

Bring your **SEXY** back

[**SELF**] What do you do when your libido has gone AWOL? A reluctant **Joanne Roeleem** signs up to be educated in the erotic arts

Lisa, my best friend, looked flushed as she handed me my birthday card: 'You're going to go to sex school,' she said. 'I've got you sessions with a sex coach!' Divorced for three years now, Lisa had recently met someone new and was constantly telling me how fantastic her sex life was. She credited the changes to one-to-one coaching via Skype with relationship expert and sex coach Jan Day. After her divorce, Lisa had admitted to battenning down the hatches, but she was now ready to open up again, so she signed up for coaching sessions with a Tantric sex coach. Like you do.

I was delighted that she'd finally got back into the saddle, as it were, but in my honest moments, I also felt deep envy. She was glowing – full of energy, hilarity and lust. Married for 14 years,

with twin boys about to start secondary school, I couldn't remember when I'd last felt like that. The last decade seemed a blur. I had left a 'proper job' three years ago to set up my own design business – and I was loving it, but it took up all my energy and focus. Being a working mother to two lively boys, I felt constantly exhausted. I loved my husband, Peter, but after 14 years, the spark had definitely faded to a monthly fizzle – and my fizz had gone flat. I can't remember when I last felt lust – for my husband or for life. My default setting was 'knackered and resentful', and now envious. Great!

So as taken aback as I was when Lisa told me about the sex coaching sessions, I looked at her flushed, happy face and thought: 'You know what? I'll have what she's having.' >>>



>>> LESSON 1: Reconnect with your feminine self

I was nervous before the first session because I didn't know what to expect – a Katie Price lookalike? A dominatrix with a whip? But no, Jan Day is a quietly spoken redhead in her fifties, who is a qualified coach and specialist in Tantric sex. 'Tantra invites you to become intimate with yourself so that you can become intimate with another, and ultimately with the divine,' she told me. Jan asked lots of questions – not about my sex life, but in general about my daily life, work and family. So I told her all about my exhaustion, my flatlining libido, and my resentment.

'You are stuck in your masculine energy,' she told me. 'You need to reconnect to the feminine. Everyone has both masculine and feminine energy within them. It's the yin and the yang, the being and the doing, but when these energies get out of kilter, life becomes hard and exhausting. The feminine is all about trusting, listening, receiving, softening and focusing on your internal landscape,' she continued. 'When you are operating in the masculine mode, it's all about doing, thinking and logic, focusing on the external, setting goals and making things happen.'

'But I need to make things happen – at work, and at home,' I pointed out. 'I can't just sit there and listen. And listen to what, exactly?'

'Your intuition; your gut instinct, the wise inner voice,' said Jan. 'You need to get out of your head, stop doing and get back into your body.'

Because I work from home, Jan advised me to start by creating some boundaries around work – such as changing into 'soft clothes' once I've finished my working day, listening to music, dancing around the living room, spending some time alone just 'being',

staring out of the window and even rolling around on a sheepskin rug! 'Explore what it feels like to be, not do,' she told me.

Creating a 'soft' place

When I put down the phone, I felt unadulterated rage race around my veins. Roll round on a sheepskin rug? Dance? Spend some time alone? Does she have any idea what my life is like? The endless to-do lists, demanding clients, mountains of washing and ironing... Resentfully, I threw myself on the sofa to write another to-do list and ended up falling asleep. The noise

“Who knew the supermarket could be such fun? I found myself in the vegetable aisle, eyeing up the courgettes and laughing out loud”

of me grinding my teeth woke me up some time later. I realised that Jan might have had a point; I was constantly in go-go-go mode. The bottom line was, I believed that if I did slow down, the business would fail and my family would fall to pieces. I believed I had to do it all because no-one else would.

Pete came home to find me sitting on the sofa, staring into space. He sat with me and we chatted about our day. 'You look tired,' he said. It wasn't a sheepskin rug, but I did put my head on his shoulder. The kids piled in five minutes later. 'Ugh! They're holding hands!' they said in disgust.

