



Excerpted from *Succulent SexCraft*, by Sheri Winston with Carl Frankel

### **The Arousal Journey Up the Stairs (H1)**

Imagine the process of sexual arousal as a flight of ten stairs, with the tenth representing orgasm. (Watch out for that top step—it's a doozy!) When you're not turned on at all, you're on the ground floor. The first stirrings of arousal bring you to step one. Mid-level arousal is the middle of the staircase, step five. Step nine is the highest level of excitement, just before your orgasm. We'll focus later on that very special tenth step, but for now let's concentrate on understanding the experience and dynamics of the arousal journey.

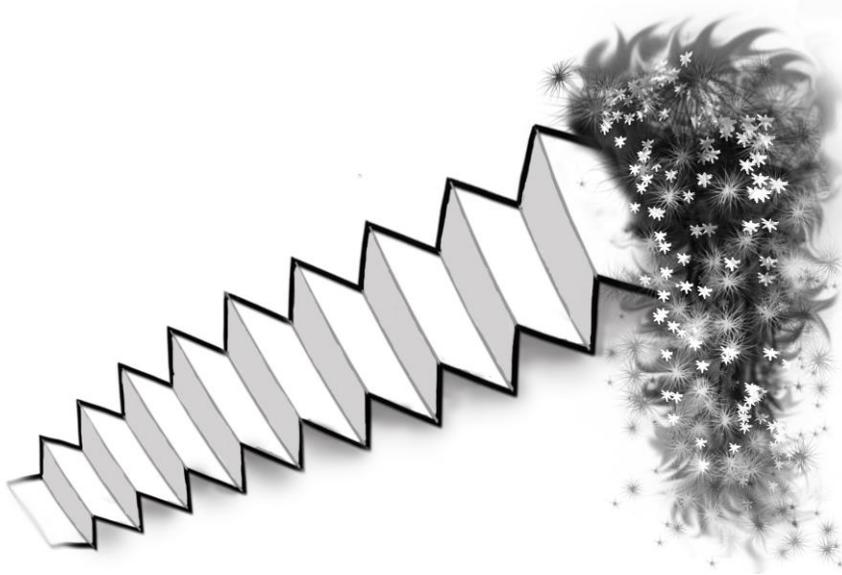
A basic biological reality about arousal is that you can't skip over any steps. No leaping from step two to step eight in a single bound. ("It's a bird! It's a plane! No, it's Super-sexy!") Each step is created by biochemical feedback loops that spiral us up to the next one, which leads to the one after that. While you can't make a super-human leap and omit any steps, you can develop the capacity to 'work the stairs,' so to speak.

That's right, you can become the Stairmaster!

You can learn to climb faster or drop back down. You can get the hang of hanging out and playing on individual steps—which can be a great move to deepen your arousal trance. You can learn how to not get stuck on a step and what to do if you find yourself unable to get where you want to go. You can learn how to stay on your arousal staircase and not fall off despite distractions—you know, like when the phone rings and you suddenly find yourself back in mundane consciousness and turned off.



Excerpted from Succulent SexCraft, by Sheri Winston with Carl Frankel



I find it useful to divide the staircase into three sections. The first three steps are low-level arousal, the middle three are medium, and the top three are high arousal.

Low-level arousal is the warm-up and transition period. Some might say this is the time for foreplay, but I don't like to use that word. I prefer 'warm-up' to 'foreplay.' Foreplay implies it's a mere precursor to the main event, which by implication makes your early arousal activities less important than 'real sex' (for hetero couples, usually penis-in-vagina intercourse).

We typically think of foreplay as something that women need and men don't. A common complaint of hetero women is that men rush through the warm-up phase.

Whatever your gender, preference or orientation, early arousal is your opportunity to get relaxed and present. It's when you loosen up and take the time to awaken your whole body. It's when you let your busy front-brain executive office start to shut down and go off-line.

Warm-up: It's not for women only!

In the early stages of arousal, you're flickering between beta wave 'real world' consciousness and alpha's light trance state. As you feel safe enough to turn off your vigilance centers and



Excerpted from *Succulent SexCraft*, by Sheri Winston with Carl Frankel  
leave your alert thinking mentality behind, you start to lose yourself in pleasure. The easier it is to feel safe, the quicker you'll fully enter erotic trance. The more times you have to return to vigilance and thinking, the harder it becomes to relax and move deeper into an altered state.

Your mid-level steps are where you're starting to be taken over by your erotic energy. You're leaving the thoughts and cares of the mundane world behind and getting into the rhythms and delights of your erotic improvisation. You move from beta to theta and become increasingly absorbed in your erotic altered state.

At the highest steps, you're in a state of intense arousal. You're carried higher and higher by the tide of Eros, transported by the powerful sexy flow out of thought and time, beyond self-consciousness—you're zooming into the Erosphere.