

## The Nectar of the Global Feminine Cooperative

We recognize that the world has been dominated by the masculine – in both men *and* women. Societies have been built on this “one-sidedness,” as Carl Jung has termed it. Following Jung, we assent that this one-sidedness is not a natural way to live. Our nature has not evolved fast enough to keep up with the development of our man-made technology. We are out of synch; we are no longer in our element. Our constitution is suited for a sensory world of the sights, sounds, smells, textures found in nature. We are not equipped to in one day have to process information about speeding motor vehicles, whirring motors and generators giving off electromagnetic fields, sirens, aircraft overhead, billboards, signs with pictures and words everywhere, storefronts trying to catch the eye, radio and TV, the touch of cold steel, concrete and plastic, and pervasive sex symbols. Our hormones are running at abnormal levels which we have come to consider “normal.” We teach our children that they have to get with this bizarre program or be punished. But our natural state, without all this cultural overlay, is silence, a very much slower pace of life, and much less input demanding constant vigilance.

Some people would rather spend time with their pet than with humans. Why? One of the biggest attractions of animals in the wild is their silence. Their relaxed pace. We still love it. We relate to it, even though we ourselves are not capable of it. Imagine how you would feel about your pet dog or cat if it talked all the time? We, by nature, are quiet, relaxed, passive, receptive – more feminine than our lifestyle demands. Our minds are tremendously stressed by the everyday clutter of a thousand anxieties and our “To Do Today” lists. We are not made for this aggressive, competitive masculine world. It is out of balance. We run on our fear that we will die before we get everything we want out of life. In societies which have lived without modern technology, the people are without our neurotic fears of death, disease, pain, and ego humiliation. Natural disasters came naturally, natural predators came naturally, surviving was struggle at times, demanding immediate reaction, but nothing like the constant tension of driving a car in traffic, or the out of control pressures of many modern jobs and careers. *The natural pace of life in “primitive” cultures allowed them to stay connected to an awareness of the immortal element within themselves.* This is the crux of the problem. This is why the world is the way it is today. We have traded off our access to our source of freedom, we have sacrificed this most essential thing, to play with our technology. It is virtually impossible, in a man-made world which demands that we be constantly doing something fast and thinking fast and processing language, to settle into the Silent Space where God-consciousness must dwell. That is to say, we never can remember our true nature as eternal Spirit, eternal Love.

And so, the aggressive, active, busy, competitive masculine attitude of the modern high-tech society produces masses of humans who doubt and even deny that there is an eternal Spirit within. Awareness is what determines the fate of the species. The loss of the Awareness of the True Self is what is causing our spiral downward. For this Awareness is our common bond with one another.

Essentially, we are all one spirit, one nature. But only at the deep level. Any person who loses touch with that level has no root. And the root is the only place where we are connected to the rest of the tree. Such a disconnected person has no basis for trusting anyone else, because all he sees is that this other person is different. The fear of the unknown induces us to throw up more and more defenses. We can't be open and honest or this other person might detect our weakness. Soon, most of our energy is spent keeping "the enemy," our brother, who carries within him our Self, at bay, either out of our lives entirely or in some box where his moves are predictable. As we lose our connection to our own integrity, as our root is severed, we can find no basis for self-respect, and therefore we have no respect for anyone else. There is nothing but the law to stop us from using one another, exploiting one another, deceiving one another, seducing one another, debasing one another, killing one another. And all because we speeded up to keep up with a masculine, competitive society, and left our souls languishing silently in the dust.

As we reflect upon this problem, its source and its possible solutions, we may discern that a society is not a real living entity. It is nothing more than an aggregate of the animal beings that compose it. Thus, to attribute a social problem to the society is relatively meaningless. It is much more productive to recognize that if a society is one-sided, this only means that the great majority of the people who make it up are one-sided, unnatural, out of balance. That is, within a psychologically healthy person of either sex there is a cooperative balance between masculinity and femininity. But a one-sided person would have a personality, or ego, in which either the masculine or feminine attitude would predominate. This occurs through an active suppression, even a disdain, for the opposite. An intra-psychic war naturally begins between the two principles, which must both be alive, and expressed, and complementing one another equally in a person in order for the individual to function freely in life and mature toward a more enriching existence. With one or the other principle predominating, the person feels thin and pale and incomplete inside, and so looks to his or her world for salvation. He seeks relief from the empty emptiness of the separate self, the ego, in an outer world which is a reflection of that emptiness.

And this describes the situation of masses of humans. A person in this condition turns to the outside world for his or her satisfaction, desperate and demanding; feeling dead inside, he is desperate to "make a life for himself," by demanding that the world provide it! The person who has never been still enough, quiet enough, to settle into the deeper strata within his or her own being, fears that there is nothing inside but the blackness, the empty emptiness, lifelessness. This shallow person is then extremely vulnerable to a culture which tells him to "live it up" – to make lots of money and spend it on material possessions and pleasures. We submit that nearly every American has fallen for this way of dealing with the depression of feeling empty. Everyone has been exhausting their time, their money, their intellect, their talents, their energy. It has all gone to the corporations and the banking elite -- the 'Illuminati' -- of the world. This *is* depressing. For the resources that could have been devoted to the inner journey are dissipated. Up in smoke.

Some blame the culture: it is materialistic, it is a “dominator culture,” it is immoral or irreligious. But the culture is just the people. *My* problem is that *I* am materialistic, dominating, immoral and irreligious, and *I* am supporting my society. Therefore, to solve the problems facing mankind at a global level, each one of us must begin by finding out how to activate the full, deeper, whole nature that does lie within, so that we don’t need a society. The problem cannot be solved by changing the government. Those who complain about the government and expect it to make their lives better are people without the courage and the conscience to face themselves. The whole problem exists within the psyche of the person. So it can only be solved by each person by withdrawing all his or her projections upon the outer world and going the more passive, more feminine route of exploring within. (Note: It must be emphasized that this feminizing of the masculine and masculinizing of the feminine *does not have anything to do with sexual preference*. Homosexuals and bisexuals are not more or less likely to be balanced as human beings than heterosexuals.)

Balance refers to the ability of the person to not be stuck in one or the other perspective. He or she would have the ability to sense when an active, masculine response to a situation is best, and to respond in a way in which this feeling or word or action is tempered by and informed by the passive, feminine side within. Similarly, he or she would have the ability to sense when a feminine response is best, and to naturally engage this side in a way in which the masculine voice within is consulted. As you can see, in a truly balanced person, feelings and words and actions would not be extreme and rigid “shoulds,” but would be moderate and temperate – spontaneous rather than restrained or phony. The free inner dialectic between the two opposite tendencies would serve as a private “devil’s advocate” or feedback loop that would insure that nothing was blurted out until it had been first “felt through” at a deeper level.

So the opposite within a person is very valuable. It prevents the urge to “fly off the handle” or to deny and repress. It allows conflicts to be resolved without violence or passive aggressiveness. And it provides the person with a much larger perspective: one who can see a situation from both the masculine and feminine perspective can truly see “the big picture.” And one who can appreciate within himself or herself the *equal* value of both, “re-members” the Place where the two meet deep in the psyche. This produces true understanding, or “inner-standing,” and compassion. And, we may speculate, this wisdom would reduce the need to rely in fear and ignorance upon dogmatic belief systems or legal systems in determining how to live and how to treat other humans, and how to expect others to treat us. When you *know* deep down whether a thing is right or wrong, you no longer need to *believe* anyone else or any teachings. And this intuitive wisdom reduces fear of the unknown. When the feminine is balanced with the masculine, we feel our common bond with all peoples, whereas the masculine alone tends to sort us into separate categories and emphasize our differences. Paranoia results.

