



Tantra for Awakening

Playbook One

Crystal Dawn Morris

Dedication

*"Tantra is the celebration of life in the present moment
... and the being of simple unity."*

Tat Twam Asi

I dedicate this book to my teachers, family, friends,
students and global community.

I offer these practices as an invitation to embodying the True Self,
which makes love with life in every moment
no matter what it looks like.

May the energy of this creative impulse ripple out in all directions
as a blessing upon all beings everywhere.

Contents

Introduction	1
What is Tantra?	3
Opening the Heart	4
Practicing Compassion	6
Accepting What Is	8
Conscious Communication	10
The Eye Gazing Meditation	12
What are Chakras?	15
Activating the Chakras	17
Chakra Wisdom Speaks	19
Being in the Flow of Abundance	21
Tantra and Sexuality	23
The Safer Sex Conversation	25
3 Gifts to Tantalize Your Lover	27
The Full-Body Orgasm	30
7 Ways to Please your Lover	33
The Pleasure Game	35
The Sensory Awakening Ritual	37
Erotic Massage and Awareness	40
Practicing the Art of Pleasure	44
Making Love with Life	47
Closing Thoughts	48
About Crystal Dawn Morris	49

Introduction

Tantra is an ancient spiritual path that has radically transformed how I experience reality. Through the practice of Tantra, I have been able to let go of the compulsive habit of doing and discover the conscious art of being. The effect of this shift has been profound. It has brought more ease, flow and abundance into my day-to-day life. I offer this book to those who recognize that the contemporary American lifestyle is not aligned with the love and freedom they long to experience.

This book is a collection of articles written over the past thirteen years. When I began writing them in 2007, Tantra was a little-known topic primarily associated with sacred sexuality. These articles are intended to introduce you to the subject of Tantra in a format that is gentle, relevant and accessible. Many eastern spiritual practices grew out of a monastic tradition and are therefore designed to be done on retreat, away from the challenges of daily living. Tantra is a spiritual tradition that recognizes the needs of people who desire to benefit from spiritual practice without having to take monastic vows. These people were called "householders". Tantra is designed to be practiced in the midst of the joys and challenges of daily living. The practices focus of Present-Moment Awareness and embodied experience.

The majority of articles in this book are practices designed to help you be more present, open and available as you move through the activities of daily living. Because we humans are conditioned by our past, we tend to function habitually in ways that may not serve us. In order to begin to awaken and transform our reality, we need to practice. Practice requires consistency, patience and compassion. This book is only a rudimentary beginning to what Tantra has to offer. I hope it inspires you to begin a lifelong journey of making love with life in every moment.

In order to begin the journey it is helpful to have a map of the territory. Nondual Tantra holds that only one thing exists and everything that has ever existed or will ever exist is made of That and because it is innately self-aware it is often called, Awareness. There are two aspects to being on this path. The first, is to become doubtless in the realization that

what you are is one-with Awareness. The second aspect is learning that the practices naturally help you navigate the human experience with more Love and Freedom. So life is more enjoyable even in the midst of challenges.

***"Awakening is not an experience per se,
nor a state of mind –
it is simply being in touch with what is already true,
moment to moment,
and letting action flow from that place.
Awakening is ever-deepening love for the truth,
ever-expanding love for the simple miracle of awareness
itself."***

Christopher Wallis, The Recognition Sutras

What Is Tantra?

Tantra is a path of embodied wisdom experienced moment-to-moment. The word comes from Sanskrit. *Tan* means "expand" and *tra* means "protect." Tantra is a tradition that helps us to expand our understanding that we are much more than a limited body-mind. When this is realized, we are protected from unnecessary suffering.

As we begin the journey, it is helpful to have a map of the territory. Nondual Tantra holds that only one thing exists, and everything that has ever existed or ever will exist is made of That. Because it is inherently self-aware, it is often called, "Awareness"; as well as "God", "Goddess", "Divine" and "True Self".

The path of Tantra has two aspects. The first aspect is the unwavering clarity that what "I Am" is, in Truth, Awareness itself; not this seemingly small, separate person with a limited body and mind. Typically, this discovery is a gradual process of recognition revealed through practice. Tantric practices facilitate a profoundly transformational discovery- "I Am" the aware space in which all experiences arise, the Divine Actor playing all the various characters and scenes in the 3-D movie called "Life". As this View gradually becomes clearer, you finally stand doubtless in the absolute recognition of your True identity as Pure Awareness.

The second aspect of Tantra is learning how to live in harmony with life. Tantric practices help us wake up from the habits of grasping and aversion. These fear-based habits arise from the dualistic worldview we have been taught, a worldview fraught with limitation. As we progress on the Tantric journey, life still is experienced as having ebbs and flows, like the tides. However, these changes are accepted as a natural part of the life cycle. They are no longer taken as a personal affront. You come to understand that suffering is optional. These two aspects of Tantra- knowing your True identity as Awareness and surrendering to life's never-ending changes, guide you home to the True Self. You learn to enjoy life as it unfolds, understanding that life is Awareness at play as an infinite field of Love and Freedom in action.

Opening the Heart



Modern life can be stressful. Our lives are busy. We feel pulled in many directions at once. The media loves to tell us about all the things that are going wrong in the world- the economy is in upheaval, terrorism is a threat and schools may not be safe places for our children. We wonder what to do about these and other issues in

our lives. At times, we become overwhelmed and get stuck in negative thought patterns. Compulsive worry leads to anxiety, fear and dissatisfaction, sometimes making us feel like a hamster stuck on its wheel. Thinking...thinking...thinking- the mind is trying to figure everything out. Getting off that hamster wheel can be challenging at times.

If you find yourself in such a state, the best thing you can do is shift out of your head and reconnect to your heart. As you open your heart, you shift your perspective. It is easier to let go of negativity and relax into the moment.

Three Keys to Opening the Heart are:

Key 1: The Heart Salutation

Extend your arms toward the earth, palms together. Inhale as you bring them up to your heart with your palms still together. Exhale and bow forward, acknowledging the Divine with the Sanskrit salutation "Namaste". "Namaste" means, "I recognize the Divine in you as a reflection of the Divine within me." (In this example, you are acknowledging the world as a mirror for seeing the Divine within yourself.) Inhale as you straighten back up. Finally, exhale as you allow your hands to return to the starting position, pointed toward the earth.

Key 2: Heart Breathing

Bring your awareness to your heart center. Now, begin breathing deeply into your belly for a few minutes, letting go of any tension as you breathe. Scan your heart, noticing if it is open, closed or somewhere in-between. Focus all your awareness on your heart. Allow your heart to begin to relax and open as you breathe into the center of your chest. Close your eyes and allow a feeling of unconditional love to fill your heart. Breathe love into your whole being. When you are ready, open your eyes. Look around and notice how you feel.

Key 3: Offer Gratitude and Blessings

Offering gratitude and helping those less fortunate is a great way to shift our attention and appreciate all that we do have. Think of 7 things in your life that you are grateful for and say them out loud. Think of someone less fortunate than you, someone who is suffering and could use your support. Send them a blessing. Ask that they receive what they need to transform their situation in the best possible way.

Practice these 3 Keys whenever you find yourself getting lost in negative mind patterns, such as fear, anxiety or worry, or if you are feeling disconnected from your heart. Opening your heart allows you to remember that Love is your true nature. It helps you to love yourself and appreciate your life. It reminds you to send love to those less fortunate and feel gratitude each day. If you practice these 3 Keys regularly, you will discover that living from your heart is much easier than living from the mind's idea of what life is about.

***"Your task is not to seek for love,
but merely to seek and find all of the barriers within yourself
that you have built against it."***

Rumi

Practicing Compassion

Compassion for all beings is the foundation of all Tantric practice. The motivation to achieve enlightenment is born out of a desire to help others to awaken and to end suffering for all beings. This practice is called "Bodhichitta", which means "awakened mind." In Buddhism, the mind is associated with the heart, not the head. Bodhichitta also is associated with wisdom and spaciousness. So to activate compassion, you awaken the heart with both wisdom and spaciousness.



[Sri Yantra Intimacy by Paul Heussenstamm](#)

Compassion is different from sympathy, which can sometimes cause a feeling of being overwhelmed by the suffering of others. If you become overwhelmed by such emotions, you are now one of those who is suffering. If you are suffering, you have lost your equanimity. To regain it, you need to let go of any attachment or aversion you have towards the situation and regain your own inner peace.