LESSON 2: Meeting my inner man and girl

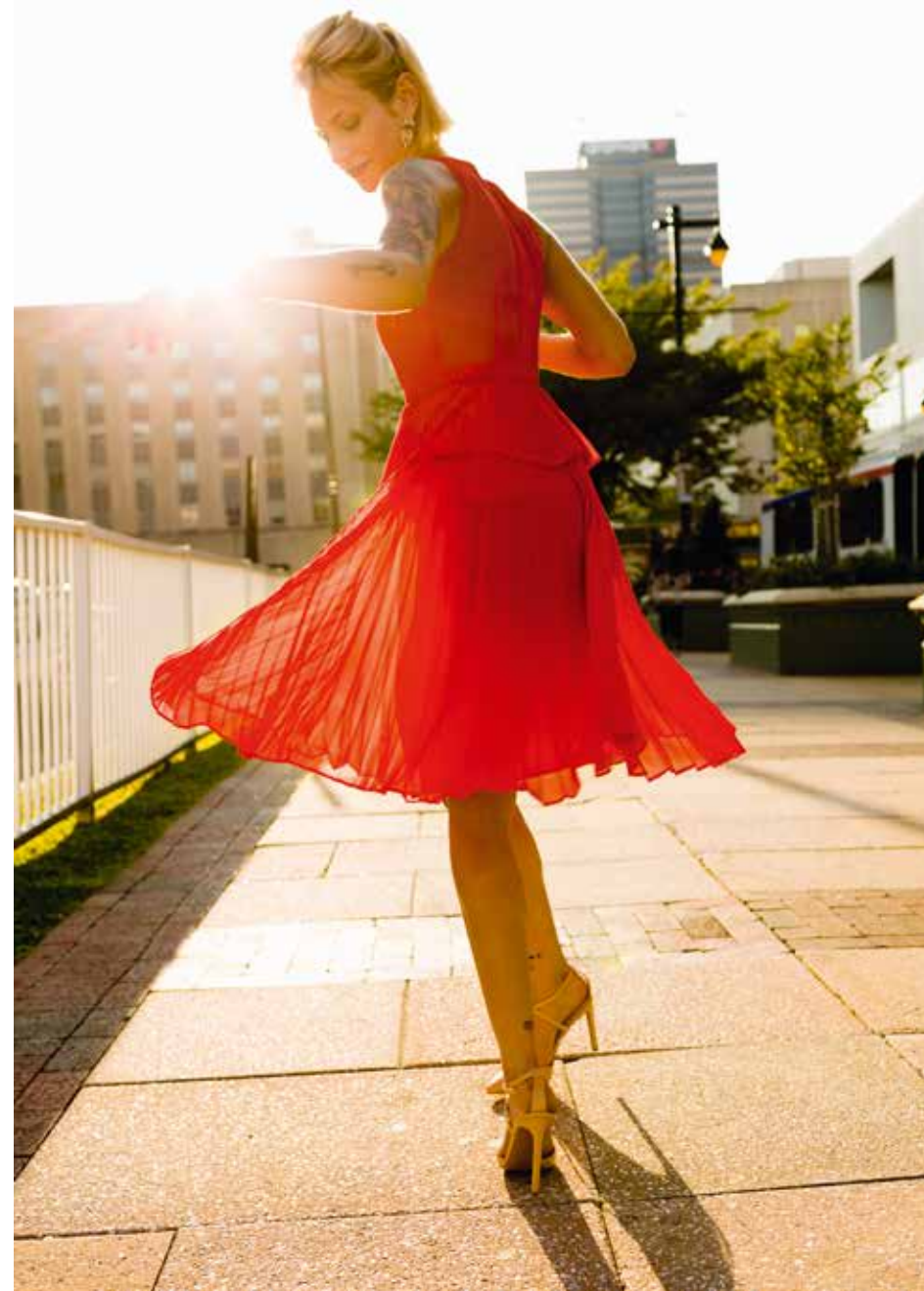
In session two, I confessed my resistance. Jan asked me to do some visualisation exercises to discover what roles the feminine and masculine play, and why I was finding it hard to reconnect to my inner 'girl'.