We the people of the Global Feminine Cooperative also recognize that the women of the world are in a better position than the men to bring about a reclamation of the feminine principle. Most obviously, it is generally easier for a woman than for a man to access the

feminine within and bring it to consciousness. Women generally know the feminine more intimately, and are endowed by nature with the stronger tendency to react in feminine ways than are men. That is, it takes less effort for a woman to be feminine in a natural spontaneous way. In this respect, it is incumbent upon women to lead the way in bringing the feminine into the world, and not expect men to do it first. For example, if a man and a woman are together and are confronted by a tense situation, it would be worked out in a more natural way if the woman brings a more passive, conciliatory attitude. This alone can often reduce tensions. If, however, she perceives the situation from the masculine standpoint of a competition for power, and reacts in a masculine, aggressive way, everything is thrown out of balance and the conflict will escalate.

In a sense, sadly, women themselves are to a great degree responsible for the dominance of the masculine in our societies. Consider these three reasons. First, women continue to support and remain partners with and feed and have sex with and benefit financially from men who engage in extremely out of balance hypermasculine behavior such as war, fighting, intimidating, power trips, and violently competitive sports. The woman knows in her heart that what the man is doing is not making him a better person, but is driving him even more out of balance. But she stays, implicitly or explicitly supporting and promoting his attitude and behavior. Maybe she wants him to be on the attack, to protect her, because of her own fears, her own mistrust of her world. Arguing with him in an effort to change his attitude might be pointless. If she feels it is useless to try to explain to him another way of dealing, she can then *show* him how it is done. And, by her integrity, she can choose to not be a part of his life if he behaves in a hypermasculine way. Otherwise, she makes him more sick, feels rotten about herself since she missed her chance to show some real courage, and is implicitly conveying a message to the children that she condones violence. Not to mention the harm that he may be doing to other people. Karmically, she is just as responsible as he is for the outcome of his actions, because she is supporting him.

Secondly, many women are aggressive consumers and spenders. This promotes and sustains the very male-dominated economic and social system that women criticize. A very effective way to counter the success of greedy masculine corporations would be to not be greedy yourself -- stop buying their products. Return to creative making do with whatever talents and resources you have at home. This would also be tremendously enriching for women at a personal level. But very few try it nowadays.

And thirdly, women have imitated men in their competitive ways, and pushed others off the ladder to “suck-cess” just as the men have. In doing so, a woman becomes masculinized and loses touch with her true femininity. She is denying her own nature. The law that rules here is that whatever you have to fight to get you will have to keep fighting to keep. Fight only leads to more fight. And this is why women are so frustrated in jobs and careers that have been defined according to masculine criteria. They stick themselves in positions that are way out of balance. Such women have sold out, given up, and turned their backs on the value of their own femininity.

Unfortunately, almost all of the “women’s movement” and “feminist movement” organizations of women have bought into the pushy, confrontive, hypermasculine strategy of getting their point across. Many of the members of these organizations think in a more masculine than a feminine way. The masculine emphasizes the attitude that you have to be tough and “stand your ground” to accomplish a goal. The feminine emphasizes gentleness and passivity, cooperation instead of domination; some degree of nurturance for all. The person with the masculine attitude fears that one concession will lead to being totally overrun, and tries to intimidate and to maintain a façade of bravado in order to prevent this. The person with the feminine attitude fears that fighting is what will lead to escalation and eventual loss. And so, women themselves who fight are showing men that they believe his strategy is superior to the feminine. This results in loss of respect; men come to ridicule such women and their political movements which betray that they do not even believe in and value their own feminine strength. How can you respect a person who caves in and joins your camp at the slightest sign of danger?

While bravado and a show of force are masculine, real courage is not. Courage is balanced. It reflects the masculine trait of being who you authentically are, and balances this with the feminine: gentle, sensitive, nurturant, patient, open-hearted, cooperative. And then, when someone tries to pressure or intimidate you, continue being the best you can be. Don’t give up your feminine strength and start pushing back. And it makes no sense to hide behind your “women’s rights.” This is just another masculine tactic. It will set you up for endless argument, and further alienate you from men and from the feminine in yourself. This is what we have seen happen in the women’s movements of the past forty years. Maybe being feminine will not get you to the top in a corporation. But is that what you really want? Maybe there is another place where you can be even more fulfilled, as well as effective and useful to humanity. Perhaps you can teach men that their goal of winning, with their pushy, cold, impersonal, unfeeling way of achieving it, is not the only way to live. Women must not be afraid to let others see their femininity. *It is not a weakness.* We must not be afraid to stop letting our masculine culture masculinize us and rape us of our natural endowment. We must stop playing their game, which is not authentic to us, and show them that true femininity is a strength, valuable in the world, and not a weakness.

So what is femininity? How do we contrast it with masculinity? First and foremost, “masculinity” and “femininity” are not realities. Each exists only in relation to the other. The masculine depends upon the contrast with the feminine for its existence; the feminine has no existence without something less feminine as a backdrop. To even call something “masculine”, you have to be having femininity in your mind! For instance, the concept “soft.” How hard would a thing have to be before you no longer call it “soft,” and begin calling it “hard”? And, more importantly, of what value is “soft” unless there is something that you consider too hard? Life is alive, organic. The Chinese speak of the incessant change, exchange, and interchange between yin and yang. Everything is flowing into everything else all the time. In nature, the yin and yang must be allowed to dance freely; it is ridiculous to keep pushing for one or the other. If a person claims that masculinity is of value in itself, or that femininity is of value in itself, that person is claiming the impossible. And that person is out of balance, trying to stop the dance! The

masculine is always just half of a natural life; the feminine is always just half of a natural life.

So feminine is not something you have to be or avoid being. It is not a set of habits or feelings to cultivate. It is not a game. It is not a role. It is not exaggerated or extreme. It is not egotistical. The term for all these is “effeminate.” If you are real and not fake, the feminine will naturally begin to express itself in you whenever the masculine has become strong. And the masculine will begin to arise in you when the feminine has become strong. In fact, we may say that the only value that each one has is to moderate the other. If a person never becomes too masculine the feminine will never arise, and vice versa. Such a person lives near the balance point – the only “equality of the sexes” that makes any sense is within. So the effort on the part of a woman to gain “power” comes from her blocking of the inner feminine that just naturally seeks to do its thing. The craving for power is a masculine craving. If a woman feels a craving for power, it is because she has lost the courage to be who she is by nature. She has lost her connection with her True Self and thus has lost her way in the world. Then fear arises. Actually, the feminine is characterized by an enduring inner strength and solid intuitiveness which frightens men who have disowned their feminine side. This strength is the envy of men. And in fact, it is this envy which motivates a man to engage in outward displays of power, and to feel that he has to prove that he can dominate everyone he meets. A man’s craving for power will become insatiable if he cannot find a good measure of the feminine inner strength *in himself* as a balance. No amount of conquest of things and people outside himself can give this to him. Nor can the most lovely feminine partner give this to him.

What about the so-called ‘feminine mystique’? A woman who denigrates the masculine becomes like a magnet, drawing all the hypermasculine people into her life without any effort. It is the yang trying to balance the yin. This out of balance feminine person quietly, effortlessly, and mysteriously attracts the most out of balance masculine people to herself. But neither one understands the other, or acknowledges the equality of the other. Her complaints that all she ends up with are assholes is due to her own unnaturalness. Similarly, a man who does not feel the equally vital feminine within himself will act as a magnet for out of balance feminine people. He is fooled every time.

