

# 51 Sex Nerd Sex Tips



Dr Emily Nagoski, Ph.D.

# 51

sex nerd  
sex tips

by Emily Nagoski, Ph.D.  
[www.thedirtynormal.com](http://www.thedirtynormal.com)



## **01. map your partner's stress**

Stress is the single most common killer of sex. You must remove the stress in order to build up the sexy! Make two lists: (1) Things That Stress My Partner Out and (2) Things that Chill My Partner Out. Use these as needed to clear away the stressy and make way for the sexy.

# 02. Map your partner's turn ons.

So you've got a list of their stressors.

Now think about what turns them on.

This could be anything from oral sex to coming home and finding the dishes done. Start with, "My partner loves it when I..."

Get their car detailed? Suck their toes? Do volunteer work at the local animal shelter? ANYTHING. The better you know what turns your partner on, the better a lover you'll be.

PS – Make a list of your OWN turn ons too! You can only be clear with your partner about what you want if you KNOW what you want. Add to it as you discover new things!

# 03. context, context, context

Your brain interprets sensations in context. When you're feeling affectionate and trusting and happy, if someone tickles you it's fun! When you're feeling cranky and annoyed, if someone tickles you, you're like, "FUCK OFF!"

When you're attempting to initiate with your sweetie, take context into account. What's their mood? How was their day? Are **their stress triggers** minimized? Have you set up **their turn ons**?

What you do to your partner matters less than the context in which you do it. And in the right context, almost anything you do will be erotic.

# 04. Light touch, deep touch, temperature

The tongue can only distinguish a few basic flavors: sweet, salty, sour, bitter, umami... and the myriad flavors we taste are the product of the interactions among those basics.

Similarly, the surface of the skin can only distinguish a few kinds of sensation: light touch, deep touch, and temperature.

Light touch is surface touch, brushing lightly. Deep touch is pressure, anything that pushes into muscle and makes the skin move over the body.

But the delights of sensation happen when you mix them up to create a novel “meal” of sensations – scratching, stroking, pressing, moving, holding...

Light touch, deep touch, and temperature are your ingredients.

# 05. speed, rhythm

You can integrate light touch, deep touch, and temperature with different styles of touch, characterized by SPEED of touch and RHYTHM – or lack of rhythm.

Speed's pretty straightforward, right? Fast, slow, somewhere in between. Hands, tongues, phalli, what have you. Flicky fast, slow like cooling lava, or somewhere in between.

Speed is a product, usually of rhythm, and the general rule of thumb is: rhythm is good. Rhythm tells your body (or your partner's body) what to expect.

But.

Some of the fancy-pants-est vibrators are the ones with a “random” mode, where stimulation is like a box of chocolates, right, you never know what you're gonna get. Sometimes the unexpected, like a sudden shift from slow to fast or from deep to light, is the most intense thing you can do.

# 06. earlobes

Don't forget about your partner's earlobes. They come in two variety: attached and unattached, genetically determined. Both varieties are EXCELLENT to grab gently between your teeth and tug and scrape your way slloooowwwly along the length of the lobe.

There is erectile tissue and there are lots of nerve endings in earlobes. Don't neglect them.

# 07. ears, too

Yes you CAN stuff your tongue into your partner's ear!

In a context where you have their full erotic potential, transitioning from earlobe nibbling/scraping to the warm, wet, sound-muffling surprise of an earful of tongue is **TOTALLY HOT**.

# 08. outer corner of the lips

Kissing is great, absolutely. But sometimes NOT kissing – or ALMOST kissing – is even better.

This is a light-touch/temperature trick: if you just rest your slightly parted lips at the **corner of your partner's mouth** and exhale slllowwwlly, it will do good things. If you then just lightly brush your tongue on that same spot, it will be even better. And if you exhale again onto the now damp patch at the corner of their mouth, well. That'd be Just Swell.

The corner of the mouth is a magical place, especially for **light touch** (tip #4).

# 09. their scalp

The scalp is a target for slow **deep touch** (tip #4 again).

