

FOUNDATIONS OF TRANSCENDENT SEXUALITY



A GUIDE
TO AWAKENING
THE SACRED
CONNECTION
WITHIN

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HEART TO HEART COUNSELING



Man



Woman



Procreation



Birth



Death



Infinity

WELCOME TO TRANSCENDENT SEXUALITY!

Over our many decades of clinical practice and research (Rashidian et al. 2013, 2015, 2018), we have treated thousands of couples for their relational and sexual difficulties.

These are the most common presenting problems by couples:

- Infidelity
- Addictions
- Pornography
- Bickering
- Sexual challenges
- Outlook on life
- Communication styles
- Time together
- Emotional intelligence
- Trust
- Trauma



Not all couples are ready for the deep intimate sexual experience that transcendent sexuality promises. Often, we need to help each couple more directly work with the presenting complaint that referred them to the therapy office to begin with.

As they begin to understand themselves and each other at deeper levels and are desirous of deeper connection, only then do we suggest exploring the ideas and concepts that transcendent sexuality offers. When couples come to us with issues such as discrepancies in sexual desire, compulsivity, affairs, addictions, trust and communication, we have found that it may be connected to their lack of understanding and disconnection from their own sexual-selves.

Our sexual-self is that part of us that develops from birth and is related to how we view the world from the perspective of our maleness and femaleness. Understanding what is included within our sexuality is vast, however, is often overlooked, misinterpreted, and is the cause of much confusion both individually and between partners.

In attempting to understand both the depth and the meaning of our sexual-selves, we first turn to the World Health Organization (WHO) (2006a) for guidance.

The current umbrella definition of sexuality, according to the World Health Organization (WHO), includes the following:

- ...a central aspect of being human throughout life encompasses
- sex, gender identities and roles, sexual orientation, eroticism, pleasure, intimacy, and reproduction. Sexuality is experienced and expressed in thoughts, fantasies, desires, beliefs, attitudes, values, behaviors, practices, roles, and relationships. While sexuality can include all these dimensions, not all of them are always experienced or expressed. Sexuality is influenced by the interaction of biological, psychological, social, economic, political, cultural, legal, historical, religious, and spiritual factors (WHO, 2006a).

According to this definition, we can see that our sexuality extends itself far into all aspects of our relationships, as opposed to simply finding ways of having better sex.

Spirituality, although mentioned in WHO's definition, has been mostly ignored.



CURRENT PRACTICE IN RELATIONAL AND SEX THERAPY PRIMARILY INCLUDES THE STUDY OF BIOLOGY, SOCIOLOGY, AND PSYCHOLOGY.

These are the dynamics that each individual brings into their relationship, which allows them to co-create the level of intimacy that they attain. Our sexual-self has been believed to be a complex interplay of these three disciplines.



We have endeavored to bring spirituality and its relationship to human sexuality to the forefront. By taking a deep dive into how each of these components come together to create our sexual-selves, we have found that couples can communicate and share these personal and powerful ideas, values, and beliefs. This enables them to co-create a deeper shared intimacy, which is our definition of transcendent sexuality.

Transcendent sexuality – the foundation of spirituality in intimate connections

According to Helen Ficher (1998) there are three basic sexual drives. One is lust, which is the craving for sexual gratification through biological horniness. The second is romantic love, which is an infatuation, deep connection, and desire to be close with a particular partner, and the third is attachment which is a calm secure union with a long-term partner.

In our dimension on Sexuality, as part of our Multidimensional Relational Psychotherapy model (MDRT), we introduced the fifth drive that focuses on the spiritual aspect of love and desire, and contains within it an ineffable quality, which some have referred to as having found their soulmate.

We have termed this fifth sexual drive as Transcendent Sexuality. This means that we, as human beings, are capable of going beyond the physical, mental, and emotional connections into a transcendent dynamic that is outside words and definitions, yet is experienced, nonetheless. To attain this level of connection requires each person to embody the spiritual qualities that we have enumerated, both here and in our **Spiritual Transcendent Dimension**.



Transcendent sexuality as the fifth sexual drive invites couples to embark on a transformative journey of self-discovery, healing, and spiritual awakening. It challenges them to transcend societal norms and conditioning, embracing a more expansive and inclusive view of intimacy, that honors the sacredness of themselves and all beings.

