

ORIGINAL RESEARCH

The “Good-Enough Sex” model for couple sexual satisfaction

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ABSTRACT *The “Good-Enough Sex” model presents a commonsense yet comprehensive perspective that challenges simplistic notions of sex and encourages couples to pursue positive, realistic meaning in their intimate lives. With the Good-Enough Sex model, intimacy is the ultimate focus, with pleasure as important as function, and mutual emotional acceptance as the environment. Sex is integrated into the couple’s daily life and daily life is integrated into their sex life to create the couple’s unique sexual style. Living daily life well – with its responsibilities, stresses, and conflicts – provides the opportunity to experience sexual interactions in a subtly yet distinctively personalized and enriched way. Sex at times is experienced as pleasure, stress relief, mature playfulness, and on another occasion as a spiritual union. Intimate couples can value multiple purposes for sex and use several styles of arousal. Good-Enough Sex is congruent with the couple’s genuine lifestyle. Good-Enough Sex recognizes that among satisfied couples the quality of sex varies from day to day and from very good to mediocre or even dysfunctional. Such reasonable expectations are an important feature of sexual satisfaction as well as inoculating the couple from disappointment and sexual problems in the future. The Good-Enough Sex perspective serves as the foundation for relationship and sexual satisfaction.*

KEYWORDS: *Good-Enough Sex model; sexual satisfaction; sexual dysfunction; biopsychosocial model; couple sexuality; sexual health*

Introduction

Approximately 45 percent of couples at a given time suffer a male, female or couple sex problem (Laumann *et al.*, 1999). While awareness of sexual dysfunction (SD) has increased in recent years with the advances in sexual medicine, clinical experience demonstrates that SD is rarely a simple performance problem with a simple cure. A sexual issue is commonly a profound human, relationship problem, which involves emotional suffering, distress, even agony. Because of this potentially profound psychological distress, SD is internationally classified as a psychiatric disorder according to the American Psychiatric Association, Diagnostic and Statistical Manual

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