



AWAKEN
LOVE
Claim God's Powerful Gift

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Welcome to Awaken-Love,

My husband and I have been blessed in our marriage for 28 years. For over twenty years, we had a good marriage, and sex was good, but it didn't happen very often. Honestly, my hormones determined whether we had sex. Years ago, we figured out what worked and then stuck with the tried and true. We had a safe relationship, avoiding hard conversations, like sex or our struggles. We actively participated in church ministry, but neither prayed together nor had intimate conversations about God.

A few years ago, our marriage went from good to great! After spending eight weeks immersed in a study of Song of Songs, I began to crave intimacy. No longer did I want to hide, but I wanted to be fully known – by both God and my husband. The study revealed how much more God wanted in my marriage and in my relationship with Him. God wants our marriage bed to be En Gedi, an oasis from all the junk of the world, where we find rest and restoration. He wants us to experience amazing freedom with our spouse, where we can be completely vulnerable. He wants us to be completely enraptured with each other - emotionally, spiritually and physically. God wants us to speak truth into each other's lives and to be able to receive it with open arms. He wants us to find comfort in each other when we are weary or broken hearted. He wants us to delight in each other like we delight in nothing else. The amazing thing is that God also wants this same intimacy with us.

In 2012, God called me to share how my life and marriage had been transformed. My transformation truly began with the realization of how beautiful I am to God – not because of anything that I did. It created a freedom to worship Him, to pray over others and to crave His Word and time with Him. My husband and I began praying together and sharing our hearts about God. We also began talking about hard things – including sex. I spent time researching Christian resources on intimacy, learned about my body and was amazed by God's design. God began revealing past experiences that still affected me. As He did, I began sharing them with my husband and praying over them. I began to recognize lies that I believed about sex and men and replaced them with God's truth. I also began to crave my husband and the connection with him as we became more and more present during sex. At times, sex would roll right into praising God.

I taught my first class to eight close friends in obedience to God's calling. My lip was trembling, and my mouth parched, as I wrestled to put words to this amazing thing called sex. Within a couple of weeks, women were sharing what a difference the class was making in their marriage. The curriculum has changed very little since that first class. I have had the amazing privilege to walk along side of over 300 women as they strengthened their marriage and talked about something as holy and intimate as sex.

This study came out of my experiences and transformation. Many of the ideas came from my own struggles for growth and intimacy. It is a part of me. But the only power for change comes from God Himself. Be prayerful and don't be afraid. God wants so much more for you than you can even imagine. My hope for you is that your life is turned upside down and that you begin to crave more intimacy, with God and your husband, so that you are fully known and unashamed.

Blessings,
Ruth

Welcome to Awaken-Love,

I stumbled upon Ruth's website on my own journey to wholeness and freedom in my marriage bed. My husband, Brian, and I were already glued together and sex was refreshing, but we were looking for more of God's truth about intimacy within marriage.

As much as this study is about sex, it is also about knowing God. He desires us to know Him deeply and to surrender all of ourselves to Him. Intimacy with Him is our greatest joy. Just as we can always learn more about God, getting to know our husband is a lifelong journey. God wants us to allow our husband to fully know us and to pursue thoroughly knowing him.

Complete vulnerability within our marriages can be both scary and divine at the same time. In my life, deeper intimacy with God has preceded a growth spurt in my marriage. When I grow closer to Him, I am assured of my safety in growing closer to my husband (who happens to be an imperfect person like myself). I've seen the pattern repeatedly and the Awaken-Love study was no different. Diving deeper with God prepared me for the Awaken-Love study. Grounded in Him, I could joyfully stretch myself. I hope you find the same to be true for you.

As you go through the study, I encourage you to share what you are learning with your husband as much as you feel comfortable. The study blew the doors off communicating about sex within my marriage. Once we could freely and comfortably talk about our marriage bed, then no topic was off limits. Opening communication, discussing the study's content together, discerning what is right for your marriage and growing together are some of the choice fruits of the study.

The impacts of the study extended beyond my bedroom. More than ever, I was gracefully loving Brian where he was and encouraging him to be the man God created Him to be. We learned new things about one another through our uninhibited conversations and intentionally creating blocks of time together. We became more in tune with one another's emotions and felt closer together in everything. Brian led with a new confidence and our whole family's interactions changed for the better.

For me, the class involved the processing of what I learned beyond the six week time frame. I encourage you to build a framework of God's design for sex while in the study and then give yourself the freedom to return to the curriculum and daily articles in the months and years ahead to build on that framework. I'm still gleaning new understandings every time I teach the study.

Seeing God transform women's lives and marriages through the Awaken-Love study is both humbling and a privilege. For some, the study jump starts their journey, for others it is a slow and steady progression and for still others it is two steps forward and one step back. No matter where you are, I pray that this study meets you there and turns your eyes toward God.

May you embrace the completeness of the forgiveness and healing God offers us all. May you intentionally step into the abundant freedom and joy that He intends for your marriage. May your appreciation for the beautiful uniqueness of each one of us, our husbands and our marriages increase. May you leave the study with a new capacity to intimately know and be known. May you share your journey with others so they may be emboldened to pursue their own lifelong journey of growing closer to God and their husband. I pray that your perspective about God's good and holy gift of sex is forever changed.

For His Glory,
Melanie

Week 1 - What is Intimacy?

Congratulations on taking this step to strengthen your marriage. Sex is not easy to talk about and yet it is so powerful. Stepping out in faith to learn God's design for intimacy will change your marriage. Do not settle, but instead claim the blessing that God has for your marriage bed.

There are many reasons to take this class and most that we hear have to do with our husbands' needs.

1. Physical need – they will explode in 72 hours.
2. Emotional need – similar to our need to talk.
3. Builds them up – they will feel like they can handle anything.
4. Physical benefits – blood pressure, sleep, pain, immune system, and headaches.

Our hope is that you take this class not just for your husband, but for you. This study is about us.

1. God created sex for us as much as for our husbands.
2. We can experience a taste of the Garden of Eden in our marriages – naked and unashamed.
3. Sex is a powerful way that we can experience love and can love our spouse.
4. Marital intimacy is a picture of the relationship that God wants with us – He wants to know us and be known by us.

We have to work toward this as sex is not easy – that is why it creates intimacy.

1. We have to stretch ourselves.
2. We have to let our guard down and be real.
3. We have to be willing to receive.
4. We have to communicate with our spouse about hard stuff.
5. We have to be willing to let God change us and not limit what He can do through us.

Sex isn't just about sex. Take a moment to digest that. Most Christian women have erected a thick wall between their spirituality and their sexuality...Our sexuality deeply impacts our spirituality and vice versa. Our confusion and hidden pain related to sex is intricately intertwined with our present relationship with God.

– Authentic Intimacy

Foundational Truths

As we journey together to discover God's intention for our marriage bed and claim His holy gift of intimacy with our husband, we will stand firm on His Truth.

1. God can transform you and your marriage.
2. God created sex for wives as much as for husbands.
3. Sex is a powerful gift from God that connects us in ways that are unexplainable.
4. Sex must be measured against God's design – oneness, knowing, pleasure, etc.
5. God desires freedom in our marriage bed, but we must deal with the lies, baggage and body image issues that steal our joy.
6. God wants us to experience so much more – marriage is not supposed to get boring.
7. Sex is much more than intercourse – it is seeing each other naked and unashamed, it is joining two into one and it is a holy communion with God.
8. The best thing we can do for our kids is have a lifelong love affair with our spouse.
9. We can learn to talk about sex in good and healthy ways to equip and encourage others.
10. Intimacy is always about our relationship with God – it is a mirror.

Mixer Question

1. Please share your name, how long you have been married and the ages of your children (if applicable).

Great sex is a parable of the Gospel – to be utterly accepted in spite of your sin, to be loved by the One you admire to the sky. – Tim Keller, *Sex and the End of Loneliness*

Introductory Business

1. Class Outline
2. Books
3. Daily Articles
4. Homework
5. Confidentiality
6. Discussion Guidelines
7. Definition of Sex
8. Seek Encouragement
9. Feedback for Class
10. Commit to Pray
11. My Qualifications and Story

Top Twelve Tips to Having a Sexual Awakening

It's about a different mindset more than a new skillset.

1. Pray about it.
2. Read Song of Songs.
3. Surround yourself with other women that will encourage you.
4. Read books about sex and intimacy.
5. Practice a lot.
6. Receive healing and/or forgiveness for your baggage.
7. Recognize lies about sex and replace them with truth.
8. Don't shy away from physical contact with your spouse because it might lead to sex.
9. Pray with your spouse.
10. Read with your spouse.
11. Share your struggles with your spouse.
12. Laugh and have fun with your spouse.

Well, for our husbands, we are the only legitimate sexual release they have. Personally, I want to be the best I can be. I want him to feel blessed to have a wife who loves having sex with him. I want him to have the confidence that comes from being sexually satisfied. For you, you are going to find a lot more security in your marriage if you embrace intimacy and pleasure. The more you and your husband are connected in your hearts, the more safe you will feel and that is part of what sex does for us. - Giving Up the Good Girl, <http://christiannymphos.org>

Song of Songs – Chapters 1-2:7: Longing, Insecurity and Praise

Thought to be written when Solomon was young, Song of Songs, is a collection of romantic and erotic poetry. The poems between two lovers – a man and a woman – are not written in chronological order, but are a series of recollections both before and after their marriage. Song of Songs celebrates the sexual relationship in the covenant of marriage.

1. It starts with a kiss.
2. Battle of compliments.
3. Insecurities and assurances.
4. En Gedi – an oasis from the world.