Practicing compassion requires equanimity, an open heart and the intent to help others in every moment, as much as you are able. Equanimity is an unbiased attitude toward all beings and is the

foundation for practicing Bodhichitta. It is a state of being which requires awareness and letting go of attachment or aversion.

Here is a meditation for cultivating equanimity. Imagine you are surrounded by three people- one is your best friend, another an adversary and one a complete stranger to you. Now examine your feelings towards each and see why you have labeled them "friend", "adversary" and "stranger". As you explore your feelings, notice that these labels are impermanent. Your "friend" could move away and no longer be important to you. Your feelings for your "adversary" might be resolved if she offered to help you through a crisis. A "stranger" could become your "friend" or "lover". In doing this meditation, you can begin to let go of your attachment to your friends, aversion for your adversaries and indifference toward strangers.

See if you can find a place of peace within yourself that allows you to see each person from a place of compassion. Generate the desire that all beings are no longer suffering and have awakened to their true nature. This is the beginning stages of Bodhichitta practice.

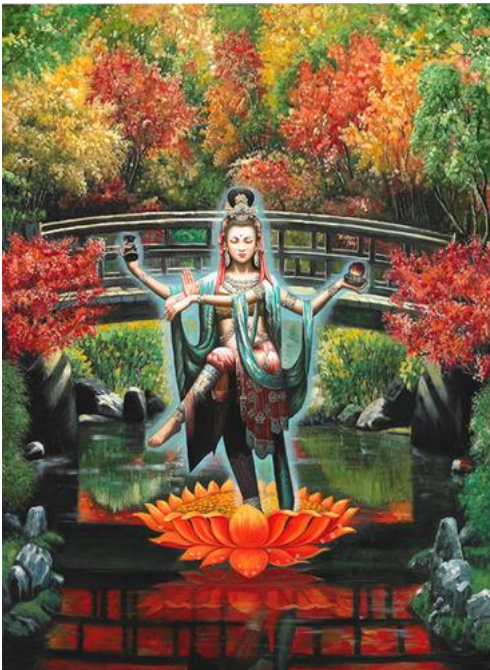
***"Compassion is what makes our lives meaningful.
It is the source of all lasting happiness and joy.
And it is the foundation of a good heart,
the heart of one who acts out of a desire to help others.
Through kindness,
through affection,
through honesty,
through truth and justice toward all others
we ensure our own benefit.
This is not a matter for complicated theorizing.
it is a matter of common sense."***

The Dalai Lama

Accepting What Is

The world is a reflection of your own inner landscape. If you want to create a better world, rather than focusing on the problem “out there,” begin by changing what is going on inside of you. This journey begins by accepting all aspects of yourself. How much do you love and accept yourself? How does that affect how you treat others? Learn how to move beyond the illusion of separation and discover that you are Love. As you let love flow through you, the world mirrors back the love you give to yourself and others.

Take an Inventory



[Daylight Dancer by Paul Heussenstamm](#)

Do you love your body? Do you feed it good food? Do you give it enough exercise? Do you touch it in pleasurable ways? Do you wear clothes that feel good against your skin? Do you appreciate your body for all it does for you?

Is your mind spacious? Have you noticed your mind is addicted to thinking? Are you able to witness your thoughts without taking them seriously? Do you meditate and notice the spaces between your thoughts? Is your mind at peace? Do repetitive negative thoughts fill your head? Do you offer kind and loving words to yourself each day?

Do your emotions flow through you? When emotions arise do you accept and feel them fully? To you find healthy ways to express both positive and negative emotions? Do you deny, judge or put limitations on certain feelings? Have you noticed your emotions are fluid when they are allowed to be as they are?

Are you aware that you are not your ego, but Awareness in form? Do you practice self-inquiry? Do you meditate or pray regularly? Do you have a spiritual community that supports your spiritual life? Do you feel alone and separate much of the time? Do you recognize that you are one with Source and all separation is an illusion?

Notice when and how you limit Love. Can you be more generous and loving to yourself? You can't give to another what you are unable or unwilling, to give to yourself. First, fill up your own cup, and then you will have plenty of love to give to others. Accept compliments. Be generous. Enjoy every moment.

By taking this self-love inventory regularly, you can begin to let go of unhealthy patterns and discover how to love yourself and others unconditionally. By giving and receiving love freely, we help create a more loving world. Share this practice with others. Become the Love you want to see in the world.

***"When you no longer derive your sense of Self
from whatever comes and goes,
the joy of exploration invites you
into the undefined depths of personal experience.
It is here, where nothing needs to satisfy you
or meet any particular demand,
in order for you to be truly fulfilled
and absolutely captivated
by the endless love affair of simply being alive."***

Matt Kahn

Conscious Communication

Use this practice at the beginning of any process. It will allow you to be more present and clear about your intentions, concerns, projections and healthy boundaries.

Step 1: Heart Salutation

Begin by acknowledging the Divine in each other. Sit across from your partner and look into their eyes. Bring your palms together and extend your arms towards the earth. Inhale, keep your hands in prayer position and bring them up to your heart. Exhale as you bow to each other. You may choose to acknowledge each other with the Sanskrit salutation, "Namaste," which means, "I honor the Divine in you as a reflection of the Divine in me". Inhale as you straighten up. End by exhaling as your arms to return to their starting position, hands pointed towards the earth.

Step 2: Create the Bubble

Create a bubble. Use the power of intention as you move your hands and circumscribe a bubble around the two of you. Feel this bubble of Present-Moment Awareness surrounding you.

Step 3: Remove any Distractions

Take turns removing things from the bubble that could detract from your ability to be fully engaged in this practice. Use your hands as you imagine removing things from the bubble. Share aloud what you are taking out of the bubble- "the past, anger, work, etc."

Step 4: Bring in Support

State aloud what things you are bringing into the bubble. Use a gesture as you call in things into the bubble that will enhance your practice, "love, willingness, presence, trust, etc."

Step 5: Offer Appreciation

You may want to offer an appreciation to the other person for being willing to share this experience with you. Examples: "I appreciate your willingness to explore this practice with me."

Step 6: Share your Desires, Fears & Boundaries

Once the bubble is created, take turns sharing your desires, fears and boundaries for this practice. One person shares, while the other person listens without judgment or commentary. Then, switch roles.

A: Desires & Intentions

Address what you want to experience in this practice.

"I desire to stay present, open and connect deeply to your heart."

Consider ending your Desires & Intentions by asking for "this or something better". Adding this to your intentions creates a space for miracles to come into your life.

B: Fears & Concerns

Address any resistance that you may have about this practice.

"My fear is that I will get self-conscious and start acting silly."

C: Healthy Boundaries

Healthy boundaries are what you need to feel safe and stay open during this practice. I have noticed that people often have resistance to setting boundaries. Healthy boundaries are bridges to deeper connection. Intimacy arises when people's healthy boundaries are honored and respected. Boundaries are dynamic, expanding and contracting. If your boundaries shift, you need to pause and check in with yourself. Ask yourself what you need in this moment to feel safe and open. Pausing is important. Once you are clear, share your new boundaries. Pause and check in anytime you notice something feels misaligned.

Examples: "I need to end by noon." "I don't want to be touched during this practice." "I want to stay connected to you, even if resistance arises."

Step 7: Now you can Begin the Process

Now begin whatever process you have chosen to do.

The Eye Gazing Meditation

The eyes are the “windows to the soul.” When we gaze deeply into the eyes of another person, we can see beyond their physical form and personality into their Essence. The practice of eye gazing is an ancient Tantric practice. It is found in the Hindu, Buddhist and Sufi traditions and is considered to be a path to enlightenment. The 13th century Sufi poet, Rumi, became enlightened while gazing into the eyes of his teacher. Many of Rumi’s poems celebrate the power of eye gazing. Here is an example:

***"Both our sets of eyes became drunk,
utterly intoxicated by the promise of Union.
O my God!
What is this union of eye to eye?"***

Eye gazing is something you have probably done naturally, such as when gazing into the eyes of a newborn baby or when you first fell in love. Even when you are in a conversation and maintain eye contact, you are probably doing a, less intimate form of eye gazing.

