

WHY THE 7 DAY WORKSHOP LIVING TANTRA 1 IS SO SIGNIFICANT.

by Rose Rouse

Every Easter (28th March - 4th April 2013), tantra teacher and relationship expert, Jan Day, holds her week course Living Tantra 1 in Somerset. "It is the pre-requisite for the other Living Tantra workshops and my training course," she explains. "LT1 puts in place an awareness of our sexual nature and a deep inner YES to our own individual way of living that. It provides a foundation in boundaries, and is the celebration of each participant as a sexual being in the way that you would have loved as you were entering puberty. So it gives people a new beginning that is healing, celebratory and very self-affirming so that each person can begin to love themselves a little more, including their sexual nature."

Who would benefit from it? "I think almost everyone would benefit from it simply because it is almost impossible to grow up in our culture without having some sexual wounding from the pervading attitudes about sex. So whether that results in having sex as a way to get love or using sex to get excitement or relief, or avoiding sex to get love, sexuality rarely manifests in an open, innocent way that is also sacred. LT1 connects participants to this kind of sexuality that honours us as a man and a woman, it's an opportunity to grow in a very real way," she says.

Patrick, a workshop leader, had lost eight stones in weight and was trying to regain confidence around starting intimate relationships again. "I knew it was going to be out of my comfort zone," he says, "and I was scared beforehand but LT1 exceeded all expectations. The challenges were mainly in my imagination. One of the parts I dreaded was being just with the men, and one of the strongest stages when I was with men separated from the women. It was a breakthrough time. I realised I could really open up with these men about shame and other painful subjects. Since then, I've started a men's group because I know how valuable that male contact is for me. Before I was always open and

vulnerable with women but not men. That has changed how I live my life. Finally, it also brought me back to being in my body after ten years of hiding it away. I'm much more confident about starting relationships again too. The course encouraged us to play and explore. Just what I needed."

Often participants sign up to LT1 at transitional times in their lives. Li had recently taken redundancy in her 30s. "I had big plans like writing a book and setting up a business," she says, "I wanted to improve my confidence. I was also choosing the wrong sorts of men. I liked Jan, I felt her compassion and strength. I hadn't worked with a woman before, always men."

And she didn't find it easy. "I wasn't expecting a challenge," she laughs, "I thought it was going to be a bit of a holiday, I bounced in with a big smile. But every day was hard for me. But I decided to be entirely naked in my honesty, I put out all the issues that I hadn't dealt with, learnt how to say difficult things like why I didn't want to work with a particular person. I found my 'Yes' and my 'No', learnt to honour myself in decisions that I made and take care of myself. Afterwards, I have stopped dieting and realised it is more important to accept myself. It's affected my professional life too, I'm more prepared to ask for what I want. With men, I'm careful and slow. Now I'm doing Jan's training so am finding out more."

Edward, an alternative entrepreneur, he did one of Jan's introductory courses – Embracing The Beloved - at Skyros and was bowled over by the safe space that she creates. "Often we don't even realise what a safe space is," he says, "I'd had a relationship breakdown and had been confused and upset by it. LT1 gave me a huge boost to my confidence and was very grounding. The structured touching exercises were mindblowing. I come from a dry, academic background and so LT1 put

me in touch with my feelings and my heart. Now I'm in a relationship again, and in much more heart-centred friendships with people. I'm not so afraid of relating. I don't censor myself so much. It was a very warm, connecting week and I'm still feeling the benefits. It was earth-shattering in fact."

What does Jan think people gain from doing the course? "They have much more self love and are able to connect with others more easily. The effects ripple out into people's lives even at work in being more open-hearted, more compassionate to themselves and others. A softness and

radiance happens. I see people over time becoming more flexible, more able to see different points of view, calmer, more authentic and honest about what is true for them. People feel the expansion of love and the widening of life to its spiritual aspects."

Living Tantra 1 takes place at the EarthSpirit centre in Somerset from Mar 28th to April 4th 2013. More info janday.com Contact office@janday.com or ring for a chat on 020 8123 9831