

My Year of New Sensations

What happened when author Isabel Losada dedicated a whole year to exploring the intersection between sex and happiness?

Interview | Kathryn Wheeler



From an early age, writer Isabel Losada was interested in everything that could nourish her mentally, physically, and spiritually. After publishing several books exploring spirituality and the pursuit of happiness, she received a challenge from a friend: “If you’ve always been interested in happiness, how is it you’ve never written about sex?” Struck by the poignancy of this question, Isabel dedicated an entire year to studying the relationship between sexuality and happiness. From exploring couples retreats to examining the relationship between sex and religion, here’s what she learnt, in her own words:

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”

On sex myths

There are two big lies out there. Firstly, the myth that sex should just happen naturally. A man should know how to pleasure a woman and a woman should be able to be 100% pleased, and if she’s not, she’s broken in some way.

The second myth, created by the porn industry, is that the man has to be harder, firmer, longer. However he is, he isn’t enough. Women are told they have to be orgasmic during penetrative sex and thrash around in pleasure.

The sexual act itself, which should be about two people’s bodies coming together for mutual pleasure and comfort, has become a performance in which you either fail or succeed. These two myths create enormous misery.

On couples retreats

What most couples do when they’ve been together for some time, and lost the spark they used to have, is have an affair. Or, post *Fifty Shades of Grey*, they think they have to suddenly develop an interest in being whipped, blindfolded and tied up. This is tragic.

Couples workshops are for everyone, and they are beautiful. When I went, there was a very young couple. The woman was pregnant and they wanted to make sure their sex life wasn’t lost while she was pregnant. On the other hand, there was a couple in their 60s who wanted to make sure they didn’t become celibate in their old age.

On women-only sexuality retreats

As women, we want to liberate our fellow sisters from whatever is holding them back. We’re all committed to each other’s progress. One of the exercises at the retreat was to stand in front of other women and say how you feel about your body. This is an enormous challenge, no matter what your body type is.

But when you see a woman who can stand naked and say, “I love my stomach because it represents my children,” you just want to applaud her. Women are there for you 100% and the level of support is amazing.

On orgasmic meditation

I discovered that there are a lot of people doing work on women’s pleasure. “OMing”, which is short for orgasmic meditation, is midway between sex and meditation. It’s a practice done outside the bedroom, separated from your normal sexual space, where the man learns how to stroke a woman’s clitoris in a very precise way, using a technique I describe in my book. He is fully clothed and so he can give 100% of his attention to her. The idea behind this process is not to get the woman to climax, but rather to explore the processes of her body.



On sex and spirituality

In the “mind, spirit, body” movement, the body has become addressed almost exclusively in terms of yoga, diet and exercise, and on how we dress. Very few people actually look at sexuality seriously, and yet it’s a huge component in our mental and physical wellbeing.

In the centre of most people’s lives is a relationship, and at the centre of that, is a bedroom. If what happens there is good and positive, then that makes a huge contribution to our wellbeing. I seek to have an experience, as a human being, that is complete, and that includes my body.

My final thoughts

At the start of the year, my partner would joke that he knew everything about sex already, and by the end he said he now knows a little less. We went through all kinds of experiences together, and the whole year was very fun. If I could give one piece of advice, it would be to make sex a priority. Decide to be an expert, learn about it, and give it time and energy. 🌈



Isabel Losada is the author of ‘Sensations: Adventures in Sex, Love and Laughter’. Watkins £9.99