Through practices such as conscious communication and breathing, mindfulness, meditation, tantra, and holistic massage, we have helped couples to cultivate a deeper connection with themselves, each other, and the divine, fostering a sense of unity, harmony and love, that transcends the confines of the physical realm.



Based on our experience with our couples, we have found that tantric sex, which is a practice that originates from ancient Hinduism, is a spiritual tradition that emphasizes the integration of physical, emotional, and spiritual aspects of human experience.

While sexuality in the West has been largely focused on procreation, pleasure and orgasm, tantra and other sexual spiritual practices are focused on intimate connection and communication at all levels of being. For these reasons and the positive outcome of this spiritual practice among our couples, we have decided to add tantric practices as part of our Multidimensional Relational Psychotherapy Model (MDRT).



Transcendent sexuality views sexual union as a sacred and spiritual act that can facilitate profound connection at all levels. Partners may engage in rituals or meditative practices before, during, or after sex to deepen their spiritual connection and honor the divine within themselves and each other. Every individual, both male and female has a certain bandwidth or tolerance for how much closeness and intimacy they feel comfortable with.



Many couples, especially those struggling with intimacy issues, both emotional and sexual, may not wish to engage in a practice such as transcendent sexuality, where being vulnerable and transparent to yourself and your partner is required. We therefore offer this model for couples who both are ready and desirous of this deep connection. For those who are not, we suggest they stay within the confines of what is comfortable, doable and interesting, as they learn about themselves and each other.

As part of our MDRT model of psychotherapy, we encourage each partner to express their authentic desires, fears, and concerns, which, when done, we have found creates a foundation of trust and openness in therapy. In this way, we have been able to create a safe space where couples feel comfortable being more vulnerable and sharing their true selves without fear of judgment or rejection. This authenticity fosters deeper connection and understanding between partners, allowing them to address underlying issues with honesty and sincerity.

Transcendent sexuality in practice

The following are ways in which spiritually based sexual practices occur, and are what we often recommend to our couples, when they are ready.

We start by suggesting setting an intention before engaging in sexual activity. Couples may enter into an honest dialogue about their desires, boundaries, and intentions, creating a safe and trusting space for exploration and intimacy.

By integrating spiritual values into transcendent sexuality, we have created a transformative therapeutic experience that cultivates deeper intimacy, connection, and fulfillment in relationships. These values provide a powerful framework for healing, growth, and transformation, guiding couples toward greater authenticity, kindness, gratitude, appreciation, and love in their sexual and emotional experience together.

Emphasizing kindness and compassion when couples communicate allows them to cultivate empathy and understanding for each other's experiences and perspectives. This is especially true when it comes to sexual interactions. We have guided our couples to practice active listening and have helped them to both validate and empathize with each other which fosters a supportive and nurturing environment, where each partner feels valued and respected.



In addition, through incorporating gratitude practices into therapy, couples can shift their focus from problems to blessings, creating a more positive outlook on their relationship.

By encouraging each partner to express gratitude for each other's strengths, efforts, and positive qualities, their relationship can move to higher and higher emotional and spiritual levels. In so doing, by encouraging appreciation and acknowledging the good in their relationship, it counteracts negativity bias, as well as promotes a sense of abundance and satisfaction.



Co-creating a sacred and nurturing environment is essential when practicing transcendent sexuality.

This may involve setting up an altar with meaningful objects, using candles or incense for ambiance, and playing soft music to enhance the mood and invite a sense of reverence.

Infusing therapy sessions with love as a guiding principle can help couples reconnect with their deeper feelings of affection, connection, and commitment that initially brought them together. We have facilitated exercises and discussions that encourage couples to reflect on their love for each other, rediscover shared values and goals, and reaffirm their commitment to nurturing their relationship. Doing this can reignite desire and passion which provides couples with a sense of purpose and direction in their journey together.



During transcendent sexual experiences, we emphasize slowing down the pace of sexual encounters and prolonging the experience to deepen intimacy and pleasure. Couples may engage in extended sessions of lovemaking, focusing on building arousal gradually and experiencing multiple peaks of pleasure.

One practice of transcendent sexuality often involves conscious breathing techniques, which are used to deepen relaxation, enhance body sensitivity, and cultivate presence during sexually intimate moments. There are several ways that couples can do this. One way is that partners may synchronize their breath to create a harmonious rhythm and increase energetic connection.

We also suggest maintaining eye contact throughout sexual encounters to deepen intimacy and emotional connection. Gazing into each other's eyes can help partners feel more present and connected on a soulful level. The eyes are, in fact, the windows to the soul.