Mixer Questions

1. What gets you in the mood?
2. How do to let your husband know you're interested tonight?

A wife who is enjoying sex and visibly getting into it is one of the most thrilling experiences any husband could have. – Kevin Leman, *Sheet Music*, p. 83

What is Intimacy?

This class is about more than sex. It is about being known – emotionally, physically and spiritually – between husband and wife and between us and God. We are created with a desire to know God and to be known by Him. God designed us to know our husband and be known by him as well. Though revealing ourselves can be scary at times, deep down, we all want to know that we are truly known and still completely accepted and loved. That is intimacy.

1. What creates intimacy in marriage?
2. What creates intimacy with God?
3. How does sex create intimacy? Should we embrace sexual difficulties and differences as opportunities to build intimacy?

Differences between husbands and wives can create tension, but working through difficulties together can build intimacy. In a survey on *The Marriage Bed*, Christian couples were asked what is lacking in their marriage. The top six answers for wives were romance, communication, non-sexual touch, time together, sex and affirmation. The top six answers for husbands were the same in a slightly different order: sex, romance, time together, non-sexual touch, communication and affirmation. All of these things positively contribute to knowing and enjoying one another.

4. How does our sexuality (our relationship with our husband) parallel our spirituality (our relationship with God)?

Hint: Think vulnerability, it's unexplainable, undefinable connection, freedom, letting go of control, surrendering, giving and receiving, etc.

Sexual intimacy is a powerful picture of the Gospel – of the degree of intimacy and ecstasy we are capable of having with God. And the Christian marriage is designed to be a showcase of this masterpiece. – Authentic Intimacy

I'm also wary that our culture tries to replace intimacy with technique. In search of the next great sexual experience, some people seem to go out of their way to concoct a ridiculous alignment of bodies or some new method to bring about a new pleasure, when what they really need is to work on their relationship.

- Kevin Leman, *Sheet Music*, p. 80

Homework

1. Reading

- Song of Songs – Read Chapter 4-5:1 out loud, thinking about God’s view of sex.
- Intimate Issues Chapter 1 – What Does God Think about Sex?
- Intimate Issues Chapter 2 – How Can I Be Godly and Sensuous?
- Intimate Issues Chapter 3 – How Do I Shift into Sexual Gear?
- Sheet Music Chapter 1 – A Tale of Two Couples

2. Application

- Kegel Exercises.
- Give your husband a sensuous massage. Experience the enjoyment of giving, focus on feeling rather than rubbing and encourage feedback in order to practice communication.
- Pay attention to what messages you hear about sex from the world.

Think about It!

Questions to consider on your own, with a friend or with your husband after completing the reading homework. These questions will prepare you for next week’s class discussion.

1. Can you relate to all the reasons that God created sex? Why or why not?
2. Can you relate to being both Godly and sensuous? Is there a division?
3. Which characteristics of a sensuous women are easy for you? Which do you want to work on?
4. Do you believe your mind has that much power?
5. Do you believe that sex can be “an amazing marital glue?” How so?

Week 2 – God’s View of Sex

Song of Songs – Chapters 2:8-3:5: Growth of Love and Intensity during Courtship

1. Peering through lattice.
2. Foxes – wives’ intuition.
3. Dream of insecurity.

Mixer Questions

1. Before you got married, how did you learn about sex (not making babies)?
2. What messages have you heard from the church about sex?

What Does God Think about Sex?

1. God gave the gift of sex that you might create life. God allows us to create life out of our love. He could have done it another way.

“...be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth” - Genesis 1:28

2. God gave the gift of sex for intimate oneness. God desires us to be so bonded to our spouse that our body, soul and spirit are woven together.

“A man shall leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.” – Genesis 2:24

3. God gave the gift of sex for knowledge. The Hebrew word for “sexual intercourse” is “to know.” Sex allows us to know our spouse in ways that no one else can and sex communicates what we cannot say with words. It is a process of revealing who you are that should result in better sex over time.

“And the man *knew* Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bore Cain...”
– Genesis 4:1

4. God gave the gift of sex for pleasure. God dedicates an entire book of the Bible to the pleasure of sexual intimacy. He designed our bodies to give and receive pleasure. He desires us to “drink deeply” with our spouse. God wants us to enjoy His gift of abandoned pleasure with our husband.

“Eat, O friends, and drink; drink your fill, O lovers.” – Song of Songs 5:1

5. God gave the gift of sex as a defense against temptation. – A healthy sexual relationship impacts more than our bedroom. It provides a reservoir of memories so that our eyes and thoughts do not need to look elsewhere.

“Drink water from your own cistern, running water from your own well.”
– Proverbs 5:15

6. God gave the gift of sex for comfort. Sex full of compassion and love can be a solace; a reminder that you are a team. Physiologically, sex can release tension and stress.

“Then David comforted his wife Bathsheba, and he went to her and lay with her.” - 2 Samuel 12:24

7. God gave the gift of sex as a picture of the intimacy He wants with us. Our sexual oneness with our spouse is an earthly picture of the spiritual oneness between Christ and His bride. It defies comprehension.

“For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh. This is a profound mystery but I am talking about Christ and the church.” – Ephesians 5:31-32

Your body was created to be sexual and to experience sexual pleasure as part of the image of God. Your sexual drive speaks to the innate, God-given passion to connect, commit, celebrate and share yourself in the most intimate way with another human being. – Dr. Juli Slattery, *Authentic Intimacy.com*

Solomon's Bride

How can we be both Godly and sensuous? Solomon's bride, whose sexuality God blessed and approved of, provides us an example to emulate with confidence. We need to be:

1. Responsive – Let go of control, be in the moment with our spouse, allow our self to receive pleasure and show him how much we enjoy it.
2. Adventurous – Try new things or new places, initiate, avoid putting limits where limits are not required, and not hide our body from our spouse.
3. Uninhibited – Tantalize our husband, tell him what we want him to do, don't hold back our responses, feel freedom to initiate and suggest new ideas, not be distracted by how we look or sound, and reveal our wants and dreams.
4. Expressive – Be verbally free, show what we feel, compliment our husband, and seduce him with our words.
5. Sensuous – Use all five senses to experience pleasure with our spouse, recall memories or meditate on our husband's body to prepare our self.

Christian women should be the greatest of all lovers on earth because, as believers, we not only possess physical passion, we have the ability to infuse holiness into our sensuousness. – *Intimate Issues*, p. 19

We must commit to move forward in our journey to becoming the Godly and sensuous lovers that God created us to be.

Discussion Question

1. Why do many of us think there is a division between being sensuous and Godly?

**Sex is perhaps 80 percent imagination and mind and about 20 percent friction.
– Dr. Douglas Rosenau, *A Celebration of Sex***

The Power of the Mind

Most women know how hard it can be to connect with our husband when our mind just isn't into it. It seems that our minds have this giant toggle switch, and when it is "off," it doesn't matter what our husbands do, we won't enjoy it. In order for our switch to be "on" it helps to feel:

1. Safe – protected, respected and cared for.
2. Relaxed – we need to transition from mommy or employee to _____.
3. Loved – with our love language, through non-sexual touch, and with eye contact.
4. Known – we want our husband to learn to read our body and hear what we really mean when we speak.
5. Beautiful – our husband's guarded eyes lead to him being enraptured by us and our body, he shares his thrill by complimenting us.
6. Wanted – he is not doing it just for us, but because he loves doing it and is amazed by us.

We must realize the power of harnessing our minds to jumpstart our bodies as we engage with our husband as well. Do Christian women allow themselves to think "like that" and is it "ok?"

1. Did God create sex before or after the fall in the Garden of Eden?
2. Did Jesus experience sexual thoughts and temptations?
3. Are sexual thoughts wrong?
4. What is lust?
5. What role do sexual thoughts play in our arousal?

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin.

Hebrews 4:15

Our sexual response is made of a composite of three things:

1. Physical stimulation.
2. Our connection to our spouse.
3. Our beliefs about sex.

We have a choice. We can prioritize connecting with our spouse or we can allow sex to get boring or even stop all together. As we age, our physical responsiveness naturally decreases. However, through the years, if we are deepening our emotional and spiritual connection, then we can look forward to having some of the best sex of their lives as an older couple. That's the importance of pursuing a lifelong journey of knowing, and being know by, our spouse.

God desires that a husband and wife be naked and unashamed, glorifying in the giving and receiving of exquisite pleasure and rejoicing in the intimate oneness that sex brings. – *Intimate Issues*, p. 11

Homework

1. Reading

- Song of Songs – Read Chapter 7, thinking about the freedom the couple enjoys.
- Intimate Issues Chapter 6 – Where Can I Go to Buy a New Body?
- Intimate Issues Chapter 8 – How Can I Get Over the Guilt of Past Sexual Sin?
- Sheet Music Chapter 2 – A Crowded Bed
- Sheet Music Chapter 11 – Turning Off the Turnoffs
- Sheet Music Chapter 16 – A Whale of a Tail

2. Application

- Kegel Exercises.
- Have your husband give you a sensuous massage. Experience the enjoyment of receiving, focus on staying in the moment and practice letting yourself be felt.
- Bring one lie about sex or piece of baggage from the past to share next week.

Think about It!

Questions to consider on your own, with a friend or with your husband after completing the reading homework. These questions will prepare you for next week's class discussion.

1. What lies about sex are hampering your marriage bed? Make a list of the lies about sex that the world, your upbringing or anyone else has fed you. Replace them with God's truth.
2. Do you have sexual sin from your past that you have not repented and been cleansed from? Ask God to reveal memories to you so that you can make a complete list of your sexual history, pray over it and be done with it. Ask God to free you from this baggage and renew you.
3. Are there body image issues that keep you from enjoying freedom with your husband?
4. How have childhood and early experiences shaped your ideas about sex?

