

Do We Have Less Sex Than Other Married Couples?

By B. J. Foster

A while back, I was having dinner with a group of friends. Most were married, but there were a handful of singles. Somehow the discussion turned to the frequency of married sex. The conversation was driven by the singles who were curious. How many times a week? How many times a month? They had heard of married couples not having sex and couldn't imagine it. In fact, they couldn't imagine anything less than once a day. Every married person laughed. The questions continued. I knew what they were after. Since each married person at the table had a strong marriage, they felt like we were a good measurement for what was "normal" and perhaps "healthy".

As we all looked at one another wondering who was going to answer them, I realized we were thinking the same thing. There was hesitancy to reveal for fear that maybe other couples have sex more and are happier. Maybe our sex life is a problem, and we should be having it more frequently. It certainly isn't as frequent as it used to be. Maybe that means our marriage is headed in a bad direction. Finally, I decided to say what I thought was true for most marriages or, at least, what was true of ours. I was a little surprised (and relieved) at how quickly the other married people agreed with me. I think most married couples struggle with this issue. So let's ask the question, "Do we have less sex than other married couples?" and when does it become a problem.

Is there a normal amount?

No. It depends on each individual couple. There may be an average amounts, but no "normal". I have seen surveys suggesting an average frequency of sex for married couples to be around a couple of times a month (once every 7-10 days). That doesn't mean that this is a number to aspire to or judge your marriage upon. What is normal and overwhelming are marriages with at least one partner who doesn't think they are doing it enough.

The key to a healthy sexual marriage is finding a frequency that works for both of you. It takes a sacrificial love for one another. Investment grows desire. One partner with a low sex drive may need to initiate, even when they don't feel like it. Interestingly, having sex regularly raises the level of testosterone which increases desire. It's like exercising. The more it's done, the higher the desire becomes to do it. On the other hand, the other partner may need to sacrifice their expectations and sexual needs. There has to be a meeting somewhere in the middle. All of this comes down to communication and to understanding. Talk and listen to one another. Seek to know each other, serve each other, and love before being loved.

When does it become a problem?

The problem occurs when couples resent one another and look out for themselves, rather than sacrificing. When a couple has sex once in a several month time frame, it may

indicate problems below the surface. The same surveys indicated that couples having more sex were more fulfilled in their marriages; however, it is difficult to determine what leads to what. Does having more sex alone lead to greater marriage fulfillment or is it vice versa? It's actually probably both working together. The couple willing to put the other first and invest in one another's needs before their own, physically and emotionally, will have a deeper level of satisfaction in their relationship