Eye gazing can be done as a one-on-one meditation with a friend or beloved. It can also be done solo, by gazing into a mirror. You can integrate it into daily life by engaging people briefly, in passing, with the intent that when you meet their eyes you will see beyond their form, into their Essence. Some of the benefits of this practice include becoming more present, opening your heart and expanding your awareness of the Divine in all beings.

Step 1: The Heart Salutation

You begin this practice by acknowledging the Divine in each other with a Heart Salutation. Sit across from your partner and look into their eyes. Maintaining eye contact throughout the rest of the process, begin by extending your arms towards the earth, palms together. Then, inhale and, keeping your hands in prayer position, bring them to your heart. Exhale as you bow forward and acknowledge the Divine in each other with the Sanskrit salutation

“Namaste.” Namaste means “I honor the Divine in you as a reflection of the Divine in me.” Inhale, as you straighten back up. Finally, exhale as you allow your hands to return to the starting position, pointed towards the earth.

Step 2: The Bubble

Now, create a bubble around you and your partner. Do this by waving your arms around both of you as you define the shape of the bubble that surrounds you. Then, gesture as if removing an object from your bubble and verbally share what you are removing from the bubble out loud. These are things that won't serve you in this practice (the past, distractions, anger, worry, etc.) Next, gesture and state what things you want to bring into the bubble. These are things that will enhance your eye gazing experience (love, willingness, presence, trust etc.) At this point, you may want to offer an appreciation or blessing to the other person (“I honor your heart, which gives so much love to the world.”) Creating the bubble helps to call you into Present-Moment Awareness and creates a safe space in which to practice the eye gazing meditation.

Step 3: Share Your Desires, Fears and Boundaries

Once the bubble is created, share your intentions/desires, fears and boundaries related to this practice. First, one person speaks while the other person listens without judgment or commentary. Then you switch roles. Here is an example:

“I desire to stay present, open and connect deeply to your soul.”

“My fear is that I will get self-conscious and will start acting silly.”

“My boundary is to stay connected to you, even if resistance arises.”

Why boundaries? When I teach this practice in my classes, people often have resistance to setting boundaries. I explain that boundaries are not walls, they are bridges. Bridges help to bring people together. Intimacy happens when people have healthy boundaries. Healthy boundaries allow you to feel safe, stay open and be present. Boundaries are dynamic, so it is important to check in periodically with yourself to see if your boundaries have changed. If they have changed, update your partner so they can honor your new boundaries. Here are a few examples:

“I need to end this practice by noon.”

"I don't want to be touched during this meditation."

"I will stay present. If I go into thinking, I will close my eyes for a moment to bring myself back into the practice."

Step 4: Eye Gazing Practice

Once you have created the bubble and shared your desires, fears and boundaries, begin the eye gazing practice. Traditionally, it is recommended that you begin by gazing into left eye. This is because the left side of the body is considered to be the receptive side. Use a soft gaze. This is not a staring contest. It is okay to change eyes if and when you feel called to. Just relax, breathe and allow the experience to unfold. Notice what arises without judging it. Be open and curious, like a child.

You can do this practice for as long as you want. Your first time, I suggest beginning with 2 to 5 minutes of eye gazing. Then, close your eyes, go inside and reconnect internally for 1-2 minutes. When you are ready, open your eyes and eye gaze again. Extend the time as you get more comfortable with the process. Doing this practice for an extended period of time can take you to new levels of connection. Set aside a time when you can practice for 45 to 60 minutes. Afterwards, discuss your experience with your partner.

Eye gazing is a great way to discover how open you are and see if any resistance arises. If you feel resistance, see if you can allow it to melt. How does it feel to be seen? How does it feel to look deeply into another person? This is a great practice for developing a deeper heart connection. It can be helpful to keep a journal of your experiences.

Eye gazing is a simple and powerful practice. It can cut through illusion and open the door to Truth. When done regularly, it can transform your understanding of who you are. Even if this is the only Tantric meditation you ever do, you could awaken through this practice. I invite you to practice eye gazing with your friends and lovers.

What Are Chakras?



Heart Chakraman by Paul Heussenstamm

“Chakra” is a Sanskrit word meaning “wheel” or “vortex”. It refers to energy centers in the body that are aligned with points along the spine. Chakras regulate the flow of energy throughout our subtle energy body. The chakras are not physical. They are energy vortexes made of consciousness. They interact with the physical body through two major vehicles—the endocrine system and the nervous system. Depending on which belief system you are discussing, their number of chakras ranges from 5 to 72,000. The system most people in the west have encountered uses seven chakras.

Each of the seven chakras is associated with one of the seven endocrine glands, and also with a group of nerves called a “plexus”. Thus, each chakra can be associated with particular parts of the body and particular functions within the body controlled by a given plexus and endocrine gland. In addition, chakras also correlate to levels of consciousness, elements, stages of life, colors, sounds, and body functions.

***“To surrender is to flow like a river into the sea of love
and in losing yourself, find yourself.***

***To surrender is to give up everything safe and secure,
and in doing so find confidence and strength.***

***To fully surrender is to allow your heart to burst open,
unable to contain all the love running through you,
and to let the overflow drench your lover with love.”***

Anonymous

Below is a brief description of the seven chakras:

Location	Color	Gland	Ecstatic Quality
Root Attributes: Survival, Earth, foundation, belonging, being enough, aliveness, masculine sexuality	Red	Sexual	Abundance / Orgasm
Lower Belly Attributes: Equilibrium, Lunar-Water, vitality, birth, desire, pleasure, health, feminine sexuality	Orange	Adrenal	Balance / Flow
Solar Plexus Attributes: Personal Will, Solar-Fire, manifesting, charisma, self-esteem, courage, radiance.	Yellow	Pancreas	Power / Manifestation
Heart (Centre) Attributes: Sacred Union, Space, intimacy, passion, love, generosity, joy, play, laughter	Green	Thymus	Love / Compassion
Throat Attributes: Authenticity, Air, communication, creative expression, inspiration, vocalizing	Blue	Thyroid	Truth / Creativity
Third Eye Attributes: Wisdom, Cosmos, imagination, inner vision, point-of-view	Violet	Pituitary	Insight / Intuition
Crown Attributes: Source Consciousness, Spirit, illumination, awakening, transformation	White	Pineal	Connection / Transcendence

Activating the Chakras

Tantra is an ancient spiritual path for awakening consciousness. It differs from most spiritual paths because it embraces the human body as a temple and sexual energy as the fuel for awakening. Your sexual energy is used to expand awareness by moving it through the body's energy centers. These centers, located along the spine, are called "chakras", which means "wheel of light". As consciousness moves through the chakras the energy body is refined. There is less identification with the ego and separation from Source is recognized as an illusion.

There are seven primary chakra centers. The first begins at the base of the spine and is called the "root" chakra. The second chakra is located in the lower belly, the third chakra is located at the solar plexus, (the area just below the diaphragm). The fourth chakra is located at the heart center and the fifth chakra at the throat. The sixth chakra (also called the third eye) is located between the eyebrows and the seventh chakra ("the crown") is just above the top of the head. Tantra teaches you how to move your sexual energy from your root, up through heart center and up to your crown. Awareness grows as each chakra center begins to flow with abundant energy.

Seven Steps for Energizing the Chakras:

1. Stand with your feet hip width apart and your knees slightly bent.
2. Breathe through your mouth and into your belly, allowing it to expand.
3. Increase the energy by breathing in as if you are sipping through straw.
4. As you inhale, rock the hips back, creating an arch in the back. As you exhale, tuck the tail bone under, flattening the back. Allow your pelvis to rotate freely, keeping the knees bent.

5. Add the "PC Pump"- As you inhale squeeze the pelvic floor muscles, pulling them upwards as if holding in your urine. As you exhale, let your pelvic floor relax.
6. Put all the steps together. As you inhale, imagine you are breathing the energy up from your root, through each chakra, to your heart. Practice this until you feel the energy pulsing from your root to your heart. You can play with speeding up and slowing down your breathing until the first four chakras are connected and flowing with energy.
7. Once you have mastered connecting the root and heart center, try moving the energy from your heart to your crown. Practice until you can feel the energy flowing easily from your root to your crown. Imagine a rainbow colored bridge of light flowing from your root to your crown, connecting the Earth and Sky.

