

Physical and Sexual Intimacy

MARRIAGE IN MOTION ▶ Module 3: An Epic Friendship

3.3

MODULE 3, LESSON 3

SUMMARY

- Your most physically intimate marriage isn't confined to the bedroom.
- Physical Intimacy is about:
 1. **Proximity** — sharing the same space.
 2. **Physical health and fitness** — caring for each other's bodies
 3. **Non-sexual touch** — holding hands, massages, snuggling
 4. **Eye contact** — pause, look deeply, really connect
 5. **Kissing** — try holding a kiss for 6 seconds
- Physical intimacy enhances sexual intimacy.
- When it comes to sexual intimacy, both partners should feel secure in their ability to make a request for sex, accept that request, or decline. Dr. Gottman says the healthiest sexual relationships are ones where there are no consequences to either partner for the "ask" or the "decline."
- The road to great sex is through conversation about sex. What should sex mean? What should it feel like? What should sex accomplish?

Couples who have the BEST sex lives, make sex a priority.

*Intimacy is not about who you let touch you...
it is about how you choose to touch another.*

ACTIVITIES

Holistic intimacy has five facets: Physical, Sexual, Emotional, Intellectual and Spiritual. We have already discussed Emotional and Intellectual intimacy. This lesson is dedicated entirely to Physical and Sexual intimacy.

Intimacy grows when couples are vulnerable... when you can ask for what you want and be confident that the answer will be heard, and honored. These activities will enhance your ability to communicate your wants, needs, and desires with your partner.

1 NON-SEXUAL MESSAGE: TELL ME HOW YOU LIKE IT

This exercise requires 60 minutes of closed-door, alone time with your partner. Rest assured, this exercise is intended to increase your communication about your physical sensations but is not sexual (unless, of course, you want it to be).

You will be giving each other a 30 minute, non-sexual massage.

The object of this exercise is for the partner receiving the massage to verbally guide and lead the masseuse through clear instructions on how to give a massage the way you like it.

INSTRUCTIONS: Begin by setting a calming environment, as you like it. Consider dimming the lights, lighting candles, selecting the right music, and setting your devices to silent.

Select one partner to be the masseuse. The other partner will begin by sitting on a flat surface facing away from the masseuse.

The masseuse will begin by massaging the shoulders and upper back. **The partner receiving the massage will then begin by verbally leading the masseuse through the massage, letting them know where they would like to be massaged next, what kind of pressure, in what technique.**

The masseuse will be sensitive to listening to the instructions and adjusting pressure, speed, technique, location, according to your partner's instructions. If the masseuse needs clarification or confirmation, be sure to ask. After 30 minutes, switch roles.

If you're new to this, here are things to think about, or say, that may be helpful:

PARTNER RECEIVING THE MESSAGE:

- Can you move to my head and massage my scalp with your fingertips?
- Can you lightly scratch my forearms with long smooth strokes?
- Can you press hard into the soles of my feet with your thumbs?
- I would like to lay down on my stomach now.
- Can you massage my stomach in circular motions?
- That pressure is too hard, can you be a bit more gentle?
- That feels amazing, keep doing that!
- I love how gentle you are. That feels so good.
- Can you massage my lower back now?

MASSEUSE:

- Are you enjoying this?
- How is this pressure?
- Should I go faster or slower?
- Are there any other areas you would like me to massage?
- Can you verbally let me know if something feels good so I can do more of that?

2 ACCEPT OR DECLINE SEX



We want to encourage you to become better at communicating your wants, likes, dislikes, and desires in non-sexual areas. You need this skill in order to clearly communicate your desire or lack of desire for sex.

All couples need the ability to gently and respectfully initiate OR refuse sex. Building trust and intimacy does not mean saying "yes," to everything. Rather, it is about the freedom to express, hear, and honor each other.

Do you know how your partner likes to be asked for sex? Do you know how your partner prefers to be told "not tonight?"

Declining sex is also part of sexual intimacy. Dr. John Gottman likes to say that the healthiest sexual relationships are ones where there are no consequences for declining a request for sex.

You may already be really strong in this area, and if so — great. However, if you need some help, the questions below will guide you toward an explicit agreement for how to say "yes" or "no" to sex, without consequences.

Take some time to go through these questions with your partner and decide how you will accept and decline sex as a couple.



The key is to actually TALK about sex, freely, with trust and respect. We know you're going to want to have your OWN conversations about sex... in ways that make sense for you both.

Here are some questions to get you started:

1. When is the best time for you to have sex?
2. How do you like to be approached to have sex?
3. Is there anything I can do to turn you on when you are not in the mood?
4. What barriers make it difficult for you to have sex? (i.e. kids in the next room, sex without showering first, lights on, etc...?)
5. If I am not in the mood to have sex, how would you like me to decline sex?
6. If you are still feeling drawn to me and sex is not an option, what else can we do to feel intimately connected?
7. What haven't we talked about regarding our sex life? What are ideas that you have to keep things passionate, interesting, and fulfilling?



TAKEAWAY

What was your #1 takeaway from this lesson? Describe any breakthrough(s):