



Can the Feminine Rule the World?

“For my grandmother really had the gift of conducting the affairs of state. She knew so well how to organize and administer that she was capable of governing not only the Roman Empire, but also every other kingdom under the sun.”

— Anna Dalassena, Byzantine Empress (1025–1102)

Since the advent of feminism, women have come into more prominent positions of power and authority. In working with hundreds of women and men, however, both in my private practice as a psychotherapist and in the workshops and seminars I conduct, I've found that women typically don't un-

derstand how to embody their natural “feminine” sensibilities as an effective force for the enlightened transformation of our world. Due to years of historical suppression, women do not recognize the deep wellspring of qualities residing with them, which can powerfully impact the course of history. The infusion

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of feminine potentials in all areas of life—including politics, medicine, education, religious institutions, corporations, businesses, the family, or even one's most intimate personal relationships—is crucial at this time for the evolution of life on this planet. Our most cutting-edge visionaries and thought leaders are calling out for a vibrant feminine participation in our world. The Dalai Lama states: "Women have a special capacity to lead us to a more peaceful world with compassion, affection and kindness. And there is no more important time for that than this very moment." Llewellyn Vaughn Lee, a prominent Sufi teacher, mystic and author, writes: "Women also understand the connections between people and the connections within life; at this time women are needed to bring a seed of pure light into life where it can create new forms and new patterns of interrelationship that are essential to the healing and transformation of life."

For centuries power has been viewed as a masculine attribute, and the feminine has been denigrated as too "weak" to direct and guide our world. These prejudiced views having been indoctrinated out of a false historical conditioning, which holds the masculine to be superior through its impulse towards taking control, conquering, and competing. However, now that these precise qualities have driven us to the edge of global extinction, depleted the earth of her resources, created massive hunger and poverty, inculcated global wars, endangered many species, and created nuclear weapons that can destroy massive areas of population, we need to find a new way forward. The masculine is not negative in itself as it contains many positive elements. It just needs to be balanced with the feminine side of life especially at this crucial time in history. We need compassionate understanding, tenderness for life, warmth, yielding, softness, nurturance, loving communication, intuitive knowing, emotional warmth, and responsiveness—to one another, to the earth, to her resources, and to all living creatures. We need to have a whole new paradigm from which we view life by placing the spiritual intelligence contained in feminine wisdom at the fore of our consciousness. The Tao Te Ching speaks to this power: "The softest things of the world override the hardest things of the world."

Sadly, men have been taught to suppress the feminine within them, thereby cutting off a vital part of their own wholeness. They fear that embracing and expressing their feminine aspects, whether personally or professionally, renders them weak, vulnerable and unattractive. Similarly, when in positions of authority, women tend to emulate male styles of leadership, thereby suppressing their own inner emotional depths and intuitive knowing. They don't trust their natural wisdom, as they have been trained to give over to the prevailing male model, which they feel is a prerequisite to gaining respect and acceptance. Sadly, most of the women with whom I've worked, no matter how successful, have doubted themselves, felt uncomfortable being powerful, and experienced an inner void or gap

that has prevented them from accessing their primal ground of feminine knowledge. I have noted that men who incorporate their feminine side, become leaders who are deeply loved and who create a deep loyalty from those around them. Women leaders, who do not fear utilizing their feminine attributes, find others magnetically drawn to them, trusting of them, and following their guidance because their genuineness is sensed.

Our fragmented way of valuing only the masculine side of life has failed to produce the cohesive solutions we need to heal our global dilemmas. Is it then any wonder that our world is in such dire straits? A new vision or paradigm lives within feminine consciousness. We need to first become whole within our very selves by embracing that which has been lost to us, the feminine. Only then, can we be the complete vessels, from which we can birth real and effective solutions to heal our broken world.

Clearly, both men and women need to reclaim the disowned feminine within their psyches and embody the power of the all-inclusive feminine understanding. However, women can more readily access this primordial feminine knowledge, since it is biologically encoded within them. A woman's consciousness is more in tune with the instinctual urge towards nurturing, empathic connectedness, tenderness and fierce protectiveness towards innocence, which are precisely the energies that the world now needs. Llewellyn Vaughan Lee takes this understanding further in adding a spiritual component: "Women carry the instinctual knowing of the divine substance in matter and of how to bring this substance into life, because this knowledge is fundamental in the process of giving birth, in bringing a soul into human form." Since women's breasts give milk to feed her child, contained within her physiology resides the consciousness for sustaining life. Breasts are necessary for the perpetuation of life, yet they have become objects of desire, idealization, glorification, pornography, and titillation. Their exploitation is due to the deep yet suppressed longing for what is contained in a woman's essence. Within each woman is a softness, a yielding, a compassionate love, an ability to become one with another and other essential attributes that nourishes and strengthens all life.

