

Plug into the positives and negatives of orgasm

By Ruth Ostrow

EVERY now and again we come across something that changes our lives significantly. This happened to me about two years ago when a friend lent me an out-of-print book called *The Love Keys* by a woman named Diana Richardson, which is probably one of the most revolutionary books on sexuality I've read.

As a journalist working in the area of sex and relationships for many years, I had read enough, heard enough from my readers and radio listeners, and experimented enough to honestly believe that there was nothing new under the sun.

And yet this book not only surprised me but it turned my way of relating to my body, and my relationship, on its head, infusing me with an energy and pleasure I'd not experienced.

So I was overjoyed to learn that Richardson, who lives in Italy and conducts tantric sexuality workshops around the world, was coming to Byron Bay on a personal visit. More delighted when she granted me a rare interview.

Richardson, whose new book *The Heart of Tantric Sex* (John Hunt Publishing UK) will be out by April next year, was a lawyer and human-rights activist in South Africa before she became involved in massage and healing work, which led her into researching ancient Indian and Taoist sexual practices.

"The things I discovered blew my mind. I began practising with my then partner, and having witnessed and documented some extraordinary results, I started travelling the world teaching workshops. I was heartened to find my students, and the couples I was working with, reporting similar experiences to mine," she says.

Now married to a tai chi master who has been teaching with her for the past decade, Richardson's work is quite revolutionary. She starts with the premise that the human body is more than just gross matter, rather it emanates an electro-magnetic field -- which is not new. However, she takes things further by suggesting that our sexual organs are our polarities and when they "plug in" together correctly, they explode in unusual electrical currents.

Richardson explains that the female body has a positive charge at the heart and breast area and a negative charge at the vagina. The male body has the opposite. To truly ignite a woman's deepest passions, she says, the breasts must be activated at the onset of foreplay.

Once activated, a woman will start pouring energy out of her heart into the man's heart, which activates his penis. Now charged, a strong energy current starts discharging out of the man into the woman's body and up into the deepest reaches of her womb.

But here's the catch. The friction of "normal sex" dulls the body's capacity to experience and receive this electro-magnetic energy. Like the guitarist who develops calluses on his fingers, our genitals have become worn, tired, needing

more and more stimulation on a gross level to feel alive, thus we thrust faster, rub harder, think up fantasies or yearn for stimulants such as new partners, to keep ourselves excited.

Richardson claims that by lying together over time, connected at the genitals, in stillness, the polarities become sensitive again to their magical capacities and start literally "sparking". The mere act of resting inside a woman, even in a relaxed state, can lead couples to a bliss so intense as to be overwhelming. Chi energy starts pulsating up the spine, particularly if combined with deep breathing, intense eye contact, and other techniques outlined in her books that keep the lovers "present in the moment", including imagining light circulating from the woman into the man, and back up her spine to her heart again, which activates the channels to do exactly this.

"It's like electric charges running through the entire body. When it begins, the body starts tingling and the pleasure can go on for hours -- one long orgasmic state rather than a peak which ends."

Richardson isn't suggesting there be no movement in sex, rather that couples move together very slowly, consciously, and as a unit, rolling with each other, changing positions, as opposed to the "desensitising" orgasm-orientated grinding we take for granted is "sex".

"True pleasure comes from relaxation not excitement. Couples in my workshops have reported to me that by relaxing deeply into the bliss of the energy, over time they have stopped needing the furious excitement that leads to orgasm, or indeed a conventional orgasm itself."

While I cannot say I'm yet in the latter category, I certainly have experienced the intense waves of electricity believed possible by Richardson alongside a profound sense of love, and full-body bliss, that comes from being deeply present and aware during lovemaking.

All this is only a fraction of what Richardson talks about in her books and her website at www.love4couples.com. But it is all I have the capacity to explore here. Suffice to say Richardson and her husband have saved many marriages with their sacred sexuality.

Richardson says: "If sex isn't working, a strong relationship will fall down. If it is, then many other irritating or difficult challenges can be tolerated. The importance of sex cannot be overestimated."

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