 6% 3%

V. Honoring differences between men and women

- a. Desire
- b. Context
- c. Arousal
- d. Frequency
- e. Orgasm

VI. Education – differences, effect of life experiences and relationships

VII. Focus on relationship

**VIII. Focus on Problem Solving:
Problems of Desire, Arousal and Orgasm**

- A. Physical factors
- B. Psychological factors – current and past
- C. Relationship issues
- D. Expectations
- E. Principled boundaries

IX. Pain on intercourse: ~12% women

X. Problems of Male Arousal

- a. Erectile dysfunction
- b. Premature ejaculation
- c. Delayed ejaculation

XI. Conclusion

Recommended reading:

A Celebration of Sex: A Guide to Enjoying God's Gift of Sexual Intimacy. Douglas Rosenau, Thomas Nelson, 2002

Sheet Music, Kevin Leman, Tyndale House, 2003

The Gift of Sex: A Guide to Sexual Fulfillment, Clifford and Joyce Penner, 2003

A Better Story: God, Sex and Human Flourishing. Glynn Harrison, IVP, 2017