We strongly encourage couples to include all of the senses, especially taste and smell during love making and describing those sensations in detail to their partner. Partners may explore sensory stimulation through various techniques such as feather-touch caresses, gentle massages, or exchanging sensual foods like fruits. Utilizing the imagination can also be a powerful way of sharing energy.

By imagining and visualizing scenes, and describing in detail what those scenes look, sound, smell, taste, and feel like, sexual and/or romantic, couples can travel to distant places while still remaining in the bedroom.



Utilizing tantric massage techniques, such as the Yoni massage for women and the Lingam massage for men which focuses on the erogenous areas allows for awakening and circulating sexual energy throughout the body. These massages often incorporate slow, sensual strokes and may include elements of therapeutic touch.

A background image of a man and a woman walking away from the camera on a gravel path in a park. The woman is on the left, wearing a red shirt and dark pants. The man is on the right, wearing a white shirt and blue jeans. They are both looking down at something in their hands. The background is filled with green trees and foliage.

Conclusion

Doing effective couple counseling and sex therapy involves a nuanced approach specific to each individual and couple. Couples seek counseling for a variety of reasons. For couples coming in with anger, betrayal or unfaithfulness, trust needs to be reestablished, and that is the central theme throughout the therapy process. For other couples, who come in with communication difficulties, misunderstandings, hurt feelings, and emotional distance, working on active listening and other communication strategies might be called for.

Still others, who come in with sexual difficulties such as differences in desire, premature ejaculation, pain during intercourse or difficulty achieving orgasm, specific questions and perhaps the taking of a sexual history may be in order. Some couples come in because their relationship lacks positive energy, and they wish to reclaim some of their old passion and connection with each other. In those cases, transcendent sexuality, which includes creating more openness, vulnerability, and transparency, may be just what the doctor ordered.

We invite you to explore our other dimensions contained within our **Multidimensional Relational Therapy Model (MDRT)**, to help you understand the deep inner workings of your mind, body, and soul.

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Robert B. Jaffe, Ph.D., LMFT, has been working as a licensed Marriage and Family Therapist and Ericksonian Certified Hypnotherapist, with over four decades of clinical experience in Encino, California. He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Philosophy from California State University, Northridge – Northridge, California, a Master of Science degree in Counseling Psychology from the University of LaVern, LaVern California, and a Doctoral degree in Philosophy and Hypnotherapy from the American Institute of Hypnotherapy, in Anaheim California. He concentrates his practice focusing on the treatment of addictions, trauma, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, and couples counseling. He further specializes in the treatment of childhood trauma, sexual abuse, neglect, and emotional/physical abandonment. His many years working in the community and his extensive academic and in field training have established Dr. Jaffe as a seasoned and experienced psychotherapist. In addition to his clinical responsibilities, Robert is an unwavering and dependable friend, cherishing deep connections with his loved ones, embracing the joys of travel, and nourishing his body with a commitment to healthy eating.

Mitra Rashidian, Ph.D., LMFT., CST, ABS., is a licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT) in full-time private practice in Encino, California. In addition, she is a Certified Sex Therapist through The American Association of Sexuality Educators, Counselors and Therapists (AASECT). Also, she is Board Certified Diplomate by the American Board of Sexology (ABS). Further, she is a Certified Hypnotherapist via the Ericksonian Foundation in Arizona. She was trained at The Valley Trauma Center in Van Nuys, California, where she worked extensively with sexual assault survivors.

Dr. Rashidian earned her Ph.D. in Counseling at the University of New England (UNE), School of Health, in Armidale, Australia. She then completed a two-year post-Doctoral fellowship position at UNE with the focus on sexual healthcare and inclusion. She received a Master

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Committed to sexual healthcare and mental well-being research, Dr. Rashidian has focused on the enhancement of relationships and sexual enrichment over the past 25 years. Her passion is to help all people achieve and experience joy and fulfillment with their partners. “We all want everlasting happiness in our lives, and I believe that this is achievable.”

In addition to her clinical and research pursuits, she possesses a remarkable talent in the culinary arts, an enduring passion for painting, a fervent dedication to gardening, and a strong commitment to maintaining a healthy lifestyle through mindful eating and regular exercise habits.

Further information about her clinical work and focus can be obtained at Psychology Today, [trfsq.com](https://www.trfsq.com), and ResearchGate.

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