



## Overview

**"The Sex-Starved Marriage: Boosting Your Marriage Libido—A Couple's Guide"** by Michele Weiner-Davis is a practical and insightful book that addresses the challenges many couples face when there is a significant disparity in sexual desire within a marriage. Weiner-Davis, a well-known marriage therapist, explores the emotional and relational dynamics that lead to what she describes as a "sex-starved marriage," where one partner feels deprived of physical intimacy while the other may feel pressured or uninterested.

## Core Concepts

At the heart of *"The Sex-Starved Marriage"* is the idea that sexual intimacy is a crucial component of a healthy, fulfilling marriage. When one partner's sexual needs are consistently unmet, it can lead to feelings of rejection, frustration, and resentment, which can strain the overall relationship. Weiner-Davis argues that addressing these issues is essential not just for sexual satisfaction, but for maintaining a strong emotional connection between partners.

## Understanding Desire Discrepancies

One of the key issues the book tackles is the discrepancy in sexual desire between partners, which is a common problem in many marriages. Weiner-Davis explains that mismatched libidos are not uncommon, but they need to be addressed openly and compassionately. She provides insight into the psychological and emotional factors that contribute to these differences, helping couples understand why they may be experiencing a disconnect in their sexual relationship.

## Strategies for Reconnecting

*The Sex-Starved Marriage* offers practical strategies for both the higher-desire partner and the lower-desire partner to bridge the gap and rekindle their sexual relationship. For the higher-desire partner, Weiner-Davis emphasizes the importance of approaching the issue with sensitivity and understanding, rather than with frustration or anger. She encourages these partners to express their needs in a way that doesn't make their spouse feel guilty or inadequate.

For the lower-desire partner, Weiner-Davis suggests exploring the underlying reasons for their lack of interest in sex, which could range from stress and fatigue to deeper emotional issues. She provides actionable advice on how to increase sexual desire, including improving communication, addressing emotional barriers, and making time for intimacy.



## **The Role of Emotional Intimacy**

Weiner-Davis also highlights the close connection between emotional intimacy and sexual desire. She argues that a lack of emotional connection can often lead to a decline in sexual interest. By fostering better emotional communication and spending quality time together, couples can enhance both their emotional and physical intimacy.

## **Practical Exercises**

Throughout the book, Weiner-Davis includes exercises and conversation starters designed to help couples reconnect and address the issues contributing to their sex-starved marriage. These practical tools encourage couples to engage in honest discussions about their sexual relationship and take proactive steps to improve it.

## **Conclusion**

Overall, *"The Sex-Starved Marriage"* is a valuable resource for couples struggling with mismatched sexual desires. Michele Weiner-Davis offers a compassionate and practical approach to understanding and addressing these challenges, emphasizing that with effort and communication, couples can rekindle their sexual connection and strengthen their marriage. Whether you're the partner feeling deprived or the one with less desire, this book provides insights and strategies to help you navigate this common marital issue and rebuild intimacy in your relationship.



## **Blog:**

### **Reviving Intimacy: How to Overcome a Sex-Starved Marriage**

In many marriages, sexual desire doesn't always align perfectly between partners. While this is a common issue, it can lead to feelings of frustration, rejection, and emotional distance if left unaddressed. Michele Weiner-Davis's book, *"The Sex-Starved Marriage: Boosting Your Marriage Libido—A Couple's Guide,"* offers a compassionate and practical approach to understanding and overcoming these challenges. The book is a valuable resource for couples who find themselves in a "sex-starved" marriage, where one partner feels deprived of physical intimacy while the other may feel pressured or uninterested.

### **Understanding the Issue of Desire Discrepancies**

At the heart of a sex-starved marriage is often a significant discrepancy in sexual desire between partners. One partner may have a higher libido and feel constantly frustrated by the lack of physical intimacy, while the other may have a lower libido and feel overwhelmed by their partner's advances. This mismatch can lead to a cycle of frustration, resentment, and emotional withdrawal, further deepening the divide between partners.

Weiner-Davis explains that these discrepancies are common and can stem from a variety of factors, including stress, fatigue, emotional disconnect, and underlying psychological issues. Recognizing that mismatched libidos are a normal part of many relationships is the first step toward addressing the issue. By approaching the situation with empathy and understanding, couples can begin to bridge the gap in their sexual relationship.