Week 3 – Naked and Unashamed

Song of Songs – Chapters 3:6-5:1: The Wedding

1. The wedding night.
2. God’s encouragement to “Eat, O friends, and drink; drink your fill, O lovers.”

Mixer Question

1. When have you felt the closest to your husband? Why?

Life in Lubbock, Texas taught me...that sex is the most awful, filthy thing on earth. And you should save it for someone you love. – Butch Hancock, singer, songwriter

Lies about Sex

We are continually inundated with lies about sex in general and sex within the covenant of marriage. Our upbringing, our church, the media (oh my, THE MEDIA!!!) and even well-meaning friends can lead us astray. What lies are impacting your marriage bed?

Lies about Sex outside of Marriage	Lies about Sex within Marriage
From the Church	From the Church
From Our Family	From Our Family
From the Media	From the Media

Baggage from the Past

We all have baggage from our past. The question is whether the lies, guilt and shame are left at the foot of the cross or brought into our marriage bed. Whether toting an overnight bag or pushing a luggage cart, we must address our baggage with our Heavenly Father. Only He can free us, restore us, and redeem our past for His glory.

Common sources of baggage are:

1. Guilt of promiscuity.
2. Anger or unforgiveness regarding our husband's past relationship(s).
3. Husband's unfaithfulness or lust.
4. Abuse.

...I have found guilt over previous sexual experiences, and a sense of being bound to previous sexual partners, to be one of the most common hindrances to a greater enjoyment of sex within marriage. - Kevin Leman, *Sheet Music*, p. 208

How to Get Rid of the Lies and Baggage

Our past formed us, but it does not have to control us. Secrets hold so much power over us, but when we share those strongholds with a fellow believer in prayer, healing takes place. God may heal you in an instant, or it may happen over time, but God will heal you. Nothing is too big or too complicated for Him to heal and redeem.

**Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.
- James 5:16**

1. Ask God to reveal the full extent of the lies, past mistakes, hurts and/or unforgiveness that you have held on to.
2. Repent and ask God to help you fully forgive yourself and others, to neutralize memories and to replace lies with truth.
3. Actively receive His forgiveness and healing for past mistakes and hurts. Ask for help if necessary.
4. Fill yourself with truth and new expectations through prayer and by reading Scripture and other Christian resources.
5. Practice walking in freedom by taking small steps to create new memories.
6. Stay present with your husband by talking and opening your eyes when you are intimate together.
7. Be open to opportunities to share your experience to help others.

Although sharing your past and painful experiences with your spouse will create intimacy, carefully discern how much detail you need to share. The important part is sharing how you allowed your baggage to affect your marriage bed.

See the Healing Resources page for recommended Bible studies and books that address sexual healing.

Body Image Issues

Female dissatisfaction with their appearance can begin at an early age and often continues for a lifetime. The vast majority of adult women are unhappy with their bodies. The very same bodies that God fearfully and wonderfully made.

Many women do not see an accurate reflection of their bodies in the mirror or in their minds. This lack of self-acceptance makes it challenging to feel attractive and to share our body with our husband. Whenever we criticize or hide our body, we are essentially saying that our body isn't good enough for him to be amazed by. Conversely, in all stages of our marriage, our husband is captivated by the perfection of our body for him.

What kinds of things make this struggle more challenging?

1. Looking at magazines.
2. Focusing too much on your outer beauty.
3. A husband that has not kept his eyes pure.
4. Comparing ourselves to others.
5. Husbands comments – about others, us, or silence.
6. Only seeing the things we dislike instead of the things that we like.
7. Comparing our pre-baby body to our post-baby body.

Self-rejection is the greatest enemy of the spiritual life because it contradicts the sacred voice that calls us God's beloved. – Henri Nouwen, *Life of the Beloved*

Be Encouraged!

God's desire for us and our marriage bed is freedom from the lies, baggage and body image issues that steal our joy. He wants us to love our body and be encouraged by our husband's thrill as he takes in our beauty. What can we do to walk in this truth?

1. It is impossible to live up to the world's standards, so stop looking at them.
2. Know that God made you unique and beautiful. He doesn't make junk or mistakes.
3. A pure husband should be your standard. Your aim is to enrapture him and only him.
4. Take care of what God gave you. Strive to be healthy so that you will feel good.
5. Spend time focusing outward by serving others.
6. Dress confidently in clothes that flatter you.
7. Believe your husband when he says you are hot, sexy or beautiful. Enjoy your husband's thrill and adoration.
8. Enjoy soft lighting and take a peek at yourself once in a while.
9. Live out of a fullness instead of an emptiness.
10. Choose confidence and self-acceptance.

Good girls grow into wives who possess incredible power to give and receive sexual pleasure. - Giving Up the Good Girl, <http://christiannymphos.org>

Homework

1. Reading

- Song of Songs – Chapter 5, focusing on how the couple communicates and uses their five senses.
- Intimate Issues Chapter 15 – How Can Sex Go from Boring to Sizzling?
- Intimate Issues Chapter 17 – What's Not Okay in Bed?
- Intimate Issues Chapter 18 – Are Quickies Okay with God?
- Sheet Music Chapter 13 – Your Sexual IQ

2. Application

- Kegel Exercises.
- Pray about the baggage and lies in your marriage bed that you want to get rid of or heal from. After your time with the Lord, take some practical steps to move forward. If helpful, then create a reminder of your forgiveness and healing.
- Greet your husband with a 15 second kiss every day this week.
- Take a shower with your husband this week.
- Wear some under garments that you feel attractive in this week. Go purchase some new undies if you need to!
- Your husband has a secret homework assignment this week. No peeking!

Think about It!

Questions to consider on your own, with a friend or with your husband after completing the reading homework. These questions will prepare you for next week's class discussion.

1. Do you have preconceived ideas of what is ok, or what is "real sex," that you have brought into your marriage?
2. Think about some creative ways to add sizzle to your sex life based on Song of Songs.
3. Is it hard to talk about sex with your husband? Why?
4. Make a list of ways that you can make your bedroom more romantic.
5. Do you have specific questions about "Our Stuff" or "His Stuff?" Email questions or topics that you would like covered.

Week 4 - Boundaries, Communication, Exploring the Senses, & Romantic Bedroom

Song of Songs – Chapters 5:2-6:13: Indifference and Reconciliation

1. Another dream and guilt personified.
2. She visually enjoys his body and verbally shares her pleasure. She uses her mind to daydream about her lover.
3. Repeat of familiar compliments.

Mixer Question

1. What's one thing that would help husbands love their wives better?

God gives tremendous sexual freedom within the marriage relationship. But God also sets forth some prohibitions that we must honor. – *Intimate Issues*, p. 199

God leaves much in our sexual relationship with our husbands up to our discretion. – *Intimate Issues*, p. 201

Boundaries – What's okay in our marriage bed?

1. Is it against God's Word? The Bible prohibits fornication, adultery, homosexuality, impurity (virginity and lifestyle), orgies, prostitution, lust (romantic notions, erotic novels, desire for someone other than spouse), sodomy, obscenity, bestiality, and incest.
2. Is it something that you and your husband are both comfortable with? No one should ever be forced to participate in something that they don't want to, but God gives married couples tremendous freedom to enjoy each other. If you love and trust your spouse, then as he reveals his desires, you need to move towards him. You also need to reveal your desires to him. If you limit what you enjoy, then you must examine why. Have you believed lies? Do you need healing from past baggage? Lovingly communicate as you take steps toward the joy and freedom God intends for your marriage bed.

3. Is it something that creates intimacy with your spouse? Does it bring you closer together? Does it help you know your husband and be known by him? Are you present mind, body and soul? Be on guard against impure motivations like pornography.

Sin is more a matter of internal heart and soul conditions than of body parts and their use. - Mary Ann Mayo, *Intimate Issues*, p. 210

Fantasies

The ultimate goal during sex is to be absolutely present – physically, emotionally, spiritually and mentally. Many women fantasize during sex - in fact many sex books recommend fantasizing as a way to help a woman experience an orgasm. Let's understand more about fantasies so that we can move toward God's best in our marriage bed.

1. Dreams. We do not have control over our dreams. If we have a crazy sex dream, then we need to just let it go. However, we do have control over what we feed our mind during the day. We need to take our thoughts captive and only allow our mind to daydream about our husband.
2. Fantasy to Orgasm. Using fantasies to experience an orgasm with our husband can be a short cut to avoid hard conversations or growth that God desires to make our sex life better. If you are bored, then do something to change what is happening in your marriage bed. For example, if you are fantasizing about sex on the beach, then live out that fantasy with your husband in your own bedroom. Let him know you more by sharing your words and creativity with him.
3. Ingrained Fantasies. Some women experience fantasies ingrained from their past that may mask unresolved pain or serve as a coping mechanism. These fantasies can feel confusing, troubling or burdensome. Shannon Ethridge's book *The Fantasy Fallacy* provides biblical insight into understanding these fantasies. Gaining insight to our past through our fantasies often allows us to understand what they are really about and then they don't hold such power over us. For women experiencing these types of fantasies, it may be a gradual process of gaining freedom while focusing on being more present with their husband during sex.

Tips to Stay Emotionally Present to Create Intimacy

- Pay attention to your body and communicate what it yearns for.
- Talk to your spouse to reconnect.
- Get rid of the “should” and “should not” – stop worrying.
- Cultivate a beginner’s mindset so that every time is new.
- Look at your husband; especially into his eyes which are the window to his soul.