So the well-balanced, self-actualized human being has a feminine side which balances the masculine within almost as soon as the masculine arises. And this person, male or female, also has a masculine side which does not aggressively shut off the feminine within, but gently, effortlessly, neutralizes it. Such a person possesses a beauty and a grace and a tenderness and a sensitive attunement in his or her actions that all humans admire. These are not feminine qualities, but are balanced qualities. The balanced man, woman, or child makes few demands on others, but offers sustenance, comfort, and a sense of closeness, of willingness to help, to provide what is needed. *Virtus in medio stat.* (“Virtue stands in the middle”.) And all this is done without even a thought. This is not far from our ideal of human love. It is natural to all of us. It is natural to feel the ebb and flow of the male and female hormones, as they “correct” one another in a negative feedback loop. Do you know how it feels when testosterone is in higher concentrations in your blood? Do you know how it feels when estrogens are in higher concentrations?

And do you know how it feels when they are neutralizing each other? Which of these conditions feels “good” to you? Which of these conditions feels “bad” to you? Each individual must discover his or her own answers to these questions before pretending to know how the other sex feels. Of course, physiologically and psychologically, we are more healthy when our hormones are balanced or nearly so. We must ask: "Why would I prefer the feeling of testosterone?" or, "Why would I prefer the feeling of estrogens?"

Then "Why do I not enjoy a balance?" Because we have lost the connection to our deeper being – our soul if you will – that makes all things right within us. We have fallen into a life of forcing. Men and women alike get ideas and try to make them happen. We get feelings that we don't like, and instead of accepting them and deepening awareness through them, we try to stop them. Thus we move further and further out of balance. In which direction? We are all pathologically hypermasculine. We are in dire need of the feminine awakening within us to balance us out. Just introspect for a moment. If you are balanced, you would be passive as much as you are active during the day. During your waking hours, your mind would be quiet half of the time and working half of the time. You would be operating on your environment only as much as you are allowing it to operate on you – only as much as you are passively absorbing it. This is almost inconceivable to many of us. Our minds are working all the time. We are constantly trying to achieve, trying to control.

In this active, masculine mode, our testosterone levels rise, the sympathetic nervous system is aroused, and adrenaline and other corticosteroids are being used up. The brain is driven to run abnormally fast. This is the familiar stress response. We all know well how it feels. We can also feel when the female hormones predominate. Estrogen and progesterone correlate with activity of the parasympathetic nervous system – lowering metabolism, relaxing smooth and skeletal muscles, slowing cerebral activity, allowing the body to recuperate, revitalize, and store energy. Subjectively, since we in civilized cultures are usually in a masculine mode trying to cope with something, this is usually a relieving, pleasant experience. When the female hormones are elevated, they make the person feel at home in the body, and tending toward lethargy rather than activity, in both men and women. Whereas elevated testosterone feels, for a while, similar to the high obtained with the use of stimulants, elevated estrogen is more similar, for a while, to the high obtained with marijuana, or even barbiturates. But what makes for “feeling good” is a matter determined by what just happened. It is temporary and it is relative. Sometimes we feel good when stimulated and active – when masculine. Other times we feel good mellowing out. Neither one is really "good" or "a bummer" in itself. All that has happened is that we have forgotten our deeper steady state. When the experience of love is lost, we are susceptible to substitutes, i.e. temporary pleasures and physical sensations. To take one example, when estrogens peak during the menstrual cycle in a woman who has lost touch with her deeper Being, and is living an aggressive, masculine lifestyle, her emotional reaction is negative. She is out of sorts, because she is essentially incapacitated. Nature is telling her to relax and rejuvenate, restore a balance so she can see deeper within herself, but her ego is pushing her to stay on track, to keep up the battle, to not slip behind. She is unable to enjoy the laid-back feminine days when they naturally come.

In contrast to these experiences of out-of-balance testosterone and estrogen, the person who is perfectly balanced is largely unaware of the body. There is no urgency to act, but no need to recover either. No stress, no drive, is felt, nor is there any need or desire to “crash.” Or to cave in. In such moments of balance, the mind is actually free of the body. A person who discovers the knack of stabilizing in this neutral state is permanently transformed. The world, and the body, lose importance. The person no longer has to knock himself out to satisfy his ambitions or the demands of the world. Thus, he doesn’t need extreme methods of escapism or recuperation. Extreme swings from testosterone to estrogen, and from masculine to feminine points of view, do not occur. When the mind is freed of concerns about the body and worldly achievements, the Inner Silence is awared. Real Love, without emotional ups and downs, becomes possible. This is a state rarely experienced by the typical “normal” person. His or her moments of balance come in brief rushes, not enduring experiences of a still and quiet mind and body. Because of the fleeting nature of these moments, he or she cannot even recognize the causes of this balanced state, or even dream that it is possible to *live* there. And this possibility cannot be explained to one who does not know of it already.

When the mind gets out of balance, each of the two cerebral hemispheres sort of musters its resources together. In general, for right-handed persons, the left hemisphere consolidates a masculine kind of information processing, and the right hemisphere a feminine. These can become quite distinct in a person who has intentionally tried to be more assertive or more dormant in various situations in life. For instance, a husband may agree to do something his wife demands only to avoid some kind of rejection. His action is not the natural feminine in him, but it is his ego figuring out how to get what it wants! So in a person who lives this way, many masculine tendencies are not naturally balanced by the feminine, and many feminine tendencies are not naturally balanced by the masculine. This describes *all* acculturated humans. And so two opposing, competing camps develop in the brain. Depending upon how serious the imbalance is, they may or may not be able to work together. As you peruse the following chart, note how strongly left hemisphere (masculine) many people are. (Adapted and expanded from Ornstein, 1972.)



Left hemisphere (“masculine”)

Hard  
Fast  
Loud  
Push  
Repel  
Active  
Compete  
Plan  
Expressive  
Intellectual  
Time-conscious  
Explicit knowledge  
Analytic  
Propositional  
Linear  
Sequential  
Focal  
Yang  
Fire  
Verbal  
Thinking  
Cause and effect  
Buddhi  
Evidence  
Extraverted  
Willful  
Moving  
Light

Right hemisphere (“feminine”)

Soft  
Slow  
Quiet  
Pull  
Attract  
Passive  
Cooperate  
Spontaneous  
Receptive  
Sensuous  
Pattern-conscious  
Secret (tacit) knowledge  
Gestalt  
Appositional  
Nonlinear  
Simultaneous  
Diffuse  
Yin  
Earth  
Spatial  
Intuition  
Manas  
Synchronicity  
Experience  
Introverted  
Compliant  
Still  
Dark

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Just opening up a dialogue, one-on-one with another person, and freely discussing the meaning of the terms “masculine” and “feminine,” can be the beginning of a growing, healing experience in itself. But many people immediately become defensive and judgmental. Our conditioning by our parents, schools, employers, the media, and other agents of socialization instill a judgmental process. As a result, there is tremendous confusion. We forget what is simply natural. The culture and the counterculture give us opposing messages. And when our male and female egos get involved in any kind of conflict, we lose touch with all sense of what is fair and balanced and equitable. It becomes extremely difficult to perceive clearly without evaluation and judgment. Consider the following examples. If you are in a male body, you think of yourself as more masculine than feminine if you have been conditioned to. The conditioning itself involves rewarding you for developing this out-of-balance self-image, and projecting it.

So, unconsciously, you come to value it as a good thing. In contrast, you, again unconsciously, see the feminine person as simply one who has failed to develop the “good” qualities for which you were reinforced. Conversely, if you are in a female body, you think of yourself as more feminine than masculine if you have been conditioned to. Just as in the male, the culture rewards you for the qualities it wants in its women, and you come to think of these as “good.” And so, a person who has not developed these good qualities is unconsciously seen as bad, or deficient. We are immersed from an early age in our respective biases. How can we ever see the two as equally valuable? How can we allow the opposite of what we have been told is “good” to become as strong in us as our ego?

