



A GUIDE TO SEX THERAPY

In this Guide we're going to explain what Sex Therapy is, who it's for, and some questions to consider when searching for a qualified Sex Therapist. We're also here to clear up common misconceptions about Sex Therapy in order to help you improve your sex life, individually or as part of a couple.

WHAT IS SEX THERAPY?

Sex Therapy is a type of psychotherapy in which a licensed therapist works with an individual or couple on improving sexual functioning and satisfaction. Good sex therapy targets not only the behavioral symptoms, but the emotions and feelings that may be creating a block to better sexual functioning. Sex Therapy often includes some education in addition to discussion about toys and novelties that can enhance sexual pleasure.

HOW IS SEX THERAPY DIFFERENT THAN SEX EDUCATION?

Today, people get educated about sex from a variety of sources, and the abundance of information can be confusing. When it comes to knowing the validity of the information, coping with feelings that come up as a result, and finding practical ways to improve one's sex life, sex therapy can be a valuable tool.

Sex Therapy integrates sex education into practice through expanding client knowledge of various components of sex — anatomy of one's body and their partner's, understanding the sexual response cycle, changes through the life span — while empowering the individual/couple to create new, exciting sexual experiences and feeling secure and comfortable in their own skin.



EXPRESSIONS WE'VE HEARD FROM PATIENTS:

“I feel disinterested in so many aspects of my life. Sex is just one.”

“He is a terrible lover. He always jumps right to intercourse.”

“I am so angry at him. All he ever wants is sex.”

“I feel turned on by other men but not by my husband.”

WHY SHOULD YOU CONSIDER SEX THERAPY?

There are many reasons someone may turn to Sex Therapy. Here are some examples:

1. You feel disinterested in sex or have a lack of desire, individually or partnered.
2. You and your partner have mismatched levels of sexual desire.
3. You feel shame or awkwardness when it comes to sex.
4. You are exploring (or are unsure) of your sexuality.
5. You have negative emotions around sex.
6. You're having difficulty with sex after childbirth, during peri-menopause or post-menopause, or after cancer/illness.
7. You're having difficulty reaching orgasm.
8. You are not able to communicate your feelings around sex with your partner.
9. You are processing a partner's infidelity, a loss, or a divorce.
10. If you've experienced trauma or sexual abuse.

CHOOSING A SEX THERAPIST CAN BE OVERWHELMING

Interviewing Sex Therapist candidates can be a daunting task, especially if you're in an area with many to choose from. Here are a few questions you should ask potential Sex Therapists in order to assist in your evaluation.

1. What population do you focus on in your current practice?

If a therapist says they see "everyone," children, adults, families and couples, you may want to be wary. Good counselors usually focus on one or two areas.

2. How long have you been working as a Sex Therapist?

Ideally, you want a therapist with a few years behind them.

3. What do you consider "normal" sexuality?

It's important to have a therapist who is "sex positive." That is, you want a therapist who thinks a wide range of sexual activity is normal and healthy. You do not want a therapist who has their very rigid and fixed idea of how often and how a couple should be having sex.



4. What are your feelings regarding the physical (medical) components of the problem?

A good Sex Therapist will be open to the idea that there are both physical as well as emotional components when it comes to an individual's sexual health.

5. What are some of your approaches?

Often the best therapists are not ones that use "one magic solution," but will incorporate a number of modalities. Be wary if a therapist says: "I only use the _____ method of therapy."

6. What is your accreditation?

The largest accrediting body for Sex Therapy is AASECT: The American Association of Sex Educators, Counselors and Therapists. Their website has a tremendous amount of information on what different types of accreditation are available and lists of local Sex Therapists.

7. If you are pursuing Sex Therapy with your partner, you can ask: How long have you been seeing couples?

Experience counts here. Someone who has a long-time flourishing practice is probably better than a brand new Sex Therapist.

EVALUATION WORKSHEET

As you contact your list of potential Sex Therapists, use this worksheet to evaluate each one. This should prove to be a helpful tool as you go through the interview process, keeping all of your notes in one place.

THERAPIST/OFFICE NAME	PHONE	EMAIL	POTENTIAL FOR FIT		NOTES
			NO	MAYBE	



THE BOTTOM LINE

You've interviewed several therapists and received a variety of feedback. But how do you determine when you've found a good fit?

It's important that you are comfortable with your therapist. Whether you go on your own or with a partner, every individual needs to be able to communicate openly and honestly. You'll want to find someone that you feel both understands your situation and can guide you responsibly towards a real solution.

WHAT MAKES SEX THERAPY AT MAZE DIFFERENT?

At Maze, Sex Therapy is a unique, cutting edge collaborative model that integrates the medical, emotional, and behavioral components of treating sexual dysfunction — all under one roof.

We'll really listen to you in order to get the whole picture of what's going on, not just your symptoms, but all the other factors in your life that may be contributing to your issues. We'll then work with you to develop a treatment plan that not only brings relief, but pleasure and excitement to your sex life. Our therapists see you as an individual person, not a diagnosis, and as a result, offer personalized guidance and support in a safe and gentle environment.

WANT TO LEARN MORE?

Schedule your Free Phone Consultation to get started.

LOCATED OUT OF TOWN? NO PROBLEM.

Maze now offers a one-time Extended Consultation with one of our specialized Sex Therapists who will assess your situation and provide guidance for treatment. Contact us to schedule your Extended Consultation today.



If you would like to learn more, or are unsure if Maze Women's Sexual Health can help you, we encourage you to **contact us for a free phone consultation.**