

## Dimensions of Healthy Sexuality

1. **NURTURING**—the capacity to receive care from others and provide care for self.
2. **SENSUALITY**—the mindfulness of physical senses that create emotional, intellectual, spiritual, and physical presence.
3. **SELF-IMAGE**—a positive self-perception that includes embracing your sexual self.
4. **SELF-DEFINITION**—a clear knowledge of yourself, both positive and negative, and the ability to express boundaries as well as needs.

## Supportive Strategies

1. **SEEK MODELS OF NURTURING** and note how they apply to our sexuality. Plan specific ways to nurture us. In general, to practice acceptance and self-care.
2. **DETERMINE WHAT RULES** prevent you from being sensual and focused on the present. Plan concrete and specific ways to notice what your senses are telling you. Integrate your sense awareness into your sexual imagery.
3. **ASK WHAT WERE THE AGENDAS** of the original “programmers” of your sexuality; discover which no longer fit in your life, and what help you can get now. Construct new sexual affirmations.
4. **BEGIN TAKING A STAND** about who you are as a sexual person. Clarify sexual priorities and set boundaries so that you can be safe and sexual. Cultivate discernment through daily meditation, reading, and sensual attunement.

## 12 Step Principles

1. **THE FIRST STEP** asks us to let others care for us and to learn to take care of ourselves. This means giving up control, letting go, and trusting others.
2. **THE SECOND STEP** reminds us that as awareness of little things helps us to trust that there are larger forces at work in our lives. A sense of wonder emerges if we are present to our lives.
3. **THE THIRD STEP** underlines the leap of faith necessary to believe in ourselves. The time-honored “act as if” principle assumes a Higher Power who made us lovable and sexual.
4. **THE FOURTH STEP** asks a “fearless” inventory of who we are which demands a more honest expression of our needs.

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5. **COMFORT**—the capacity to be at ease about sexual matters with oneself and with others.
6. **KNOWLEDGE**—a knowledge base about sex in general and about one's own unique sexual patterns.
7. **RELATIONSHIP**—a capacity to have intimacy and friendship with both those of the same gender and opposite gender.

## Supportive Strategies

5. **CREATE GREATER COMFORT ABOUT SEX** by identifying and overcoming negative and dysfunctional family, religious and cultural messages about sex. Confronting issues of sexual preferences. Resolving issues created by sexual abuse.
6. **PAY ATTENTION** to the many ways sexual issues enter and affect your day-to-day life. Learn more about sexuality. Operate on the basis of information, not “rules”. Develop a plan to learn more about your sexual self.
7. **EXAMINE YOUR OWN BELIEFS** about men and women. Develop deeper relationships with those of both genders. Learn to separate the erotic from relationships with those of the gender to which you are attracted. Identify those in your life who support your efforts to change.

## 12 Step Principles

5. **THE FIFTH STEP** helps us to be fully known by others, including all of our “dark side”. This helps us to be comfortable to integrate those pieces we used to hide.
6. **THE SIXTH STEP** encourages us to look deeper for “holes” or areas that need work in our life. Some of our most important lessons come to us here.
7. **THE SEVENTH STEP** allows us to take another leap of faith that these more difficult issues will also be overcome. Working them out adds to our spiritual and life experience.

## Dimensions of Healthy Sexuality

8. **PARTNERSHIP**—the ability to maintain an interdependent, equal relationship that is intimate and erotic.
9. **NONGENITAL SEX**—the ability to express erotic desire emotionally and physically without the use of the genitals.
10. **GENITAL SEX**—the ability to freely express erotic feelings with the use of the genitals.

## Supportive Strategies

8. **EXPLORE HOW THE PRINCIPLES OF HEALTHY SEXUALITY** can change the rules of abandonment. Seek out tools to confront sexual exploitation and sexualized conflicts, needs and self-destructive patterns. Learn and practice behaviors which build and enhance enduring relationships.
9. **LEARN MORE ABOUT NONGENITAL TOUCH**, and plan time to enjoy its pleasures. Practice communicating needs and desires; express what feels good. Reduce focus on orgasm; increase focus on whole process of sex. Use touch to gradually acclimatize self to more fearful levels of sexual contact.
10. **IDENTIFY AND WORK THROUGH PROBLEMS** of control and power in sex. Confront impotence and preorgasmic conditions. Review resources on sexual information and techniques. Choose some new sexual techniques, and make a plan for experimenting with them.

## 12 Step Principles

8. **THE EIGHTH STEP** demands a “rigorous” honesty, which becomes central to healthy relationships. This honesty makes all relationships durable and our sexual relationship renewable in its eroticism.
9. **THE NINTH STEP** is the action step that requires us to do what we can to keep our relationships in order. That means to use all means that we can and to make amends for those areas in which we have not done enough. It also means that when we stop over important parts like non-genital expression, we can make up for it.
10. **THE TENTH STEP** builds on the principles of the previous nine and asks that these principles be practiced in our lives. Few activities demand the integration of these principles more than the use of the genitals.

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11. **SPIRITUALITY**—the ability to connect sexual desire and expression to the value and meaning of one's life.
12. **PASSION**—the capacity to express deeply held feelings of desire and meaning about one's self, relationships and intimacy experience.

## Supportive Strategies

11. **SEEK OUT MODELS** for creating and communication meaning in sex. Acknowledge the link between sexuality and spirituality. Examine sexual history to determine where you find meaning in sex. Learn to communicate meaning concurrently and consistently.
12. **STATE PUBLICLY HOW YOU HAVE CHANGED** as a result of this process. Publicly witness your "conversion"- your new beliefs, values and ways of living. Leave the "observer of life" status and actively participate in the world around you.

## 12 Step Principles

11. **THE ELEVENTH STEP** encourages us to constantly improve our spiritual consciousness. In that way, we remember our connectedness and purpose.
12. **THE TWELTH STEP** asks that we bear witness to our experience to others. Given the centrality of sex in our lives, this includes sexual experiences as well.