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## Understanding Your Sexual Essence



### WHAT IS A SEXUAL ESSENCE?

Suppose you are wearing sexy clothes that complement the shape of your body. If your business colleague looks you up and down and squeezes your ass, it would probably be a case of sexual harassment. Yet, if your lover did the same thing, you would probably welcome it. When it comes to emotional and sexual expectations, your business colleague and your lover are probably not equal in your eyes.

What do you really desire from your intimate partner? Are you clear about your emotional and sexual expectations? We often expect our partner to be everyone for us: our business colleague, our lover, the parent of our children, even our friendly therapist. It doesn't work. The spark disappears. The passion peters out. Little things about our partner begin to really annoy us.

In our hopes to achieve a 50/50 Relationship, a relationship based on meeting each other halfway and sharing responsibilities equally, we usually forget what drew us together to begin with: our unique and special

gifts as embodiments of Masculine and Feminine. Not just the gift of a business colleague, with whom we can share our financial strategies. Not just the gift of a therapist, whom we can visit when we want to talk about our problems. Not just the gift of a childcare professional, whom we can hire by the day or by the month. But the unique gift that we share *only* with our intimate partner—the gift of our uninhibited sexual essence. When we have forgotten this unique gift, our intimacies become flat.

What exactly is your sexual essence?

Imagine that you live in the future, at a time when intimate partners are built from scratch. You look through a catalog, picking and choosing exactly what you want in an intimate partner. First you look at the “Anatomy” section. One page in the catalog displays pictures of arms to select. Do you want a partner with hairy arms or smooth arms? Do you want a partner whose arms are stronger than yours or more lithe? You make a selection and continue flipping through the catalog, looking at pictures of eyes, legs, mouths, genitals and torsos. There are even scratch-and-sniff pages. You take your pick, creating the intimate partner of your choice.

Then you turn to the “Emotional Character” section of the catalog. On each page is a whole spectrum of emotional qualities, ranging from joyous to angry, silly to serious, expressive to reserved.

For instance, one page is dedicated to “Control-Yielding Spectrum.” Do you want a partner who enjoys taking control of a situation, or a partner who enjoys following your lead? Do you want a partner who likes to make the decisions half the time, leaving you to make the decisions the other half of the time? Or would you prefer one who lets you make most of the decisions? Perhaps you would like a partner who is very dominant in bed, but less so when it comes to daily decisions. You can create the exact partner you want, so why not get specific?

Finally, you turn to the “Sexual Essence Spectrum” section of the catalog. Each page offers a full range of sexual essences, described as “expressions of the heart”: the way your intimate partner will express his or her love, affection and desire for union. Just as your partner’s potential arms were displayed in a spectrum of hairy to smooth or massive to frail, the sexual essences are also arranged in a spectrum. The range of sexual essences spans the spectrum from the extreme Masculine at one end, to the more balanced or Neutral types in the middle, to the extreme Feminine at the other end.

By choosing a sexual essence, you are choosing the texture of your partner’s love. For example, what do you want to feel when your partner embraces you? You can choose from selections like “Visionary Hero,” “Gallant Prince” or “Big and Dangerous,” which are different types located toward the extreme Masculine end of the spectrum. Or you could choose from “Innocent Waif,” “Wild Goddess” or “Radiant Dancer,” types located toward the extreme Feminine end.

Or you might choose your partner’s sexual essence from the “Good Friend” part of the spectrum, somewhere near the middle. This type of partner has a more balanced or Neutral type of sexual essence, which allows him or her to be able to listen to you and really understand your thoughts and feelings. An extremely Masculine or Feminine partner, on the other hand, may lead all discussions toward deadly serious debate, flowing emotional roundabouts or delicious sexual embrace. Since the extreme Masculine and the extreme Feminine speak such different languages, they often find it more communicative to passionately embrace each other or turn away in silence, rather than to speak in rational words, which often seem to get in the way of what they really want to “say.” People with more Neutral sexual essences, however, find it quite easy and fulfilling to speak honestly and clearly with each other, without getting into fights or tense silences.

