

SEXUALITY



SacredSEXUALITY

with MARTINA HUGHES

Creating Real Intimacy – Part 1

Men and women often feel that intimacy is lacking in their lives. But what is intimacy? Intimacy is about real connection – connection to yourself first, the willingness to be present, receptive and allowing of your life force. Intimacy with yourself can facilitate intimacy in relationship with others. It is a feeling of being fulfilled and engaged in meaningful exchanges with others – that enhances and enriches your daily experience of life.

I feel incredibly blessed to enjoy a depth of sharing, realness and intimacy with myself, my family, close friends and a beloved partner. As I write I feel the way my heart bubbles over in beautiful deep tender moments of sharing feelings, passions, dreams and visions for the future. Equally, I can experience expansiveness in my heart in moments of sharing silence, outrageous laughter or as I hold a friend in tears.

How can you begin to experience real intimacy? Through connecting intimately with your innermost feelings, thoughts and desires – becoming available to feel and express the energy which animates your life force. We have learnt to shut down from an early age, due to family and societal conditioning, saying no to the energy which naturally wishes to express through us – this prevents us from truly knowing ourselves. Without knowing yourself, you will find it diffi-

cult to create a real connection or experience intimacy with someone else.

Intimacy for me is about sharing who I am inside and outside, without needing to hide anything, and allowing myself and others to experience all of me. This includes my fears, my joys, my pains, my anger, my bliss. . . and being able to say yes, embracing, whatever passes through me without judgment, fear or going into defensive modes of behaviour.

If you have fallen into a routine life and feel disconnected from yourself and your loved ones, then maybe it's time for some changes. The way to discover and reconnect with ongoing and lasting intimacy is through embracing all of YOU! The more you can accept yourself, the more others will enjoy and appreciate you.

Here are some practices for you to become more intimate with yourself:

1. Write a list of your top 5 values in life and beside each value write down the activities you engage in which support those values. This will help you to know whether what you are doing (activities, relationships, work) is in alignment with who you are (values). By knowing and understanding this in yourself, you can begin to make different choices to support what is important to you.

2. Spend time each day sitting in silence and breathing



into your body. As you breathe notice feelings, sensations, energy moving through you - tension, sadness, tingling, happiness, rage, love - all of the physical and emotional responses that you experience are real and valid. Notice how these feelings pass when they are acknowledged without creating a story or identity around them. If you feel an intensity of energy that feels like it needs to move - then dance, run, swim, draw, paint, jump up and down. . . engage your body and breathe fully into the activity. If you engage in an activity and neglect your breath and body awareness, you may find that you simply pushed the feeling undercover, rather than releasing it.

3. Notice your responses to difficult situations in everyday life - do you freeze, shut down, put up your defensive behaviours — or run away? Feeling our responses to conflict can give us insights into parts of ourselves that we have been hiding. Once you notice your initial reaction to freeze, run or fight ... slow down and feel what is underneath that, what is the vulnerability, what creates the tension, where do you hold it in your body? Answering these questions and learning to acknowledge these parts of yourself will help you

to experience yourself more fully. You may find it useful to write your responses to these situations in a journal, in order to release the feelings and thoughts onto a page and refrain from getting stuck in your head about it.

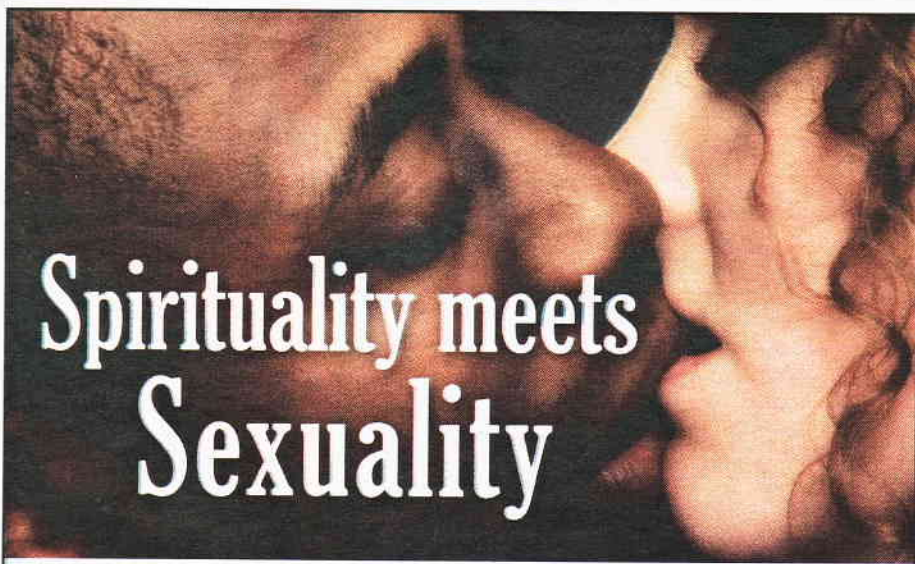
4. Keep a gratitude journal - each day write down what you are grateful for that day. You will find that the more gratitude you experience, the more your heart opens and you let yourself into feeling everything. It can be as simple as being grateful for the sunshine on your skin or an evening spent with friends. On the other hand, it can be gratitude for a challenging conversation with a loved one which brought new insights or a difficult day when you remembered to breathe and feel. When we are grateful, we invite more openness into our lives.

Allow self awareness to be your path to creating real intimacy – the more deeply you feel yourself, the more deeply you will feel others. In the next edition, I will share with you some exercises for creating real intimacy with others. In the meantime, enjoy getting to know yourself more fully!!!

Martina Hughes of Tantric Blossoming has been actively exploring sacred sexuality, tantra, breathwork, energetic healing and shiatsu for over 8 years.

Martina's vision and passion is to inspire men and women of all ages to feel their own natural energy, joy, vitality and bliss. She facilitates a space of greater awareness, openness and receptivity for people to experience the essence and freedom of their inner being.

Martina offers mixed workshops, courses for women as well as Tantric consultations to women, men and couples to expand their knowledge and energy. For more information, visit www.tantricc Blossoming.com or phone 02 9664 1110.



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