

Non Sexual Touching

Non-sexual touch is critical for marriage and yet it is often an area that gets overlooked when talking about intimacy because so many people have this equation in their head:

INTIMACY = SEX

This leads to a lot of miscommunication, frustration and disappointment. Intimacy does not always mean sex. Intimacy, especially physical intimacy is about getting to know your husband or wife on a deeper level.

You know why touch, in general, is important for marriage. Now it's time to develop your non-sexual touch toolbox.

In looking at the seasons of many marriages it often looks something like this...

Dating

I'm just getting to know you. In the beginning it might be a handshake or a hug. A couple progresses to hand holding, kissing and more, yes sometimes sex. Sometimes it seems like you simply cannot keep your hands off of each other.

Newlyweds

We're married, let's have more sex, let's cuddle, still hugging, still kissing although now that you're married it might not have the same passion as it did before.

New parents and/or married for a number of years

A peck on the cheek, maybe holding hands, kids in between you. Things are different now and you attribute it to many things, the kids have so many

needs, your life is so busy. It's just not as important to touch that much, even though you are aware that something is missing.

Kids getting older/moving into empty nest/married many years

Touch?? What's that. My spouse knows that I love them. I don't necessarily have to show it. It's not that important that we hold hands or touch each other.

Your marriage needs you to have a full toolbox of non-sexual touches. Why? Because touch conveys so much. Non-sexual touch creates a safe place for your spouse. It shares desire, wanting, love, importance, connection. Touch allows the two of you to be connected without words. It's your bodies coming together to share the same space.

What are some types of non-sexual touch?

- Holding hands
- Putting your arm around each other
- Hugs
- Kisses
- Cuddling
- Resting your leg on each other
- Massage
- Spooning
- Resting a hand on your spouse's arm or leg
- Rubbing noses
- Resting your foreheads together

Yes, a lot of the suggestions on this list could and do lead to sex. The difference is the intention. Are you touching your spouse with the motive to have sex or are you touching them with the motive to encourage and lift them up? Both intentions have a place in marriage. However if you only ever touch your spouse with the intention of having sex, you will find that they don't want to be touched. You need both.

It's not always about sex. Sometimes the best type of intimacy is where you lay back, laugh together at the stupidest things, hold each other and enjoy each other's company.

~Anonymous

It's important to note that not everyone is comfortable with touch. Some of you grew up in families where touch was not done or where touch was not welcome. It is important for the two of you to understand this about each other.

1. How did your parents touch each other?

2. What messages have you received about non-sexual touch from growing up or other relationships?

3. What can I do to meet your touch needs?

It's time to take stock of the non-sexual touch in your marriage.

1. How do you show non-sexual touch in your marriage?

2. How often do you touch your spouse non-sexually in your marriage?

3. What are your favorite non-sexual touches to receive?

4. What are your favorite non-sexual touches to give?

5. Describe the balance of your non-sexual touch to sexual touch in your marriage.

6. Question for your spouse: How would you describe the touch in our marriage?

7. Question for your spouse: What types of non-sexual touches do you like to receive?

8. Question for your spouse: What types of non-sexual touches do you like to give?

9. Question for your spouse: How would you describe the balance of non-sexual to sexual touch in our marriage?

No other form of communication is as universally understood as touch. The compassionate touch of a hand or a reassuring hug can take away our fears, soothe our anxieties and fill the emptiness of being lonely.

~Randi G. Fine