

## Sexual Assertiveness Ladder (slightly amended)

Sheila Kitzinger, *Woman's Experience of Sex*, p. 132

What follows is a ladder of increasingly intimate self-disclosure constructed by an imaginary woman named Deborah. You can create your own ladder. Then you can look at the items at the bottom of your ladder, and think of ways you could be assertive—the words you might say and what you would do—starting with the easiest situations and working up.

- 18 Suggesting that we try sex games like bondage or S/M.
- 17 Suggesting that we use a sex toy
- 16 Suggesting that I show my partner by masturbating how I get aroused most easily
- 15 Saying I want to make love without intercourse
- 14 Telling my partner I have often pretended to have an orgasm
- 13 Asking my partner to delay penetration
- 12 Telling my partner I did not have an orgasm and that I do not want one just now
- 11 Asking my partner to talk while making love
- 10 Telling my partner that something s/he does is really uncomfortable
- 9 Saying I don't want to make love
- 8 Suggesting changes in sexual techniques
- 7 Saying that I don't like something my lover is doing
- 6 Getting my partner to realize how turned off I am when one of the children wakes up and cries
- 5 Describing the effects of something we are doing together
- 4 Saying what I would like my partner to do
- 3 Describing my sexual feelings
- 2 Explaining to my partner changes in desire at different times of the month
- 1 Saying I enjoy something my partner is doing