

GREAT SEX

A MAN'S GUIDE TO
THE SECRET PRINCIPLES OF TOTAL-BODY SEX

BY MICHAEL CASTLEMAN



FOR ANNE,
MY TRAVELING COMPANION ON THE ROAD TO GREAT SEX,

AND FOR MY CHILDREN,
WHO, I HOPE, WILL CONNECT WITH EQUALLY CREATIVE LOVERS AND DISCOVER GREAT
SEX FOR THEMSELVES.

MAKING LOVE IS PERFECTLY NATURAL,
BUT NEVER NATURALLY PERFECT.

—THEA SNYDER LOWRY

Non-fiction:

The New Healing Herbs: The Classic Guide to Nature's Medicines . Updated revision of *The Healing Herbs* (Rodale Press, 2001)

Blended Medicine: How to Combine the Best of Mainstream and Alternative Medicine for Optimal Health and Wellness (Rodale Press, 2000)

There's Still a Person In There: The Complete Guide to Preventing, Treating, and Coping with Alzheimer's Disease. Coauthored with Matthew Naythons, M.D., and Dolores Gallagher-Thompson, Ph.D. (Putnam, 2000)

Nature's Cures: 33 Natural Therapies to Improve Your Health and Well-Being (Rodale Press, 1996)

An Aspirin a Day: How the Familiar White Pills Help Prevent Heart Attack, Stroke, and Cancer (Hyperion Books, 1993)

Before You Call the Doctor: Safe, Effective, Self-Care for Over 300 Common Medical Problems. Coauthored with Anne Simons, M.D., and Bobbie Hasselbring (Ballantine Books, 1992)

The Healing Herbs: The Complete Guide to Nature's Medicines (Rodale Press, 1991)

Cold Cures: The Complete Guide to Prevention and Treatment of the Common Cold and Flu (Ballantine Books, 1987)

The Medical Self-Care Book of Women's Health . Coauthored with Sadjia Greenwood, M.D., and Bobbie Hasselbring (Doubleday, 1987)

Crime Free: The Community Crime Prevention Handbook (Simon and Schuster, 1984)

Sexual Solutions: For Men and the Women Who Love Them (Simon and Schuster, 1980, 1989)

Fiction:

The Lost Gold of San Francisco (21st-Century Publishing, 2003)

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Special thanks to the members of the *Great Sex* Advisory Board, who gave so generously of their time and expertise, and who are quoted throughout the book:

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SINCERE THANKS ALSO TO:

Rosemary Basson, Ph.D., Marianna Beck, Ph.D., Vena Blanchard, Ph.D., Joani Blank, Kelly Bodden, Susie Bright, Joe Catania, Ph.D., Rebecca Chalker, Bill Clark, Karen Croft, Bill Dillingham, Jim Dillingham, Betty Dodson, Ph.D., Sandor Gardos, Ph.D., Howard Gordon, Jack Hafferkamp, Ph.D., Barbara Jonas, Michael Jonas, Ben Kallen, Nava Lerner, M.A., Janet Lever, Ph.D., Amy Levinson, Jack Morin, Ph.D., Richard Pacheco, Jim Petersen, Chip Rowe, Jocelyn Saurini, Pepper Schwartz, Ph.D., Anne Semans, Anne Simons, M.D., Kathy Sisson, M.A., James Smolev, M.D., Matthew Solaro, David Steinberg, David Talbot, Eric Wilkinson, Cathy Winks, Jay Wiseman, Hank Wuh, M.D., and The Lawrence Research Group's Xandria Collection, Brisbane, California.

AND HEARTFELT THANKS TO:

My agent, Katinka Mason, of Brockman, Inc., who, for 27 years, has piloted my little boat through the choppy waters of publishing.

Jeremy Katz, executive editor of *Men's Health* Books at Rodale Inc., who loved the concept of *Great Sex*.

And Leah Flickinger, indefatigable editor extraordinaire, who worked as hard as I did to bring the book to fruition.

INTRODUCTION

THE SURPRISINGLY SIMPLE SECRET OF GREAT SEX

Would you like to be the great lover you've always dreamed of being? Would you like women to sing your sexual praises? Do you want your penis to be as large as it possibly can be? Would you like ejaculatory control to last as long as you want? Are firmer, more reliable erections on your wish list? And would you like your relationship to feel more erotic, both in and out of bed? All these sexual benefits—and more—can be yours without a great deal of effort. *Great Sex* explains how.

Before I reveal the surprisingly simple secret of great sex, I should mention that I'm not a doctor, psychologist, or sex therapist. But for 30 years, I've been a sex educator, counselor, and journalist specializing in men's sexuality. During that time I've interviewed the nation's leading sex researchers and therapists, and have written extensively about sexuality, particularly about men's sexual issues. For 5 years, I answered the sex questions submitted to the *Playboy* magazine Advisor. Since 1999 I've answered the questions submitted to Xandria.com, the Web site of the nation's largest marketplace of sex toys.

The information in this book comes not only from my three decades of research and writing, but also from the leading resources in sexology and sex therapy. Space does not permit listing the additional 51 books and 374 medical journal articles I also consulted. If you'd like to peruse them, visit www.greatsexthebook.com. The book also took shape with the assistance of some of the nation's most experienced sex therapists (see [here](#) for biographies of the *Great Sex* advisory board members). Also central to this volume are the two largest and most comprehensive American sex surveys completed to date. The landmark 1994 "Sex in America" survey from the University of Chicago studied a representative sample of 3,150 men and women aged 18 to 59. The National Sexual Health Survey, a 1996 study from the University of California, San Francisco, involved a representative sample of 8,000 Americans aged 18 to 80.

