

MASTURBATION

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Hi! Greetings and best wishes from one masturbator to another. I assume you masturbate because over 95 percent of men and 2/3 or more of women avail themselves of this marvelous sexual outlet.<sup>1</sup> Infants masturbate, children masturbate, adults masturbate, Americans and Europeans masturbate, people in primitive as well as advanced societies masturbate, and yes, even Chinese Communists masturbate. There are more people masturbating than wearing clothes. And the more educated they are, the more likely they are to participate.

So what's the hang-up? Why are we afraid to admit it, or discuss it even among our closest friends? Why do we feel guilty and ashamed and wish we had never begun to amuse ourselves sexually? Why do parents, for the most part, shame children away from their own sex organs, and warn them against playing with themselves?"

The answer is ignorance. It is traditional, particularly in our society, to think of sex as ugly and disgusting, and even as an heinous crime (the way it is, for the most part in the state of Indiana). Sex gets down to the nitty-gritty. Sex is basic. It gives rise to all sorts of desires and fantasies. It lets you relate to another being on a deep gut level. It breaks down barriers between you and someone else. During orgasm restraint is impossible and for a while you trip out in your own fantasies, and the universe is what you make of it.

Obviously anything which gives so much pleasure and allows so much freedom must be evil, and therefore eliminated, or controlled to the point where it loses its beauty and pleasure, and becomes a meaningless act, filled with shame and loathing, and decorated with such terms as "deviate", "abuse", and (God forbid) "sin". (God always disapproves of what parents disapprove of and sanctions what parents sanction. But since even they admit to "sin", it is apparent that they cannot follow their own rules, nor refrain from indulging in their taboos.)

Intercourse is relatively easy to prevent (or so people thought). Unwanted pregnancy and venereal disease were and still are two very real considerations in intercourse, and society has used them as lethal bullets. So much so that people would rather die of VD than to admit to having physically loved someone.



But masturbation is different. Physically, it involves no one but yourself, and it is usually done in private, away from nousey parents, unsuspecting friends, and the punitive society. No one can become pregnant from it, and since there is no physical contact you cannot get VD from it. The only way they can get to you is through saturation bombardment of half truths, myths, and outright lies. We must be so thoroughly afraid and ashamed of masturbation that there will be no way "temptation" will be able to overcome our fears and cause us to "abuse ourselves". So we are told that masturbation causes insanity (so 90% of the world is crazy.), acne (it's not the chocolate bars), warts (people stopped believing the toad story), and even VD (anyone knows that orgasm created deadly bacteria). We are told and shamed into believing that it is an infantile or immature habit, and that mature, well-adjusted people grow out of it. We are to believe that it causes sex crimes and juvenile delinquency, and that children of people who masturbate will be sick and anemic. It seems that all the ills in the world from birth defects to senility have been attributed to masturbation. And after all these intimidations, just to be sure, they remove the doors from toilet stalls, so you can't hide in there and so that your friends can serve as an unwitting police force, and, by their very presence, prevent you from having fun. Many luckless people have had forced castrations or clitoridectomies because Mother and Dad and the concerned rulers thought it would be best to prevent a person from falling into temptation.

But masturbation is a natural sex outlet. It is a normal form of sexual behavior, and not any more aberrant or deviant than blinking when your eye feels irritated. It affords a great deal of pleasure and is quite handy (no pun intended) when other sexual outlets are either not desired or not available. The deviated are those who would thwart the natural and suppress masturbation, or impose guilt on people who do it, and give them all sorts of psychosexual hangups.

One of these ignorant and mislead individuals was an 18th century Swiss physician by the name of Samuel Auguste Andre David Tissot. As a physician he was a very respected individual, and was apparently quite skillful. But with regard to many things, including sex, he was a bird brain. This might be excused because of the times during which he lived but where knowledge ends, superstition and prejudice begins. Tissot's name gave credence to all sorts of weird and almost paranoid ideas about masturbation. Unfortunately, many of his ideas on the matter have persisted for over 300 years. (Your parents told you not to masturbate because it was evil, degenerate, and and/or dangerous. They told you this because that is what their parents taught them, etc.) No one really sought to disprove Tissot's assumptions because sex was, and, to some



extent, still is, dirty and sinful anyway, and it made good sense to repress it. Tissot's ideas, therefore, were welcome to their messed up minds.

Tissot believed as the ancient Greeks did, that there ran through the body a "life fluid". This "life fluid" flowed through the vital parts such as the eyes, kidneys, brain, heart, spine, etc. The fluid (not to be confused with blood) was needed to maintain life and was to flow in an orderly, even, and moderate manner in keeping with the Greeks' idea of classic moderation. Semen, Tissot thought, was this life fluid in its purest form. During intercourse, he believed, there was an invisible torrent of vital breath flowing between the two people, which restored their vigor and compensated for any seed loss in the man. So you can imagine what he thought of masturbation! Without the return flow, a man permanently lost part of this vital life fluid. "The loss of loz, (semen) would weaken a person more than the loss of 2 1/2 pounds of blood", the good doctor asserted. From this indisputable premise he deduced that loss of semen caused, among other things, "simple gonorrhoea, dropsy, consumption, weakening of the digestive system, loss of appetite, excessive appetite (he had you both ways there), vomiting, and indigestion." It could also induce an "entire breakdown of the respiratory system, and a flagging of the nervous system." Some of the milder effects included "general lassitude accompanied by pallor and general debility, damage to the faculties and memory, and epilepsy!" (Orgasm, be believed, was an epileptic fit).

