



Wild & Sublime® Podcast, Episode 12
“Erotic Creativity”
Oct 15, 2020

Are you stuck in a sex rut? Karen talks with three knowledgeable guests from different corners of the sex-positive world about erotic creativity and how to sustain it. Their juicy in-depth conversation ranges from roleplay and kink to tantra and mindfulness.

Host: Karen Yates

Guests: Goddess Erica, Brandon Hunter-Haydon, Corinne Diachuk

Goddess Erica

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Karen Yates

Welcome to Wild & Sublime, a sexy spin on infotainment®, no matter your preferences, orientation or relationship style. Based on the popular live Chicago show. Each week, I'll chat about sex and relationships with citizens from the world of sex positivity, with spicy additions from storytellers and musicians. I'm Karen Yates. Today, we chat in depth about erotic creativity, discussing kink, Tantra, roleplay, and our basic human impulses. Keep listening.

Wild & Sublime is sponsored in part by Uberlube, long-lasting silicone lubricant for sex, sport and style, I highly recommend it. Go to Uberlube.com. This has been a good week for Wild & Sublime. This past Saturday, October 10, was our second anniversary. And I was looking at pictures from our first anniversary show at Constellation Chicago, which are on our Facebook site, so you can have a look. And that was just such a great night. We brought the audience on stage, and everyone stood in a circle — a very large circle — and sang "Happy Birthday." We had cake. And there was just a lot of great conversation that night. And even in the face of this past year, bringing us to year two, there's been a lot of changes, obviously, in the world, and a lot to reflect upon. But one of the things I've really been thinking about is how proud I am of this podcast and everyone that's been involved with it, and everyone that I have met in the past several years, and how much my life has been enriched by all of these amazing relationships that have come my way because of the show. So, to all of you who have been involved with the show with the podcast, I'm just feeling a lot of love for you all. So, I just wanted to say that.

And the other great thing that happened this week is, there was a very nice interview with me that was published in New City, here in Chicago. And I really enjoyed it because the interviewer, Haley Osborn, really did a nice job of crafting our very long conversation into — they basically reflected back all of the really important points that I wanted to make about the show and the podcast and where everything is going. So if you'd like to read that article, we've linked to it in the show notes.

And speaking of moving forward, today marks the beginning of a change in the formatting of this podcast. We're still going to be doing the segmented shows, which I call magazine-style episodes. But now we're going to be alternating them every other week with more long-form conversations, either between groups of people, or one-on-one interviews. Because I've been feeling for some time — and this actually went back to the live show — I've been really feeling the urge to get in depth. To really go to the heart of the conversation, which of course you can't do in 10-minute segments. So that will be the change. And you know, I was thinking, when we changed the name of the show to Wild & Sublime, built into the name is that... I guess you can say dichotomy with sex, that there is this wildness, this fastness to it. But there's also this other component that people really want, which is the sublime. You know, really wanting that deep, transcendent quality, which is why we come together. We come together to feel oneness, and I feel like this long form — and you might even experience it with the conversation that you're about to hear — is just this quality, as we just get deeper and deeper into the conversation. And things get just more juicy. It's pretty indescribable. So let me know what you think.

I was interested in getting folks together for this episode to chat about erotic creativity. Because so often in longer relationships, the first thing that goes is the sense of newness, or the sense of the unexpected, and what's going to happen next. And that's true also of the erotic relationship we have with ourselves, just in self play. So I was really interested in getting people together to talk about this idea of erotic creativity as sort of an antidote to that kind of deadening quality that can creep up on us over time. And we had an amazing conversation. It took a lot of twists and turns, and I was really pretty fulfilled by it, and hopefully you will be too. So you'll be hearing a conversation among sexual empowerment coach Goddess Erica; somatic sex educator, yoga therapist and faculty member at the Institute for the Study of Somatic Sex Education Corinne Diachuk — and the Institute is where I got my training — as well as recurring guest, psychotherapist and intimacy coach, Brandon Hunter-Haydon. Enjoy.

Goddess Erica.

Goddess Erica

Hello. I am very excited to be here. Thank you for having me.

Karen Yates

Corinne Diachuk. Welcome.

Corinne Diachuk

Hi, Karen. Thank you.

Karen Yates

And Brandon Hunter-Haydon.

Brandon Hunter-Haydon

Hello, hello.

Karen Yates

Hello, hello. I got so freaking excited about this panel chat. Just like, the breadth of information, the breadth of wisdom of everyone showing up today. So I just want to say thank you all, I feel very humbled by your collective knowledge. So folks, we're here today to discuss erotic creativity. And as I just mentioned, I am very excited to be talking with everyone today. And so my very first question, because I'm aware some people might be thinking, "What is erotic creativity?" So I would love to hear each of

you explain to me: what for you is erotic creativity? And why don't we start with Corinne?

