

Six Tips for Creating a More Passionate Relationship

1. ***Operate from the Best in Yourself.*** If you're like most people, you have a scared, angry, vindictive, or lazy side that limits the quality of your sexual relationship. However, you don't have to let that side of you run your marriage. Instead, operate from the best in you, from the resilient part of yourself. Bring forth the solid part of you that wants to have a better relationship. Reach out from the best in you to the best in your partner, both in and out of bed. That's where the best sex in your life comes from. Remind yourself of what is good, admirable, and competent about you, and about your partner. Relate to your mate as if he or she has the capacity to change and develop further as a person.
2. ***Sustain eye contact with each other out of bed.*** Many couples stop making emotional contact, even if they still have sex. Here's a quick and meaningful (but not easy) way to get back in touch, or at least bring your awkwardness with each other to the forefront: Make an agreement with your partner to look into each other's eyes for at least five minutes in a quiet, private place. Do this without talking. This is not a staring contest, but rather, taking time to really look into each other and let yourself be seen. Before you begin, take a moment to get seated comfortably, soften your eyes, and relax your face. Make yourself receptive to your partner; let him or her connect with you. Deliberately lower your emotional barriers. Expect to run into your own resistances, and note them in the back of your mind. Afterwards, discuss the experience with your partner. Do this several times a week, until silent gazing is warm and inviting.
3. ***Try Hugging 'till Relaxed.*** Here's a terrific way to get more in touch with your partner while also getting a better grip on yourself. It turns a simple hug into a window into your relationship and a way to improve it. Prepare yourself by taking a few minutes to slow down, relax, and slow your heart rate. Then stand facing your partner a few feet away. Get a balanced, well-grounded stance over your own two feet. Close your eyes, take a breath, and relax again. Open your eyes, and when the two of you are ready, shuffle forward without losing your relaxed balanced position, so that you have one foot between your partner's feet. Get close enough that you can easily put your arms around your partner without feeling off balance, or pulling or pushing your partner off-balance either. Shift your stance or position as needed to be physically comfortable. Let yourself relax into the hug and remember to breathe. Lots of feelings about your partner, your relationship and yourself are bound to surface. Note your resistances but don't give into them. Afterwards, talk about the experience with your partner. It often takes several months of practice, several times a week, but you'll be amazed by the many improvements this brings. Hugging 'till Relaxed is fully described in the book [Passionate Marriage \(click here\)](#).

4. ***Make eye contact in bed.*** This great activity builds on the two previous suggestions. "Heads on pillows" combines eye gazing with a relaxed physical connection, and brings it into the bedroom. Pick a time when you won't be disturbed. Lay down in bed (or the living room floor) with your clothes on or off. Lie on your side, facing your partner. Put your head on your own pillow and have your partner do likewise. Move your pillows far enough apart so your mate doesn't look like a Cyclops. Do the same relaxed eye gazing described in Tip #2. If you feel the urge to touch your partner, touch his face or hold his hand. Stay away from genitals and buttocks until both of you can reach a relaxed connection with some reliability. Subsequently you can expand this activity to include foreplay and intercourse, but it's more important to establish a resilient collaborative alliance than arouse each other. Ultimately, you can bridge this into reaching orgasm while looking into each other. Heads on pillows is explained in detail in the book [Resurrecting Sex \(click here\)](#).
5. ***Change your style of sexual interactions.*** Do you usually wait for your partner to make the first move? Although you and your partner may touch each other, are you typically more the giver or the receiver when you have sex? Are you a take-charge person or the more passive participant? Identify your typical role in sex and deliberately change it. Change the predominant overall tone or themes that characterize your sexual relationship. Ask your partner to join with you in intentionally making these changes, or do them unilaterally. Remember, your partner will probably be as nervous as you are, so don't expect him to support you emotionally. Be patient with your partner and yourself. Approach this as practice validating, accepting, and supporting yourself in your relationship with your partner. For more on the emotional politics of changing your sexual relationship consult [Resurrecting Sex \(click here\)](#).
6. ***Pay attention to depth of involvement with your partner during sex.*** When you and your partner are actually having sex, you are using one (or more) of three primary psychological mind-sets. These are focused on (1) physical sensations, (2) playing out sexual fantasies, and (3) engaging your partner. People focus most on physical sensations and sex games and fantasies. Instead, focus on engaging your partner during sex. Pay attention to what your partner seems to be thinking and feeling, rather than simply trying to bring him or her to orgasm. Try to establish a deeper emotional connection. Emphasize the special relationship you're trying to develop, rather than getting lost in your sensations, or playing out sexual scripts that turn you on. Once you and your partner are good at "partner engagement," you can work as a team to create terrific sexual sensations and play out your most erotic turn-ons. Dimensions of sexual experience are discussed more fully in [Passionate Marriage \(click here\)](#).