



# FIELD MANUAL



## WEEK 2

# THE TRUTH ABOUT DESIRE

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The Science of Female Sexuality Across the Lifespan

# HOW DESIRE REALLY WORKS

## Target Outcomes

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- Explain spontaneous versus responsive desire in simple terms
- Describe the Basson circular model of female desire
- Understand why women often start from sexual neutrality
- Recognize the silent standoff pattern in relationships
- Know that willingness is a healthy starting point

## Belief Reframe

**“Her desire shows up after connection, not before.”**

## Critical Points

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- The old desire model was built from male bodies
- Women often start from a neutral, not turned-off place
- Desire can show up after arousal already begins
- Responsive desire is normal, healthy, and very common
- Both partners waiting creates a painful silent standoff
- Willingness is a valid and healthy starting point

**Key Takeaway: Desire follows the right conditions — it doesn't start them.**

## Directives

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Write down which desire model you assumed applied.

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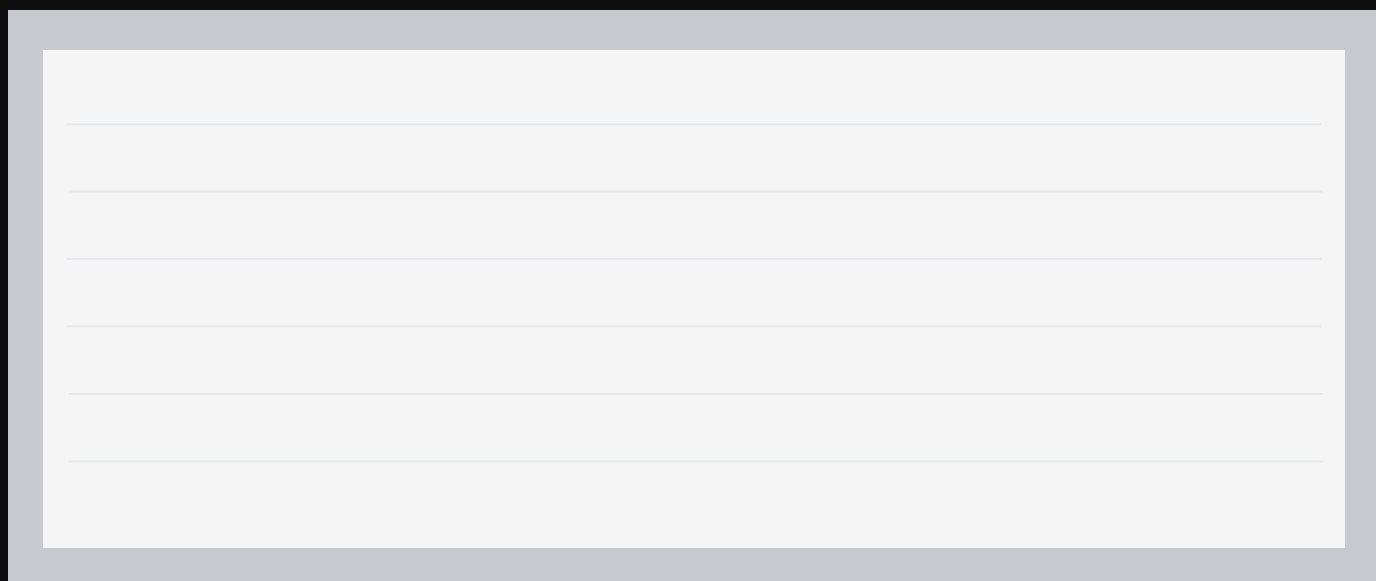
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Describe how the silent standoff shows up for you.

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Review the Desire Model Comparison Sheet this week.

Discuss responsive desire with your partner this week.

# BRAKES AND ACCELERATORS

## Target Outcomes

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- Explain the accelerator and brake systems of arousal
- Understand why too much brake causes most problems
- Name common menopausal brakes on her desire
- Shift focus from adding accelerator to removing brakes
- Identify brakes you may be contributing to yourself

## Belief Reframe

**“Ask what's turning her off, not what turns on.”**

## Critical Points

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- The accelerator sends "go" signals for sexual arousal
- The brake sends "stop" signals that block arousal
- Most problems come from too much brake pressure
- Menopause adds pain, fatigue, stress, and body shame
- More accelerator cannot overcome a fully pressed brake
- Reducing her brakes matters more than adding excitement

**Key Takeaway: Removing her brakes matters more than pushing the accelerator.**

## Directives

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Write down three brakes your partner likely feels.

