

# SMART MARRIAGES 2008 – SAN FRANCISCO, CA

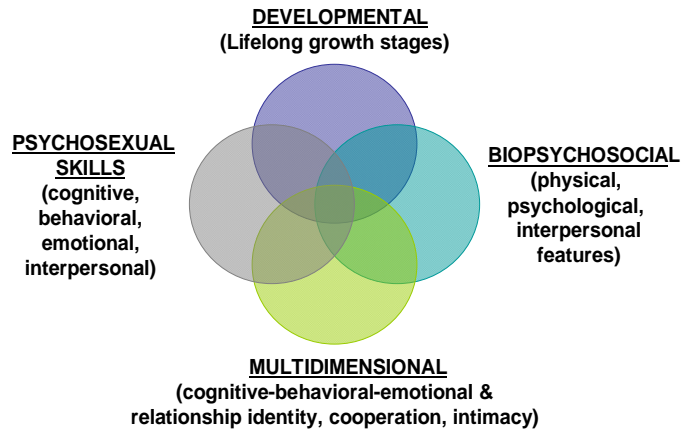
Friday Workshop July 4, 2:30–4pm

## 507 Married Sex for Men

Michael Metz, PhD & Barry McCarthy, PhD  
[www.MichaelMetzPhD.com](http://www.MichaelMetzPhD.com)      [McCarthy160@comcast.net](mailto:McCarthy160@comcast.net)

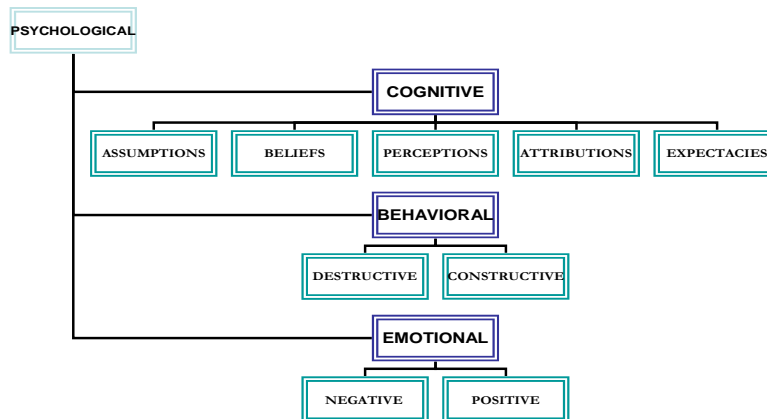
Ten things men need to know to deal with the common problems  
– low desire, porn addiction, erectile dysfunction, premature  
ejaculation, etc. – to build a healthy, pleasurable sex life.

### Features of the Integrative Approach



(From: Metz, M. E. (2008). Healing Sexually Fractured Couples from Problems with Men's Sexual Health)