Combine these resources with many years of my own experience in the field, and I like to think I've learned a thing or two about lovemaking—notably, the surprisingly simple secret of great sex. The secret is the central message of this book: *Stop trying to imitate what you see in pornography—the rushed, mechanical sex that's entirely focused on the genitals. Instead, cultivate the opposite of porn: leisurely, playful, creative, whole-body, massage-based lovemaking that includes the genitals, but is not obsessed with them.*

Porn is all-genital, all the time—and that wreaks havoc on men in bed. When you stop trying to imitate porn, most of your sex problems disappear—in particular, involuntary ejaculation, erection difficulties, and trouble ejaculating. The reason is that our bodies work best sexually in the context of relaxed, full-body sensuality. Unfortunately, the approach to lovemaking most familiar to the majority of men is pornography, and familiarity breeds imitation. Mimicking porn also hurts men another way. It makes them lousy lovers. According to the "Sex in America" survey, one-quarter of women have difficulty expressing orgasm during partner sex, or can't come at all.

The sexual approach I advocate happens to be the way most women enjoy making love. Every major sex survey agrees that the vast majority of women would like men to expand their erotic view beyond the genitals and adopt a love style based on whole-body, massage-inspired sensuality. Most women

consider the entire body—every square inch—one big erogenous zone, and can't understand why so many men explore only a few corners of this vast erotic playground. Many women find it impossible to become sexually aroused with only the limited, largely genital touch so many men provide.

When men make love the way women prefer, women become more arousable, enthusiastic, and complimentary lovers. They're more likely to enjoy orgasm, and less likely to say, "Not tonight." In other words, when men jettison porn-style sex and embrace a creative, whole-body approach to lovemaking, everybody wins. Both you and your lover have more fun in bed and suffer fewer sex problems—not to mention that your relationship is likely to feel more intimate and fulfilling out of bed as well as between the sheets.

Impossible? Not at all. The simple secret of great sex can transform your erotic life for the better—much better—often in just a few weeks. All you have to do is to abandon forever the idea that sex should proceed the way it does in adult entertainment. Don't get me wrong. I'm a regular guy just like you. I've seen a good deal of porn, and I happen to be an enthusiastic admirer of women's breasts, butts, and genitals. These wonderful body parts certainly should be a part of your lovemaking, but not to the exclusion of what really excites the vast majority of women—gentle, loving, sensual touch and everything else. So from one regular guy to another: Ditch porn-style sex and the many problems it causes in favor of the love style that turns her on, and turns you into the confident, accomplished lover you want to be.

Now about porn. Social liberals defend it as a form of free speech, and some sexuality professionals recommend it to pique erotic interest, or to familiarize people with some sexual techniques. Meanwhile, social conservatives excoriate porn as debased, sinful, abusive of women, and evidence of moral decay.

Let me state at the outset that in the Great Porn Debate, I side with the liberals. I have no problem with pornography's unprecedented availability in video shops, on cable TV, and over the Internet, nor do I believe that sexually explicit music lyrics should be restricted. I have two teenagers at home, and I don't lose any sleep over their listening to songs with sex-drenched lyrics, or viewing the pornography they can see for free on the Internet (though when one asked about using my credit card to subscribe to a porn site, I said no).

But the bitter cultural debate about sexually explicit media misses a key point. Pornography is bad for sex. Very bad. It causes or contributes to all of men's major sex problems: hang-ups about penis size, involuntary ejaculation, erection impairment, and ejaculatory difficulties. It also completely misrepresents how women become sexually aroused and experience erotic fulfillment. Pornography is like the chase scenes in action movies—exciting and fun to watch, but definitely not the way to drive

Let's get one thing straight: I'm not down on men. My heart goes out to guys who try to be good lovers but get no real coaching except from adult media. In our society, despite women's decades-long march to sexual equality, girls are raised to be sexually passive. As a result, young men feel pressure to know the ins and outs, as it were, of sex, so they can lead their presumably more naive girlfriends through intimate explorations. Few parents discuss the fine points of sex with their sons. At school, if a young man receives any sex education at all, it is confined to sperm, eggs, sexually transmitted infections, the importance of abstinence until marriage, and possibly the various contraceptives.

Faced with woefully inadequate sex education at home and in school, what do guys do? They fall back on the resources available to them—other poorly informed young men, and pornography, which ignores whole-body sensuality and instead features men with elephantine penises and women who can never get enough.

Since the mid-1960s when William Masters, M.D., and Virginia Johnson developed modern sensate focus therapy, it has become abundantly clear why so many couples' sex lives are agony instead of ecstasy. The rushed, mechanical, all-genital love style most men learn at the curbside, in the locker room, and

from pornography ignores women's erotic needs and causes men's sex problems.

~~It's possible that you might require a prescription or several months of sex therapy to resolve your~~ sexual concerns. But for all the anguish that sexual difficulties cause, sex is pretty straightforward and many problems, perhaps most, can be resolved with self-help.

Of course, there is no dearth of sexual self-help books. But only *Great Sex* is organized around the simple secret of great sex. In our sex-obsessed culture, it's a sad commentary that this secret remains such a mystery. Men need to slow down, understand women's real sexuality—not the nonsense depicted in porn—and appreciate leisurely, playful, whole-body sensuality. If you do, here's what I guarantee: You'll suffer fewer sex problems. The woman in your life will be more sexually responsive. And both of you will feel happier with each other and more erotically fulfilled.

Michael Castleman

San Francisco, 2003

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PART 1
PRINCIPLES OF
GREAT SEX FOR MEN





TOTAL-BODY SENSUALITY

THE FOUNDATION OF GREAT SEX

Does a great basketball player shoot with just his wrist? No. He uses his whole body. Everything works together as a well-coordinated whole. This same principle is the basis of great sex. Most of us are preoccupied with what's between the legs—our own and our partner's. But great sex is far more than that. It's a celebration of whole bodies, not just a few body parts. And it's based on full-body sensuality. "Every sex therapist wholeheartedly endorses a whole-body, sensual approach to sex," says *Great Sex* advisory board member Dennis Sugrue, Ph.D. In fact, it's the simple secret to great sex. Here's your sense-by-sense guide.

