



Tantra is a spiritual science from ancient India and in its basic essence is very similar to Taoism from China. Both involve balancing the male and female energies to create harmony and both have an ultimate goal of spiritual unity with the universe or the source or God.

The Tantric interplay of the male and female energies

was represented in Hindu mythology with Shakti and Shiva, and represented in Taoism with yin and yang. Both Tantra and Taoism aimed to create union of body, mind and spirit. And in both, sexuality was seen and practiced in a spiritual context.

Tantra: Sex & Spirit

By Diane and Kerry Riley

Tantra emphasises that we deserve all the love and sexual pleasure we can possibly receive; that sexual loving is a way to reach the mysteries of the heart, the soul; the God and Goddess within each person. It also teaches that sex is a way of bonding with a lover physically, emotionally and spiritually to create feelings of ecstatic pleasure, deep intimacy and expanded consciousness. It's important to recognise that any judgments we have about sex reflect our inhibitions and demonstrate that we are not entirely free and accepting of our own sexuality.

Well, what's the difference between Tantra and just having sex? One of the key differences is where the mind is. It's the same in life. One's experience of life depends on where the mind is. We are all living in the same world, but our experiences are determined by our perception.

And so in lovemaking it's not what we are doing that affects us; it's the attitude with which we are doing it that makes the real difference to our experience. If we can adopt the attitude that our lovemaking is spiritual, then our lovemaking will indeed become a spiritual experience. When I'm asked this question of the difference between tantric sex and just having sex, I use the analogy: normal sex is like running along the beach, it's a good exercise and shouldn't be stopped however tantric sex is more like tai chi or yoga or chi gong; it's a different level of exercise - it harmonises body, mind and soul, as does tantric sex.

Tantra was traditionally only practised in a spiritual sense, but this doesn't mean you have to be 'holier than holy' or understand Hindu mythology to incorporate the practices into your love life. Modern teachings of tantra are accessible for anyone who has an interest in adding to, and expanding the ways they make love.

Benefits and practices you can try:

FOR MEN

There are excellent techniques in Tantric Sex to increase a man's ability to last longer using ejaculation control skills and practices to help with erection dysfunction and feeling of virility. Viagra can help with performance but not with loving desire for his partner, (unless that desire is only to perform). Women want to feel a man's love and connection not just his performance trying to get her to climax. Tantra teaches a man intimacy skills to turn sex into making love. For an experiment ask your man 'How much love are you feeling while making love?'

Often men are more conscious about getting a result ... good sex and orgasm... than how much love they are feeling in their heart. It may be that a Tantra lesson would be good to connect sex and heart feelings for him. Of course if he can't last long, then he has no time to feel his love anyway because he is too busy concentrating on controlling himself - this is not making love.

A practice to help him with control is strengthening the pubocoxigel muscle one way to locate this muscle is to try and stop the flow during urination by contracting the pelvic floor. If you can do that then you have found the muscle. It is taught in many texts that if a man contracts this muscle before ejaculation it will stop it.

However if it is done incorrectly it doesn't work. For example, a common error is trying to contract this muscle just before ejaculation. If you do it at 90%, and you haven't practiced enough it won't work and may even cause you to come. It's best to do it in stages at 20%, at 30%, at 50%, at 75% and then 90%. I'm not suggesting non ejaculation practices that are often given in Taoist texts, because if these are not done properly it can lead to prostate problems. So for these practices to be successful and healthy full education / training is necessary.

Tantric techniques can assist in prolonging and improving the experience of love-making – for example breathing slower and deeper and concentrating more on the out- stroke than the in- stroke can help. It's not the woman's responsibility; it's up to him to master ejaculation control. It's men's business. Men can have up to four sessions with a Tantra goddess skilled in teaching these practices to guide conscious men to be better lovers. Also these skills can be taught in a couple's session.

TANTRA FOR WOMEN

'Traditional texts on Tantra and Taoism were written by men - and many of the practices strike me as having a male orientation about them, emphasizing techniques for the man to use for his spiritual enlightenment. Although the female was honored, the practices for her to do are not as easy to find. For example, so many of the contemporary books on tantra and Taoist sexology emphasize the forcing of the sexual energy, or Kundalini, up the spine with strong breathing and visualization to move it out of the sex center and into the higher center, known as the spiritual center, often called the crown chakra at the top of the head. This is most often done in a sitting crossed-legged position by

oneself or with a partner sitting astride in a position called Yab/Yum.