When your partner is relaxed and in a snuggly, warm kind of mood, gently but tautly grip their hair and pulllll a little, slowly. Don't yank or tug. Just grip. And pull. Like you want to drain just a trickle of water from a full bathtub, and you're jussstt barrrely lifting the plug in the drain.

This is about physical pressure at the roots of the hair, but it's also about control and trust. Only when a partner really trusts you can they relax into feeling controlled by you, and allowing you to be in charge of their head **TOTALLY** counts as feeling controlled by you.

Bonus tip: If you're makin' out hot 'n' heavy, use the hair-grip trick to move your partner's head, to get access to new places to kiss, lick, and nibble, rather than moving your own head to get to those spots.

It's about trust. And pressure.

# 10. eyelashes – yours

Holding your partner's face in your hands, in a tender moment of affectionate face-sucking, use your own EYELASHES to brush gently along the angles of your partner's forehead and temples and cheekbones and nose and chin. Don't do it for long – it can get ticklish-feeling – but for a sweet moment, it's delicious.

Can you think of anything more intimate?

(Well yes, hopefully you can, but still. Pretty intimate, right?)

# 11. nose.

Smell is important, of course it is. But your nose is good for more than sniffing. The **ala** constrict or expand to change airflow. And the tip of it provides a sensation unlike that produced by any other body part. The tip is firm yet smooth, pliant yet rigid.

Brush your the tip of your nose along any body part that likes **light touch**. Examples:

The neck, and the dip between the clavical bones.

The inside of the wrist and/or elbow, including all along the soft underside of the forearm.

Behind the ear.

Along the arch of the foot – underside or topside.

The inside of the thigh.

The labia or scrotum.

The clitoris.

The **frenulum**.

# 12. where to fuck: armpits

The thing is, you're allowed to do ANYTHING YOU WANT in bed, with your partner's consent. There are no rules, there is no script. So why not try some new, funny, beautiful, surprising things?

Axillary intercourse. Also known as armpit fucking.

The armpit is densely innervated, a source of erotic sensations and smells, and a juicy, fun place to fuck with whatever appendage, organic or plastic, gives you and your partner pleasure.

Isn't it time you lost your armpit virginity?

# 13. where to fuck: the knee

There is a sweetly soft spot in the bend of the knee that has been aching for years for you to fuck it. Lube it up real good and bend the foot close to the hamstring, and slide something sexy in the fold there. A penis, a finger, a toy. The slipping, dipping, thrusting sensations will capture and hold your partner's attention.

(Tab A-Slot B instructions: Person A is lying on their back with a foot on the mattress/floor/table/what have you. Person B kneels on the outside of that leg, maybe with their hands on Person A's knee cap, hipbone, shin, or foot.)

Again, there are no rules, there is no script. You and your partner get to make up all the fun new joyful things you want. Why NOT fuck the knee?

Is it silly? Could be. Is it sexy? Could be!!

# 14. where to fuck: feet

If you put the bottoms of your feet together, you'll notice a nice little gap at the arches. (Some gaps are bigger than others – size doesn't matter).

In your brain, your feet and your genitals **are right next to each other**. Consequently, lots of people have a very easy time experiencing foot stimulation as erotic.

So here's what I think you should do: I think you should lube up that gap between the arches of the feet and slip a phallus right in there. I think you should lie on your back and let your partner make sweet love to your feet, which you get busy with your phallus (penis or clit, as appropriate).

Alternative, you can fuck your partner's feet and watch them get busy with their phallus.

Because the best thing about sex is that consenting adults get to do anything they want with each other. ANYTHING. I'm just here to inspire creativity.

# 15. where to fuck: intergluteal

“Situated between the buttocks.” That’s what intergluteal means.

And it is an excellent, EXCELLENT place to fuck.

All these places – the armpit, the knee, the feet, and the butt cheeks – they share a few characteristics:

They are sexually neglected by too many people.

They are highly sensitive, with lots of nerve endings just going to waste.

But let’s talk about the butt – not the anus (that’s [a different post](#)), but the butt.

The area between the butt should be slicked up with lube (in itself a delicious process) and then you can slide something handy – maybe even a hand – in and out.

