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More Important Than Love

By Margaret Paul, Ph.D.

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More Important Than Love

By Margaret Paul, Ph.D.

"I just want to feel loved," complained Angie. "Is that too much to ask? I want to be able to count on Richard in bed. I'm tired of feeling like I don't count!"

Angie and her husband, Richard, were caught in a power struggle that was having a very negative affect on their sex life. Most of the time, as soon as they started to have intercourse, Richard would ejaculate, leaving Angie angry and frustrated. The more upset Angie got, the more trouble Richard was having sexually. They started counseling with me due to this issue.

"Richard," I asked, "Have you had problems with premature ejaculation in other relationships before you got married?"

"Yes," he answered. "Sometimes they would start off okay, but eventually they always ended up this way. I've tried lots of different things but nothing has worked. I just don't know what the problem is."

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As I got to know Angie and Richard, it became apparent to me that they were caught in a control–resist system, and that it was this system that was affecting their sex life. It was the same system that had negatively affected their sex lives in previous relationships.

Angie had learned early in her life, from both of her parents, to protect herself from pain with anger and righteousness. When things didn't go her way or when she felt rejected, she would get hard, bristly, blaming, and parental. At those moments, having control over getting love and avoiding pain was more important to her than being loving to herself and others. Angie had no idea how to take loving care of herself in the face of feeling rejected.

Richard learned early in his life from his experiences with his parents that not being controlled was more important than being loving to himself or others. He learned to go into various forms of resistance

to feel safe from being controlled by others, including not doing well in school and not taking care of his health. For Richard, premature ejaculation was another form of covert resistance. It's as if his body was saying, "I don't want to be controlled so I need to get out of here as soon as I can." In addition, he was covertly saying to Angie, and perhaps women in general, "I'll show you that you can't control me." Richard had no idea how to take loving care of himself in the face of feeling engulfed, so the wounded part of him would revert to what he learned as a child – resistance.

While Angie was not causing Richard to resist and Richard was not causing Angie to get angry and judgmental, they were each reacting to the other's learned protections with their own learned protections. Either one could shift the system by learning to take care of themselves when their fears of rejection and engulfment surfaced.

For example, Angie can practice tuning into her feelings of rejection and reassuring herself that Richard's behavior is coming from his fear of engulfment and is not a personal rejection of her. She can practice moving into compassion for herself and Richard, rather than going immediately into judgment.

Richard can practice speaking his truth and standing up for himself when Angie is angry and blaming, rather than going into automatic resistance. He can let Angie know that he is not available to being treated this way, and at the same time stay open to caring about her feelings and understanding that his resistant behavior is painful to her.

While the power struggle is showing up in the sexual arena, it is actually taking place in the whole relationship. Often the sexual relationship is a barometer of what is happening in the rest of the relationship. With Angie and Richard, the control and resistant behavior is most apparent in their sexual relationship. Sexuality is a vulnerable area, and it is easy to feel rejected in the sexual arena. Because of this vulnerability, it is in this area that Angie is most controlling. It is in this arena where she feels most rejected when Richard is not fully present or prematurely ejaculates. Richard, on the other hand, is most frightened of being controlled in the sexual arena. Being told what to do and how he should perform sets off all his fears of engulfment. The anxiety he feels over performance as well as the anger over Angie's attempts to control him combine to make him too tense to be fully present. Without being present with his love for Angie, his body resists lovemaking.

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Instead of working on sex, Angie and Richard are each working on their individual participation in the control–resist system. Each are practicing staying open to honesty and caring and personal responsibility for their own feelings rather than just controlling and resisting control. As a result, their sex life is slowly improving.

Margaret Paul, Ph.D. is the best–selling author and co–author of eight books, including "Do I Have To Give Up Me To Be Loved By You?", "Do I Have To Give Up Me To Be Loved By My Kids?", "Healing Your Aloneness", "Inner Bonding", and "Do I Have To Give Up Me To Be Loved By God?" Visit her web site for a FREE Inner Bonding course: <http://www.innerbonding.com> or <mailto:margaret@innerbonding.com>

Love is Good!

By Frances Evelyn Mison

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Love is Good!
But is it Blind?
Will Love visit Us?
Or will it Blow away?
I'm so fed up of looking!
For Love!
Do you feel that way?
Shall we say for Today
Though!
That Love is Good!
The Sadness has Passed at Last!
With this New Love
that we have.
So Shall we say
Just for Today.
That Love is Good!

I am a new author and poet. I would love to make writing my career, and actually receive some money, for doing what I love to do—"Write"



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