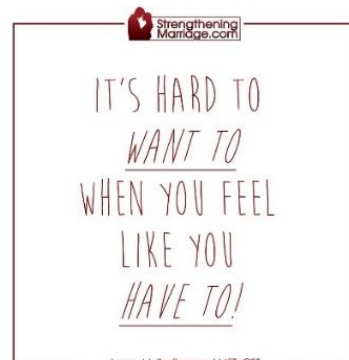


Bridling and Spiritual Surrender (Sexual Self-Mastery for Men)

Knowing HIM Sexually – Sexual Wholeness for Men

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No one teaches young men that the self-mastery that's required before marriage will also be needed within marriage given that marriage is not a sexual free-for-all. Wives need to feel that they have the agency within marriage to choose sex or not in any given moment and not be "punished" for saying no. They often need time and space to mentally work on embracing their own sexual self by embracing and developing their sexuality. The following are things husbands can do to help in the bridling of their passions (sexual self-mastery) and to help them stay out of "sexual desert" / deprivation / deficit-thinking mode. This helps to restore sexual agency to wives—providing an opportunity for them to be able to choose their husbands sexually—genuinely and freely—"I want you sex!" instead of continually engaging in "duty sex."

ACTION ITEMS

1. **Remove pressure.** Remove any psychological pressure you are inadvertently putting onto your spouse. This helps couples to stop having "duty sex" in their marriage. Your wife needs to *feel* that she can freely choose to have sex or not without negative repercussions. Many husbands think that since they can't have relationships with other women and can't look at porn/masturbate, that they NEED to be able to have sex with their wives on demand any time they feel desire or arousal. This is what we might call "unhealthy entitlement." This is the primary reason husbands need to work on bridling and spiritual surrender so that they can develop sexual self-mastery in their marriages and create the kind of mutually mindful "sextraordinary marriage" God intended. (See also "[Shared Journey to a Sextraordinary Marriage](#)," "[ACES Diagram – How She Can Want To](#)" and "[Fuel for Female Sexual Desire – How Women Get in the Mood](#).")
2. **Process frustrations.** Do some "[process writing](#)" on the unfairness, anger, resentment you may feel. Write out a list of at least 50 items of anger / frustration, etc. Finish the sentence stems: "I hate that my wife..." or "I'm angry that she..." etc. Do this until the anger and frustration melts away.
3. **Let go.** Learning to bridle / master / surrender your sexual desire may require letting yourself grieve what you long for (see step 4 of the "[7 Steps of Spiritual Surrender](#)").
4. **Implant surrender.** Read the "[7 Steps of Spiritual Surrender](#)" every day or as often as necessary to get the principles of spiritual submission into your heart and mind.
5. **Take emotional accountability.** Understand the need for emotional accountability in where your sexual relationship is at the moment and how it got here. (Listen to the podcast at the link to better understand the concept of "[emotional accountability](#).") Your relationship will get better but taking ownership of your role or your part of where things are is vital to the healing process.
6. **Stay connected.** Focus on staying emotionally connected with your wife instead of "checked out" *despite any sexual lack* you may be feeling. Love her in the specific ways she feels loved by doing the things on her [Love Language list](#) to focus on loving her better instead of focusing on what you may feel is lacking. This will help her feel like you love her for more than her

body and less like a mere “sexual satisfier” for you.

7. **Be sexually grateful.** Keep a personal list of things you like/love/appreciate about your wife—especially intimately. This is to re-train your brain to see and focus on the positives and her efforts and to move into a mindset of intimate gratitude instead of living in lack, or “sexual desert,” or deficit thinking.

Husbands generally lean toward interest in novelty, adventure, creativity (“treats”) in the sexual relationship while wives lean toward feeling emotionally safe, secure, and connected and free to choose in or out. The tendency toward sexual “treats” can feel like a bottomless pit to wives who feel like their efforts are never enough sexually. Sexual gratefulness creates an environment to bring about sexual blossoming in your wife.

This grateful list would include any effort your wife makes or has made to be intimate or affectionate. This might include things like, “I’m grateful that she kissed me when I got home yesterday” or “I love that she wore some lingerie last night.” Add a few items like this to your list regularly to fuel living in that grateful mindset—especially any time you are feeling a lack of intimate connection.

8. **Believe change is possible.** A key component of success is believing that change is possible. Many couples have 30, 40 even 50 years of evidence to the contrary in their marriages. You must choose to overwrite that history with faith that things can get better. This positive, faith-based mindset is needed to make space for change to occur. Being in a “sexually grateful” mindset can especially help. This allows you to send feelings of positive belief toward your wife. Many times, I see wives making positive changes, but the husband is stuck in a belief that she will never change. This sabotages her efforts and his desired relationship.

9. **Focus elsewhere.** It’s hard to not be consumed by the “lack” you may be feeling. Focus your attention on loving and connecting with your kids more and/or other healthy outlets or hobbies while she's working toward *getting her agency back* (see “[Agency, Change & Sex](#)”). Stay away from trying to “manage, help, or teach” her once you’ve shared your desires. It takes away her agency. It will take time and patience to develop your sexual-self-mastery and her sexual agency. Focus on developing a happy life despite...! (You might find some additional helpful direction to stop the “pursue/ withdraw” cycle in this handout – “[Divorce Busting – Last-Resort Techniques](#).”)
10. **Partner with God.** Since we are essentially asking husbands to “walk on water” by developing this sexual self-mastery it is imperative to partner with God to do for you what you are not able to do for yourself! Build a more [personal and profound relationship with God](#) to sustain you while your “needs” aren’t yet being met...
11. **Utilize other helpful tools.** To help you along your sexual self-mastery journey, review and use the tools/coping skills for self-regulation, emotion regulation, mindfulness, etc. found under the “Self-Development” category on my [Resources Page](#).
12. **Speak with surrender.** Know that as you truly get the concept of surrender/ self-mastery down you’ll still be able to bring up the topic of intimacy or even initiate it, but it will feel different to both of you (with no pressure). The words might sound the same as before, but it will be clear to you and her that you are “speaking with surrender.” That might sound something like, “*Hey what do you think about some lovemaking tonight?*” ...but she'll be able to hear it (because you are sending it) from a mindset of -- “*I totally think you'd be happy to be intimate tonight, but I'm totally okay if you're not.*”