

Coming Together

**Embracing your Core Desires for Sexual Fulfillment
and Long-Term Compatibility**

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This book is not intended as a substitute for the medical advice of physicians. The reader should regularly consult a physician in matters relating to his/her health and particularly with respect to any symptoms that may require diagnosis or medical attention.



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Welcome to Your Desires

A healthy sex life is one of the most important keys to long-term relationship success. Great sex deepens the emotional bond between two people, increases happiness, and helps you make it through the day-to-day challenges of life. When sex isn't happening, it often becomes the focus of fights, disconnection, and dissatisfaction. As one of our clients put it - when sex is good it becomes 10% of the relationship and when it isn't it becomes 90% of the relationship.

Women come into our office complaining of low desire. Men begin to lose their erections or express that they prefer to stay home and masturbate to their favorite porn instead of going out and looking for a partner. Couples come in who have suffered in sexless relationships for many years and tell us in hushed voices about their boring sexual routines. Couples who love and are attracted to each other share their bafflement as to why their sex lives aren't thriving.

Erectile dysfunction (ED), low desire, and porn dependence may seem like functional barriers, but, more often, they are the result of people not being in touch with what they really want sexually. It's like their bodies or their psyches are saying: "I'm not getting the sex that I really want, so I don't really want to have sex." It's no wonder so many couples end up in sexless relationships.

Sex therapists, coaches, doctors, and sex experts each present their own separate solutions to sexual problems focusing largely on technique and one-size-fits-all approaches. Unfortunately, techniques don't get to the heart of what people are really looking for from their sexual connections. One size does not fit all since people's desires are very unique.

As sex and relationship coaches with 30 years of combined experience, we have seen every sexual issue. What may be surprising is that almost all of the problems that have to do with sex can be addressed by a single solution: understanding your Core Desires. Understanding your Core Desires is the opposite of a one-size-fits-all approach. It is discovering the unique set of feelings and experiences you want to have. We go to sex to feel something - whether it is powerful, adored, competent, etc. In order for your sex life to thrive, your Core Desires must be discovered and fulfilled.

Considering our society's lack of a nuanced understanding of desire, it is no mystery that people are struggling. Let's take a lack of sexual compatibility as an example. Often people have searched for answers in couple's therapy, tried deepening their communication (many times with great success on the relationship front), tried all the latest sexy toys, retreats and couple's vacations, and even tried experiential workshops - from tantra to kink and everything in between - without any long-term change in their sexual connection. This is because, unless the approach uncovers your Core Desires, it is not going to solve the problem.

It could be the case for some people that tantra, a new sex toy, kink, or even just the fact that their partner was willing to try something new might work for some people. If your Core Desire is around novelty, just trying something new might spark up some excitement. Or, if one of your Core Desires is teamwork, going to a workshop together might meet that need. Likewise, some people have Core Desires around power, so a kink workshop would be great, while others like to feel their sex is spiritual so tantra might get them aroused.

The problem with most approaches is that they offer surface solutions. This means each person's foundational Core Desires are never fully accessed or properly shared. Imagine if this couple kept having tantric or kinky sex, but the novelty wore off for one, and the other didn't feel that team feeling anymore once the workshop adventure was over. In a

matter of months or even weeks, they would be back to square one, even more at loss as to why their sex lives are not thriving.

Or, imagine that they went to a kink workshop, but only one of them was turned on by the content of the workshop. They might start shaming each other, or feeling like it is unfair that only one person is getting their needs met. With the help of Coming Together, you can share and teach each other your actual turn-ons while discovering and honoring differences. This is the pathway to an exciting, sustainable sex life. It is also the pathway to much more openness and intimacy in your relationship.

Don't get confused. While it is sometimes possible to get turned on at the beginning of a new sexual connection by experiences that do not touch on your Core Desires, getting your Core Desires met is essential to your long-term sexual satisfaction.

In this book we will illustrate the steps of how to reach sexual compatibility as a couple:

1. Learn what turns each of you on - your Core Desires
2. Communicate these Core Desires in a way each of you can understand and relate to
3. Fully accept each other's Core Desires while knowing that you can also have your boundaries
4. Go through the process of learning your partner's Core Desires and how to play them out in an experiential way (your Hottest Sexual Movies)
5. Bridge differences in how you want to have sex and learn to take turns if your sexual desires are vastly different from one another's

Discovering your Core Desires might seem simple and straightforward, yet people are constantly struggling with sexual issues because they don't really know how to do it. If this is your experience, go easy on yourself - the information available out there about sexual arousal is

pretty terrible and most professionals don't know how to help. Additionally, even if you know what you want, the next steps can be daunting.

