

Claire's Tips and Tools for Relationships That Work

July 2006

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Let's Talk About Sex

Sex after marriage. Does it exist? Yes, but sometimes you have to look hard to find it!

Most experts say married couples don't have enough sex because of the pace of modern life. Or because they have small children in the house. Or because of communication problems and resentments that have built up over the years. All true. What married couple doesn't struggle with these challenges?

But there's another reason for low-sex marriage that I don't hear much about. **This might sound harsh, but the truth is, for a lot of people it was never that good to begin with.** I mean good in the sense of being truly physically satisfying.

In the beginning of a relationship, sex might be exciting or fun or sweet, but not really physically satisfying. If that's the way it was for you, you probably remember that when your relationship was new, it didn't matter so much. The newness itself lent excitement to everything.

Also, in the beginning, it felt wonderful just to be close and never mind the details. But now that you're married, you've got plenty of togetherness. **Sometimes it feels like way too much togetherness.** Double or triple that if you've got small children. Your idea of sensual bliss might be an entire evening without anyone touching you at all. Or an extra hour of sleep. Under these conditions, sex is not going to pique your interest unless you know it's going to be really, really good.

“OK, then what do we have to do to make it really, really good?”

That would be the ideal approach. But when it comes to sex, it's usually not that simple. It's hard to admit it's not all it could be. You don't want to hurt your partner's feelings. And you don't want to get hurt, either. You might be afraid to find out what your partner is thinking. “What if he doesn't find me attractive any more?” “What if I'm not good enough for her?” And you're so busy. **It's easier to focus on other things and let sex take a back seat in your marriage.**

Most likely, your worst fears are unfounded. There's nothing dire going on at all. **Any problem starts to look like a dragon when you don't talk about it.** This is especially true of sexual issues because we have such strong feelings about them.

Chances are, your sex life just needs a little attention. That's why I suggest a very gentle approach. You don't have to have a heavy conversation about the meaning of sex in your relationship. And please, don't try to figure out whose fault it is you're not having more sex. I guarantee you that will not make either of you feel sexier!

Just think in terms of getting re-acquainted with your partner. Ask her what she likes. And tell her what you like in a gentle, positive way. Say what you want more of, not what you don't like. "You know, I really like it when you touch me right here."

Breaking a pattern feels awkward at first. Those comfortable married habits have a powerful momentum! Don't expect a 180 turnaround. **Just aim to open the door and get comfortable talking about sex in a loving way.** Then you can both gradually guide each other to more satisfying sex. I'm sure you'd both really love that.

The hardest part is taking the first step. That takes guts. Someone has to decide it's worth it. Will that someone be you?

Announcing the "Rock Solid" Marriage Counseling Program

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You talked and I listened! Remember the survey I conducted earlier this year? About what kind of services you want? Here's what you told me.

You'd like to:

- Learn more skills in less time.
- Get help in real time, by phone and email, when problems come up.
- Take home information to refer to when you need it.

I took your suggestions and created a step-by-step 12-week marriage counseling program.

This intensive program includes:

- Carefully designed sessions that build on prior learning, insights, and trust.
- A 28-page workbook to refer to during and after the program.
- Unlimited phone and email access to me between appointments. (Really!)
- A Rock Solid Reference Sheet that summarizes your learning in the program, with the key tools you need to remember to keep your marriage strong.

If you are serious about turning your marriage around, this is the program for you. Click below to get the complete description. And please feel free to forward this newsletter to anyone you know who might be interested. ["Rock Solid" 12-Week Marriage Program](#)

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Claire Hatch, LICSW, is a licensed counselor who helps people raise their self-esteem and turn their relationships around. She works with clients in her Seattle area office and by phone around the world. Claire gives seminars on how to turn conflict to connection, build a strong marriage, and balance family and work. For more information, visit [www.clairehatch.com](http://www.clairehatch.com) or contact Claire via email at [claire@clairehatch.com](mailto:claire@clairehatch.com) or by phone: 425 823-2273.

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