

THE NEXT EVOLUTIONARY WAVE

The feminine has only recently begun re-claiming her power. Many women still think feminine power means to be like the men! They are still afraid of their emotional authority, and their natural, sensual, non-rational wisdom. We need to honour the emergence of profoundly feminine power.

The masculine is even less clear about the nature of its power. Tossed about in reaction to feminism, the masculine is still floundering somewhere between nostalgia for the Macho Man and a guilt-ridden need to prove he is a good and caring New Man. Most men have little sense of their real power – the power of being physically potent, with a fierce heart, and a high, inspired vision. We need to honour the emergence of true masculine power.

And the empowered masculine and feminine need each other in order to emerge. So we need to support each other. This means communities of men and women who understand that the imbalance and disempowerment of the feminine and masculine have led us to a state of emotional, psychological, social, economic and environmental disturbance – communities who understand that a truly mature culture can only be built upon the foundation of a balanced and equal honouring of both of these principles. And who understand that this honouring cannot just be theoretical, or philosophical – that it needs to be won with the blood and sweat of our hearts.

We need communities of men and women who understand that if we want to genuinely emerge from the arid and abusive legacy of a dying patriarchy – and if we truly want to offer something whole and soulful and life-affirming to our children and children's children – then we HAVE to cultivate a self-honouring, and mutually-honouring, masculinity and femininity. Anything else will only cultivate another distortion.

And this won't be easy. It will take centuries. We are ALMOST ALL of us frighteningly emotionally immature. And I speak as someone who has been involved in the study and teaching of self-development for over 40 years. To truly self-honour, and honour another, requires

enormous maturity. And we have very little of it.

In most cases, the masculine is too immature to open to the feminine, and avoids her either by repressing her, or by pandering to her. He is too immature to feel her, just feel her, and feel the consequences of masculine domination, and not be crushed or re-absorbed, but just receive her in her rage and pain – and discover her tender heart.

And his resistance perpetuates her rage, and bitterness, and withdrawal. And their shared healing cannot begin. And she, for her part, can then only heal in isolation, overcast by sadness, even despair. Or if she does remain in connection with this avoidant masculine, lives in compromise, denying her own seeing, manipulating, resenting, even humiliating...

These are harsh words. But the emotional reality is harsh. Even among the most emotionally mature among us these tendencies are still difficult to negotiate.

And this emotional reality exists at the individual level, at the level of marriage/partnership, at the level of family, of community, of society, of civilization – it pervades all of our interactions.

And it affects us both internally and externally. It repercussions in every sphere of our activity as a race, and upon everything we touch. For the most part we still govern ourselves, manufacture, travel, do business, fight and eat in an emotionally absent, alienated, abstract-mental, left-brain, so-called streamlined, masculine-dominant way. Which less and less of us want. But we just don't know the way out.

And yes, the feminist critique explained all of this. But the 'liberation' of women was only the first step. The next step is that men, and all predominantly masculine individuals, and all things moved by the masculine principle, Now need to open to the feminine principle, to women, to feminine individuals, and to their own femininity. And quite frankly, most men aren't man enough to open to their femininity.

'Not man enough' meaning there is not enough masculinity, not enough *authentic* masculinity – which is definitely not the bravado of the macho man. Most men, and masculine women, are terrified that if they open to their femininity they will become soft, weak, overpowered, and,

ultimately, destroyed. And the fact is: they're right! Not that they will be destroyed – but that, precisely because they don't have enough authentic masculinity, their premature opening to the feminine will result in them becoming less potent, less decisive, less capable of leadership, and less sexually attractive.

For a man to fully open to his femininity – and not become feminised, or subservient to women, he has to be VERY masculine. 'Very masculine' means he has to have grown up beyond his only-natural sense of inferiority to women (after all, he was a baby at HER breast), and faced both his neediness towards, and hatred of, women – and matured into a place of self-honouring that does not depend on anybody else's approval.

Only then can any masculine individual fully open to the millennial pain of the feminine (and the very intimate and personal pain of the feminine), and only then does he become fully trustworthy, and only then can the feminine completely soften and offer her gifts – which are the emotional and sensual sensitivity, and maturity, and authority, which are the antidote to our so-called-post-patriarchal malaise.

So there is work for the masculine to do. But the situation is too urgent and critical for us to wait until it is complete and he can 'fully' open to the feminine (and anyway emotional maturity isn't linear). So he'll have to do what he can with his brothers, and then do his best when he meets his sisters. And go back and forth, and mess up sometimes (in fact, probably – often), but nevertheless keep on going, back and forth, drawing resolve and strength and depth from brotherhood, and then allowing his sword to be tempered in the fire of sisterhood and community.

