

## **Wendy Maltz Hierarchy of Sexual Interaction**

Wendy Maltz work around healthy sexuality is a wonderful resource in assisting clients to heal from sexual trauma. I use this hierarchy to identify what level of healing the (adult) client is in their own sexual intimacy. As I have said in the seminars, the ultimate level of intimacy does not occur until the thriver stage. You can find Maltz's work at her website [www.healthysex.com](http://www.healthysex.com) or in the Journal of Sexual Addiction and Compulsivity: The Journal of Treatment and Prevention (Dr. Patrick Carnes, editor-in-chief), Volume 2: Number 1.

Here is a preview of the Hierarchy:

### **+3 Authentic Sexual Intimacy**

- Reverence toward body and self**
- Ecstasy and communion**
- Emotional intimacy**
- Spiritual connection during sexual intimacy**

### **+2 Making Love**

- Focus on pleasure and performance**
- Climax is the goal**
- Equality and mutuality**
- Consensual (with expectations)**
- Experimentation and skills**

### **+1 Role Fulfillment**

- Duty, social customs**
- Procreation is the goal**
- Limited repertoire**
- Sex for drive reduction**
- Inequality – willing acceptance**

### **-1 Impersonal Interaction**

- The “partner” is a sex object only**
- Self focused**
- Shame based**
- Sex under the influence of drugs or alcohol (possibly without protection)**
- Disregard for possible consequences**

### **-2 Abusive Interaction**

- Entitlement**
- Humiliation and exploitation**
- Coercion (non-violent) and manipulation**
- Submission and dominance roles**
- Sex on demand**
- Sex for power and control**

### **-3 Violence Interaction**

- Overt physical coercion**
- Goal of dominance, destruction and annihilation**
- Sexualized rage**
- Torture, pain, physical harm**
- Sadistic and ritualized behaviors**