This practice of forcefully directing the Kundalini up the spine can be good for men to learn because the energy in the genitals generally builds up quickly for them and, as a result, they often ejaculate too soon before their partner's sexual energy has time to build. So moving sexual energy into the brain for expanded consciousness can be of practical benefit for men to help them control ejaculation. However, for some women, this practice may not be suitable, particularly if you are not consistently orgasmic. The reason for this is that if you pull energy out of your pelvis and your yoni, then it is less likely you will orgasm, and that's not what most women want! It's only recently that women have strengthened their connection to their orgasm, so why do the opposite?

One suggestion for women is that once you are feeling sexually excited, concentrate on swirling your pelvis, as in belly dancing movement imagining the energy rising naturally like steam from a simmering pot, radiating throughout the body - filling you with delightful pulses of sensual/sexual energy. There is no need to force anything, when it can flow. According to Dr Stephen Chang "the Tao

of Sexology' forcing can have detrimental effects'. Another suggestion is to actually take a belly dancing class. This really helps a free and easy movement of your hips and promotes a good and strong connection between the mind

and body, especially the pelvic area, the sex area. This can greatly enhance the pleasure you feel during sex.

A practice you can do yourself at home is the 'Crescent moon'. Stand with your legs slightly apart and your knees bent a little. Trace the shape of the other rim of the crescent moon with the movement of your hips. After a while, if that comes easily to you, experiment with figure eights and a variety of movements. Close your eyes and continue and enjoy the flow of this very feminine movement. Try shutting your eyes for a few moments so that you can sense deep into your hips and pelvic bowl.

Tips from a man - what he wants: In my consultations with men, many express their disappointment that their partner doesn't move their hips enough. Men like it when their partner moves. Another thing men love is when their partner is making pleasurable sounds. These are keys of tantra: sounds and hip movement. Another key is to be aware of the PC muscle and contract it during lovemaking to create pleasurable sensation for him and you. The most important thing conscious men want is for their woman to be really enjoying the lovemaking – releasing inhibitions and freeing the love goddess within. Experiment with some of these elements to create and sustain a passionate relationship. There was an episode on 'Sex in the City' where a group of women friends got a Tantra Goddess, a female coach, to show them some magic strokes to use on their partner and how to create more sweet orgasms for themselves.

Tantra for couples: Tantra can bond relationships

...normal sex is like running along the beach, it's a good exercise and shouldn't be stopped...

together, break habitual patterns, put new spark into relationships, balance desire levels and expand the way you make love on all levels. More and more couples are open to exploring tantra and not just accepting that 'this is the way it is' after a few years together. A good place to start as a couples is to hold hands and shut your eyes for a few minutes, and think about some of the things you enjoy about your partner, because we often spend a lot of energy inwardly complaining about the things that annoy us or we want to change about the other. So for five minutes, let go of that, open your eyes and take turns telling each other ten things you appreciate about them. When one partner shares something the other should simply say 'thank you' with no further comment. Just accept and enjoy. At the end have a hug and don't discuss it further. Do something together like a walk or a simple act of having a cup of tea.

Sounds too simple... but try it and see the effect for yourself. Theory is knowing it, practice is living it!*

Bio: Kerry and Diane Riley are Australia's leading Tantra teacher's and founders of the 'Australian School of Tantra'. They have shared their deep understanding of sacred sexuality, heartfelt connection and committed relationship with thousands of men and women through their courses, books, DVD's

- 1 Excerpt from 'Sexual secrets and Practices for women, unleashing the sex goddess within' by Diane Riley (to be released later this year).
- 2 For full instructions see 'Sexual Secrets for men, what every woman would want the man to know' by Diane & Kerry Riley.

For more information and education on Tantra and any of the above go to www.australianschooloftantra.com.au



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Kerry & Diane Riley.

Australia's leading & most experienced tantra teachers. Founders of Australian School of Tantra. Authors of 'Sexual Secrets for men/women' of worldwide publications, co creators DVD 'Secrets of Sacred Sex' over 200,000 copies sold

Enquiries
and bookings
0404 764 894 or
(02) 9974 4724



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