

Help for Sex-Starved Couples

During any football game you might have seen a commercial with girls ripping off their clothes and wrestling. In this day and age, no matter where you turn you will probably see some sexually oriented message because everybody knows, sex sells. Well, maybe everywhere but in the marriage bed.

“We are seeing more marriages where one spouse is longing for more sexual closeness and the other just wants a good night’s rest,” said Michele Weiner Davis, marital therapist and author of *The Sex-Starved Marriage: A Couple’s Guide to Boosting Their Marriage Libido*. “The consequence of this is a lack of closeness/intimacy in the marital relationship. Couples stop holding hands, laughing at each other’s jokes or sitting next to each other on the couch. Irritability, anger and resentment creep in and begin to create a deep chasm in the relationship.”

According to Weiner Davis, there are millions of couples where one person is more sexual than the other and the less sexual person is continually saying no.

“I recently spoke with a couple that was dealing with this issue,” said Weiner Davis. “I asked the husband to tell his wife how he felt when he was continually rejected.” “I wonder if you still find me attractive or if you still love me,” said the husband. Tearing up, his wife responded, “In the 15 years we have been married I have never once considered what it would be like to be you when I say no.”

“One of the best-kept secrets is that women are not always the ones with the lower sex drive,” said Mrs. Weiner Davis. “Most marital therapists would agree that low desire is a bigger problem for women, but men are right behind them – they just don’t talk about it because there is so much shame involved.

“I am constantly amazed at how many couples never talk about sex. They don’t tell each other what they like and don’t like, or what feels good. When spouses aren’t tuned into each other’s sexual needs unspoken messages are communicated like, ‘I don’t have to care about your sexual needs, but I expect you to be monogamous and care about my needs.’”

Can couples really do anything to cure the problem? “You bet!” said Mrs. Weiner Davis.

- Don’t ignore the problem – It will not go away on its own.
- Talk about your feelings as opposed to expressing anger and frustration.
- Tune in to your spouse’s “turn ons” and not your “turn ons”- Spending time with your children, a back rub or a surprise evening out may be real turn ons for your wife. On the other hand, making his favorite meal or giving your blessing when he wants a guys night out could be a real turn on for your husband.
- Just do it... Even if you aren’t in the mood - Many lower-desire partners find that once things get moving it really is enjoyable.

Research shows that for close to 50 percent of the population, desire doesn't just happen. Couples who are intentional about making their sexual relationship a priority find that all aspects of their relationship are better. When you are loving to your spouse in the way they want to be loved they return the love. If you are wondering whether your marriage is at risk for becoming sex starved you can take a quiz at www.sexstarvedmarriage.com.