

1

What Is Intimate Communion?



INTRODUCTION

Nipples, lips, warmth and caress: it starts with two bodies entwined as one, moving like a sensitive snake of tongue and fire, shivering up the spine and down the belly. Then, mind gives way to flesh, and flesh gives way to love. The very surfaces of touch open out into the light of love. Mouth opens, body opens, mind opens, so wide and bright that you are gone in love, your partner is gone in love, and love is all that remains.

As a woman, you have become the all of his desire. As a man, you have become the spine of her surrender.

Grateful for your demise in light, the Divine is alive in every lover's smile.

This book is for men and women who are turned on by sex, love and true spiritual ecstasy. It is for people who enjoy tangled bodies, open hearts and enlightened minds. If you are not delighted by a style of

intimacy involving deep passion, deep devotion *and* deep understanding—all three—then this book is not for you.

When a man and woman embrace one another without guarding themselves, without protecting themselves or holding back, then they naturally transmit to one another an ecstatic force of sexual energy, love and oneness. At the beginning of many intimacies, this transmission is often body-blissing, heart-rending and mind-blowing. But after several years, many intimacies become, at best, loving friendships between two people who, in truth, desire something much deeper—deeper sexual union, deeper devotion, deeper understanding.

Many of us have experienced “old-style” intimacies based on roles of male control and female giving, and have found such relationships to result in unhealthy dependence and pain. Many have then grown into “modern-style” intimacies based on independence and fairness. What has been the result?

Have our well-intentioned efforts toward internal balance and self-responsibility inadvertently eroded the attractive power in our intimate relationships? Is there actually another step to take, beyond even personal independence and healthy self-esteem, by which we can finally let down our guard in intimate love and relax deeply into our natural sexual core? How do we take this next step toward heartfelt passion and spiritual vitality in modern intimacy—beyond male domination, beyond idealistic feminism, and beyond safe but lukewarm “50/50 partnerships”—without losing the ground we have gained?

After years of counseling and conducting relationship workshops across the United States, it seems obvious to me that it is time for men and women to take the next step in their style of intimate relationship. This new style of intimacy would extend beyond old sex roles for men and women. It would also extend beyond the guarded sense of independence that often holds passionate sexual surrender at arm's length

and prevents deep and vulnerable emotional opening in many modern relationships. This book describes how to make the transition to this next stage of relationship, which I call “Intimate Communion.”

All intimate relationships grow, stage by stage, through three major cycles of glorious passion and frustrating failure. Up to now, our culture has only been aware of the first two of these stages, so we haven’t known what to do when we have grown beyond an imbalance of power in our intimacy and have achieved a more balanced 50/50 Relationship—often at the expense of deep sexual passion and spiritual aliveness, or so it seems.

As we begin to take the next step in intimacy, it’s important that we know what to do when our relationship feels like it has come to a standstill. Knowing when to leave a relationship—and when to “lean into” the sometimes difficult process of intimate growth—is a key to practicing Intimate Communion. Learning how to navigate through each crisis, and knowing where you are going, allows you to consciously progress through each stage of intimacy, into a deeper and deeper giving and receiving of sex, love and spirit.

BEYOND 50/50

Many people today believe in a myth that says intimate happiness is attained through a 50/50 ideal of equality based on a notion of “sameness” between men and women. Belief in this myth of the 50/50 partnership is one of the major reasons that men and women have been unable to cultivate and deepen sexual, emotional and spiritual union in intimacy. As many of us have discovered, when we focus on dividing the pie equally, our intimate embrace often becomes more like a business handshake than a delicious swoon that dissolves two lovers into a single heart of desire.

Culturally, the modern “50/50 Relationship” was born of dissatisfaction with the old style of suppressive relationships between the sexes, wherein men and women were confined to rigidly defined sex roles that dictated how they were supposed to behave—or what they could achieve—just because they happened to be men or women.