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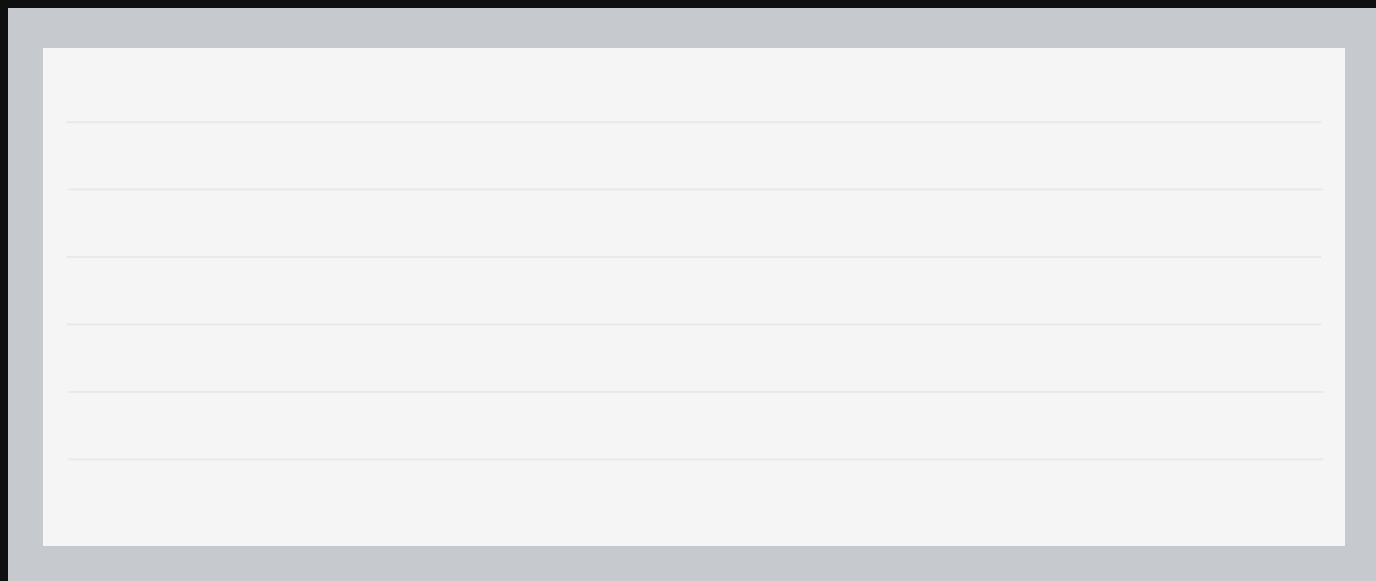
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Write which brakes you might be adding yourself.

A large rectangular box with a light gray border and a white interior. Inside the box, there are seven horizontal lines for writing, spaced evenly apart. The box is intended for the user to write down which brakes they might be adding to themselves.

Complete the Brakes and Accelerators Inventory this week.

Remove one small brake for your partner this week.

# THE FULL PICTURE

## Target Outcomes

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- Explain the biopsychosocial model in simple terms
- Describe biological changes that affect desire during menopause
- Understand the psychological grief of the menopause transition
- Recognize the social pressures of the midlife squeeze
- Know that low desire has many causes, not one

## Belief Reframe

**“There is no single fix for something this complex.”**

## Critical Points

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- Biology includes hormones, tissue changes, and physical pain
- Psychology includes grief, body image, and identity shifts
- Social context includes caregiving, work stress, and mental load
- Low desire affects forty to fifty percent during menopause
- All three dimensions interact and feed into each other
- Seeing the whole picture matters more than finding one fix

**Key Takeaway: Her experience is complex — see the whole picture first.**

## Directives

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Map your partner's experience across all three dimensions.