Try different speeds.

Try different pressures.

Try different angles.

Definitely try it.

(These are things you should do when you and your partner are already turned way on.)

# 16. whisper

Not many species have face-to-face intercourse. Even fewer produce language. What better way to enjoy being human than to talk to your lovemuffin while you fuck face-to-face?

Using whatever phallus is right for your relationship (an organic one or one from the store) in whatever orifice is right for your relationship (two to choose from – both very excellent), whether you're the receiving or inserting partner, you can tell your partner important things during intercourse.

You can tell them about a fantasy. You can tell them how it feels to be there with them in that moment. You can tell them what you adore about a wide variety of their body parts, their mind, or their heart. You can tell them all about some intimate plans for the future you have.

Applying a tip like this requires first **knowing your partner's turn ons** – what you say does matter – but the words themselves are less important than the urgent, passion-gruffed voice you use, the body tension and breath-holding that shapes your phrasing and constricts your throat.

And this one isn't for everybody. Some folks are highly verbal; others are not. Some folks, when highly aroused, find that the language centers of their brain seem to disengage entirely and only pre-human vocalizations are available to them.

# 17. the back, hands free

When you're both naked and turned on and face-to-face, here's what you do:

Whisper, "Turn over."

When they're on their stomach, straddle their hips, lace your fingers through theirs, and lightly lightly lightly brush your front along their back.

Brush up and brush down.

Brush slowly.

No no, slower than that.

Yeah.

And find something to do to their **ear**, while you're at it.

# 18. their back, your tongue

Sensation on your skin is organized into patches, and the larger these patches are, the less sensitive the area is. These patches are smallest on your fingertips where sensory sensitivity and acuity are supremely important; they are largest on your back, which means sensations there are diffuse and generalized. Imagine trying to read braille by having someone rub the raised bumps along your shoulders. No matter how slowly they went, you'd never be able to discriminate

You can use this in your favor.

With your partner already aroused and tuned in and lying on their stomach, start at the top of the left hip and run your tongue and the tip of your nose slowly (and wetly) up the back to the shoulder. Allow your own torso to follow your tongue and nose, brushing along the skin of your partner's back.

Then go back down the left hip and start again, slightly further to the right, slow up the length of the back with your tongue and nose.

And again, a little more to the right.

And again.

And again.

All the way across the back, slowly. Take. Your. Time.

Feel free to add sporadic bites, nips, kisses, and sucks you like.

Because the back is so diffusely innervated, this will feel very complex and subtle. It'll be very difficult for your partner to tell what you're doing, but alllll their attention will be focused on it.



# 19. hair displacement

Did you know your skin has a set of nerve endings that specifically notify your brain about disturbances to your hair?

In a context of slow attentiveness, gently gently gently brush over your partner's skin where there is hair – don't touch their skin, just brush over the surface of the hairs.

Seriously. Woah.

(Of all the arguments in favor of leaving hair intact, this is my favorite.)

# 20. alternating sensations

In a sexy **context**, your brain interpret's all sensations as sexy. And sensations broadly fit into **light touch, deep touch, and temperature**. If you'd like to create a series of sensation that swamps your partner with pleasure, try varying the kind of sensation.

For example, the best spanking combines sharp slaps and soothing, warm strokes.

And vibration-numbed skin can still respond to light touch and temperature.

When one set of nerve endings is brimming with sensation, the other set(s) are hungry and waiting for their turn.

# 21. anal: external stimulation

External anal play: outer extrema of the rectum is massively innervated, exquisitely sensitive, and more delicate than a rose petal, than spun sugar, than a wisp of cloud. Delicate. Use lots of lube (silicone is great) and just barely brush a finger or two over the puckered surface of the anus.

(If your partner is worried that paying any attention to the butt will result in penetration, and they don't want penetration, assure them that you're only interested in them superficially! 😊 You can reassure them through the elaborate strategy of telling them, "I'm not interested in penetration, I just want to touch.")

