

What Fantasies can do to Your Relationship: The Effects of Sexual Fantasies on Couple
Interactions

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The definition of the term *sexual fantasy*

Sexual fantasies refer to any mental imagery that is sexually arousing or erotic to the individual. A sexual fantasy can be an elaborate story, or it can be a fleeting thought of some romantic or sexual activity. It can involve bizarre imagery, or it can be quite realistic. It can involve memories of past events, or it can be a completely imaginary experience.

Measures used in Study 1

Sexual desire

1. I feel a great deal of sexual desire for my partner.
2. I am passionately attracted to my partner.
3. I desire to get physically intimate with my partner.

Desire to do something that would make the partner happy

4. I desire to do something that would make my partner happy.
5. I desire to do things with my partner that my partner really enjoys.

Fillers

6. I feel relaxed.
7. I feel shame.
8. I feel guilt.
9. I feel content.
10. I experience negative feelings for my partner.

Measures used in Study 2

Sexual desire

1. I feel a great deal of sexual desire for my partner.
2. I am passionately attracted to my partner.
3. I desire to get physically intimate with my partner.

Desire to engage in engage in shared activities with the partner

4. I desire to engage in an intimate conversation with my partner.
5. I desire to visit a museum with my partner.
6. I desire to do things with my partner that my partner really enjoys.

Fillers

6. I feel relaxed.
7. I feel shame.
8. I feel guilt.
9. I feel content.
10. I experience negative feelings for my partner.

Daily-level measures (Study 3)**Relationship-promoting behaviors**

1. I told my partner I loved him/her
2. I was physically affectionate toward my partner.
3. I complimented my partner.
4. I did something (not listed above) that made my partner happy.
5. I tried to help my partner solve a problem.
6. My partner was concerned about something, and I provided him/her support and reassurance.
7. I have accepted my partner as he/she is.
8. I talked about my feelings with my partner.
9. I tried to make my partner feel wanted.
10. I made my partner laugh.

Relationship-Damaging behaviors

1. I criticized my partner.
2. I complained to my partner about something he/she did that bothered me.
3. I “snapped” or yelled at my partner.
4. I was inattentive and unresponsive to my partner.
5. I intentionally ignored my partner.
6. I distanced myself from my partner.
7. I was inconsiderate or selfish.
8. I did not have enough time to spend with my partner.
9. I did something (not listed above) that upset my partner.

Daily-level measures (Study 4)**Positive relational perceptions**

1. I felt committed to my relationship today.
2. I felt that I have a very valuable relationship today.

Negative relational perceptions

1. I felt frustrated in my relationship today.
2. I had doubts about the compatibility between me and my partner today.

Relationship-promoting behaviors

1. My partner behaved affectionately and warmly toward me today.
2. My partner behaved thoughtfully toward me today.
3. My partner was responsive to my needs today.
4. My partner really cared about me today.

Sexual desire

1. I felt a great deal of sexual desire for my partner today.
2. I was very interested in having sex with my partner today.
3. I wanted to kiss my partner passionately today.
4. I perceived my partner as extremely sexually desirable today.
5. I was passionately attracted to my partner today.

Relationship quality

1. Today I felt that the quality of my relationship with my partner was: (1) “poor” to (5) “excellent”