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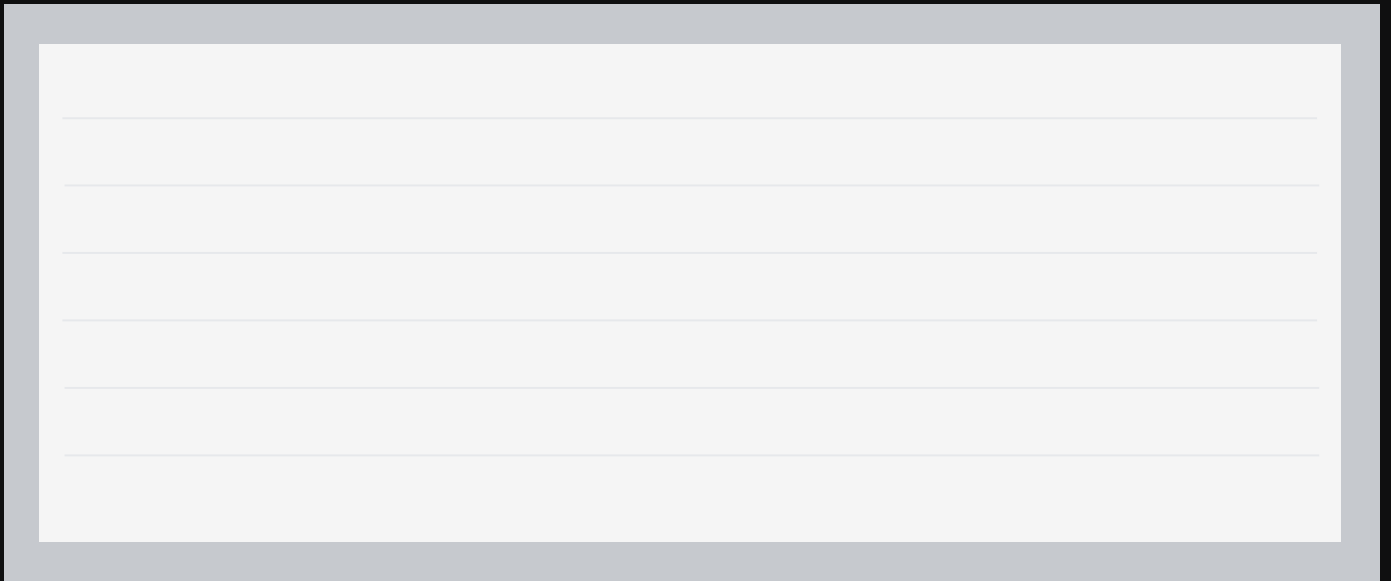
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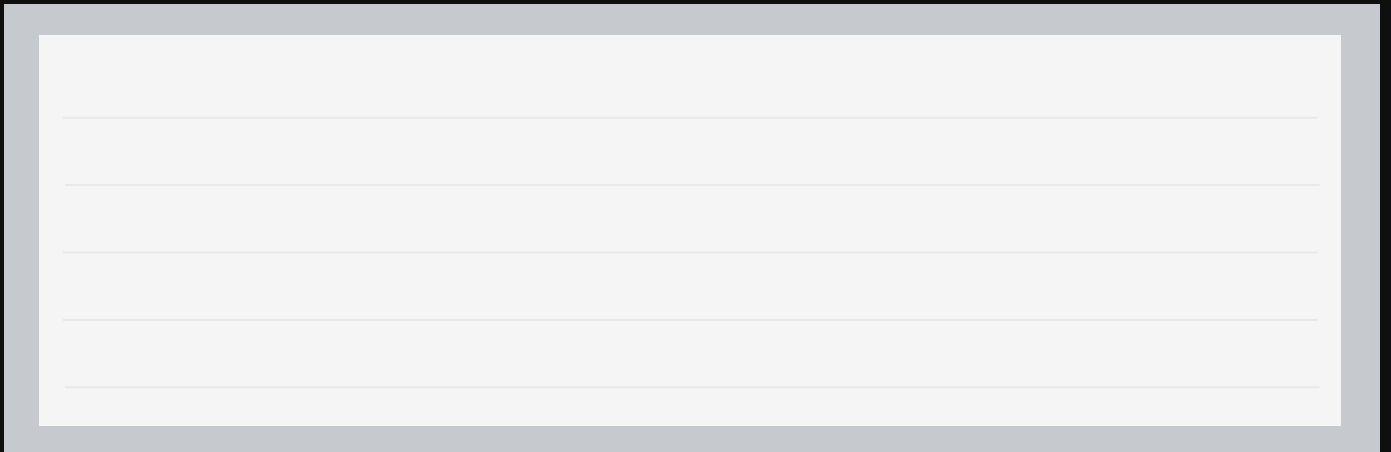
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Write what you think she grieves most right now.

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Notice one social pressure she carries this week.

A large rectangular box with a light gray border and a white interior. Inside the box, there are seven horizontal lines for writing, spaced evenly apart.

Ask your partner what feels hardest right now.

# BODIES DON'T TELL ALL

## Target Outcomes

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- Define arousal non-concordance in your own words
- Know the ten percent concordance finding for women
- Understand why physical signs are unreliable guides
- Recognize how menopause widens the concordance gap
- Practice asking instead of assuming during intimacy

## Belief Reframe

**“Her body's response does not equal her experience.”**

## Critical Points

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- Physical arousal and felt arousal often do not match
- Women show only ten percent overlap between the two
- Wetness does not prove she is aroused or willing
- Dryness does not prove she is uninterested or rejecting
- Menopause makes physical response even less reliable as guide
- Ask her what she feels instead of guessing

**Key Takeaway: Stop reading her body — start asking her directly.**

## Directives

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Write about a time you assumed based on physical signs.

