

## #2 Sensual & Sexual Boundaries

Everyone has the right to protect their boundaries by maintaining a clear distinction between sensual and sexual touch. All Vitamin T exchanges require permission, but it is especially necessary when someone wishes to cross the boundary between these two forms of touch. This boundary is only to be crossed by consenting adults.

Intentions are comprised of wants, needs, hopes, fantasies and attitudes which combine to form a certain state of mind. Clearly stated intentions and boundaries establish respectful touch.

Sometimes the purpose is to be friendly and non-sexual. Sometimes contact is initiated in order to become sexual. In either case, a clear signal of intention needs to be made prior to any touch. If the intention is clearly sexual, the person must wait for a positive response before crossing the sensual and sexual boundary.

The following situations demonstrate non-sexual intention.

A routine physical exam by a family physician may involve touching the genitals. Contact is strictly professional.

Two friends greet each other with an affectionate hug and kiss. Although there is no sexual intention, one of them experiences a sexual response. Such responses are natural. Although one person has sexual feelings, there is no intention to act upon them. This is a clear choice to keep the interaction at a friendly level.

A couple goes to sleep in the nude. They lie close to each other and enjoy the warmth and closeness of the body contact. They are just interested in a sensual form of contact.

The next two examples show clear sexual intention.

Two single people are at a party together. They catch one another's eye across the room. As the party proceeds, their gazes keep meeting. Even before any words or touch passes between them, they sense the sexual intention growing. Both are enjoying the flirting.

A husband is reading the newspaper and listening to music. His wife sits down beside him and begins to nibble on his ear. She is communicating her desire to cross the border into sexual touch.

Double messages, ambiguous gestures, innuendos, and secretly seductive behavior often hide underlying sexual intentions. This is confusing and harmful. Any touch that occurs under these circumstances is not Vitamin T.

The following chart describes the general differences between sensual and sexual touch.

### Sensual Touch

relaxing  
friendly  
public  
normal sensitivity  
affectionate  
all ages  
general permission  
clothes on  
no genital contact  
feels pleasant  
minimal skin contact  
releases tension  
non-aerobic

### Sexual Touch

exciting  
romantic  
private  
heightened sensitivity  
passionate  
adults only  
specific permission  
clothes off  
genital contact  
feels erotic  
maximum skin contact  
releases sex hormones  
aerobic and anaerobic

Confusion can arise between people when the fine line between sensual and sexual touch is approached. One partner may be feeling sexual; the other may be feeling sensual. This is a classic mismatch of intentions. It is time for the partners to talk about intentions and the appropriate forms of touch for each degree of intimacy.