



**When He's in the mood. You're not. You're feeling hot, He's not. Mismatched libidos...**

**are one of the biggest issues couples face in their sex lives.**

"The thing is, I'm always the one making the moves...", a man at a dinner party whispered to me recently. "I just wish she would even *occasionally* show she wanted to have sex with me". After encouraging him to speak to his, thankfully absent, wife about how he feels so they can move forward to a better place in their marriage, he reminded me of two important things. Firstly: To make a mental note to tell my mates not to introduce me as a sex therapist. And secondly, how difficult it is when couples are faced with the problem of wrestling their mismatched libidos.

What's not surprising is the anxiety that results by having different sex drives. I've often heard couples say how alone they feel. They become afraid to speak to their partner about it. They even struggle to tell their best friend. After all, this isn't exactly something that can be easily discussed over a latte. A whole load of emotional baggage accompanies how hot, or not, you're feeling. If you're the one who usually says no to sex, you can feel guilty, pressurized or inadequate. And if you're the one longing for some action, you can *also* feel guilty... for pressurizing your partner. On top of this, you can feel rejected. Which makes you sad. And depending on the strength of your relationship, this can lead to resentment. Sometimes a feeling of deep anger.

If you're reading this and have absolutely no idea what I'm talking about, celebrate because you one of the few lucky couples who are sexually in-sync. Either that, or you're in a new relationship, where sex flows as easily as your credit card used to pre crunch. The harsh reality is that after we all enjoy *o.d-ing* on the surge of sex and love hormones for the first few months of a relationship, our minds and bodies return to planet earth. They have to. Imagine keeping up those intense levels of being so infatuated with your new lover. You'd be fired from your work for incompetency. Except you wouldn't care. Because you'd be so drunk in love! As reality seeps back into our lives is exactly when most couples are confronted with the sexual situation they need to deal with. And having different cravings for sex, means compromising. Often without support. And that's hard to do.

There are so many reasons why you have a higher or lower libido than your lover. Pregnancy, diet, mood, exercise, prescription drugs, tiredness and stress all play their part. As does your upbringing. Then there's also society, which thankfully, is finally getting to grips with the reality of women *wanting* and *enjoying* sex. And don't forget this, which I believe to be the biggest factor in why someone is hot versus not: our overwhelming individual testosterone levels. They vary hugely, from person to person, and day to day. But compare the levels between genders and then you'll see that men's testosterone levels don't make them from Mars.. Pluto seems far more appropriate. Did you know that men have around twenty times more of this sex drug? And you can often double that amount again in the mornings. Just sharing this fact can help couples accept their libido difference. After acceptance, you can start to work with how you as individuals are different.

So what can you do to get in-sync with each other's libidos? First, recognise that you're in a pretty normal situation. The fact that you have different desires doesn't have to be a problem if you manage it well. Most importantly, keep talking, keep listening, and keep making an effort to



understand the other person's point of view. Do this, and you both can enjoy the sex life you deserve.

**Here's some homework to get you started if your low sex drive is getting you down....**

1. **Make a date for sex with your partner.** Whilst higher desire partners can rely on regular sexual urges which they act upon to get aroused, as a lower desire person, you don't have the same level of incentive for sex. But that's ok. Your circuit probably works the other way round. Which means once you have been aroused, your desire kicks in. Some simple forward planning (with your lover slowly arousing you, perhaps with a naked massage) will allow you both to enjoy sex more often.
2. **What turns you on?** Because you can't rely on the spontaneity of sexy thoughts and fantasies, knowing what gets you in the mood is really important. Your sexual desire is yours (not your partner's responsibility) to manage. So is it getting dressed up for a night out? Perhaps going away for a night? After tennis? After a romantic movie? Whatever it is that helps you feel sexy, use it to get yourself in the frame of mind for loving.
3. **Take a back seat.** Even if you don't have the want for sex as often as your partner, you can still be part of their sex life, by playing a less direct role. For example, if they are enjoying solo sex, make an input. Any small contribution from you, from stroking their genitals to whispering in their ear can make a big difference in helping you stay connected as lovers.