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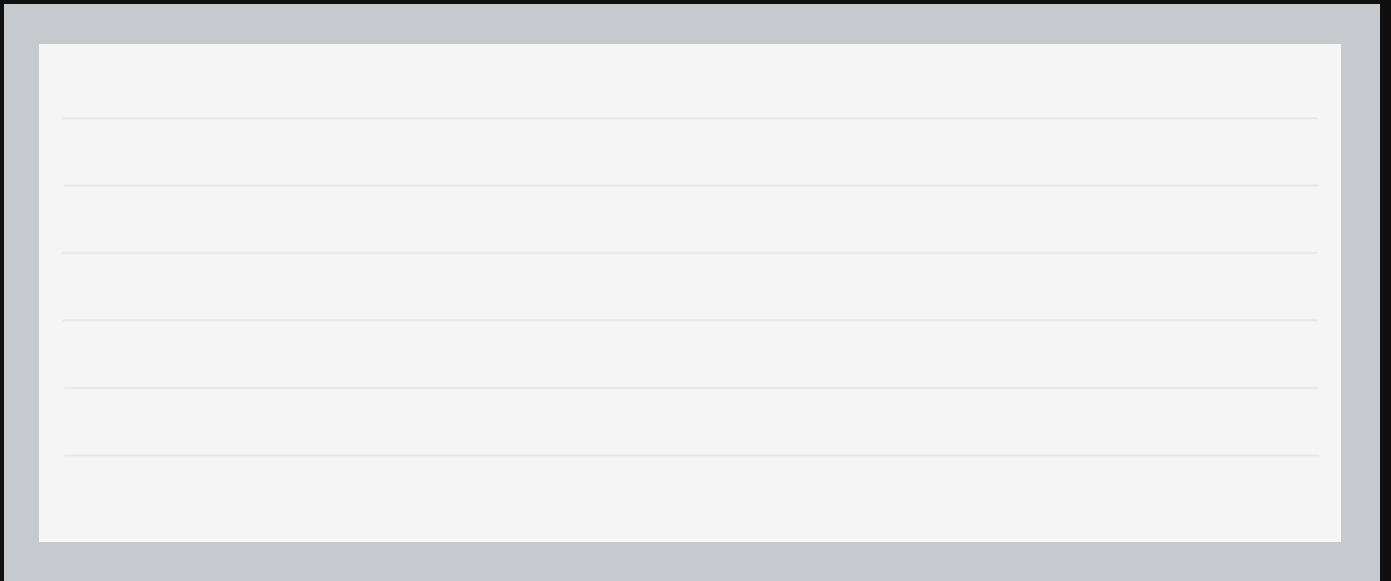
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Write one kind question you could ask during intimacy.

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Practice checking in with your partner during closeness.

Keep lubricant accessible without treating it as failure.

# A NEW WAY IN

## Target Outcomes

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- Describe the three parts of responsive initiation
- Explain context creation and why it comes first
- Practice making low-stakes invitations without hidden agendas
- Understand attuned escalation using sensate focus principles
- Handle a "no" with genuine warmth and acceptance

## Belief Reframe

**"Create the conditions; let desire arrive on its own."**

## Critical Points

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- Context creation means reducing brakes hours or days before
- Low-stakes invitations offer connection without expecting intercourse
- Attuned escalation means moving forward slowly and collaboratively
- Genuine offers with no hidden agenda build deep safety
- A warm response to "no" protects future connection
- This is a daily practice, not a one-time technique