Your marriage is unique. There is no other couple in the world who has the exact same needs, struggles, history, personality and questions as you and your man. You need God’s help to apply principles to your own unique journey toward sexual pleasure. – Dillow & Slattery, *Passion Pursuit*

And where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. – 2 Corinthians 3:17

In light of God’s limited prohibitions and the incredible freedom to explore new sexual delights within marriage, ultimately, we need to pray about the things that are not black and white and be sensitive to the Holy Spirit. We must seek God’s wisdom concerning our marriage and discern what is best for us and our husband. What may be good and right for one marriage, may not be for another, and it may even change over time.

Discussion Question

1. Brainstorm examples of how masturbation creates intimacy or creates separation in marriage.

Creates Intimacy	Creates Separation

What you do in the position verbally will matter more than what position you're in.
Kevin Leman, *Sheet Music*, p. 89

Communication

Let's face it, talking about sex is hard. It can be awkward and terrifying. However, if our husband can trust that we will gently communicate what we need, then he can stop worrying whether he is doing everything right, and become fully engaged rather than a spectator. If we want our spouse to know us better, then we must reveal our self. We need to communicate:

1. How complicated sex can be.
2. How good we want it to be.
3. What we need to get there – relaxation, romance, foreplay, full undivided attention, variety, technique, etc.
4. That we want to know what will please him, too.
5. Instead of saying “no,” share where we are and how he can help us get to where we need to be.
6. Whether we are done.

If you want to frustrate a man, tell him nothing. – Kevin Leman, *Sheet Music*, p. 99

Tips for Communicating about Sex

1. Read books together.
2. Show him what you enjoy. Use your own hands, guide his hands or use non-sensual zones for demonstration.
3. Come up with your own terminology.
4. Share your dreams.
5. Practice using fast moving games like 2-Minute Poker.
6. Create excitement using your words.
7. Take a sex quiz and compare answers.
8. Play a game where one person has to vocalize what they want the other person to do to them.
9. Talk when you are alone with your spouse in the car.
10. Explain feelings or movements by noting similarities in his and your genitalia.

Exploring the Senses

God gave us five senses to explore and experience our husband. So much noise in life can numb us to the world around us. Just like the blind person that hears a pin drop, we too can strengthen our senses, as we eliminate distractions and focus. During sex we can draw ourselves out of the craziness of our head by focusing on what we experience through our senses. We can increase the passion in our marriage bed by appealing to all five senses.

Sense	Example	Describe Your Experience
Taste		
Touch		
Smell		

Discussion Questions

1. Do we limit what we experience through our senses during sex? With God?
2. What happens when we are worried about the future rather than enjoying the present?
3. How do we incorporate and expand our senses during sex? With God?

A Romantic Bedroom

Our bedroom should be inviting to us and our husband. We should strive to make our bedroom our own retreat from the world to be refreshed by one another. Some simple ways to turn our bedroom into our personal En Gedi are:

1. Get rid of the clutter.
2. In the winter, use an electric fireplace or electric blankets.
3. Nightlight for easy mood lighting.
4. Pads and pillows – for propping and different positions.
5. Create a tool kit – massage oil, lube, blindfold, vibrator, etc.
6. Lock the door.
7. Try to avoid hard conversations in the bedroom.
8. Candles and mirrors.
9. Music for setting the mood.
10. Sensuous artwork.
11. Dark chocolate or other favorites.
12. Invite God into our bed.

Discussion Question

1. How do we invite God into our marriage bed?

WARNING - Some of the daily articles this week may be very detailed. Skip over the ones that are not right for your marriage bed.

Homework

1. Reading

- Song of Songs – Chapters 1 and 2, noticing who takes the lead and when.
- Intimate Issues Chapter 4 – How Can I Relate When He’s a Microwave and I’m a Crockpot?
- Intimate Issues Chapter 7 – How Do I Make Love with Children Wrapped Around My Knees?
- Sheet Music Chapter 6 – The Big “O”
- Sheet Music Chapter 7 – Oral Delights
- Sheet Music Chapter 12 – Sex’s Greatest Enemy
- Sheet Music Chapter 14 – Too Pooped to Whoop

2. Application

- Kegel Exercises.
- Write FREEDOM on a sticky note and put it on your bathroom mirror, dashboard, undies drawer or somewhere that will remind you of the freedom God desires for your marriage bed.
- Play 2-Minute Poker or another game to practice communicating.
- Work on expanding your senses during sex. Use silk, feathers, music, lighting, your voice, food, etc. There are more ideas on pages 229-230 in *Intimate Issues*.
- Take some steps to make your bedroom a sensuous oasis.
- Your husband has a secret homework assignment this week. No peeking!

Think about It!

Questions to consider on your own, with a friend or with your husband after completing the reading homework. These questions will prepare you for next week’s class discussion.

1. Why is sex typically so much more complicated for women than for men?
2. Are you really open to new possibilities in your marriage bed or have you just found what works for you and expect that is what will happen?
3. Do you consider knowing your husband more, and being known by your husband more, a lifelong journey?
4. Email questions or topics about “Our Stuff” that you would like covered.

Week 5 – How Our Body Works

Song of Songs – Chapters 7-8:4: Increasing Intimacy, Desire and Freedom as Marriage Matures

1. The dance – striptease.
2. Go to the countryside.
3. Like a brother – kiss outside.

Mixer Question

1. What is your ideal date or most romantic thing that your husband could do for you? What about a small romantic gesture?

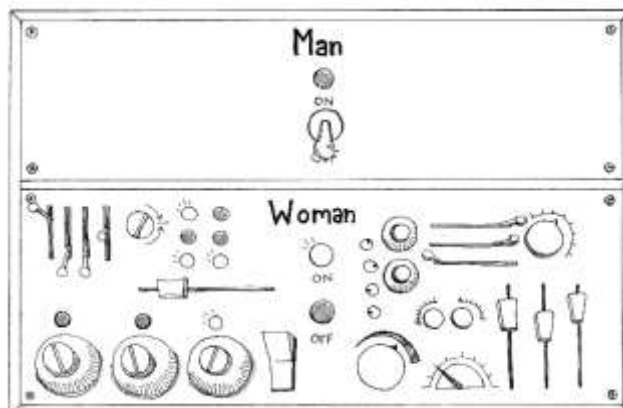
Warning - Our sexuality is as individual as a finger print. Be sensitive to others because we don't have the same experiences. Be careful with your voice and expression during our discussion.

God's created differences between man and women are nothing short of holy.
Differences bring balance, fullness, and completion to a marriage.
– *Intimate Issues*, p. 41

Our Stuff

If a man has recently married, he must not be sent to war or have any other duty laid on him. For one year he is to be free to stay at home and bring happiness to the wife he has married. - Deuteronomy 24:5

God knows that we are tricky...He designed us!



Complicated. Tricky. Mysterious.

These are all words used to describe our bodies. We can begin to think that we got the short end of the stick...why didn't God just give us a "LAUNCH" button?

But what we tend to think of in a very negative light can also be looked at through a positive lens.

Every inch of the female anatomy can trigger sexual longing.
- *Intimate Issues*, p. 37

God created our bodies capable of experiencing pleasure in an endless variety of ways. Our creative and erotic minds can connect emotions to physical expression. We can enjoy different pathways to orgasm, different triggers, combined stimulation, and discern real connection from just going through the motions.

In her book *Orgasms*, based on information collected from first hand conversations with thousands of women, Lou Paget shares the ten ways which women have experienced orgasms:

1. Clitoral
2. Vaginal and Cervical
3. G-Spot
4. Urethral
5. Breast and Nipple
6. Mouth
7. Anal
8. Blended – more than one area.
9. Zone – a new arousal area typically experienced by people with spinal cord injury.
10. Fantasy – the mind alone.

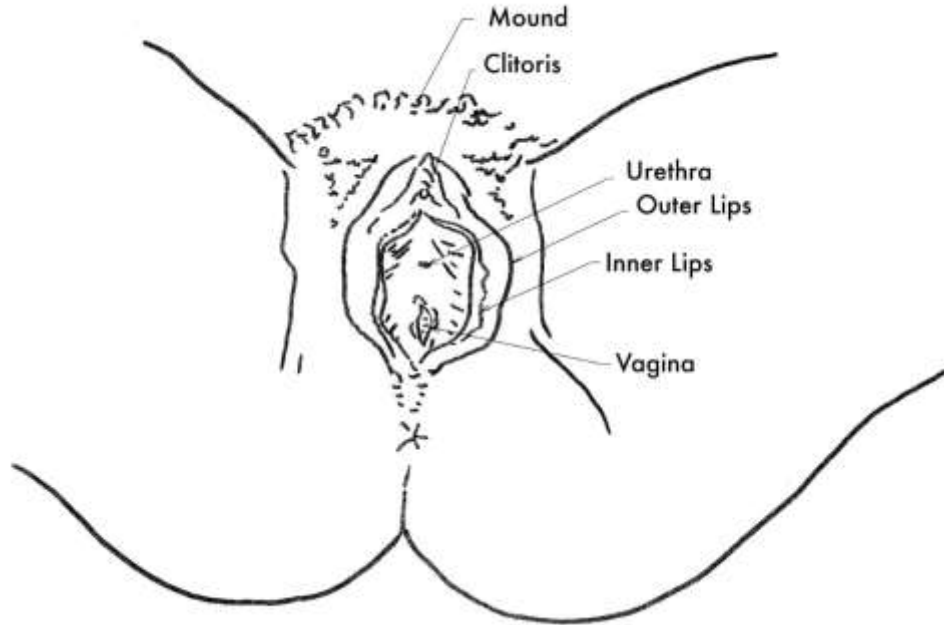
Your plants are an orchard of pomegranates with choice fruits, with henna and nard, nard and saffron, calamus and cinnamon, with every kind of incense tree, with myrrh and aloe and all the finest spices. You are a garden fountain, a well of flowing water streaming down from Lebanon. – Song of Songs 4:13-15

This list shouldn't add pressure to our life or serve as a to-do list, but hopefully helps us appreciate the amazing capabilities of our body.