Some of the benefits of energizing the chakras are improved health, sexual vitality, mental clarity, expanded creativity and inner peace. Do this practice daily to maintain and enhance your physical, emotional and spiritual health. It is also a great practice to do prior to making love and can also be incorporated into your lovemaking. As sexual energy moves from the root to the crown, you connect to the mystical realms and discover that you are not your thoughts, body, feelings or beliefs. You are the Divine in human form, celebrating the ability to experience pleasure, bliss and unity consciousness.

***"Tantra relaxes the body, opens the heart
and brings the mind into clear focus."***

Margot Anand

Chakra Wisdom Speaks

This practice allows you to access the wisdom held in your chakra energy centers. You will lend your voice to the chakra center you want to communicate with it in a direct way. The more you are able to relax and surrender, the easier it is to access the wisdom of your chakras by letting them speak in their own unique voice.

Set aside 30-60 minutes for this practice. Make sure the phone is off and that you won't be disturbed. This can be done alone or with a partner. If done alone, have your journal nearby, so you can take notes. You may also choose to record the experience. If done with a partner, only one person speaks and the other acts as a witness. They may take notes, if that feels appropriate to both parties. The witness should not interrupt the speaker while their chakra is talking.

Begin with a Heart Salutation: sit across from your partner and look into their eyes. Maintaining eye contact throughout the rest of the process, begin by extending your arms towards the earth, palms together. Then, inhale and, keeping your hands in prayer position, bring them to your heart. Exhale as you bow forward and acknowledge the Divine in each other with the Sanskrit salutation "Namaste." Namaste means, "I honor the Divine in you as a reflection of the Divine in me". Inhale as you straighten back up. Finally, exhale as you allow your hands to return to the starting position, pointed towards the earth.

Sit or lie down in a comfortable position. Now, direct your attention to the chakra you are going to listen to. Take slow, gentle, relaxing breaths into your belly. Relax deeply for several minutes. As your exhale, breathe out any tension you are holding. As you inhale, breathe in life force energy (prana/chi/ki) and feel your body being energized.

When you are relaxed, focus your attention on the chakra you feel called to connect with. Place your hands over the area related to that particular chakra. Breathe into it and begin to tune into the energy of this chakra. Invite it to speak to you by offering it your voice. "I invite you to speak aloud and I give you my voice." Begin by having the chakra

share its name. "I Heart, desire to share my wisdom with you." Then allow the chakra to speak to you, in the first person, "I, Heart, want to share that I have been feeling ignored lately. Crystal has not been listening to me... I would like.... It would be helpful if..." Continue to tune in for 5-10 minutes or longer. There may be pauses as the information is accessed. Stay present with the process until it feels complete. End with a Heart Salutation.



[Butterfly Mandala Blue by Paul Heussenstamm](#)

Being in the Flow of Abundance

In challenging times, it is easy to believe the stories you hear in the news and from the people around you. Believing the gloom and doom can cause you to contract in fear. You feel like you are losing control. Control is just an illusion, the ego's attempt to hold on to the past instead of being in the moment. When you let go of trying to be in control, you allow yourself to discover the flow. The world is always changing. You can fight it, or surrender and change with the times. Surrender does not mean to give up. It means to relax into each moment, trust the journey and allow the universe to support you. Here are three keys to help stay in the flow and find peace, no matter what challenges come your way.

The first step is to let go of trying to control what is happening and learn to ride the waves. Take time each day to shift your attention from what is going on in the world around you and focus inward. Inside you there is a quiet, spacious place of being. Rest in this place as often as you can. To find it, close your eyes, exhale with a deep sigh, let go of everything and relax into the nothingness. Notice the spaces between the thoughts and allow the spaciousness to expand.

Second, feel into the body and see if you can become aware of your body's vibration. It is a subtle energy that flows through you. Once you are aware of it, notice how far it extends beyond your body. See if you can expand your energy a little farther out from your body. This energy is consciousness. Your body-mind is a magnet that has the ability to attract whatever it focuses its attention upon. If you generate negative thoughts, you will attract negative energy. If you generate positive thoughts, you will attract positive energy.

Third, abundance is about allowing. Relax, open up and be in the flow, release negative beliefs that block abundance. State clearly, in words, thoughts and deeds what you want to attract into your life. Offer gratitude for all that you receive and give generously to others. Become aware of when your thoughts, words or action are out of alignment with your desires and quickly shift back into being in the flow. When

obstacles arise see them as a gift. They are either there to shift your course or to wake you up. Welcome change as an ally. As you learn to relax into the abundance around you, life will become less about doing and more about being. Enjoy the journey.



[South African Waterfall by Paul Heussenstamm](#)

Abundance is a state of mind. You could be the richest person in the world and be living in fear. Allowing your inner peace to be independent of the outer world makes it possible to be in the flow of abundance no matter what is going on in the world around you. Master these three keys and you will live a peaceful and abundant life.

"There is a vitality, a life force, an energy, a quickening that is translated through you into action, and because there is only one of you in all of time, this expression is unique.

You have to keep yourself open and aware to the urges that motivate you. Keep the channel open."

Letter from Martha Graham to Agnes de Mille

Tantra and Sexuality

The intention of this article is to help those new to Tantra to have a better understanding of what Tantra is and to clarify the relationship between Tantra and sexuality.

Tantra is an ancient spiritual path which probably began over 3000 years ago in the northern latitudes of the Indian subcontinent. It has influenced many religious and spiritual movements over the centuries including Brahmanism, Sivaism, Buddhism, and Patanjali Yoga, to name a few. The purpose of Tantra is two-fold. The primary purpose is to reach spiritual liberation called, "awakening". The secondary purpose is to enjoy life and learn to navigate the human experience with ease and flow.



[Radakrishna 2 by Paul Heussenstamm](#)

"Tantra" is a Sanskrit word meaning a divinely revealed doctrine or text. These texts were initially part of an oral tradition passed down from teacher to student. Each text revealed a unique system of spiritual practices for awakening. Typically, those on the path had teacher who taught a specific tantra. When a student was accepted by a teacher, they received an initiation which would enhance the possibility of reaching spiritual liberation in one lifetime. The

teacher would gradually reveal the tantra to the student in the form of a daily spiritual practice. As the student showed proficiency in their understanding of the practice, the next phase of the practice would be revealed. Students often lived with their teacher for 2-3 years, until they had stabilized their basic understanding of the tantra. Teachers often had a community of students around them practicing at various levels of clarity.

Once the tantric view and foundational stages of the practice were well established, the student could then venture into the world and live life as a householder. A householder could marry, have a career and participate fully in the secular community while still maintaining a daily practice, meeting with their teacher regularly and staying connected with their spiritual community. Full realization of a tantra most often would gradually unfold over years or decades of committed practice.

Tantra differs from the dualistic traditions, which see the body-mind as something separate from God that must be transcended. This is why most religions see sex, and desire of all kinds, as something to be avoided if you want to become spiritual. The ascetic traditions believe one must transcend temptation by withdrawing from society, being celibate, fasting frequently, and taking a vow of poverty.

Today, there is a common misconception that Tantra is primarily concerned with sacred sexuality. This is not the case. Non-dual Tantra recognizes that all experiences are an expression of Awareness. It is one of the few spiritual traditions that acknowledges that the body-mind is no less sacred than spirit. This is why some Tantra traditions included sexuality as part of their advanced practices.

Tantra is a spiritual path that sees all aspects of life as sacred. It is a path that is ideally transmitted to a practitioner through a relationship with an experienced teacher. Tantra is a wisdom tradition that bears fruit through personal experience of a practice over time. It is a path of love and liberation in which committed practice allows all aspects of life to help us awaken to the nature of reality. As we practice, we gain clarity and are able to bring more compassion into our relationships. Sexuality is an aspect of life that often leads to attachment and confusion. Therefore, it is recommended you begin your Tantric practice outside of a sexual context. First, develop a strong foundational practice. Once that is established, the process of bringing it into sexually naturally emerges. There are advanced Tantric practices which include sexuality as part of the practice.

The Safer Sex Conversation

This script is a good way to initiate a conversation about your sexual history and ask someone else to share theirs with you. Ideally, this is done prior to finding yourself in a sexually charged situation.