**Key Takeaway: Release the brakes first, then let desire follow naturally.**

## Directives

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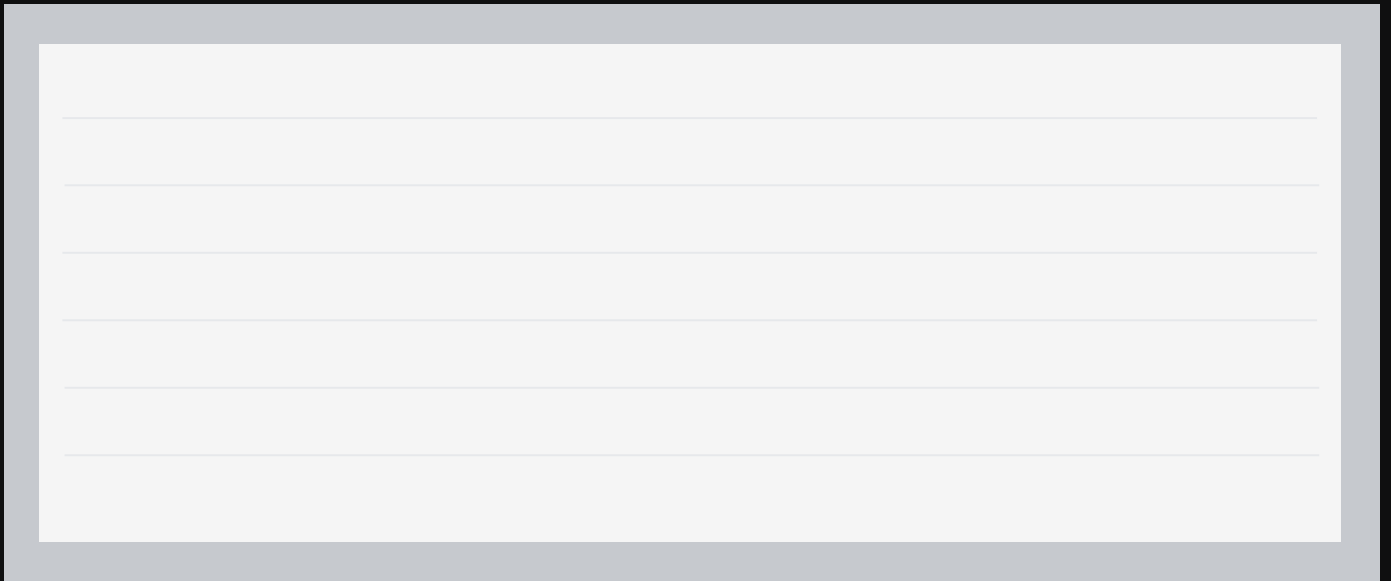
Write your personal Responsive Initiation Plan this week.

Creation:

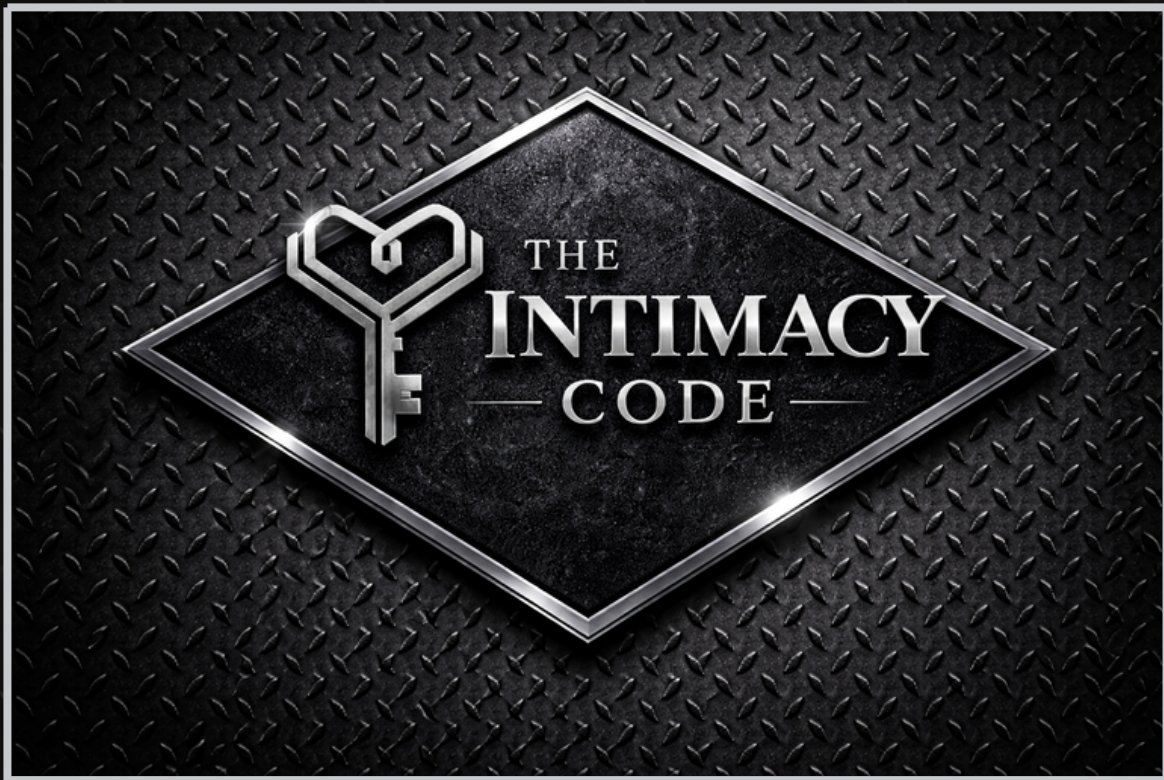
Low-stakes invitation:

Attuned escalation:

Try one responsive initiation sequence before next week. Write what happened and how you both felt afterward.