For years, scientists have tried to define what women should experience during sex. Let's instead begin to trust our own body, delight in the pleasure that we enjoy and not limit what God gives us to experience.

Relaxing, communicating with our husband and being vulnerable can be a challenge, but that is part of the reason that sex creates intimacy. We are on a lifelong journey with our husband, and as we continue to "know" each other, sex will never get boring.

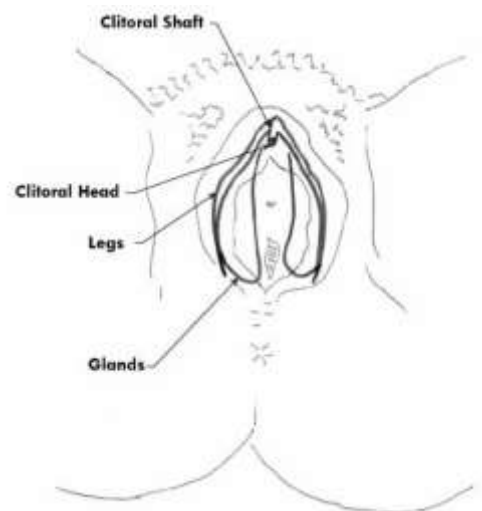
Our Genitalia



My beloved has gone down to his garden, to the beds of spice... – Song of Songs 6:2

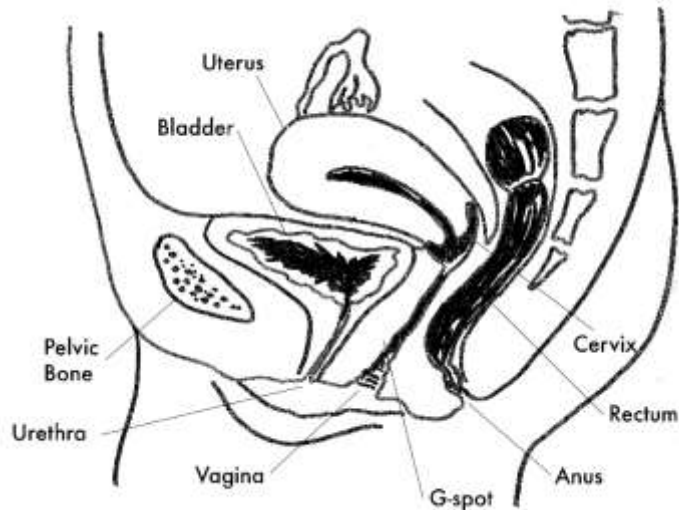
Clitoral Orgasm

- Typically the easiest orgasm to experience.
- There's more than just the clitoral head. The shaft extends up, while the legs and glands extend around the vagina.
- Most clearly defined orgasm – a pinpoint of pleasure caving into a radiating outward – courtesy of the pudendal nerve system.
- Manual or oral stimulation typically are the simplest paths to orgasm.
- Use a lubricant.
- Tease the area to warm it up.
- Engage your mind and senses.
- Combination of tensing (legs, abdomen, pelvis) and relaxing your mind.
- General ramping up of stimulation.
- Once you find the spot, stay steady and lean into it.
- Deep abdominal breathing, acting out, holding your breath, or rapid breathing can trigger an orgasm.
- Show your husband what works for you.
- A vibrator can help in learning.



G-Spot Orgasm

- The G-Spot is deep tissue between the front wall of the vagina and the urethra.
- It may feel like nothing or it may feel great when you are highly aroused.
- Less clearly defined orgasm, more of a full body experience and a pushing out – courtesy of the pelvic and hypo gastric nerve system.
- Responds to firm stimulation in a “come hither” motion with the pad of the finger.
- It is not unusual to feel like you need to urinate, so relax and move past this worry.
- Can be combined with manual or oral stimulation of the clitoris to provide a turbo boost.
- If your body does not initially respond, then be open to a gradual awakening over time as you revisit this area.



Deep Spot Orgasm

- The Deep Spot is located deep in the vagina near the cervix, usually on the front wall.
- It feels similar to a G-Spot orgasm; same nerve system.
- Responds to firm stimulation like the G-Spot.
- Must be highly aroused so that the uterus has tilted up and moved the cervix out of the way.
- Can be stimulated manually or during intercourse.
- For some women, the Deep Spot acts as a surefire trigger for an orgasm.

Intercourse

- The number one question asked – “How do I have an orgasm during intercourse?”
- Statistically – 1/3 of women orgasm hands free, 1/3 of women can with help, and 1/3 never orgasm OR 1/3 always orgasm, 1/3 sometimes do, and 1/3 never orgasm during intercourse.
- God designed it all and it is all good. There is no hierarchy of orgasm. The important question is “Are you getting to know each other?”

Tips to Experience More Pleasure during Intercourse

- Kegel exercises.
- Combined stimulation – his hand, your hand, or vibrator.
- Think in terms of the other ways that you experience orgasms and adapt your positions and movements to mimic them.
- Take control of the movement to figure out what feels good to you.
- Come up with a Plan B to take the pressure off of both of you.
- Focus on connecting intimately during intercourse, not just trying to have an orgasm.
- Train your body to become more flexible in what it responds to.
- Never say never.

**It takes time, experience, knowledge and practice to excel at being a good lover.
– Kevin Leman, *Sheet Music*, p. 96**

Your spouse's commitment to you should be your motivation to excel!

Oral Sex

- One of the most consistent ways for women to orgasm.
- Utilizes natural lubrication.
- The tongue provides 360 degrees of movement.
- Superior to manual stimulation because no hangnails or calluses.
- One of the most intimate ways to be known by your husband.
- Can be combined with manual stimulation of the clitoris or G-spot.
- Set patterns to entice and awaken the body – ex. lick 3 times part way up and then the 4th time over the clitoris and hood.
- Balance of movement and stillness – action and reaction.
- Three reassurances we need to hear from your husband:
 - We have all the time in the world.
 - I love your scent and taste.
 - I love doing this.

Be freshly showered and believe him when he says these things!

- Prop your hips up on a pillow to make it more comfy for your husband.

Awake, north wind, and come, south wind! Blow on my garden, that its fragrance may spread everywhere. Let my beloved come into his garden and taste its choice fruits. – Song of Songs 4:16

Female Ejaculation

- Some women do, some woman don't.
- Years of women feeling ashamed because they thought they were peeing the bed has now been skewed the opposite direction by pornography depicting many women squirting across the room to set up a whole new expectation.
- Can happen before, during, or after orgasm, but at very high levels of excitement and after extended arousal.
- Can be associated with G-Spot stimulation, but not always.

Toys

- The Bible does not address toys. Prayerfully discern what it right for your marriage. Does it create intimacy?
- Based on Deuteronomy 24:5, recommend spending at least a year figuring things out without toys. It takes time to get to know each other.
- In order to stretch in other ways of knowing each other (words, feeling, thoughts), there may be times to put toys aside to focus on just the two of you. Learning new things takes time.
- Can provide a different way to be known and can be very intimate to share with your spouse.
- Can aid in figuring out how to have an orgasm or how to experience an orgasm during intercourse. Useful for quickies, variety, or Plan B.
- Can help a wife enjoy sex even when there are physical challenges.
- No more addictive than having sex exactly the same way every time.

Anal Sex

- The Bible does not address anal sex. Sodomy was men raping men. Prayerfully discern what is right for your marriage because there are many cautions.
- A wife should never be pressured into anal sex. The wife must be the one that wants to try anal sex because she must be relaxed to avoid injury.
- Beware of the motivation. Anal sex is prevalent in pornography.
- Diligent hygiene is critical - whatever goes in this area goes nowhere else.
- The tissue in the anus is very thin so injuries can occur – fissures, infections, sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), tearing, prolapse, evidence of increased incidence of colon cancer.
- There is no natural lubrication.
- Going slow, extended foreplay, trust and clear communication are essential.

Multiple Orgasms

- More common in older women.
- Try a short cool down period and then ramp back up.
- Vibrators can be a good way to get there.

Painful Sex

- There are numerous causes – Vaginismus, yeast infections, dryness, certain positions, hitting the cervix, menopause and more.
- Seek medical help and don't give up. Find a different doctor if you need to.

Hormones

- Menstrual cycles typically provide two hormonal peaks that increase our sex drive, but we should choose to prioritize intimacy all month long and creatively stay connected even when intercourse isn't an option.
- Hormonal birth control can flat line the libido in some women.
- Menopause will be an adjustment in your sex life. No longer physically driven by hormonal peaks, the power of your mind becomes even more important. Dryness and thinning vaginal tissue become a common struggle, so lubrication, Kegel exercises, and frequent sex become essential – basically “use it or lose it.”

See the Resources page for additional books and websites covering these topics and more.

**The goal of sexuality is to express oneness and intimacy with your mate.
– Kevin Leman, *Sheet Music*, p. 95**

It is important to understand how our bodies work, but having the biggest orgasm is not the goal of sex. God designed sex so that we might know each other.

Are you getting to know your spouse through sex and is he getting to know you?

Focus on staying connected by looking at each other, by feeling each other, by hearing each other and by smelling each other. Make your marriage bed less about getting from Point A to Point B and more about truly connecting.

