

Conflict Strategies and Sexual Well-Being

We wanted to know how perceived partner IER strategies impacts couple's sexual well-being



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Interpersonal Emotion Regulation During Relationship Conflict: Daily and Longitudinal Associations With Couples' Sexual Well-Being

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*Scroll to see
what we found!*



Interpersonal emotion regulation (IER)

strategies are responses that someone can use to influence someone else's emotional experience.

Responses can include **responsiveness, cognitive support, physical presence, and hostility.**



Responsiveness can look like giving validation to their partner.

Cognitive support can look like helping their partner come up with a plan to resolve a problem.

Physical presence can look like using nonverbal communication to show they're present with their partner.

Hostile responses can look like a partner being invalidating or dismissive to their partner.



we wanted to know:

1

Does how someone perceives which IER strategy their partner used impact their sexual well-being?

2

Does the impact hold over time?

3

Does binary gender impact the association of perceived IER strategies and sexual well-being?



We recruited
122
long-term couples



Participants completed daily diaries to report:

- **sexual well-being** (desire, satisfaction, distress)
- how much **relationship conflict** they experienced
- What **IER response they think their partner used** on conflict days



we found that...

When someone reported their partner to use **responsiveness**, they felt **more sexually satisfied** and their partner reported **enhanced sexual desire**.



When someone reported their partner to use **cognitive support**, they reported **higher sexual desire** and their partner reported **higher sexual satisfaction**.

When women perceived their partner to use responsiveness or cognitive support, their partners reported **enhanced sexual distress**.

and...

When someone reported their partner to use **physical presence**, they and their partner reported **greater sexual desire**.

Physical presence was also associated with their own and their partner's **enhanced sexual desire 4 months later**.

When someone reported their partner to use a **hostile strategy**, it was associated with one's own **lower sexual satisfaction and desire**, but not with their partner's.



so, what does all of this mean?

When someone perceives their partner to be using **responsiveness, cognitive support, or physical presence strategies** when conflict arises, it **can lead to enhanced sexual well-being** rather than if they used hostile strategies.



Overall...

These findings could help couples **understand the costs and benefits of specific IER strategies** on couples' sexual well-being. Results of this study highlight IER as a potential target for interventions – encouraging couples to **recognize their partners efforts** and **use more adaptive IER strategies** may have implications for couples' overall well-being.



This is a summary of our published article:

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Blog post and infographic by Kaitlin Myers, Grace Wang and Olivia Kempster