Women didn't get off the hook either. Even though loss of semen is impossible, in addition to all of the above, ii women were liable for "hysteria, incurable jaundice, stomach cramps (I bet you thought your period caused them), collapse of internal organs, ulceration of the womb", etc. You name it, masturbation caused it.

In the library of Edinburgh University in Scotland there is a less scholarly treatise called Onania, or (in case you didn't like that one) The Heinous Sin of Self-Pollution and All its Frightful Consequences, in Both Sexes Considered, London 1759; 16th ed. (You can see how popular it was). The author must have masturbated his soul away, for he remains anonymous. Besides VD, he also thought masturbation caused criminality, and deterioration of the brain. "The consequences are many and horrible both to body and soul." Masturbation stunts growth (just like coffee), and is the cause of many a phymosis and paraphymosis--"I shall not explain these terms any further, but it suffices that they are very painful and troublesome." If you wish to know what they are, try looking them up. On the other hand, you might have better luck creaming up your own definition.) Furthermore, masturbation, Mr. Anonymous asserts,



causes stanguries (painful emissions of urine, drop by drop- caused by spasmodic contractions of the bladder and uretha), priapisms (morbid and more or less persistant erections of the penis, especially when caused by disease and without sexual desire), gonorrhœas, thin and waterish seed, fainting fits and epilepsies, consumptions, loss of erection (remember the priapisms?), premature ejaculation, and infertility. From the wretches who survive will come children so sick and weakly (from the "thin seed" I presume) that they are a "misery to themselves, a dishonour to the human race, and a scandal to their parents." In addition to all of the foregoing, women masturbators suffer from leucorrhœa (a discharge from the vagina of a white yellowish or greenish white mucous resulting in hysteric fits, barrenness, and a "total ineptitude to the Act of Generation itself." WOW!!

In 1830, a Frenchman named Rozier decided that insanity ought to be included. (I guess he figured if you believed all the other stuff, you must be insane.) Shortly thereafter a refined gentleman named Fielding Blandford XIX (can you imagine 19 Blandfords fielding?) declared that masturbation had never really been investigated by competent people, and that very little had been written intelligently about it. It was time, he said to lay aside the ignorant myths which clouded the true nature of masturbation. He recognized that most people masturbate and decided that people who thought masturbation caused insanity were crazy. ("Otherwise in all our schools insanity would be an everyday occurrence") He said that the intimidations of Tissot et al were just that: an effort, and a not very scholarly one, to stop people from masturbating. "All threats are designed to stop people from masturbating. None succeeds." He said if people were accurately informed about masturbation they would stop of their own volition. Why would they stop? Because, according to the 19th Fielding Blandford, masturbation causes miscarriages, maternal death, divorce, nervous disorders, circulatory disorders, early aging, disturbance of equilibrium, all sorts of female ailments, and heart disease<sup>3</sup>.

There has been an effort on the part of the church leaders to attach a "sin" label to masturbation. Their shaky support comes mainly from Genesis 38:9, where Onan lets his seed fall on the ground, and is exterminated by God. (Hence, the word Onanism.) But, if you will research it, you will discover that Onan did not masturbate, but rather pulled out (i.e. coitus interruptus) instead of mating with his sister-in-law (brother's widow) as was the Hebrew custom to keep a lineage going. Another reference is in the New Testament where Paul warns against "self-abuse." But again "self-abuse" means abusing one's self, and masturbation does not abuse anything. The definition in dictionaries: as self-abuse reflects another ignorant attempt at suppression.

So where does that put us? With all these lies, superstitions and half-truths perpetrated on us? Anyone who has ever experienced orgasm knows the mind experiences a fantastic sensation (the beginnings of insanity?). We know how the heart beats very hard and fast (could this cause a heart attack?) and how sweaty (cause of acne?) and exhausted we are afterward (a forewarning of physical debility?). And when men do it often, the semen indeed does appear more watery, and one begins to question one's fertility. Is there only a limited supply? If I use it up now will I have any left to give if we want children? Is the blood drained to manufacture the semen, and if so, how much? Will I have a miscarriage, or a deformed child? Will a physician know I've masturbated if he should examine me?



Why do I feel so guilty if this is so natural?