...denying your spouse the joy and fulfillment of having someone who is pursuing him or her sexually. From a faith perspective, it's not morally permissible for anyone else to fulfill the role. If you don't do it, nobody else can. Your denial means your spouse will have to go without. – Kevin Leman, *Sheet Music*, p. 215

**WARNING - Some of the daily articles this week may be very detailed.
Skip over the ones that are not right for your marriage bed.**

Homework

1. Reading

- Song of Songs – Chapter 8, focusing on her attitude and expectations for pleasure.
- Intimate Issues Chapter 19 – How Can I Recapture the Passion?
- Intimate Issues Chapter 20 – How Long Does It Take to Become a Godly, Sensuous Woman?
- Sheet Music Chapter 5 – A Very Special Connection: Sexual Positions
- Sheet Music Chapter 9 – For Women Only
- Sheet Music Chapter 10 – Thirty-One Flavors – and None of Them Are Ice Cream!

2. Application

- Kegel Exercises.
- Take a sex quiz with your husband and discuss the results.
- Spend some time getting to know your husband's penis. Take him from flaccid to erect to high arousal. Focus on feeling, seeing how his penis works, learning what feels good to him and appreciating just how amazing his body is.
- Your husband has a secret homework assignment this week. No peeking!

Think about It!

Questions to consider on your own, with a friend or with your husband after completing the reading homework. These questions will prepare you for next week's class discussion.

1. Think about your husband's ideal date.
2. Think about a way you could blow his socks off.
3. Has your attitude about sex changed over the last five weeks? How so?
4. Email questions or topics about "His Stuff" that you would like covered.

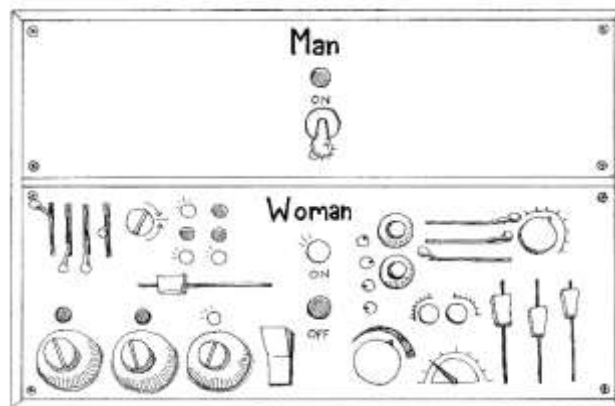
Week 6 – How His Body Works, Frequency, Date Ideas

Song of Songs – Chapter 8:5 – 8:14: Nature of Love; How Love Began

1. Love is intimate, intense, indestructible, and invaluable.
2. Her family protected her purity.
3. She can now give herself.
4. An allegory of God's love for us and our love for Him.

Warning - Our sexuality is as individual as a finger print. Be sensitive to others because we don't have the same experiences. Be careful with your voice and expression during our discussion.

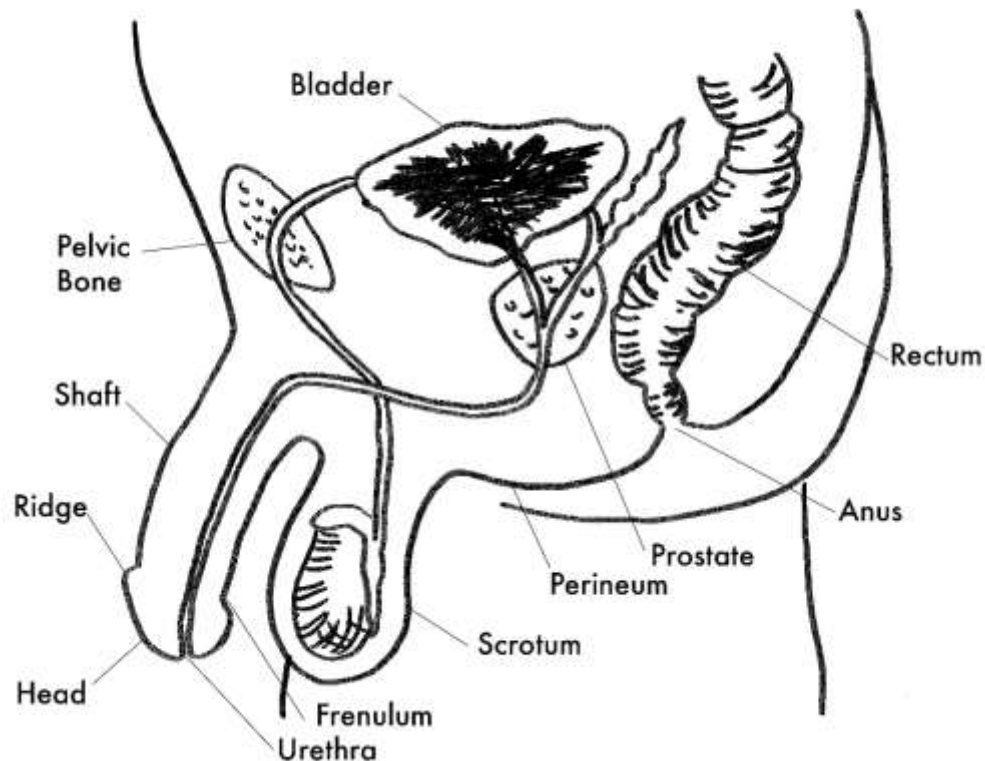
His Stuff



Our husbands are typically pretty simple. Many of them could operate with an on/off button like this stereo and be pretty ok with it. However, this picture isn't quite right. Men have the capability for much more than just an on/off switch. They just don't naturally go there.

Perhaps one of the reasons that God created women so complicated is so that we can show our husband a whole other world of intimate experiences. We can show him how to slow down and really connect in emotional and spiritual ways during sex. We can take him on a circuitous path of pleasure, with dips and turns around every bend. We can show him how to enjoy and linger in other zones of his body that might surprise him. Part of our pleasure as a wife ought to be expanding our husband's horizons. As he grows, he understands more of our desires.

His Genitalia



But that one location [a man's genitals] contains so many stimulation points that even a mild touch drives him wild. – *Intimate Issues*, p. 37

Four Ways to a Stronger Orgasm for Men

1. Stronger Kegel muscles.
2. Longer time between ejaculations – not a trade-off most men would take.*
3. Extended arousal – by creating anticipation during the day.*
4. Peaking – the process of taking them close to orgasm and then backing off and repeating.*

* Related to how much fluid is ejaculated. More fluid = stronger orgasm.

Kegels

- Helps men control ejaculation by relaxing muscles during arousal and contracting muscles at the point of no return.
- One study showed that after several months of doing Kegel exercises, 40% of men had regained normal erectile function - as effective as Viagra.

Premature Ejaculation

- Frequency and age are contributing factors.
- Avoid anxiety or worry by using Plan B.
- Men need to become in tune with their body to know when to slow things down.
- Instead of avoiding foreplay for him, train him to last longer by enjoying manual or oral stimulation for longer and longer amounts of time.

**Like an apple tree among the trees of the forest is my lover among the young men.
I delight to sit in his shade, and his fruit is sweet to my taste. - Song of Songs 2:3**

Oral and Manual Sex

- In order to be more comfortable, you need to be the one in control of any movement.
- It is a new way to intimately get to “know” your husband.
- Use lubrication – they naturally have none.
- Think about experiencing him with all five of your senses.
- Focus on feeling him, not rubbing.
- The ridge of the penis is the most sensitive area, especially the underside.
- Have him show you what he likes.
- During oral sex think about the motion, what you can do with your tongue and varying degrees of suction. Combine these elements.
- Don't be afraid to take him somewhere new – like stillness or swirling or _____.
- A hand combined with the mouth works great and helps prevent gagging.
- Set up rhythms and expectations by establishing patterns of stimulation.
- When his testicles raise to hug his body and become ripe peaches, he is very close to orgasm and you need to make a choice.
 - Finish strong;
 - Take a step back to extend the ride; or
 - Hold him at the crest for as long as you can so he can gently fall over.

Perineal Massage – the area between the testicles and the anus.

- Men tend to carry their tension in their pelvic area. During foreplay and arousal, spend time warming up and relaxing the pelvic area.
- Light tickling or touching can feel great if he is not ticklish.
- At times of high arousal, when his peaches are ripe, externally stimulate the prostate by pressing firmly into the perineum with the pads of your fingers.

Prostate Massage

- Originally developed to help men with inflamed prostates.
- Aneros, a medical company, developed a t-shaped tool to stimulate the prostate. It is now sold as a sex toy.
- An orgasm from prostate massage feels different and is transmitted through a different nerve system. Just like the G-Spot for women, it is a gentler orgasm and more of a full body experience.
- Hygiene is crucial – whatever goes here goes nowhere else.
- Any toy used in the anal area must have a stop to prevent it from getting sucked in.
- Lubrication and no sharp finger nails are a must.
- Being in this most vulnerable position can help a husband understand how vulnerable his wife is during sex.

Low Drive Men

- At least 20% of marriages have a lower drive husband.
- Many things can affect a man's sex drive – stress, medications, depression, low testosterone, feeling disrespected and porn use, to name a few.

Pornography

- We must have a compassion for men and how hard this world is to live in.
- Most start viewing pornography as a kid or teen.
- Viewing pornography is not about you, whether he finds you attractive, or whether he loves you.
- Most husbands are ashamed and afraid to talk about it because they don't want to hurt their wife.
- It is not about intimacy. It is a coping mechanism like alcohol or food.

If pornography, infidelity or any other past sexual hurt affect your marriage bed, then you need to put God at the center of the healing process. Don't try to get back to what you previously had, but instead transform your marriage bed to be a sacred time of connecting that is holy, healing and right. Pray before sex, pray about struggles and praise God for the moments of connection and healing.

See the Resources page for additional books and websites covering these topics and more.

There are times when a guy wakes up hornier than a toad...see how much you can love your man by sending him to work with his need met rather than having him leave the house trying to keep his lustful thoughts at bay.

