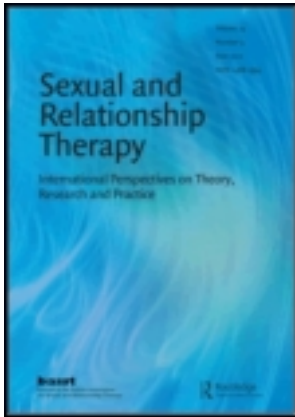


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Love your gusset: making friends with your pelvic floor

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marriage ended during the course of her pursuit of improved orgasmic function and the book includes a section regarding the importance of communication with sexual partners and about using the diet to suit individual needs, lifestyles and relationships.

The role of biochemistry in our sexual functioning is currently a hot topic and one that interests many doctors and therapists as well as pharmaceutical companies searching for an effective treatment for FSD. So a book that discusses the role of dopamine and serotonin in terms that are easy to understand, is both fascinating and enlightening. However, I have reservations about the recommendation that pre-menopausal women with low libido should be taking testosterone supplements or indeed, what the long-term effects of high levels of fish oil could be and whether we need to be concerned about consistently high levels of dopamine, which have been linked to compulsive and addictive behaviour.

In the final chapter the author discusses her own current sexual functioning in some detail. She boasts of 40 to 50 orgasms a day, which she qualifies by explaining that she can have ten orgasms in five minutes; she also extols the virtues of female ejaculation, which provides her a certain camaraderie with men, and brags that, due to her 'sky high' libido, sexual thoughts are never far away and, more worryingly, states that she finds something appealing in every man she meets! Interestingly, the author admits that she has taken her diet to the extreme but doesn't understand why, is it possible that high dopamine levels may be contributing?

Is this what women want? Do we want to be like a stereotypical, sexually obsessed man? I certainly don't think so! The majority of women like being women with all the inherent complexities and contradictions. Would we choose to regularly drink a chilled glass or two of white wine or the ability to have multiple orgasms? I think white wine would win nearly every time. But do we want to have the ability to 'switch off' and enjoy intimate and sexual pleasure with our partner, similar to those experiences we enjoyed on holiday or before we had children or in the first throes of lust? You bet we do!! Will many of us buy the book, take fish oil, eat dark chocolate and watch the carbohydrate content of our diets? Most definitely!

This book is controversial in many ways, but overall, it is a fascinating book that both engages and challenges; it explains the connection between our diet and various chemicals in our bodies that effect our sexual functioning in an accessible way; it provides practical suggestions to improve our sexual satisfaction and finally, it is a book that is sure to create a great deal of interest, discussion and debate.

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Love Your Gusset: making friends with your pelvic floor, by *Professor Grace Dorey*. Barnstaple, Devon: G Dorey, 2007, 75 pages, £7.90 (hardback). ISBN 978-0-954-53934-4

This is a delightful little book for women of all ages with a most light-hearted but clear and concise approach to help women learn to love and to strengthen their pelvic floor. The accompanying illustrations by Peter Clover are simply superb, ranging from endearing,

titillating and sexy, to funny, embarrassing and hilarious as well as evoking a whole array of other emotions and feelings in between. This book is for women of all ages. It invites them to look at their pelvic floor and shows them how with a few simple daily exercises 'their gussets can be transformed'. It is divided into six sections, which describe and discuss various issues and topics such as getting to know your gusset; strengthening your gusset; gussets and babies; sexual, continence and various other problems as well as sensible and healthy lifestyle advice in relation to your gusset.

Grace Dorey was awarded a Ph.D. for her research on the role of pelvic floor exercises in erectile dysfunction and post-micturition dribble. She is an expert on the subject of male and female incontinence and has published several other books in this area and about the importance of the pelvic floor fitness (for men and women with sexual dysfunction and for men after prostate surgery for instance). Grace works as a Consultant Physiotherapist for Continence and is a Visiting Senior Research Fellow at the University of the West of England.

Grace modestly suggested to me that 'the book would make a fun stocking filler for female friends' but I strongly feel that most women will benefit from her wise advice and helpful instructions, whilst most men will undoubtedly learn something from it as well. I really recommend this little gem.

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Friends, Lovers and Groups, edited by Rutger Engels, Margaret Kerr, and Hakan Stattin. Chichester: John Wiley, 2007, 190 pages, £85.00 (hardback). ISBN 978-0-470-01885-9

Who does not remember that time when one knew best, just like the rest of one's friends? That period – adolescence – is the target of this book, which in particular looks at one of its most crucial tasks: developing relationships with friends, lovers and within groups.

The book is divided in four areas. Each chapter is written by a different author, some presenting their research projects in detail, some using the latest research to share innovative thoughts. In the first part, the authors describe a "deviancy training" mechanism of peer influence. To learn about the mechanisms that drive the formation of deviant friendships, the authors tested if the way adolescent responded to deviant talk would influence the development of deviant behaviours. The more deviance talk, the more fun (laughter, sexual activity and substance use), which may sound like a good idea at the time, but which is linked with adult negative outcomes. Other questions posed are around peer influence: what is the difference with the famous "peer pressure"? And what about the mixture of antisocial and prosocial skills the "influencer" in antisocial behaviours needs to succeed?

The second part addresses romantic and sexual relationships. As an adolescent psychiatrist, I see in my clinical practise how adolescents just brighten up when mentioning a partner. Romantic relationships are positively correlated with peer social competence and other positive factors, but there is now evidence that these relationships can be associated with adverse consequences: break ups are one of the strongest predictors of