Try lying your partner on their belly, legs spread wide, and part their butt cheeks with one hand, while a single finger brushes from just above to anus, over the anus, to just below the anus. Traveling that entire distance, including areas that are beyond the sphincter itself, engages more of the nerve endings.

As always, varying speed and rhythm can totally change this experience.

Experiment.

## 22. anal: more external

More external anal play: tug on the butt cheeks.

Pull them outward, grabbing either with the flats of your fingertips or the points of your nails, depending on your partner's preference. This indirectly stimulates the external surface of the anus without even hinting at penetration.

A long, slow, steady outward pressure generates one kind of sensation, and a quick tug, upward or outward, generates a totally different sensation. Play with both.

# 23. external anal-oral

You know how I keep saying that **lube is important** for anal stimulation?

Well, what's constantly lubricated and soft soft soft, for light touch?

YOUR. TONGUE.

Don't be afraid.

When you're both feeling adventurous and affectionate, suggest it gently, with a question mark. If you're icked out by the poop issue, conduct your foreplay under the purifying spray of a slippery, soapy shower.

And when you're both warmed up and juicy, spread your partner's legs wide and travel south from the genitals to the anus. Lick.

Speed. Rhythm. Pressure. Everyone's butt is different, so try different thing. Start slow, rhythmic, and light, then try faster, vary the pace from fast steady flicks to short, sporadic darts of the tongue, followed by torturous pauses, nibbles and kisses on the gluteal muscles, and slow, hot, wet trails along the inner edge of the butt cheek.

Don't be scared. There aren't rules about what you're allowed to do – anything you and your partner want is **ALLOWED**. If you want to try it: Go. For. It. (with their consent).

# 24. anal external: pressure

While you're fascinating your partner and melting them into a puddle of arousal, through your attentive care of their anal sphincter, here's a luscious thing to do:

With a well-lubricated finger that has well-trimmed, well-filed nails, just PRESS against the anus with the flat of a finger (or two. Or three.)

Don't penetrate. Just press. Push. Pressure. Deep touch.

The anus will wink at you. It may wink at you from light touch stimulation too, but it will almost certainly wink with pressure. That's good.

Remember to consider speed and rhythm. Is this a slow, gentle, gradual, steady pressure? Or is this a rapid moment of pressure in the middle of light, tantalizing touch? Does it pulse? Does it pulse quickly or slowly... or irregularly? It is just a slight pressure, or does it go deep, edging penetration but never getting there?

Don't forget: the nerve endings that respond to pressure are separate from the nerve endings that respond to light touch. You haven't fully explored the erotic potential of a patch of anatomy until you've tried both.

# 25. anal penetration

Anal penetration: a brief how-to.

A finger (or two... or three) with well-trimmed, well-filed nails; a big toe, equally well manicured; a phallus, either organic or artificial; a washed and tidily peeled carrot, chilled for added interest; a fortuitously designed handle of a serving spoon (careful with wood! use a condom!); whatever comes easily to hand, as long it's:  
rounded  
smooth  
firm enough  
fits in a condom, and  
has a flange or something on the end that will prevent it being sucked into the anus, making you the ER doc's favorite dinner party anecdote.

Beginners should start small – maybe the diameter of a pinky finger or a baby carrot? Start small and go slow.

Variability in temperature would be a bonus feature.

# 26. anal penetration: stillness

Years and years ago, I was talking with a woman about her relationships with her buttplug and her boyfriend.

Her boyfriend really loved that she loved her buttplug. But he always wanted to play with it. He wanted to fuck her with the toy, move it in and out. He really was convinced that the pleasure for her came with the movement.

He didn't understand, couldn't understand, that what she loved was just having the thing in there. Just move it gently in place, and leave it there. Fuck the bajeezus out of her vagina in the meanwhile, by all means, but for her the buttplug was about STILLNESS.

Penetration and be still.

Ask your partner about it. Try it. Add it to oral sex and manual sex and genital sex. Have quiet, motionless anal penetration as an adjunct to a spanking, to breast stimulation, or to a dry humping make out session.

Because you're allowed to try anything you both want to try.

