

Intimacy Inventory - borrowed from Esther Perel

My intimacy inventory is designed to get you to start asking questions to examine and explore yourself, your behaviors, your motives, and your history. These are questions you've probably never asked yourself directly, even though you've thought about or dealt with the issues that surround them. Why is it important? We all come to relationships with an emotional dowry that contains fears, anticipations, expectations, and your wounds, and your strengths. The emotional dowry is learned but it becomes second nature.

In other words, our relational and sexual aspirations are based on what you had, what you didn't have, what you wish to repair, and what you wish to repeat. When you answer these questions it is like holding a mirror close up and looking at various parts of yourself. My hope is that by looking at them without judgement or prejudice, you are able to take note of your challenges and to map the changes you'd like to make.

How should I use it? This inventory is not a rigid exercise, or something you score. I want you to explore each of these questions' individual on your own time (maybe try one or two per week). As you read through them, and begin thinking about the answers, circle the 2-3 that are most relevant and start going back just to those because they hold the kernel of what is significant to you in becoming more self-aware about your intimate relationships and your sexuality.

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10 Questions You Should be Asking Yourself About Your Sex Life

1. What is a strength you bring to your relationships? What's a dilemma that you carry with you?

2. When do you feel most free in your relationship?

3. What do you like to experience in sex?

Some options here include: tenderness, softness, closeness, intensity, aggression, transcendence, spiritual connection, rebelliousness, a release, surrender, dominance, abandon, unboundedness, freedom, freedom from responsibility, ruthlessness, timelessness, giving, receiving, being taken, possessing.

4. What are the dominant messages you grew up with about boys & girls/men & women?

5. Among the 5 senses, which one is most sexual for you? (seeing / hearing / smelling / touching / tasting)

6. Of the following verbs, which one are you most comfortable with, and which would you like to stretch? To Ask | To Take | To Give | To Receive | To Refuse

7. How comfortable are you in communicating your sexual wants and dislikes? How about your emotional wants and dislikes?

8. What was the attitude towards sex in your family growing up? (e.g., comfortable, natural, awkward, repressive, shameful, guilt inducing, abusive... please elaborate, go beyond the word!)

9. Do you want sexual exclusiveness in your relationships?

10. What is a hard conversation for you to have around intimacy and sexuality? How do you feel? What happens to your body? What is the story there?