

Facilitator's Retreat Report:

Sex, Spirit & Intimacy

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At Wisdom House in Litchfield, Ct., on the weekend of March 15-17 (the eve of the vernal equinox), 45 individuals joined to transform their perceptions of sexuality and spirituality. Facilitated by Drs. Michael Picucci and Elias Guerrero, *Sex, Spirit and Intimacy* focused on healing and integration of the sexual-spiritual split. The previous fall, Michael attended the First International Conference on Sex and Spirit at the Findhorn Foundation in Forres, Scotland; he brought current moments of learning, development and facilitation from a European perspective. Erotic and spiritual energies were used to evoke and inform the exercises and rituals. Participants were left with the invitation that “when one freely invites in sexual energy all else becomes about the experience of wholeness.”

The retreat was intentionally designed to bring people intimately together in the spirit of love and good will. Group safety was created by bringing shared intention to our grounding principle, *respect for self and other*. On Friday night, we began by facilitating a sacred circle greeting exercise where each person was welcomed in spontaneously directed nonverbal, verbal and tactile ways. The intention was to not only energetically ground everyone but to invite subconscious and powerful energies to resource our experiences and create a sense of safety and integrity for what was about to unfold. These processes honored and respected peoples' barriers and over time participants shed layers of the self in a manner that shone forth new possibilities. One participant realized that a “slow vibrator” had the possibility of a richer experience than the furtive and hurried escapades with the “fast one.” She felt her soul revealed itself to her.

Teachings and writings utilized ranged from the science of particle physics to Tantra. Author Peter Russell posits that many of the answers we seek are before us in the most basic understandings of *nonlinear dynamics* and *complexity theory* and that we are fundamentally an exquisite and unique manifestation of energy at our most basic state of being. In clothed group exercises, we explored how to read and listen to this energy through experiencing the flowering of desire and pleasure. In *The Living Energy Universe*, Schwartz and Russek define SOUL as the **S**ystemic **O**rganization of **U**niversal **L**ove. To this, we added in the distinction that S.E.X., or “**S**oul **E**nergy **e**Xchange” which can shift us from a carnal instinct into a new paradigm of the sublime and sacred. Soulful S.E.X. involves exchanging the energies of: Love, Pleasure, Lingam (giving or active male energies), and Yoni (receiving or passive female energies) with no judgments or agenda. We used “healing imagery” to fuse our most loving energies with our most private shadowy erotic energies creating surprising transformative experiences. In another exercise, the subtle power of vulnerability was explored as a key to finding inner fulfillment. Our working premise is that like plants and trees, we are zeotropic and, once exposed to the light we will naturally grow toward it. Ultimately it is our choice to transform the poison of negative conditioning into nectar through the experience of releasing bound and charged energy.

We processed how intimacy is really the possibility of comprehending the self and other and reviewed the challenges in long-term relationships that require particular attention and

facilitation for successful negotiation. In a Tantra ritual on a Saturday night, we listened to our souls talk to us. Initially set to drumming music to rouse the body, it was followed by opening the six chakra channels experiencing erotic energy moving through participants in order to grace themselves, each other and the world. The finale to this ritual was the formation of a human mandala with participants linking each other with hands and feet. Copious tears, sobbing, and energy moved through the room followed by an overarching sense of peace, presence, and tranquility. Participants were bowled over with comments like they “had felt energetic currents flowing through their hands and feet.” Beautiful music and gentle movements were spun through this and all of the weekend rituals.

Interestingly, gender differences and sexual orientation were such “so whats” they barely entered the room. This was astounding for the 11 women and 36 men (mostly gay). The women’s extraordinary contributions of honesty and vulnerability totally leveled energetic barriers. Daphne Rose Kingma, in *The Future of Love* states, “in the evolution of human consciousness, the personality is like this self-seeking child, while the soul is this seasoned, wise adult.” This chilly late winter weekend was all about this dance of the child and adult set to the choreography of sexuality and spirituality. By Sunday morning, our souls were freed to inform us with personalized and specific closing words manifested through a gentle closing ritual of love and spirit. The participants realized how shame-free erotic energy could direct us to the soul’s center containing the seasoned wisdom therein.

Michael & Elias can be reached through The Institute for Authentic Process Healing at www.theinstitute.org.