# 27. anal penetration: the monkey sphincter

The anal sphincter is actually TWO sphincters, one stacked on top of the other. The outer sphincter, the “human sphincter,” is under conscious control. You can wink it open and closed right now if you want to.

\*wink.\*

See?

The inner sphincter, though, is the monkey sphincter. It’s not under conscious control. It reacts to the environment by winking tight in response to novelty, stress, and change, and risk.

And it takes the outer, human sphincter with it.

Because it’s a monkey, you can’t talk it out of feeling untrusting, stressed, or surprised, you can’t reason with it. So a key to pain-free pleasure-full anal penetration is keeping the monkey sphincter calm and happy. The person being penetrated should always feel trusting and in control. They should be the person controlling how fast and deep penetration happens, and the penetrator should just stay still and calm.

Always go slowly and gently with the anus, and when it winks in response to novelty, stress, change, or risk, stay still and calm and allow the wink to pass. Work WITH the wink. Allow it.

# 28. anal penetration: Crisco

If you're not using latex\* protection, you know what the very best lube to use is?

Crisco.

Crisco is bad for you to eat. Hydrogenated fats, which are handy because they stay solid at room temperature, are, very broadly speaking, less good for you than fats that haven't been processed.

But fats that are solid at room temperature are AWESOME for butt sex.

Butter is good for butt sex too, but really, it's so much more expensive and delicious, why not just put it on bread or asparagus or just lick it off your finger? Save butter for eating.

And save Crisco for butt sex.

(\* Polyurethane protection is totally safe with oil-based lubes.)

# 29. anal sex: better pooping = better sex

Look, I know people don't like to talk about it, but I also know that when people's poop system has issues, it interferes with their willingness/ability to enjoy anal stimulation. So just a few words to make your pooping system work better.

A healthy diet. Less fried stuff, less processed stuff, less starchy and sugary stuff. More fruits and vegetables, more nuts. For some people dairy interferes with their poop system – you probably know who you are, but you can always try an exclusion diet (spend a few weeks without eating any) and see how you feel.

And regular physical activity. Keeps things motile.

If there's anything on earth that should motivate you to skip junk food, it's higher quality, more pleasurable sex.

Better sex through better health, my friends. Better POOP health.

# 30. anal penetration: double

For those with vaginas (or partners with vaginas):

Simultaneous penetration of the anus and vagina is INTENSE. It's worth trying with a partner you trust, and with whom you feel comfortable communicating really explicitly.

Because the logistics are easier if you're working with, say, a butt plug and a vibrator (the penetrating partner just uses both hands), than if you're working with a butt plug and a phallus (e.g., penis, strap-on, etc), let's walk through the how-to of penetrating with a phallus.

Let's assume for the time being that the phallus is going in the anus – this doesn't have to be true, but it's one possibility. A convenient way to make this happen is if both partner's lie on their sides, inserting partner spooning the receiving partner. This way, while the penetrator can penetrate their partner's anus from behind, the receiving partner can use their hands to insert the sex toy/whatever to their vagina. (This is especially good because it allows plenty of manual or toy access to the clitoris!)

Or if the phallus is going in the anus, then the penetrating partner can work the butt plug or other flanged object into the anus, and then penetrate the vagina in whatever position appeals to you both.

Or you can do from-behind fucking, with both partners on their knees. The penetrating partner can use a phallus for either orifice and hands or toys for the other orifice. (Again, both partners get access to the clit this way. Which is good.)

Just a few ideas. You have to be ready for it to be a little silly while you're getting everything lined up, and then you have to be ready for the sensations to be pretty intense. Both of these things require

trust. Letting someone put something **INSIDE YOUR BODY** is a very, very big deal. Letting someone put **TWO** things inside your body is even bigger.

Trust is an aphrodisiac. The more you have, the better this will all go.

# 31. random setting

Did you know that a popular feature on high end vibrators is the “random” setting?

It provides random bursts of speed and intensity and rhythm – from bzzzzZZZZZZzzzzzzZZZZZZzzzzZZZZZZzzzzzz to BZZZ BZZZ BZZZ BZZZ and everything in between. I’ve mentioned this before, but what I didn’t mention is that you can use this as inspiration for your approach to fucking.

