

## I WANT MORE FUN IN MY LIFE!

Is there anyone who could honestly say that s/he does not want to be happy? Is there any one who would actually refuse a chance to feel good? or have fun? or receive pleasure? The time to be happy is now!!!! There is no point in delaying happiness until I am 'not so tired', 'not so overweight', 'not so depressed', 'not so busy', 'feel sexier', 'the kids are grown', 'am in better shape', 'the dishes are done' and a million more excuses that we all come up with. What are we waiting for? So what if you don't really feel all that good right now? PRETEND that you do, then ACT accordingly. Soon you'll see yourself doing things that make you happy. Then, guess what, you become happy!

Everyone – Everyone – Everyone! these days, even young women and men are experiencing low desire for sexual relations. There may be a small hormonal component, or sometimes a physical issue, but most often there is a huge lifestyle problem. Most of the people in present day western societies are too busy, too rushed, and too stressed to remember to take time out for intimacy and pleasure. Women and men may feel badly about themselves, uncomfortable with their bodies, be angry with their partner, and/or have emotional, family, work and financial stressors. These all contribute to less inclination towards openness, vulnerability, and intimacy, sexual or otherwise.

Both women and men need to feel loved, nurtured, heard and appreciated. They often need to know that work, social and family obligations are all met before they take time for themselves. Women, especially mothers, put themselves and their own needs at the bottom of their 'To Do' list. They feel like it is selfish, over indulgent, unnecessary and the furthest thing from their mind. They don't want to take a day off work to for rejuvenation, or a weekend away from the house spent reconnecting with their partner. There are always excuses why to not take care of themselves and have some fun. I often hear my patients say “. . . I could not care less if I never had sex again, ever!” People in a long-term relationship can get stuck in a rut, become bored and disinterested. Many women with a history of abuse or stringent religious beliefs will have even more deeply ingrained hurdles to clear.

So what can be done? Laugh. Try to let go of your self-imposed mental obligations for just a brief time. Laugh. Get out of your head and into your body. Laugh. Reconnect with your body through a Yoga class, or swimming, walking or even simple stretching. Laugh. See a counselor who helps you with coping skills. Laugh. Have a special drink or a ritual meal with your partner. Laugh. Take a bath together. Laugh. Make a good relationship even better. Laugh. Take a vacation. Laugh. Get out of the house. Laugh. Get the kids or the mother-in-law out of the house. Laugh. Make “fore” play the “whole” play. Laugh. Experience the sensations that every part of your body can enjoy: feet, ears, scalp, fingers, lips, etc. Laugh. Have no performance goals, other than to have both partners enjoy their own feelings of pleasure and being nurtured as much as possible. Laugh. Make **each** time new, fresh, fun or different in some small way. Laugh. Try putting on clothes that make you feel happy and sensual, then your partner can enjoy the suspense of unwrapping each layer. Laugh.

Play a game where both partners win every time, its called '**Maximal Fun & Pleasure**'.  
**To play:** each partner tries to give his/her partner the most pleasure possible for the duration of the game. **Rules:** play as long or as short a time as you like, taking turns and exploring all body parts that feel good to the recipient. At the beginning of game, decide together on an ending time. **Definitively** decide together, if both partners want or do not want to exchange touches of sexual organs for that game day. **To start:** 'Put love into your fingertips.' Transmit a message through your hands (or other body part) of caring and compassion in a totally non-verbal, non-sexual way

that your partner will absolutely enjoy. (If you can't find that feeling, then PRETEND you have it for the duration of the game.) Ready, set, go!

Penis-in-the-vagina sex is rather overrated. Women tell me all the time that they really prefer hugs, foot rubs, back rubs or talking for their intimacy. Many men prefer oral sex to vaginal sex. Every inch of the body can respond to a pleasurable feeling. The areas of the body that physiologically have the most concentration of nerve endings and therefore the greatest tactual response in both men and women are PINK. Think about it, nipples, tongue, mouth, anus, etc. etc. That's why we call them our 'erogenous zones' ( – or society telling us where not to touch, where not to look.) These areas are quick, direct and intense sensations for most all mammals. Some people need a long time to warm up to having those areas touched, others want only those areas touched. Only 5% of women can have an orgasm just by having their vagina stimulated. The other 95% need well-performed attention paid directly to the clitoris. As women age, there is less blood flow and more dryness. At that time it is necessary to up-the-ante to get the same intensity of orgasms as in younger years. The clitoris loves a vibrator. It is a 'medical necessity' after a certain age and estrogen status to use lubricants and sex toys. Truly, it is essential.

Eating well (supported by dietary supplements), sleeping well, staying active, and living a balanced lifestyle (work and play, stress and fun) are essential components to a healthy mind and body. Other things that you can include in a wellness plan are complementary and alternative health practices such as Prayer/Meditation, Yoga, Massage, Acupuncture, Homeopathy, Naturopathy, Herbal Medicine, Energy Medicine, etc. to get your life and body more in balance and support your soul. If you have tried every single one of these suggestions and things are not much better, then maybe hormones such as Estrogen or Testosterone might be something for you to consider for healthier sexual function. There are some contraindications, and some side effects of these medicines that must be discussed with your doctor to know if they are right for you and your own individual history. And sometimes, the best decision to allow both partners to be the happiest they can be, is to take a break in the relationship for a while.

Remember, happiness, fun and pleasure are definitely worth pursuing alone or with a partner. There is an easy method: Pretend. Pretend you feel good even if you don't. Do it for short spans of time and increase the length as you improve your playful pretending skills. Any chance to change your life requires an effort. It will some take time to get it so that it feels right. Please have patience. Go within. Rediscover what makes you happy.

**GET A VIBRATOR! USE A VIBRATOR! USE MULTIPLE VIBRATORS! PLAY!  
EXPLORE! HAVE FUN! SPICE IT UP! GO ON A DATE! GO TO A LOCAL MOTEL!  
WATCH A SEXY MOVIE! CUDDLE. HUG. TOUCH. LAUGH. GIVE MESSAGES. FOOL  
AROUND. HAVE NO GOALS! LAUGH and LAUGH and LAUGH SOME MORE!**

I hope these ideas in some small way help you clarify your understanding of your life and your goals.

~ Terri Vanderlinde, DO

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