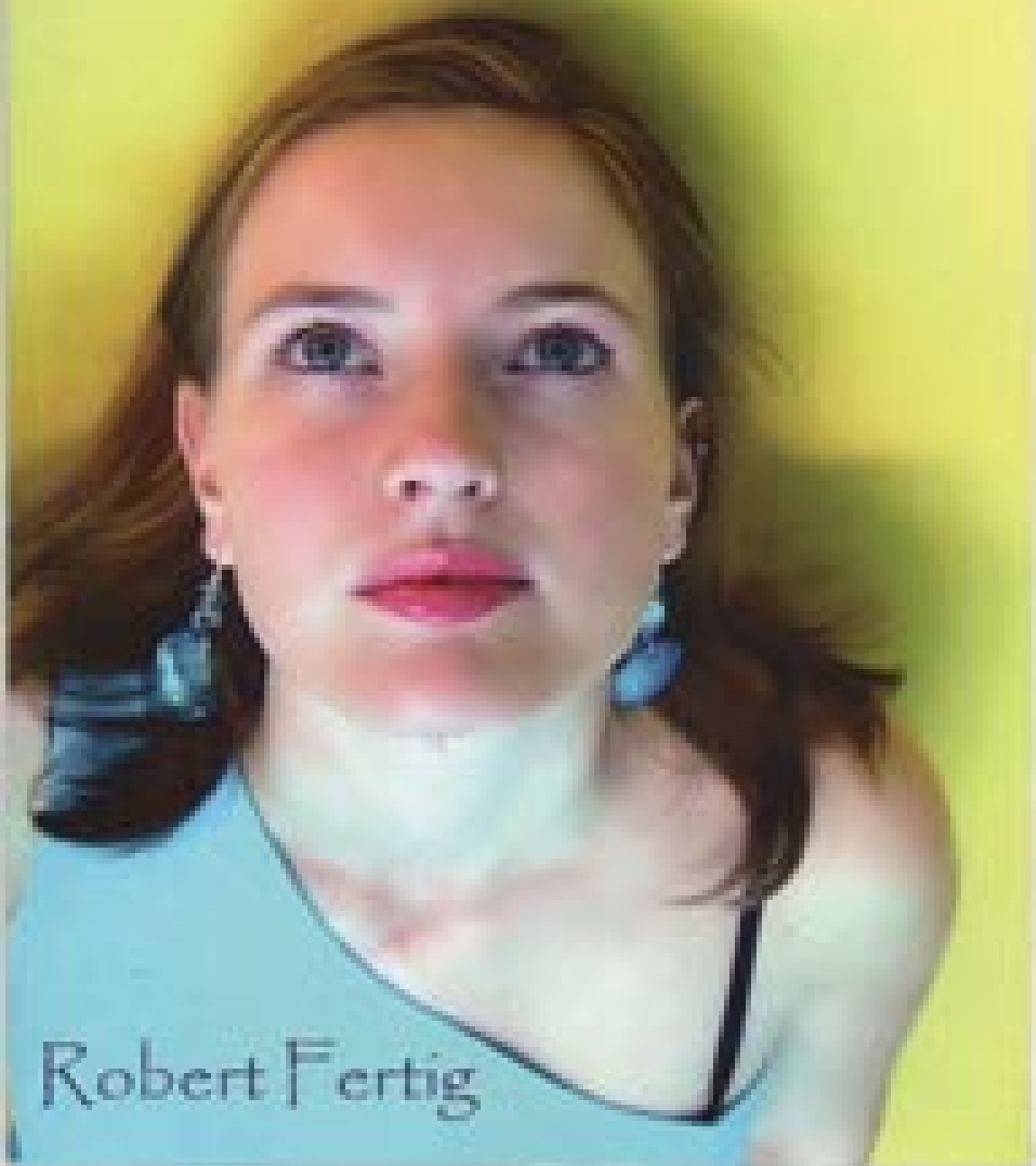


What Every Woman Needs to Know

To Help With Her Man's Eyes



Robert Fertig

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CHAPTER SAMPLE

Part I.

