

Non Genital Sensate Focus

This exercise is called 'sensate focus' because the aim is to focus on the sensations that are produced by touching and being touched by your partner. It is important that you both agree that this exercise should not lead to sex as it is more about intimacy, and you both need to feel 'safe' enough to relax and enjoy it without any expectations.

Make sure that you allow enough time to do this exercise without being rushed or interrupted. Set the scene for example dimmed lighting and perhaps both have a warm bath or shower before you begin.

You can wear as many or as few clothes as you wish. The important thing is that you feel comfortable.

This exercise is called non genital, because it is not about genital stimulation but focuses on other 'safe' areas of the body. All genital areas and breasts are therefore no-go areas.

If you wish you can use massage oils but remember that this is about touching and not massage. Massage tends to be something that one person does to another and this is supposed to be something that you do together.

Partner A starts by touching B's neck, thinking about what the skin feels like - the different textures etc. Partner B should feed back how this feels, perhaps using 'hot' and 'cold' so that A learns what feels good to their partner. After a few minutes swap around so that B touches A's neck.

Then move onto another area of the body, for example arms, legs, back or face etc, taking it in turns and continuing to feedback on how it feels.

This sounds like a really easy exercise to do, but many couples find it difficult for a variety of reasons. Do not worry if it feels a bit contrived and artificial. After a few times it will feel more relaxed and enjoyable. Some couples find that the less serious you are when doing it the better.

It is supposed to be enjoyable rather than a task, so enjoy it.