



Have you got sex on the brain? Well, you're certainly not alone

Have you been thinking about sex today? You don't have to answer that, but chances are that the answer is: Yes, you have. Repeatedly.

The amount of time we humans spend thinking about sex is difficult to document. But it's safe to say that we think about sex a lot more than we admit. Not since "Don't ask, don't tell," became a military policy for homosexuals has there been such blatant hypocrisy.

The Judeo-Christian sense of guilt attached to sexual matters is behind our duplicity. Nothing touches us emotionally so much as sexuality; nothing so influences our lives. Yet, our sexual fantasies are rarely revealed, not even to our closest friends.

The attention we give to sex and sexuality has many variables: our age, our gender, whether we're getting any and, if we are, whether we're enjoying it.

According to research reported on the web by Mental Health Net, over half of all men think about sex once or more during the day, 20% of women do. Male college students have sexual thoughts over seven times a day, college women over four times a day. Over half of these thoughts are externally triggered. About 85% of men and 70% of women fantasize when they masturbate. And about 25% of us feel quite guilty about some of our sexual thoughts. These numbers seem low to me.

Anything on which you focus is magnified in your consciousness. Put thought toward something and you draw it into your life. Entertain sexual thoughts and you are sure to feel more sexually alive, more responsive, more attractive. Sexual thoughts help us to overcome sexual fears and provide a rehearsal for a real encounter.

The more you think about something, the more you want it and the less you are able to concentrate on other things. This is why coaches, teachers, and spiritual advisors sometimes discourage their charges from any kind of sexual activity, lest it detract from their athletic, academic, or devotional aspirations.

Taken to an extreme, fixation on sex can be an unhealthy addiction. If thoughts become obsessions that could influence your behavior, there is potential danger and you should seek treatment.

Keeping your mind off sex is hard, but finding stimulants for the libido is easy. A two-year study by Alexa Research, a web traffic measurement service, revealed that “sex” was the most popular search term. People want “sex” more than

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they want “games,” “music,” “travel,” “jokes,” “cars,” “jobs,” “weather,” and “health” combined. “Porn” (along with “porno” and “pornography”) was the fourth most popular search term. “Nude” (and “nudes”), “XXX,” “Playboy” and “erotic stories” (and “erotica”) were also among the top twenty.

“When men think about sex, they do so in a fairly innocent, harmless way,” says my friend Hank. “Rarely do I find myself harboring explicit, porno-movie style thoughts about the woman standing next to me in the bus queue. I’m more likely to think, ‘Mmm, nice bum,’ invent a mental image of what it would look like in the flesh, and then return to reading my paper.”

“As a single guy,” Brian told me, ‘instead of having to find a date, go out, and spend a lot of money—without any guarantee of scoring—it’s easier for me to just stay home on a Saturday night. I’ve got a good collection of pornographic pictures and they provide good company with no risk of STD.’”

My girlfriend Katya told me about a sexual fantasy that I liked so much, I’ve started to have it myself. “I like to remember that everyone is a unique, human soul with the need for love and the ability to show love,” she says. “So I look at a person’s façade and try to envision what he or she might look like while being kissed or exchanging a squeeze with someone they love. I imagine them in orgasm. I picture their mouth, eyes, and their veins. I do this even with people I think of as ugly, and they become beautiful. People’s personalities reveal themselves when I think of them: sweaty, yearning, delighted, glowing with passion, deeply engaged....”

Some daydreams are about actions one would like to experience, some are not. Most of us do not consider the thought as morally equivalent to the deed. Sexologists Masters, Johnson,

and Kolodny write that having kinky sexual fantasies does *not* necessarily mean you want to actually engage in the same sexual acts (e.g. no one wants to be raped).

The researchers found that the common sexual fantasies of men and women are similar, except that women may imagine being in more romantic situations while men focus on body parts. Men are prone to imagine that they are doing something to the woman (dominating), while women imagine being done to (submitting). It is common for men and women to imagine doing something out of the ordinary or taboo, such as watching others having sex, forcing someone or being forced, receiving oral sex in a church. We like to imagine being desirable. We seek novelty. Especially during masturbation but also during intercourse, it is common to imagine having sex with someone other than our real life partner: a previous lover, a neighbor, a teacher, a celebrity, etc. (It may not be a good idea to disclose those fantasies.)

One thing's for sure, most of us spend a hell of a lot more time thinking about sex than having it.