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Complete the Initiation Audit in your workbook honestly.

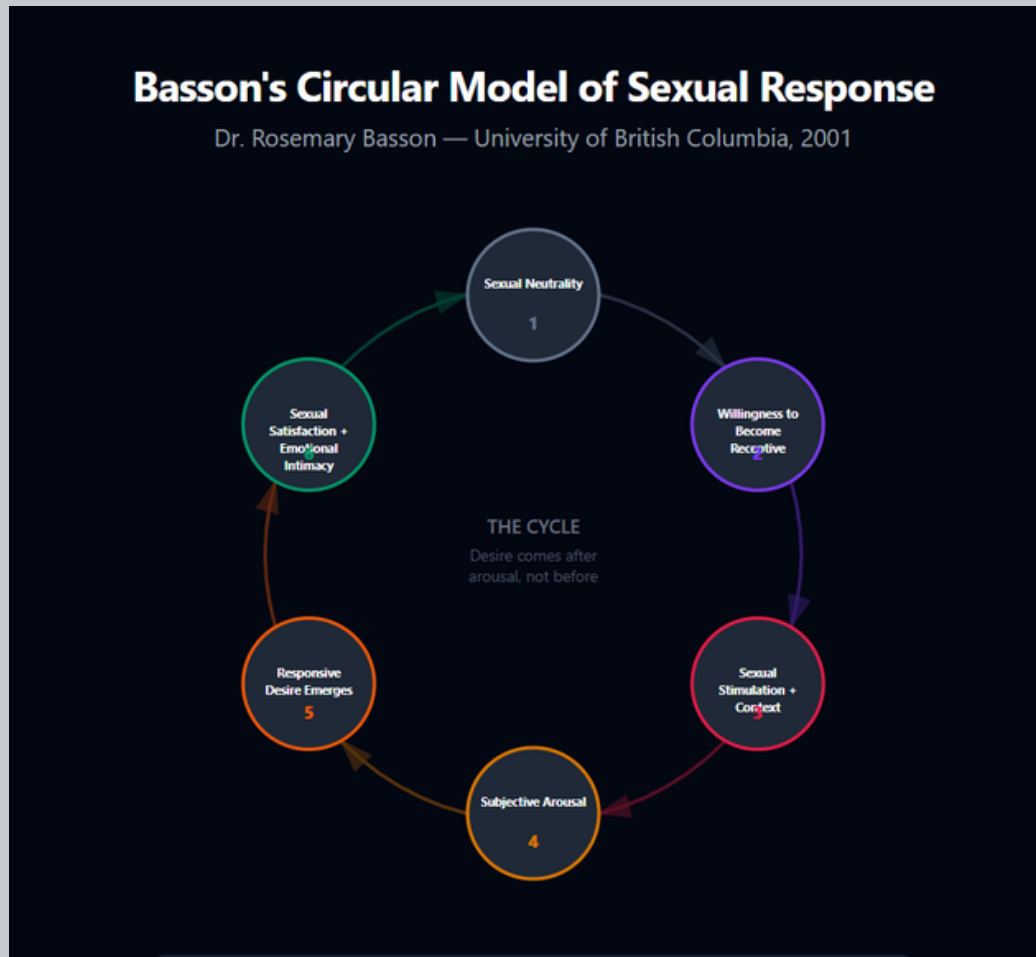


## EXECUTION RESOURCES

## The Old Model: Linear Desire

Desire → Arousal → Orgasm → Resolution

## The New Model: Basson's Circular Model



## Her Brakes and Accelerators

Circle each one that applies

### Physical Brakes

- Pain during intercourse or penetration
  - Vaginal dryness or tissue thinning
  - Hot flashes or night sweats disrupting her comfort
  - Chronic fatigue or low energy most days
  - Poor sleep or insomnia
  - Joint pain or general body soreness
  - Medication side effects that lower desire
  - Weight changes that make her body feel unfamiliar
  - Bladder issues or worry about leaking
  - Headaches or migraines that come more often now
  - Other physical brake:
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### Psychological Brakes