Finding a way to talk about it, feeling safe articulating it, and then knowing how to teach your partner about it, can all be challenging because of the shame and sex-negativity in our society. Creating a safe space for you and your partner to share who you really are as sexual beings is one of the most valuable gifts you can give each other. The vulnerability of sharing these desires deepens trust, intimacy, and emotional connection.

While most advice suggests communication as the end-all-be-all of transformation in your sex life, just talking about it isn't enough. Whether you are in a long-term relationship or out there in the dating world, if you really want to have the most mind-blowing and deeply fulfilling sex possible, you have to know what feelings you want to have during sex and be able to teach others how to take you there. The process of teaching a partner can be challenging and it is essential to be gentle and teach experientially.

Additionally, you both must have the patience to go through this learning curve together. Sound difficult or scary? Once you engage it can be fun and exciting, particularly if you can leave judgment at the door and go into it with curiosity and compassion. Remember, you don't have to do anything you don't want to do, and the fact that your partner may have different desires than you doesn't mean you have to change who you are.

Before we dive more deeply into how to discover both your own and your partner's Core Desires, we think it is important to talk about the three reasons why this process is not common knowledge - why we don't have a good collective understanding or conversation around our Core Desires.

Reason 1: The Myth that Sex is “Just Supposed to Happen”

As a society, we have the extremely damaging belief that sex is just supposed to happen (and, moreover, be immediately great). In movies, television, and romance novels, we see two people falling into each other's arms and, without a word, they have mind-blowing sex that completely fulfills each of them. Whether they end in a fade-out, or satisfied side-by-side panting, there is never a moment before, during, or after where they say, “Hey, I'd really like you to...” or, “Wow, that was great, and you know what would make it even better next time...” or, even, “You know, I'm really attracted to you, but for sex to be satisfying for me, I'm gonna need a little bit of...”

This idea that sex is just supposed to happen - and be great when it does - means that we are not supposed to have a conversation, we are supposed to just find “the one” that will be a perfect match and will be able to know what we need without having to ask. This damaging myth has gotten in the way of so many potentially compatible couples, leaving them endlessly disappointed, living in a sexless relationship or moving on to someone else.

Reason 2: There are Socially Acceptable Sexual Desires and Other Desires that are Judged and Shamed

The second, more painful and insidious reason is that our culture has a set of specific sexual desires that are seen as acceptable and others that are not. As a society, we exalt monogamous couples made up a stereotypical man and woman participating in romantic or passionate sex with some occasional male dominance sprinkled in to add some edginess or taboo. The people in these stories are generally thin, able-bodied, and heterosexual with normal lives, jobs, etc. Any erotic desire or experience that falls outside of these parameters is rarely depicted in media. When they are depicted, they are often shown as aberrations. People who have shamed and unacceptable desires are often shown as criminals or social outcasts who are ultimately punished for their digressive behaviors.

Desires between same-sex couples or transgender folks, non-monogamy, or multiple-partner sex, female dominance, fetishes, or anything else outside of societal norms is generally ridiculed or made to look comical, leading to hiding or potential social ostracization. The requirement that people have socially acceptable sex prevents a more open and comprehensive conversation and leaves many people's desires out of the picture. This makes it very difficult for people to explore, accept, or come out about what they really desire sexually.

Reason 3: Sex is Trivialized or Pathologized

Another reason that we are not having an in-depth and nuanced conversation around sexual desires is that our culture thinks of sex as trivial and inessential to our happiness or to a well-rounded life. While your sexual self-acceptance and self-expression is an important key to your confidence, aliveness, and overall joy in life, many of our cultural beliefs will end up making you feel like thinking about sex and talking about sex is an indication that you are lacking more meaningful pursuits.

You can see these beliefs in the ways society pathologizes people who are deeply interested in sex. They are called nymphomaniacs or perverts. Our society pathologized desires as "weird" or "fetishes" and shames folks that have desires different from what is most socially acceptable. People who masturbate frequently or have multiple partners are labeled sex addicts. The level to which we are willing to label a deep interest in sex as an addiction is an indication of how uncomfortable our society is with sex.

In the face of these three reasons, it is no wonder we don't have a very nuanced, broad, or helpful erotic lexicon.

How *Coming Together* is Different

In *Coming Together* we will help you understand what's at the core of many sexual challenges including sexless marriages, low desire, erectile dysfunction, and porn dependency. We will offer you a deeper understanding of what helps you maintain attraction and sexual compatibility beyond the honeymoon period. We will give practical tools to discover the feelings you want to have and teach you how to write, direct, and star in your own Hottest Sexual Movies.

While some books have offered basic tools of self-discovery in this area, we are going to walk you through the step-by-step process to break down all the necessary aspects of learning about your Core Desires and Hottest Sexual Movies so that you can accept your desires, teach your partner what you want, and fully realize your erotic potential. This will inevitably lead to you having a more exciting and fulfilling sexual and emotional life.

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