

Self focus for women

Task 2



Information for patients Sex and Relationship Therapy

Introduction

This exercise is about exploring your body using touch.

How should I prepare?

You need to plan 45 minutes alone with no one else around. Try to relax and clear your mind of worries. Try to ensure the bathroom is warm.

Start by having a bath (or shower) allowing yourself time to feel relaxed and clean. Take your time when drying – notice how your body is responding to being dried and whether it feels different to how it usually does when you dry your body.

Exercise two

Once you have dried yourself it is time to start the second exercise.

Whilst you are naked use your hands to explore the many textures of your body.

- Imagine this is the first time you have seen your body.
- Notice what you see, how it feels underneath your fingers that are touching as well as what that part of your body feels like when you are touching it.
- Start with your hands – exploring between your fingers, the backs of your hands, palms and your nails noticing the differences in texture, skin temperature and what you are feeling about the experience.
- Continue from your hands to wrist, arms, and shoulders noticing differences and maybe how by touching firmly, softly or lightly different areas might respond sometimes unexpectedly.

Now explore your chest noting the feeling of your breast area and nipples.

- How do they react to touch?
- Does the skin feel softer or harder?
- Would your body be responding differently if it was someone else touching it?
- Continue down over your stomach – what is different about this area of your body?

Try to keep your mind focused on the task and if you notice any other thoughts or worries just notice them and try not to stay with these but “let them go”.

Move down your stomach and note the start of pubic hair.

- How does it feel under your fingers – how is it different to other parts of your body that have hair?
- Move on to the labia – notice the different textures and where the labia begins and where the skin changes.
- Try to notice whether it becomes more sensitive in different areas and if there is a way of touching that is different to other parts of the body when touched.
- Is there any change in how you are thinking when touching in this area of your body?
- If this makes you feel aroused or uncomfortable **stay** with the feeling. Try to find out why that feeling has come about. This is after all your body – it belongs to you and only you for the rest of your life. Be aware of your feelings at this time. For many people touching genitals has been taboo outside of washing and going to the toilet. We often touch but do not really notice.
- Notice where the most sensitive areas are – see what sort of touch produces the most responses.
- Use a hand mirror to look at the underside of your vagina, your partner may know these views better than you. See how it all fits together.
- Explore the area between your labia and anus; this is called the perineum and it is often a very sensitive part of the body with lots of nerve endings and therefore sensitive and/or ticklish.

Now try to reach your buttocks as best you can. Move your hands over the rest of your body. Explore thighs, legs, feet and toes.

- What kind of touch do you enjoy the most?
- What type of movement feels good, what type feels comforting, which is exciting?
- During the whole exercise did you notice some areas were warmer than others?
- Did some areas get warmer whilst you were touching or after you had touched them?

Keeping a note of your feelings

When you have finished the exercise, spend some time reflecting on the experience - what have you learnt, what is new or different. Write down your thoughts and what you noticed as well as what you felt; by doing this it will help you to give feedback about the experience to your therapist, who will want to hear about what this second exercise was like for you.

How often should I do these exercises?

It will help if you do this exercise at least twice so that you get the maximum advantage – becoming more familiar and comfortable with your body



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