

Dimensions of the “Good-Enough Sex” Model For Couple Satisfaction

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1. **Sex is valued as intrinsically good**, an invaluable part of an individual’s and couple’s self-esteem, pleasure, intimacy, comfort, and confidence.
2. **Sexuality is inherently relational**. Relationship and sexual satisfaction are the ultimate developmental focus and are essentially intertwined. The couple blends the 12 facets of intimacy; views the partner as “Sexual Friend”; their relationship as “Intimate Team.”
3. The partners ground their **sexual expectations** on realistic, age-appropriate expectations. Accurate and reasonable knowledge about sexual physiology, psychology, and relationship health are crucial for sexual satisfaction
4. **Good physical and psychological health**, ensured with healthy behavioral habits, are vital for sexual health. Individuals value their and their partner’s sexual body.
5. **Relaxation** is the foundation for sexual pleasure and physiological sex function.
6. **Sensual touch & emotional pleasure** are valued as well as sexual performance.
7. Valuing **variable, flexible** sexual experiences and abandoning the “need” for perfect performance inoculates the couple against sexual dysfunction by overcoming performance pressure, anxiety, and fears of failure and rejection.
8. Five **basic purposes for sex are integrated** into the couple’s sexual relationship -- blending pleasure, tension release, self-esteem, intimacy, and/or procreation.
9. Partners integrate and flexibly use the three basic **sexual arousal styles** to cope with “sexual over-familiarity” by balancing and blending multiple styles of sexual arousal --> sensual “self-entrancement”, “partner interaction”, and “role enactment”.
10. **Gender differences** are respectfully valued and similarities mutually accepted. Each is attentive to integrating their psychological and physical sexual feelings. The man learns to self-regulate his sexual drive and arousal while the woman self-regulates her emotional drive and sexual arousal. They consciously accept and respect the body’s “biological sexual nature,” he learns to personalize his biologically natural tendency toward “sexual objectification,” and each differentiates and integrates emotional and sexual feelings (issues of “emotional sexualization” and “sexual emotionalization”) to enhance relationship intimacy.
11. Sex is integrated into **real life** and real life is integrated into sex. Sexuality is developing, growing and evolving throughout life. The healthy couple integrates the events of daily life to create their realistic, distinctively personalized, and enriched sexual style. Sexual health and satisfaction are directly influenced by the quality of relationship conflict resolution. Conflict presents the ordinary, day-to-day opportunity to cooperatively address it and thereby deepen emotional and sexual intimacy. They each become leaders in cooperation for intimacy – in and out of the bedroom.
12. Sexuality is **personalized --> occasionally playful, special, spiritual**. Mature playfulness is characterized by acceptance, emotional trust, and pleasure.