

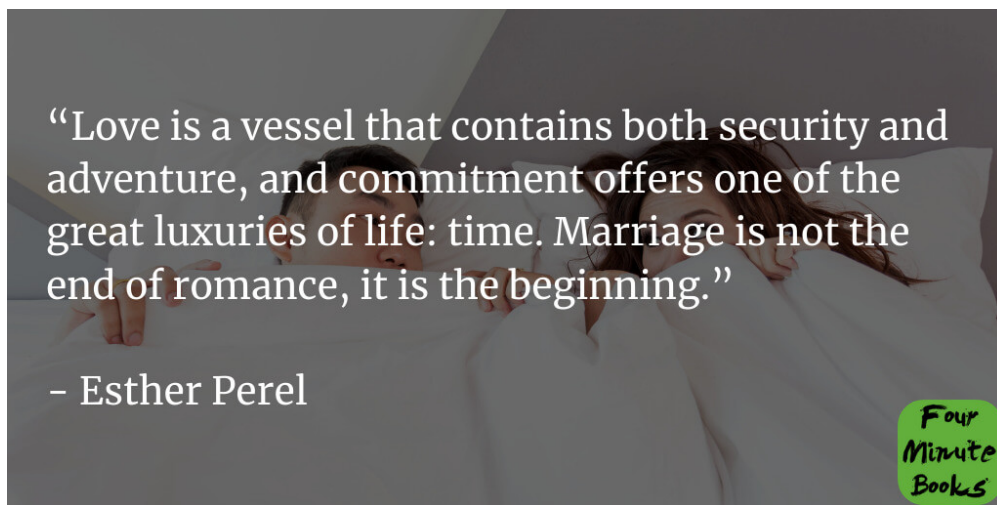
# Mating In Captivity Summary

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**1-Sentence-Summary:** *Mating In Captivity* explains the best sex advice that couples therapist Esther Perel has discovered in over twenty years of experience, and explains the barriers that can kill sexual desire in our domesticated society and what you and your spouse can do to remove them so you can enjoy better emotional and physical intimacy together.

**Read in:** 4 minutes

**Favorite quote from the author:**



Remember when you first met your partner? How jittery and excited you felt to be with them? Each new milestone like the first kiss and the first “I love you’s” brought so much joy and passion.

But then you moved in together. And the novelty kind of wore off. Then throw in a stressful work life and maybe some kids. By this point, you are emotionally connected but you don’t have much time and energy for physical connection.

It’s just natural, right? You surely can’t keep the passion fire going forever. According to psychotherapist Esther Perel, it doesn’t have to be this way. It is possible to keep the passion and eroticism alive in a long term relationship. But it takes some work.

In her book *Mating In Captivity: In Search of Erotic Intelligence*, Perel expertly teaches couples the formula for keeping sexual passion alive. So don’t resign yourself to a lackluster sex life, with her help you will find ways to become vulnerable with your partner and enjoy exciting and fulfilling intimacy for the rest of your life.

Here are 3 of the greatest lessons I’ve learned from this book:

1. How you view sex as an adult comes from experiences you had when you were a child, and you can work through the difficulties those may bring.
2. If you have kids and want to remain physically intimate with each other, you have to prioritize sex.
3. You're always at risk for infidelity, but acknowledging that makes it easier to protect yourself against it.

Do you want a better sex life? Then this book is for you! Let's jump right in!

## **Lesson 1: The experiences you had as a kid make up your views on sex now, and you can improve the areas in which you're lacking.**

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It seems a little weird to think about how your childhood influences your sex life now. But your background actually does have a lot to do with how you see intimacy.

At his mom's funeral, Dylan recalled his father telling him not to cry even though he was just 12 at the time. From then on, he felt showing his emotions would disappoint his father, so he decided he would repress them.

Little did he know, this part of his past would stunt his ability to connect later on. As an adult, he found himself picking up new partners at the club every week. Anonymous sex protected him from the humiliation that came with emotions.

Many of us carry some baggage from the past that affects our sex life now. **Our erotic blueprint, aka what turns us on, can highlight childhood trauma.** If we didn't feel emotionally connected to a caregiver in childhood, we'll likely not be able to be vulnerable as an adult. This can prevent us from true eroticism.

When we explore our past and see where our problems come through, we can work to solve them. For Dylan, this meant therapy to learn to open up emotionally. For someone who was consumed with pleasing their partner to enjoy sex, this meant just learning to enjoy himself more.

If we can overcome childhood fears of separation or other trauma, we will finally be able to let ourselves go and feel the true pleasure that comes with uninhibited intimacy.

## **Lesson 2: Parents must prioritize sex if they want to stay physically intimate even while kids are still in the home.**

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It's ironic, if you think about it, that though sex makes babies, they tend to smother parents' sex life. This can happen whether or not the child is biologically yours or even if you had a stellar sex life before.

Why is this? Anyone with kids can tell you that your marriage changes after kids. Priorities tend to shift. We are tasked with taking care of a tiny human and our biggest responsibility is now keeping them safe. So we stop partying, buy a home, become responsible adults.

The problem? **Eroticism desires excitement, unpredictability, and danger.** We can't have both, so we choose security. This is made worse by the fact that many mothers feel they have to be selfless to be a good mom, so they don't allow themselves to look for pleasure anymore.

Perel says to combat these changes and find time among your busy schedules to set aside time for dates. Sure, it may not be spontaneous, but you will anticipate this time, which can fuel sexual excitement as well. So schedule this time out, and let yourself fantasize about it. You will find yourself excited for this one on one time.

### **Lesson 3: You can protect against infidelity best if you acknowledge that it exists.**

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Thinking about a monogamous relationship where two people are so attracted to each other they don't even notice other people in the world is a nice thought, but it's not really realistic. Temptation will most likely continue to exist, even if you're deeply in love with and attracted to your partner.

In fact, acknowledging that temptation is a thing could save your marriage. There's always going to be that person who pops into your partner's fantasies. Maybe it's a movie star, or an old crush, or your kid's teacher. It's okay.

While we want so badly to cling to the idea that we are the only one our partner sees, you will find that acknowledging there is temptation asserts your freedom and commitment in a relationship. **We are basically saying, "Yeah, that doctor is hot, but I chose you."**

Perel says it's okay to include this third person in your sex life. She doesn't mean inviting them over, but they can be a fun part of your sexual fantasy, if you tell your partner. Making them part of the fun will change the third person from a threat to a game, eliminating the temptation to stray.

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## Mating In Captivity Review

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The thing I really liked about *Mating In Captivity* was that it identified a lot of things that nobody ever talks about that can make marriage a lot harder! Even better, it talked openly about these things and how to deal with them in healthy ways. I think everybody should read this book because honestly, society will never teach you enough of the right things about sex, love, and marriage.

## Who would I recommend the Mating In Captivity summary to?

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The 32-year-old couple with kids that just can't seem to reignite the passion they once had, the 45-year-old couple who are emotionally connected but aren't physically intimate, and anyone that's in a relationship or who wants to be in one.