

A man and a woman are shown in profile, facing each other and holding hands. They are both smiling warmly. The background is a softly blurred restaurant interior with warm lighting and bokeh effects from out-of-focus lights. The overall mood is intimate and romantic.

Let's Talk About Sex

Questions for Couples
to Talk About Sex

Dr. Juli Slattery

A resource from Authentic Intimacy

Talking about sex can be difficult. In fact, some couples think it is easier to have sex than to talk about it. Why? First of all, we don't have good models for how to talk about sex. You hear people joking about sex all the time, but when have you witnessed or been part of a healthy conversation about sexuality? Sex is also difficult to talk about because it taps into some deep feelings and desires. Honest conversations about sex can evoke fears and shame which can quickly lead to conflict.

Below are a few questions that can prompt you and your spouse to talk about sex in a healthy way. Before you jump into the questions, here are a few ground rules to set up a safe place to talk.

- Make sure you have time and privacy. Set aside 45-60 minutes of uninterrupted time.
- Don't try to cover everything in one sitting. The goal is to learn how to make conversations about sex more natural and frequent. Address only 1-3 questions in one conversation.
- Pray before talking. Ask God to give you grace and love for each other as you address some personal and sensitive issues.
- Listen to your spouse. Instead of responding immediately with your own thoughts, ask a follow up question and then restate what you heard your spouse say to make sure you understand his/her feelings.
- When it's time to share, own your feelings instead of accusing or blaming. Instead of saying, "You never .." or "You hurt me when..." say something like "I feel ... when we ..."
- If you hit a roadblock, take a time out. Issues like sexual trauma, pornography, and feeling sexually rejected take time to process. If feelings begin to escalate, stop talking and ask God to give you grace and wisdom. You may decide to reach out to a counselor to help you talk through areas that are particularly painful or seem to always lead to conflict.
- Thank your spouse for sharing honestly and vulnerably. The goal is not to be right or wrong but to understand each other- to build intimacy.
- Consider reading a book or listening to a podcast or sermon about sex together. Learning about sex from a reliable source can help steer your conversations in a constructive direction. Here are several suggestions to start with:

Books: *Restoring the Pleasure* by Cliff and Joyce Penner

A Celebration of Sex by Douglas E. Rosenau

Blog by Dr. Slattery: "Why Does Sex Matter?"

Java with Juli episode: "Why God Created You to be Sexual"

Ok, so here are the questions!

1. How did you learn about sex? What was helpful and what wasn't about that experience?
2. What have you learned about sex since we have been married?

3. If you could ask God one question about sex/sexuality, what would it be and why?
4. What is your favorite sexual memory from our marriage?
5. How effective do you think we are at talking about sex? How can we improve our communication in this area?
6. What pleases you the most about our sexual relationship?
7. What is the most difficult aspect of our sexual relationship?
8. What do I do or say during sex that is distracting or hurtful for you?
9. What do I do or say during sex that is encouraging for you?
10. What role do you think God should have in our sex life?
11. What role do you think spiritual warfare plays in our sex life? How can we be more intentional about addressing spiritual warfare?
12. What is one thing that triggers you to be tempted by pornography or other sexual sin?
13. How can I help you focus on me/us with your sexuality?
14. There are a lot of male and female stereotypes around sex. What stereotypes do you think we fit and what stereotypes don't represent us?
15. In what ways do you think God is using our sexual relationship to challenge us to love each other like He loves?

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

DR. JULI SLATTERY is a recognized expert in the integration of biblical truth and sexuality. She is a



clinical psychologist, author, and speaker, with over twenty-five years of experience counseling, discipling, and teaching women. Juli holds degrees in psychology from Wheaton College (BA), Biola University (MA), and Florida Institute of Technology (MS and PsyD).

From 2008 to 2012, Juli worked at Focus on the Family where she was a co-host on the Daily Broadcast. In 2012, she co-founded Authentic Intimacy with Linda Dillow. She hosts a weekly podcast (Java with Juli), blogs, speaks, and writes about the intersection of sexuality and the Christian life.

Juli and her husband, Mike, have been married since 1994 and have three sons. Juli is a member of the board of Trustees at Moody Bible Institute. She has contributed to the New York Times, USA Today, Today's Christian Woman, Thriving Family magazine, Focus on the Family, Family Life Today, and many other secular and Christian media outlets.

We have many more resources around this topic at AuthenticIntimacy.com