TOUCH

Mention "sex" and "skin" and most men think "penis." Sure, the penis is important to sex, but here's a key concept many men don't appreciate: For truly great sex, the rest of your skin is just as important—actually more so. Why? Because your skin is your body's largest sense organ—and its most sexually potent. Made up of hundreds of millions of nerve fibers, your skin provides an impressive amount of surface area, all of which responds exquisitely to touch, particularly erotic touch. And more of the brain is devoted to touch than to any other sense.

Human beings can live rich lives without sight, hearing, taste, or smell; but without touch, life loses its richness. An example from history shows that, in some cases, we can't live at all. In the late 19th century, American infant-care experts insisted that holding and cuddling babies was "primitive." As a result, many orphanage staffs and affluent, well-educated Americans adopted a hands-off attitude toward infant care. Interestingly, this message did not trickle down to poor, less-educated women, who continued to hold, hug, and cuddle their infants as their ancestors always had.

By 1910, pediatricians began reporting a strange new disease that caused many healthy infants to withdraw, lose weight, and die. They called it "marasmus" from the Greek for "wasting away." When public health officials investigated, they made some surprising discoveries. At the time, the vast majority of infant diseases were associated with poverty. So it made sense that marasmus (now called failure to thrive) was epidemic in orphanages. But strangely, it struck infants in many affluent families and bypassed infants in poor families.

Eventually, physicians identified its cause—lack of cuddling. When parents and orphanage staffs returned to "primitive" infant cuddling, marasmus disappeared. Today, child development experts agree that infants cannot be held and cuddled too much.

"Failure to thrive has never been documented after infancy," explains Stella Resnick, Ph.D., a sex therapist in Los Angeles. "But the fact that lack of touch can cause death, even during a brief period of life, shows how important it is. Think of touch as a nutrient transmitted through the skin. Cuddling

and massage are deeply nurturing and relaxing. And they're fundamental to great sex."

~~Response to massage-like cuddling is hardwired into our nervous systems. Painful sensations—fingers on a hot plate, grit in a shoe—are transmitted to the brain through nerve fibers that trigger the release of stress hormones. But your skin also contains nerves that respond to pleasing touch and stimulate the release of other hormones that produce feelings of relaxation and well-being. "Gentle massage stimulates the release of oxytocin, a hormone that enhances sexual pleasure and contributes to arousal and orgasm," says Hank Wuh, M.D., author of *Sexual Fitness*.~~

When massage-style caresses excite the skin—all of it—anxiety melts away, mood improves, and pain subsides. In addition, slow-paced, whole-body massage helps prevent and treat two of men's sex problems, notably rapid ejaculation and erection difficulties.

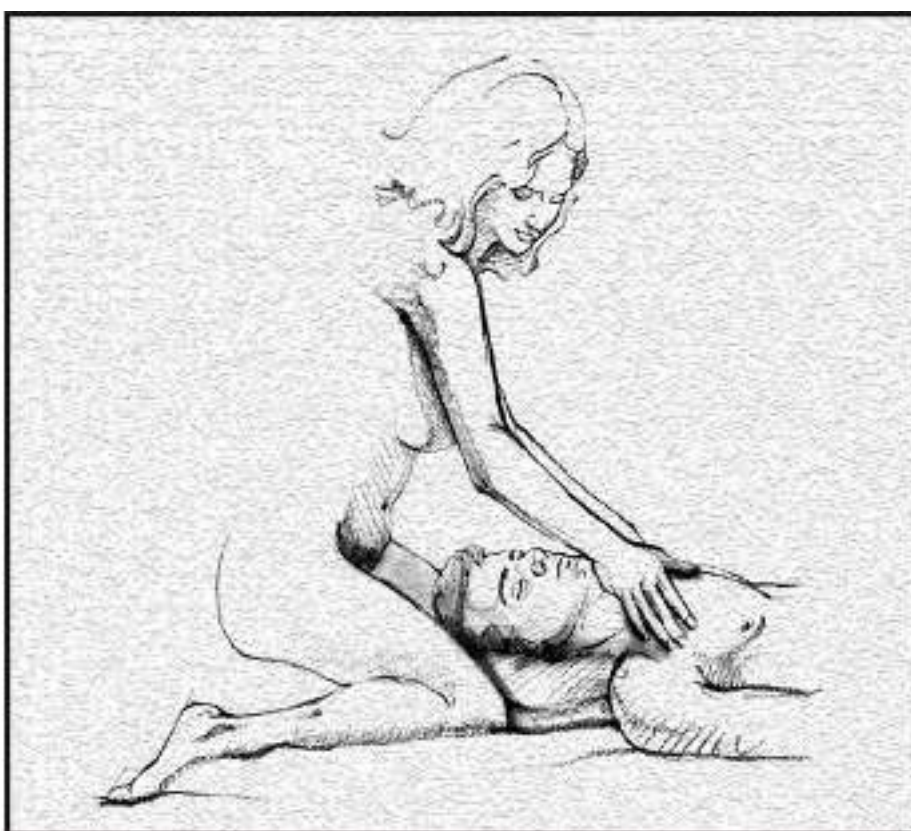
It's also critical to women's sexual responsiveness. Without extended, whole-body massage, many women cannot become sexually aroused, produce vaginal lubrication, and express orgasm. "Men can become aroused visually," says Sugrue, "for example, by watching a lover slowly undress." In contrast, most women are more aroused by touch. "I often advise couples to take turns arousing each other the way they like best," he says. "She can dance a strip-tease for you, then you can take her in your arms and massage her all over."

