

# Psychology of the Diaphragm

Alison Sand

1970

Reprinted from *Off Our Backs* (February 27, 1970), a Woman's News Journal.

"My doctor told me that if using a diaphragm were a test of mental ability I'd be given a moron rating."

That quote is unique to one woman's experience with one strange gynecologist but it is, unfortunately, revealing. Most women don't receive adequate instruction or encouragement from their doctor and leave his office insecure about their ability to use it.

Learn to use your diaphragm before you need to use it. Make time for a thorough reading of the preceding article and the instruction pamphlet that will come with your diaphragm. Then take that written material and all the diaphragm paraphernalia into the bathroom, close the door, and practice.

Practice unabashedly. All alone you are acquiring a skill that is roughly comparable in difficulty to learning chords on a guitar, knitting, or rolling a joint, and a thousand times more crucial to your emotional and physical well being.

Check out the diagrams. Explore yourself sans guilt or embarrassment. It's perfectly all right for your fingers to be exploring your vagina in search of your cervix. In fact, it's really a turn-on to locate and recognize and be able to understand the function of those important parts of your self.

More important possibly than your confidence in your ability to use a diaphragm as a contraceptive is your matter-of-fact acceptance of your right to use it. Men should take their cues from you. Be righteous about using that diaphragm! You have assumed the major responsibility for contraception. He can be grateful for that and supportive of you.

Abortion counselors too often hear this refrain: "My old man gets angry when I interrupt our lovemaking to put in my diaphragm." If your gentle interjection of reality offends his sense of aesthetics, his interest is clearly in some sort of fantasy event and not in happy, honest lovemaking with old flesh and blood you!

## Related

See "The Diaphragm," in this issue.

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Fifth Estate #105, May 14-27, 1970

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