Dear Dr Hartman

A gush of letters followed Dr Hartman’s study of the new baby boom in our last issue. On reading the flood of responses, ALR became convinced that this is a service our readers need on a more regular basis.

Dr Hartman welcomes your problems. Please send all correspondence to Dr Hartman’s secretary, Julie McCrossin, at the following address: Dear Dr Hartman, ALR, PO Box A247, Sydney South, NSW 2000. All queries will, of course, be treated in strictest confidence.

Hello Patients,

Dr Mary Hartman here again.

Since I last spoke to you via the pages of this magazine about the psycho-sexual fallout from the current baby boom, my chain of lucrative private clinics has literally been flooded with letters from ALR readers. Readers who are desperately seeking help from the sexual hand of healing.

It seems I have tapped an enormous pool of unmet psycho-sexual need.

Here is a common problem from today’s mailbag:

Dear Dr Hartman,

I am a 35-year-old ageing leftwing teacher who thinks there is more to feminism than EEO. I have been cohabiting on a predominantly monogamous basis for nearly eight years with my lover George. George is a balding public servant who believes in progressive social change, early retirement and the revolutionary potential of taxation policy. We have two small children, Emma (Goldman), two, and Daniel (Ortega), six months.

My problem is simply this: Since Danny came home in his capsule, patting Baby on his cute little bottom is all the physical intimacy I need. Just the thought of sex exhausts me. Some days I barely have the energy to turn the bread over in the toaster. Humping with George is about as appealing as five minutes stuck in a phone box with Wally Lewis.

I love George and always will. We read the same magazines. We enjoy the same TV programs. We agree to disagree about the housework. But, after a night of getting up and down to the kids and a day of para-military organisation to make sure everybody is picked up and put down in the right place at the right time, my idea of an orgasmic experience is sitting utterly alone in a darkened room with a whiskey, a packet of Tim-Tams, and a good leftwing TV documentary. It’s good to know somebody is changing the world, while I’m changing nappies.

Doctor, you must help me. I know that if George and I don’t make love at least once a week that we’re lighting a psycho-sexual fuse on a time bomb that could blow up our marriage.

As youngsters, we were so noisy in our old communal student lodgings that our housemates would run up the stairs to see if George was having another asthma attack. These days a cuddle in our pyjamas and touching toes while we read together in bed genuinely feels like enough.

What should I do? (Signed) Worried, Moorooka, Qld.

Dear Worried,

Patient, this is just a classic case of Mid-Life Psycho Sexual Paralysis. I wouldn’t be at all surprised to hear that you and silly old George have decided that the only way to keep the two-year-old happy at night is to let her sleep with you. If so, you’ve just banged the final nail into your psycho-sexual coffin.

I’ve found this sort of repressed nonsense to be especially common among female university graduates with feminist tendencies.

You spent the ’70s sitting in circles ‘consciousness raising’ and discussing ‘sexuality’ in the context of French philosophy and psychoanalysis. But in the ’80s, when it comes to a good old-fashioned root, you think people are talking about trees.

Quite simply, it’s time to stop thinking about ‘sexuality’ and start concentrating on ‘sex’. A Tim-Tam won’t take you down the road to psycho-sexual fulfilment, but George might - with the right encouragement.

Always remember, if men wanted sex with equals, they’d have intercourse with each other. For an appropriate fee I can teach you how to kick domestic and work goals by day, and then at night transform yourself into a simpering sexual kitten to arouse and satiate yourself and your man.

All this without the aid of drugs, wires or special diets.

At my clinics we will teach you the simple practical steps you need to get the jungle juices flowing again, no matter how tired you are.

Our Arousal Maintenance Program or AMP includes surprise mid-week nights in expensive hotels with water views. Reliable child care is supplied back in your home. Our AMP emergency crisis packages include sauna, jacuzzi and light tasty food facilities, plus the screening of intelligent and tasteful but profoundly sexy movies.

The films are shown in special cinemas with off-screen queen-sized bedrooms. The beds have the cleanest and whitest sheets you’ve ever seen. And there are huge luxury baths, and lots of itty-bitty packets of sweet-smelling lotions and potions to play around with.

Patient, go now to your desk and mail me the authorisation to bill your Visa, American Express or Mastercard. By return mail I will send you all the information you seek.

Fear not, doctor is here.

I look forward to seeing you at one of my clinics.