



Your Sexual Stewardship Before Marriage

HOW TO PREPARE FOR A HEALTHY SEXUAL RELATIONSHIP

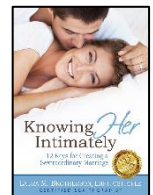
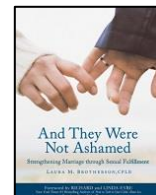
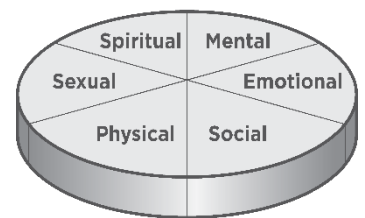
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What you can do to prepare for a healthy, mutually fulfilling sexual relationship in marriage.

- 1. Pray for help.** Pray, ponder (and maybe even fast) for Heavenly Father to help you embrace, relax into (at least mentally), gain a testimony of, and develop your God-given sexuality in preparation for marriage. The Spirit can confirm to you the truth of God's divine designs for your sexuality and its ordained expression within marriage and guide you to the resources and direction you may need.
- 2. Identify and overcome negative sexual feelings/ attitudes/ conditioning/ insecurities, etc.**
 - a. Reflect on the sexual messages/conditioning you have received by doing some process writing and answering the "Sexual Beliefs Survey" questions.
 - b. Do the "Good Girl Syndrome - Self-Awareness Assessment."
 - c. Positively-program your mind by reading and re-reading affirming statements about sexuality and/or listening to audio books/presentations with affirming messages about healthy sexuality in marriage.
- 3. Understand and affirm your sexuality.** Understand your own feelings about sex and notice your comfort level with appropriate physical touch (before and after marriage). Do things that develop healthy familiarity, comfort, knowledge, etc., like developing your "spirituality" (i.e. reading scriptures, going to church, etc.)
 - a. Am I comfortable with my sexuality? Do I have shame about it? Do I have any compulsivity regarding sexuality? How comfortable is it for me to touch and be touched appropriately? What about kissing?
 - b. * **Men's primary challenge is to bridle and master their sexuality.**
 - c. * **Women's primary challenge is to embrace and nurture their sexuality.**
- 4. Get educated sexually.** Find some good, trustworthy books/resources to get educated sexually. Attend classes/seminars (i.e. BYU's "Healthy Sexuality" course). What you especially need to know:
 - a. 1) Differences in how men and women are wired sexually
 - b. 2) Specifics regarding the inhibitors and intricacies of the female sexual response

Parts of Self



5. **Be able to talk about sex.** Learn to discuss sex more openly, comfortably, and confidently knowing it's a gift from God that can be discussed appropriately.
 - a. Do a "book club" with parents, friends or roommates, or create other opportunities to openly and appropriately discuss sexual learnings.
 - b. Be a vocal and positive advocate by affirming healthy marital sexuality any chance you can.
6. **Discuss intimate expectations.** Discuss your intimate expectations for marriage before the honeymoon, if possible, to avoid becoming another honeymoon "horror story." Discuss with your fiance your thoughts and expectations of the honeymoon and the overall sexual relationship. What do you imagine the first experience be like? How often do you think you'll be intimate? Who will initiate?
 - a. Write out your ideal honeymoon experience. Write out how you imagine your honeymoon playing out. (Be as detailed as possible.) Share your mental blueprint of the honeymoon with each other. This will help you be more aware of each other's assumptions and expectations.
 - b. Follow the Spirit as to how and when to share these writings with each other. It would be ideal to discuss this prior to the honeymoon if you can do it in a public place or even just in a written conversation to help avoid discomfort or awkwardness. This delicate discussion can help alleviate anxiety.
7. **Resolve any moral issues before marriage.** Stay morally clean and remove any guilt and shame. These feelings are counter-productive to a healthy sexual relationship in marriage.
 - a. Develop the maturity and wisdom to create appropriate emotional and physical boundaries to avoid situations that will be difficult to resist.
 - b. *Get professional help.* If addiction or other compulsive sexual behaviors are in the mix, definitely seek professional help prior to marriage to get into a habit of active addiction recovery efforts. This will help you undo the effects of pornography and begin the re-wiring process in the brain.
8. **Develop playfulness.** Developing your playfulness can be helpful in learning to embrace your sexuality. It can help you be more relaxed and lighthearted about both sex and life in general, which is especially helpful within the bedroom.
9. **Seek pre-marital counseling.** (... *Prevent rather than Repair!*) Seek out at least some pre-marital counseling to resolve any relational or sexual issues that might be outside your awareness.
10. **Repeat above steps.** Repeat any of the above steps until feelings of fear, anxiety, embarrassment, shame, etc. are diminished or gone.