So now we can see how deep the root of the problem is. The society can’t change until the egos of its people back down. The society is not going to change if egos just insist that *other* egos back down, make concessions, show “respect” or “equality.” Yes, pressure can make another person conform at the behavioral level. But it does not bring about the inner reorganization of the personality so that the person *really believes* in the equality. So the only solution is this: *I* have to leave my ego behind. *I* have to be the one to let go of my identification with my male or female anatomy, and of my attachment to the bias on many issues with which I have been programmed since youth. The only way to truly eliminate sexual discrimination is for many individuals at once to clean *their own* house, to question the value of their perspective and even their entire personalities, to surrender the old ego in favor of a new, more balanced sense of Self.

And this is the crux of our project. The members of the Global Feminine Cooperative are committed to self-transformation. This can occur only through humbling of the ego. Each of us will consciously free ourselves from all cultural pressures from all sides which are keeping us trapped in the one-sided view of ourselves that we have as egos. We are willing to let go of everything we believed in, everything we have been taught we were. Not oppose it, hate it, or reject it, but simply let it go, let the energy behind it be redistributed so that other, opposite functions can naturally emerge. Until one achieves this, it is impossible to be truly balanced. It will be impossible to look at anything in any way except through the filter that has programmed us. Until we let go of ego, that is all we are capable of seeing. We will always fear the power of our opposite, since it remains the unknown, the unpredictable – and the unattainable.

But what is this “power”? Who really has “power”? People who are fearful of an unknown force are always trying to accumulate more “power” to protect themselves from it. They always feel as if they never have enough power to equal that of their opposite. What they would call a “balance of power” is the feeling of safety. What this really means is that he or she wants the security of knowing that he or she has the upper hand and can use it to neutralize the opposite if threatened. So no ego really wants a fair “balance of power.” What he or she calls fair is never perceived by the opposite person as “fair” or “a balance.” So, as long as there exist female egos and male egos, we are in a stalemate. A stand-off. Each too estranged from and fearful of the opposite to give in on the key issues that male and female egos are built around.

*Egos, by nature, are always masculine.* There is no such thing as a *feminine* ego. The *female* ego, however, does exist. This is an ego built around desirable qualities that the female ego wants to claim, and to define as feminine. This ego then pushes, in masculine fashion, its interpretation. For example, this person may wish to claim that a desirable quality such as gentleness is not masculine but is feminine. So this person consciously acts “gentle.” But this is not a natural spontaneous outpouring of the quality of gentleness; it is forced. The attitude behind it is masculine. There is an egotistical motive behind it. It is effete, effeminate. It is not feminine. Gentleness is neither masculine nor feminine. It requires both to contribute in a natural response to another person in need. There must be a masculine reaching out in a specific direction tempered by a feminine sensitivity. Thus, as soon as the natural balance is lost, and people develop egos around their gender, it creates a confused mess.

The only way to solve this emotionally charged, fear-driven, cold war between the sexes is to see the truth: *no ego, male or female, has any power.* We, in our egos, don’t understand what power is. There can never be a power imbalance because whichever side is using its power is also using it up. The very exercise of power is giving that power away. The master gives control to the slave by enslaving him. The slave gains power by submitting. If the slave is clever he will induce the master to believe that he, the master, has total control. Then this clever slave will induce the master to continue to use his power against the slave. This slave, wise in the ways of life’s balancing act, knows that the more aggressive the master becomes, the more he will be robbed of his ‘power.’ The master becomes feminized -- controllable. The dog controls the life of its owner as much as the owner controls the dog. So the one who seizes power, and wields it, is doomed. But the one who femininely waits, and lets nature take its course, finds opportunity dumped in his or her lap. This is the ancient Chinese principle of yin and yang, and the Chinese government is right now suffering and waiting in a yin condition. If they can sustain this, it will give them control of the world, while the hypermasculine, greedy nations and secret governments are wearing themselves out trying to “win” some war that in the end will destroy them. So the effort to gain “power” is ridiculous. It betrays an ignorance of how nature works. And, more than that, the ego’s obsession with its place in the pecking order prevents the person from *living: enjoying the journey to the depths, to the only realm where the meaning of life can be found.*

Nothing in the world – no person, no religion, no government, no circumstance – has power to harm you. Yes, your ego, your self-image, can be harmed. Your body can be harmed. But *you* cannot be harmed. Who you really are cannot be harmed in any way. We are all called upon to in our lifetime find this True Self beyond the vulnerable part of us which will decay and die. We are all called upon to stop fortifying, asserting, our personality, our ego. This is just our shell, our shield, our façade, our weapon. We are all called upon to transcend its learned habits *and its survival instincts.* Nothing short of this transcendence -- which is really an immanence -- can make an individual man or woman happy. In our hypermasculine societies in which both men and women have lost the true receptive, still, passive side, the challenge facing us is to allow our feminine side to operate in our lives.

But it often happens that femininity never achieves a stable equilibrium with masculinity, and the personality is characterized by episodes of hyperfemininity alternating with hypermasculine control. One way that this can happen is when a woman feels that her ego is not getting enough attention. She becomes deliberately seductive, preoccupied with her physical appearance, works at being romantic, and/or becomes promiscuous. These are not the natural unfolding of a healthy femininity. They are *masculine strategies for using feminine traits to get what her female ego wants*. Since she can't admit her own masculine, she cannot find the lasting joy of the harmony between both principles in her inner being. This is exactly what drives a woman to become obsessed with contacting the masculine by controlling the men in her life. She puts her energy into making men want her. But this affords her only a very short-lived kind of satisfaction. Even though it feels like great fun and a triumph of her womanhood, she always ends up feeling that she put more energy into it than it was worth. Then she becomes even more depressed about herself, and more bitter toward men because she feels that they cheated her, don't respect her, etc, etc. She does not transform or deepen as a person.

A second way in which femininity can become an out-of-balance hyperfemininity is excessive preoccupation with motherhood, facetiously referred to as "(s)mothering". The woman's natural femininity has consolidated into an obsession, the ego trying to define itself as a supermom. She does things for her children that are beyond what her natural instincts tell her to do. She overprotects them, even to the detriment of their growth. It is possible even for breastfeeding to become an issue; instead of the natural motive of nourishing a helpless infant, it is done to nourish the mother's ego needs. Again, this is a pushy, masculine strategy that an out-of-balance woman might use to proclaim and reclaim what she thinks of as her femininity or "womanhood".

And a third example of out-of-balance femininity is begrudgingly caving in and doing things against her own conscience due to social pressure or intimidation. This is not feminine – it is plain lack of courage to do the natural and right thing. Situations arise all the time in life which require us to choose either to do what is right or to do what is safest. People in affluent societies want to protect what they have accumulated, including their own egos. So, for example, a well-to-do woman may be in a social situation where she is genuinely feeling compassion for some less fortunate person, and guilt comes up. She suddenly is overcome by a realization of her common bond with this person. But her peers use some rationalization to try to talk her out of her spontaneous feeling. What better time to be authentically who you are and resist the ridicule or the rationalizations? Maybe you will lose friends, but these friends live by their egos rather than their hearts or souls. You are better off without them.

Where do we look for good role models of authentic, balanced women? They are difficult to find in high-tech, hurried societies. Actually, some of the women saints and mystics who have abstained from sex, partners, and motherhood have lived very beautiful and balanced lives. Such outward things are not necessary to refine femininity to a fulfilling level. A few examples of such women are Teresa of Avila, Therese Neumann, St. Agnes, and Anandamayi Ma. We will talk about them later.