### Cognitive-Behavioral-Emotional Psychological Components



# 10 THINGS MEN LEARN FOR COUPLE SEXUAL HEALTH

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1. He learns to positively value sex. Sex is intrinsically good; and accepting and affirming sex and his and his partner's sexuality is the foundation for his positive sexual self-esteem. He cooperatively blends with his partner the 5 purposes for sex (procreation, anxiety reduction, pleasure, self-esteem, and intimacy).
2. He is committed to developmentally integrating his maturing sexuality into his manhood. He affirms his sexuality as lifelong and developmental, involving physical, cognitive, emotional, behavioral, and relational features.
3. He grounds his sexual expectations on accurate and reasonable knowledge about sexual anatomy, physiology, psychology, and relationship health.
4. He places his ultimate sexual focus on intimacy. Sexuality is relational. He views his partner as his "Sexual Friend" and their relationship as an "Intimate Team." During periods when he may not have a significant partner, he anticipates developing and "growing" intimacy with his "virtual partner."
5. Sensual touch & emotional pleasure is valued as well as sexual performance.
6. He learns to self-regulate his sexual drive and arousal. He consciously (a) acknowledges, accepts, and respects his body's "*Biological Imperative*," (b) learns to manage his biologically natural tendency toward "*sexual objectification*," and (c) differentiates and integrates general emotions (e.g., loneliness) and sexual feelings (issue of "*emotional sexualization*").
7. He learns flexible sexual arousal. He copes with the enduring relationship problem of "sexual familiarity" by balancing and blending multiple styles of sexual arousal (self-entrancement, partner interaction, and role enactment) with his partner.
8. He becomes a leader in cooperation for intimacy with his partner. He learns to invest his honest emotions with his partner. He promotes mutual closeness, pleasure, stress reduction, soothing comfort, mutual self-esteem, playfulness, and joy in-and-out of the bedroom. He learns to lead constructive, mutually satisfying conflict resolution. Conflict presents the ordinary, day-to-day opportunity for he and his partner to cooperatively address it and thereby deepen emotional and sexual intimacy. *Sexual health and satisfaction are directly influenced by the quality of relationship conflict resolution.*
9. He, with his partner, embraces the standard of "Good Enough" Couple Sex characterized by realistic sexual expectations, acceptance of routine, pleasure over performance, grounded on relaxation, mutual pleasure, and mature playfulness.
10. He integrates his sexuality into his, and his partner's, daily life. The healthy sexual man integrates the daily events of life and blends this with his partner's, to create their realistic, distinctively personalized, and enriched sexual style. Mature sex "fits" real life, with philosophical / spiritual meaning.

## ***Three Essential Sexual Health Learnings for Men***

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Throughout the various stages of life (childhood, adolescence, young adult, marriage, widowhood, aging), men developmentally learn and integrate three important psychosexual skills for sexual health.

You develop and adapt a maturing awareness of your thoughts, feelings, and motivations for behaviors, as well as the ability to “regulate” the physiological, psychological, and interpersonal dimensions of your sexuality.

<b>Task # 1 →</b>	<p><b><u>You value and proudly embrace your male sexuality as good. You accept the male “BIOLOGICAL IMPERATIVE” or “lust” without shame. You respect the fundamental power of sex and accept your need to self-regulate.</u></b></p> <p>You <u>learn to regulate</u> this drive with healthy sexual knowledge and attitudes, and with physically healthy habits, exercise, and self-discipline. When this regulation is in balance, your lust does not create problems for you and you can <u>freely enjoy sex</u> with your appropriate partner. When under-regulated, sex drive can cause a variety of personal, sexual, and relationship problems by mechanically acting out; or conversely, when over-regulated deprive you of healthy lust and passionate pleasure.</p>
<b>Task # 2 →</b>	<p><b><u>You accept as normal and healthy your male biological tendency to visually OBJECTIFY external sexual stimuli. Accepting this requires you to regulate this tendency toward sexual “objectification” by self-discipline of your cognitive focus (thoughts), and placing conscious priority to “personalize” your sexual relationship.</u></b></p>
<b>Task # 3 →</b>	<p><b><u>You come to appreciate and manage the male tendency for “EMOTIONAL SEXUALIZATION”.</u> To overlook your general emotions such as loneliness, frustration, sadness, resentment, anxiety, irritability or fear of inadequacy, and to misinterpret and transform these to sexual feelings, fuels problematic sexual behaviors (e.g., compulsive pornography misuse; affairs, excessive sexual demands on one’s partner).</b></p> <p>Sexual health involves developing an <u>emotional sophistication</u> about your feelings, using direct, healthy ways for emotional management, and balancing emotional and sexual feelings in one’s intimate relationship.</p>