Imagine, instead of straightforward, steady, rhythmic fucking, you did give your partner a few slow, deep thrusts, then one or two hard and fast ones, then a handful of shallow, gentle thrusts, then stayed very, very still until they started squirming, then just one, very deep, very hard thrust....

Put your penetration on random setting. Tune in to your partner. And make them crazy.

## 32. the vaginal opening

You can tell the difference between quality sexual science and bullshit sexual science by how they talk about the nerve endings of the vagina – i.e., the reproductive canal itself.

The fact is, nearly all of the sensitivity of the vagina is located in the outer quarter or third of its length. In other words, it is stimulation of the opening of the vagina, not its length, that provides the most, uh, bang for the buck.

So focus on that. Focus with tongue, with toy, with fingers. When the rest of your partner's body is already warm and throbbing with arousal, when the clitoris had its fair share of attention, focus on the vaginal opening.

A key hint: this means width, not depth, is your true friend. Width, gradually increased.

# 33. the cervix

So I know in Tip 32 I just said that the vaginal opening is the heart and soul of the vagina's sensitivity, and that's true.

But there is a great deal to be said for the role of the cervix.

So: only, only, only, only when your partner is turned on to the point of whimpering and writhing, use deep penetration to touch their cervix. (If you're using fingers, cut and file your fingernails well, and wear gloves or else wash your hands like a SURGEON.)

The stimulation most likely to give good effect is a fairly rhythmic bounce; you don't want to press or push against the cervix or uterus, you just want to bump it, gently and slowly at first, then with escalating pressure and speed. And bear in mind that this stimulation necessarily is accompanied by stimulation to the mouth of the vagina and (one hopes!) to the clitoris.

Not everyone with a cervix will find this intense sensation pleasurable, but those who do will find it pleasurable almost beyond bearing.

# 34. what the vagina feels

What kind of stimulation feels good in the vagina?

People who don't have one sometimes mistakenly think that the vagina can feel small variations in texture or temperature or pressure.

The vagina, she's not very good with details. She's good at getting a holistic sense of stimulation. When you see those glass toys with arrays of nubbies, don't imagine that the vagina can feel each nubbin; no the vagina gets a general sense of nubbinness.

The clitoris can often feel each nubbin. The vagina? She wants and understand gists. You can be simple with a vagina. If the vagina and clitoris preferred flavors, the vagina would prefer milk chocolate covered pretzels – simple, sweet, salty, creamy – and the clitoris would prefer dark chocolate covered espresso beans – complex, multidimensional, subtle, with interesting finishes and great variety and subtlety.

Be simple with the vagina. Be subtle with the clitoris.

# 35. put your fingers in a vagina

Your whole hand can fit in a vagina, but you must go slowly.

When your partner's is already writhing with desire – and I mean **THROBBING** with it, get you some lube and, as appropriate, poly glove, and start with 1 finger. Your index finger

Add your middle finger when they're feeling good.

When you've done excellent things their **g-spot**, add a third finger by touching the tips of your ring finger and index finger, and holding your pinky down with your thumb. Palm up, my friends.

Keep doing fabulous things to their clit, thighs, breasts, belly, anywhere you can reach with your free hand or other appendage.

Add your pinky by tucking it under your ring finger. At this point, you can get to the entire length of all your fingers, right up to your knuckles inside. This is as big and intense as lots of people want to go. And it IS intense.

# 36. Put your hand in a vagina

Once you've got your fingers in, your partner might want more. Get their permission first. This is a big, amazing, intense deal.

You have to go slowly at first. Keep the brakes off by avoiding surprises.

Tug upward on the mons or clit, press down a little on the abdomen, and WATCH YOUR PARTNER'S FACE. Only go in a little bit at a time. And then back out to your fingertips. Then in a little further, slowly, watching their face, then out again, and again, each time a little slower and a little deeper. You can vary the speed and also the amount your hand withdraws.

Watch their face, listen to their words. You are, with your hand in their vagina, their willing, blissful servant. Like the best servants, you bring pleasure by being supremely obedient.