THE BASICS OF MASSAGE

When you hear the word massage, you might associate it with massage parlors where about the only thing you *can't* get is a good massage. Nonprostitute massage therapists omit the genitals, but what cares? A professional (nonsexual) massage can be a wonderful prelude to lovemaking. Afterward, when you and your lover climb into bed, you can play with each other's genitals all you want.

If you're new to massage, here are a few basics. In the United States, two massage styles predominate—Swedish and deep-tissue, or shiatsu. Developed 150 years ago by Per Henrik Ling, Swedish massage integrates ancient Asian massage techniques with a Western understanding of anatomy and physiology. It employs long, gliding strokes using the whole hand or the heel of the palm, or kneading strokes with the fingers. Swedish massage strokes can vary from light and feather-soft to firmer, deeper pressure. A good massage therapist should ask you to specify the kind of strokes you prefer.

Shiatsu massage is a Japanese adaptation of acupuncture. In Japanese, *shi* means "finger" and *atsu* means "pressure." Like the Chinese needle therapy, shiatsu emerges from the idea that life energy (or *chi* in Chinese, *ki* in Japanese) circulates around the body along pathways called meridians. When the energy flows freely, it produces health and pleasure. Blockages cause illness and distress. Finger pressure on the points associated with various illnesses releases blocked energy, re-establishing optimal energy flow. Body charts illustrate where the points are located. When pressed, the points announce themselves with tenderness, tingling, or mild discomfort (but not pain). Point massage involves a circular, boring movement with the thumb or forefinger for about 30 seconds.



(A)



(B)

Swedish massage is the type most easily incorporated into lovemaking. It employs long, gliding strokes using the whole hand or the heel of the palm (A), or kneading strokes with the fingers (B).

You can find massage supplies (oils, lotions, mittens, vibrators, et cetera) and excellent

instructional videos so you and your partner can give each other sensual massages. See the Resources section at the back of the book for supplies or to find a massage therapist in your area.

Important tip: Avoid using sexual lubricants as massage lotions and vice versa. Sex lubes and massage lotions are formulated differently. Lubricants are great for intercourse, but they dry too quickly when used for total-body massage, and may feel sticky. Massage lotions feel marvelous on the skin, but are generally not slippery enough to work well as genital lubricants.

THE SEXUAL BENEFITS OF WHOLE-BODY MASSAGE

“Every square inch of the body is a sensual playground,” says *Great Sex* advisory board member Louanne Weston, Ph.D. “It’s sad that so many men explore only a few corners—women’s breasts and genitals—and often ignore everything else.”

Why don’t men realize the importance of massage in great sex? Why do some men even question its benefit? Partly because, ironically, as men leave childhood and enter adolescence we often “lose touch” with touch. “Men slap each other’s backs,” Sugrue explains, “but don’t share gentle affectionate touch the way women do. I often ask men to think back to when they were teens, to how erotically powerful such nonsexual activities as holding hands, kissing, or a hand on a thigh could feel. Rediscovering the pleasure of total-body touch and massage is an important part of sex therapy for many men.”

Another reason why many men feel skeptical of massage-based lovemaking is its association with foreplay. The term “foreplay” suggests that it’s something you do before the main event (intercourse) something separate from it. In our headlong rush into intercourse, many men ignore 90 percent of women’s most potent sexual organ—every square inch of their skin.

Rushed foreplay represents a major misunderstanding of how women respond sexually. Most women prefer extended, playful, total-body massage that includes their breasts and genitals, but isn’t preoccupied with them. In fact, it’s worth repeating that to experience sexual arousal, most women absolutely require total-body caressing. “There’s no way I’m going to get aroused with a minute or two of rubbing here and there,” says New York City sex educator Betty Dodson, Ph.D. “I need at least 20 minutes of gentle caresses all over—preferably more.”

Rushed foreplay is also a one-way ticket to sex problems for you, notably rapid ejaculation and erection difficulties. Rock music is replete with lyrics about doing it “all night long,” but with rushed foreplay, many of us can’t even do it for 2 minutes. The reason is that your penis is very sensitive. It enjoys arousal, but if it happens too quickly, it can’t take the pressure, and it either ejaculates quickly or goes soft. Extended, total-body caresses distribute sexual arousal around the entire body, taking the pressure off your penis. It still becomes highly aroused—in fact, more aroused—but because you’re aroused from head to toe, your penis isn’t the focal point. That helps it behave the way you want it to.

Professional massages also help you get used to the idea of slowing the sexual pace to incorporate total-body sensuality. Some men resist massage, just as they resist extended sensual lovemaking. They dismiss both as “touch-feely crap.” My advice? Embrace the hands-on experience. Make love a few times shortly after professional massages, and I bet your penis behaves better, your partner becomes more aroused and responsive, and that “touchy-feely crap” starts making more sense.

Formal massages can be wonderful preludes to sex, but they’re not necessary for total-body sensuality. You can enjoy many of the same benefits simply by taking a hot bath or shower together before lovemaking. Use soft washcloths and nice-smelling soap over every square inch of each other’s bodies. The warmth relaxes tense muscles. And soaping and drying each other can be a marvelous turn-on. For extra sensual enhancement, dry off with warm towels. Before you get into the water, drape your towels over a heater or toss them into the dryer, so they’ll be warm when you use them.

You can do the same with bathrobes.

Replacing rushed foreplay with relaxed, full-body caresses is probably the single most important improvement men can make in their lovemaking. And once you get used to it, you'll probably find that extended sensuality also enhances your own experience of sex.

FOREPLAY? FORGET IT!

Okay guys, you have my permission to skip foreplay as most of you know it. I give you license to scrap the linear, end-res sex pornography inspires so many men to pursue. Great sex is a whole lot more than a few kisses, a quick sweep of her breasts and between her legs, some thrusts, and bang!