It is worthwhile to reflect upon the polarities described for the left vs. right brain, yang and yin, and Shiva and Shakti to clearly distinguish masculine from feminine tendencies. But it is even more meaningful to look within yourself and become conscious of the inner struggle between these two principles. Each person has his or her own unique scenarios to play out, with many obstacles to deal with on the path of pulling away from the roles we are expected to play. Ultimately, in order to become “a real human being” -- to fulfill your true potential -- you must reconcile the two opposites without favoritism, seeing them as of equal value in your inner, and outer, life. And, in this process, you will remember how they just played together inside you when you were a young child. This means that the bird and the snake must learn to dance together and stop the attacking and defending. The resulting reconciliation brings about a relaxed inner peace, which we may call the Memory of the True Self. If you go on identifying yourself as masculine *or* feminine, and treat the opposite within you as of lesser value, you are in a war with yourself that you can never win. You are rejecting the very source of your own happiness. You will shrink into a niggling little ego, jealously guarding your little territory, seeing all the rest of the world as your enemy. And if a lot of the people around you are like you, your entire world becomes out-of-balance – mentally ill, pretentious, militant, and a nasty place to live and raise children.

Modern, high-tech societies, as we have already indicated, are by nature out-of-balance toward the masculine. They became what they are and maintain themselves by pushing and forcing. Pushing competitors out of the way. Pushing workers to produce. Pushing products onto buyers. Pushing the feminine around. And, pushing the feminine in themselves deeper into their unconscious – out of sight, out of mind. Both men and women have done this. Both have become too one-sidedly masculine. Even matriarchal cultures are usually one-sidedly masculine, since the most masculine and aggressive women are often the ones who end up in the influential positions.

In the process of pushing the feminine down, we lose the natural balance that gives us our intuition, our compassion, our tenderness, our patience, our protective feelings, our open-heartedness, our sense of oneness with all those born of woman. And we lose our conscience, our ability to *feel* when a thing is not right. Then we have nothing to guide us. We begin to rely on cold reasoning, gain/loss calculations, monetary values, rigid moralizing, unnecessarily invasive medical treatment, legal power over others, seductiveness, coyness, our “rights,” justifications for going to war, and other ego tricks to make ourselves feel safe. Someone who gets in the way of our plans is no longer a brother to work out a problem with but an enemy to defeat. It is the “We are good, they are evil” fundamentalist bigotry of extreme polarization. This is because the masculine alone can see no other course of action except to use some kind of force. So, he needs a target. Not that he is evil. He is just mentally ill, functioning with only half a mind, without his feminine side.

Matthew Arnold has stated:

“If ever the world sees a time when women shall come together purely and simply for the benefit of mankind, it will be a power such as the world has never known.”

Do you care enough about mankind to devote some of your energy to something which is purely and simply for its benefit? *You are one with all humanity. Whatever one suffers, you are suffering too, in some way.* If you can put your ego aside and become balanced within, if you as a woman can let your femininity show you how and when not to engage your masculine side with the world, mankind will automatically benefit. If you can revive the feminine within yourself so that it is as vital as your masculine, you will treat all humans as your own children. You will respond to the part of each person that is just trying to live, unmolested, in the way that he or she knows. You will serve as a role model for both men and women, as they see your tears of compassion for your children, of all nationalities, of all religions, who suffer.

What can the feminine do? What can it give us? This verse from Hendrik Ibsen exposes the mystery of how the feminine works:

“Soul, be faithful unto the last.  
The victory of victories is to lose all.  
The sum total of your loss constitutes your winning.  
Eternally we possess only that which we have lost.”

By accepting loss, by being humble, one wins the only real victory there is. When one is passive, when one femininely accepts force rather than returning force, the magical power of the feminine is activated. By settling, by absorbing, by feeling, by consolidating in stillness, a new state of mind arises. Something unwanted ends. A “New Age” can never dawn until both men and women alike can live according to this wisdom. All the millions of women in the world who have been intimidated into giving up on their femininity and become masculinized are supporting the hate, division, and genocide in the world. Imagine, on the other hand, a different scenario. Two diplomats from different countries who have a strong nurturing side, a good conscience, and a balanced perspective. They lay down their weapons and meet to discuss a sensitive issue. It doesn't matter if they are male or female. Each would feel the pain of the other in this tense moment. Their hearts would go out to one another. Each would be receptive, yielding, sensitive, able to look at the situation from all sides. Each would be willing to give a little to achieve an equilibrium. Neither would fear showing his vulnerability, because he trusts. He would seek a trade rather than defying the stronger party, or intimidating the weaker. If each is perfectly balanced – egoless – a way to resolve the crisis would be found.

Multiply this situation around the globe. A huge shift would occur worldwide. And all because each individual had done just a little work on himself or herself to become balanced intrapsychically. *To do this is not a sacrifice!* It is not a sacrifice because it is the root of all happiness. It is the Memory of one's True Self. Enlightenment. This is all that is necessary to save the world. And, nothing less *can* save the world.

But here's the dilemma: The true feminine is accepting of what is. The true feminine is not aggressive, ambitious, assertive, politically active, power-driven. So how can she do

anything effective? We have an idea that only masculine tactics are effective, because this is what we grew up with in our society. We don't see the feminine at work. Is there a way for the woman to remain feminine and leave the world a better place, even make lasting changes? The answer is found in the ancient text the *Tao Te Ching*. All things are done by Non-doing! Here are some quotations to give you a taste of this way of living.

Give up thinking, and put an end to your troubles.  
Is there a difference between yes and no?  
Is there a difference between good and evil?  
Must I fear what others fear? What nonsense!  
Other people are contented, enjoying the sacrificial feast of the ox.  
In spring some go to the park, and climb the terrace.  
But I alone am drifting, not knowing where I am.  
Like a newborn babe before it learns to smile,  
I am alone, without a place to go.

Others have more than they need, but I alone have nothing.  
I am a fool. Oh, yes! I am confused.  
Other men are clear and bright,  
But I alone am dim and weak.  
Other men are sharp and clever,  
But I alone am dull and stupid.  
Oh I drift like the waves of the sea,  
Without direction, like the restless wind.

Everyone else is busy,  
But I alone am aimless and depressed.  
I am different.  
I am nourished by the Great Mother.

\* \* \*

The softest thing in the universe  
Overcomes the hardest thing in the universe.  
That without substance can enter where there is no room.  
Hence I know the value of non-action.

Teaching without words and work without doing:  
It is a world in which very few dwell..

\* \* \*

He who knows when to stop does not find himself in trouble.

\* \* \*

Stillness and tranquility set things in order in the universe.

\* \* \*

When the Tao is present in the universe,  
The horses haul manure.  
When the Tao is absent from the universe,  
War horses are bred outside the city.

There is no greater sin than desire,  
No greater curse than discontent,  
No greater misfortune than wanting something for oneself.  
Therefore he who knows that enough is enough will always have enough.

\* \* \*

Without going outside, you may know the whole world.  
Without looking through the window, you may see the ways of heaven.  
The farther you go, the less you know.  
Thus the sage knows without traveling;  
He sees without looking;  
He works without doing.

\* \* \*

The world is ruled by letting things take their course.  
It cannot be ruled by interfering.

Therefore when Tao is lost, there is goodness.  
When goodness is lost, there is kindness.  
When kindness is lost, there is justice.  
When justice is lost, there is ritual.  
Now ritual is the husk of faith and loyalty, the beginning of confusion.

\* \* \*



Empty yourself of everything, let the mind rest at peace.  
The ten thousand things rise and fall, while the Self watches their return.  
They grow and flourish, and then return to the Source.  
Returning to the Source is stillness, which is the way of nature.