Corinne Diachuk

Hmm. When I think of eros, I'm really aware of a quote from Jack Morin. He wrote "The Erotic Mind." And I can't remember his exact framing. But for me, how it translates is that when we explore our eros, we have the opportunity to take the difficult material of our lives and transform it into something pleasurable, or something healing. And so when I think of erotic creativity, for me, it's about journeying through all the different layers of myself with courage and a willingness to be vulnerable. And going into the places that might feel a little bit scary, or tender. And that's where the juice is for me, meaning into the difficult places.

Karen Yates

Yeah. And that book "The Erotic Mind" is such a great, great book about figuring out what our core erotic themes are in our life, and how they transform and where we've come from. Goddess Erica, what about you?

Goddess Erica

Erotic creativity for me is... I want to say it's all encompassing. It is the philosophy that I like to live my life by. I feel like everything that we do poses an opportunity to infuse some level of eroticism into it, some level of Tantra into it. I feel like Tantra is infused into everything. It's all about being receptive and listening and receiving the information and the feedback and the stimulus that's given to you. And processing it in different ways. And processing it through the lens of eroticism means that you can find intense pleasure in simple things, like enjoying a meal, or getting dressed, or having a conversation with someone. Even if it's a platonic type of relationship that you have with someone, you can still feed off of the tantric energy of connecting with another person, opening yourself from your heart to another person.

Karen Yates

Yes, and I love that you brought up Tantra, because I study Tantra as well, and you know, for the listener, explain to me how Tantra infuses your life. I think a lot of people think of Tantra as purely sexually focused. But there's a whole other dimension to Tantra. And can you talk a little bit — you have just talked a little bit about it, about the everyday, essential aspect of it. But yeah, I would love for you to open it up for a second here. Yeah.

Goddess Erica

The idea of Tantra as being purely sexual is a very Western idea. The basis of Tantra is not sex. Tantra, for the western listener, is a way for you to connect with yourself. So that's another misunderstanding that people have, is that Tantra is about interacting with another person, often physically. It's about recognizing, accepting and honoring yourself. And once you have filled that vessel, then you have the mental and emotional and spiritual bandwidth to connect with other people, and to share that energy, and what can become a really delicious feedback loop. So you give your energy, they give their energy. There's a selflessness to Tantra. There is no, "I'm going to do this thing and I'm expecting an outcome." It's about enjoying the sensations in the moment, and really being present for the journey.

Karen Yates

Great. Can't wait to open that up as we go along. Brandon, what is erotic creativity for you?

Brandon Hunter-Haydon

Oh, I'm thinking of one of my favorite Esther Perel quotes, which is "The erotic is the antidote to death." And for me, I think of the vital life force that runs through us, that has a heat and generativity. And in terms of — I think, from my point of view, I look at these things from a therapeutic perspective, to recognize that the erotic, the energetics of eros are ultimately falling to our calcified and frozen grief, to trauma, to wounds, and to frozen desire. And so the eros is really — it's generative, just like the sun's energy in a way. And it can play out in sexual and also not explicitly sexual ways. The erotic and the sexual are distinct but overlapping things that can mingle powerfully, but are not necessarily intertwined.

Karen Yates

What do you think keeps people from being erotically creative? We've alluded to trauma, but I would love for anyone to just jump in.

Goddess Erica

Well, the first thing I would say is social conditioning. We have gender role expectations, we have this idea of what's proper and what's not proper, people don't have permission to safely and consensually do whatever the hell they want. And they should. You know, we walk around self-censoring and self-filtering ourselves. And it gets in the way of our creative process if we're constantly telling ourselves, "No, that's not proper," or "No, that's not for me to do," or "No, that's not acceptable." Then we severely limit ourselves.

Karen Yates

Mm hmm. There's a kind of victimhood. We victimize ourselves with societal messages. Corinne, I see you nodding.

Corinne Diachuk

Yeah, I completely agree with what you just said, Goddess Erica. And I think, a lack of relevant and meaningful education, like people just not even knowing that it's possible. Or what eros is. There's such a big lack, a gap in education around this permissioning that you just spoke about.

Karen Yates

I think about myself — you know, even when I was young, I thought I was very sexually liberated. I thought I knew a lot. And in point of fact, I didn't! Learning more and more, I just realized, Wow, what a paucity of information I had as a youngster, based on how I grew up and — you know, whatever middle class existence. I just wasn't given a lot of information. And Brandon, what do you think keeps people from being erotically creative?