I challenge you to find the foreplay in the following scenario: You light some scented candles and watch an erotic video for a while, gently holding, kissing, and stroking each other's faces and arms. Next, you feed each other strawberries or olives as you undress, caressing each other some more. Then, you shower together, dry each other, and have a glass of wine. After that, you turn on some music, ease into bed, and lie face-to-face, kissing, lightly caressing each other. Then, you suck each other's nipples for a while, trade foot massages, and after that, fondle each other's genitals for a time. Then you treat each other to oral sex. After a while, you have intercourse, then uncouple and feed each other some more snacks, while continuing to kiss and caress. Next, you return to oral or vaginal intercourse, but in some different positions. And on and on, all night long.

Can't find the foreplay? That's because it's not there. It's all sex—quite simply, great sex.

Compared with perfunctory foreplay, this kind of spontaneously creative sex raises oxytocin levels much higher, providing some potent sexual benefits. Both you and your lover experience greater whole-body sensual arousal. This makes sex more enjoyable for her, and ultimately makes the prospect of genital play more appealing. Both you and she are more likely to enjoy intensely pleasurable orgasms. And your penis is much more likely to get hard, stay hard, and you'll ejaculate when you want. In addition, it gives you plenty of time to discuss contraception and condom use to prevent sexually transmitted infections.

SIGHT

When it comes to sex, men are visual creatures. We love the sight of naked women. We enjoy pornography. Nothing's wrong with that. But there's more to sexually alluring sights than nakedness and videos of the old in-and-out. Spicing up the visual environment in which you make love can heighten arousal for you and your lover.

One reason so many people are in the dark about total-body sex is that they make love with the lights off. Try candles. They illuminate lovemaking with a shimmering, romantic glow. Another visual treat involves watching your lover undress. Don't rush this. Think of it as a gift. When you receive a gift, unwrapping it is half the fun. It heightens the anticipation. The same goes for sex. Slowly undressing each other turns ordinary lovemaking into a gift-wrapped, sensual surprise.

Erotic videos can also spice up sex. Many sex therapists recommend X-rated videos as sexual stimulants and erotic enhancements. Most men need little coaxing to watch porn. Many women enjoy it as well. But quite a few women dislike traditional male-oriented pornography. They often prefer videos produced by former porn actress, Candida Royalle, whose Femme Productions videos exude a more feminine sensibility. Femme videos include plenty of you-know-what, but compared with standard porn, the characters appear more real and the sex takes place in the context of more loving relationships. Women enjoy Femme videos more—and find them more arousing. Or try an instructional erotic video. Several are as erotic as they are educational. (See Resources.) Or flip through books of erotic art or photography.

Frankly sexy sights can be a terrific turn-on. But so can other visual delights—a sunset, an elegant restaurant, a bubbling hot tub, or your honey beckoning to you from in front of a hearth with a roaring fire.

SOUND

Down through the ages, music has been used extensively in healing. In the Bible, the young David plucked a harp to soothe troubled King Saul. Apollo, the Greek god of medicine, was also the god of music. And the Greek philosopher Pythagoras advised daily singing to relieve worry and sorrow. Today, the United States boasts more than 5,000 music therapists, who, among other things, use music to help people achieve a state of deep relaxation. Many studies show that music reduces anxiety, elevates mood, helps relieve pain, and improves the quality of life. As a result, it enhances sex.

Here are some suggestions for using sound to heighten arousal and sexual pleasure.

Make noise. Many people make love in silence. If pillow talk distracts either of you from your erotic focus, then perhaps silence is golden. But most people enjoy hearing a lover whisper: “You’re beautiful,” “You turn me on,” “I love you,” and other intimate endearments. And here’s a question many women appreciate in a prone position: “Is this okay?” Many men assume their lovers enjoy their moves. Maybe so; or maybe not. When men invite women to coach them in how to provide pleasure, women usually appreciate it—and get more turned on.

The sounds of sexual pleasure are also contagious. Deep breathing, loud sighs, and little love moans help you relax and tell your lover you’re very turned on—and often spread the excitement. Some men feel reluctant to make noise during sex, fearing that it’s too “animalistic,” or that it signals they’re not in control. On the contrary: You don’t have to scream to communicate how much she turns you on.

Make sex musical. These days, small portable boom boxes make it easy to listen to music in your bedroom or anywhere you enjoy making love. Play anything you both enjoy. Discuss the volume. Some lovers prefer soft music. But if your walls are thin and you feel self-conscious making love noises that people in the next room might hear, louder music can mask the sounds you’d rather keep private.

Eavesdrop. The companies I mention in the Resources section at the back of this book all sell erotic books on tape or music collections specifically produced to accompany lovemaking. Erotic books on tape or similar stories might not be your cup of tea in the bedroom, but try them in your car on the way home after a date as you shift emotional gears toward sex. Listening to erotic stories can help you make the transition.

TASTE

If you doubt the erotic power of food, rent the video of *Nine and a Half Weeks*, and check out the refrigerator scene. Mickey Rourke and Kim Basinger work themselves into an erotic frenzy by feeding each other such sensual treats as chocolate, strawberries, and globs of jello. Fine food—and the conversation that accompanies it—can make what happens after dessert taste even more delicious.

Or take some snacks to bed. Try feeding each other bits of fruit, cheese, or anything you both find appealing. Or incorporate food items into your lovemaking. Whipped cream in aerosol cans is my favorite. Apply it almost anywhere, then lick it off. The same goes for chocolate syrup and fruit preserves. Use your imagination. Just go easy on one ingestible—alcohol. When used to excess, it’s a major sex killer.

There’s more to sensual taste than just food. There’s the delicious taste of your lover: her lips, tongue, nipples, and genitals. If you like how she tastes, let her know. You might also experiment with chocolate body paint, flavored sexual lubricants, or a vibrator that comes with slip-on candy sleeves (see Resources).