### **The Importance of Sexual Intimacy in Marriage**

Sexual intimacy is more than just a physical act—it's a way to express love, connection, and vulnerability. In her book, Weiner-Davis emphasizes that a healthy sexual relationship is a crucial component of a fulfilling marriage. When sexual needs are consistently unmet, it can lead to feelings of neglect and rejection, which can erode the emotional bond between partners.

For the partner with a higher libido, this deprivation can feel like a personal rejection, leading to frustration and resentment. On the other hand, the partner with a lower libido may feel pressured or guilty, which can further dampen their desire. This negative cycle can have a profound impact on the overall health of the relationship.



## **Practical Strategies for Reconnecting**

One of the strengths of *"The Sex-Starved Marriage"* is its focus on practical strategies for both partners to reconnect and rekindle their sexual relationship. Weiner-Davis provides tailored advice for each partner, recognizing that their needs and experiences may differ.

For the higher-desire partner, the key is to approach the situation with sensitivity and patience. Rather than expressing frustration or making demands, it's important to communicate needs in a way that doesn't make the other partner feel inadequate or guilty. Weiner-Davis suggests focusing on the emotional aspects of the relationship and finding ways to enhance emotional intimacy, which can naturally lead to a renewed interest in physical intimacy.

For the lower-desire partner, Weiner-Davis encourages exploring the underlying reasons for their lack of interest in sex. This might involve addressing stress, fatigue, or unresolved emotional issues that are impacting their libido. She also suggests taking small, intentional steps to reconnect with their partner, such as setting aside time for intimacy and gradually rebuilding their sexual connection.

## **The Connection Between Emotional and Physical Intimacy**

Weiner-Davis highlights the strong connection between emotional intimacy and sexual desire. In many cases, a lack of emotional connection can contribute to a decline in sexual interest. By improving emotional communication and spending quality time together, couples can strengthen their bond and reignite their sexual relationship.

One of the most effective ways to enhance both emotional and physical intimacy is through open and honest communication. Weiner-Davis encourages couples to have regular conversations about their needs, desires, and any challenges they're facing. These discussions can help partners better understand each other and work together to find solutions that meet both of their needs.

## **Moving Forward Together**

Addressing the issues in a sex-starved marriage requires effort and commitment from both partners. However, with the right approach, it's possible to overcome these challenges and rebuild a satisfying sexual relationship. Weiner-Davis's *"The Sex-Starved Marriage"* provides couples with the tools they need to navigate this common issue and create a stronger, more intimate connection.

If you find yourself in a sex-starved marriage, remember that you're not alone—and that with empathy, communication, and a willingness to work together, you can rekindle the passion in your relationship.



For more tips and resources on building a strong, intimate relationship, visit [CoupleStrong](http://CoupleStrong.com).



## Handout

### Reconnecting in a Sex-Starved Marriage: A Couple's Guide

Inspired by "The Sex-Starved Marriage" by Michele Weiner-Davis

#### Introduction

This handout is designed to help you and your partner address and overcome the challenges of a sex-starved marriage. Based on insights from Michele Weiner-Davis's *"The Sex-Starved Marriage: Boosting Your Marriage Libido—A Couple's Guide,"* this guide offers practical steps and strategies to help you rekindle your sexual connection, improve communication, and strengthen your emotional bond.

#### 1. Understanding the Issue

##### Key Insight:

- Sexual intimacy is a crucial part of a healthy marriage, and discrepancies in sexual desire are common. These discrepancies, if left unaddressed, can lead to frustration, resentment, and emotional distance.

##### Action Steps:

- **Recognize the Signs:** Identify whether your marriage may be experiencing a sex-starved dynamic. Are you or your partner feeling consistently deprived or uninterested in sex? Acknowledge this issue as the first step toward resolution.
- **Open Dialogue:** Start a conversation with your partner about your sexual relationship. Approach the topic with empathy and understanding, recognizing that both of you may have different perspectives and needs.



## 2. For the Higher-Desire Partner

### Key Insight:

- If you have a higher libido, it's important to approach the situation with sensitivity. Expressing frustration or making demands can further alienate your partner and worsen the situation.