Brandon Hunter-Haydon

Well, there's a just echoing off of what these two folks have wonderfully said already. There's a deeply intractable and pervasive mythology that's running rampant across our society and culture, that dictates and presupposes both what the sexual and what the erotic are supposed to be. And that's from a conceptual to a sensory level. So there's all kinds of narratives and messages that tell us how the erotic is supposed to look, how it's supposed to feel, smell, touch, sound — all those things. It's all pre-scripted. And so anything that doesn't fit within that sort of framework is usually left out, or is considered fringe or marginalized — or at times, treated as though it's abnormal.

Karen Yates

If anyone feels comfortable, I would love to hear a story, or an example of a moment when you were confronted with the erotic, and it was completely unexpected, or it was outside of the box that you had formally constructed the erotic to be.

Goddess Erica

I would love to tell the story of my — the first scene that I ever did.

Karen Yates

Okay. And when you say "scene" — kink scene, yeah?

Goddess Erica

Kink scene, I'm sorry, yeah.

Karen Yates

I like to just like, explain as we go.

Goddess Erica

I'm a dominatrix. And the first scene that I did was non-sexual. Well, not sexual in the sense that there was no sexual contact happening. It was a foot worship scene. So, we had previously met and negotiated. We talked about what we were interested in, what we wanted and what we didn't want. And at the end of the negotiation, I decided, I want you to come to my house and massage my feet, and then go home. And, you know, of course, that's the parameters for it, right? But of course, within the scene, more things are going to be happening, more things I have planned, you know, within each of our boundaries. So he arrives, I have the lights down, I have incense burning, I have soft music playing, and I instruct him to kneel in front of my bathroom door and stare into the flame of a candle and contemplate his place, which is beneath me. And I go into the bathroom, and I shut the door, and I take a shower. And it's all about, you know, I'm giving him the tension of knowing that behind this door, just a plank of wood, I'm naked. This stranger that he's never had any sexual contact with. So I shower, I open the door, and then I oil myself in front of him. And then I take him and I ask him to massage my feet. And he massages my feet. And while he was massaging, I had every intention of reading a book, scrolling through Facebook, ignoring him. You know, I'm new to kink. So I'm here I am thinking, here's this thirsty dude, who wants to touch my feet. So I'm just going to let him touch my feet, and I'm going to send him home. And the moment he touched my feet, our eyes met. And something changed for me. I could not ignore him. It wasn't a physical attraction. It wasn't even a chemical attraction. There was an energy exchange that happened, the moment that he touched my feet. We were both all in this scene. And it transformed me. There was something so incredibly erotic. I was so turned on by having this man that I had only met once before pouring oil onto my feet and rubbing my — massaging me with such reverence and piety. It put me on a trajectory towards where I am now, which is, you know, helping to teach other people how to tap into their own erotic selves into their own sexual natures.

Karen Yates

Hmm. beautiful story. Corinne, Brandon, would you like to relate a story?

Brandon Hunter-Haydon

Right. Now I just want to say that listening to that, thank you, Goddess Erica, for sharing that. Not only was that sensual and gorgeous, but to me, I immediately had sort of genetic memories, as it were. Just the turn of phrase. Of something ancient and sacred. That is a way of relating, that is a way of reverence. Like you said, it was reverent, that we already know to do. And that is a way of relating to each other and to the world. And maybe in a way, this sort of divine feminine, or how we might, we might make meaning of that. I was really struck by that. I got full body shivers, just listening to it. So that was...

Karen Yates

What really stands out for me about this story that you just shared, Goddess Erica — and thank you for that — were the components of the clarity, the negotiation, the meditation, the contemplation about the dynamics, like you each knew what your roles were. And through creating that really safe or clear container, that's how the magic unfolded. Because there was no pressure, there was no expectations, you knew that you only had to show up in a certain way and that there was nothing more. And so I just really, I feel excited in my body around the clarity of the container. And that within that, the magic can happen.

Hmm. Yes, the negotiation.

Goddess Erica

So important.

Karen Yates

Yes.

Goddess Erica

We all should negotiate. And honestly, that's another reason why I wanted to become an educator in the sexual realm. Because more vanilla people need to see the value of negotiating. It's not unsexy to plan your sex. It's not unsexy to say exactly what you want and exactly what you don't want. Because that makes it so clear. Even something as simple as, "I don't want to be touched," or "I do want to be touched, in this way." I want to be kissed in these situations but not those. I think that when we don't communicate those things, particularly in vanilla situations, people end up taking things personally. And it's not personal, because, you know, no one is really out to get you. You know, we are all really kind of inside of our own heads. And if we kind of let some of that out, it makes for better connections with other people.