How a man with E. D. can enjoy an

Excellent Sex Life

Without using Drugs or Appliances

While in the process of rewriting this book, Harry Beer, one of the members of a prostate support group, read only Part I of this book. He responded to my question:

“What did I learn from this book? Well, there are more ways to skin a cat that I realized. There is also much more to relationships than I realized. I learned to be more tender, more understanding of what she wants. It is also important to realize that we are not alone, we are no longer lost, those of us trying to live with it. It was well thought out and well put together. It proves that there are better solutions than putting more drugs into us, we put too many in as it is.

It offers a wholesome and natural way of approaching the problem (impotence) and shows how to get over inhibitions, and learning to have patience.

. . . It shows that loving needs to be worked on and that foreplay has to be worked on and it gives solutions.”

Chapter One

The Quality of Life

Quietly, very discreetly, hundreds of men have come to me regarding a problem his “close friend” was having. They would ask, “My best buddy has E. D. and he wants to know if he can ever get back his sex life?” Prudently, insuring that we were out of earshot of any other person, my response given was always addressed to his “close friend’s” problem, even though both of us know that this is not about his close friend, but himself. The face of a man must be saved at all costs.

During the past sixteen years I have done countless volunteer seminars and health fairs for the American Cancer Society. Three times each month is average though there have been days when I have done as many as three seminars in one day or weeks when I served at three different health fairs. Thousands of women and a substantial smaller number of men have questioned me about prostate cancer and its negative effects. Most men will not ask questions regarding themselves but instead, their queries are couched by seeking information for “their best friend.”

It is safer to be in denial as all too many men play the sometimes death-defying game of, “If I don’t know, I don’t have to worry.” The unfortunate part about denial is that it is usually those men in denial that account for a large part of the 40,000 deaths each year of American men. Multiply that by men all over the face of the earth and the number becomes quite substantial. Perhaps the following is a good example is what happened one month after I did a seminar of this subject.

“My wife and I are having more fun than we’ve had in years. Your seminar literally changed our lives.”

A smiling couple in their late fifties or early sixties, holding hands, walked over and said those very words to me at the close of a Prostate Cancer Research and Education Foundation support group meeting in San Diego. A month earlier, I gave a one hour seminar to that group on “How to Enrich Your Sexual Life whether you have E. D. or not.” The smiling man, who stated that his life was changed, is a prostate cancer survivor who, after facing the diagnosis, had gone through the decision-making process with his spouse and physician as to the best possible treatment for his case. They elected to have a radical prostatectomy. With his wife at his side, he told me that after the surgery he had erectile dysfunction (E. D.). Because of it had avoided all physical contact with his spouse, much to her chagrin. She added, and he agreed, that this negative reaction to erectile dysfunction had a devastating effect on their marriage. In order to save their thirty-year marriage, his urologist suggested that they both attend prostate support group meetings where they would join in with other couples who met regularly for mutual acceptance, understanding, compassion, but, most of all, for their mutual education.

That same afternoon, one by one, five additional couples came over to speak privately with me. Each man said that before my seminar he had thought that since he had his prostate gland removed, he would never be able to enjoy a meaningful sexual relationship again and whatever sexual pleasure was previously enjoyed, was now gone forever. The good news is that now there is another handful of men who previously assumed the traditional male position of no erection, no sex, learned otherwise. All twelve people happily told me how the previous month’s one-hour seminar changed and enhanced their lives forever. Quite candidly, two of the women wept with emotion as their husbands told their extremely candid stories.

Those six men and their wives freely stated that they ended up with a greater understanding of sexual relations and more sexual pleasure than they ever thought possible. These men also learned that life was not over and sex was not over. They realized that the misguided perception that leads men with E. D. to give up any and all sexual activity is foolish, futile and foolhardy. It cannot be repeated often enough, because a man has erectile dysfunction does not mean that the fun and pleasure of his previous sexual life is over. All every man with

E. D. has to do to enjoy really good sex is to stop negative thinking, and open up his mind to the extraordinary possibilities available to him. If necessary, read and re-read, the following pages. Within the covers of this volume there awaits a new and wonderful world of sexual possibilities, fun and perhaps more sexual enjoyment than most ever thought possible. None of what follows is theory. Every single point, every experience and every moment of sheer bliss comes from my personal life experiences which are shared openly, without fear or shame.