– Kevin Leman, *Sheet Music*, pp. 86-87

Frequency

Just Do It by Douglas Brown is a fun book that chronicles what happened when his sassy wife decided they should have sex for 100 days in a row. Together they made very intentional decisions in order to make sex happen. They:

1. Found babysitters for regular date nights.
2. Redecorated their bedroom to make it romantic.
3. Physically made feeling healthy a priority – she did yoga, he lifted weights.
4. Put dates on the calendar.
5. Bought some new bedtime outfits – lingerie for her and silk pants for him.
6. Planned several weekend get-aways to interesting places.
7. Invested in some ways to spice things up when they were having an off night.

What they didn't expect was:

1. They became so connected that they actually noticed when the other was having a bad day.
2. They started to flirt with each other again.
3. They were forced to resolve conflict before bed.
4. They started taking advantage of opportunities for quickies.
5. Their kids thrived.
6. They began loving each other throughout the day with notes, phone calls, service and gifts.

Intentional decisions and lots of “becoming one” turned what had been a *good* marriage into a *great* marriage. The frequency of which we are intimate with our husband is unique to our marriage. However, knowing that God designed sex to be a marital glue and a means of connection that positively impacts other areas of our lives, we need to be intentional and ensure that sex is a priority. Generally, more is better than less.

Principle for Most Women

The less we have sex, the less we want it and the harder it is to respond. The more we have sex, the more we want it and the more responsive we are.

Most of us may never have a sex drive like our husband, but that does not mean that sex is unimportant to us. It just means we need to go at it from another direction.

Think about your love affair with God. The more you spend time with Him, immersed in His Word, praying continually, and worshipping freely, the more you crave Him. What initially was a choice, becomes something that you desire and miss when it does not happen.

Could you have the same love affair with your husband? If you have sex often, and became increasingly connected to your spouse, could you get to the point where you actually crave your husband? Could sex transform from another thing on your “to-do” list into something that fills you up? Would you miss the connection that sex with your husband provides when it didn’t happen? Many women have experienced just that and marriages have been transformed.

Discussion Question

1. Has this class changed the frequency that you have sex? If so, has it changed the way your husband acts or the way that you act? How has this impacted your marriage?

Tips to Make It Happen

1. Spend time connecting – weekly dates, annual overnights.
2. Daily non-sexual touch and at least a 15 second kiss.
3. Exercise – it increases libido, strong abdominal muscles help with orgasm, Kegel exercises keep sex on your mind.
4. Use the lock on your door so you can have sex when someone else is in the house, even your kids.
5. Don’t always have sex at 11:00 pm – nap time, lunch time, morning, or the middle of the night.
6. Put sex on the calendar – especially during the busy years, we schedule everything else.
7. Think about sex throughout the day to build anticipation.
8. Share initiation responsibilities - come up with a plan if necessary.
9. Give your husband a chance to get you in the mood – bath, back rub, talk time, no pressure touching, kissing, foreplay, etc.
10. Get medical help if necessary – beware of birth control pills, medication side effects, and pain during intercourse.
11. Don’t worry about your kids knowing – it’s good for them.
12. Teach a child that is too young to babysit alone to put the other kids to bed, so that you can have a bedroom date.

Date Your Husband

When we think about a going out on a date with our husband, we often think about dinner and a movie. What if the next time you surprised your husband, you took the kids to a friend's house, spread out a blanket in front of the fireplace, grabbed some wine and cheese, slipped into something silky, and waited for him to arrive home to receive the gift of simply being fully present?

**How handsome you are, my lover! Oh, how charming! And our bed is verdant.
- Song of Songs 1:16**

Date Ideas

1. Drive-in movie theater in the car – in the garage.
2. Thunderstorm sex.
3. Invite him home for a meal and you're cooking in nothing but an apron.
4. Picnic at a park making out and you're wearing no underclothes.
5. Progressive dinner - in each room you get a different course and a different base.
6. Pretend beach party in the middle of winter – act out that fantasy in your house.
7. Write an erotic story about the two of you and read it to him out loud.
8. Hide your panties in his pocket for the day.
9. For extended business trips – skype sex, phone sex, instant messaging with permission.
10. Do a striptease, put on a lingerie fashion show, or have a photo shoot.
11. Have a picnic in front of the fireplace.
12. Next time you are stressed out, ask him to help you relax.
13. Make it a goal to christen every room of your house.
14. Have backyard sex or sit out by the bonfire and get creative.
15. Next time you go out to dinner, get dressed like you are going to the prom.
16. Each of you make a personal wish list of date night ideas and sex scenarios that you take turns enacting over the next year.
17. Buy a couple of decadent desserts and meet him after the kids are in bed with a glass of wine and dessert in a candle lit room.
18. Get dressed up and dance junior high style to Frank Sinatra in the privacy of your home.

**What most men need is reassurance of manhood in addition to sexual gratification.
- *Intimate Issues*, p 38.**

We are formed in God's image full of creativity and life. Let's have fun making memories with our husband and then store the memories in our cistern to draw on in a dry spell or to inspire new ideas. God gave us a huge playground to enjoy while we get to know our husband and become known by him.

Drink water from your own cistern, running water from your own well. Should your springs overflow in the streets, your streams of water in the public squares? Let them be yours alone, never to be shared with strangers. May your fountain be blessed, and may you rejoice in the wife of your youth. A loving doe, a graceful deer— may her breasts satisfy you always, may you ever be intoxicated with her love. - Proverbs 5:15-19

God is the Author of Passion

As we reach the conclusion of our time together, let's remember that this study is about more than sex. It is about being known – emotionally, physically and spiritually – between husband and wife. God designed us to know our husband and be known by him. Our differences, which are God's good and perfect design, create a journey of discovery that stretches us and builds intimacy in our marriage as we work to better understand each other's bodies, needs and desires.

This study is also about being completely known between us and God. We are created with a desire to know God and to be known by Him. God desires us to be in a profoundly personal and intimate relationship with Him. The deep knowing that God invites us to experience with Him calls us to abide in Him and orient our lives so that we continually connect more and more. In the most beautiful way, we lose ourselves to gain all of Him.

God has a zealous love for us. He has a holy passion for us; a devotion of fiery intensity that never ends. He loves us immeasurably right now - even with our faults, failures and doubts. When we truly embrace His love for us, we experience freedom to walk in the fullness of all He desires for us. If we are not jumping in with both feet with Him, then everything in this study is pointless. We simply can't go deeper with our husband.

Knowing God is essential to knowing our husband and being known by him. We need God to be our stronghold trust so that we can risk being fully vulnerable and loving our husband with abandon. The surety of God's love allows us to share our innermost thoughts and feelings and gives us the freedom to love without restraint.

**The LORD appeared to us in the past, saying:
“I have loved you with an everlasting love;
I have drawn you with unfailing kindness.”
Jeremiah 31:3**

Practically speaking, what does this look like? It's loving our husband out of an overflow of God's abundant love – not because he earned our love. It's asking God to give us that extra push to move closer to where our husband's desire is and then walking in faith that God will provide in that very moment. It's extending forgiveness to the imperfect man that we married because we know that we too are imperfect and that God fills in all of those gaps. It's asking our husband to pray over our hurts and insecurities and trusting that his love and acceptance is not diminished by our baggage. It's graciously and unashamedly sharing our needs and desires with our husband – I need to hear your words, can you move your hand here, please just hold me – and being responsive without self-consciousness or apology. It means choosing each day to walk in God's glorious design – pursuing both Him and our husband - whether we feel like it or not. His truth is not changed by our emotions. It's running after God because we realize that ultimately, it is our love for, and relationship with, Him that makes us better wives and better lovers.

**Perhaps sexual climax brings us closer to God than anything else on earth.
Isn't a powerful and pleasurable sexual connection, when freely enjoyed between
husband and wife, a sweet foretaste of the connection we'll one day experience in the
afterlife? When we can intimately know God as fully as we are known by Him and
basking unashamedly in His presence?
– Shannon Ethridge, *The Sexually Confident Wife***

Discussion Questions

1. What are the differences between being a lukewarm Christian and being on fire for God?
2. What are the differences between having a good marriage and having a great marriage?

Just like God wants us to be crazy in love with Him, God desires us to be crazy in love with our husband. Similar to our relationship with God, we have to make intentional choices to grow closer to our husband – it doesn't just happen. God wants us to have an all-day, every-day love affair with our husband that is passionate, physical, and vulnerable. That intense marital relationship moves you and your husband toward a deeper relationship with Him. Sex is a gift that God created to join spouses together more powerfully than words or deeds. It is a Holy Communion with Him and a

reminder of the Covenant with each other. It is a profound picture of the intimacy that God desires with us. Sex within marriage is but a foretaste of the ecstasy and delight of Heaven, when we, His bride, are united to Jesus in perfect Oneness.

**“For this reason, a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.” This is a profound mystery - but I am talking about Christ and the Church.
– Ephesians 5:31-32**

Mixer Questions

1. Share something from the study that was surprising, impactful, or fun.
2. How have you or your marriage changed since taking this class?
3. What steps will you take to continue on this journey?

Homework

1. Reading
 - Song of Songs – out loud with your husband in bed.
2. Application
 - Kegel Exercises.
 - Surprise your husband with a sex date.
 - Your husband has a secret homework assignment this week. No peeking!

Think about It!

Questions to consider on your own, with a friend or with your husband as you continue your journey.

1. What do you most hope to “know” about your husband?
2. What do you most hope he “knows” about you?
3. How will you remind yourself of your commitment to pursue knowing your husband when times get busy, you get tired or new challenges come your way?