First of all forget everything you have ever heard about masturbation, even in this article. Think instead of "normal" coitus. Is there anything wrong with it? Is it not pleasurable for both sexes? Is there any harm in it, physically or spiritually? If you believe purely in physical evolution, sexual intercourse appears to be the highest state of reproductive process and sexual expression. If you believe in specific creation by a God or gods, was not the sex arrangement also created by the same force which created the rest of you? So it really cannot be anything bad. Nothing different happens during masturbation, except that usually one's hands to the stimulating of one's genitals rather than the penis or vaginal muscles. An important exception is that a person is able to control the event more when masturbating than when having coitus. Therefore, a stronger sensation is possible, though not necessarily a more satisfying one. Masturbation is not only harmless, it is also quite beneficial for both men and women. Masturbation, like intercourse, provides relief from sexual tensions. As sexual desires build and are unable to be satisfied, one may become nervous and restless, unable to operate efficiently. Masturbation relieves these tensions. If you cannot get to sleep some night due to simple nervous tension, masturbate. The total exhaustion you experience after you climax can easily lead to safe, restful sleep, with no drug hangover in the morning. Masturbation can be especially helpful in assuring satisfaction for both partners. Either partner may be insufficiently stimulated in coitus and so masturbation may be necessary to bring that partner to orgasm. While orgasm certainly is not the most important thing in intercourse, the release of sexual tension built up by the sexual excitement of love-making is important for physical--emotional comfort. Also it is generally the case that one partner wants more sexual release through orgasm than does the other partner. Often the woman wants more orgasms than the man does and the man can't satisfy her coitally. Manual stimulation of the partner who desires it is the perfect solution. Masturbation is also helpful in relations with your lover or lovers. If for some reason you and your partner do not actually have intercourse, a very satisfying experience can be had by touching, carressing, and otherwise involving yourself with your partner's genitals to the point of orgasms for you both.

In women, especially, masturbation, can be very helpful in achieving a highly satisfying sex life. Studies show that women who masturbate will tend to have an easier time adjusting to coital pleasures than those who do not. Many women have found if they masturbate at the onset of menstruation, the flow is increased and cramp and associated backaches disappear or are greatly reduced. But even without these physical benefits, masturbation gives and enormous amount of pleasure, and is completely justifiable from that point alone.

All right, So you've admitted to yourself that you like to masturbate, or if you don't masturbate that at least you'd like to try. So how do you do it? In women, the clitoris is usually the most sexually sensitive area. It is a small lump of tissue located forward to the vaginal opening. You may not be able to feel it before you become excited, but with excitement it becomes enlarged. To masturbate women usually rub the clitoris and/or the surrounding area with their fingers, hands or any other relatively smooth object. The best rhythm and pressure to use and length of time needed for adequate stimulation varies. Don't just try rubbing



for a couple of minutes and give up--keep going as long as it feels good. The tip of the clitoris is so sensitive that it hurts to touch it so women usually touch around it. Often women like to continue stimulation after an orgasm and so have another. With continual stimulation women can have several orgasms in quick succession. Another way to masturbate is with the warm water from a shower. Remove the shower head or adjust it so that the water comes out almost like it does from a faucet. Then lie down and place the genital area under the falling water. A few women have had orgasm by fantasizing. This is rare, but possible. Dildoes, penis substitutes, have been used in the past and are still used by some women today. Actually their use is more a result of the traditional male orientation of sex than of female physiology. It is generally easier for a woman to stimulate the clitoris directly than for her to use an artificial penis and stimulate it indirectly.

Men usually know how to masturbate because males are more encouraged to be sexual than are females. Also men are used to handling their penises (they have to when they urinate), whereas touching genitals is taboo for women. There is really only one basic method for men and that is simulating intercourse. A man usually wraps a hand around his penis and moves the hand away from him and back toward him. As with women the best rhythm and pressure as well as the length of time needed varies. Sometimes for some men the rim of the head is too sensitive to touch. Variations are using other objects such as bedshhets, overripe cantaloupe, etc.

It is up to you how you want to stimulate yourself. Don't be intimidated into a certain method. The criterion to use is: Does it feel good? Your way might seem strange to others, but if it gives you pleasure it is good. The Japanese women, for instance, used to insert five balls of different weights into their vaginas, which masturbated them as they walked.

Both men and women should not be concerned that masturbation builds calluses on their genitals, and therefore desensitizes them. Quite the opposite is true. The more they are used, the more sensitive they become, and the more pleasure they will give you. More good news? YOU CANNOT MASTURBATE TOO MUCH. You cannot overindulge. Your body won't let you. Sexual desire and arousal diminish if you masturbate or have intercourse a lot in a short period of time. If you force the issue, sex becomes very dissatisfying, and if you push it, the nerves refuse to cooperate and sexual excitement is not possible. What constitutes "a lot" and what period of time is "short" is entirely up to the individual, and even individuals vary from time to time. Some people want some sexual outlet six times a day--every day. Others might get arouses only once or twice a year. But at any rate, the aforementioned demise of sexual potential is temporary. In a day or two, or in just a few hours, vigor is fully restored and the nerves are in full service again, eager to be enjoyed.

In conclusion, masturbation is a natural, normal, and useful sex activity. It is safe, cheap, and is very much a part of a healthy and satisfying sex life. If you can enjoy coitus without physical harm, you can certainly enjoy masturbation. So have fun.



FEETNOTES

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