

BEARING ALL

Learning the Latest Moves of the Pole Dance

Because emerging gender-bending generations are actively rejecting old labels and lives. . .

RECENTLY MY HUSBAND AND I were out on a walk and I was catching him up on a stressful project that I had been wrestling with all day. Suddenly he stopped, whirled around, and gave me a passionate embrace and kiss. It lasted just a few moments, yet afterward I felt giddy, weak in the knees—and my multitasking mind finally turned off! Looking back, that kiss was intoxicating because his spontaneous outburst of affection created a shift between us like two magnets coming into attraction. This delightful interlude got me pondering: How do couples maintain—and play with—what can be called “polarity”?

Couples I counsel are in fact a lot like magnets: When aligned north to south, their opposing polarity inspires an irresistible connection. Conversely, when couples come at each other with

identical poles, repulsion results. This just in: Repulsion can be a real killjoy when it comes to sexual desire.

In long-term relating, couples need to learn how to consciously shift

polarity, or else trouble ensues. My husband and I are a perfect example: He is a soft-spoken, contemplative, single-minded man with a fierce work ethic who knows how to prioritize. I tend toward bold, effusive expression, I have a penchant for multidimensional musings, and I somehow manage to putter my way to achievement. When our polarity is aligned N/S, he appreciates my improvisational insight and I his nuts-and-bolts grounding. When our polarity is N/N or S/S, our energy flatlines into competition or indecisiveness. When it gets really bad, I look and sound like a demanding wing nut while he resembles a deer frozen in someone’s headlights.

It’s important to note that polarity doesn’t just exist between couples. We all have our own internal continuums of energetic polarities—such as stability vs. spontaneity, security vs. risk, extroversion vs. introversion, emotional vs. cerebral, and doing vs. being. Where we tend to live on the spectrum of these polarities influences what we are attracted to in a partner. Energetic opposites *do* attract, but don’t confuse energy with values. Having shared goals and lifestyle preferences are foundational to long-term harmony. Shared values give us a sense of stability; energetic poles create excitement that keeps us wanting to be together.



« *Happy Day*
Sara Pulver

Of course, the most universally recognized human poles are “masculine” and “feminine,” and the genitalia you were born with still tend to dictate which of these poles you are expected to represent. Yet emerging gender-bending generations are actively rejecting these labels, and frankly, it may be time to update our terminology. What seems to be true is that we all have a continuum of two primal poles inside us: One embodies a powerful sense of penetrating presence and focused goal-orientation, and values physical challenge; the other draws its power from intuitive receptivity, creative chaos, and emotional insight. In my practice I call this polarity the dance between “Strength” and “Surrender.”

The Chinese yin and yang symbol mirrors an essential truth of this dynamic dance: Within polar opposites, the other always resides. The two need each other in order to be fully known. Real Strength knows how to surrender to what’s present; true Surrender requires strength to relinquish control in order to tap into a larger source of power.

The good news is that the radical culture shift we’ve been in for the past 50 years allows much more room to experiment with the primal polarities of Strength and Surrender. We get to choose, and even to switch, but most of us still have a home base. This becomes apparent with sex: We favor being either the penetrating presence or the receptive force in bed. Consciously embodying our more latent pole can deepen our capacity to enjoy our home base—so long as our partner also switches to maintain polarity.

The challenge is that our radical culture shift has caused many couples to forget how to passionately engage. In my practice, many women are the main wage earners and use their Strength in service to their vision and to provide for their families. But in doing so they can end up chronically denying their Surrender nature—and their partners go passive in the face of

Strength run amok. Frustration and apathy prevails both in and out of the bedroom.

If polarity is like football, I find many couples chronically skirmishing at the 50-yard line with nobody scoring. A new game is needed, where we learn how to not favor one pole over the other, but to be fluid in our use of these powerful energies and play the entire field.

—JOY HOSEY

Creating Poles Apart

It takes two to tango, but only one partner to change the dance! Here are a few ideas for recharging your magnetic attraction with another by shifting your polarity.

Tips for Embodying Strength:

- If you tend toward a neutral or aloof listening posture, lean in a couple of inches.
- If you tend to look up, to the side, or down while listening, try looking into your partner’s eyes instead.
- If you tend to be the animated storyteller, be the present listener.
- Make firm body contact: Put your hand on the small of his back or hip when walking.
- Offer big, warm, grounded embraces when your partner is frazzled—and hold them until you feel her relax.

Tips For Embodying Surrender:

- Recline your body when conversing. Consciously relax!
- Take a bath, lie on the earth, light a candle, and connect with your breath.
- Carve out unstructured time for creative play.
- Dance with abandon!
- When overwhelmed, let yourself cry. And, ideally, let yourself be held.

The good news is, if you can recognize illusion as illusion, it dissolves.

Eckhart Tolle

Spirituality & Health

Let come what comes, let go what goes. See what remains.

RAMANA MAHARSHI

Spirituality & Health

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