

## RELATIONSHIPS – SEX VERSUS TANTRA – WHAT IT IS – WHY DO IT?

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The past 40 years or so have brought about many changes... these years gave us the promise of personal independence, prosperity and also sexual sophistication. For many people many of these promises have been fulfilled, we know more about everything than our grandparents did in terms of the world thanks to the media and travel. We know more about ourselves because of self-help books and seminars and therapists of one kind or another. We know we have to take care of our bodies and that smoking is bad for us. Unfortunately, we are less successful in relationship than previous generations in making them last.

Two people going into a relationship start with passion generally... the heat, the weakness at the knees, the heart racing, pulsing passion that is proven to make you eat less, sleep less and feel better. People in love shine.... The arousal is fast and easy and each partner is continually charged to make love. Let's go back to the beginning to see where it came from.

In the western world most of the conversations we had around sex as teens were furtive and behind our parent's backs. Despite popular beliefs, the movies and the sexy novels, we are not naturally good at sex or at relationships! We are largely conditioned by belief systems that were instilled in us as children, such as 'Don't touch yourself there'.... 'That's dirty' etc. leaving residues of guilt and fear in the psyche of many. Thus most of us are not well educated in the celebration of our own sexuality let alone the art of sexual love with another. The result is that many couples fail to journey deep into the depths of their core to find the absolute ecstasy, bliss and joy that resides there.

The sexual urge is a natural one, yet what do you do with it? For both sexes as teenagers they have no idea what is happening to them, their bodies are changing and this strange energy is flooding through their bodies. If done at all, masturbation is carried out quietly and furtively so that no one hears or sees and the energy of guilt goes into the cells. You can all use your imaginations now to recreate early teenage explorations into your own sexuality. In my day at the drive-in movies, there was more sex in the cars than on the screen! Teenage boys want it, girls think boys know all about it because they are always talking about it and so the myth about sex is perpetuated. You know the hypercritical statement of old that made it okay for boys to "sew their wild oats" whereas girls were supposed to remain virgins until marriage! I used to wonder who the boys were going to do it with! Illogical but part of growing up in my day. Then you get into a relationship... suddenly all this pent up energy of years is supposed to be allowed to flow easily and effortlessly. Well, that is a little like having an old tap on a property that hasn't been turned on for 20 years and what happens when you do get it to turn? The water doesn't flow out, it dribbles and it often brown and dirty looking and it takes a while before it works properly! There are a million things that can go wrong in sex. The turn-on suddenly becomes a turn-off. The orgasm that was building like a volcano died somewhere along the way. The man is too hot and it's too fast etc. Is it any wonder

that several years into most marriages, the passion that drove the relationship has disappeared, unfortunately along with it often goes the woman's sex drive. Why? Because sex, by and of itself... after a while is boring! (Generally more so for women than men)

With a high divorce rate in western countries it is obvious that we need a significantly new way of relating to each other in all ways and particularly sexually. We need to find a way to sustain that love and passion over a lifetime. So what is the solution? For us, it was Tantra. We had heard about it, read about it and eventually we began a search for teachers who "fit" with our philosophy and who could teach us what we wanted to learn.

To use an analogy, Tantra is like going to school. We start off in kindergarten and then move to primary school. Most complete high school and a percentage of those people go on to University, out of which a few get a PhD or a Masters. Tantra is something that offers many levels of study and requires many years of practice to get that PhD. It is a practice that requires exactly that.... Practice, practice, practice! It is like being an artist of one modality or another, you have to practice and it can take years before your work is renowned, or you are totally satisfied with it. Sex is different, they did a survey and found that 20 years later, most couples were still making love the same way they did in the beginning. Nothing had changed. Sadly, many people say they don't need to learn about sex. After all, they have been doing it for years, how hard can it be?

Sex is about the genitals and Tantra is about intimacy and that is what women in particular want. That special closeness, the communication that is deeper than sex, more heart centred.... a profound spiritual connection. Of course, once the connection happens, the arousal follows and passion is right behind it. In Tantra we say you can always be too tired for sex but you should never be too tired for love. Unfortunately when intimacy is missing and sex is just sex, women in particular remain unsatisfied at a primal level. With Tantra comes unity and joy from the communion with your beloved.

Tantra is an ancient art form which transforms your sexual and spiritual lives by uniting them and it turns the sexual into the sacred. Tantra has been called the missing piece of the spiritual puzzle that many of us search for. The Tantric exchange is a Holy one where we bless each other physically, mentally, spiritually and energetically. It changes the nature of the sexual experience and brings the spiritual aspect of love into your daily life. It turns lovemaking into a loving meditation.

Now there are many different forms of "Tantra" – the main two being the Tao method and the Hindu/Buddhist method. The Taoists of ancient China looked upon sex as a vehicle for enlightenment providing that the sexual urge was properly harnessed. In the 10<sup>th</sup> Century a Japanese physician compiled a bedroom monograph for Japanese sovereigns showing them to regulate their sex lives harmoniously. He based his advocacies on the age old writing of Taoism. These texts were written on sexology long before the world even heard of the word. Taoist Tantra uses words like 'Cranes with necks intertwined' and speaks of the specific ways of making love, e.g.6 soft strokes to the right, two hard strokes to the left! The Hindu method is less interested in how much and

how often but rather how to utilise the power of the heart to create intimacy. It comes from a series of esoteric Hindu books that describe certain disciplines and meditations and are over two thousand years old. It refers to Shiva - the penetrating power of focused energy and Shakti, the female creative force. Personally we practice and teach the Hindu method.

In Tantra the language is different, partner becomes Beloved. Penis becomes Lingam or Wand of Light and Yoni becomes Sacred Space. The love making begins with looking into each other's eyes and connecting at the heart. It is virtually the opposite of normal sex. In Tantra you don't keep moving until it is over, you stop and feel the vibrations in your body as the energy moves up through the charkas. You deliberately bring the energy from the genitals to the heart and then up through the crown chakra. It makes orgasm and love making very different, more intense and more beautiful and somehow more allowing. It is the fuel of relationships that allows women to access the deep well of their feminine essence, their Shakti power – and allows men to recognise and access the healer within all men, creating for every couple a union of sexual wholeness woven into a tapestry of intimacy and heart connection. It opens the way for a new level of communication and allows for deep healing.

Tantra is something that, in our opinion, is best studied by couples who are committed to growing in their relationship together. After all, if sex is sacred then you can't achieve that sacredness and trust with a passing stranger or on your own. It is tough enough to create intimacy between people who love each other and it requires a lot of trust in yourself and your Beloved to allow the surrender in your own body to the ecstasy that Tantra brings. Tantra can create relationships that speak of heaven on earth, definitely something we need on the planet right now.

*Diane McCann Mathews facilitates 'The Goddess Within' for women and together with her husband Robert, run 'Man's Inner Journey' and 'Tantra' workshops.*

*[www.goddesswithin.com.au](http://www.goddesswithin.com.au)*

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