At any given time in our lives, each of us has a preference: We either want a partner who loves us in a more Feminine way, a more Masculine way or a more Neutral way. And likewise, your own sexual essence is, itself, more Feminine, Masculine or Neutral. It doesn't matter whether you are a woman or a man; your sexual essence may still be Masculine, Feminine or Neutral.

How can you figure out what your sexual essence is right now?

## SEXUAL ESSENCE QUIZ

This is a simple quiz to help give you a feeling for your sexual essence. Try to answer each question as honestly as possible. As you are answering each question, imagine that you are in bed with a sensitive and sexy intimate partner whom you trust completely. Following the quiz is a key to help you determine your sexual essence from the answers you have chosen.

1. *I would more often prefer that my sexual partner was*
  - A. physically stronger than I am
  - B. physically less strong than I am
  - C. my exact same strength
2. *I would more often prefer that my sexual partner was*
  - A. physically larger than me
  - B. physically smaller than me
  - C. the exact same size as me
3. *Although I may like variety in the bedroom, I would prefer this situation more often:*
  - A. I surrender to my partner, who sexually ravishes me in love
  - B. I sexually ravish my partner, who surrenders to me
  - C. nobody surrenders and nobody gets ravished

4. *It would hurt me most if my partner were to say to me:*
  - A. "You are looking really old and wrinkled lately."
  - B. "You are really losing your edge—you seem lost."
  - C. "You really treat men differently from women."
5. *I am more often turned on when*
  - A. I give up control and let my partner be in charge sexually
  - B. my partner gives up control and I am in charge sexually
  - C. nobody gives up control and nobody is in charge
6. *If I had to choose from one alternative, I would rather*
  - A. have a sequence of unfulfilling vocations but a perfectly fulfilling intimacy
  - B. have a sequence of unfulfilling intimacies but a perfectly fulfilling vocation
  - C. have a sequence of partially fulfilling intimacies and partially fulfilling vocations
7. *When my partner does something that really hurts me, I most often*
  - A. close down emotionally
  - B. have an impulse to leave the relationship, just for an evening or for a long time
  - C. discuss things rationally with my partner without closing down or wanting to leave
8. *Which sentence most accurately describes the majority of the intimate partners you have had in your life?*
  - A. My partners have tended to get upset when I gave them directions while they were driving.
  - B. My partners have tended to change their minds about our plans, based on the emotion of the moment.
  - C. My partners have tended to be like good friends, with great communication and very little misunderstanding between us.

9. *Which statement is most true?*

- A. My partners often seem to assume they are right about everything.
- B. My partners seem to like to tell me that I think I'm right about everything and that I am inflexible.
- C. My partners and I have rarely had a discussion about who is right, because it has rarely been an issue.

10. *I find that my partners have been the kind of people who*

- A. focus while working or watching TV to the extent that they hardly notice me
- B. flow from one task to another, even while conversing, very easily —although often they don't completely finish one task before moving on to another
- C. can easily talk to me while watching TV and also finish most every task that they begin

### **Scoring Key**

If you answered mostly A's, your sexual essence is more Feminine. If you answered mostly B's, your sexual essence is more Masculine. If you answered mostly C's, your sexual essence is more Neutral. Don't be confused if your answers were not clear cut. As we will see later, most of us have layers of false Masculine and Feminine energy surrounding our true sexual essence.

## **WHAT DO MEN AND WOMEN REALLY WANT? A SURVEY**

It doesn't matter whether you are a woman or a man. Your sexual essence could still be more Masculine, more Feminine or more Neutral.

You may not be fully aware of your true sexual essence, though. It may be covered over by layers of mistrust, fear or denial. You may have developed your “opposite” energy for positive reasons, too. You may have developed your Masculine energy in order to succeed at a career, even though deep down you have a more Feminine sexual essence. Or, you may have developed your Feminine energy in order to deepen your intuition or healing ability, though deep down you have a more Masculine sexual essence.

