

is the more passionate of the two. In such a state of affairs, each should seek to develop a happy medium. The more strenuous partner should seek to restrain eagerness; the colder one should seek to manifest more interest.

When intercourse is too frequent, nervousness, lack of interest, peevishness, and even outbursts of anger may develop.

There are two main purposes of intercourse. The more important is the begetting of children and creation of a family. But to regard this as the only legitimate purpose is now generally considered a distorted and narrow viewpoint, based on ancient taboos, misguided teaching, or an unclean attitude toward sex. In the ancient world when tribes were almost constantly engaged in warfare, the very existence of a tribe might depend upon the number of male children it could produce to develop as warriors. Hence a taboo on intercourse except for the purpose of procreation developed, with severe punishments for violations. But to limit legitimate intercourse today to such a purpose is not only to take a great deal of joy out of marriage, but prolongs a superstition as foolish in its way as the killing of girl babies among tribes where only warriors were wanted. The second purpose, then is the enjoyment of life and love.

Some people are lacking in sex desire, partly on account of physical deformity and partly because of fear. Such persons should not marry. If they do marry they should select a mate with a similar attitude toward sex. Those who take continence as an ideal and deny themselves the pleasures of the marriage bed in order to serve humanity in a broader capacity, should follow a similar rule. No person with strong sex impulses should take vows of celibacy, and then lightly break them. It is better to marry than to burn, said the Apostle Paul.

One of the richest enjoyments of life is fulfillment of the love instinct in successful mating. Normal sex relations are nothing to be ashamed of. To speak of intercourse as beastly is to insult the beasts. To talk of "animal passions" is a slur on the animal kingdom. The full enjoyment of the climax of sex emotions is the right and privilege of every normal human being.

Sex plays an important role in life from fifteen to forty-five years of age or more. There is surely no sin in being happy under the right circumstances. Man is above the animals, who only enjoy sexual relations at certain periods, the mating seasons. Human beings (except perhaps Eskimo women) have no regular mating seasons, but the instinct for love is more or less continuous. A man and woman who truly love each other are mates for life. Their love grows richer through the experiences of the years. Out of their sex life and along with it, develops a spiritual affinity which makes them truly man and wife, and through which the two become as one. They share their joys and problems and depend upon one another for many things. They may even be miserable when they are separated any length of time. If one is untrue to the other and goes off with a different mate, the other suffers much and may even wish to die.

The first intercourse is sometimes painful, and usually difficult for the bride. This is because of the hymen or partial membranous covering over the vagina. All women do not have it when fully matured, and it varies in thickness and size. The presence or absence of the hymen is no test of virginity. Many virgins are without it, and cases have been known of prostitutes who still possess a hymen. A man who finds easy access to his wife's vagina on the first night is a fool if he suspects her virtue. On the other hand, where a strong hymen exists it should be broken gently and gradually and with as little pain to the woman as possible. It may take several acts of intercourse to do this. Gentle pressure usually accomplishes it. A forceful entrance is a form of rape, and may well turn a bride against her husband. In a few cases, access is so difficult as to call for a slight surgical operation for the woman.

Many young married couples, mistakenly regard a honeymoon as a time to let themselves go, and indulge in an orgy of licentiousness. Disgust, horror, and a mutual antipathy may well result. The only cure for such overindulgence is rest. But better yet is the wise restraint and consideration in avoiding extremes.