## ***Dimensions of the “Good-Enough Sex” Approach For Couples***

*Michael E. Metz, Ph.D. & Barry W. McCarthy*

- 1. Sex is a good element in life, an invaluable part of an individual’s and couple’s long-term comfort, intimacy, pleasure, and confidence.**
- 2. Relationship and sexual satisfaction are the ultimate focus and are essentially intertwined. The couple is an “intimate team.”**
- 3. Realistic sexual expectations are essential for sexual satisfaction.**
- 4. Good physical health and healthy behavioral habits are vital for sexual health. You value your sexual body and your partner’s sexual body.**
- 5. Relaxation is the foundation for pleasure and function.**
- 6. Pleasure is as important as function.**
- 7. Valuing variable, flexible sexual experiences and abandoning the “need” for perfect performance inoculates the couple against sexual dysfunction by overcoming performance pressure, fears of failure, and rejection.**
- 8. The five purposes for sex are integrated into the couple’s sexual relationship.**
- 9. Couples integrate and flexibly use the three sexual arousal styles – partner interaction, sensual self-entrancement, and role enactment.**
- 10. Gender differences are respectfully valued and similarities mutually accepted.**
- 11. Sex is integrated into real life and real life is integrated into sex. Sexuality is developing, growing and evolving throughout life.**
- 12. Sexuality is personalized: Sex can be playful, spiritual, “special.”**

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McCarthy, B. W., & Metz, M. E., (2008 in press). The Cognitive-Behavioral “Good-Enough Sex” Model: A Case Illustration. *Sexual and Relationship Therapy*,

Metz, M. E., and McCarthy, B. W., (2007). “The Good-Enough Sex Model for Couple Sexual Satisfaction.” *Sexual and Relationship Therapy*, Vol. 22 (3),351-362.

# “Good-Enough Couple Sex” is Great Sex.

Michael E. Metz, Ph.D. & Barry W. McCarthy, Ph.D.

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Many - when they first hear us propose putting into practice Good-Enough Couple Sex - think we're encouraging acceptance of mediocre or second-rate, bland, take-what-you-can-get, boring sex. To the contrary, the Good-Enough Couple Sex model summarizes the developmental principles for satisfying sex without hype. It serves as a blueprint for a genuine, pleasurable, realistic, playful, intimate, erotic, flexible, satisfying sexual life.

## How is “Good-Enough Sex” great sex ?

1. You feel more self-assured and proud of yourself as a sexual person because the Good-Enough Sex model is based on positive, realistic expectations.
2. You gain a sense of self and other acceptance because you view sex in realistic terms, seeing sex as a part of unfeigned life and an honest intimate relationship.
3. You accept yourself and your partner as authentic persons, not mythic figures.
4. You understand and view your sex life as a normal part of life, not hype with its pressure to be someone you are not or pressure to sexually perform in ways that don't fit your actual body and your genuine self.
5. You can accept variable sex with its passionate and “wild” times, special and intimacy times, as well as accept the mediocre times without disappointment and panic because together you find flexible ways of making love that fit your life's situation.
6. You feel more confidence about your sexual function and flexible because you understand there are multiple reasons for having sex, and multiple ways of becoming aroused. You can be flexible because you are an intimate team and have options and choices for pleasing yourself and each other.
7. You feel anxiety-free because your solid focus as a couple is mutual pleasure, not the Hollywood movie pressure of perfect performance.
8. You feel comfortable with your partner because you endeavor to cooperate as an “intimate team.” Together you are open to a variety of meanings in your sexual life – fun, pleasure, comfort, tension reduction, playfulness, consolation, spirituality.

What makes Good-Enough Couple Sex great is that it is not “great” in the perfectionistic performance sense but in the sense of emotional acceptance and relationship playfulness, cooperation, intimacy, pleasure and eroticism. It is a case where reality really is better than fantasy.

## Variable Sexual Experience Distinguishes Satisfied Couples in “Good-Enough Sex.”

(From: McCarthy, B.W. & Metz, M.E., (2007). *Men’s Sexual Health*. NY: Routledge.)

Valuing variable flexible sexual experiences (the 85% approach) and abandoning the need for perfect performance inoculates the man and couple against sexual dysfunction by overcoming performance pressure, fears of failure, and rejection.

The reality for emotionally and sexually healthy couples is that the quality of sex varies. The male myth portrayed in the romantic love/passionate sex media (including R and X-rated videos) is that each sexual experience involves perfect performance. What nonsense. In truth, both scientific findings and clinical experience show that emotionally satisfied, sexually functional couples have a variable, flexible sexual response (Table 6.2). This means that about 35–45% of encounters are very satisfying for both partners, another 20–25% are better for one (usually the man) than the other, and 15–20% are okay but not remarkable. The most important information is that 5–15% of sexual encounters are unsatisfying or dysfunctional.