In order to illuminate how incorporating the feminine perspective positively alters one's personal perception of the world, I have included an imagery exercise, which elucidates this understanding. This imagery experience takes the reader to the time in a young girl's life when she first develops breasts. This is a time of visionary change in her body and mind; at the same time as this physical transition occurs, from being a child to being woman; she also comes to view the world differently mentally and emotionally. Please read the instructions below one by one, and allow images to be formed in your mind as you read.

A Visionary Start

1. See a tree blossoming in the spring.
2. See the two most beautiful blossoms, which stand out on the tree.
3. See the two most beautiful blossoms, and experience the fragrance.
4. See that the image is like the beginning of a new vision.
5. See in your mind that you have just begun to develop breasts. [A male should instead see in his mind that breasts have begun to blossom on a young girl. Similarly in other exercises which follow, he should see a young girl in the image and experience himself as a boy of her peer group.]
6. There is a new feeling and a new vision of your body. Your mind is open. You are excited and awakened to new things, but the boys of your age are still unaware.
7. What kind of vision do you have of the world, when you keep your breasts in mind?

Examples:

A 45-year-old man responded:

When asked, "What kind of vision do you have of the world, when you keep your breasts in mind?" A man said:

"I see a sphere like the planet earth. When I think of what is happening on the planet, I feel mixed. There are lovely things and terrible things. I feel bad about the terrible things and I feel sadness towards it and horror. There is an understanding that even though it is horrible, it is the way that it is. I accept it. There is detached neutrality in me. When I keep a breast in mind, it suddenly softens my perception of the world. It also softens me. I feel tenderness arising within me. I see the breast not as an object of sexual desire, but what it is essentially. As I am seeing a breast, I feel tenderness for the earth. There is yielding in everything. I feel love for the people of the earth and for all of creation. My neutrality leaves, and I feel a desire to do something for the earth. I think of things to do like how to conserve her resources and to be mindful of what I can do to help, like not wasting water and not wasting material things."

A 50-year-old woman responded:

When asked, "What kind of vision do you have of the world, when you keep your breasts in mind," she said:

"My breasts contain such sweetness yet, there is a timidity in me to express this sweetness in the world. I feel one down and not important. I have to hide my innocence since I don't understand why people are so mean and discounting of me. Yet, I am so sweet inside. There is tenderness and love in me. Within me also, I sense a mountain of a woman. I carry justice in my veins as the blood courses through them. I am the bringer of light. I am the water who nurtures the young. I am the milk of human kindness. My heart has been torn asunder in pain of the devastation of all that is innocent. I cry for the earth and its animals lost and destroyed. I am the passion of mothers in war protecting their children from death. I am all the blood of humanity as it spills on this earth. I am the love in the stars whose brilliance lights the skies. I am the innocence of a girl wide eyed in wonder. I am the love in the heart."

It is revelatory to note that the responses to the image instruction exposes the participant's conditioned gender response to the world. When asked to, "keep a breast in mind" as they see the world, both the man and woman's sense of self as well as, perception of the world is altered positively. The man, socially trained to suppress his feminine side, had become detached towards the suffering in the world. However, when he kept a breast in mind, he suddenly became more loving, connected to the earth, and with ideas erupting from within him to help the world in some manner. The woman felt hurt and discounted by the world and her inclination was to stay hidden. However, while "keeping a breast in mind," the depth of her innate feminine force emerged in a powerful expression of illumined stewardship for the world.

These responses are typical of the many I have gathered from both men and women. It is clear that women are the healers of this age. It is urgent that women come into an understanding of their power and authority at this time in history for a necessary positive shift to occur in the world and for men to honor the feminine within them and around them. ■

Source of image instruction: Dr. Akhter Ahsen. 1988. *Aphrodite: The Psychology Of Consciousness*. New York: Brandon House, Inc.



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