

# Making Sexual Fantasies a Reality

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Introducing new things in the bedroom can be as nerve wracking as anticipating a first kiss or as simple as asking a direct question, but **experimenting with sex should be a mutually fun and exhilarating experience** for both partners.

Whether you are enjoying great sex or looking to reignite the flames of intimacy that burned like an inferno that first time you touched each other, most couples wouldn't define their sex lives as "perfect." Perhaps one of you secretly wishes to try something different? Maybe your mind's eye drifts to fantasizing about someone else joining in on your fun? Role play? Toys? A little S&M?

Allow your mind to wander in the labyrinth of your deepest sexual fantasies for just a moment. Now ask yourself whether or not these are the *actual* sexual experiences you encounter? If the answer is "no," there are many reasons why. Exploring those reasons with a focus on **self-acceptance** will help you change your answer to "yes."

In order to better understand how men and women can feel comfortable trying new things in the bedroom, I talked with Celeste Hirschman, M.A. and Danielle Harel co-creators of the Somatica Method—a relational and experiential body-based approach to Sex Therapy and Relationship Coaching.

Hirschman said, "I think the most important thing that many couples *don't* do is **have a conversation** about 'here are my fantasies, here are yours where do they overlap?'" Often times when a relationship is new, couples are consumed with the passion and energy and hormones that ignite in anticipation.

There is a lot that comes from experiencing a new person in the beginning, Harel said, "but as they are together longer, people start to feel that there is this thing that I really want out of sex, but how do I even talk about that. It's too

embarrassing.” **That fear and embarrassment can lead to either less sex, worse sex, or in some cases no sex at all.**

“We encourage people to create an honest conversation, but there are two important rules,” said Hirschman.

**First, you don’t get to judge your partner’s desires or fantasies.** “It’s important to create a space where you are accepting and celebrating of each other’s fantasies and desires,” she continued. **The second rule is that you don’t have to meet all of your partner’s fantasies.** “This is *really* important because it means that you can still have boundaries in the face of the fact that your partner has desires,” said Hirschman.

“It’s all about establishing safety for that conversation to happen,” said Harel. “In our new book, *Making Love Real*, we talk to people about how to have those conversations.” Another in-road might be to watch a movie or read a story to somebody and ask questions of him/her. “How does that make you feel? Are you at all open to this? Are you disgusted?” said Harel, are really important conversation starters.

The problem, said Hirschman, is if they are disgusted it closes off the opportunity of having a safe conversation. “We are so sensitive about our desires and feel vulnerable about whether it’s OK to have them. The other person might feel ashamed, even if we’re not trying to shame them,” she said.



Even though sharing our bodies is an intimate engagement, it's not the pinnacle of intimacy that many think it is. **“Sharing our psyches, what we think about in our deepest fantasies,” is the most intimate rendezvous in a partnership.** Talking about what we think about when we watch porn, what we fantasize about is so secretive, and many people worry, *What If they think the way that I'm thinking is gross?* That's really scary, said Hirschman.

The first step in overcoming that fear is self-acceptance. “We should all be able to say, ‘Ok, not everyone is going to want to share in all of my desires, but **all of my desires are beautiful.** I may even have some desires/fantasies that I want my partner to know about, even though I might not want to enter into them,” said Harel.

How do you know the difference? Hirschman said, “I just like to think about it in my mind, but when I think about actually doing it, it doesn't excite me at all. I do want to be able to fantasize about it and share that fantasy with my partner to have my full level of arousal that I'm capable of.”

There is something about letting yourself off the hook, Harel said. “We don't have a lot of control over how our fantasies develop and we can't really change

them. **Accepting them and knowing that this is what gives you arousal is important.**”

In helping guide their clients toward this place of self-acceptance, Hirschman and Harel advise, “You can have a conversation that says these are the ones I want to enact; these are the ones I want to tell you about or talk about in bed. We think relationships can offer us happiness. Sometimes it can, but more than that, it can offer us **acceptance for all of who we are.** In our best and worst.”

Finding someone who accepts us from our most vanilla to our dirtiest fantasies, Hirschman said, “That is the most profound experience of intimacy I think a person can have. Listening to their fantasies. Maybe we can talk about it in bed or watch threesome porn to make space in our lives even if those fantasies are not fully enacted.”

Because so many men and women enter into relationships with the hope of being wanted, they hold back from exposing all of who they are. The problem is, if you aren’t sharing who you are and what you want early enough, you may not find the partner that is willing and able to experiment in ways that truly arouse you.

Being up front from the beginning may mean that the other person isn’t interested. “**Don’t count it as rejection, count it as incompatible,**” said Hirschman.

Taking the big leap from conversation to action can be even more frightening than sharing the words that represent the fantasies that arouse you. Maybe you want your partner to be more dominant and he doesn’t know how to be? His fear of rejection, of not doing it right, or not pleasing you keeps him from trying, so how do we dip our toe in the water?

“Try one little thing. **Take it in baby steps.** Maybe you want to be dominated, worshipped, used. Part of my fantasy is to feel precious, but another part of my fantasy is to feel used,” said Hirschman, so you try one thing that aims toward reaching that core arousal that will bring you to the greatest pleasure. It’s all learnable.

Hirschman and Harel teach their clients how to act with passion or romance in the words they say, their attitudes, their touch demonstrating the actual acts, words, gestures by teaching them to act out their hottest sexual movie.

Hirschman also said, “If it’s hard to bring it up and talk about it, do a little try in bed. You bring a little bit of that energy and see how your partner responds to it and see if they reciprocate. Gauge if you can take them further along in your movie without having to talk about it too much.”

Because I like to give everything the old college try, I ordered the book, so hopefully I’ll be doing more than reading very soon.

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