# 37. light touch taint

'Taint pussy, 'taint ass. The perineum is the smooth area between either vulva or scrotum and anus. It is SENSITIVE.

Light touch, friends. Lube. And the very very tips of your fingers. Of your tongue. Of your breath. Of your nose.

That, accompanying scrotal or vulvar light touch, can make their eyes cross. Accompanying anal or vaginal deep touch, it can be transcendent.

# 38. deep touch taint

A variation:

'Taint pussy, 'taint ass. The perineum is the smooth area between either vulva or scrotum and anus. It is SENSITIVE.

DEEP touch, friends. Lube and PRESSURE. Gentle at first, then gradually, gradually escalating, with your fingers (be sure your nails are in great shape, and short!) or a toy.

Add it to a cocksucking or a clit licking.

# 39. shout

Sometimes you want to whisper, sometimes you want to shout. When something feels good, make a noise – not a word, just a noise.

The better it feels, the louder the sound.

When you come, let the waves of release travel up your body to your vocal chords, and let the pulsing breath of orgasm carry sound out of you, so that the whole room fills up with the vibrating echoes of your pleasure.

And as orgasm transitions into quiet, let your sounds transition to laughter or tears or sighs or secrets.

# 40. silent

Play a game with your partner.

Imagine you are in a bedroom at someone else's house and there are lots of people downstairs and YOU CAN'T LET ANYONE HEAR YOU.

(Fun variation: actually BE in a bedroom at someone else's house, where you can't let anyone hear you)

Be as silent as you can. Listen to every chuff and sigh, every gasp, every slurp or slap or squish. Listen to every noise and try to make it as quiiiiiet as you can. Shhhhhhh...

Why does this work? Because it draws your attention urgently to the present!

# 41. backs of the knees

Very, very sensitive to light touch.

Remarkably close, neurologically, to the inner thigh.

Two point discrimination – that is, the sensitivity to specific locations – is terrible on the back of the knee, so when you brush your fingers or a feather or a belt or a tongue across the back of the knee, your partner gets an impossible-to-track sensation that they can't pinpoint. And they can't see it. All they can do is hear and attend and wait to see what you'll do next.

# 42. how to use a feather or a tongue

How about this for a nerdy tip:

Some nerve endings in the skin are “slowly adapting,” which means that they continue to send signals to the brain pretty much as long as they are receiving stimulation. They typically have large “reception fields” – i.e., they’ll pick up signals across a relatively wide patch of skin.

Others are “rapidly adapting,” which means they send a signal when a sensation **CHANGES** – when it starts, when it ends, when it gets faster, but not if a sensation is just continuing. These typically have small “reception fields,” responding to sensation only in a very tiny patch of skin. This makes them great at recognizing **MOVEMENT** and **POSITION**.

What does this mean for sex play?

If you’re going to use **LIGHT TOUCH**, keep it moving, keep it changing, or else the nerve endings will adapt and stop sending signals to the brain.

Using your tongue? Keep it moving. Using a feather? Keep it moving. It doesn’t have to move fast or far, but it has to move.

BTW, these kinds of nerve endings – Meissner’s Corpuscles – are found most densely on the fingertips and lips.

Knowledge is power friends. Feathers and tongues.

# 43. skin stretch

Did you know you have nerve endings whose primary job is detecting the stretch of your skin? They're called Ruffini corpuscles.

They're slowly adapting, which means you can pull on skin, gently stretching and stretching and stretching, and you'll keep receiving signals from your skin.

Try tugging earlobes. Try tugging finger joints – or any joints, joints are rich in Ruffini corpuscles. Stretch and tug and rotate together. The combination of stretch and rotate is great for the Ruffinis.

# 44. chemoreception for everyone

This is for the lovers of male bodied people:

It turns out that CINNAMON and VANILLA are highly arousing smells for males. And no, I don't know why (though I have a couple keen ideas).

But look: if you want to smell excellent and desirable for your male bodied partner: cinnamon and vanilla.

# 45. chemoreception for YOU

There are no “aphrodisiacs” in the sense of “something you consume that automatically increases desire or arousal.” But you can CREATE aphrodisiacs through behavioral association.