Recommended Resources

Books

1. **Orgasms** by Lou Paget – a respectful secular book filled with explicit instructions. The position sketches are sorted by what area is stimulated during intercourse.
2. **A Celebration of Sex** by Dr. Douglas Rosenau – a Christian textbook that covers everything from communication to how to have an orgasm.
3. **The Sexually Confident Wife** by Shannon Ethridge- a secular book by a Christian author. This book will take you from confronting your past to realizing your sexual potential as a woman. This book was transformational in Ruth's life.
4. **She Comes First** by Ian Kerner – a respectful secular book written for men with detailed step by step instructions for how to pleasure a woman with oral sex.
5. **Completely Overcome Vaginismus** by Mark and Lisa Carter – a great resource for women who experience pain during intercourse due to vaginismus.
6. **Passionate Marriage** by David Schnarch – a secular book that talks about how to keep passion alive, not through technique, but through connection. Not an easy read, but it will inspire you to so much more.
7. **Intimacy Ignited** by Dr. Joseph & Linda Dillow and Dr. Peter & Lorriane Pintus – a couples eight week Bible study on the Song of Songs including real life application for your marriage.
8. **Kosher Lust** by Rabbi Shmuley Boteach - a great book about the importance of lust or deep desire in marriage filled with practical tips to keep passion alive.
9. **Creating an Intimate Marriage** by Jim Burns – a Christian book filled with practical strategies to create intimacy which then makes everything else easier.
10. **Talking to Your Kids about Sex** by Mark Laaser – a Christian book about how to have a lifetime of age-appropriate conversations with your kids about healthy sexuality.
11. **The Sex Starved Wife** by Michelle Weiner Davis – a secular book that unveils the many reasons men lose interest with steps to move towards renewed intimacy.
12. **Shattered Vows** by Debra Laaser – a great book that offers hope and healing for women who have been sexually betrayed.
13. **Surfing for God: Discovering the Divine Desire beneath Sexual Struggle** by Michael John Cusick - a Christian book that goes beyond just practical methods of retraining or accountability and digs to the core issues that hold people in bondage to pornography.
14. **Clean: A Proven Method for Men Committed to Sexual Integrity** by Douglas Weiss – a Christian book filled with practical ways to retrain your mind and body as you journey to break free from lust or pornography.
15. **Pulling Back the Shades** by Dannah Gresh and Juli Slattery – a Christian response to *50 Shades of Grey*. This book addresses the legitimate desires of women and how the world exploits them.
16. **The Fantasy Fallacy** by Shannon Ethridge – a topic seldom addressed by the church, fantasies can be a window to our past and do not have to control us.
17. **Faithful: A Theology of Sex** by Beth Felker Jones – a Christian book sketches a theology of sexuality that demonstrates sex is not about legalistic morals with no basis in reality but rather about the God who is faithful to us. This book is part of Wheaton College's Ordinary Theology series.

Websites

The Marriage Bed - <http://site.themarriagebed.com/>

Paul and Lori Byerly have been offering scripturally based, scientifically accurate information on sex and intimacy for married Christians since 1997. Their website offers informative articles, surveys and a discussion forum.

Hot, Holy and Humorous - <http://hotholyhumorous.com/>

J. Parker is a Christian wife who has written three books and been blogging to encourage sex and marriage by God's design since 2010.

Awaken-Love – <http://awaken-love.net>

Ruth Buezis and Melanie Lloyd blog about intimacy to stretch you to embrace all that God has for you within the marriage bed - from the spiritual aspects of sex to the nuts and bolts. We invite you to be part of the revolution of Christians speaking God's truth about sex and encouraging Christians to grow in intimacy with God and their spouse.

Intimacy in Marriage – <http://intimacyinmarriage.com/>

Julie Sibert is an author that encourages Christian women toward healthy sexuality.

Christian Nymphos - <http://christiannymphos.org/>

No longer an active website, the archived articles written by multiple Christian women tackle any and all issues women face in their sex lives. They communicate fun and freedom in the bedroom.

Covenant Spice - <http://covenantspice.com/>

A discrete online store for Christian couples.

Quick Links to Specific Subjects

Sexual Positions - <http://christiannymphos.org/the-cn-position-page/>

Orgasms - <http://intimacyinmarriage.com/resources/the-orgasm-page/>

Orgasm During Intercourse - <http://awaken-love.net/category/how-to-have-an-orgasm-during-intercourse/>

Oral Sex - <http://hotholyhumorous.com/tag/oral-sex/>

Adjustments to Aging - <http://awaken-love.net/category/aging-adjustments/>

Song of Songs - <http://awaken-love.net/category/live-the-song/>

Healing - <http://awaken-love.net/tag/path-to-sexual-healing/>

More from Awaken-Love

Follow us on Facebook ([facebook.com/4awakenlove](https://www.facebook.com/4awakenlove)), Google+ ([Awaken-Love](https://plus.google.com/+Awaken-Love)) and Twitter ([@AwakenLoveClass](https://twitter.com/AwakenLoveClass)).

Healing Resources

Bible Studies

Path to Sexual Healing by Linda Cochrane – a 9 week Bible study journey toward wholeness for victims of sexual abuse, former abusers and those with past willful sexual sin. God used this study to surprise Melanie by the completeness of His healing.

Surprised by the Healer by Linda Dillow and Juli Slattery – a book that shares women's stories of healing from sexual abuse, betrayal in marriage and other sexual brokenness; includes a 10 week Bible study.

Forgiveness: Breaking the Power of the Past by Kay Arthur – a Bible study that acknowledges that when wounds run deep, forgiveness doesn't come easy. God's mercy moves us to choose forgiveness so we can be freed from a painful past and propelled toward being all that God intends us to be. This study helped Melanie truly understand that experiencing more freedom with God and her husband was possible.

Books

Dirty Girls Come Clean by Crystal Renaud – a guide for women that want to be free from the bondage of pornography addiction. It includes practical strategy woven with stories of real women.

No Stones: Women Redeemed from Sexual Addiction by Marnie C. Ferree – this Christian book tackles an often taboo topic: female sexual addiction. It describes the problems, unearths the root causes, and offers solutions.

Healing the Wounded Heart: The Heartache of Sexual Abuse and the Hope of Transformation by Dan B. Allender – the Christian authority on healing from sexual abuse. He addresses the topic with sensitivity and compassion and offers hope and healing.

When Trust is Lost: Healing for Victims of Sexual Abuse by Dan B. Allender – A short, but profound, booklet that helps victims and offenders discover how they can find hope that leads to healing and peace. A must read!

View PDF: <http://discoveryseries.org/discovery-series/when-trust-is-lost-healing-for-victims-of-sexual-abuse/>

Forgiveness Prayer

Heavenly Father, I choose as an act of my will to forgive _____. I forgive _____ for _____ (List specific offenses). I release _____ to You, Heavenly Father.

Heavenly Father, I ask You to forgive me for holding unforgiveness, bitterness, resentment, etc., in my heart towards _____. I receive Your forgiveness now and Your cleansing of my heart from all unrighteousness.

Heavenly Father, forgive me for holding resentment towards You for allowing these hurts to happen to me.

Heavenly Father, if I have any more negative feelings stored up within me towards _____ I ask You to cleanse them from me now. I open myself to replace these negative emotions with the fruit of Your Spirit – love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

Heavenly Father, I ask that You now heal the wounded places in my soul. Heal every memory of those offenses so that I can look back on them, realistically accepting that they were hurtful, but also trusting that You, Lord, have healed the hurt. Enable me to use this experience to help others with whom I come into contact.

Now, Heavenly Father, I ask that You bless _____ with Your abundant mercy. Prosper _____ in every way, body, soul and spirit. In the Name of Jesus I ask.

Used with permission: Kyle Miller, Global Care & Response, Austin, Texas

Kegel Exercises

What are Kegel exercises?

Kegel exercises were originally developed in order to cure urinary incontinence. During follow up visits to their doctors, women began reporting that they were experiencing orgasms during intercourse for the first time. Kegel exercises can benefit women and men.

To find the correct muscles to exercise, shut off your urine in midstream. The goal is not to just strengthen the muscles, but to have good control over them. Therefore, focus on the contraction of the muscles, as well as the full relaxation of the muscles.

The exercises can be done discretely any time of day – at stop lights, while on the phone, in the shower, while watching TV, etc.

What are the benefits of Kegel exercises for women?

1. To keep sex on her mind.
2. To connect her mind to her sex muscles.
3. To increase circulation and engorgement, resulting in increased sensations during intercourse.
4. For stronger orgasms.
5. To aid in consciously relaxing the muscles to prevent painful intercourse.
6. To prevent urinary incontinence.
7. For pelvic floor health.

What are the benefits of Kegel exercises for men?

1. To last longer through the conscious relaxation of his Kegel muscles during sex.
2. To prevent ejaculation by squeezing his Kegel muscles when he is close to the point of no return.
3. For stronger erections.
4. For stronger orgasms – and possible multiple orgasms.
5. To prevent urinary leaking.
6. For prostate health.

What are the recommended exercises?

1. REPS – Alternate contracting and relaxing your Kegel muscles for 3 seconds each. Do sets of at least 10.
2. ELEVATORS – Contract your Kegel muscles for 3 seconds, then contract to a tighter level for 3 seconds and repeat until you cannot go any tighter. Then work your way down. Relax to the lower level and hold for 3 seconds, then relax at the next lower level, until you are all the way back down. Do sets of at least 5.
3. FLUTTERS – Contract your Kegel muscles as quickly as you can at least 10 times.
4. ZIPPERS – Contract your Kegel muscles starting at the front and working to the rear until your entire pelvis floor feels zipped closed. Then gradually unzip working from the rear to the front. Do sets of at least 10.

Try to do all four exercises at least a couple of times a day.