### Action Steps:

- **Communicate with Compassion:** Share your feelings with your partner without blame. Use "I" statements, such as "I feel disconnected when we're not physically intimate," rather than accusing or pressuring.
  - **Focus on Emotional Intimacy:** Work on strengthening your emotional connection. Engage in activities that bring you closer, like spending quality time together, talking, or showing affection in non-sexual ways.
  - **Be Patient:** Understand that changes won't happen overnight. Give your partner space and time to explore their own feelings and desires without feeling pressured.
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## 3. For the Lower-Desire Partner

### Key Insight:

- If you have a lower libido, it's important to explore the underlying reasons for your lack of interest in sex. Addressing these factors can help you reconnect with your partner and rediscover your sexual desire.

### Action Steps:

- **Identify Barriers:** Reflect on potential factors contributing to your decreased sexual desire. Is it stress, fatigue, unresolved emotional issues, or something else? Understanding these factors is crucial.
- **Communicate Your Needs:** Share your thoughts with your partner about why your desire might be low. Be honest and open about what you need to feel more interested in intimacy.
- **Take Small Steps:** Start with small, manageable actions to rebuild your sexual connection. This could be as simple as holding hands, cuddling, or sharing a long kiss. Gradually reintroduce intimacy into your relationship.



## 4. Strengthening Emotional Intimacy

### Key Insight:

- Emotional intimacy and sexual desire are closely connected. Strengthening your emotional bond can naturally lead to a stronger physical connection.

### Action Steps:

- **Quality Time:** Make time for each other regularly, free from distractions. Engage in activities that you both enjoy, whether it's a date night, a walk, or simply talking without interruptions.
- **Express Appreciation:** Regularly express appreciation and gratitude for each other. Recognizing the positive aspects of your relationship can help reinforce your emotional connection.
- **Share Vulnerabilities:** Open up to each other about your fears, concerns, and hopes. Being vulnerable with your partner can deepen your emotional intimacy and create a stronger foundation for physical intimacy.

## 5. Practical Exercises

### Key Insight:

- Engaging in specific exercises can help you and your partner reconnect both emotionally and physically.

### Action Steps:

- **The "Touch Base" Exercise:** Spend 10-15 minutes each day touching each other in a non-sexual way. This could be a back rub, holding hands, or sitting close together while talking. The goal is to reintroduce physical contact without the pressure of sex.
- **Daily Check-In:** Set aside time each day to check in with each other about your emotional and physical needs. This can be a quick conversation where you both share how you're feeling and what you need from each other.





- **Create a "Date Night" Ritual:** Plan a regular date night where you focus solely on each other. This time should be dedicated to enjoying each other's company without the stress of daily responsibilities.

## **Final Thoughts**

Reconnecting in a sex-starved marriage requires effort, understanding, and patience from both partners. By addressing the underlying issues, improving communication, and focusing on both emotional and physical intimacy, you can rebuild your connection and create a more satisfying and fulfilling relationship.

**For more tips and resources on strengthening your marriage, visit [CoupleStrong](#).**

**Prepared by CoupleStrong**

*Strengthening relationships, one couple at a time.*



## **Assessment**

### **Sex-Starved Marriage Couples Assessment**

**Based on "The Sex-Starved Marriage" by Michele Weiner-Davis**

#### **Instructions:**

This assessment is designed to help you and your partner evaluate the state of your sexual and emotional connection, inspired by the principles from *"The Sex-Starved Marriage."* Each partner should complete the assessment separately, and then you can come together to discuss your responses.

For each statement, rate your agreement on a scale from 1 to 5:

- **1 = Strongly Disagree**
- **2 = Disagree**
- **3 = Neutral**
- **4 = Agree**
- **5 = Strongly Agree**