1. "The last time I was tested for Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI's) was..."
 - a) "The tests I had done were..."
 - b) "The results of those tests were..."
 - c) Share any risky activities you may have experienced since you were last tested.

(A Comprehensive STI Panel consists of: HIV, syphilis, oral herpes (HSV-1 or HSV-2), genital herpes (HSV-1 or HSV-2), HPV/genital warts, gonorrhea, chlamydia, hepatitis B and hepatitis C. Female testing usually includes a Pap smear and wet mount to check for other common vaginal infections. Other infections that can be passed by sexual/sensual contact include: head lice, pubic lice, scabies, and molluscum contagiosum.)

2. "My gender identity is... The pronouns I use are..." "My sexual orientation is..." (straight, gay, bi ...)
3. "My relationship status is..." (single, dating, living with a lover, married, in an open relationship with one or more people, fluid-bonded with one or more people...) "My current relationship agreements that you need to be aware of are..."
4. "I use___ to prevent unwanted pregnancies. If an unplanned pregnancy occurred, I would like to ... My safer sex practices and/or boundaries are..."
5. Is there any history of sexual trauma you feel I need to be aware of at this time.

6. Then ask the other person, "How about you?" Listen closely to what they say and how they say it... Ask questions, if you need clarification.
7. "If we have sex what it would mean to me is ..."

If you mutually agree to engage sexually, then create the Bubble. Share your desires, fears and healthy boundaries. Healthy boundaries allow you feel safe and stay open. They are dynamic and can expand as well as contract. Discuss what sexual activities you are open to explore at this time and what is off the menu. Remember that intimacy grows when you stay present, authentic and communicate clearly using "I"-statements ("I think...", "I feel...", "I want..."). Ask for clarification if you're not clear about their boundaries or preferences.

The Safer Sex Talking Points

1. Sexual health- testing, results and any risky behavior since last test results.
2. Gender identity and sexual orientation.
3. Relationship status and agreements: monogamy, celibacy, polyamory.
4. Contraception and pregnancy concerns.
5. Is there any history of sexual trauma that may be triggered?
6. Offer this practice by going first. Share your answers in a simple, direct and vulnerable manner. Then ask, "How about you?"
7. What would it mean to you if we connected sexually? What kind of aftercare do you need?
8. If you decide to engage, share your desires, fears and boundaries.

***"Sexual intimacy is enhanced
when we authentically share our desires,
fears, boundaries and preferences
prior to sexual engagement."***

Crystal Dawn Morris

3 Gifts to Tantalize Your Lover

Are you ready to be a shining star in a world of mediocre lovers? Do you want to be unforgettable? Master these three gifts and you will be able to surprise the lover(s) in your life with these profound skills.



Offer Your Presence

Everyone has the qualities of masculine and feminine within them, regardless of their gender. Presence is one of the qualities associated with masculine energy. It is the ability to be clear and attentive, to step out of mental chatter and be fully engaged with what is arising in each moment. When your lover feels your masculine Presence, they will want to open to you. They will feel seen and appreciated. When you focus your full attention on them, they are able to allow their divine light to shine.

If they are open to physical touch and the setting is appropriate, greet them with a "Melting Hug". If you are taller, bend your knees and align with them belly-to-belly and heart-to-heart. Place your right hand on their back, level with their heart, and your left hand on their lower back. As you hold them, breathe together. Allow your two breaths to become as one. When the hug ends, look deeply into each other's eyes without

speaking. See the divine in them and let them see the divine in you. If it feels authentic, share something that you appreciate about them, like "You look radiant tonight."

Listen to the Body

Flow is one of the qualities of feminine energy. In order to be in the flow, the heart needs to be open and the body and breath need to be connected to the heart. Listen to their body as much as you do to their words. Observe the breath. Is it shallow or deep? Is their body tense or relaxed? Is their heart open? Allow your Presence to help them open their heart and relax their body. Do you feel connected to each other? Intimacy blossoms in an environment of trust. Invite a space of ease in which you can both surrender into the moment. The more present you are, the more surrender unfolds.

One way to begin tuning into the body is by lying together, either in the "Spoon Position" with you behind them with your hand over their heart or by facing each other in the "Scissors Position". "Scissors" is when one of their legs is between yours and their other leg is resting on top of your hip. Then, begin to breathe together. If facing each other, you can gaze into each other's eyes while you breathe together.

Once you are breathing together in harmony, you can begin exploring touch. Invite a sense of wonder into your exploration of their body, as if touching this body for the very first time. Be curious. Notice the texture of the skin. Is it warm or cool? Smooth or rough? Notice how they respond differently to various types of pressure, speed and depth.

Check in and find out what kind of touch they desire. Touch is perceived differently, depending on the intention behind the touch. Are you touching with the intention to serve? Are you honoring their needs and desires, or are you focused on taking pleasure for yourself? Taking is a form of receiving, so this puts them in the role of passive giving. It is important to make sure this is within their boundaries. Keep checking in energetically. Are they merely tolerating your touch, or are they drinking it in with relish? Bring awareness to the experience of power of giving and receiving touch. What is being revealed?

Try something new. Invite them to be blindfolded and spend an hour caressing every part of their body, except their genitals. Use your fingers, lips, hands, feathers, flowers and even food. When their whole body is vibrating with desire, it is easier to feel into what their body wants sexually.

Since there is immense joy in, both, receiving and giving, you may want to invite your lover to switch roles. Give them an opportunity to listen to your body. Let them explore how you like to be touched. You might want to be blindfolded and touched everywhere, except your genitals, until you are vibrating.

When pleasure is flowing, it may naturally flow into lovemaking, if that is within your mutual boundaries. When making love, let go of any ideas about what it "should" look like. Allow intuition to be your guide. Be open to the magic of the moment. Let go of expectations and see what wants to unfold. Be respectful of each other. Allow your bodies' wisdom to guide you into new experiences that neither of you may have had before. Release any attachment to a specific outcome.

Honor the Temple and "Close the Gate"

Our body is a temple. After any kind sexual connection, it is valuable to honor and appreciate what you have shared together. Snuggle and/or breathe together for a few minutes. After sexual penetration, it is especially important to honor that you have been inside the temple of the body. A beautiful way to end your sacred time together is to "close the temple gate" by placing your hand over their genitals, perineum and/or anus with the utmost Presence and sensitivity. Allow them a few moments to fully integrate their experience. This simple ritual creates a sense of completion after lovemaking, creating a space to honor the connection you have shared.

By mastering these three gifts of Presence, listening and honoring, we welcome more love and harmony into our relationships that naturally ripples into the world at large.

The Full-Body Orgasm



[Standing Chaka Woman by Paul Heussenstamm](#)

What we think of as our sexual energy is actually our life force energy. In Tantra, we use this life force energy to expand our capacity for bliss. This practice teaches you how to move your sexual energy from your genitals up to the crown of your head and everywhere in between, allowing the entire physical and energetic body to become ecstatic. When the sexual energy reaches the crown, it supports the realization of your True Self, as Divine Consciousness in human form.

The full-body orgasm allows the entire body to vibrate with orgasmic energy. This can be experienced outside of a sexual context, as well as when making love. Anyone can learn how to experience a full-body orgasm by following the steps below.

Opening the Pleasure Central Channel

1. Stand with your knees hip width apart and slightly bent.
2. Breathe through your mouth and deeply into the belly. Allow your belly to expand and feel the breath beginning to activate your sexual energy.
3. Once you have mastered the belly breath, you can increase the intensity by inhaling as if you are sipping through a straw. Exhale

with an open mouth and release a deep sound from the belly. Sounds intensify the expansion of erotic energy.