On sexytime days/night, wear some specific fragrance. Any fragrance will do.

Every time.

For a month.

It won't take even that long for your partner to associate that smell with sexytimes, so that when you walk into a room smelling of that particular fragrance, their body will have mastered the association and will begin to respond, wanting you without even knowing why.

# 46. turn off nociception (part 1)

We have nerve endings whose job it is to recognize stimuli that are potentially dangerous (“nociceptors”). These pain receptors limit the intensity of stimulation you can give your partner because they have a “threshold” of pain tolerance.

But you can raise the threshold and therefore increase the intensity of stimulation in a bunch of ways:

Get your partner very, very, very aroused, very turned on, slowly and lovingly, using all the tips and techniques you can think of. High sexual arousal increases endorphins, which block nociception.

When their body is highly aroused, you can get VERY intense and your partner’s brain will interpret practically any sensation as erotic.

NB: Get their permission to do this first. Say, “I want to turn you on until you’re writhing with desire, and then I want to spank you. May I?”

Or, “I want to bring you to the brink of orgasm and hold you there, trembling, while I pull your hair and bite your nipples. Would that be okay with you?”

# 47. turn off nociception (part 2)

Those pain receptors? Another way to turn them off is to “close the gate” on them – simply overwhelm the pain sensation with another sensation.

Like, you know how when you stub your toe, you grab it and rub it?

The throbbing of the pain is overwhelmed by the rubbing and pressure, so your brain only receives the other signals, not the pain.

Say you’re spanking your partner. Don’t just slap. Let your hand rest, gentle and warm, over the little red patch of skin you created. Close the gate on the stinging.

Layer sensation. Close the gate on pain by offering simultaneous, overlapping pleasure: pressure, light touch, gentle temperature.

# 48. turn off nociception (part 3)

A third way to minimize the responsiveness of pain receptors is simply to numb them:

Ice. It numbs all but the deepest nerve endings, leaving access only to sensations of PRESSURE and STRETCH.

Move the ice slowly over the area you want to numb, either the flat of an ice cube, or the edge. Use the flat on the broad areas of the body (like the thigh) and the edge of the fine-grained sensation areas of the body (fingertips and lips and arches of the feet).

Then suck.

Or stretch.

Or massage.

The skin.

The lack of access to pain sensation and light touch will allow pressure and stretch to feel more intense.

# 49. turn off nociception (part 4)

Want another way to minimize pain sensation, so you can get really intense in your stimulation without hurting your partner?

This one is actually my favorite:

Love.

Feeling supremely safe, affectionate, cared for, romanced, and adored changes your partner's brain chemistry so that their sensitivity to pain is vastly reduced.

Talk to them about your love for them. Feed them melty chocolate, sucked off your fingers. Touch their face, hands, feet, and scalp. Make lots of eye contact, deep, genuine, vulnerable. Smile at each other. These are attachment behaviors and they'll shift your partner is a brain state with a maximized threshold for pain awareness.

You can share really, really intense sensations in the context of profound trust and love.

# 50. tiny points of sensation

I've mentioned the nerve endings in the surface of the skin that responding to changes in light touch.

The other nerve endings in the surface of the skin are Merkel's discs which are... well, they're the ones that let a person read Braille. They are finely-tuned, highly sensitive especially to tiny POINTS of sensation.

Tiny. Points. Of sensation.

The hands, feet, lips, and face are especially sensitive to this kind of sensation.

Always get permission before using any kind of tool on your partner – and you'll need a tool for this.

“Stay still. I want to try something. It's a little risky. Tell me if I hurt you. Ready?”

# 51. what smells mean

Sex play is really all about **context**, right? The accumulated experience of our lives

So think about the aromas of life and what they mean for your partner:

The smell of dinner cooking when they get home.

The smell of chlorine at the pool or the hot tub.

The smell of cocoa after playing in the snow.

The smell of laundry, or the smell of the steam that rises from a dishwasher.

Think about the smells your partner might associate with feeling loved. Create an environment rich with those smells.