- Negative body image or feeling unattractive
- Grief about aging or losing her younger self
- Stress about work, money, or responsibilities
- Feeling touched out from caregiving duties
- Anxiety about not being able to orgasm
- Worry that sex will hurt
- Feeling pressure or obligation to have sex
- Resentment from unresolved relationship conflicts
- Feeling emotionally disconnected from you
- Shame or embarrassment about her changing body
- Depression or low mood that lingers
- Feeling like she has lost part of her identity
- Other psychological brake:

### Relationship Brakes

- Feeling criticized or not good enough
  - Lack of nonsexual affection in daily life
  - Every touch from you feels like it leads to sex
  - Feeling unheard when she says no or not now
  - Unequal division of housework or mental load
  - Feeling like a manager instead of a partner
  - Arguments that never get fully resolved
  - Feeling like you do not understand her experience
  - Lack of quality time that has no sexual agenda
  - Sensing disappointment or frustration after she says no
  - Feeling like your mood depends on whether you have sex
  - Other relationship brake:
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### Context Brakes

- No lock on the bedroom door or kids nearby
- The bedroom feels cluttered, stressful, or unrelaxing
- No transition time between daily life and intimacy
- Rushing or feeling like there is not enough time
- Being interrupted by phones, devices, or notifications
- Feeling like intimacy only happens late at night when tired
- Other context brake:

# Her Brakes and Accelerators

## Physical Accelerators

- Feeling rested and having enough energy
  - Being free from pain in her body
  - Gentle, nonsexual touch throughout the day
  - Feeling physically comfortable and warm
  - Using lubricant so penetration feels good
  - Slow, patient physical buildup without rushing
  - Other physical accelerator:
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## Psychological Accelerators

- Feeling attractive and desired for who she is now
- Feeling emotionally safe and accepted
- Laughing together and having fun
- Feeling respected and admired by you
- Knowing there is no pressure for a specific outcome
- Feeling confident in her own skin
- Feeling seen as a whole person, not just a sexual partner
- Other psychological accelerator:

## Relationship Accelerators

- Feeling emotionally connected and close to you
  - Receiving affection that does not lead to sex
  - Having her feelings validated without being fixed
  - Knowing you handle her "no" with warmth
  - Feeling like an equal partner in daily life
  - Having uninterrupted quality time together
  - Being listened to without judgment
  - Feeling like you are a team
  - Other relationship accelerator:
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## Context Accelerators

- Privacy and no worry about being interrupted
- A clean, calm, and inviting bedroom space
- Plenty of time with no rushing
- Earlier in the day or evening when energy is higher
- A relaxing transition like a bath, massage, or quiet talk
- Music, lighting, or atmosphere that feels good
- Other context accelerator:

### **SECTION 3: BRAKES YOU MAY BE ADDING**

This is the hardest section. It asks you to look honestly at ways you might be pressing on her brake without meaning to. Nobody does these things on purpose. But recognizing them is the first step toward change.

Circle any item that might be true, even a little.

- I sulk, go quiet, or pull away when she says no to sex
- Most of my physical affection leads toward sex
- I bring up how long it has been since we had sex
- I make comments about her body that she does not enjoy
- I have compared her desire now to how it used to be
- I take her low desire personally, like it means she does not love me
- I try to fix her feelings instead of just listening
- I have suggested something is wrong with her for not wanting sex
- I do not do my fair share of housework or mental load
- I expect her to be in the mood without creating the right context
- I rush physical intimacy instead of letting it build slowly
- I focus on intercourse as the main goal of intimacy
- I check out emotionally when sex is off the table
- I have stopped being affectionate because it goes nowhere
- I treat lubricant or aids as a sign something is broken

## SECTION 1

### HOW YOU CURRENTLY INITIATE

For each item, circle the response that fits best.

1. When I want to be intimate, I usually:

- a) Make a direct verbal request or suggestion
- b) Start touching her physically and hope she responds
- c) Drop hints and wait for her to pick up on them
- d) Wait for her to initiate instead
- e) I have mostly stopped trying

2. How often do you create context before initiating?

- a) Almost never — I initiate when the urge hits me
- b) Rarely — I sometimes think about timing but not much else
- c) Sometimes — I try to make things feel relaxed first
- d) Often — I think about what she needs before I approach
- e) Almost always — I focus on her environment and state of mind first

3. When do you most often initiate?

- a) Late at night in bed when the day is over
- b) Whenever I feel the urge regardless of timing
- c) On weekends when there is more time
- d) After we have had a good connection moment
- e) I do not really have a pattern

4. When you initiate, what outcome are you hoping for?

- a) Intercourse specifically
- b) Some kind of sexual activity
- c) Physical closeness that might lead to more
- d) Connection first, and whatever feels right after
- e) I am not sure — I have not thought about it clearly

5. How much time usually passes between your first move and hoping for a sexual response?

- a) A few minutes or less
- b) About fifteen to thirty minutes
- c) An hour or so of building closeness
- d) Several hours of connection throughout the day
- e) I build connection over a full day or more before initiating

## SECTION 2

### HOW YOUR INITIATIONS LAND

Check every statement that is true or mostly true.

