

Excerpt from this article (<https://www.northeastpsychological.com/reclaiming-sexual-desire/>) written by Jaida Edwards. I am only placing this part here because I don't fully agree with some of the other things she states in her writing. These exercises are standard in most Sex Therapy treatment protocols.

- Kitty Ellyson, LCPC

Sexercises: Mind and Body

The goal is to experience sexual desire in the body (Hall, 2004).

Solo Exercises:

- Stimulating your sexual imagination: Read erotica or books on sex, check out a sex shop in person
- or online, watch erotic videos, or indulge in sexual fantasy.
- Focused Breathing: First, lay down and place your hand on your chest and abdomen. Second, relax your stomach muscles and inhale deeply through your nose to completely fill up your lungs. Third, breathe in to the count of five, then exhale to the count of five.
- Sensual Meditation: First, set aside uninterrupted private time and lay down on your bed. Second, close your eyes and practice focused breathing. Third, shift your focus to specific areas of your body one at a time. Start from the head and work your way down, paying close attention to the sensual parts of your body. Fourth, as your attention shifts to each body part, try to relax the tension within it. Let a feeling of warmth inhabit your body. Fifth, when the focus shifts to the more sensual areas of your body, tense the muscles in that area, then release the tension. Repeat.
- Self-Pleasuring: First, acknowledge the conditions necessary for relaxation such as a locked door or free apartment. Second, once these conditions are met, complete the exercise with or without initial desire present. Third, undress fully or partially. Fourth, explore your body in a curious and appreciative manner, focusing on the shape and texture of your skin. Fifth, caress your whole body, focusing on the sensual parts that increase desire. Sixth, visualize your desire as building steadily and slowly. Seventh, focus on the increase in sensation, breathe deeply, and pay attention to what you are feeling and where you're feeling that sensation. Eighth, implement delayed gratification by allowing arousal to build and fade. Acknowledge the desire to continue and enjoy the feeling of wanting. Ninth, allow yourself to experience an orgasm. Pay attention to what is going on in your body and the sensations.

Partner Exercises:

- Outercourse: First, discuss the exercise with your partner, remove distractions, and make sure they are aware of what it entails. Second, ask your partner to be the rules enforcer. Third, set aside a designated time with your partner that is free from distractions. Fourth, during the exercise, you and your partner are only allowed to give nonverbal positive feedback and verbal constructive feedback using positively worded messages. Fifth, after the exercise, spend 5 minutes discussing it with your partner. Sixth, do this exercise multiple times a month. Seventh, after multiple attempts you can vary the exercise such as including intercourse, continuing outercourse after orgasm, or not striving for orgasm.
- Mirroring: First, set aside time to complete the exercise with your partner and remove distractions. Second, both partners undress. Third, take turns being the 'mirror' and the 'leader.' Using slow and sensual movements, the leader will move, touch their body or their partner's body while their partner mirrors the movements. Fourth, start with less sensual parts of the body and move up to more sensual parts as you go along. Fifth, do not focus on sexually arousing your partner or bringing them to orgasm. The goal is to teach each other about sexual preferences and to enhance nonverbal communication. Sixth, do not have sex during or after the exercise. Seventh, after the exercise is over, discuss it with your partner. Eighth, repeat the exercise over time.
- Mutual pleasuring: First, set aside time to complete the exercise with your partner and remove distractions. Second, both partners undress. Third, take turns being the giver and the receiver of pleasure. Fourth, the giver touches and caresses their partner in ways they have learned their partner enjoys, while the receiver passively receives the pleasure and does not reciprocate the touch. Fifth, switch with your partner. Sixth, follow the rules for positively giving feedback. Sixth, follow the rules for positively giving feedback. Seventh, start with less sensual parts of the body and work up to more sensual parts. Eighth, do not engage in any other sexual activity during or after this exercise.