Men were not supposed to express their emotions and were confined to the role of “breadwinner.” Women were confined to the role of “housewife,” with little political or economic power and few opportunities to move beyond their household lives.

Because neither men nor women in this old, or “first-stage,” style of relationship were allowed to develop their full capacities, they became dependent on one another for what they lacked by themselves. Men became dependent on women for sex, nurturing, and care of the home and children. Women became dependent on men for money, affection and status.

Eventually, many men and women found that they wanted to be free. They no longer wanted to depend on, or be depended on by someone else. As individuals and as a culture, we began to embrace the ideals of wholeness and of individual completion, by accepting the Feminine and Masculine energies that lie within each of us. Men began to accept their “internal goddess” by learning to express their emotions and nurture themselves, while reconnecting with their vulnerability in relationships. Women began to accept their “internal warrior” by developing their careers and strengthening their political clout, thereby freeing themselves from economic dependence on men.

Intimate relationships between men and women evolved from first-stage “Dependence Relationships” to second-stage relationships based on the modern ideal of two independent people, whole unto themselves, coming together as equals and evenly splitting the responsibilities of the

household, finances and childrearing. I call this second-stage style of intimacy the “50/50 Relationship.”

Nobody would disagree that the 50/50 Relationship is a positive step toward liberation from the dependence-inducing gender roles of the first stage. The trouble is, many modern women have had to cloak their unique and natural expression of “Feminine radiance” in order to succeed in today’s more Masculine-oriented economy. And many modern men, stuck in a vague transition point between old models of the masculine and new identities, have become ambiguous at their core, unable to be fully present and confident in relationships and in their lives.

Although efforts toward social and economic equality between men and women have obviously been necessary and enormously beneficial, it appears we have also suffered an unplanned side-effect to this well-intentioned movement: Men and women have inadvertently become more and more sexually neutralized, unable to give each other what they really want in intimacy. We are restraining the fullness of the Masculine and Feminine forces that lie within each of us.

Rather than celebrating the attractive differences between the Masculine and the Feminine qualities in each of us (which often bring intimates together in the first place), some people have begun to deny that there even is a difference. Some people seem to believe that, in terms of inherent Masculine and Feminine energy, all people are actually the same.

Of course, there is at least *some* difference that we could feel; otherwise, we wouldn’t have a sexual preference. On the contrary, most of us know the kind of lover we want. Regardless of whether we are heterosexual, homosexual or bisexual, most of us have a preference for either a more Masculine lover or a more Feminine lover.

While fully supporting social, financial and political equality between men and women, as a personal consultant and educator I also

want to acknowledge some of the major complaints men and women have about each other in *intimacy*.

Women are complaining that men are becoming weaker, less committed in intimacy, and seemingly lost in their lives. In short, women often ask me why men are such “wimps” these days.

Men are complaining that women are becoming hardened, more resistive and sharply independent, to the point that they are no longer very attractive to the men. In short, men often ask me why women are becoming such “ballbusters” these days.

Modern men and women have discovered that equality, by itself, does not make for a passionate and growing relationship. So where do we go from here? Surely we don't want to return to the painful, regressive Dependence Relationships of the first stage. But if we are dissatisfied with the safe but lukewarm independence typical of second-stage 50/50 Relationships, and we are also dissatisfied with first-stage relationships based on inequality and sex roles, where else can we go?

Intimate Communion, the style of relationship described in this book, is an entirely different style of relationship from either Dependence or 50/50 Relationships. Intimate Communion is not about the old style of sex roles, nor is it about the modern ideal of “fairness,” wherein the essential strengths of the Masculine and Feminine forces are often denied along with the attractive differences between them. Intimate Communion is about opening our hearts and giving the unique gifts that lie deep in our sexual, emotional and spiritual core.

However, in the name of economic security and emotional safety, many of us have developed a shell of protection that hides our native gifts. For fear of becoming too vulnerable or dependent, many of us have lost trust in our natural Feminine style of gifting, preferring a more aggressive or independent stance in the world. For fear of becoming too macho and insensitive, many of us have lost trust in our natural

Masculine style of gifting, and in doing so we have lost touch with our real direction in life and are afraid to take a strong stand in our intimacies and in the world.

