

Sex a Symbol of the Self

James,

I am reading How to Attain Enlightenment and loving it. It is like talking to you except I can slow it down and replay it over and over. I think I am getting much of it and it feels right.

I have a question that I've been wondering about for awhile, which is: When I see a woman, especially an attractive one, I start thinking about her genitals. Or should I say, my mind starts thinking those thoughts and I just go along. I've been watching that for years.

I'm wondering if that is from an archetypal patterning in the brain that wants to complete itself, ie male attraction to female, or is it just my dirty mind.

James: It is just an archetypal pattern in the brain. In Vedanta we say that it is the macrocosmic *vasanas*, the desire of life to replicate itself. The thoughts that go with it belong to you. We call them the creation of the individual. Yet, they do not really belong to you in the sense that you did not consciously set out to entertain them. You picked them up unconsciously during your childhood. But they seem to be 'yours.' Once you realize that you did not consciously choose them, you are free to choose another way to see it.

If you have been watching it for years, it probably means that somehow you get pleasure thinking like this. If so, why? I am not saying that you should not think this way, only this: what is the payoff? I have no way of knowing, but probably women's genitals are a symbol of pleasure and function like a religious image. You contemplate on it, your mind goes to the essence and you unlock a bit of the bliss of the self. I am sure it has not failed to cross your mind that there is no actual pleasure there. It is something you put there owing to your past experiences. I once had a dear gay friend and I asked him what was his idea of the worst torture in the world. And he said, "Being chained with my face in front of a woman's genitalia." It is clear from this example that the joy is not in the

object. 😊

Douglas: There were 4 year old inappropriate sexual experiences that may have created early tracks the brain - not sure how you put that - so I'm wondering if those early patterns doing get replayed, over and over.

James: Yes, absolutely. Most positive and negative tendencies start at a very early age and persist throughout one's life. If you want to get rid of them, you have to do inquiry on them to see what is actually there. Sex organs are one of the most common symbols of the bliss of the self. In Eastern spiritual traditions they assume a mythic status and function as metaphors for the creation and enlightenment.

Douglas: It does interest me that even random sexual experiences seem to pattern deeper and come up more often than other experiences.

James: Yes, this is because sex is an activity that involves all the senses and produces intense pleasure. Where there is pleasure the mind dwells. There is pleasure in a symphony too, but only one sense organ is involved. So to get great pleasure from this kind of activity, you need a very subtle mind.

When you realize who you are, the mind will not continue to revolve around sense objects because the bliss of self knowledge is so enthralling, all your attention goes there.

Douglas: Thank you so much for this! It may seem strange but it has been a great help.

You are welcome, Douglas