

# Female Arousal and Desire

Original article by Catherine Elton entitled *Learning to Lust* in an article of Psychology Today; (Info compiled here from that article by Don Boice)

She writes that sexual desire in women is less directly tied to physical arousal than it is in men; in fact, ***desire often follows arousal, rather than precedes it***...more a matter of mind than mechanics...

***Many women engage in sex feeling neutral and experience desire only when they are physiologically aroused.***

Data show that what ignites women's desire, regardless of any generalized decline in desire, is a new partner.

Ester Perel, author of *Mating in Captivity*, contends that domesticity undermines desire. "Good intimacy doesn't always guarantee good sex," she says. "*The very elements that nurture love- reciprocity, mutuality, protection, closeness, emotional security, predictability- are sometimes the very things that stifle desire.* Love wants a certain kind of closeness; desire needs space and distance to thrive."

Marta Meana supports this, "formalizing their relationship by marriage *rendered sex so overly available and so sanctioned that it lost a forbidden and erotic quality* that formerly turned them on. Among others, *overfamiliarity with their partner led to a decline in romance and in sexual innovation*, as well as to a loss of their own sense of individuality and desire to care for their appearance, which they felt promoted sexual desire. *The roles of mother, wife and professionals were not only overwhelming but highly desexualizing.*"  
Journal of Sexual and Marital Therapy

Fantasy:

Women often fantasize about being ravished or found irresistible. Perel and Meana say that *women yearn to be uniquely desired- to be chosen as "the one."* Women want a commitment because it signals they are uniquely desired. *Once you are married, he is stuck. His advances no longer signal your unique desirability.*

Meana points out research- "Women find it arousing to think of themselves in lingerie or nude. Thinking of themselves as sexy boosts their desire. ***Feeling good about themselves emotionally and physically appears to be a bigger mediator of women's desire than men's.*** *Women are often distracted during sex by their own negative evaluations of their physical appearance.*"

Meredith Chivers notes that *women may just need more time for their minds to catch up to their bodies*-perhaps explaining why they want more foreplay. Men are more in tune with what is going on with their bodies than women are.

**One solution:** *learn the basics of mindfulness* (Lori Brotto) to reconnect the mind with the body's sensations.

Then examine their bodies in a nonsexual way without generating distress. ***Lessen distractions by judgment of physical appearance during sex.*** *Allow your mind to just be and just look, not to judge.*

Then *Brotto helps women change the way they look at their body and enjoy sensations in a sexual way.*

Lastly, she teaches them to *connect bodily arousal and emotional pleasure.* Tune into the sexual sensations of your body.

If you would like your emotional and physical intimacy to be top notch, perhaps it is time to look at a relationship expert who can get the results you are looking for. Consider giving us a call, if you want us to help you get that with your partner 585.544.5342