You may feel that you are somewhere toward the middle of the spectrum, a more balanced or Neutral person. If this were true, then you would prefer a more Neutral intimate partner, since you are always attracted to your opposite. However, the vast majority of people are not Neutral, but strongly prefer a partner who gives them a particularly Masculine or Feminine gift of love. In fact, in surveys I have given throughout the United States, the qualities that most men want in their women are quite different from the qualities most women want in their men. No wonder the attempts of women and men to meet halfway in their relationships often lead to such tepid results. Most women and men don’t want a sexually “halfway” partner. They want an enlivening Feminine or Masculine gift.

In workshops I have led across the United States, from Hawaii to New York, I separate the participants, putting all the men in one room and all the women in another. Then I ask each group, “List the six most important qualities you want in an ideal intimate partner.” This list is only of those qualities desired specifically from their intimate partners or lovers—not those gifts they would also want from their friends, parents or co-workers. For instance, a woman may want her intimate partner to be loving, but she also wants her friends, her children and her cat to be loving, so “loving” is not included on this list.

I remind them that although their ideal partner will have many more

qualities than these six, these are the six qualities they would insist on in the creation of their ideal intimate partner. Finally, and this is critical, the whole group must agree on the same qualities. Any qualities that only a few people want are not included. All the women must come to a unanimously determined list in their room, and all the men must do the same in their room.

After asking hundreds of educated and successful women and men to make these lists at workshops across the United States, I have found that the results are amazingly consistent from city to city. What emerges are lists of qualities that describe the ideal man or woman, the intimate partner of our fantasies.

These lists of qualities have very little overlap. Women and men want distinctly different qualities in their intimate partners. This is to be expected. After all, most (but not all) of us have a preference: we want to be sexually intimate with a person who is more Masculine or more Feminine.

What exactly were the qualities that people most wanted in their intimate partners?

Virtually every woman agreed that foremost among the qualities they wanted in their man were:

1. Presence
2. Intelligence
3. Strength
4. Passion
5. Direction
6. Humor

Did the men want the same qualities in their women?

No. In fact, in two different cities, the men made lists that began like this:

1. Great in bed

2. Great in bed
3. Great in bed

After I reminded them that they had to choose six *different* qualities, they laughed and rewrote their list.

The qualities that men across the country wanted most in their women were:

1. Beauty
2. Sexual openness
3. Trust of their (man's) direction
4. Support for their (man's) vision
5. Intelligence
6. Healthy radiance

Notice that except for "intelligence," the idealized qualities for men and women are entirely different. (The mutual desire for "intelligence" may result in part from the background of the workshop participants; most were highly educated.) For instance, these women wanted their "ideal man" to have a strong sense of direction. Although this may also be a quality that men want in their women, it never showed up on any group's list as one of the top six qualities that men want in their ideal intimate partner. The reciprocal was also true; these men wanted their "ideal woman" to trust their direction, but it apparently wasn't as important to the women that their ideal man trusted theirs. More important to the women was that their ideal man be full of presence, strength, passion and humor. Yet these qualities never showed up on the men's wish list. In their ideal woman, men want beauty, sexual openness, healthy radiance and support of their man's vision. The idealized qualities for men and women are not equal.

As these lists show, many of us definitely desire some qualities of the

extreme Masculine or Feminine in our partners. Many of us definitely desire sexual polarity, or a highly charged attraction, in our intimacies. We may want a man, full of presence, to desire us and come forward in confident love. Or, we may want a radiant woman to desire us and respond to us by trusting, opening and inviting us deeper.

Some of us may want the qualities of the Masculine on one day and of the Feminine on the next. But the fact is, if we have any sexual desire at all, it is a desire for polarity. We can go to our friends and family to get non-sexual love. But this kind of love is not enough for most of us. Most of us want sexual polarity. We want to feel love transmitted in Masculine or Feminine ways.

Some of us might, if we had that catalog in the future, choose a partner with interchangeable sexual anatomy, but very few of us would be turned on by a neutralized blob of pink flesh, indeterminate of sexual origin. Some of us might prefer an intimate partner with unchanging anatomy, male or female, but with interchangeable sexual essences: We sometimes want a strong Masculine tiger to pounce on us and at other times we want a coy Feminine pussycat to lick our fingers.

