



“...your **love** will deepen and the feeling of ecstatic union will be more and more present as an **everyday** reality in your life, whether you are making love or cooking dinner, or walking in the woods **together.**”

Tantra and relationships

Jan Day

Contemporary tantra is understood to be all about sex and ways to achieve great orgasms. It certainly can lead to deeper intimacy and more profound love-making, but tantra has so much more than that to offer. Tantra is a spiritual path where our focus is on developing consciousness in every aspect of our being. And gaining more consciousness is the reason why better sex and deeper intimacy emerge in our relationships.

But how do we get there? A good place to start is by bringing more consciousness to ourselves - to this body, to this heart, to this belly that stirs with feelings, to this mind and to all the thoughts that bombard us. By doing this, we establish a stronger connection with ourselves. The more we connect and listen to ourselves, the more we can truly be with another. It is also true that we are supported to be more deeply with ourselves if the person we are relating with, can deeply accept and embrace who we are when we are - "naked with our clothes on". When we are totally witnessed and loved at this level of vulnerability, then our relationship is able to keep deepening.

Tantra invites us to include our bodies, as a man or a woman with all the natural sexual and sensual feelings that are held within us. It invites us to embrace our aliveness, to make friends with ourselves and so to be willing to reveal ourselves. When we are able to become transparent with our partner, the process of intimacy is able to expand. When this process of embracing, be-friending, accepting and revealing is shared by two people, it builds a deeper and deeper trust, acceptance and love. It starts a cycle of meeting in conscious presence - inviting deeper and deeper union with each other on all levels.

I encourage people to take small steps. These are likely to be more fruitful, allowing us to open slowly to all that we are experiencing and feeling without shocking ourselves or gritting our teeth in a determined effort that only results in us closing down and shutting off from ourselves again. Slow is good even if it isn't dramatic or exciting!

The building blocks of this process are grounded in meditation, in being willing

to BE WITH whatever and whoever is there. We don't have to be sitting in a cave in the Himalayas and we don't even have to be sitting on a meditation cushion in silence, although having an individual meditation practice is a great way to stretch our inner muscles of consciousness and heart. All that is required of us is that we hold an intention to be truly present and give ourselves some space to embody it.

I often offer the following exercise in workshops because it is fun, sensual and often helps with awareness. Start by choosing a small amount of food. It could be just one strawberry. Sit opposite one another, pick up the strawberry and simply look at it, seeing it as if for the first time. See all the detail of it for a minute or two. Then bring it closer and take in the smell of the strawberry, perhaps also enjoying the touch of it on your lips. After another minute or so, feel the strawberry with your tongue and begin to get the first sense of its taste and texture on your tongue. Then, slowly let the strawberry rub against your teeth so that the tiniest bit of juice runs into your mouth. Be with whatever the taste is, even if it is disappointing. Stay with it. Take the next 5-10 minutes to eat the strawberry as slowly as you can and stay in some eye contact with your partner.

After you've done this exercise, you might like to ponder what it would be like to spend some time with your partner giving and receiving the same exquisite quality of attention that you gave to the strawberry. As you bring this quality of attention to each other, your love will deepen and the feeling of ecstatic union will be more and more present as an everyday reality in your life, whether you are making love or cooking dinner, or walking in the woods together.



Jan offers a full program of workshops and coaching for singles and couples wanting to find their way on this path of personal growth, spiritual development and love of life. For more information go to

www.janday.com