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Ungiven Sexual Gifts

Why Are Men Afraid of Women?

The feminine is the ocean, and the masculine is a boat on the ocean. The masculine navigates from one point to another. It takes the ocean currents, the wind and the shifting tides into account in order to reach its destination. The strength of the feminine could crush the masculine at any time. But with skill, the boat can joyfully ride with the ocean's power and achieve a goal. The ocean is all motion, all energy, but doesn't go anywhere specific. The boat can be devoured by the ocean, but it can also move with currents toward a specific place, whereas the ocean flows in many directions at once.

The immensity of feminine energy coupled with the direction of masculine vision result in fullness and balance. Yet the unpredictability and sheer power of feminine energy is daunting to a man who is weak in his vision.

That's why some men say about women, "Can't live with them, can't live without them." To many men, women are the most attractive thing in the world, like a deep blue ocean glistening in the sun. And women are also the most frightening and dangerous, especially when a man feels weak.

The delightfulness of the ocean and its wildness arise from the same vast source of energy. They are both part of the same feminine force. Men are attracted to the spontaneous freshness, the vast, radiant, always changing, unpredictable force of femininity. But they are also repulsed by this force in its wilder form. It requires a strong man, sure of his direction, to embrace a strong woman, full of energy, spontaneity and wildness.



Can a Man Be Strong and Also Feminine?

The whole spectrum of masculine and feminine qualities exists in all of us. On one side of the spectrum is the extreme feminine. It is like walking out in the dew of the garden and dancing in ecstasy, connecting with nature, connecting with life. But it may also be wild and unpredictable.

The extreme masculine, on the other hand, can concentrate on a task to the point of perfection, with no disturbance whatsoever and complete self-discipline. The extreme masculine, in a man or woman, cuts through obstacles and penetrates to the core of the issue, persisting until the final goal is reached.

In between the extreme masculine and extreme feminine is a full spectrum of being. Some of us are comfortable in certain parts of the spectrum but not in others. Very few of us have a free rein throughout the entire spectrum because we may be embarrassed by some aspect of our masculinity or femininity. All of us can learn to be full and whole throughout the spectrum.

For instance, when a man is really enjoying sex, he has a definite directional quality (masculine) as well as a real sensitivity to his partner (feminine). Men who are able to embrace both their feminine and masculine during sex are able to enjoy the sensual as well as the physical experience.

By freeing ourselves to express the entire spectrum, we become more whole as a man or woman. Even so, each of us will find our favorite place in the spectrum. And, each of us will be turned on most by a man or woman who expresses a unique "flavor" of masculine or feminine love.

It's good to be free in our masculine and feminine expression. It's also good to know what we want. Then, we can choose a partner who will not frustrate our desires to imbibe

of the more masculine or feminine flavors of loving. We can choose a man or woman who is able to love us in the way that fulfills the yearning in our heart.



Why Don't I Trust My Man When He Just "Hangs Out"?

When the masculine is whole in men or women, they love what they are doing with their lives. They do it with integrity.

When the feminine is whole in men or women, they overflow with love. Their radiance transforms their life and their partner's life. They uninhibitedly give and receive love.

When the masculine is whole, a person becomes a master of conscious doing, a master of vision and direction in life. When the feminine is whole, a person becomes a goddess of love, radiating love into life. Since all of us are both masculine and feminine, we can all become masters of conscious doing and radiant loving.

The feminine part of each of us feels supported when the masculine part of our partner is taking care of life business with clarity and integrity. In the dynamics of a man-woman relationship, if the man hasn't mastered conscious, masculine doing, then the woman has to master it. Because he hasn't cultivated his masculine, his partner may have to overcultivate her own.

When I lived on the Hawaiian island of Kauai, there were quite a few men who were beach bums with very little money. There was a strong tendency for men to be undisciplined in their lives and not master conscious doing because they could just hang out, enjoying the sensuality of Hawaii

and remaining in their feminine energy. Therefore, the women on this island became proficient at taking care of themselves quite successfully. Many women on this island had highly developed masculine energy because no man had come into their lives who was trustable.

Naturally, and very healthfully, these women have developed a strong masculine ability to do. This makes it all the harder for them to trust a man because now a man has to come along who is especially good at conscious, masculine doing, since the woman is so especially good herself.

