

An Appreciation Exercise to Boost Safety, Love and Passion

In my book *Cuffed, Tied and Satisfied* I shared the story of Tabby and Kyle who were struggling with their sexual connection. After doing this exercise, the energy in the room started to shift.

As Tabby and Kyle sat a little closer and were touching one another, they each began to relax a little. Sharing appreciation for their day-to-day lives was easy. However, when it came sex, it got a bit harder and they needed my help to guide them through the conversation.

Tabby got tears in her eyes at one point, and I invited her to keep breathing through the emotion that was coming to the surface. Since she was Energetically wired, hearing the appreciation from Kyle touched her deeply. She had only been hearing dissatisfaction about their sex life from him, and it had taken a toll on her.

At one point during our day- long intensive I worked with Tabby alone. She was soft and feminine. I noticed that when Kyle returned later in the day, Tabby's energy changed and she became more masculine, or "harder". Because she is Energetically wired, Tabby dove right into pointing out how he was doing everything wrong. I invited her, instead, to start using an internal mantra of, "I love everything he does." I also invited her to soften, to find her breath and the curve in her body, and finally to return to gratitude.

When you find yourself criticizing always come back to appreciation.

Appreciation First Exercise

This exercise will help you to build connection and rekindle passion. In my Tantra practice, gratitude and appreciation for each other is foundational, and I have been teaching this for years. However, I recently

realized that these “softer” exercises are important for kinky beginners. They can be the foundation for building all that kinky, hot sex later on. It's vital that as you practice this exercise you allow yourself to come from your heart, to be vulnerable and loving.

Step One: Lie in bed next to each other. If it feels like too much of a charge to lie in bed, try sitting across from each other. Next, I like to use the Tantra-based hand/heart breath, which adds more intimacy to the exercise. Place your left hand on your partner's heart and your right hand over their left hand at your own heart. Look into each other's eyes and alternate your breathing. As your partner breathes in, you breathe out. If this all feels too intimate, skip this step and share steps 2-4 in the car as you drive!

Step Two: Take turns sharing what you appreciate about your partner. Begin with non-sexual things. “I appreciate how you support me and my work.”

Step Three: Take turns appreciating different things about your partner as a lover. “I appreciate how dedicated you are to making sure we have a great sex life.”

Step Four: If it feels appropriate, add touch to the appreciation. Begin to lightly stroke each other's bodies as you gaze into each other's eyes and state your words of appreciation.

Doesn't gratitude and appreciation put you in a much better state? I find myself more open and in a place of greater pleasure when I am in gratitude versus criticism. Have fun practicing and let us know your results!