

# AROUSAL HELPERS

## How to Stay More Mentally, Emotionally and Physically Present During Lovemaking

Laura M. Brotherson, LMFT, CST, CFLE

StrengtheningMarriage.com

Remember **B - R - A - V - E** as you utilize the following suggestions to stay more mentally, emotionally and physically present, engaged and focused during the arousal phase of lovemaking. Each step will help to increasingly demand your attention and get you out of your head and into your body. These arousal helpers keep you more focused during sex. This allows you to more easily ascend the arousal scale rather than getting derailed as you reach the pinnacle of climax.

1. **B -- BREATHE**. Breathe slowly and deeply to ground yourself and get out of your thinking mind. Pay attention to your breathing (the inhale and the exhale) to distract yourself from your thoughts, and you'll be able to stay more present during lovemaking. With each breath, say the word, "one" as if counting each breath. You might even breathe in sync with your spouse. It demands your attention and increases connection. Another possibility is to do a "Kegel" exercise (contract your P.C. muscles) as you breathe in and out.
2. **R -- FOCUS ON TOUCH RECEIVED (Receptive Touch)**. Soak in all the pleasurable sensations you are receiving. Notice every touch, kiss, and caress you are feeling. This step is more of a "receptive" tool than an active one, but helps you focus and can more easily lead you to the next suggestion.
3. **A -- GET ACTIVE (Proactive Touch)**. Be an active participant in the process by proactively touching, kissing, caressing and feeling your spouse's body instead of just passively receiving your spouse's touch. No "dead-fish" sex allowed! Feel the softness of his neck with your lips. Feel the hardness of his shoulders with your fingers taking in the strength and security he provides. Giving and receiving touch is one of the best ways to help you get out of your mind and into your body where you can feel and sense... instead of think.
4. **V -- VERBALIZE**. Verbalize your pleasure (and/or have your spouse help too) with sounds and/or words that communicate what you are feeling, what you are wanting, etc. Even just "Mmmm" and "Ahhhh" or "Oooh, I love that!" can help you let go into a surrendered state where your body can take over and lead you into the exquisite involuntary response of orgasm. You might consider practicing such expressions in a mirror, since many women aren't terribly comfortable verbalizing sexual feelings. Being verbal sexually can be a huge turn on for women to help them get more fully absorbed in the arousal process. Husbands will love it too! Verbally role playing sexy scenarios can be a great way to command your attention, as if recreating a "chick flick" scenario with your spouse. (See Auditory Arousal handout for additional information.)
5. **E -- EYES OPEN**. Try keeping your eyes open during sex to visually share the sexual experience with your spouse. Eye contact demands your attention and increases intimate connection. For some it may be better to keep your eyes closed in order to maintain focus. Play with both options to see which works best.