

QUICKIES: pleasure and fulfillment a sex ed summary from scarleteen.com

Pleasure is a feeling we get when we do something that makes us feel good.

Fulfillment is a feeling we get when we do something that makes us feel satisfied or proud.

Some people assume that pleasure only comes from sex. Some people think fulfillment only comes from romantic relationships. Sex can be pleasurable. Romantic relationships can be fulfilling. But these aren't the only ways we can experience pleasure or fulfillment.

There are many ways to bring pleasure and fulfillment into our lives. The more chances we give ourselves to feel good, the more enjoyable life is likely to be. When we have a variety of activities in our lives that connect us and give us a reason to get up, we feel good. Feeling fulfilled can also give us as much pleasure as eating something tasty.

How do we come up with something pleasurable to do? We can think about the things we like to see, touch, taste, smell, or hear. This gives us an idea about the kind of pleasure we're seeking. Then we can figure out how to create those sensations or feelings. We all have items, sensations or activities that make us feel good.

Here are just ten of the many ways we can experience pleasure:

- Find a garden or park and enjoy nature
 - Wrap yourself in a soft blanket
 - Take a warm bath
 - Put on a piece of clothing that feels great on your skin
 - Watch or read something that makes you laugh
 - Do something active that is more pleasant than painful, like swimming, hiking, riding a bike, yoga or stretching
 - Lie down somewhere and listen to your favorite music
 - Cue a happy scent memory, like your partner's deodorant or your parent's cookies
 - Hug someone you love
 - Drink a warm beverage like tea, coffee, or cocoa
- Cook or bake something that smells and tastes delicious

How do we find fulfillment? We can ask ourselves what we value, enjoy, or are curious about.

If we're passionate about something there are many ways we can enjoy that passion. We can see if there are volunteer opportunities that let us use our passion to help others. We can set aside some time each week for activities we enjoy. If there's something we've wanted to try and never had the chance to, we can look for groups that do that activity. We can find books at the library to help us get started on a hobby or learn how to do an something.

If our days are busy, we can set aside little chunks of time to do or experience things that make us feel happy and fulfilled. It could be ten minutes of exercise, eating a favorite snack, or writing or drawing in a journal.

Some people find it easier to schedule a specific time for things, like before bed or during lunch. Others do at least one pleasurable thing a day, but don't decide what that thing will be ahead of time.

A final big source of fulfillment is spending time with friends. Friends are a source of connection and enjoyment. If we can't see friends in person, even just taking a few minutes to text or call them to talk can make a day way better.