The Good-Enough Sex model accepts that among satisfied couples, up to 15% of the time their sexual encounters will not flow to intercourse. Rather than thinking of these as failures, accept them as part of normal variability. Instead of apologizing, you can transition to a backup scenario—either a warm, sensual scenario or an erotic, non-intercourse scenario leading to orgasm for you, her, or both. The Good-Enough Sex approach encourages relationship satisfaction with an acceptance of variability in the quality of sex grounded on positive, realistic expectations. This serves the man and couple well and inoculates them against sexual problems with aging. Accepting Good-Enough Sex is often easier for the woman than for the man, but it promotes sexual satisfaction for both.

*Table 6.2*

### *The Quality of Good-Enough Sex in Well-Functioning, Satisfied Married Couples*

35–45%	Very Satisfying
20–25%	Good (at least 1 partner)
15–20%	Okay (not remarkable)
5–15%	Unsatisfying (dysfunctional)

*Note.* Adapted from “Frequency of Sexual Dysfunction in Normal Couples,” by E. Frank, C. Anderson, and D. N. Rubinstein, 1978, *New England Journal of Medicine*, 299; and *The Social Organization of Sexuality: Sexual Practices in the United States*, by E. O. Laumann et al., 1994, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.; Table 10.10, p. 374

## ***Sexual Health Resources***

(from: McCarthy, B.W. & Metz, M.E., (2007), *Men's Sexual Health: Fitness for Sex Satisfaction*, NY: Routledge.)

### ***Suggested Reading on Male Sexuality***

- Joannides, P. (2006). *The guide to getting it on*. West Hollywood, CA: Goofy Foot Press.
- McCarthy, B. W., & McCarthy, E. (1998). *Male sexual awareness*. New York: Carroll & Graf.
- Metz, M. E., & McCarthy, B. W. (2003). *Coping with premature ejaculation: Overcome PE, please your partner, and have great sex*. Oakland, CA: New Harbinger.
- Metz, M. E., & McCarthy, B. W. (2004). *Coping with erectile dysfunction: How to regain confidence and enjoy great sex*. Oakland, CA: New Harbinger Publications.
- Milsten, R., & Slowinski, J. (1999). *The sexual male: Problems and solutions*. New York: W.W. Norton.
- Zilbergeld, B. (1999). *The new male sexuality*. New York: Bantam Books.

### ***Suggested Reading on Female Sexuality***

- Foley, S., Kope, S., & Sugrue, D. (2002). *Sex matters for women: A complete guide to taking care of your sexual self*. New York: Guilford.
- Heiman, J., & LoPiccolo, J. (1988). *Becoming orgasmic: Women's guide to sexual fulfillment*. New York: Prentice-Hall.

### ***Suggested Reading on Couple Sexuality***

- Holstein, L. (2002). *How to have magnificent sex: The seven dimensions of a vital sexual connection*. New York: Harmony Books.
- McCarthy, B., & McCarthy, E. (1998). *Couple sexual awareness*. New York: Carroll & Graf.
- McCarthy, B., & McCarthy, E. (2002). *Sexual awareness*. New York: Carroll & Graf.
- Schnarch, D. (1997). *Passionate marriage: Sex, love and intimacy in emotionally committed relationships*. New York: Norton.

### ***Other Notable Sexuality Readings***

- Fisher, H. (2004). *Why we love*. New York: Henry Holt.
- Glass, S. (2003). *Not "just friends."* New York: Free Press.
- Maltz, W. (2001). *The sexual healing journey*. New York: HarperCollins.
- McCarthy, B., & McCarthy, E. (2003). *Rekindling desire*. New York: Brunner/Routledge.
- Michael, R., Gagnon, J., Laumann, E., & Kolata, G. (1994). *Sex in America: A definitive survey*. New York: Little, Brown.