4. Next, allow your pelvis to begin rocking. Keeping the knees bent, let your pelvis rotate freely. As you inhale, rock the hips back, arching the small of the back. As you exhale, tuck the tail bone under, flattening the small of the back.
5. Now, add the "PC Pump". As you inhale, squeeze the pelvic floor muscles, pulling them upwards. As you exhale, let them relax back down. It feels a bit like when you are trying to stop or start a stream of urine. Women know this practice as the "Kegel exercise".
6. Put all the steps together. As you inhale, imagine you are breathing the energy up from your genitals (root) to your heart. Practice this until you feel the energy pulsing from your root to your heart. You can play with speeding up and slowing down your breathing.
7. Look within and notice the empty space that exists before thoughts arise. Be curious about this empty space. Ask, "What is present prior to all experience?" Notice this space of Awareness never changes. It is infinite and eternal. This Awareness is your fundamental nature.
8. Once you have mastered connecting root and heart, move the energy up to the crown. Practice until you can feel the energy flowing from your root to your crown. See yourself as a rainbow bridge of light connecting Earth and Sky. This is a wonderful way to get your energy flowing. Now you are ready to explore the Full-Body Orgasm.

Awakening the Full-Body Orgasm

1. Open the Central Channel and use it to build the flow of energy in the body.
2. The "Streaming Reflex" helps you recognize that your body is made of ecstatic energy, which you can stimulate and expand

whenever you want. You learn to experience orgasmic energy outside of a sexual context and discover that you can awaken your own pleasure body without genital contact. The practice: Begin by standing with your feet hip width apart and knees bent. Allow your thighs to begin to vibrate side to side. Allow the energy to spread up and down the body, until your whole body is vibrating. It is helpful to do this with music, I recommend Osho's "Kundalini Meditation".

3. The "Ecstatic Response" is the process of being relaxed in high states of arousal. You learn to become a bigger container for ecstatic energy and to relax fully, letting the energy naturally expand. The effect is one of sexual excitement and deep peace. When you master the ecstatic response, you move beyond the genital orgasm and discover the full-body orgasm! The practice: After several minutes of your whole body streaming lay down on the floor with your knees bent and your feet close together. Let your knees gently fall apart like a butterfly's wings opening. Allow your body to relax fully and continue to open and close your knees. This process allows the ecstatic energy to spread throughout the body. This is best done listening to gentle, relaxing music.

Once you've mastered "Opening the Central Pleasure Channel" and "Awakening the Full-Body Orgasm" outside a sexual context you can introduce them into your lovemaking. Explore ways these practices can enhance both Eros and presence. Sexuality has the potential to be an alchemical experience that transforms energy and matter into Spirit. Some of the benefits of these practices are improved health, sexual vitality, mental clarity, expanded creativity and inner peace.

***"The path to joy is that of seeing the truth
of the whole of your being."***

Christopher Wallis

7 Ways to Please your Lover

Tantra is a spiritual path that embraces sexuality as a doorway to the Divine. If you experience lovemaking as a living prayer and see our beloved as the divine, then sex can take you beyond the world of form, into the formless mystical realms. Here are seven Tantric tips to help you turn sex into a spiritual practice.



Kissing and Biting the Neck

The neck is a sensitive and exciting erogenous zone. Explore the whole neck and throat area using various types of kisses, nibbles, nips and bites. Take direction from your lover as to what they like. See if you can bring your lover to orgasm by only stimulating their neck.

Connected Breathing

Before making love, take time to breathe together and connect your energy. Practice slow belly breathing while gazing into each others' eyes. Do this practice until you feel the energy flowing between you. Connect your energy to your lover's energy, beginning at the base of the spine and moving up to the heart.

Share How You Like to Be Loved

Take turns telling each other exactly how you like to be loved. Be specific. Show them where and how to touch you. You may even want

to demonstrate by touching yourself as they watch. Describe how you like to be kissed, if you like your hair pulled, a favorite fantasy, etc.

Embody a Particular God or Goddess

Dress up as a particular god or goddess, such as Krishna and Radha, the Hindu God and Goddess of Love. Embody their qualities and imagine how it would be to make love to each other as this god and goddess. Then, play out your roles as "Divine Lovers."

Erotic Massage

Give your beloved an erotic massage. Take your time, using long, slow strokes. Discover new ways to give them pleasure. Help them expand their "pleasure body" by using the three keys of Tantra- breath, sound and movement.

Recite Erotic Poetry

Find poetry that turns you on. I like Rumi, Hafiz, and Kabir. Spend time reading erotic poetry aloud to your lover. Write your lover an erotic or ecstatic poem and recite it to him/her. Make up a haiku. Let language massage your soul.

Be a Love Artist

Stretch yourself and discover new ways to love as you never havbefore. Be a canvass for Love to play upon. Know you can not fail as a love artist. Humans are love in form. Allow yourself to be inspired and share your vision with others.

Tantra is an ancient spiritual path that embraces all areas of life as a path to awakening. Humans need to be touched and feel love. Sexuality is one way to connect to your life force energy and enter ecstatic realms. Learning to give and receive pleasure is healthy, fun and bonding. Practice loving yourself and others daily. Spread the joy and create a better world.

***"The one who realizes the truth of the body
can then come to know the truth of the universe."***

Rat Nas Tantra

The Pleasure Game

At the beginning of a relationship, sex is often spontaneous, intense and erotic. This phenomenon is called the "honeymoon phase". It is when the "new relationship energy" (NRE) makes everything exciting. Over time, the NRE naturally fades, romance dwindles, passion wanes and sex often becomes routine. The "Pleasure Game" is one way to rekindle the passion and romance in your relationship.

1. Make a date. When life gets busy, it is easy to forget to schedule time for you and your beloved to have uninterrupted time together. Turn off your cell phones, shut off the TV, and disconnect from the outside world.
2. Create an altar or temple area by decorating the space where you are going to play, so it feels as if you are somewhere special. Use fabrics, candles, flowers or whatever feels right to make the space feel inviting and exotic. I know a guy who surprised his wife by turning his garage into a temple and his Harley-Davidson into an altar where he invited her to be pleased.
3. Take a ritual bath, using it as a transition into sacred time. Allow the bath or shower to wash away the cares of the day. Make a commitment to avoid digressing into mundane concerns about the house, kids or work. Dress in clothes that make you feel special, like a god or goddess.
4. Sit facing each other. Create a bubble around both of you. Use your arms to define the shape of the bubble, imagining it surrounds both of you. This bubble allows you to let go of the outside world and create a safe and sacred space to play the "Pleasure Game". Remove things from your bubble that might interfere with you enjoying the game. Do this by stating out loud what you are removing from the bubble and, at the same time, make a gesture as you remove it. Examples may include the past, distractions, anger, work, etc. Then, bring things into your bubble that will enhance the experience and make a gesture as

you bring them into the bubble. Examples might include love, sensuality, presence, trust, etc. Once the bubble is created, share your desires, fears and boundaries related to this game. (Boundaries are what you need to feel safe and stay open.) One person speaks while the other listens without judgment or commentary, then you switch roles.

5. Before beginning the game, take a few minutes to look into each other's eyes and breathe together. Allow your hearts to connect and begin to feel the energy flowing between you. Imagine that, as you explore pleasure together, you are doing it not only for yourselves but for all the men and women in the world.
6. Play the "Pleasure Game". Decide how much time you have to play the game and divide the time in half. Pick who will give and who will receive first. The receiver then tells the giver how they want to be pleased for their allotted amount of time. Then the roles are reversed.

Some requests might include: hair brushing, a pedicure or a massage, acting out a fantasy, performing a favorite sexual act, trying a new sexual position, mutual self-pleasuring, erotic storytelling, getting naked and doing some "dirty dancing," making love in a car or some other unusual place. Be creative. Ask for what you want. Take this opportunity to be daring and move beyond your comfort zone while honoring your partner's boundaries. Don't insist that they do something they aren't ready or willing to do. When this ritual is done with a playful and open heart, it can be a great way to revitalize and enhance your relationship.

Tantra recognizes that everything is alive and connected. It embraces all areas of life as a path to awakening, including sexuality. Sex is seen as a doorway to the Divine. By bringing conscious awareness into this practice, we can enhance our connection to our beloved and help make the world a better place to live. The "Pleasure Game" is one way to reignite the passion in your relationship. Taking time to connect in a special way with your beloved goes a long way toward creating a happy, healthy relationship.

The Sensory Awakening Ritual

Tantra is unique as compared to most spiritual practices in that it embraces the senses as a path to spiritual awakening. It sees the body as a temple where Consciousness plays and explores the material plane. Tantra uses the senses to expand awareness. One way this is done is through doing a "Sensory Awakening Ritual". You and your partner can explore the art of giving and receiving pleasure by activating the senses. There is something profound about surrendering totally and allowing all your senses to respond and be awakened. It is a sensuous process that can be light and playful or erotically charged. This ritual is a wonderful way to share an evening with a friend or lover.

