

Feeling Frisky? Rekindling Passion in Relationships

Oh that energy of spring! It stirs the blood, stirs the dreams, stirs the passion in us. So what if you're feeling frisky, feeling all stirred up, yet your relationship is feeling a might dried up or still in the deep freeze of winter? How can we use the rush of spring to our satisfaction?

To answer that I need to give you a big tip about reality – about a metaphor that describes reality as consisting of three levels and the impact they have on our passion, our lives, and our relationships.

In his book, Dreaming While Awake, Arnold Mindell shares what he has learned from his work as a therapist and from spiritual teachers from around the world including the Aboriginal peoples of Australia. There are three levels of reality, he says, and all are operating and available to us all the time.

The level we are most familiar with is that of every day life, of **Consensus Reality**. This is the level of facts, figures, objective measurements, tasks, events, people, to-do lists, manifested reality. This is the level we are operating from when we focus on all the daily life tasks – like going to work, taking care of the kids, paying the bills, cleaning the house, putting gas in the car. It's called consensus because we all (in our own cultures) agree on what we are considering to be real. In consensus reality things are objective, concrete, definable, measurable and often predictable.

Before things manifest in Consensus Reality they exist in our dreams. This level of reality is referred to in relationship coaching as the **Dreaming Level**. This is the level of our hopes and fears, our dreams and our values, our emotions and our projections. In this level things are subjective or dualistic– I have my dreams and you have yours. So there is no objective truth in this level, only each of our truths from our individual experiences. The room that I could objectively measure in Consensus Reality would be, say 30 feet by 30 feet. From the Dreaming Level it may feel very large or quite small to me depending on what's on the other side of it – like my young child in need or a dangerous person.

At the root of both of these levels is the **Sentient Essence Level**. This is the level before words, before any separation at all. This is the place of pure potential, of all possibilities. There is no "I" here, no duality, for on this level all is one. This is the quantum field in physics, where light is both wave and particle, or the place that spiritual traditions recognize as where we are all one. Some call this the void or the womb of creation. It is the sea of probability or tendency for something to happen.

Since this level is preverbal it's tough to clearly articulate it, but we all know it. When we have the sense of the essential nature of someone or something, we are tapping into this level. This is the level we are talking about when we feel "chemistry" with someone. We don't have words, we just know. We feel the Sentient Essence level when we have immediate responses to things – we just know if we are attracted or repulsed by

something despite not having words to express why. What we sense of this level of reality tends to be eternal and indestructible, experienced in just a moment and not expressible in words.

The flow begins in the Sentient Essence Level of all possibilities. From this a tendency leads to the Dreaming Level of ideas, feelings, and imagining. Out of the dreaming something is then born into the Consensus Reality Level. All levels are alive in us and acting on us all the time. And both individuals and our relationships need awareness and navigation of each of the levels.

Spring reminds us of the initial rush, the awareness of the Sentient Essence Level of Reality that we first felt in our relationship. What we yearn for in the zesty-ness of spring is that chemistry and the dreaming that came out of it. When we've been in relationship for a while we can stagnate in the tasks of Consensus Reality. The day to day of work and bills and housework and kids and the routine can completely sap the Dreaming and Essence out of our close relationships.

What spring is reminding us of, is pointing us towards, is the richness behind Consensus Reality that our relationship is yearning for. If we're feeling frisky and we want more passion in our intimate relationships, it most likely is time for more Dreaming and more Essence. We need the depth of the Dreaming and the Sentient Essence levels to inform our Consensus Reality. Without the richness of the other two levels just living in the day-to-day grind of Consensus Reality is no longer satisfying. It can feel like a prison that our spring feverish wild side wants to break out of.

How, you ask, can we get more Dreaming and Sentient Essence (and therefore more zesty satisfaction) in our relationships? Here are a few ideas:

Set at time to be with your beloved remembering your early life together. What was it about your beloved that called to you? What is your original story, or myth, of you two together? What do you two uniquely create together? Why did the universe (fate, spirit, destiny, the tooth fairy) bring you two together? What is your shared purpose?

You could spend some time together in what I call the hawk view – get some time just the two of you, perhaps in a physical place where you have a far view, or at least a place with privacy and spaciousness, to reflect. Consider the far view on your lives together. What of your values are you living in your full daily lives? What do you each yearn for more of or less of? If you could imagine your relationship – that essence you create together – speaking to you, what is it that your relationship is yearning for in this springing time? How can you create that together?

To get reconnected to the non-verbal Sentient Essence Level you could play with communicating without words. Maybe there is a posture or body movement that you could use to express to your beloved what you are yearning for or what it's like to be living mostly from Consensus Reality. Maybe there's a way to express without words what your beloved means to you or what they can count on you for at this time. Or you

can use metaphor to capture the Sentient Essence Level. For example, if your sex life (or your relationship) were an animal, what would it be? Is there something that animal needs now? How will you care for and nourish this precious animal?

Yes, it can be really edgy to reveal ourselves in this way, but, heh, spring is a time for some risk taking. Lean into that spring energy of desire and life force. This is your chance to transform your relationship into even more vibrancy and passion. Let the wild wind blow and ride it.

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