

3 steps to good sex and becoming a better lover

I would like to share with you three steps to good sex and becoming a better lover. In all my years of experience in my personal and professional life, I have come to realize that these are the most foundational skills that one must have.

1. Develop the ability to do what makes you feel good- Many of my clients are confused when I say this because it seems counterintuitive. They ask- "To be a good lover shouldn't I do what my partner likes?" My answer is that everyone you meet will have different preferences. Learning what someone likes takes time, communication and trial and error. It's not something that you are supposed to just know in your initial encounters. What everyone does have in common is that we all want to feel like our partner desires us. That desire is expressed by the way you touch someone, the way you look at them, how your breath changes and a certain energy you put off. When you are approaching physical intimacy from focusing just on what your partner likes it becomes a performance, the connection is lost and you often end up in a place of anxiety or inhibition. Steps 2 and 3 details how to develop this ability to do what makes you feel good.

2. Be present in your body- This is easier said than done. We are so used to being in our heads that it's much easier to be caught up in our thoughts than it is to be present in our bodies. Focusing on the present, or being mindful, is like a mental muscle you can develop. The more you practice it the easier it becomes. To focus on the present, take a deep slow breath with your diaphragm and feel the physical sensations of your breath. It's good to exhale through your nose. When you catch yourself being in your head, use your breath as a tool to pull yourself back into your body. When you are present, you are able to be in touch with all the sensations you are feeling as well as any emotions you are feeling. When you combine that with deep slow diaphragmatic breathing you are helping yourself stay in a relaxed state and be free from performance anxiety or any stress you may be feeling.

3. Sensate focus- this is a term coined by Masters and Johnson. To do sensate focus, touch your partner in a sensual not sexual way, and it's good to start out by excluding the chest and genitals. While touching, focus on the sensations against your skin- texture, shape, temperature, etc. Touch with different parts of your hands, your wrists, the insides of your forearms. Concentrate on what feels interesting or good to you. Keep your focus what you are feeling and staying with what feels pleasant for you. Don't worry about being creative or what your partner's experience is like. If you notice yourself thinking, go back to step 2. You can practice on your own body or on objects before trying this out on a partner.

Follow these three steps and keep in mind, with experiential body based learning it takes practice to get good at it. The more practice you get the more change you will notice. And anytime you do something new it's going to feel awkward, but the more you do it the more familiar and comfortable it will feel. Be gentle with yourself, and have fun!

By Eileen Chao, M.A. - sex and intimacy coach