SMELL

The nose is one of our most erotic organs. Studies by neurologist Alan Hirsch, M.D., director of the Smell and Taste Treatment and Research Foundation in Chicago, show that certain aromas elevate mood, reduce anxiety, and help control pain—all of which contribute to sexual pleasure. And beyond formal research, many people agree. Just look at the \$6 billion perfume industry and the popular alternative healing art of aromatherapy.

Meanwhile, during the past 20 years, it has become clear that the almost indiscernible fragrances of human pheromones exert subtle but powerful effects on human sexuality.

Pleasant aromas—and some surprising ones—enhance total-body lovemaking. Most scented products and aromatherapy items use fragrant plant oils. Not only do they smell great, they enhance lovemaking by contributing to sensuality. Many plant oil scents are relaxing, which helps people feel more sexual. And they help you separate the smells of everyday living from the special aromas you associate with lovemaking. Before getting into bed, take a bath or shower with a nice-smelling soap, trade massages with fragrant lotions and oils, or fill the bedroom with fresh-cut flowers or scented candles.

Certain scents also increase bloodflow to the genitals. Researchers at the Smell and Taste Treatment and Research Foundation in Chicago wired volunteers' penises with bloodflow monitors, then exposed them to various fragrances. The ones that produced the greatest inflow were:

1. A combination of lavender (a key fragrance in aromatherapy) and pumpkin pie, with its aromas of pumpkin, cinnamon, and nutmeg.
2. A combination of licorice and fresh doughnuts.
3. A combination of doughnuts and pumpkin pie.
4. Fresh-baked cinnamon buns.

Enjoy one or more of these as you get ready to make love. Or take one or more to bed with you, and feed pieces to each other.

QUICKIES

HOW DO THEY FIT INTO TOTAL BODY SEX?

If the most fulfilling lovemaking requires leisurely, playful, total-body sensuality, where does it leave the hot, rip-your-clothes-off quickie?

Quickies can play an important role in your sexual repertoire. But they don't promote great sex in quite the same way as total-body sensuality. For starters, don't expect your best orgasms from quickies. The more sensual your lovemaking, the more intense and satisfying your release.

And quickies simply are not as pleasurable for women as they are for men. Even young, hormone-driven gals generally prefer extended, playful sensuality to a mad dash for intercourse. Quickies rarely provide women enough time to reach orgasm. And because they don't include enough touching and caressing for her to warm up sexually, she may have trouble producing enough vaginal lubrication to make intercourse comfortable, much less enjoyable. Women aren't the only ones who suffer. The fast pace of quickies may cause you to struggle with ejaculatory control and erection problems.

As you age, quickies can become even more challenging. Young men may be able to raise full erections at the drop of a zipper, but this is less likely for older men. "There's an old joke about sex as men age," *Great Sex* advisory board member, Lin Alperstein, M.S.W., L.C.S.W. says. "What young men want to do all night takes older men all night to do."

Nonetheless, "Sex doesn't have to be an elaborate affair every time," Sugrue explains. "Seven-course banquets are wonderful."

but every now and then, fast food hits the spot.”

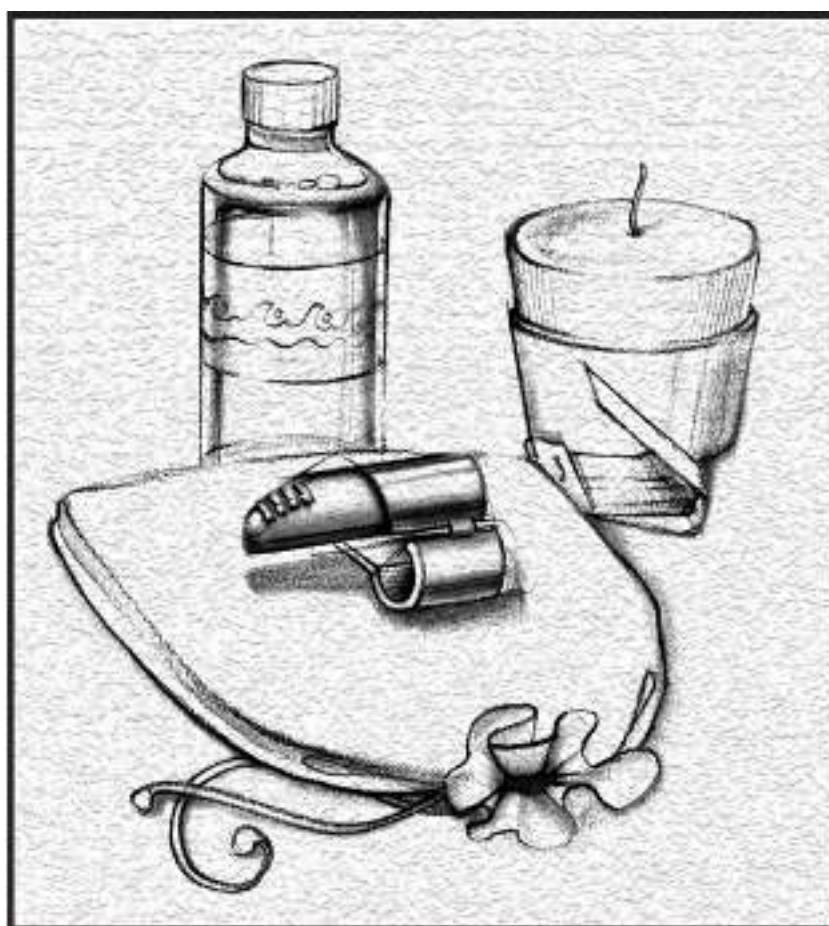
To make the most of a quickie:

Heat up the anticipation. If you have to travel to enjoy your brief rendezvous, get on the phone and start talking about how you feel beforehand. That way, by the time you rush into each other’s arms, you’re already aroused.