During the past sixteen years, a major part of my life has been spent, first hand, being victorious over cancer again and again and again. Cancer has claimed most of my colon, more than half of my rectum, gall bladder, left kidney and prostate. My irrefutable position regarding cancer has been, and remains, never yield to cancer, no matter what the odds of survival may be. Each time cancer reared its ugly head, it was honestly faced without fear. Fear can destroy the strongest of human beings and their will to survive. As a result of these experiences, it became singularly important for me to share what was learned with anyone willing to listen, this led me, and hopefully them, on an inspiring journey. I first attended, and later led, prostate support group meetings and before long was a guest speaker for other prostate support groups, the United Way and the American Cancer Society. During this period there were also many discussions with small and large groups and countless one-on-one encounters with men who have/had prostate cancer or were concerned about potentially getting this life-threatening disease.

In all of those contacts with men who had or have prostate cancer and/or had sometime in their life, or presently have erectile dysfunction, the expression Quality of Life was mentioned over and over, it apparently being of paramount importance to each man who brought that point up. It was amazing to me that the Quality of Life seemed to be the single overriding issue regarding prostate cancer, even more important than conquering the cancer or perhaps even holding on to life itself. When men facing prostate cancer and potential erectile dysfunction were asked the question, "What do you mean by the Quality of Life," the responses were never specific. Issues were skirted, but what I did learn from what they said was that the concept of dying was of lesser importance than losing their ability to have an erection.

No one will dispute the point that we all want as high a quality of life as humanly possible. You want it. I want it. We all want it, BUT, when Quality of Life concerns affect one's life physically and sexually, especially when personal concerns about the latter affect the former, those decisions frequently and exponentially can cause an increased rift between partners and can also cause more serious problems that they are not aware of, such prostate cancer which can spread into the bones or other parts of the body such as the liver or lungs.

What really concerns me is why so many men prefer to face E. D. without taking positive action. It's probably quite similar to wanting to quit smoking but not quitting even though smokers know that the smoking will probably kill them. My mother knew that smoking was killing her, and even though she had an oxygen tank with her all of the time, she would not quit smoking. She survived six heart attacks, but lost her life in her refusal to give up her two packs of cigarettes a day habit. Yes, and my father-in-law lost his life to it as did my closest cousin, who was brought up as my sister after her mother died. Cancer does kill!

When faced with prostate cancer and the possibility of erectile dysfunction, every man should be open enough to explore all the possibilities of resolution of his "so-called" problem. Most men will learn that it may not be as bad as their first perception. Of course, in the majority of cases, prostate cancer grows slowly and those afflicted will probably die of old age before they die of prostate cancer, but that is not necessarily. One can throw the dice, so to speak, life or death on one roll. Then there is the other side of the coin. My prostate cancer grew from the size of a peppercorn in the prostate gland to where it doubled the size of the gland and extended itself into surrounding tissue doubling in size again.....all in only three weeks and two days from the date of the original biopsy to actual surgery.

Don't assume anything about prostate cancer. If your medical urgency permits, learn everything that you possibly can before taking action, perhaps even before you are diagnosed with prostate cancer or any other cancer. Gather facts. Ask questions. Explore the myriad of alternatives. Read books on the subject. Attend prostate support groups. Talk it over with your physician and your life partner. Then make your decision. You cannot insist that your doctor make it for you. We may kid about some doctors playing God, but when push comes to shove, they cannot and will not assume that imperious position.

There is now so much more information available and men should realize that they are not alone. Many celebrities have gone public with their prostate disease. Men such as Robert Dole, former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani, Jerry Lewis, General H. Norman Schwarzkopf, Stewart Granger, Robert Goulet, Richard Petty, Robert Stack, Louis Gossett Jr, Telly Savalas, Andy Grove, Sidney Poitier and Arnold Palmer. These men have brought prostate cancer into the public limelight, especially through some of the early Pfizer commercials for Viagra that featured Robert Dole.

The Public Broadcasting System's program, NOVA, also covered the subject of erectile dysfunction and there it was stated that fifty-two percent of American men will have E. D. at one time or another in their lives. According to the New England Journal of Medicine, 30 million American men are now affected. Even the queen of talk shows, Oprah Winfrey, addressed E. D. on one of her programs.