The point is, whatever our sexual preference, heterosexual, homosexual or bisexual, very few of us would choose neutralized anatomy and a Neutral sexual essence in a partner with whom we want to share passionate sexual loving. It is the uniqueness, the non-equivalence, of the Masculine and Feminine form and essence that creates and sustains attraction and sexual polarity in our intimacies. When we deny the differences between the Masculine and Feminine sexual essences, we deny what most men and women really want in their intimate partners. We end up being dissatisfied with our partner's way of loving us. We end up neutralizing the very passion that drew us together to begin with.

My guess based on surveys at workshops around the country is that

roughly 80 percent of women have a Feminine sexual essence and 80 percent of men have a Masculine sexual essence. About 10 percent of men and women have a Neutral sexual essence. And about 10 percent of men have a Feminine sexual essence and 10 percent of women, a Masculine sexual essence.

Therefore, I will frequently use men in my examples of people with Masculine sexual essences and women in examples of the Feminine sexual essence. This will apply to roughly 80 percent of you reading this. If you feel that you are a man with a Feminine sexual essence or a woman with a Masculine sexual essence, simply reverse the genders in the examples. Keep in mind that your sexual essence is most easily discovered in your secret desires for an intimate partner. For instance, you might be a very successful businesswoman, a woman who is a real corporate warrior, and yet also want to be with a Masculine man. That is, you may have successfully developed your Masculine energy to be successful in the competitive world of Masculine business, yet still feel like a goddess deep in your heart and want to be cherished and honored as a Feminine woman.

## SOCIAL EQUALITY AND SEXUAL PASSION

One problem in our intimacies today is that many of us have confused social gender equality with the neutralization of our native Masculine and Feminine sexual essences. We must differentiate what we want in bed from what we want at the workplace. We want passion in our intimacies but neutrality in the employment office. We want our intimate partner to cherish and appreciate our sexual essence and anatomy, and yet we want our sexual essence and anatomy ignored when we are conferring in the boardroom. If we confuse functional roles in the workplace with the naturally different sexual desires of

most men and women, everybody suffers.

The Feminine sexual essence must be honored in its own right if intimacy is to flower, as must the Masculine sexual essence. However, the workplace often places a higher value on the Masculine way of operating and often demands that both women and men act more “business-like.” Because of this, women often hide their radiance and take on a competitive edge in order to be taken seriously. Men often suppress their language, behavior and even sexual urges in order to work alongside women. Just because men and women can both wear gray suits doesn’t negate the fact that each of us is a unique sexual being.

As individual men and women in the economic and political world, we should all be given the same opportunities and treated with the same respect and “equal eye.” In an effort to achieve this, men and women are learning to treat each other as equals and, to some extent, even treat each other as non-sexual beings. Unfortunately, we have confused the equality of the workplace with sexual neutralization in our intimate relationships. In our intimate relationships, we have inadvertently negotiated the neutering of our sexual essence in order to be treated as equals.

We need to make a distinction between what we want in the workplace and what we want in our intimate lives together.

Sexual fulfillment in intimacy is not based on neutrality, but on the attractive differences, playful opposition and pleasurable non-equivalence of the Masculine and Feminine gifts, anatomical, emotional and spiritual. This is a key to why the modern ideal of an intimate relationship can be so dissatisfying. In a modern relationship, in which equivalence between men and women is often emphasized, we may never receive the *full* gifts of Masculine or Feminine loving that we truly desire.

In order to freely express our loving in Intimate Communion, we

must be free to express our native sexual essence, whether it be Neutral, Masculine or Feminine.

## BLOCKED-UP AND COVERED-OVER SEXUAL ESSENCES

Suppose you are a woman whose sexual essence is naturally more Feminine. You will lose trust in your partner if you find that he is always ambivalent and undirected, waiting for you to take the lead most of the time. In this case, your partner is waiting to follow your direction, to trust and follow your Masculine sense of “mission.”

“What do you want to do tonight?” you ask.

“I don’t care, what do *you* want to do?” he answers.

If your sexual essence is actually more Feminine, you will find yourself wishing that your partner would take you into account and just make a decision. Your Feminine essence wants to feel his Masculine energy, direction, presence and passion. You want to feel him take a stronger lead in your lives together, rather than being ambiguous and unclear.

