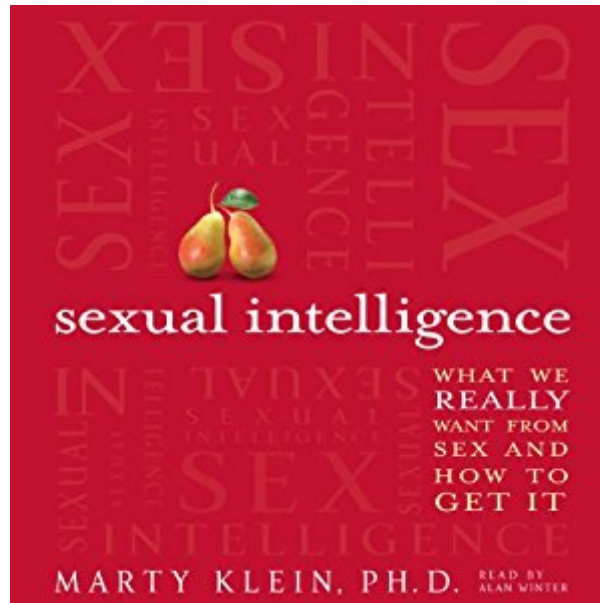


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# Sexual Intelligence: What We Really Want From Sex - And How To Get It



## Synopsis

In *Sexual Intelligence*, Dr. Marty Klein shows how our ideas about sex - and ourselves - are more important than a perfect body or exotic techniques. With many engaging examples from his thirty-year private practice, Marty provides a robust, practical perspective that makes it impossible for people to fail at sex - because they don't aim for success.

## Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 7 hours and 35 minutes

Program Type: Audiobook

Version: Unabridged

Publisher: HarperAudio

Audible.com Release Date: June 18, 2013

Whispersync for Voice: Ready

Language: English

ASIN: B00CRKNAZ8

Best Sellers Rank: #23 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Health, Mind & Body > Sexuality #210 in Books > Medical Books > Psychology > Sexuality #266 in Books > Health, Fitness & Dieting > Sexual Health > General

## Customer Reviews

*Sexual Intelligence* is a really easy book to read. Klein's information is very straightforward and quite accessible. But that doesn't mean you'll get through it all in one sitting, because you'll find yourself putting it down and thinking a lot about a story, or a suggestion, or an example. Odds are that you'll find yourself reflected back from the page somewhere along the way, but don't let that scare you. Klein's compassion is so clear that it becomes more of a revelation than a threat. In addition to offering lots of great information about each of the components of *Sexual Intelligence*, Klein also discusses some of the common obstacles to developing it, how to respond to the sexual effects health issues & aging, and letting go of the idea of sexual success or failure. I really do wish I'd had this book when I was younger, if only because it would have helped me respond to some of the difficulties that I faced. But no matter where you are on your life's path, if you want to get the most out of sex and relationships, there's something here for you. I don't think that this book will replace the amazing how-to books and movies that are available because even with *Sexual Intelligence*, people still need to learn how to explore and enjoy the many kinds of sexual pleasure that are

available to them. And I think that it offers a solid starting point for figuring out how to get the most out of sex and our relationships. So I'm giving this book a big thumbs up!

I picked up a copy of this book after reading a review which suggested that it could help me cope with the effects of aging on a satisfying sex life. My wife and I, both in our late 50s, read the book to each other, and it provided a good springboard for some helpful conversations. We found that Dr. Klein really does have some worthwhile insight into our concerns, and in fact, his insight covers a wider range of 'troublesome' situations. His central, core insight, roughly paraphrased, is, "Relax and enjoy the sex you have, with your actual body, and your actual partner, with her/his actual body. Stop worrying about what's 'normal', or whether you and/or your partner are 'good enough', and just enjoy the sex that the two of you actually have together." Pretty simple, really, but definitely in the category of 'easier said than done'. So, yes, certainly - this is a helpful book, written with sympathy and wit. That said, it contains a perplexing number of befuddling head-scratchers. For one, he perpetuates the bizarrely reductive caricature (distressingly common among otherwise-highly-trained medical professionals) of the Sympto-Thermal Method of Natural Family Planning as "marking days off the calendar" and "The Rhythm Method". I could recommend that he audit an NFP class, to come up-to-speed on the current state of the art. In a related vein, he tells us that contraception is "a special part of Sexual Intelligence", because "to reduce . . . anxiety, we have to make sex essentially harmless and meaningless." Huh?? That just seems incredibly lame. Hooray for meaningless sex! Really?? Our experience has always been that participating in the 'transcendence' of sex (its 'cosmic meaning', if you will) has made it immeasurably richer, not anxiety-provoking. And over the three-plus decades of our marriage, my wife and I have had lots and lots of really satisfying (and occasionally mind-blowing) sex, without contraception. In fact, the generation of a new human being literally from the 'stuff' of the two of us, is one of the most powerfully erotic experiences we've known. Your mileage may vary, I suppose. . . In the further context of 'sex is better if it's meaningless', he delivers, on page 158, an odd mini-rant about 'organized religion', 'American Christianity', and others who "claim to know what sex 'means' or what its 'purpose' is", so they can 'control you'. Huh?? I have to say, if 'American Christians' are really trying to 'control' other folks' sex lives, it ain't working very well. And aside from Dr. Klein's negative stereotyping and imputation of nefarious motives to his philosophical adversaries, one wonders what he makes of the various well-known surveys indicating that religiously-committed married couples (i.e., people who subscribe to notions like 'meaning' and 'purpose' and 'commitment') report the highest levels of sexual satisfaction. To sum up - I thought this was a

helpful book, and we have recommended it to friends. It contains some helpful insights. But more often than I liked, it left me scratching my head, saying "Huh??"

My partner and I greeted this book with great anticipation, reading it aloud to each other, as we're both focused on what makes for a solid, later-in-life relationship. We were disappointed. We get Dr. Klein's point that striving to be "normal" in sex assures that one performs sex (or doesn't) rather than enjoys love making. But he repeats this theme over and over to the exclusion of anything new. For us, the book was not complex enough for our liking. We kept asking ourselves, "Who is he writing for?" Sexual Intelligence did not take us inside the bedroom into the minds and hearts of those who love and seek to be happy. The author speaks of "sexual intelligence" but where is the emotional intelligence of the stuck places of his case studies? How does it feel to want intimacy but be fearful of it? What is it like to struggle with sex and aging, or sex and pregnancy? For example, Klein offers up the case of a young pregnant woman who sexually withdraws from her husband. In place of the normal anxiety that occurs during this period (which we know from our own past lives), the young pregnant woman comes off, not as understandably anxious about sex, but as spoiled and immature. How are we to relate? Frankly, we had trouble attaching emotionally to the book. While we agree with the call for "sexual intelligence" (especially as one matures in life), we didn't feel drawn in to a deeper understanding (and appreciation) of what it means to be a sexual being.

Interesting and Excellent. There may be well satisfied and adjusted, and intelligent people who have ultimate sexual practice, but my guess is there are many who wish it was easier to do and communicate. Relaxing into great sex as an older man with medical problems who can talk about anything without being upset with a partner who is happy and can do the same is a beautiful concept. Sex changes as life goes on, but it can always be beautiful if we are free to talk about it when a problem arises and also not talk about it if there is no need. We always seem to have something lurking in the background in our subconscious or cultural conditioning. Once we understand ourselves and each other, communication is good at any level, sexual or otherwise. It requires listening, patience, intelligence, and true compassion. That is what the world needs now. This book is about all of the above, and I thoroughly enjoyed it.

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