With all of this information on new techniques and methods of treating prostate cancer you will find there isn't any one approach that is right for everyone. Your urologist can explain the possible approaches that may be taken, but the ultimate decision is yours. He/she will probably advise you that your first job is to get educated, really educated. Learn about all of the treatments along with their positive and negative sides and don't fool yourself, there are definitely positive and negative sides to all treatments. None are perfect. Many are discussed within the pages of this book, but keep in mind that new methods of treatment are constantly being introduced. If one of several different types of surgery are the chosen option, erectile dysfunction does not always occur and incontinence may be infrequent. Whatever choice is made, even if one of the negative results is erectile dysfunction, there remains a rich and rewarding sexual life providing you do not assume the poorly conceived notion of "no erection - no sex." This may not be the accepted traditional thinking process, but once one passes through the accepted mores and pre-determined negative thinking, there are erotic joys so fulfilling and rewarding that you and your sexual partner will be amazed. Within the pages of this book, we will address the many techniques of making love and having enjoyable sex even though a man may have E. D. Another point of equal importance is that even if a man can still have an erection, there is much to learn about sex and the joys it brings beyond the accepted and traditional forms of love-making.

The overriding theme for members and new-comers in most prostate cancer support group meetings is when prostate cancer is diagnosed, always take a pro-active stance. Learn everything possible about prostate cancer so that you know exactly what you are up against. We consistently stress it among ourselves and especially direct those thoughts to the men who are playing the odds with "watchful waiting." When I was diagnosed with prostate cancer there was no time for research as immediate surgery was of paramount importance due to both previous history of cancer and a large tumor in my left kidney.

Once on the track of writing this book, it became necessary for me to increase my knowledge of this subject. I began reading books and researching through the world-wide web while attending more prostate support groups where I openly stated my case history with candid details of my several cancer surgeries including my radical prostate surgery with resultant erectile dysfunction. While attending those meetings, it became evident to me that when the subject of erectile dysfunction was brought up response or admission by any individual was almost unheard of. Men would sit, listen and volunteer their histories, including Gleason scores, PSA levels and their choice of treatment(s) but erectile dysfunction as pertaining to them - never!

Male privacy is a precious quality. Most men have little difficulty in responding to questions regarding the women he may or may not have seduced, but inquire about his personal sex life, especially if he has erectile dysfunction, one hits a stone wall. Whenever the subject of E. D. is raised, the solid stone wall becomes thicker and higher. On the other hand, women have no trouble discussing breast or uterine cancer. Most have little personal concern when talking about the removal of one or both breasts, BUT for a man to admit to erectile dysfunction????

During Health Fairs for the American Cancer Society I have taught many hundreds of women how to do a proper examination of their breasts. They welcome the information and finite detail as to the exact methods that can help them become aware of any potential problem. When it comes to speaking with men about their sexual health, or getting their annual PSA (prostate specific antigen) blood test (more on this later), a few will admit to getting it and fewer still even know the results beyond the usual response of "My doctor said I am OK." Back to the adage of, "What I don't know will not hurt me."

This ever present veil of personal secrecy led me to think of the men as members of a very secret fraternity, much more secretive than the "don't ask - don't tell" military method of resolving the issue as what to do about men and women who happen to be gay and further served as the catalyst for the original title of this book, The Secret Fraternity. It obviously has been changed to reach a broader market. Even within support groups where men get to know one another and the medical specifics of prostate cancer and its various treatment therapies are shared in complete candor, one's sex life is not discussed.

Eight years ago, seven very senior level, independent business consultants (six others plus myself), met to determine whether or not we could create a company of management consulting professionals. Towards the end of the first meeting, two of the men stated a logical and honest concern that they did not know any of the others well enough to risk sharing their hard-earned clients. One man suggested that we wait until we each had the opportunity to get to know one another and develop mutual trust prior to creating a company which would mean bringing the other members of the new consulting group into individual consultant client bases. We agreed to meet bi-monthly in order to get to know each other better, learn in more detail about each other's core competencies and accomplish our goal of establishing mutual trust.

After two months of meetings in my home, we were all present when one of the group who had previously met my life-partner turned to me and said, "Robert, you have made no bones about the fact that because of prostate cancer surgery, you have E. D." He continued, "the reason that I asked is that I too have a problem with frequent erectile dysfunction though not as a result of surgery for prostate cancer. How can you keep such a beautiful woman happy when you cannot satisfy her sexually?" That question began my thinking on the need for this book. When I explained the basic concept of how to have a superb sex life with E. D., found in detail within these pages, to all four of the men who admitted to having E. D. They could hardly believe that I was telling the truth.