It is difficult for a lost or weakened man to match this kind of woman. For her to truly embrace him as a *man* means that she must feel that his masculine energies are at least as strong as her own. This means she must feel his integrity as a conscious doer: He has a vision of his life. He knows how he is going to accomplish that vision. And, on a daily basis, he is bringing his vision to fruition. This is what the masculine force does in either man or woman.



Is Fairness Always Best?

Certain things that feel like a real gift to you may mean nothing to your man. For instance, most women really love to receive flowers from men. They're seen as a transmission of love. For most men, flowers are nice, but nothing to weep about.

Women and men "speak" a different language of love. After working for years every day with many men and women I noticed that about 80 percent of the women I work with share a language of love and about 80 percent of the

men share a language of love. Both languages are distinct and express the specific masculine and feminine feelings about love. But there are always exceptions: Some women may be indifferent to receiving flowers, but not many.

It might be difficult for a man to understand how flowers can make a woman feel so loved, sometimes even to the point of tears. But if a man loves a woman, and he wants his woman to receive his love, he learns to speak love in *her* language. He can learn to give her the gift that most touches her heart.

When we have grown beyond the ideal of constant equality, we can learn how to gift each other in intimacy. When it's no longer an issue who kills the cockroach or who opens the door for whom, we are free to learn each other's language of love. At that point, we can begin to look at who receives the greater gift. If she kills the cockroach, does he feel it as a gift? When he kills the cockroach, does she feel it as a gift? Gifting is rarely perfectly symmetrical. Usually, women and men appreciate giving and receiving different gifts of love.

Over time, we can learn how to express one another's language of love. Then, the relationship fills with life, because we do the specific things that really give each other energy. Either partner could do these things. She is as capable of taking out the garbage as he, but who receives it as a greater gift?

If equality was the main issue, then he would say, "Look, I took out the trash yesterday, so you take it out today." That's fair—but it's not necessarily a gift. So-called fairness is not always the best way to measure a gift.

Once you have achieved fairness in your relationship, once you are no longer clinging to your ideas of roles and "have to's" and "shoulds", then serving one another becomes a matter of gifting, and your gifts to each other are unique.

You might stifle your true motivation to relax a little bit and be honored as a woman because of the notion of fairness or equality, or because you feel you have to do your part and participate in the world, and in your relationship, in a certain way. It's good to honor what you truly desire, deep inside, in the silence of your heart. Then you are able to offer and receive from your partner true gifts, instead of performing according to external roles or because of an internal voice that says you should always be equal in your daily chores. A deep relationship is not a matter of balancing a ledger sheet documenting who did what and when, but a matter of partners first discovering and then giving and receiving their deepest gifts of love.



Who Should Pay for Dinner?

The masculine quality of cherishing and protecting the feminine develops in three stages. In the *first stage* of a relationship, a man wants to cherish and protect his woman. But he also wants to "keep her in her place." She has her role and he has his. "You are a woman, and I want you to act like one. I am a man, and a man acts a certain way." This rigidity is dogma. It becomes something to grow through, something to rise above. This is the first stage.

During the *second stage* of a relationship, equality becomes important. For instance, who pays for the dinner on a date? It used to be that men always bought dinner. Men felt like they "had to." They felt weak if they didn't. It also kept a woman in a certain place and created all sorts of games between the sexes. Our culture soon began to see this as a limitation. It

became very positive to break out of these limiting roles, so that men and women on dates both felt free to buy each other dinner—they had equal rights to pay for the date.

It is healthy to grow beyond "shoulds," to grow beyond roles, into this second stage of freedom and equality. You could open the door for your man as well as he could for you. You could pay for his dinner as well as he could pay for yours.

Once equality has been established in a relationship, then we are free to ask, "What is the real gift I can give?" This is the *third stage*, the stage of mutual gifting between men and women, that stage I call "intimate communion." Through which gifts do you best transmit love to each other? Each couple can freely experiment with this.

For instance, most men, when they are acting upon love rather than a "should," feel like they are giving love when they buy their woman dinner or open a door for her. A woman usually receives such a gesture as a gift. It is a way for his masculine "do" mode to express appreciation and honor her feminine radiance.

As long as it doesn't become a role, there are certain things we find that gift each other that are not symmetrical between men and women in every case. For instance, when a woman opens the door for her man, he may appreciate it, but probably doesn't feel anything special. It might as well be a mechanical door.

Ultimately, of course, it doesn't really matter who opens the door or who buys dinner for whom. But it might be worth experimenting to discover who receives it as a real gift of love and who enjoys giving it most.



Are Artists Always Feminine?

