

Cheap Trick No. 6

SWAK—Sealed With a Kiss!

There's more to the humble kiss than mouth meeting mouth. Romans so loved the kiss that their Latin language is alive with variations on a kissable theme. For instance, an *osculum* is a kiss on the face or cheeks. Take it one step further, and it becomes a *basium*, or an affectionate kiss. Next, there's the no-holds-barred kiss, the *suavium*, for lovers only.

Unfortunately today the kiss is often overlooked. Many couples forget to kiss and most sex researchers ignore the power of the kiss. Kissing was not even addressed in the landmark University of Chicago Sex in America survey in 1994.

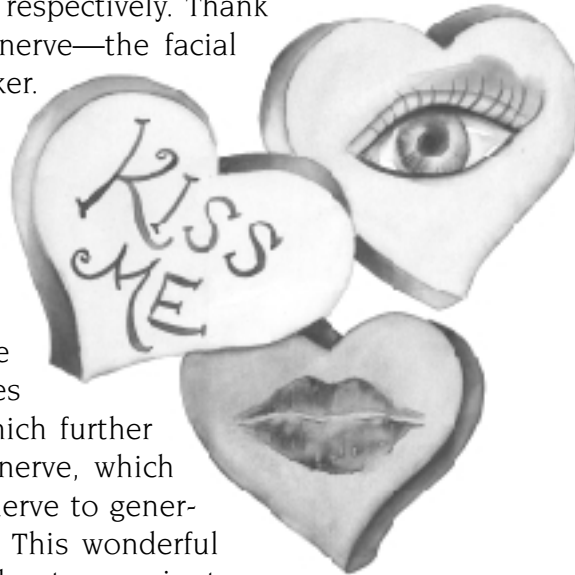
When it comes to kissing in our era, the following observational statistics (rounded up or down) apply to both genders:

- ☀️ 90% like kissing
- ☀️ 90% enjoy kissing in their car

SMARING

- ☀️ 90% enjoy being kissed on the ear
- ☀️ 80% enjoy a gentle bite when kissed
- ☀️ 50% say that kissing is more intimate than sex
- ☀️ 40% find kissing essential after a fight
- ☀️ 40% would kiss more if they had the time
- ☀️ 25% enjoy necking in the movies

The kiss has two elements, sensation and motor, and burns about six to twelve calories per pucker. The sensory stimulation of a kiss is controlled by the fifth cranial nerve, whose upper and lower divisions control both the upper and lower lip, respectively. Thank the seventh cranial nerve—the facial nerve—for the pucker. Putting this physiology together, you come up with this pleasant chain of events. You feel with the fifth nerve, then pucker up with the seventh, which causes you to feel more, which further stimulates the fifth nerve, which causes the seventh nerve to generate a greater pucker. This wonderful cycle continues for about one minute,



Cheap Psychological Tricks for Lovers

the time of the average kiss. The stimulation of both nerves causes the glands in the mouth and the lips to secrete saliva, and that's important.

Some researchers believe that kissing is actually the beginning of a chemical bond that can unite people for a lifetime. Apparently it's the ingestion of each other's sebum (the semiliquid, greasy secretion of the sebaceous glands) that does the trick. Chemicals found in humble saliva are thought to be among those that attract one human to another. Sebum excretion levels are highest during early adulthood—the period when bonding is most important. In other words, when the desire for courtship is strong, sebum is abundant. Some studies have shown that you will kiss at least seventy-nine people before you find your ideal mate.

What's the cheap psychological trick? Kiss a lot. Once you find the perfect sebum, you've found your mate for life.

REFERENCE

Bakos, S. *Sexational Secrets: Erotic Advice Your Mother Never Gave You*. New York: St. Martin's Mass Market Paper Press, 1998.