Make it a total-body quickie. You may not have much time, but that’s no reason to jettison sensuality entirely. Arrange your tryst to include as much music, visual interest, fragrance, tasty treats, and massage as your time together allows. Consider creating a “quickie kit” containing some lubricant, a candle, matches, perhaps a vibrator, and anything else you and your lover enjoy. A portable radio and scented candles can be used almost anywhere. If this is a planned quickie, stop by a market and pick up some treats to feed one another, for example, cold shrimp and spicy cocktail sauce. Be creative with your kissing. As you undress one another, enjoy some nongenital massage.

Use a lubricant. Quickies may not give the woman time to self-lubricate enough to enjoy intercourse comfortably. Commercial lube can help.

Keep a vibrator handy. The faster the sexual pace, the more difficult it is for women—and older men—to experience orgasms. Vibrators can help women come quickly, and vibrating penis sleeves can do the same for men.



A quickie kit can come in handy when you want to maximize the moment.

HOW TOTAL-BODY SENSUALITY ENHANCES INTIMACY

I don’t have to tell you that there’s a disconnect between men and women when it comes to intimacy. Women complain that men have trouble with intimacy, that they go overboard on sex and shortchange emotional expression. But to many men, intimacy is sex. Clearly, men and women conceive of intimacy differently. Total-body sensuality can bridge this gap.

Let’s start with some definitions. What does it really mean to be intimate with someone? Intimacy requires mutual self-revelation. In other words, you must have enough trust in your partner (and she in you) to share your hopes, dreams, and fears, and how you feel about each other and your relationship.

Because it requires you to disclose personal and sometimes private feelings, intimacy hinges on being able to express your emotions, something many men find difficult. “Don’t feel intimidated

Weston advises. “Self-revelations don’t have to feel like psychotherapy. Just talk about what you enjoy about the other person, what you like in your relationship, your feelings about yourself, and any changes you’d like to make.” Intimacy also involves asking questions about how your lover feels about her life and your relationship. Draw her out. Help her explore her feelings. The more you and your partner talk about the personal sides of your lives, the more comfortable you will become—and the more intimate.

Now that you understand a little more about intimacy, you may be surprised to learn that once you apply total-body sensuality to your sex life, you can also use it to enhance intimacy in your relationship, which leads to better sex. Here’s how.

- The principles of total-body sensuality promote deep relaxation, which should help you feel more comfortable about self-revelation. Because total-body sensuality helps people feel safe with each other, comfortable, more secure, and less interested in escape, it can also help banish insecurities that make you withdraw emotionally from your partner.
- Total-body sensuality is playful. It’s fun. It’s creative. It excites all the senses. It helps you feel closer to your partner, more connected. As feelings of connection increase, intimacy deepens.
- Sensuality boosts self-esteem. It’s fulfilling to provide another person with pleasure, and it feels equally wonderful to know that someone else is focused on giving you pleasure. “Sensual play makes people feel valued, which is fundamental to intimacy,” explains *Great Sex* advisory board member Marty Klein, Ph.D.
- Sensuality allows you to savor sexuality. It slows things down, eliminating the rush into genital sexuality and intercourse. It isn’t an excuse for women to “avoid” sex. Rather, total-body sensuality expands lovemaking to include the entire body. It helps her enjoy sex more—and when she does, so do you.
- Sensuality makes sex more pleasurable. A slow, sensual approach gives women all the time they need to become aroused and responsive, and it helps men avoid sex problems, notably rapid ejaculation and erection problems. Sensual sex means more fulfilling sex—and mutual happiness and fulfillment deepen intimacy.

INTIMATE PLAY

MAKE A GAME OF IT

The year was 1979. The place: Scottsdale, Arizona. Barbara Jonas was upset because she and her husband, Michael, had a spat shortly before he left on an extended business trip. Feeling lonely, Barbara, then 37, regretted the tiff, and didn’t want lingering bad feelings to spoil the couple’s reunion. She wanted Michael’s homecoming to celebrate all the playfulness and love of their marriage. But how?

A love letter, Barbara thought, pulling out some paper. But on reflection, she didn’t want to give Michael something to read. She wanted to create something they could do together. Barbara traded her stationery for index cards. She typed up a series of questions and designed a rudimentary game board. The evening of Michael’s return, she tacked a note to their front door, prepared the living room, and held her breath.

Suitcase in hand, a road-weary Michael trudged up the walk hoping his homecoming would be happier than his departure. He wanted to tell Barbara how much he loved her, but he’d never been much good at expressing such feelings. Struggling with what to say, he noticed Barbara’s note: “Change into something comfortable, and meet me in the living room.”

Intrigued, Michael did as the note asked, and when he entered the living room, the lights were low, a fire crackled in the fireplace, fresh flowers graced the coffee table, and an alluringly dressed Barbara handed him a glass of chilled champagne.

plate of hors d'oeuvres—and a stack of index cards. “I was so taken aback,” Michael recalls, “I just played along.” Which was exactly what Barbara had hoped.

The Jonases sat down at Barbara's homemade game board. She handed Michael pencil and paper, and asked him to write a secret wish for later that evening. Barbara also penned a wish, and said, “First one around the game board wins the wish.”

Then they took turns rolling dice and moving game pieces. After each move, they drew a card. Some were “talk” cards that asked open-ended questions designed to celebrate and reflect on their relationship; others were “touch” cards with playful, sensual instructions.

Today the Jonases don't recall who won that initial game, but they have vivid memories of the evening they first played. “Barbara's game was a powerful experience for me,” Michael recalls. “It put me in touch with all the positive aspects of our relationship. It helped me say all the loving things I'd always wanted to say but somehow never could.”

“The game put our disagreement behind us,” Barbara recalls. “We had a wonderful reunion, and felt very close.” The Jonases' revived intimacy led to another game they liked to play . . . in the bedroom.