She asked me to personify my inner man. What does he look like? Handsome, strong, impatient, motivated... Does he get things done? 'He's the sort of man I'd want on my team,' I said. 'What role does he play in your life?' she asked. 'He looks after me and protects me,' I replied. As soon as I said it, I felt tearful. Jan asked me to imagine my feminine self. All I could see was a little girl around 10 who was mischievous and fun, laughing, but fragile, too – definitely in need of protection.

Jan asked me to be aware of these two energies as I go through the day, to be aware I could turn up my protective masculine energy when I need it, but to allow my feminine energy to play, too. 'It would be good for you to explore how you can be feminine and safe,' she said. 'Allow your strong masculine side to step in if you need his energy, but allow your inner girl out to play. Keep a journal about how you are feeling each day.'

Back to my childhood

Jan's words struck a chord with me. I began to write, in bed, before I started my day. I found it interesting that my feminine energy manifested as a little girl. I wrote about my childhood. Like many of us, I'd experienced some challenging times. I wondered if that was when I decided it wasn't safe to be feminine. Jan encouraged me to 'dialogue' with my inner 10-year-old. 'Ask questions in your journal and imagine she's going to answer,' she instructed. I tried, and found a delightfully mischievous



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voice. She was sick of all the work; she wanted fun. Suddenly, my masculine protector spewed onto the page – no, it wasn't safe. Get back, keep your head down. Focus on what you can control.

Pete had got up to have a shower and when he walked back into the room, I was sobbing into my pillow. He was horrified; I didn't even cry when our dog died. I told him about my journal and what I was learning. 'I'll take the boys to school, you stay there,' he said. He came back and we talked and talked as he held me. I cried some more. I hadn't felt this close to him in years.

LESSON 3: Make love to yourself

In my last session, Jan instructed me to get in touch with my body – and touch my body – specifically my *yni*. 'That's Sanskrit for your fanny,' Lisa added, helpfully. 'Book some time alone, make love to yourself by stroking yourself all over,' Jan advised. She suggested I buy 'yni eggs': 'You insert them in the morning and you can be aware of your feminine power at all times.'

Horrified, I tell Lisa about my homework. 'If you don't want to get the eggs,

then walk with your fanny. It's just as good. Walk as if your fanny is powering every step,' said Lisa. 'It's getting you focused on the juicy business of sex at all times of the day. It's like magic; I went from invisible to switching my bleepers on overnight.' Jan encouraged me to bring sexiness into the everyday, too. 'Don't separate the two. Fondle vegetables in the supermarket. Find a new erotic connection to the world and yourself,' she instructed.

Courgettes and connection

Who knew the supermarket could be such fun? I found myself in the vegetable aisle, eyeing up the courgettes and laughing out loud. I started taking pictures on my phone and sending them to Lisa. She sent me a filthy commentary back. A man stood opposite me in the aisle and smiled. I met his gaze and blushed. I practised 'walking with my fanny' when I was out doing errands. It could have been my imagination, but I seemed to talk to more people that day than usual. When Pete came home, he grabbed me in the kitchen and we snogged – with tongues!

School's out

Three months on, and something has definitely shifted. Life is just as busy, but I feel different. I'm laughing more, saying 'fuck it' to the to-do list and making playlists on Spotify instead. I've been out dancing with Lisa, and she's teaching me how to dance as well as how to walk that walk! My inner child seems to be growing up into a teenager who is rebelling against routine. No more 'martyr mummy' – I'm letting the kids and Pete get on with it. The house is definitely more chaotic, but I don't care. I haven't rolled on a sheepskin rug but I have rolled around with my husband more – a lot more. And he asked for courgettes for dinner last night.

For more information, see janday.com