

The Importance of Intimacy for Increasing Sexual Satisfaction

by Dr. Lyne Piché, Registered Psychologist

Being close physically and emotionally to another human being is an important part of creating a satisfying sexual relationship. There are ways to increase the level of intimacy and closeness within your relationship. This may lead to improvements in your sexual relationship as well as to your overall relationship satisfaction.

Sexual satisfaction is enhanced when your relationship is happy, when positive communication is favoured and time is spent improving your relationship. Sexual satisfaction can decrease when you are unhappy in your relationship, when there are unresolved conflicts in your relationship or when your expectations within the relationship are not being satisfied. It is important to address relationship problems and resolve conflicts as they occur.

Here are some tips:

1. **Spend time together.** Take short periods each day to be together. Ensure that you take the time to holiday together, this is especially important for partners with busy schedules or caregiving responsibilities. Remember a holiday does not have to involve travelling or a large expense, time alone at home counts too!
2. When you are together with your partner, **be present.** This involves silencing cell phones, ignoring email and computer requests as well as turning off the television. Being truly available for your partner once a day is a worthwhile goal.
3. **Communicate positively.** Remembering to foster positive and supportive interactions can assist you to create a healthy and happy relationship. Thanking your partner and recognizing their efforts are two important ways to communicate positively. It is also important to be honest. This includes communicating your personal feelings, thoughts and perceptions regularly.
4. **Grow within your relationship.** It is easy for relationships to become stagnant over time; bad habits creep in which undermine your efforts at creating intimacy. Recognizing when your relationship needs extra attention and energy is an important long term investment.
5. Discussions surrounding sexual expectations, sexual preferences and sexual values are an important part of establishing a healthy relationship. Sexual expectations can change over the course of a relationship. **Open communication about sexuality** should be fostered within your relationship.