Create a Sacred Space

Turn your room into a temple. Begin by removing the clutter and creating an altar. Light some candles, add a vase of flowers, crystals, photos or objects that honor your relationship to the Divine. Then, gather the items that can be used to awaken all the senses during the ritual. Some possibilities might be massage tools, fur, feathers, fruits, chocolate, flowers, essential oils, music, bells, rattles, and eye covers. Bathe and dress in ritual clothing. The ritual begins by blessing the space. This can be done with sage, incense, bells, songs or calling in the directions. Put on some sensuous music.

The Bubble

Create a bubble around you and your partner. Do this by waving your arms around to define the shape of the bubble that surrounds both of you. Take turns releasing one thing at a time that might compromise or limit the upcoming ritual in some way. As you say the thing you are removing, (the past, distractions, anger, worry, etc.) make a gesture, as if removing an object from your bubble. Next, state the things that will enhance your shared ritual (love, willingness, presence, trust etc.) and gesture, as if bringing these things into your bubble.

Share Your Desires, Fears and Boundaries

Once the bubble is created, share your desires, fears and boundaries related to this practice. First, one person speaks while the other person

listens without judgment or commentary. Then, you switch roles. Here is an example:

"My desire is to stay present, open and connect deeply to your soul."

"My fear is that I will get self-conscious and shut down." "My boundary is that we both turn off our cell phones."

Why boundaries? Boundaries are not walls, they are bridges. Bridges help to bring people together. Intimacy happens when people have healthy boundaries. Healthy boundaries allow you to feel safe, stay open and be present. Boundaries are dynamic, so it is important to check in periodically with yourself to see if your boundaries have changed. If they have changed, update your partner so he/she can honor your new boundaries. Here are a couple of examples:

"I am getting tired. I want to end by midnight." "I am sensitive to perfumes, so don't use them, please."

Once you've shared your desires, fears and boundaries, offer each other a blessing, such as "I want to bless your hands for all they do for others." Then, decide who will receive first and cover his/her eyes with a blindfold. Help the receiver to lie down and get comfortable. The giver begins the ritual by stimulating the senses in whatever way feels right, as long as it honors both your boundaries. Come from a place of devotion as you awaken and arouse your partner. Take your time. Be playful and creative.

The Power of Sight

In this ritual, we limit the vision with a blindfold to enhance the other senses and add an element of surprise. Also, the removal of the blindfold and restoration of sight at the conclusion of the exchange often lends itself to a fresh appreciation of the experience of seeing by the receiver. It's as if the world is once again being seen through the eyes of a newborn baby.

The Power of Smell

Scent is an important component of pleasure. Your olfactory nerves pick up chemical messages from the air you breathe and conduct them quickly to the brain. Smells are often associated with memories. A whiff of a particular food, perfume or place can immediately transport you into a moment from the past associated with that scent. Pheromones

are chemical messages we send and receive. They affect who you are attracted to and are an important factor in whom you pick as a mate. Smell is a great awakener.

The Power of Touch

Touch is a basic human need. We live in a culture where many people are often touch-deprived. Touch creates connection at the most basic level. The skin is your biggest organ. It feels good to be massaged, kissed, caressed and held. The skin is sensitive to many types of sensations. Explore nibbling, biting, and pinching if you want to add more excitement. Exploring what excites and arouses you and your partner can be fun and bonding.

The Power of Sound

Sounds create a mood and affect the emotions. They can be intrusive or soothing. Pleasant sounds can help us to relax, be present and open. Stimulating sounds can enliven the body and mind. Music and song are a great gift that can heal and transform. Use music that is sensuous and arousing.

The Power of Taste

The mouth is a very sensitive sense receptor and highly developed in most people. Food is associated with survival as well as pleasure. Our taste buds detect sweet, bitter, salty and sour. Use a variety of your favorite tastes and textures- salty, crunchy, sweet, juicy, to tantalize the lips and tongue.

The "Sensory Awakening Ritual" is a great way to open and expand your senses. It allows you to surrender into the pure joy of Consciousness celebrating in human form. It is a gift to be able to connect and experience pleasure and ecstasy with your partner. In a world where people are mesmerized by the incessant stream of thoughts flowing through their heads, it is refreshing to let go of the mind and rediscover the pleasures of the body.

***"Let your perception fully encompass
the reality of a universe dancing ecstatically..."***

Abhinava Gupta

Erotic Massage and Awareness

Erotic massage is a wonderful way to practice presence. As the giver, you drop into your heart and allow your hands to become an extension of Awareness, listening to the receiver's words, body and subtle energy. On the path of Tantra, we enjoy coming together to honor and celebrate the body as a temple. This practice can be a relaxing way to connect and explore presence with a lover or intimate friend. It also allows you to explore erotic energy in new ways and can be a prelude to lovemaking.

Preparation

Prepare a warm, quiet, comfortable place where you won't be disturbed for at least two hours. Make sure all phones are turned off. Light some candles and put on some relaxing music.

The Heart Salutation

Begin with the Heart Salutation. It is an ancient tantric practice for acknowledging the Divine in each other as you enter into sacred time. Sit across from your partner and look into their eyes. Maintain eye contact throughout the rest of the process. Extend your arms towards the earth, palms together. Inhale and, keeping them together, bring your hands to your heart. Exhale as you bow forward and acknowledge the Divine in each other. Inhale as you straighten back up. Finally, exhale as you allow your hands to return to the starting position, pointed towards the earth.

The Bubble

The Bubble calls you into Present-Moment Awareness and creates a safe space in which to offer an erotic massage. Make a bubble around you and your partner with your arms so that it surrounds both of you. Remove things from the bubble that won't serve this process (the past, distractions, anger, worry, etc.) Do this with a gesture, as if physically removing an object, while stating aloud what you are removing. Next, bring things into your bubble that will enhance your massage ritual (Love, willingness, Presence, trust etc.) Once again, use gestures and spoken words. Here are two examples:

"I release the past."

"I call in passion."

Share Your Desires, Fears and Boundaries

Once the bubble is created, share your desires, fears and boundaries related to giving and/or receiving an erotic massage. One person speaks while the other person listens, without judgment or commentary. Then, switch roles. Here is an example:

"My desire is to stay connected to erotic energy."

"My fear is that I may fall asleep and you may feel hurt or disappointed."

"My boundary is to finish this practice by 11 pm."

Healthy Boundaries

People often think of boundaries as walls. Healthy boundaries are bridges that create intimacy when they are expressed and are honored. You are able to feel safe, be open and remain present. Boundaries can change, so check in periodically. If a contraction arises, ask to pause and notice what is arising. This goes for both giver and receiver. If your boundaries have changed, tell your partner and renegotiate. Don't expect them to read your mind.

Giving an Erotic Massage

Decide who will be the giver and who will receive. Invite the receiver to lay face down on a massage table, bed or blanket on the floor. Make sure they are warm and comfortable. The giver then grounds him or herself before gently laying their hands on the receiver. Recognize this is a unique opportunity to honor and serve your beloved. Attune yourself to the receiver. One way to attune is by breathing with them for a few minutes as you feel into their energy.

Begin to awaken their skin by lightly stroking it with feathers, fur or the tips of your fingers. When you are ready, cover their body with warm oil. Use long, slow massage strokes. You are massaging more than the surface of their body. You are connecting with them on multiple levels. Encourage them to take deep breaths, make sounds and move their body. This allows the energy body to awaken, move and release tension. Use different parts of your body- your hair, arms and chest, to massage your partner. Be playful, curious and creative.

About half way through the allotted time, invite the receiver to roll over. Massage the front of their body with warm oil, again using long strokes. Introduce sound in a new way by toning on their body, using sounds like, "Ahh", "Yumm" or "Omm". This can be a powerful tool for activating your partner's energy-field.

Always ask permission before touching the genitals, even when you are touching a life partner. Make sure they are open and ready before you offer to explore their genitals. In Tantra, we call the vagina, "Yoni," which means "Cosmic Matrix" and the penis, "Vajra," which means "Thunderbolt." Begin by working on the areas around the genitals- the pubic bone, groin and thighs. Then, as they are ready, explore the external area with oil. At first, be gentle and go slow. Allow for them time to release any tension in this area. Listen to their body. Watch how they respond and see if they become aroused. Focus on what gives them pleasure. Try different strokes.

