How do you spell relief without masturbating? [1]

Dear Alice,

I'm a happily married woman whose husband is in the military. He is away a lot and I don't believe in masturbation. Any suggestions on relieving the tension?

Answer

Dear Reader,

Since your sexual tension may, understandably, be mixed with the emotional weight of your spouse's absences, an ongoing dialogue with him about how his time away affects you might ease some of your load. And don't wait to chat when he's home -- use the Internet as a vehicle for frequent conversations if he has easy access. If plain loneliness is part of his travel fallout, think about increasing your contact with friends, relatives, and others who may be in your same boat.

On the physical side of the divide, massage immediately comes to mind. Since longing for your husband's intimate touch is surely tied up in your sexual tension, a professional rub down might just satisfy some of your "skin hunger." No, a licensed massage therapist (LMT) won't (and shouldn't) maneuver like your Colonel, but massage therapy can serve up the right combination of touch and tension relief to get you through his tours of duty. For more info on how to find a masseur or masseuse in your area -- including ones for military wives on a budget - read Seeking massage therapist [2] in Alice's General Health archive.

Yoga, meditation, tai chi, and other attention-focusing practices may bring you mental and physical peace, dissipating your sexual strain by releasing your bottled-up energy and directing it elsewhere. Merely relaxing and getting your mind off of, well, getting off will no doubt result from these kinds of techniques. For that matter, a hobby or volunteering could do the same. Good old-fashioned exercise is an option, too -- nothing like a hundred push-ups or a run in the park to spend the sexual energy. Even some sensual Latin, Mediterranean, or freestyle dancing in the privacy of your living room could do the trick. Just find what is right for you, and to be fair, it's possible for all of these suggestions to produce the opposite of the desired effect, sending your urges to even higher altitudes.

If, for you, masturbation means self-stimulation that includes orgasm, then would self-stimulation that stops or pauses before climax be an option? It is possible to be satisfied sexually even if you decide to forgo the "big O." Another alternative is self-massage, using lotion or during a hot bath or steamy shower. After you've pondered or pursued these
suggestions along with your own ideas, you may conclude that finding a release valve equal to private time with your husband is mission impossible. But this doesn’t mean that answering and enjoying your natural desires can’t be a mission accomplished.

Alice!
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