

USE DOMINATION AND SUBMISSION TO MAGNIFY DESIRE AND POLARITY

Sexually speaking, the masculine is the force of direction and the feminine is the force of energy. That is, the masculine provides the form in which the feminine can freely flow, like the structure of the riverbank guides the energetic flow of water. Less obvious is the fact that the force of the river's water carves the shape of the riverbank that guides it.

Neither masculine nor feminine is superior or inferior. Both are part of the same process whereby men and women learn to recognize their oneness and love their twoness. Masculine and feminine are both necessary for the fully polarized sexual dynamic. Whether homosexual, heterosexual, or bisexual, in any given moment, one partner must be more like the water and one partner more like the riverbank or else the flow of sexual energy will become shallow or dry up.

For instance, if neither partner is willing to take the masculine lead and direct the moment, then the immense feminine power of sexual energy will go all over the place, never stabilizing in the deepest gorges of love. Sex may be fun, intensely pleasurable, and wild, but it will tend toward the superficial, repeating the same pleasurable patterns over and over without growth in depth.

On the other hand, if both partners insist on taking the lead, there will be no flow of water, no force of sexual energy, no abundant liquid

ecstasy in which to dive and commune. The rigid stance of control will predominate if both partners are willing to be the riverbank, but neither is willing to let go and flow freely in the pleasure of love.

Every man and every woman should be able to enjoy both aspects of sexuality, masculine and feminine, deepening the sex as well as widening the energy of ecstasy, directing the flow as well as creating the energy of the flow. Although both aspects of sexuality can be accessed and enjoyed by every man and woman, each individual will have a preference dictated by his or her sexual essence.

Every man and woman, heterosexual or homosexual, will find their sexual complement in a partner who most enjoys playing the opposite sexual force to theirs, masculine or feminine. Therefore, it is important that every person understand and be willing to embrace the fullness of both masculine and feminine forces without denigrating or shying away from either.

Sexually, the masculine can be felt as the force of directive penetration and the feminine as the force of energetic reception. Both partners should be able to sensitively penetrate the other partner's moods and resistances and bloom him or her into love from the inside out. And both partners should be able to receive the love of the other, opening in pleasure, trust, and surrender, thus actively evoking greater energy and love. Penetration and reception are both active roles. Neither is passive. And neither can function without the other.

At the physical level, both man and woman should be able to play the active feminine force by opening to receive the penetrative love of their partner (orally, anally, or genitally, via tongue, finger, penis, or sex toy). Everyone has their preference for various forms of sex, and nothing should be forced on anyone. But to continue growing, it is important to discriminate between healthy preference and deleterious fear.

It is fine, of course, if you simply don't enjoy a finger entering your anus in a gentle and loving way; but if you automatically and totally shut down emotionally and physically to your partner's penetrative love, then you probably have a resistance to opening in other ways to receive masculine love, sexually or spiritually. Perhaps as a child you were abused by penetrative masculine force, emotionally or sexually, and thus developed a resistance to opening to the masculine aspects of your lover even as an adult. Or, perhaps for other reasons, you simply don't trust relaxing, surrendering, and opening your heart and body so thoroughly that you allow yourself to be ravished by masculine spiritual force, which invades your being and opens your depths to the absolute one of love.

The deep love that is your very nature embraces both masculine and feminine, in yourself as well as in every man and woman. Therefore, you will limit your capacity to rest as the depth of your natural openness if you resist embracing the masculine force of spiritual penetration or the feminine power of spiritual surrender, whether you are a man or woman.

Another way to characterize these sexual forces of spirit is that the masculine is the force of pervading presence and the feminine is the force of attractive radiance. Sexually, the masculine partner practices allowing himself or herself to be attracted beyond separation into the radiant love and abounding energy of the feminine partner. The feminine partner practices allowing every cell to be pervaded and opened by the masculine partner's strength of presence. Strong masculine presence and powerful feminine radiance make for a sexual polarity full of consciousness and love.

If you are playing the masculine sexual pole (whether you are a man or woman), one of your gifts is to be able to sweep your lover off his or her feet, to ravish your lover, and to obliterate your lover in

love, so that all layers of resistance are pervaded by your presence of consciousness and dissolved in deep love. Both partners should have the capacity to do this at times, though the partner with the more masculine sexual essence will enjoy “taking” or “ravishing” his or her lover into a total surrender in love more often.

If you are playing the feminine sexual pole (whether you are a man or woman), one of your gifts is to be so radiantly alive, allowing so much love and pleasure to flow through your open body, that you become irresistibly attractive, drawing your lover’s attention into the realm of overwhelming feminine pleasure, so your lover can no longer hold back but must yield bodily into the oneness of love. Both partners should have the capacity to do this, but the partner with the more feminine sexual essence will more often enjoy incarnating this power of attractive radiance and “enchanting” or “seducing” his or her partner into a total surrender in love.

