

A Tantric Night of Pleasure
by Karen Harrison
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Imagine - you and your beloved have lit candles that are gently scenting the room. Soft music is playing in the background, inviting you to relax. The fire is blazing with soft lights dancing on the wall. Nearby is luscious fruit and drink. You have taken turns bathing each other, gently letting the soap slide over each other's body in preparation. Sitting across from each other on the floor, you take turns stating your intentions for your time together. Your beloved goes first and you can't believe your ears but he actually says that his intention is for you to feel safe, loved, and like the most cherished woman on the planet! Your intention for him is to feel loved, adored, and pampered. With strawberry in hand, your lover caresses your lips with the sweet fruit so that you can smell and feel it before he gently glides the fruit over your tongue. You sensually let the berry roll around in your mouth, feeling all the sensations on your tongue. Similarly you feed him a slice of luscious orange.

To open up the flow of energy in your bodies, you gently close your eyes while sitting across from each other and intend to activate energy centers called chakras. The energy begins to flow more freely and feels like gentle warmth radiating throughout. Through this meditative practice, both are called present to leave all cares behind and totally focus on self and beloved. Next you softly gaze into each other's eyes, seeing past personality into the soul of your beloved and you hold this gaze for 5 minutes or more. Never have you felt such full attention from anyone before and you find yourself melting into the experience.

Next one begins by checking in with the other about what is present in the beloved's heart, belly, and body. The heart represents relationship and love, the belly the emotions one is feeling, and the body what is present regarding tightness, needs for food or rest, and desires. By checking in with each other, both are able to briefly state what is going on and then leave that behind to be fully with each other in body, mind, and spirit.

This is tantra, which is sacred sexuality and sacred relationship. Often in tantra, both partners take turns giving each other a night of pleasure. It is the man's turn to receive and he chooses a sensual massage, beginning with his back side. You gently warm the oil in your hands and slowly glide over the bottoms of his feet. Moving very sensually, you slowly work your way up his legs with a light pressure that awakens all the feelings in his skin. After working your way up to his back, you place the oil on your chest and use your own body to gently massage and caress his. Breathe warm air onto his back and neck with your lips the way you would blow on glasses to clean them. When he turns over, you massage his legs and work your way up to his stomach. There softly chant Om over his navel to further awaken energies laying dormant. From here, the massage can continue in any way you both desire.

Because your lover loves to give to you, he chooses to give you a sensual massage in return, touching you in all the ways you have always longed to be touched, stroking you gently with just the right pressure and slowness. You are able to ask for what you want because you know your body from your own self-exploration.

"Imagine that a deep man were making love with you. He can feel his deepest purpose. Right now, he wants to open with you in utter heart surrender. From his deepest heart, he wants to enter you and take you open in love beyond all bounds. He gazes into your eyes and breathes with you, entering your heart fully, inhabiting your deepest heart's yearning."

--From "Dear Lover," a book by David Deida

After the massage, both partners continue to pleasure each other in all the ways that they enjoy, maintaining eye contact much of the time. Keeping eyes open and focused on your partner allows your heart to open more fully because both are present to each other rather than in their own world. Using the breath, the partners are able to build up the energy and move it through their bodies, thus enjoying full body pleasure rather than gratification centered only in their genitals. They take their time with love making and enjoy laying together in spoon position afterwards, breathing together and letting the energies of their bodies merge, dancing in mystical union.

Sound impossible? Through some tantra training, this is not only possible but can become your new reality in love making – not every time but some of the time. The word “tantra” comes from ancient Sanskrit language meaning “expansion through awareness”. Its practices involve breath, movement, sound, and intention to quiet the mind and activate sexual energy, directing it throughout the body to achieve states of consciousness and bliss. Tantra traditions come from ancient practices in India, Nepal, China, and Egypt.

Here is a simple tantric exercise you can try right now. Find the muscles that stop the flow of urine, which for women are known as Kegel exercises. However, in tantra, we add the breath. Gently tighten the muscles several times. Inhale and tighten the muscles, exhale and relax. Repeat for a few minutes. Stop and notice the flow of energy and how your body feels. This exercise helps to rejuvenate the body, awaken energy in the pelvis, keep from leaking urine, and for men to overcome premature ejaculation.

Tantric lovemaking differs from traditional love making in a number of ways. Ideally, partners would set aside at least 1 ½ hours with 30 minutes of connecting and foreplay, 30 minutes of love making, and 30 minutes to cuddle and rest afterwards. Both partners are honored as the beloved and we attempt to see beyond the personality into the soul of the person. Doing so brings the Divine into lovemaking, which blends spirituality and sexuality, elevating love making into a sacred practice. There is greater emotional connection because of the honoring ways each partner is treated and through keeping eyes connected. Drifting off into fantasy is discouraged and instead partners remain present in their bodies and to each other. The goal oriented aspect of sex to

achieve orgasm is surrendered into allowing pleasure in each moment. Breath work is added to love making to spread sexual energies throughout the body, making the whole body vibrate with energy in a pleasurable way. With this practice, it is possible to achieve longer pleasure and multiple orgasms, although they are not the goal of tantra.

According to “Jewel in the Lotus” by Sunyata Saraswati and Bodhi Avinasha, tantra is the quickest path to enlightenment. This is because you are using powerful sexual energy in a spiritual way. This seems to me to be the most fun path for spiritual development! Some other benefits of tantra are rejuvenation, developing higher sense perceptions, deepening of your relationship, empowering women, balancing male and female energies within your body, and clearing out emotional blockages. I have additionally noticed that I have more energy and abundance in my life in all areas.

Can you practice tantra if you don't have a partner? YES! Many of the tantric practices can be done alone. They involve learning how to sense the movement of energy in your body, circulate energy with breath and intention, become more aware of your own body and what feels pleasurable, open your heart, and still the mind to become centered in your body rather than stuck in your thoughts. One of my favorite practices is generating sexual energy through repeatedly tightening the muscles that stop the flow of urine and then breathing that energy throughout my body with a special breath called Cobra Breath. With just a few breaths, I can generate a mild state of bliss. If I raise more sexual energy and use the cobra breath, I can move into a state of bliss that feels like union with the Divine. Through my own tantra practice, I feel more vital, juicy, open, and loving!

Perhaps the best testimonial on tantra is exemplified through two of my teachers, Richard and Antoinette Asimus of www.tantraheart.com. They have been married for 38 years and 8 years ago made a commitment to make love every day. I recently spent a week with them at a tantra teacher training they led. They arose at 5am every morning to make love before we started our program at 7am. The workshop lasted until 10:30 every night and they went to bed at 11:30. They didn't look tired and never spoke a cross word to each other over 7 days. They are in their 60s and had more energy than I have in my 40s!

If you would like to learn more about tantra, visit my website and see the section on Sacred Relationship/Tantra, where I have articles and information on monthly classes, weekend workshops, and private sessions. If you would like a list of suggested reading materials and DVDs to learn more, email me.

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