Be creative. If you are going to do internal massage, use lots of lubricant. How much pleasure can they allow? Is she open to exploring the possibility of multiple orgasms? Is he able to come close to orgasm without ejaculating?

Close by spooning together and connecting your heart centers with love, compassion and gratitude. Help the receiver to sit up and end with a Heart Salutation. Offer them water or juice to drink. Share a bite of chocolate or piece of fruit. Ask the receiver how the experience was for them. Share what it was like for you as the giver. Make plans to switch roles in the future.



Six Benefits of Erotic Massage are:

1. It is a practice in present-moment-awareness.
2. It allows you to connect your heart and hands as you explore touch in new ways.
3. It allows you to practice sharing your desires, fears and healthy boundaries in the arena of sensuality.
4. It creates an opportunity for the giver and receiver to become more aware of subtle energy.
5. It uses breath, sound and movement to awaken the full-body orgasm.
6. It melts away the illusion of separation and allows Oneness to emerge.

After this practice, take some time to notice what it brought up for you. Reflect on what you learned about Awareness. As the receiver, were you able to surrender into the experience? As the giver, did you slip into taking, either consciously or unconsciously. What was the gift you received from this experience?

***"Love withers under constraint;
its very essence is liberty.
It is compatible neither with obedience, jealousy nor fear.
It is there most pure, perfect and unlimited
when its votaries live in confidence,
equality and unreserved."***

Percy Byshe Shelley

Practicing the Art of Pleasure

Tantra teaches that the body is a temple and one of its gifts is the ability to experience pleasure through the senses- sight, sound, smell, touch and taste. While it requires practice, pleasure is an art worth developing. Some of the skills that enhance pleasure are a finely tuned sensory awareness, the capacity to enjoy pleasure for extended periods of time and presence. How much pleasure do you allow into your life?

According to women's health expert Dr. Christiane Northrup, the author of "Women's Bodies, Women's Wisdom", pleasure is crucial. It is an essential nutrient that you need every day to maintain and/or regain your health. Pleasure releases health-promoting hormones. She suggests you can make the world a better place by giving yourself pleasure.

Pleasure like any art requires practice. Why? Because we live in a culture that rewards hard work and judges those that pursue pleasure. Do you remember being a kid lost in a moment of pleasure, when suddenly you were being yelled at to go and do your chores? How many times has this scene played out in your life? Eventually, you got the message that it was not okay to play too long or enjoy pleasure too much.

That's why practicing pleasure may bring up resistance. People often associate pleasure with guilt. You may wonder, "Am I being selfish or indulgent?" If resistance arises, be with it. Sit and embrace it, like you would a wounded child. Allow the feelings to arise and express them in healthy ways, such as through movement, art or sharing them with a friend. As you release the resistance, you may discover you have an even greater capacity for experiencing pleasure than you did before. Integrate pleasure into your life. Let your senses be indulged- feel the sun on your skin, taste your favorite fruit, smell the scent of flowers in the yard and listen to the sounds of the world around you. When you commit to practicing pleasure regularly, you will become an expert at it.



Ways to Practice the Art of Pleasure:

1. Practice being present and aware in each moment, instead of living in the past or future. The present moment is the only place pleasure can happen.
2. Open your body fully. Breathe into your belly, let go of tension. Do this several times a day and you will begin to notice if you start to contract.
3. Take pleasure breaks often during the day. Discover the simple pleasures that you have been overlooking. Learn what gives you pleasure.
4. Hone your sensory awareness. Focus on a particular sense and see how much you can engage and expand it. Keep a sensory awareness journal. See how much you can increase your awareness and capacity for pleasure.
5. See through fresh eyes. Be curious and innocent, like a child. Children find wonder in the world. See the mystery all around you.
6. Challenge yourself to feel pleasure in unlikely situations, like while stuck in traffic or sitting through a long meeting. If you notice negative thoughts, pause, and make a conscious choice to refocus your attention. Focus on your breathing, let go of resistance and begin to circulate your breath throughout your

body, expanding your aliveness. Feel your energy beginning to flow beyond your physical body. See how expansive you can be.

7. Be generous to yourself and others. Give yourself a 3-5 minute mini-massage at least once a day. Recognize the power of touch and find a friend who wants to trade massages. Hug often, share touch with those open to receiving it.
8. Eat slowly and allow yourself to savor each bite. Food can be erotic.
9. Look deeply into your beloved's eyes, seeing beyond form and personality. Know they are the Divine, in form. Let them be a mirror for you to see the Divine in yourself as well.
10. Finally, celebrate your body by giving yourself orgasms. Orgasms heal. They release tension and produce hormones that balance the body-mind. They also reset your electromagnetic field and give you a sense of well-being. When you orgasm regularly, you vibrate with pleasure. As you radiate pleasure, others feel it and begin to experience pleasure as well.

Practice and notice how your life changes. The world is starving for joy and pleasure. You can't make other people change, but you can change yourself. Through your willingness to practice pleasure, others will be inspired.

***"My whole teaching consists of two words,
"meditation" and "love".
Meditate so that you can feel immense silence,
and love so that your life can become a song,
a dance, a celebration.
You will have to move between the two,
and if you can move easily,
if you can move without an effort,
you have learned the greatest thing in life."***

Osho

Making Love with Life

Many people today are under the impression that "spiritual awakening" is defined having a peak experience or being in some kind of ecstatic state. Experiences and states, however, come and go. To be fully awake is to realize That which is unchanging, That which is inseparable and the source of all change. I call this, "making love with life". You are Awareness- formless pure potential simultaneously unfolding as everything that exists. To make love with life is to let go of the mind-driven "separate self" who seeks control, denies responsibility and always needs more. It means embracing the Mystery and being willing to surrender everything to the Divine Will. "You" disappear into the magic, into the infinite space between thoughts and ideas, and discover what is always vibrating just Beyond the Beyond!



Closing Thoughts

I hope this e-book has taken you on an interesting journey and given you a taste of Tantra. Tantra is an experiential path. As you have made your way through these chapters, I hope you have taken the time to do at least some, if not all, of the practices. These practices are not meant to be a one-off experience. Ideally, they are done many times. If a particular practice resonates deeply, consider making it a daily practice for a few months, or until something more powerful comes into your life.

Tantra is a practical path. Do what works! However, you won't know what works until you give it a try. I hope this e-book has awakened a desire in you to have more adventures on the path of Nondual Tantra. Enjoy the process and be open and curious as you explore Tantra.

Putting this e-book together has also been a journey for me. Originally, these writings were published as a series of online, stand-alone articles written to introduce the general public to the topic of Tantra. Editing it has helped me appreciate how much I have grown and evolved since I began formally studying Tantra in 2003. I appreciate that I have come to know the True Self and the Bliss that vibrates as life in every moment. I have discovered that daily practice is worth the commitment of time and energy. I love watching the people I work with expand and discover a new way of navigating reality.

If you feel inspired to do so, I would love for you to continue your Tantric journey with me.

- My Website: www.TantraForAwakening.org
- Join my online school at www.TantraVersity.com
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/CrystalDMorris/>
- Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/crystaldawnmorris/>
- YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/CrystalSedona>
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Many Blessings,
Crystal Dawn Morris

About Crystal Dawn Morris

Crystal Dawn Morris helps you open your heart fully so you can learn to make love with life. She is a Nondual Tantra Teacher and Love & Freedom Coach. At the age of 16, she had a powerful spiritual awakening in which she experienced uninterrupted bliss for 7 days. This was her introduction to the art of making love with life. In 1988, she had a kundalini Awakening which put her on the path of Tantra. She's began teaching Tantra in 2006 and launched her Tantra For Awakening website in 2008.

Crystal founded TantraVersity, an online school, in 2018. She is also on the faculty of the International School of Temple Arts. Crystal is committed to helping people consciously connect to their True Self so they can live a life of love and freedom.

She has two sons and five grandchildren. Crystal lives in Sedona, AZ.



Tantra for Awakening

Playbook One

Crystal Dawn Morris

www.TantraForAwakening.org