If you do not have the opportunity to enjoy this deep play of ravishment and pleasure, then the need to do so will go underground in your psyche. You will begin to develop “kinked” versions of this healthy masculine and feminine play. The healthy masculine desire to penetrate your lover’s emotional resistance and open him or her into love will become rape fantasies, or fantasies of controlling and dominating a sexual partner. The healthy feminine desire to uninhibitedly flow with the power of attractive ecstasy and be surrendered as the water of love in your partner’s trustable riverbanks will become a fantasy to be controlled, raped, bound, restrained, and forced to give and receive pleasure.

These twin desires to dominate and be dominated, to command submission and be submitted, are simply expressions of the irrepressible human need to play the full range of masculine and feminine sexual force. These universal forces are in each of us, man or woman,

though they are most apparent in those individuals with more extreme masculine or feminine essences. However, each of us can learn to express these forces in love with our chosen intimate partner. If we suppress these natural forces within us, then our internal circuitry becomes kinked. Our bodies develop symptoms of tension and closure. Eventually, due to the pressure building up behind the kinks, we may find ourselves desiring extreme versions of these same forces.

If we are too ashamed to live our actual desires with our lover, then we may try to experience them from a safe distance without personal involvement. We may want to read about domination and submission in romance novels and porno stories, or see them lived out in movies, on TV shows, or in adult magazine pictorials. If we are unwilling to embrace and metabolize our own secret desires, then our fascination with forced sex and pleasure will eventually manifest in the culture at large, being lived out by people less suppressed than ourselves.

The entire answer to the widespread depiction in the media of abuse, self-abuse, violence, victimization, and rape, as well as the actual perpetration of these behaviors, is not simply to make such conduct illegal. This is a necessary first step. But these desires and behaviors will continue to manifest themselves in our culture until, in addition to healing our past wounds, our deep spiritual masculine and feminine desires are acknowledged and acted upon.

Ultimately, a necessary part of the solution is to learn to live our natural desires in love, with a trusting and trustable partner (before our desires become pathological, manifesting as internal symptoms or external projections). Then, the deep and healthy spiritual desire behind the need for sexual domination and submission makes itself known: it is the heart's deepest desire to navigate to truth (masculine) and surrender in love (feminine) beyond all fear and resistance into the open trust of unbounded being.

The following exercises can be done by both men and women, in homosexual as well as heterosexual relationships. Since most readers of this book will be heterosexual men with a masculine sexual essence and heterosexual women with a feminine essence, I will use this more common sexual orientation in the examples to simplify the descriptions. However, these exercises can be effectively practiced by anyone, man or woman, heterosexual or homosexual, in accordance with the principles outlined here.

If you are a man (or playing the more masculine partner), try to get in touch with your masculine sexual desire to guide, penetrate, and ravish your lover so deeply that she is gone in love. If you have become weakened in your ability to do this, a good way to get in touch with this part of yourself is by exaggerating it. For some specific period of time, play master to your lover, while she plays your slave. Command her toward greater pleasure, her own as well as yours. Train her to open and receive more and more love. Punish her for disobeying. Reward her for submitting to your direction. Tie her up and force her to experience so much pleasure that she can only surrender, since she has no other choice.

Of course, this is as much of a test for her as it is for you. Does she really trust you? Does she trust that you will lead her to greater pleasure and love? If she doesn't, what is the basis of your relationship? Are you worthy of her trust? Have you navigated to your own deep truth, so you have the capacity to guide her heart to its depth? Are you attentive to her needs when she is at your mercy? Can you feel her emotional and sexual flow, and thus guide her to deep love and ecstasy, or are you an unfeeling klutz, a master unable to serve your slave?

Perhaps she doesn't trust you because she shouldn't. Perhaps you have never taken the lead with love and integrity, guiding her into

more love and openness than she has ever experienced before. Now is the time to learn how to do so.

When you are both ready, then reverse this play, so the woman is the master to the man who is her slave. This time, the man is commanded toward greater pleasure and openness, disciplined, punished, and rewarded, with the woman taking full responsibility to navigate their play to the deepest possible ecstasy and love.

Whether man or woman, playing the slave is not simply a matter of passively submitting to the whims of the master. Rather, the slave is the active force of pleasure and attraction. The slave's moans, writhes, and vulnerable expressions of trust attract the master into deeper love and service. The point of the exercise is the magnification and deepening of love, trust, and pleasure—vulnerable obedience is just one way to elicit this openness. If you are the slave, allow your body to freely exhibit the signs of your pleasure, moving in unconstrained ecstasy. Allow your trust to be so complete, and your love so total, that you would literally do anything your lover wanted.

In many ways, it is the slave who has the sovereignty in this kind of sexual play. It is the slave's ongoing choice to transfer his or her power of command that creates the master. This choice is a choice of trust and love that grows over time.

As master or slave, when you test your limits by exaggerating your natural play, you will discover the little nooks and crannies of your distrust and unlove. It is easy to hide your resistance to giving and receiving pleasure and love during a normal day, but in the midst of exaggerated play these limits will become glaringly obvious. What don't you trust about your partner? What pleasures are you afraid of experiencing or expressing? Are there parts of yourself or your partner that you don't really love? Do you trust your own capacity to bring your partner into the very depths of open and unfettered being?