Three years later the Jonases decided to market the game commercially. Now called “An Enchanting Evening,” it's one of the nation's top-selling adult-oriented games. “An Enchanting Evening reminds couples why they fell in love in the first place,” says Lewis Richfield, Ph.D., a couples therapist in Los Angeles. “And it helps restore intimacy, sensuality, and sex.”

“The link between intimacy and sexuality is a problem for many couples,” Klein explains. Many men have difficulty discussing their emotions and believe that sex expresses their love. Meanwhile, many women have difficulty becoming sexually aroused and feel that loving closeness helps them warm up to sex. “An Enchanting Evening helps men discuss their feelings, which gives women the emotional connection they want. And it helps women become sexually aroused, which gives men the responsive lovers they want.”

To obtain An Enchanting Evening, see Resources.

TOTAL-BODY SOLUTIONS TO YOUR NUMBER ONE SEX KILLER—STRESS

I've spent the greater part of this chapter talking about total-body sensuality—how you can use sensual techniques to enhance your lovemaking and enjoy great sex. Problem is, most of us reasonable, healthy guys can't even start applying this simple secret until we can overcome the everyday stressors and tensions that keep us wound up.

In our fast-paced, highly competitive culture, many men fall victim to the ravages of chronic stress—and the sex problems that result from it. We feel consumed by The Three A's of Manhood: achieve, achieve, ACHIEVE. And we can't relax. Even when we're supposed to be mellowing out, we're still preoccupied with closing that deal, meeting that deadline, getting that promotion. (How many of you have called your office during a vacation?) After all, doesn't a “real man” strive unceasingly for greater accomplishments? For lots of us, working feels more natural than relaxing.

It's no coincidence that men call their stressors “ball busters.” They are. Take a few seconds right now and think about the stress in your life. Is it interfering with your intimate relationships? Are you missing out on great sex?

According to research, the obsessive pursuit of material success is the equivalent of aiming a wrecking ball at your sex life—it causes intimate relationships and healthy sexuality to crumble. University of Rochester psychologists reviewed studies correlating the pursuit of wealth with the pursuit of happiness. They found that those who make money the central focus of their lives are unusually high risk for anxiety, depression, divorce, social isolation, and low self-esteem—all contributors to emotional burnout, sex problems, and lousy lovemaking.

Researchers with the Massachusetts Male Aging Study, an ongoing investigation of 1,709 men over 40, analyzed stress as a contributor to erectile dysfunction (ED). Compared with the men who had no symptoms of anxiety or depression—good predictors of stress—those with symptoms were almost twice as likely to experience ED.

THE DEEP RELAXATION SOLUTION

Many men have trouble relaxing because they do it so little. Relaxation is like any other skill. It requires practice. Relaxation—especially the deep relaxation necessary for great sex—is a whole lot different from simply not working. (Just ask anyone who's unemployed.)

Ironically, men who feel tense, overworked, and stressed out sometimes approach relaxation as though they were attacking a challenge at work, without pausing to consider what relaxation actually involves. Or they choose activities that don't really get the job done, for example, watching a baseball game (possibly relaxing, possibly not, depending on how your team does), with friends (good), while eating junk food (bad), and drinking alcohol (more than a drink or two is bad).

To make sure you really are relaxing, here's what you need to do.

Take a time out. You need a break from the “shoulds” that dominate your life. Slow down, sleep late, and dawdle over the little pleasures you never find time for—spending time with the people you love, reading books, going to movies and concerts, taking long walks, gardening, getting away, or just doing nothing.

Live in the moment. True relaxation involves focusing on the present. Tune into yourself, your emotions, and the people you're with. Tune out that tiff with your boss, the income tax deadline, and family hassles.

Lose yourself. At a concert, melt into the music. While swimming, merge with the water. During a massage, drift away to a dreamy, tranquil place. Let go.

Say no to pressure. Relaxation means doing what you want, when, how, and with whom you want. No one pushes you to “produce” or “perform.”

If the way you choose to relax involves competition, keep it friendly. Admire your opponent's well-executed moves as much as you appreciate your own. It should be play. The emphasis is on having fun, not on “killing” the other guy.

Once you've got the rhythm of deep relaxation, you can apply it to your pursuit of great sex. Total-body sex shares the following attributes with relaxation. You just take relaxation a step further into sexual pleasure.

Take a time out . . . for sex. Total-body sex involves not only a time-out from daily hassles, but also a conscious s-l-o-o-o-w-ing of time. With all due respect to the quickies I discussed [here](#), the best sex is usually slow sex. “One of women's main complaints about the way men make love,” explains Weston, “is that it's too rushed, too formulaic. Men plunge into intercourse before women feel ready.”

It's not that men are boors. Most men truly want to please women. “I think the reason so many men rush sex is that male sexual energy is aggressive and lusty,” explains Alperstein. “Many men fear that if they slow down, they might lose their erection, or that their partners might reconsider having sex with them,” she says. Actually, slowing down is more likely to keep women interested and aroused, and help you maintain your erection, or allow it to return if it subsides.

Compared with men, it usually takes women considerably longer to become sexually aroused, so a slow pace is absolutely essential for most women's sexual responsiveness. Not to mention that when you slow down, you're much more likely to enjoy ejaculatory control and cooperative erections, and you'll be able to come when you want to.

Live in the erotic moment. Many people notice that sex feels hotter in hotels. Why? “Because unlike your bedroom,” explains Klein, “hotels have no associations with your past or your future.” Hotels rooms are about right now, which helps people focus on the present moment, and on sex. Every now and then, arrange an erotic weekend getaway. Even if you don't get to hotels often—never—try to think of your bedroom as a sanctuary from everyday stresses. When you're in bed with your lover, try to stay focused on the present.

Lose yourself . . . in sex. Consider the typical X-rated video. It may be titillating, but the actor

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