\* \* \*

And from *The Way of Chuang Tze*:

#### THE EMPTY BOAT

He who rules men lives in confusion; he who is ruled by men lives in sorrow.  
Yao, therefore, desired neither to influence others nor to be influenced by them.  
The way to get clear of confusion and free of sorrow  
Is to live with Tao in the land of the Great Void.  
If a man is crossing a river and an empty boat collides with his own skiff,  
Even though he be a bad-tempered man he will not become very angry.  
But if there is somebody in the boat, he will begin shouting, and cursing,  
And all because there is somebody in the boat.  
If you can empty your own boat crossing the river of the world,  
No one will oppose you. No one will seek to harm you.  
The straight tree is the first to be cut down;  
The stream of clear water is the first to be drained dry.  
If you wish to improve your wisdom and shame the ignorant,  
To cultivate your character and outshine others,  
A light will shine around you as if you had swallowed the sun and the moon;  
You will not avoid calamity.  
A wise man has said:  
'He who is proud of himself has done a worthless work;  
Achievement is the beginning of failure; fame is the beginning of disgrace'.

Who can free himself from achievement and from fame,  
Descend and be lost amid the masses of men?  
He will flow like Tao, unseen.  
He will go about like life itself, with no name and no home.  
Simple is he, without distinction.  
To all appearances he is a fool.  
His steps leave no trace. He has no power.  
Since he judges no one, no one judges him.  
Such is the perfect man. His boat is empty.

\* \* \*

So no aggressive, ambitious new plan, no realignment of the balance of military or political power in the world, is needed to enter a new phase for humanity. And, hopefully, you see that this is not to advocate the view that if we ignore the problem it will go away. As is stated in the text just quoted, non-action is not "a studied inaction."

If you are stopping yourself from saying or doing something, that is an action! Non-action is a state of relaxed passivity, of humble acceptance of whatever life is using you for, regardless of your own desires, goals, or philosophy. And if you are moved, you do not feel like you are the one doing it. You are a pawn. This is non-action. Folding your arms and refusing to respond is not non-action, it is inaction. It is not balanced, it is too masculine. Laziness, or failure to recognize your opportunity for a natural response, are not balanced either – these are too feminine. The perfectly enlightened person, the Buddha, is in a realm in which he is rarely, or never, called upon to move. That is his karmic blessing. We are not there yet.

To arrive where he is, we must let the flow of life carry us.

Osho explains it in another way. He talks about developing the ability to witness life. First we learn to witness our own actions, our emotions, our thoughts, and to be able to remain still until our stillness is ended by whatever force acts on us. It is very difficult to remain still and accepting when in a painful situation. It is very difficult to remain still when you want to fight. He talks about how a teacher can help a person to develop the attitude of non-action:

“The help is a kind of encouragement. First he can explain to you that whatever hindrances [to witnessing] you are feeling are natural. He has experienced them himself, so don't be worried. Go on working on them, however hard they look. They may be rocks, and your witnessing may be as soft as water. But in the long run, the water wins. And the rock simply disappears into sand. At the first glance it seems that there is no way for the water to win. How can it win the rock? But finally, that's what happens. Just somebody who has *seen* it happen has to help you, that don't be discouraged by the rock, its strength is nothing before the water. Lao-tze used to call his way 'the watercourse way'. A beautiful name. So soft, so liquid. No rigidity. You can put it into any form, it is always ready, gives no resistance. Such a non-resistant element finally destroys the rock. But somebody has to say to you: "I have faced the same situation, don't be discouraged, the rock will disappear, will have to disappear. That is the way of existence." (From *The Last Testament*, vol 3, #16)

Here is an illustration of how we are programmed to fight instead of to witness. The human body is not sacred. Medical personnel often treat it as if it were, and they wage war with death as if death were an enemy. You can see their fear and hatred of death in their feverish efforts to “save” a dying person. This is oftentimes more their own personal ego hang-up, a matter of professional pride than it is true compassion. With real compassion they would want suffering to end. They would not use techniques which add to the patient's suffering, or prolong it. They would remain peaceful and reverent, inspiring the patient. They would be sensitive enough to work with the forces of nature, whichever way they may go. Death is not an enemy, it is a gate. But the out-of-balance attitude of those who have not prepared for it and who can't accept it makes the thought of dying terrifying and the process of dying a nightmare. This same principle applies to those who kill. It is not the killing that is the problem. It is the condition of the

soul of the killer. A person at one with his True Self could not raise his hand against another in fear or anger or hate. These feelings toward a brother would not come to him. Only if the victim is already at peace with death, wishes to die, and asks to be relieved of the body, *and* the executioner is in a state of compassion, with no trace of fear or anger or hate toward the victim, is the timing right. Both would have to be in touch with the True Self, the eternal Spirit. So this mercy killing could be the masculine well-balanced by the feminine. However, the act would have to be a “non-action” – coming *through* a humble executioner. But even this is shaky ground.

So the real problem with war is much larger than a simple moral objection to killing, torturing, maiming, harming. It enlarges to encompass all thoughts, words and deeds conceived in fear. Fear is the experience at the root of all anger, hate, deceit, mistrust, theft, judgment, unforgiveness. So we cannot arbitrarily set a rule that says “Do no harm.” This can at times just lead to suppression – a war within the psyche that cannot be won. It is more meaningful to say instead “Go inside yourself. Explore every tiny nook and cranny of your Being. If there is anything born of fear there, *do not utter a single word, do not move, until you root it out.*” This is the only rule anyone ever needs. It is the ignoring of the malevolences within ourselves which is responsible for all human misery. When we ignore them, we miss the opportunity to root them out. Without them, we would all be living in harmony. If we can stay focused within, on the path to the truth of who we are, and bring all of our shortcomings one by one to light, we will come to experience that the Light of Divine Love IS a Reality. One who has not found an experience of the truth within can never know that there is such a thing as Divine Love. When the Light comes, it replaces the personality. This eliminates the masculine-feminine imbalance. The two opposing tendencies slowly disappear into one another. We will be as dewdrops dissolved and dispersed into the river of humanity, and flowing to become One with the Ocean of Bliss, our true Home, in the Herenow.

The urge to harm or kill is the fear of impulses we hide within ourselves. It is the fear of seeing in ourselves what we project upon the other person. We want to kill that part of ourselves; we want to kill our one-sided, deficient, fearful personalities. Each of us is the only real obstacle to our own happiness, not some other person, religion, or nation. In fact, we *need* our outer enemy. For by studying him and getting to know him we can discover exactly what it is in ourselves that we most fear. Our job of looking inside is speeded up. However, it is very painful to look directly at what you feel is the most repulsive kind of human – and then to realize that it is a reflection of you. Very few of us have had that kind of courage. But perhaps men can find a new courage and women can find a new courage, as we begin to realize that nothing else seems to be saving us from personal misery and global catastrophe. So the problem must be faced.

How many times should you forgive a brother? Jesus said seventy times seven. If he smite you on one cheek offer him the other cheek also. Gandhi wrote in reference to non-violence: “Even if his opponent plays him false twenty times, the *satyagrahi* [a Gandhi follower] is ready to trust him the twenty-first time, for an implicit trust in human nature is the very essence of the creed”. But it goes even deeper than this. *A Course in*

*Miracles* defines forgiveness as recognizing that what you thought your brother did to you has not occurred. As long as the ego believes that its idea of itself and its world is real and important, can it really forgive what threatens it? Only when one has left far behind the male or female ego identity, and remembers consistently that I am only the True Self, and sees the sensed world outside as but a dream, is true forgiveness possible. Because if there is still left even a single shred of fear of the outer, blaming and the urge to destroy are still alive. We must be very careful not to deny our feelings, and not to claim to forgive when we really haven't.

