



Having Sex, Wanting Intimacy: Why Women Settle for One-Sided Relationships

By Jill P. Weber

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Finding lasting love and intimacy can be difficult for many women. Some end up agreeing to sexual relationships hoping that they may lead to longer, more fulfilling relationships, only to be let down when they don't. Here, Jill Weber explains why women feel forced into a male model of dating that barter sex for the unrealistic hope that it will lead to emotional intimacy. What it leads to for the woman, most often, is disappointment, despair, and impaired self-esteem. "Sextimacy," as Weber terms it, traps women in relationships that are one-sided and lack emotional intimacy. When this happens, women routinely blame themselves instead of realizing they should blame their romantic strategy.

This book, in a step-by-step progression, shows a better way to break the cycle and cultivating better relationships. It teaches women how to recognize when they are in a Sextimacy event as opposed to the beginning of a mutually fulfilling relationship that won't leave them racked with morning-after regrets. And it gives clear direction about what women can do to find warm romantic partnerships that serve their needs.

Using real stories from women of various ages and stages of life, Weber shows how patterns of behavior may develop that produce a vulnerability to being used. Starting in childhood and proceeding through the crucial teen years, she illustrates the factors that may go into this limited approach to cultivating romantic relationships, and provides clear tips on how to stop. Including a series of self-assessments, the book offers women insight into the patterns that rob them of the opportunities to grow and to fulfill their emotional needs. Anyone struggling to break the cycle of having sex without the attendant intimacy they crave will find in these pages a warm and ready approach to finding love and fulfillment.

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Editorial Review

Review

Clinical psychologist Weber exhorts girls and women to stop offering sex in the hope of gaining emotional intimacy with men, a process she terms “sextimacy.” In a self-help volume more aptly targeted toward today’s hook-up culture than Harville Hendrix’s well-regarded *Getting the Love You Want*, Weber contends that women too often invalidate their own desires in partnerships that unilaterally meet the needs of the man. She describes the female biological need for bonding and urges women to expect mutual fulfillment and to refuse sex with partners who are unwilling and/or unable to provide emotional intimacy and safety outside of sex. The inclusion of contributing family pattern descriptions and self-assessment questions adds depth and utility to this excellent book. VERDICT The author’s dedication page reads simply “To Girls.” Most sexually active females will see themselves or someone they know in this compassionate and helpful book. Recommended. (*Library Journal*)

What do we do when we want people to want what we want them to want...but, they just don't want it? Many of us fail to recognize that the answer to this question resides within ourselves. The answer seems simple, but the inter-workings are complex...inter-workings that are explored in Weber's book and explicated in this review. Weber positions herself as a clinical psychologist who is married and a mother. . . . [and offers] observations based on her clinical experience and knowledge of the field, shares examples from patients in her therapy sessions and cites other scholars' research—largely reflective of U. S. cultural and social contexts—as appropriate. . . . Weber's text does make good arguments that could benefit many women as they relate to self-worth and self-awareness and the value of their voice in heterosexual, romantic relationships. . . . While of significance to young women and women, this text is could also be of interest to men, parents, educators and students, particularly those who focus on interpersonal communication, psychology and gender studies. The text introduces many good points of discussion, debate and consideration. Importantly, Weber's book focuses heavily on the female self—self-awareness, self-esteem, self-worth, and self-work and her messages to women about the legitimacy of their feelings, voice and relational placement are valuable. There exist important lessons about how girls are being raised and conditioned in Weber's text and, perhaps most paramount is Weber's shining the spotlight on a woman's knowledge of and relationship with her entire self. (*Sex Roles: A Journal of Research*)

Where has this book been? For years we've needed someone to directly address the pseudo-liberation that passes for authentic autonomy and pseudo-intimacy that can block the option of genuine vulnerability. The sad truth that women feel compelled to accept male defined approaches to sexuality requires discussion and *Having Sex, Wanting Intimacy* will now offer that possibility. Hopefully this book opens a watershed dialogue – among women, within relationships, and throughout our culture-at-large. The reflection and change that will likely result is long overdue. (Kent Hoffman, Rel.D., Psychology of Intimacy, Gonzaga University)

Jill Weber eloquently explains how many women end up ashamed of some of their greatest strengths and guides the reader through the process of turning this around. Her book will be helpful to women who would like to be more mindful and self-aware in their intimate relationships and to others who want to better understand women who seem troubled by their relationship patterns. (Matthew D. Johnson, Ph.D., associate professor of psychology, Binghamton University)

Jill Weber has written an engaging and thought-provoking book that will stimulate many women to ponder

their relationships with men and with their own bodies. (Karen Prager, professor of psychology and gender studies, The University of Texas at Dallas)

Having Sex, Wanting Intimacy is directed at those women, including high school and college students, who use sex as a means to achieving intimacy, and who fail miserably in doing so. It shows them how to recognize the signs that their relationships are based on physical activities rather than emotional connections, and guides readers to finding a better way.

About the Author

Jill P. Weber, Ph.D., is a clinical psychologist in private practice in the Washington, DC area. She has appeared as a psychology expert in various media outlets including *USA Today*, *Washington Post*, *Nightline*, *U.S. News and World Report*, *Teen Vogue*, *Family Circle*, *Seventeen*, *CNN*, *Associated Press* and *the Discovery Channel*. She specializes in the impact of culture on female identity and relationship development. Jill writes a blog for *Psychology Today* and *Huffington Post*. For more see www.drjillweber.com.

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