“What do you want to do tonight?”

“How about if we go out to dinner and then go for a walk in the park?”

However, if your natural Feminine sexual essence is covered over by your own Masculine energy, then you will attract a partner who is polarized by your Masculine energy. Masculine and Feminine energies always attract your reciprocal. If you are putting out Masculine energy,

you will attract a man who puts out Feminine energy. You will attract a partner who lacks strong directionality, presence and confidence. He may be radiant and intuitive, but his life will be ambiguous and undirected, and therefore he will be attracted to *your* Masculine energy.

If you find that you are repeatedly disappointed that the men (or women) you attract are somewhat weak or lost, unable to completely follow through with what they start, wishy-washy or threatened by your success, then you are probably animating more Masculine energy than is true of your natural sexual essence. Your Feminine sexual essence may be looking for a really good source of Masculine love, but the Masculine energy you are putting out is attracting men who *need* more Masculine in their lives, and who are therefore attracted to yours. But they don't fulfill the deepest desires of your Feminine sexual essence.

Suppose that you are a man with a naturally Masculine sexual essence. Time after time you are disappointed by your intimate partners. You seem to attract women, again and again, who don't trust your direction, who are more directed in their lives than you are, or who insist that you follow their direction—even though you want to follow your own direction.

If this is the case, you have attracted partners who are animating more Masculine energy than Feminine. If your sexual essence is Masculine, the only way you could be attracting such women is if your Masculine expression is blocked. Thus, your potential partners feel your more Feminine energy. They feel that they have “space” in the relationship to fill with their Masculine directionality, even though, deep inside, you are not turned on by a partner who usually wants to take the lead.

If you have had a series of intimate partnerships that ended because you no longer found your partner was “woman enough” or “man

enough,” then you probably are animating a false sexual character yourself. Probably, you are putting out less Masculine or Feminine energy than would be natural for you if you were free. Therefore, you attract a partner who is polarized by your diminished sexual essence—that is, a partner who also expresses relatively less Masculine or Feminine energy than is his or her true essence. If you are falsely neutralized, you will attract partners who are also falsely neutralized: indecisive men and pushy women.

If your sexual essence is *actually* Neutral, you will prefer your partner to be more Neutral or balanced between Masculine and Feminine. For instance, you will enjoy following your partner’s strong lead half the time, and you will equally enjoy providing a strong lead for your partner to follow half the time. If you have a Neutral sexual essence, this is the kind of relationship that you most want, that will turn you on sexually the most, that will inspire love, passion and gratitude in your intimate life.

But if you have a more Feminine or Masculine sexual essence, you will find yourself yearning to be ravished by, and to be the ravisher of, your intimate partner. Safe and neutral discussions by themselves just won’t do.

## ATTRACTING AN APPROPRIATE PARTNER

Regardless of your native sexual essence, you may have spent time developing your Masculine energy to accomplish goals or your Feminine energy to contact your hidden emotions. This is a positive step: to become whole by developing both Masculine and Feminine energies. However, if you want to attract a partner who will complement your native sexual essence, you must learn to let go of your more superficial Masculine or Feminine skills and relax into your deep core, the heart

of your true intimate desires. If you always put out more Masculine or Feminine energy than is true of you, you will attract partners who need you to be more Masculine or Feminine than is true of you. You can always attract the kind of partner you really want if the energy you put out in intimacy is true to your native sexual essence.

We should keep the success and sensitivity we may have developed as we mature in our lives, but we should also learn to relax into and offer gifts from our natural sexual essence if we want to attract partners who appreciate our *native* gifts, rather than our more superficially acquired gifts. Otherwise, if we don't allow our true sexual essence to shine, our partners will tend to complain that what we give them is not enough—that we are not Masculine enough or Feminine enough—or we will feel this way about our partners.

In your intimacy, you will always evoke in your partner the reciprocal of your own energy. If you begin to animate more Masculine energy—for instance, by concentrating on your career—your partner will feel the need to “carry” more of the Feminine energy of the relationship. If you begin to animate more Feminine energy—for instance, by taking a retreat from your worldly challenges in order to re-connect with nature, your body or your emotions—your partner will begin to carry more of the Masculine energy of the relationship.

