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**SAVAGE  
LOVE** **SEVEN NIGHTS**  
BY DAN SAVAGE

*I love my wife, but I have a lot of resentment, disappointment, and insecurity over our sex life. After four years of marriage, huge angst remains that I have yet to get a handle on. Right now, with kids and our busy lives, she's content with sex once a week or so, and I need relief pretty much every night to help with my insomnia. What's more, I really don't enjoy porn at all, but if we aren't having intercourse, there's pretty much no other way for me to get off. Blame it on my fundamentalist evangelical upbringing, but I fear my porn use becoming an addiction. It makes me feel dirty. I would love a solution to this problem that doesn't involve me jerking off in a dark room by a computer screen after my wife falls asleep every night. All I want to do is feel close to my wife, orgasm, and sleep. I think she does sincerely care and wants to help me, but is just so tired and busy with her career and our kids. And yes, I have talked and fought with her countless times. In weaker moments, I'll admit I have also guilted her for her more "active" sexual past (with prior boyfriends) and for her current "neglect," which I know is unfair and unhelpful. I just don't know what to do.*

**When Orgasms Enable Sleep**

You've been married four years, you have more than one child, you both work—and if you divide household labor like most couples, WOES, your wife is doing more/most of the cooking, cleaning, and child care. But even if you were childless, living in a hotel suite with daily maid service, eating only room service, and throwing your underpants out the window after one wearing, WOES, it would still be unreasonable to expect PIV intercourse every night of the week.

Frankly, WOES, once-a-week PIV is more sex than most young straight dads are getting. And if you're demanding PIV from your wife as a sleep aid—"ask your doctor if Clambien is right for you"—it's a miracle you're getting any sex at all.

And the limited options you cite—it's either PIV with the wife or masturbation in front of the computer—aren't doing you any favors.

Consider PIV from your wife's perspective: Her husband fucks, comes, and falls asleep. She lies there for a while afterward, tingling, and may have to go to the bathroom once or twice. The PIV that puts her husband to sleep after a long day? It puts her sleep off. And if she wanted to get it over with quickly—because she was exhausted—there wasn't much foreplay, which means she probably wasn't fully lubricated (uncomfortable) and most likely didn't come (unfair). That's a recipe for resentment, WOES, and resentment kills desire. (Or maybe you should think of it this way: If your ass got fucked every time you said yes to sex, WOES, you wouldn't say yes to sex seven nights a week.)

If you expanded your definition of sex, WOES, if your options weren't PIV or nothing, you might not have to masturbate six nights a week. Because if your definition of sex included oral (his and hers), mutual masturbation, and frottage—and if these weren't consolation prizes you settled for, but sex you were enthusiastic about—your wife might say yes to sex more often.

Still, you're never going to get it seven nights a week. So make the most of the PIV you're getting, broaden your definition of sex and get another night or two of sex in per week, and enjoy porn without guilt the rest of the week. And if you're concerned about the amount of porn you're watching, try this trick: Lie on the couch or the floor or the guest bed, stroke your cock (even if it's soft), and think dirty thoughts. Your cock will get hard, I promise, and you'll get off. It's how most people masturbated before the internet came and ruined everything, WOES, and it still works.

*When I met my partner of three years, I thought I'd hit the jackpot: a Dom who packs a wallop but knows how to listen and loves group sex (which is kinda my jam). It's hard to let go of my memories of the early days. We have had some rough patches, especially since he has had increasing financial trouble/underemployment, whereas I am back in school and have too many jobs. The biggest issue as I see it is he always makes me explain at length why I am busy—not just what I am doing (e.g., midterms) but whether that is "normal" (yes, every semester). I am tired. I care about my partner a lot and feel very close to him in some ways, but I also see him taking advantage of me financially and demanding endless reassurance on top of this. So my desire is to DTMFA. But when I talk about my feelings in the relationship, he argues with me—about what my feelings are or should rationally be. I am really ground down by this. The prospect of breaking up feels like it will be an ordeal. I feel trapped. I don't think I can stay with him, but I also don't want to have a conversation about leaving.*

**Sincerely Troubled Under Constant Criticism**

We need someone's consent before we kiss them, suck them, fuck them, spank them, spoon them, marry them, collar them, etc. But we do not need someone's consent to leave them. Breakups are the only aspect of our romantic and/or sexual lives where the other person's consent is irrelevant. The other person's pain is relevant, of course, and we should be as compassionate and considerate as possible when ending a relationship. (Unless we're talking about dumping an abuser, in which case safety and self-care are all that matters.) But we don't need someone's consent to dump them.

That means you don't have to win an argument to break up with your boyfriend, STUCK, nor do you have to convince him your reasons are rational. You don't even have to discuss your reasons for ending the relationship. You just have to say, "It's over; we're done." It's a declaration, STUCK, not a conversation.

*Thank you so much for all of your advocacy—of both sexual and political persuasions—through the years, Dan. Like Madder, the mom whose letter you ran in last week's column, I have used Trump's past and current behavior to help further discussion about the concepts of consent and body awareness, safety, and respect with my young daughter. There's just one thing I wanted to add: Parents should not restrict the "Trump Talk" to their daughters. Our sons need to be told that words and actions that objectify, demean, and damage women are not what being a boy or man is about. My son is only 3, so he's a little young as of yet. But I will definitely have the Trump Talk with both my children.*

**Sons Need Trump Talk Too**

Thanks for writing in, SNITT, and you're right—we need to have the Trump Talk with our sons, too. But I would add another reason to your list: While our sons absolutely need to be told not to objectify, demean, and damage women, our sons also need to be told that they, too, have a right to move through this world unmolested.

Parents have sex, too! Or so say the hosts of *One Bad Mother* on the *Lovecast*: savage-lovecast.com.