

Interview with top Tantra Teacher

Jan Day

by Rose Rouse

Jan Day - janday.com - has been teaching tantra workshops for the past 20 years and has built up a formidable reputation in the UK as a facilitator who works creatively and compassionately with the wounds we all carry around our sexuality. Participants feel safe to explore their boundaries in her workshops and also find themselves re-discovering joy in their relationships, whether sexual or not.

I wondered how your own life has influenced your tantra work?

"Somehow as a teenager, I picked up the message that sex was disgusting and I ended up in a sexless marriage at 17 which was something I'd wished for. The problem was that I had no-one to talk to. I left that marriage still a virgin. However, by the time I got to Oxford University to do a chemistry degree, I was searching out ways of spiritual expansion and I found the meditations of Osho.

Did Osho have a profound effect on you? You lived at an Osho community called Medina in the 1980s, didn't you?

"Yes, I healed my sexuality through his teachings initially, and then my capacity to have relationships. He was a tantric mentor, he truly gave the freedom to us to be ourselves. He never told us how to be but rather pushed people's buttons until they discovered what was true for them. I found sexual self-confidence and the beginning of deep inner listening. I loved that everything with Osho included the rough and tumble of real life, it wasn't esoteric in an airy-fairy way."

And you studied and taught *The Art of Being* with Alan Lowen?

"Alan used to live in Poona and Oregon, and he created *The Art of Being* out of his work there. I learnt a lot from Alan including my own journey back to aloneness as well as how to work with structures in workshops. I also did a lot sexual healing work with him too."

What about your other spiritual influences during this time in the 90s?

"I went to psychotherapist called Sundar and he really opened me to God, and a new perspective on the sacred. He opened me up to prayer. I'd been interested in Christianity when I was a teenager, and then yoga, at this point which was a dark one for me, Sundar taught me about the love of God again. He also introduced me to Amma. I did a retreat with Jack Kornfield around this time, which was influential in opening my heart more. And there was Yogananda too. I was really being influenced by Western and Eastern spiritual thinkers.

You were living in Maui for 15 years, then came back to the UK?

"My father was ill so my husband Frieder and I decided to come back to live with him. By this time, I'd finally found a man that I could really share my life and love with. We came back in 2007. Back here, I discovered the teachings of Ken Wilber which really opened me up to new perspectives, I love the way his work brings a kaleidoscopic overview of life. That excites me. For me personally, I was thrilled to include the mind and science in my way of understanding and being in the world. A lot of the older work I did, was about escaping the head, this work included it. I felt as if I'd come home."

Who have you been interested in more recently?

"Thomas Huebl. His focus is on the subtle energies and I enjoy this exploration with him.

He opens you up to the mystery whereas Osho, for instance, was much more about being in the every day.

You have been influenced by Harvell Hendrix and David Deida in your relationship work? "Yes, Hendrix has some great ways of teaching people to listen, particularly couples to each other.

He also emphasises learning to put yourself in your partner's shoes, there are some useful exercises for that.

And Deida very much looks at the role of the masculine and feminine within all of us and within the relationship.

And where are you with your study and what you bring to your work?

"I'm looking to bring consciousness to every nook and cranny in my every day life, and those of my students. That's also where relationships with your loved one, come in. They bring us into conflicts and the possibility for huge growth. My workshops with Conscious Relationship help participants become aware of how they behave in love relationships. Of the shadow side of how they relate. And this provides a huge opportunity for transformation. They also get the time and space to practice relating in different ways, of opening to spirit as well. It's really about having a willingness to connect on every level of our being with ourselves as well as the other."

Jan Day has a 5 day workshop Passion, Power and Love at New Year, plus a 7 day healing sexuality workshop Living Tantra 1 at Easter 2015. Most courses are open to couples and singles. More details on janday.com