That is, if you are a woman with a Feminine sexual essence and over time become more and more directed in your life, then you can expect that your man will become less and less Masculine—weaker, less certain and less willing to take the lead—in his loving of you. Or he may try butting his Masculine head against yours, since challenge and competition are natural forms of Masculine-Masculine communication. If you express more Masculine energy, you can also expect that your man may begin looking elsewhere for a source of Feminine energy: perhaps a more radiantly Feminine lover, frequent massages,

or trips into the Feminine energy of nature via surfing, snow skiing, golfing or fishing.

If you are a man with a Masculine sexual essence and over time you become ambiguous in your outward life, so that your “mission” becomes weakened or unclear, then you can expect that your partner will become less and less Feminine—less radiant, less vibrant, and more insistent on taking the lead—in her loving of you. She may feel that she needs to take charge in the relationship, since your Masculine energy has been diminished.

You can also expect that your woman will begin looking elsewhere for a source of Masculine energy: another lover perhaps, even just a Masculine “friend,” or perhaps the Masculine energy of a successful career or worldly “cause.”

As a culture, we have grown from the “old days.” Men and women are no longer as stuck in old roles of sexual stereotypes as they used to be. Men and women are more free to act in whatever style they choose. Naturally, the first thing men did was to balance their outdated “macho” energy with the more emotional and relational energy of their internal Feminine.

Likewise, the first thing women did was to balance their outdated “submissive housewife” energy with the more competitive and assertive energy of their internal Masculine.

Men and women are no longer dependent on each other for wholeness as they were in the old days. Men have developed their Feminine energy and women have developed their Masculine energy. This is a step in the right direction. But there is another step to take if we are to end the epidemic of so-called wimps, ballbusters and lukewarm relationships.

## 50/50 SQUELCHES OUR SEXUAL ESSENCE

I am suggesting that, as we have grown in wholeness, many of us have lost touch with our own true sexual essence as well as our partner's, so we aren't getting what we really want in a relationship. Instead of enjoying the uniqueness of each person's sexual essence, we often settle for a fair, relatively healthy, yet mediocre sense of equality.

For instance, we may think we want to share "old-style" Masculine and Feminine responsibilities equally with our intimate partner. So, we agree to a fair, 50/50 split right down the middle—but we really don't enjoy cooking half the time or changing the oil in the car half the time. It just doesn't feel authentic to our core. It doesn't feel like our true gift. Our sexual essence ends up feeling squelched. It's not completely fulfilling, but at least it's fair.

We also end up unfulfilled when we disregard the sexual essence of our intimate partner. For example, we want our partners to be receptive and listen to us as if they were our therapists, but we also want them to ravish us as if they were gods or goddesses of love. Our partners may become so used to "giving us space" and listening to our problems, however, that they no longer feel free to spontaneously ravish us with the wild force of their love.

When we lose touch with the unique expressions of our sexual essence or our partner's, we get confused, our partner gets confused and both of our true desires remain starved. Our obligation in intimacy is to give and receive the deepest gifts of love—gifts that are unique to each person and that cannot be predetermined by some outdated cultural ideal of the proper roles for men and women, or by a modern cultural ideal that men and women should be more alike, capable of and interested in the same careers, emotions and life-goals. Ongoing passion and growth in intimacy requires us to let go of our ideas of what we

“should” be doing and instead trust the wisdom inherent in our unguarded heart and uninhibited body.

By becoming conscious of our native sexual essence, we are no longer confused about what we want to receive in intimacy and from whom we want it. We are empowered to give our unique gifts as sexual beings and also to attract a partner who will give us the special gifts that we want from our chosen source of intimate emotional and sexual loving—not from our friends, business partners and therapists, but from our lover, our consort, our spouse. When we are ready to grow beyond the fair but flat confines of a 50/50 Relationship, we learn to reconnect with the great gifts of our unique sexual essence. We learn how to trust it, how to give it and how to receive it from our partner. We can stop treating each other as generic people and begin savoring the refreshing delicacy of uninhibited sexual essence.