With practice, you can work through your limits and doubts. Consciously encountering your resistances, you can learn to breathe love through them. Then, you and your partner will be able to freely express love, trust, and pleasure as both master and slave. Fear will not limit the openness and humor of your play. At this point, when you are both freely loving, the practice of domination and submission no longer serves your growth. However, it may still be useful to play this way on occasion to reinvigorate the energy of your partnership if old roles and sexual styles become too set and mediocre. Such play may also arise spontaneously as a delightful expression of the extreme masculine and feminine dynamic in any moment of sexual enjoyment.

However, be aware of this kind of play becoming fetishistic or obsessive, whether you are a man or woman. For example, some men become obsessed with the feeling of a woman sexually dominating them. If their intimate partner is not available for this kind of play, these men will pay a lot of money to be bound, whipped, and forced to serve a sexually dominant woman. This is an exaggerated version of a man's healthy desire to contact his own feminine energy, to learn to open and trust the pleasurable guidance of another, to freely let go into ecstasy without having to be in charge, to be bound by a woman's desire, to be the water freely flowing within the banks set down by the masculine command of a dominating woman.

There may be many reasons for his need to submit to domination: He may be acting on a spiritual desire to contact a higher feminine archetype to which he can devote himself. He may be healing—or wallowing in—the wounds of childhood abuse. He may simply want to shift from being stuck one-sidedly in his masculine at the corporate office all day.

But whatever the reason, he has developed a strong need to relax and open, guided by another's command. He wants to feel controlled, restrained, and taken by a partner he can trust. He wants to feel forced

to submit to pleasure. He wants to enjoy obeying a force of love more masculine than himself, relax his own volition, surrender in ecstasy, and flow where he is guided. If he is homosexual, he will play this with another man. If he is heterosexual, he will want to surrender to the command of a dominant woman.

This play can be natural and good and healthy—if it is occasional and filled with humor, trust, and love. But if a man (or woman) becomes addicted to this play, if he depends on it for sexual arousal, then he must face the kinks that perpetuate his exaggerated desire. Perhaps he has a true feminine essence and this is the only way he will allow himself to express it. Perhaps he is afraid of his own strong masculine, and so must project it outward and receive it from another. Perhaps he's tired of being responsible for making the decisions all the time and now he wants to enjoy following someone else's lead for a change. In any case, there is a big difference between addictive obsession and rejuvenative play.

The play of domination and submission is only truly restorative when it leads both participants to love beyond their present limits. With practice, the dominator learns to take total responsibility for guiding both participants into devotional surrender—to one another, and then through one another into open love. The dominator learns to navigate the sexual play toward divine surrender, not simply toward egoic pleasurization. The desire to trustfully guide a lover toward heart surrender in whole-body ecstasy is one thing; the self-aggrandizing need to control someone in order to feel strong is quite another.

Just as the dominator may have loving or selfish motives, so may the submitter. Individuals who simply degrade themselves are not exercising the deepest responsibilities of the submitter. To submit in total love and trust can be a gesture of fearless and empowered communion, rather than an expression of self-loathing or self-abnegation.

The power is in the river, even while it submits to following the banks. As a conscious slave, your ongoing choice to transfer command to your partner creates the dynamic of the play. Your willingness to be totally unprotected deepens the trust between you. Your display of vulnerable pleasure attracts your partner into greater responsibility and sensitivity. To play the slave in a healthy and heartfelt way is to create a dynamic of deep love, not to feel inferior to the master. Yes, in the sexual play you obey a master whom you trust—but as an act of powerful love, not as an act of weakness. To play the submittor is to be the river whose power of openness and flow of love shapes the riverbank even as the river conforms to the riverbank's shape.

A weak person is afraid to lose love, and so will obey a partner in the hope of garnering security in the relationship. A weak person obeys in the hope of being loved. But a strong person realizes that the highest form of existence on earth is as a servant. We are here to serve each other. We are here to serve our lover, which means to heal our lover with pleasure and enlighten our lover with love. Such a servant is a slave to divine love, and will do anything to draw a partner into the relaxed openness of total love—abandon and communion in divine fullness. This is true submission: communion in divine love and surrender to the openness of being itself.

The unhealthy play of master and slave reduces each partner to a narrow role in the hope of satisfying their egoic self-image while securing a partner who is hooked to them by selfish need. Alternatively, the healthy play of domination and submission always increases the recognition of each partner's divine nature and expands their capacity to commit themselves to the total communication—sexually and otherwise—of love, respect, compassion, pleasure, and trust.

The process of sexual deepening is served by anything that heightens the *conscious* play of masculine and feminine, penetration and

reception, ravishment and surrender, the command of love and the obedience to love. Anything that allows you and your lover to navigate toward a greater depth of being, to surrender more fully, to bypass your social sense of self-control, and devotionally yield into the throes of unguarded communion and openness in love—anything that allows this deepening will serve the both of you.

Why defend yourself when all you want to do is give and receive love? Why hold back when all you want to do is be free to ravish and be ravished in love? With your committed intimate partner, in humor and tenderness, use the practice of domination and submission to explore your areas of fear and to expand your depth of conscious passion in the play of masculine and feminine love-gifting.