After interviewing thousands of men and women about their true desires in an intimate relationship, I must report that when most men and women achieve a 50/50 Relationship, they find they want a partner who expresses more Feminine radiance or Masculine presence in intimacy. These interviews reveal that men and women are filled with wild and beautiful Masculine and Feminine gifts they are afraid to share, and they are also reluctant to fully express their own real desires in intimacy: sexual, emotional and spiritual desires.

To grow through the three stages of intimacy, we must come to terms with our deepest desires to give and receive our sexual, emotional and spiritual gifts. We may find that we are hiding some of our real desires, thinking they are unfair or taboo. Before we can learn to give and receive our deepest gifts, whether gently or wildly, we must understand why we often confine our loving, and how we can liberate the mysterious force of love that lies yearning in our hearts.

INTIMATE COMMUNION

What is the ultimate pleasure in intimacy that men and women seek? Where is it to be found, once and for all? As many of us have already discovered, it is not finally to be found in any specific person we can “own,” acquire or on whom we can depend. Neither is it to be found in a carefully arranged 50/50 Relationship with a “safe” man or woman. Rather, it is to be found in the process of open-hearted surrender, of being overwhelmed in love.

This is the secret that all passionate lovers know: In the moment of true ecstasy, we die to ourselves in love, and this surrender itself is our

sweetest pleasure. Surrender of self into love is the basis for Intimate Communion.

To admit this pleasure of sweet surrender is taboo in our culture. For instance, our culture expects us to be strong and independent; “surrendering” to love is considered an act of weakness by many people. Likewise, we are always supposed to be in control of ourselves. Yet, when two lovers surrender their boundaries and melt into a single body of passion, they are anything but “in control.” In the heat of love and desire, we are liable to ravish our partner or submit ourselves in a way that we would be hesitant to talk about in public.

Most of us have blissfully let go of our boundaries to some degree during orgasm or in the delicious ecstasy of emotional surrender in love. In order to explore the fullness of Intimate Communion, we must be willing to embrace the taboos of extreme pleasure, which our society would rather not discuss. Even though most of us have a line that we don’t want anyone to cross, we must be willing to explore the deepest hidden Masculine and Feminine desires for surrender in our heart.

If you are willing to give your true gift and express your true desires, you can create perfect intimacy, moment by moment. This kind of intimacy is something you *do*, not something you *have*. It is an ongoing practice of sexual union, emotional openness and spiritual trust. It is a practice of love.

This is one way Intimate Communion differs from the psychological techniques offered by most relationship books that deal with our “inner child” or with finally getting the love we always wanted from our parents. Rather than looking at how our past has resulted in the present state of our intimacy, the practice of Intimate Communion involves consciously practicing a new style of intimacy in this present moment, thus making the past obsolete.

There is no reason to remain mediocre in our intimate relationships. Step by step, in Intimate Communion, we can breathe new light into our bodies, minds and hearts, even to the point of unbounded joy. We can understand the stages of intimacy we have already grown through and those through which we have yet to grow. We can honor and find humor in the attractive and potentially frustrating differences between the Masculine and Feminine ways of loving. And we can embrace the taboos of love that we secretly desire, so that the depth of our ecstasy in union is no longer limited by the *shoulds* and *shouldn'ts* of our time.

This practice of Intimate Communion is not based on the sex roles of yesterday, nor on the 50/50 idealism of today. Rather, this new style of intimacy is a next step for men and women who are ready to yield their protected sense of separate self to the blissful force of unrestrained love—a step that liberates men and women from past and present confines by requiring them to surrender the fearful boundaries that guard their heart. By understanding the natural flow of sexual energy, and by trusting the inevitable stages in which love grows, men and women can relax into Intimate Communion, the next step in intimacy beyond the 50/50 Relationship.