### ***Suggested Reading on Relationship Satisfaction***

- Chapman, G. (1995). *The five love languages: How to express heartfelt commitment to your mate*. Chicago: Northfield Publishing.
- Doherty, W. (2001). *Take back your marriage*. New York: Guilford.
- Gottman, J. (1999). *The seven principles for making marriage work*. New York: Crown Publishing.
- Love, P. (2002). *The truth about love*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Markman, H., Stanley, S., & Blumberg, S. L. (2001). *Fighting for your marriage: Positive steps for preventing divorce and preserving a lasting love*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- McCarthy, B., & McCarthy, E. (2004). *Getting it right the first time: Creating a healthy marriage*. New York: Brunner/Routledge.
- McCarthy, B. W., & McCarthy, E. (2006). *Getting it right this time*. New York: Routledge.

Perel, E. (2006). *Mating in captivity: Reconciling the erotic and the domestic*. New York: HarperCollins.

### ***Suggested Reading and Resources for Mental Health***

Bourke, E. (2001). *The anxiety and phobia workbook* (3rd ed.). Oakland, CA: New Harbinger Publications.  
Burns, D. (1989). *The feeling good handbook*. New York: Penguin.  
Staff of Parragon Publishing. (2002). *New guide to relaxation*. Bath, UK: Paragon Publishing.

### ***Internet Sites: Mental Health***

Obsessive Compulsive Foundation: <http://www.ocfoundation.org/>  
National Institutes of Mental Health (NIMH) home page: <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/>  
NIMH, Anxiety: <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/anxiety/anxietymenu.cfm>  
NIMH, Depression: <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/publicat/depressionmenu.cfm>

### ***Internet Sites: Health***

National Institutes of Health (NIH): <http://www.nih.gov>  
National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism: <http://www.niaaa.nih.gov>  
WebMD—for many illnesses, including diabetes, cancer, heart disease: <http://www.webmd.com>  
Sex Addicts Anonymous: <http://www.sexaa.org>

### ***Videotapes: Sexual Enrichment***

Holstein, L. (2001). *Magnificent lovemaking*.  
*Sex: A lifelong pleasure series* (1991). (Available from the Sinclair Institute, P.O. Box 8865, Chapel Hill, NC 27515)  
Sommers, F. *The great sex video series*. (Available from Pathway Productions, Inc., 360 Bloor Street West, Suite 407A, Toronto, Canada M5S 1X1)  
Stubbs, K. R. (1994). *Erotic massage*. (Available from the Secret Garden, P.O. Box 67, Larkspur, CA 94977)  
*The couples guide to great sex over 40*, vols. 1 and 2 (1995). Available from the Sinclair Institute, P.O. Box 8865, Chapel Hill, NC 27515)

### ***Professional Associations***

American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT): [www.therapistlocator.net](http://www.therapistlocator.net)  
American Association of Sex Educators, Counselors, and Therapists (AASECT): P.O. Box 54388, Richmond, VA 23220-0488, [www.aasect.org](http://www.aasect.org)  
Association for Behavioral & Cognitive Therapies (ABCT): 305 Seventh Avenue, New York, NY 10001-6008. Phone (212) 647-1890, [www.abct.org](http://www.abct.org)  
Sex Information and Education Council of the United States (SIECUS): 130 West 42nd Street, Suite 350, New York, NY 10036. Phone (212) 819-7990, fax (212) 819-9776, [www.seicus.org](http://www.seicus.org)  
Society for Scientific Study of Sexuality (SSSS): P.O. Box 416, Allentown, PA 18105-0416. Phone (610) 530-2483. [www.sexscience.org](http://www.sexscience.org)  
Society for Sex Therapy and Research (SSTAR): [www.sstarnet.org](http://www.sstarnet.org)

### ***Sex “Toys,” Books, and Videos***

Good Vibrations Mail Order: 938 Howard Street, Suite 101, San Francisco, CA 94110. Phone (800) 289-8423, fax (415) 974-8990, [www.goodvibes.com](http://www.goodvibes.com)