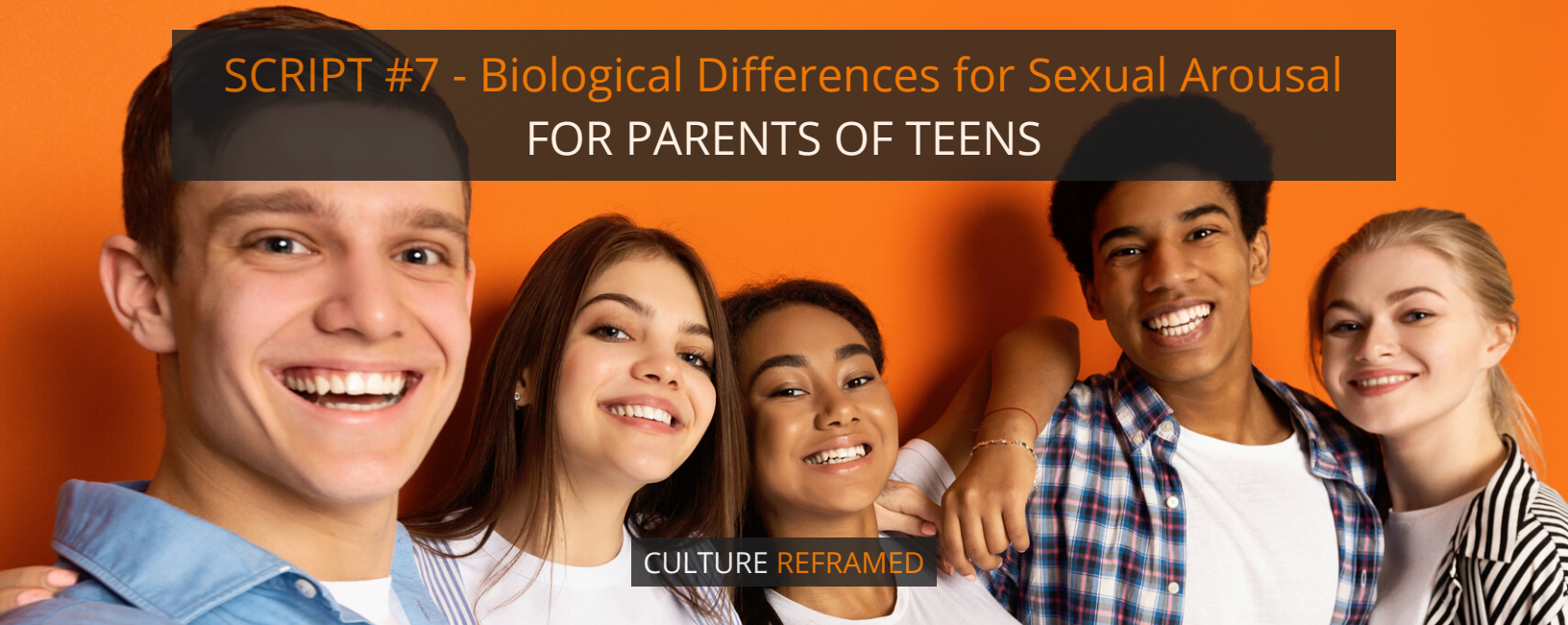


# SCRIPT #7 - Biological Differences for Sexual Arousal FOR PARENTS OF TEENS



In this script, you will discuss how the differences in male and female arousal can lead to misunderstandings. Whenever talking about differences between males and females, you run the risk of promoting stereotypes, and this is important to acknowledge in the conversation. We suggest you discuss sexual pleasure before having this conversation.

**parent** *I recently heard something interesting about the differences between men and women when it comes to sexual arousal. It made me think, and I would really like to share it with you.*

*So, is this about sex again?*

**teen**

**parent** *Well, yes, but it's really about how men and women are kind of hard-wired to misunderstand each other.*

*Okay.*

**teen**

**parent** *So, I'm guessing you know what sexual arousal is.*

*Are you serious?*

**teen**

**parent** *So, just to be clear, when your body begins to change into an adult body, you become capable of being sexually aroused, excited, or horny. This may happen just by thinking of something sexual, or someone may get sexually aroused by something they see, touch, or smell. In the same way that smelling something delicious can activate your desire to eat, as you mature, your senses and your imagination can also activate your desire for sex.*

*This is kind of obvious.*

**teen**



Right. But what's interesting is that what activates sexual arousal in men, and what activates sexual arousal in women can vary enormously. For men, research shows that it's what they see that is mostly responsible for activating their sexual desire. And, for a man, sexual arousal happens much more quickly. He can get an erection just by seeing something sexy.

Okay.



But for women, sexual arousal takes longer, and what they see is only a small part of what gets them aroused. Sexual arousal for women involves many more of their senses, such as smell and touch.

So what?



Well, if you don't know that there's a difference in how men and women get aroused, then it would be natural to assume that we are all alike. Men would think women are like them, getting turned on the same way they do. This idea is reinforced by porn because most porn is designed for male arousal.

So now we are talking about porn again.



I'm afraid so. Think about this. If women get the message that their bodies are supposed to react like men's do—expecting to be turned on the same way and with the same timing—how do you think they will feel when their response is not the same as a man's?

It won't be good.



Right, they'll end up thinking there is something wrong with them. And that happens a lot with women. And there is even more. If men and women experience arousal so differently, this difference can also lead to a lot of misunderstandings in heterosexual relationships.

I have no idea what you're talking about.



If males are easily aroused just by looking at something sexy, it makes sense that they aren't really thinking that being turned on by a real person means that much. It's just kind of automatic.

I guess.



On the other hand, if female arousal takes longer and involves all their senses, they might be more likely to think that all those feelings are a real emotional bond.

Isn't this just a stereotype about men and women?



*Yes, it is a stereotype. Some men will have a greater sense of intimacy, and some women will be easily aroused without deeper connection—and it's not about judging someone if they are different. It's about understanding that everyone is not like you and that sometimes our biological differences can lead to misunderstanding. What if the way men and women are hard-wired makes women more likely to think that sexual arousal and pleasure are related to being emotionally connected? To being in love?*



*I still think this is just a stereotype.*



*I'm glad you are thinking that way. We should never assume anything about someone just based on their gender. And, at the same time, knowing these biological differences is super-important. It helps us to be able to talk with our partner—to really discuss—not just what is pleasurable for them, but also what being intimate means to them.*



*I get that.*



*You never want one person thinking this is just for pleasure and the other person thinking that this means you're in love.*



*Yeah, that would be messed up.*



*Exactly. There are a lot of things to think about when you decide to be intimate with someone. Understanding how their body works and communicating how your body works is one part. But perhaps the most crucial part is understanding what being physically intimate means to you and your partner. This would be true whether you are with someone of the same gender or another gender.*



*I get it.*



*Thanks for listening. And I think bringing up stereotypes was important.*

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