- She often seems caught off guard when I initiate
- She has said I only touch her when I want sex
- She tenses up when I start touching her in certain ways
- She seems to brace herself when I reach for her in bed
- She has stopped changing clothes in front of me
- She avoids the bedroom until she is very tired
- She has said she feels pressured even when I think I am being gentle
- She says yes but seems to be going through the motions
- She has pulled away from kisses that feel like they are leading somewhere
- My initiations usually end with her saying not tonight
- I can tell she feels guilty when she turns me down
- She has said she does not know what she wants anymore

**Total checks:** \_\_\_\_\_

If you checked four or more items, your current initiation pattern is likely pressing on her brake even if that is not your intention. This is not about blame. It is about information.

## SECTION 3

### THE HIDDEN AGENDA CHECK

One of the biggest brakes in responsive desire is sensing a hidden agenda. Answer these questions honestly.

Check every statement that is true or mostly true.

- When I give her a massage, part of me hopes it leads to sex
- When I do extra housework, I sometimes hope she will notice and feel more open to intimacy
- When I plan a nice evening, I feel disappointed if it does not end sexually
- When I am physically affectionate, I am often testing to see if she is receptive
- I find it hard to cuddle or be close without wanting it to go further
- I sometimes do kind things with the unspoken hope of earning intimacy
- If I am warm and helpful all day and she still says no, I feel cheated
- I have trouble giving affection that I know will not lead anywhere
- She has said that my kindness sometimes feels like it comes with strings
- I would be less affectionate if I knew for certain sex was off the table

**Total checks:** \_\_\_\_\_

This section is not meant to make you feel ashamed. Hidden agendas are extremely common and usually unconscious. But your partner can feel them even when you cannot see them. Every checked item is a brake you are adding to her system without realizing it.

## SECTION 4

### WHAT HAPPENS AFTER A NO

For each item, circle the response that is most honest.

1. When she says no or not tonight, my first internal reaction is usually:

- a) Rejection — it feels personal
- b) Frustration — I wonder when it will ever happen
- c) Sadness — I feel disconnected and alone
- d) Understanding — I know it is not about me
- e) Relief — at least I know where I stand

2. What do I usually do outwardly after she says no?

- a) I go quiet and pull away emotionally
- b) I say it is fine but she can probably tell it is not
- c) I try to negotiate or convince her to change her mind
- d) I make a comment about how long it has been
- e) I genuinely let it go and stay warm and close
- f) I roll over and stop all physical contact

The next morning after a no, I usually:

- a) Act normal but feel distant inside
- b) Am noticeably cooler or quieter than usual
- c) Bring it up again to talk about it
- d) Act warm and connected like nothing happened
- e) Withdraw affection for a while without meaning to

4. How long does it typically take you to emotionally recover from a no?

- a) A few hours
- b) A full day
- c) Several days
- d) I carry it until the next time we are intimate
- e) I recover quickly and move on genuinely

5. Has your partner ever said any of the following after turning you down?

- "Please don't be mad."
- "I'm sorry."
- "I know you're frustrated."
- "I feel bad."
- "Don't pull away from me."
- "I still love you."
- "It's not about you."
- "I just can't right now."

If she has said two or more of these, she is likely managing your emotional response on top of her own experience. That means saying no costs her something, which makes future intimacy harder, not easier.

## **SECTION 5**

### **YOUR INITIATION PATTERN SUMMARY**

Based on your answers, fill in the following.

My typical initiation style is:

The outcome I am usually hoping for is:

After a no, I usually respond by:

The hidden agendas I carry most often are:

The brakes my current pattern is likely adding are:

## **SECTION 3**

### **HONEST REFLECTION**

Answer each question in at least two full sentences.

1. What did you learn about your initiation pattern that surprised you?
2. If your partner filled out this audit about you, where would she agree and where would she see it differently?
3. What would it look like to initiate with zero agenda and genuine willingness to hear no?
4. What is the hardest part of letting go of the outcome you hope for?