A sincere soul, seeking the path to the True Self, must balance his or her active search with the feminine attitude of slowing down. One must be able to wait patiently, in Sunyata's "positive passivity," while deep feelings, moods, images, thoughts and urges work their way into consciousness. His term "positive passivity" captures the perfect balance between masculine and feminine. One must be able to admit weakness and frailty, and not be stupid enough to try to fight the monstrous passions and the Holy Terror as they do their work of destroying the ego. One must submit. And, one must be able to cry, and to suffer alone. And, on the masculine side, one must be steadfast, positive, in this posture. When we thus achieve a balance with the forces of life, an attitude of witnessing, of non-action, of 'positive passivity,' life begins to flow. And we begin to flow, effortlessly and joyfully, along with it. We are permeated by a sense of being at ease, of all-rightness, of forgivingness, and everything falls into place. But this must be experienced to be believed. And you can't experience it unless you give it a chance.

The lives of two women mystics in India might be introduced as exemplary. They are two of the many perfected, ego-free women in human history. Most of the stories of such women are never told, because the balanced person hardly attracts much publicity. These two women, Kasturabai Gandhi and Anandamayi Ma, can teach us many lessons about how to call upon the strength of femininity in dealing with the challenges facing a woman on her journey to wholeness.

Kasturabai was Mahatma Gandhi's wife. As a young man, Gandhi had had a very successful law practice. The couple lived and gave birth to their sons in luxury. But his compassion for the masses of starving and destitute untouchables in India was to change everything for himself and his wife. He walked away from his lucrative career and began to live at a bare subsistence level, wearing only a loincloth that he could make with his own hands at a spinning wheel, and excreting at a latrine that he himself could dig in the ground with a shovel. He took vows of non-violence, truth, non-stealing, celibacy, non-possessions, bodily labor, minimal and bland diet, fearlessness, equal respect for all religions, use of what can be manufactured at home, and equal treatment for untouchables. So he moved his family out of their plush affluence and into a simple hut full of flies and mosquitoes. And he stopped having sex. He insisted that his wife Kasturabai also take the eleven vows. At first she resisted, argued, refused. But in time she began to see the wisdom of what he was doing. She recognized him as not just her husband but as her guru. A devout Hindu woman, she could not disobey her guru.

The mahatma was a very demanding man. She had to suffer tremendously. Her ego as a woman had no place to find refuge. Here's an example. She was the treasurer of Gandhi's ashram. One day he discovered a small discrepancy of four rupees on the Books, and he publicly announced her mistake, causing her great embarrassment and humiliation among the followers. But she called upon a feminine strength to learn to accept such treatment. Toward the end of her life, she paid her husband the following tribute:

“I thank you for having had the privilege of being your lifelong companion and helpmate. I thank you for the most perfect marriage in the world, based on *brahmacharya* [self-control] and not on sex...How thankful I am that you put God and country before bribes, that you had the courage of your convictions and that you had a complete and implicit faith in God. How thankful I am for a husband that put God and his country before me. I am grateful to you for your tolerance of me and my shortcomings of youth, when I grumbled and rebelled against the change you made in our mode of living, from so much to so little.”  
(Quoted in Yogananda, *Autobiography of a Yogi*)

Kasturabai died in imprisonment for Gandhi's cause of non-violence, more than a year before he was assassinated. She had transformed herself from a materialistic and rather fearful, dependent woman into an outpouring of unselfish love. In the end, she was every bit as courageous as her husband who was called “The Mahatma” – “great soul”.

Anandamayi Ma, the “Joy-permeated Mother”, was one of the most beloved woman gurus of the twentieth century. She was known to have the ability to heal by a touch of her hand, and even by her mere presence. She was utterly unaware of her outward appearance as a woman, but knew herself only as the changeless soul. She often fell into trances that could last for days. Her followers had to feed her with their own hands as if she were a helpless child; if they did not feed her she would not eat, or even ask for food. At times when the trance was deep, she did not eat even when food was placed in her mouth. Here are some of her words:

“A saint is like a tree. He does not call anyone, neither does he send anyone away. He gives shelter to whoever cares to come, be it a man, woman, child, or an animal. If you sit under a tree it will protect you from the inclemencies of the weather, from the scorching sun as well as from pouring rain. And it will give you flowers and fruit. Whether a human being enjoys them or a bird tastes of them matters little to the tree. Its produce is there for anyone who comes to take it. And last but not least, it gives itself. How its self? The fruit contains the seeds for new trees of a similar kind. So by sitting under a tree you will get shelter, shade, flowers, fruit, and in due course you will come to know yourself”. (From *Matri Darshan*)

Anandamayi was married by an arranged marriage while still a young girl. Swami Yogananda relates that she told this story when he asked her about herself:

“Father, there is little to tell”. She spread her graceful hands in a deprecatory gesture “My consciousness has never associated itself with this temporary body. Before I came on this earth, Father ‘I was the same’. As a little girl, ‘I

was the same'. I grew into womanhood, but still 'I was the same.' When the family in which I had been born made arrangements to have this body married, 'I was the same'. And when, passion-drunk, my husband came to me and murmured endearing words, lightly touching my body, he received a violent shock, as if struck by lightning, for even then 'I was the same'. My husband knelt before me, folded his hands, and implored my pardon. "Mother", he said, "because I have desecrated your bodily temple by touching it with the thought of lust – not knowing that within it dwelt not my wife but the Divine Mother – I take this solemn vow: I shall be your disciple, a celibate follower, ever caring for you in silence as a servant, never speaking to anyone again as long as I live. May I thus atone for the sin I have today committed against you, my guru".'

(Yogananda, *Autobiography of a Yogi*).

She also said:

"This body has lived with father, mother, husband, and all. This body has served the husband, so you may call it a wife. It has prepared dishes for all, so you may call it a cook. It has done all sorts of scrubbing and menial work, so you may call it a servant. But if you look at the thing from another standpoint you will realize that this body has served no one but God." (*Matri Darshan*)

And:

"I never say 'I will do this, I will not do that.' It is you who makes me carry out whatever work lies in your power to induce me to perform". (ibid)

This woman Anandamayi Ma was a great teacher to thousands in India throughout her lifetime. She was illiterate; she never went to school. And yet, her wisdom was crisp and brilliant in answering questions before a crowd. Once when a man challenged her with a question to the effect that how could a woman be a teacher of men, her instantaneous reply was "We are all feminine before the Father".

In modern, fast-paced, high-tech masculine societies, women are under tremendous pressures. Their fear and frustration produce a lot of rhetoric about asserting their rights. It is understandable. They need some relief, and can't find it anywhere. However, there is another factor. Because of the woman's loss of her connection with her own soul and her natural being, she believes that if she simply and humbly lives her natural "instincts" she will be miserable. She fears that she will be overrun, abused. She fears that she will miss her opportunity to enjoy what the culture has to offer. Most women want a relationship with a man, and most men want a relationship with a woman. For many, the terms "need" and "dependent" are applicable. But any relationship demands humbling oneself. In fact, every wise teacher and patriarch over the centuries has seen the purpose of marriage as a sacrament – an instrument for purifying people of their separate egos so that they can once again feel their common deep connection to the True Self, or God. Pushy ego assertion kills the fragile line of communication that leads to open compassion and inner-standing. Humans of all eras have had to be reminded of the value of letting go of pride. It must be emphasized that this is not the same as submission or putting up with things you really want to rage against. This is masculine – you are fighting yourself!

The truly humble person does not feel like he or she is putting up with something, because he does not want to defy it. He just accepts deep down whatever is. And, only the truly humble person discovers its powerful effects.

