

**Blog post by Attorney Jim Duzak, Tucson, AZ, author of "Mid-Life Divorce and Rebirth of Commitment" (Cold Tree Press, 2007). <http://attorneyatlove.blogspot.com/2008/01/pleasure-principle.html>**

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### **The Pleasure Principle**

"Satisfying sex has less to do with positions, camera tricks, or physical stamina. It is about cultivating the simple moments of playfulness, joy, and appreciation. Instead of adding more and more, deepen what you have". (Dr. Sandra Scantling)

Faithful readers of this blog know that I admire the work of Dr. Sandra Scantling ([www.drsandy.com](http://www.drsandy.com)), author of "Extraordinary Sex Now" and a certified sex therapist. Unlike a lot of "experts", she writes clearly, convincingly, and from a real-world perspective.

As a sex therapist, Dr. Scantling---naturally enough---gets a lot of questions from couples whose sexual desire or performance have gone downhill over the years. Some of her clients have objective medical or hormonal problems that interfere with normal sexual functioning. But others are perfectly-healthy people who have somehow convinced themselves that their sex lives are inadequate. They think that they're not having sex as often as they "should". Or they think that their lovemaking techniques are not sufficiently varied or sophisticated, or their orgasms sufficiently explosive.

In many such cases, the couples are unduly hung-up over external, and often erroneous, definitions of what is normal. They read some survey in the newspaper that says that married couples their age have sex twice a week, and they feel depressed about having sex only once a week. Or they watch an explicit video together to see if it increases their desire, and it has the opposite effect. They wind up comparing themselves unfavorably to the hard bodied, super-endowed, multi-orgasmic porn stars on the TV screen.

People like this are allowing "society"---in the form of everything from oversimplified media reports on sexual functioning, to celebrity sex scandals, to erectile dysfunction ads, to porn movies---to define what is normal for them, and, even worse, to define it in purely quantitative terms: how long, how hard, how often.

What Dr. Scantling suggests, and I agree completely, is to stop worrying about what is "normal", and start searching for what she calls your internal erotic focus. Start enjoying things again, not just when you're in bed but when you're savoring a chocolate truffle or a glass of fine red wine, or enjoying a funny story someone is telling, or breathing in the fresh air on a fall morning. People who can consistently take pleasure in the little things of daily life are going to approach lovemaking with the same sense of anticipation and relaxed sensuality.

If you have sex just once a week---or once a month, for that matter---but it's an experience that physically delights and emotionally nourishes you and your partner, you've got something to treasure. If it works for the two of you, forget the (probably inaccurate) statistics and the (probably doctored) porn videos. You've learned that quality matters more than quantity, which is one of the secrets of a happy life as a couple.