If the masculine cannot hear this, then, in desperation, the feminine will go it alone. And (give it a few centuries), we will enter a matriarchal era, another imbalance, an age of repression of the masculine, and another eventual inevitable upheaval as the masculine reasserts itself and reclaims its dignity.

This does not mean that feminine individuals haven't got their 'stuff', or that 'it's only the masculine that needs to change'. Everyone has their 'stuff' - their personal history and pain and challenges. But to whatever

degree an individual is connected with their femininity (and again, to blunt, and also obvious: it's mostly the women who are connected with their femininity), to that degree they have the potential to take us into intimacy with ourselves, each other, and all of life. And it is in this intimacy-with-life that we will be able to re-shape ourselves and our culture and our world.

It is in this feminine-induced intimacy-with-life that both men and women find the trust and openness to heal their inherited conditionings – the inheritance of the macho man and the prematurely feminised man, and the inheritance of the submissive woman and the angry, bitter mis-empowered woman. And it is in this feminine-induced intimacy that we can support each other in opening to our archetypal masculinity and femininity, beyond stereotypes, and beyond gender roles.

So we are talking about a collective evolutionary maturity-project of vast proportions. We need to take feminism further. We need to combine feminism and masculinism, honour both, and work together towards a culture of honouring. This is our most mature collective evolutionary impulse. There are many other impulses. But this is our most mature. And for those of us who have the maturity to be able to see the necessity and difficulty of this impulse, it is a choiceless choice. It is not necessarily what we want to do. We see it is what needs to happen.

Those of us with enough maturity to see beyond our own limited sense of self, and recognise that we are cells within the body of society, pack animals, culturally-conditioned creatures shaping the culture that shaped us, participators in (not spectators of) the evolution of our culture and race and planet.... we see the choiceless choice. Even if it seems a daunting and impossibly heroic endeavour, we choose - if not on our own behalf, then on behalf of our grandchildren and great grandchildren. We choose to heal. We choose to open to each other. We choose to participate. We choose to band together, and re-work our hearts, and the way we were taught to relate, and the way we were trained to run a culture.

We choose to re-honour the masculine, to re-invoke its nobility. We choose to have faith in men, in their longing for heartfelt truth, and service to life - beyond abstract ideas and moral principles. And we choose to honour the pain of men, who have also suffered under

patriarchy.

We choose to re-honour the feminine, to re-invoke the glory and beauty of her depths. We choose to have faith in women, in their longing to relax into their overflowing eroticism, to just be trusted, to be able to guide the creative purposefulness of men with the tenderness and fierceness of their hearts.

We choose to not pin men down into 'the masculine', nor women into 'the feminine'. But we also choose to honour the neurological, biological, psycho-physical and culturally-conditioned connections between men and the masculine, and women and the feminine.

We could put it this way: 'the-collective-of-women' holds the feminine, and 'the-collective-of-men' holds the masculine. This is why we need to move beyond our individualised therapies and growth-work and human-potential work, into community-focussed, personal-is-political, political-is-personal, collectivised healing and activism.

And we cannot shirk the mirror of masculine-disempowered-dominance, and feminine-disempowered-submission, which lives on in our bones – whether as it has for millennia, or in the form of reaction to that conditioning. We have to face the way in which this patriarchal inheritance (and immature reaction to this inheritance), continues to shape our minds, our everyday lives, and the social, economic, military and political infrastructures that shape our culture.

And we need to explore which social structures would accurately reflect a balance of the masculine and feminine. At the moment, whether by intention or default, there seems to be a movement towards local sustainable community. But we shall see. We need to create forms from the inside out, not the outside in.

'Inside out' means emerging from a mood of intimacy-with-life, in which the masculine inclination to structure and form can be touched by the feminine heart. 'Outside in', which has always been the case until now, means imposing ones-size-fits-all ideas (however brilliant) upon our multifaceted humanity, and suffering the straight-jacketed consequences.

Is this idea of honouring both the masculine and feminine another such idea? By definition, this cannot be another impositional masculine-power-over concept because it honours the anarchic, un-philosophisable, heart-following, flowing feminine from the start.

Feminism was the most powerful psycho-evolutionary cultural wave of the twentieth century. From a bigger perspective though, it was only the most recent wave in an evolutionary ocean that has been demanding equality and the-truth-of-the-heart (as against the concocted truths of our religious, philosophical and scientific minds) for thousands of years.

All that I am articulating here, that we are working for within The Culture Of Honouring, and that millions of others around the globe are working for in their own ways, in their own fields, is the next evolutionary wave - following fast behind the feminist wave, resonant with the feminist wave, carrying the same energy of rightness and togetherness, calling out now not only to the feminine to stand up, but to the masculine to join her in her saturation with compromise, and to shape together a culture that honours both the masculine and the feminine in the fullness of their power.

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