In his final sermon to his closest followers, Mohammad tried to clarify exactly how a man and woman who are married might best purify themselves of ego and find Allah through their relationship. He stated:

“O men, to you a right belongs with respect to your women, and to your women a right with respect to you. It is your right that they not fraternize with any one of whom you do not approve, as well as never to commit adultery. But if they do, then God has permitted you to isolate them within their homes and to chastise them without cruelty. But if they abide by this right, then to them belongs the right to be fed and clothed in kindness”. (from Grieve, *Islam*, pg. 186)

The devout Muslim woman wants time alone to pray daily in safety in her own home. She also recognizes the universal value of feminine virtues such as humility. She knows that happiness cannot be found outside herself and her connection with God. So why should she throw all this away for frivolous human relationships? A woman with any sincerity is not going to associate with the insincere.. And she realizes, as did Anandamayi Ma, that in remaining in solitude away from people she is not serving her husband, but she is serving God. Why should she rebel, and defy a person who reminds her to seek God within and not in the outer social world? And the man is enjoined to risk his life if needed to provide a safe home for the wife, and to work humbly to feed and clothe her. Jesus taught “He who humbles himself shall be exalted”, meaning such a person will find the highest state of Divine Love. It is not logical. We do not know how cause and effect work here. How can humbling oneself lead to anything but more oppression? But all the great mystical teachers have taught us to trust, that many blessings will come to the one who voluntarily humbles himself or herself.

Only one who practices “positive passivity” can ever learn the mysterious power of the feminine letting go of ego, and realize the exaltation of which Jesus spoke. Some argue that ancient teachings are irrelevant to relationships in “advanced” civilizations. It depends on the purpose. If a marriage is just for sex, or money, or status, or a baby factory, or to promote and sustain the two egos, then the teachings of the masters are irrelevant to the level of understanding of the people. But if the purpose is seen as to become fulfilled as a human being and find through the relationship the source of the deepest Love within, then we should heed the advice of the great teachers. But remember, they are not interested in catering to egos. On the other hand, the corporations are. To the money interests in a society, the institution of marriage is for one purpose: to generate capital. This is achieved by offering incentives to man and woman for expanding their two separate egos. Each ego then can be a big producer of capital and consumer of products. If husband and wife find the deep meaning in life through their relationship, they will lose interest in the material world. So the corporations have to keep them apart, each one pursuing a rhythm of life demanded by their own place in the corporate world; i.e. they must be induced to do whatever brings in

more money. The more they make, the more they spend, the bigger their egos get, the less time they have to meditate and find out who they really are. And it goes even further. The power elite wants to keep men and women at odds with each other. Why? For the same reason that they want to keep the drug laws and the traffickers: create confusion, 'divide and conquer'. And then reap a profit from both sides. The power elite in the world know exactly how to get us working for them. And so the male ego/female ego dual career marriage sure does work to satisfy the tax collector, the auto industry, the fast food restaurants, the superstores, the espresso cafes, the pharmaceutical industry and medical profession, the bars and taverns, the fashion industry and the divorce attorneys. Not to mention the psychologists who get all the children after they grow up in this mess.

The Wise know that the ego is the only obstacle to Enlightenment, salvation, liberation. The teachings of the Masters are for those sincere ones who have ears to hear. The process of discovery of the True Self, the journey toward wholeness, the forsaking of ego-preservation in favor of acceptance of what is, is a series of decisions. Life is constantly presenting us with situations in which we can allow it to feminize us, and open the door into the deepest Bliss experience -- or we can fight. And it is like a spiral in which each shift within toward the masculine compensated by a shift toward the feminine is smaller and smaller, closer to the neutral balance point – if we do not cling to a one-sided ego.

But the ordinary person is ego controlled. He or she defines "me" as a handful of characteristics. Such a person uses a lot of energy to prevent life from threatening this self-image, from bringing out of him or her the opposites of those characteristics. We can easily see why there is so much resistance to the opposites within. The person would be negating himself. For example, if someone has built his life and friendships around an ego which is extraverted, what would happen if suddenly there was a switch, and the person became an introvert? All that was built up would be lost. What would his friends do when he ignores them? Not to mention the shock to the personality structure itself. And, one who has lived as an extravert is very uncomfortable with introverted feelings. They are the unknown. When they surface, it is felt as a failure, as a breakdown, of my "normal" personality. The ego fights like hell to prevent this. This ego that fights is what common sense calls a "strong" personality. In reality, there is nothing strong about it. It is a terribly frightened personality – it is a rigid personality about to shatter. It forces extroversion, even when smiling and being friendly and entertaining is felt to be false. But this suppression of the introvert within just makes it more explosive. The result is that the person is way far from the balance point as an extrovert, then snaps all the way into an extreme swing into introversion, with depression and actual disgust for people.

This bipolar situation with wide swings of the spiral also happens in extremely masculine and extremely feminine people. And the more extreme it is, the less you can prevent the opposite from taking over. The super-masculine personality is feeding the super-feminine within, and preventing the insight that would bring the courage to relax and allow. Within the sexiest seductress with the most feminine exterior are concealed the claws of a tiger. The only way out is to give up the rigid ego-identification with one or



the other. Then we take a turn deeper into ourselves, and the next turn of the spiral is not so far from the central balance point. A little ego has been lost, who we thought we were is a little blurred, a little more like our opposite and the rest of mankind. The more the person humbles himself and admits that he or she is not so special, so unique, so strong in what he was claiming to be, the less wildly the spiral swings and the more the Light of the True Self shines through. The goal and the end of the journey is to stabilize at the center, where there is Pure Silence and contentedness in all situations. There is no fear, and thus no need to play either a masculine or feminine role. This is the mystical state. It IS attainable. All we have to do is let go of our egos as men and as women.

Here in the Global Feminine Cooperative we are not glorifying either womanhood or the feminine. We are not claiming that woman or the feminine is in any way superior to man or the masculine. We are not attacking men, or attempting to outshout them. We are not widening the gap between the two opposites, but offering a correction to the hypermasculine neurosis in *both men and women*, which will in due course of time further a cooperative communication. Our attitude is not hostile, nor is it 'empathetic'. We are not moralizing about any social conditions or relative status, nor are we aligning with any religion or political position.

Our appeal is to the individual, to do his or her own inner work, to explore with a conscientious dedication all self-deceptions. Our appeal will not reach the fearful women and men who just want to keep their egos safe and sound. We are entreating every man and woman of integrity to admit that there is a better, more honest way to live than he or she has been living. Our proposal is not for meetings and conferences. There is a path to individual transformation, and it is followed in one's aloneness, not in groups. In a group, each person brings with him or her all the excess baggage of ego's problems, a point of view, a personality, a physical presentation. Each comes looking to the others for something, and the 'strength in numbers' illusion obscures the sensitivity of each person. Each additional participant at a gathering superficializes the event one additional degree. Only the person who remains silent and unnoticed, and observes, and feels, and does not participate can come away from a group event with anything more than a short-lived enthusiasm, a useless emotional bubble.

So this proposal for the Global Feminine is to be used by the individual, for private meditation and reflection, and as encouragement to see a new way in his relationships with all other humans: each is an opportunity to deepen the meditative state -- the contact with the True Self. And the biggest obstacle to the realm of the true is a stubborn defensiveness about one's ego as a man or a woman. If each of us can relax, and allow the feminine within to cancel out the unnatural attitude of paranoia and attack that seems to be everywhere nowadays, a grace will permeate our beings. We won't have to fight for change at the political level; the change within will do its magic. It will resonate throughout the world, touching people in a multitude of unknowable ways. As we disown our fearful and greedy egos, we will remember Who we really are. Each moment in this silent remembrance touches others. We here offer to those few intuitive and sincere women and men the resources to realize this, and there is no need to join a group, or even to discuss anything. That is all optional, but is almost always just a diversion.

"Keeping to the main road is easy, but people love to be sidetracked!"

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go within, and let the real liberation begin