Any task done well requires wholeness, a full complement of masculine and feminine energies. Let's look at art as an example. If you are an artist and have too little masculine then you may be very intuitive and very sensitive, but you'll rarely complete a project. If you have too little feminine energy, then you may produce a lot because of your disciplined approach, but you may not be as sensitive to the elements of your medium. A balance of masculine and feminine is required to be creative, sensitive and disciplined as an artist.

Anything done well requires a balance of the masculine and feminine. If you are a high-powered executive, for example, you won't do as well in your job if you don't have a good intuition for people. Being attuned to another's feelings is a feminine quality. Even if you have a very strong organizational ability, you also need sensitivity to people in order to make it as a good executive. The best people in all fields usually have a strong complement of both masculine and feminine energy.



Do I Really Want a Masculine Man?

The religious myths of Hinduism contain a beautiful archetype for the essential masculine and feminine characters. In these myths, God is considered to have a masculine and feminine aspect. The masculine is called Shiva and the feminine is called Shakti.

The masculine is the transcendental aspect. Shiva is totally

free yet pervades everything. The feminine aspect, Shakti, is the energy of the universe. Sometimes she is called Parvatti and is considered Shiva's consort. In paintings and sculptures she is shown half-naked with a very curvaceous, feminine body, encircled with jewelry. She wears a gauzy wrap around her waist and legs and is often depicted dancing.

In Hinduism, the play between the masculine and feminine, between Shiva and Shakti, is shown very clearly. The feminine form of God dances and attracts Shiva into life. The masculine form of God pervades through and through everything, including Shakti and her dance. He is attracted into incarnation by Shakti's devotion and radiance.

Just so in everyday life. A Shakti-like woman attracts a man out of his head into his heart. She attracts a man out of his projects and abstract ideals into the reality of life and the relationship of love.

On the other hand, when a woman is lost in her moods, a Shiva-like man's humor and love will lift her out. He will open her out of her moods.

Imagine you are angry. You run into your room and slam the door, telling your man to leave you alone. Your man respects what you say and so he shrugs and walks away. He goes off and finds something to do, or goes out with his friends to let you cool off.

Now imagine, instead, that your man comes into your room and puts his arms around you and looks lovingly into your eyes. You are angry, so you fight against him, push him away, perhaps hit him. But he stays in place with gentle firmness. He quietly tells you with a smile how much he loves you and that he is going to keep holding you, loving you, until he feels you loving him, too.

What kind of man do you want? A man who turns away at

your closed door, or a man who settles for nothing less than love? A fair man, or a Shiva-like man? The choice is up to you.



Why Is It So Difficult for Him to Honor Me As a Woman?

In ancient cultures where women were not obliged to act like men, men and women cherished the feminine. They honored the feminine in a way we don't see today. As women have taken on more masculine characteristics to make it in today's world, both men and women have lost their deep respect for the feminine. They no longer provide the support, integrity and care for a woman that would be natural if both partners trusted and honored the feminine.

In a polarized relationship, a man and woman honor and gift each other. One way that a woman could gift her man is by relieving him of the obligation to be in his feminine too excessively. She gives this gift by relaxing into her feminine energy and doing what she loves to do for him and for herself. Thus, he remains sexually polarized with her, full and strong in his masculine energy. He remains decisive. In order for her to gift him this way, he must relieve her of the obligation to be in her masculine too excessively by providing her with everything she needs to be able to relax into her feminine energy at the appropriate time.

Today, however, the feminine and masculine have been dishonored and degraded. For instance, very few men today are totally connected with a vision that carries them through life with integrity, skill and clarity. They have lost the ability to guide their life from their highest purpose. They have lost

touch with their true masculine core, and therefore have trouble honoring you as a woman.

Very few men live a life of conscious completion: "If I were to die today, my life would be complete." As the masculine has degraded, many men have lost their vision. They have lost their ability to say, "This is my highest truth. I want to share it with my woman in love and make it possible in the world."

While many men have lost touch with their masculine sense of direction, many women have lost touch with their bodies. The feminine is very bodily oriented, very sensual and full of life force and pleasure—very alive. Yet the degree to which many women today don't love their own bodies is profound. Your relationship to your body is your relationship to the feminine.

Our culture has allowed a degradation of both the masculine and feminine. It is up to each of us to reclaim the fullness of our sexual character, strengthening our vision and relaxing deeply into our bodies. Then we can honor our partners with our native sexual energies, relieving them of the necessity to be overly masculine or feminine.