As we discussed this subject, the other men wandered in. The man who originally brought up the subject seemed comfortable with the others witnessing his questions. Before long, three additional men in the group admitted to the same concern. In fact, only two of the seven stated that they did not have a problem with E. D. My response to this subject was to remind them that the objective of the bi-monthly meetings was to reach a point of trust so that together we could build a consulting organization. With the almost universal admission of E. D., we certainly had reached that point as this is a subject that most men will almost never admit to another man until complete and total trust has been reached.

None one of those men had done anything about resolving the erectile dysfunction issue other than to avoid having any sexual relations with their spouses. Further, they stated that they never thought about having sex without an erection. The biggest surprise to me was that a few of them said that they were even too embarrassed to mention their E. D. to their own physicians.

As it turned out, this was the final meeting of the group. From that meeting on the men who had admitted to erectile dysfunction always had some excuse as to why they could not come to the next meeting or to the one after that. Eventually the potential consulting organization concept was dropped. It seemed that even though it took unquestioned trust to state that one had E. D., once stated, there was too much embarrassment to face the others again. Why is it that when women face adversity, they bond together, but when men face adversity, they choose to go it alone? This seems especially true when it comes to erectile dysfunction.

On all too many occasions, men shut out their families and more importantly, their wife or significant other. They close the gate on any sexual intimacy because they think that in order to be a man they must have their equipment (penis) functioning. In many cases of E. D., the men have shut down physically, emotionally and communicatively. Basic family and/or espousal communication has been shut off and is out of the question. Wives and sweethearts may try to communicate, but most meet with little if any success in efforts to get their partner to talk about his E. D., no less make love with them. Women say that their husbands not only refuse to discuss the subject but won't even hold or fondle them, much less make love. This refusal of men to discuss their erectile dysfunction, or their resulting embarrassment if they do, made me realize how important it was for me to address these issues in order to debunk the notion that only the positive resolution of their perceived penile problem is to regain their lost 'manhood.' I've often been asked if there were any changes in my innermost feelings about myself since the prostate surgery a decade ago. My response has always been, "Obviously I accept the fact that I will never have an erection again. So what! An erection does not make me more or less a man." It is perfectly OK not to be the envy of the locker room, if any man really is. The reality of the situation is that tens of millions of American men and perhaps hundreds of millions of men world-wide have the capability of sexual fulfillment for themselves and for their partner. Any negative outlook is a hindrance to enjoying life to the full est. Erectile dysfunction does not mean that life or sex is over, both can be enjoyed to the fullest. Others have gone through more, but please consider that I have been there and have worked through it resulting in complete sexual happiness with an boundless zest for life. It can be done. It has been done. The end result is wonderful and quite rewarding.

There you have it. The basic concept of this book. There is no reason why erectile dysfunction should prevent any male from having a rich and rewarding sex life. This is the main theme of this book and is discussed in great detail in part I. Just how do you participate in a full sex life while having erectile dysfunction" The chapters on sex, foreplay and seduction will get your imagination going. How seduction can be a lot of fun and foreplay will be well beyond the imagine of many men. Yes, you'll find, seduction is for real men and foreplay is not necessarily reserved for sissies.

Whether you are male or female, you will find through the information found on these pages just how much fun renewed sex can be for both of you. How to make love-making really exciting is covered in depth and the techniques for fulfilled sexual enjoyment are discussed for those who do or do not have erectile dysfunction. There is a section on prostate cancer with specific details and was brought up-to-date just prior to printing.

This book is for you - all of you - of course for men, but also for women, because women are the other side of the equation and more often than not, lead their men. Some of the subjects addressed are:

How to accept sexual reality as it is, not as it was, or as you may wish it to be.

How to make love without an erection and have the time of your life doing it.

How a positive attitude over adversity can and will conquer unbelievable odds.

It worked for the couples in my seminars and it will work for you. We individually have the power to change our lives. We only need to give ourselves permission and in doing so, enrich not only ourselves, but all of those around us. The results of changing expectations, wants, needs and desires will prove to be nothing short of amazing.