#### **Section 1: Understanding and Addressing Desire Discrepancies**

**1 I feel that my sexual needs are being met in our relationship.**

◦        ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

**2 We openly discuss our differences in sexual desire without judgment.**

◦        ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

**3 I understand my partner's feelings and perspective about our sexual relationship.**

◦        ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

**4 We work together to find a balance that satisfies both of our sexual needs.**

◦        ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

**5 I feel supported by my partner when discussing our sexual relationship.**

◦        ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5



## **Section 2: Emotional Intimacy and Connection**

**6 We regularly spend quality time together, focusing on our emotional connection.**

◦        ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

**7 I feel emotionally connected to my partner in our day-to-day interactions.**

◦        ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

**8 We express appreciation and affection for each other frequently.**

◦        ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

**9 We are open and honest with each other about our feelings and needs.**

◦        ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

**10 Our emotional connection positively influences our physical intimacy.**

◦        ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

## **Section 3: Addressing Barriers to Intimacy**

**11 I have identified factors that might be contributing to my (or my partner's) lower sexual desire.**

◦        ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

**12 We have discussed these factors and are actively working to address them together.**

◦        ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

**13 I feel comfortable sharing my concerns about our sexual relationship with my partner.**

◦        ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

**14 We both make an effort to understand and address each other's needs and concerns regarding intimacy.**

◦        ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

**15 We are committed to working through challenges in our sexual relationship together.**

◦        ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5



#### Section 4: Rebuilding Sexual Intimacy

16 **We make time for physical intimacy, even if it's not always about sex.**

◦ ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

17 **I feel comfortable initiating physical affection with my partner.**

◦ ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

18 **We have explored new ways to reconnect sexually that consider both of our comfort levels.**

◦ ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

19 **We are both patient and understanding as we work on rebuilding our sexual connection.**

◦ ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

20 **I feel hopeful about the future of our sexual relationship.**

◦ ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

#### Scoring:

- **80-100:** You and your partner are actively working to address any discrepancies in sexual desire and are building a strong emotional and physical connection. Continue to nurture these efforts.
- **60-79:** Your relationship has a solid foundation, but there may be areas where more attention is needed. Consider focusing on improving communication and addressing any emotional or physical barriers to intimacy.
- **40-59:** Your relationship could benefit from more open dialogue and intentional efforts to reconnect both emotionally and physically. Discuss ways to work together on these areas.
- **Below 40:** It may be time to address significant issues in your sexual and emotional relationship. Consider seeking additional resources or professional guidance to help improve your connection.



### **Discussion and Reflection:**

After completing the assessment, come together with your partner to discuss your scores. Use these questions to guide your conversation:

- 1 What are our strengths in terms of sexual and emotional intimacy?**
- 2 Which areas could use more attention or improvement?**
- 3 How can we better support each other in addressing desire discrepancies?**
- 4 What steps can we take to rebuild our physical and emotional connection?**

**Final Thoughts:** This assessment is a tool to help you and your partner understand and address the dynamics in your sexual and emotional relationship. By focusing on communication, understanding, and intentional efforts to reconnect, you can build a stronger, more fulfilling marriage.

For more resources and support, visit [CoupleStrong](http://CoupleStrong.com).



## 7-Day Reconnection Challenge for Couples

Inspired by "The Sex-Starved Marriage" by Michele Weiner-Davis

**Challenge Overview:** This 7-day challenge is designed to help you and your partner reconnect emotionally and physically, inspired by the principles in *"The Sex-Starved Marriage."* Each day focuses on activities that encourage communication, intimacy, and understanding. By participating in this challenge, you'll take important steps toward rebuilding your connection and reigniting the passion in your relationship.

### Day 1: Open Communication

**Objective:** Begin the challenge by opening up about your sexual and emotional needs.

**Activity:**

- Set aside 30 minutes for an honest conversation about your sexual relationship. Discuss your desires, any challenges you're facing, and what you each need to feel more connected.
- Use "I" statements to express your feelings (e.g., "I feel..."), and listen actively to your partner's perspective without interrupting.
- End the conversation by setting one or two mutual goals for the week to improve your connection.

**Reflection:** How did this conversation help you understand each other's needs better? What are the goals you've set together for the week?

### Day 2: Reignite Emotional Intimacy

**Objective:** Focus on strengthening your emotional bond to enhance your overall connection.

**Activity:**



6 Plan a special date night where the focus is on emotional connection. This could be a dinner, a walk, or a favorite shared activity that allows you to spend quality time together.

7 During the date, share with each other what you appreciate most about your relationship. Be specific about the qualities or actions that mean the most to you.

8 Avoid discussing daily responsibilities or stresses; instead, keep the conversation light and focused on your relationship.

**Reflection:** How did spending quality time together affect your emotional connection? Did it help you feel more in sync with each other?

### **Day 3: Explore Physical Affection**

**Objective:** Reconnect through non-sexual physical touch to rebuild intimacy.

**Activity:**

11 Spend time today engaging in physical affection that isn't focused on leading to sex. This could be cuddling, holding hands, giving each other a massage, or simply sitting close together while watching a movie.

12 Focus on being fully present in the moment, enjoying the physical closeness without any pressure or expectations.

13 If you feel comfortable, talk about how these moments of touch make you feel and what you enjoy most about them.

**Reflection:** How did non-sexual physical touch impact your sense of intimacy? Did it help you feel closer and more connected?

### **Day 4: Identify and Address Barriers**

**Objective:** Identify any barriers to physical or emotional intimacy and work together to address them.



**Activity:**

- 16 Individually reflect on any factors that might be contributing to lower sexual desire or emotional distance. This could include stress, fatigue, unresolved conflicts, or external pressures.
- 17 Share your reflections with each other and discuss what steps you can take together to address these barriers. This might involve making changes to your daily routine, seeking support, or setting boundaries with external stressors.
- 18 Create a plan for how you can both support each other in overcoming these barriers.

**Reflection:** What barriers did you identify, and how can you work together to address them? How does addressing these issues help you feel more connected?

**Day 5: Plan an Intimate Evening**

**Objective:** Reignite your sexual connection with an evening dedicated to intimacy.

**Activity:**

- 21 Plan an evening where you can focus entirely on each other without distractions. Set the mood with soft lighting, music, and any other elements that help you feel relaxed and connected.
- 22 Spend time on extended foreplay, focusing on touch, kissing, and other forms of physical affection that help you reconnect. Take your time and enjoy the process.
- 23 Communicate openly about what feels good and what you enjoy, making sure that both partners feel comfortable and valued.

**Reflection:** How did planning an intimate evening together impact your sexual connection? What new things did you discover about each other?





## **Day 6: Strengthen Emotional Intimacy**

**Objective:** Deepen your emotional connection through meaningful conversation.

**Activity:**

- Set aside time for a deep conversation about your relationship. Discuss your hopes, dreams, and any fears or concerns you may have.
- Be open and vulnerable with each other, sharing aspects of your inner world that you may not have discussed before.
- Use this conversation as an opportunity to reaffirm your commitment to each other and to the relationship.

**Reflection:** How did this conversation affect your emotional intimacy? Did it help you feel more connected and understood?

## **Day 7: Reflect and Plan for the Future**

**Objective:** Consolidate the progress made during the challenge and plan how to continue growing together.

**Activity:**

- 5 Reflect together on the past week. Discuss what activities or conversations were most impactful and how they affected your relationship.
- 6 Identify the practices that you found most helpful and discuss how you can incorporate them into your regular routine.
- 7 Set a few goals for continuing to strengthen your emotional and physical connection in the coming months.



**Reflection:** What has been the most valuable takeaway from this challenge? How can you continue to build on the progress you've made this week?

### **Final Thoughts:**

Congratulations on completing the 7-Day Reconnection Challenge! By focusing on communication, emotional intimacy, and physical connection, you've taken significant steps toward revitalizing your marriage. Remember, intimacy is a journey—continue to nurture your relationship with empathy, understanding, and love.

For more tips, resources, and support on your relationship journey, visit [CoupleStrong](http://CoupleStrong.com).



## Description

### Sex-Starved Marriage Reconnection Bundle

This comprehensive bundle is designed to help couples address and overcome the challenges of a sex-starved marriage, inspired by Michele Weiner-Davis's book *"The Sex-Starved Marriage: Boosting Your Marriage Libido—A Couple's Guide."* The bundle includes:

- **Overview of the Book:** A detailed summary that outlines the key concepts and strategies from *"The Sex-Starved Marriage,"* focusing on understanding and addressing discrepancies in sexual desire within a marriage.
- **Blog Post:** An engaging blog that explores how couples can reconnect emotionally and physically by addressing the challenges of a sex-starved marriage, offering practical advice and insights.
- **Couple's Handout:** A practical guide with actionable steps and exercises to help couples improve communication, strengthen emotional intimacy, and rebuild their sexual connection.
- **Couple's Assessment:** A self-assessment tool that allows couples to evaluate their current level of emotional and sexual intimacy, providing a foundation for growth and deeper connection.
- **7-Day Reconnection Challenge:** A step-by-step challenge designed to help couples reconnect emotionally and physically over the course of a week, focusing on communication, intimacy, and mutual understanding.

This bundle is perfect for couples looking to address issues of sexual desire discrepancies, strengthen their bond, and create a more fulfilling and passionate relationship using the insights and strategies from *"The Sex-Starved Marriage."*