Karen Yates

We talk a lot on the show for people who, you know, bringing in ideas of kink to folks -- vanilla folks, i.e. non-kinky folks -- that, you know, we grew up in a culture that is... Sex is seen as like, "add water and mix." You know, it just happens. We just kind of roll along and it just happens. And we're fed a lot of media ideas that -- you know, from the golden age of movies on down, that it's just supposed to happen. Love happens, sex happens, eroticism happens. And actually, no. We're really so much more served when we can articulate our needs to each other. And I do appreciate you saying it's not personal. We all have various preferences. We all have various desires, and they're not always going to line up and that's why we negotiate, or we talk. And it doesn't make it unsexy. In fact, it can increase the sexiness.

So in talking about the creativity of negotiation, but then you know, Goddess Erica, your story just now really clearly illuminated that in the middle of something, something new springs up. And that is the nature of eros, that kind of fountain, never-ending fountain. I would love to talk a little bit about erotic creativity and improvisation, and in the immediacy of the moment, how does how does that happen? How do we allow it to happen?

Goddess Erica

So for me BDSM is just sexy improv. You know, much like in the story that I just told you, you set up the scene with agreed upon parameters. And then you color in the lines. The improv is, you know, are you using crayons or paint or liquid latex -- or you know, if you're into Klingons, the blood of your enemies... It's really about--

Brandon Hunter-Haydon

[laughing] I really appreciated that.

Goddess Erica

I also have a thing for nerds. So it's really about reading the room, reading your partner, reading yourself, and then deciding how the pieces fit together. And you know, nothing goes as planned, and I'm going to throw in a little something extra. I am an orgasmic birth doula. And, you know, we see this a lot in labor, where I have to tell my clients, or remind them, you have this idea of how you want your labor to go. It's not going to go as planned. Guaranteed, something is not going to go the way you want. It can go completely smoothly, and there's still going to be something that's just not quite right, or a few things that aren't quite right. And really, you know, the improv, the erotic creativity behind it even, and something as seemingly benign as labor, is

deciding in the moment: How do you respond to it? How do you respond to something going not quite as planned? Do you brace yourself against it? And kind of shut yourself off because it's not word for word how you had imagined it in your mind? Or do you roll with it? Do you submit yourself to the situation, and allow yourself to find your footing in what you have been given?

Karen Yates

Mm hmm.

Brandon Hunter-Haydon

I love the way that you're speaking to this. And it's helping me to recall and organize my own experiences and thoughts around this too. And one of the things I'm thinking of is distinguishing between performance and the spontaneous, especially during the erotic, and both of those things can be powerful. I'm a big fan of roleplay, both in a therapeutic context, and also in an erotic context. And I think that role play is really powerful, because it can be the container, it can be the structure, whether that's a character or the meeting place, all the details of the interaction, everything you're going through, all the structural points that form this vessel into which the elixir is brewed. Into which the elixir -- which requires spontaneity to heat it. And so I think that when we can balance those two things, if we rely too much on performance, then as Goddess Erica was saying, when something goes awry, we might get stymied, we might get stuck, or really fall off. And then we might regress, we might retreat, to sort of protect or save face or protect our egos. Because performance is highly ego-driven. But if we match that, or mingle that with the spontaneous, which is that which is coming alive and unfolding in the space organically as a result of the mixture of both safety and risk, as it were, then we really have something that we can stay attentive to, no matter what shape things kind of kind of take. So we can roll with things that maybe defy our expectations in the moment, if we are with that spontaneous connection, or that spontaneous energy, if that makes sense.

Karen Yates

Mmm. Corinne, what's going on with you?

Corinne Diachuk

Well, I'm just hearing a lot of really juicy information that I feel in alignment with. And when I specifically think about improv, it's like, the "Yes, and." If the boundaries are clear, if we all know what the boundaries are, when we're going into an interaction, then I feel secure enough in myself to be able to say, okay, that isn't exactly what I had

in mind. But I can say yes to that. And one of my most favorite lines actually is "Let's try it." Let's try it.

Karen Yates

We'll return to our conversation in a moment. If you're enjoying this deep dive into erotic creativity, consider making a one-time contribution to our work here at Wild & Sublime. In addition to our monthly membership program that has a lot of benefits, you're also able to make a one-time donation. Just check the show notes, or our website at wildandsublime.com. We love bringing you this content and supporting you in your sexy journey, and hope you'll consider supporting us as well. And now, back to the conversation.

So, one thing that's kind of burbling up as we're all talking is: Corinne, you're a somatic sex educator, I'm a somatic sex educator, and for me, so much about sex is this impulse that it arises from the body. You know, it's an impulse to explore, or it's taking the thinking mind offline, and allowing impulse to just come naturally in the moment. And so Corinne, I would love for you to just talk a little bit about the body's role, rather than the mind, the mental role, in erotic creativity. This is really important.

Yeah, thank you. The statement that I often use is that we need to create a quality of quiet that allows us to actually follow the natural impulses of the body. So for in my experience, what I've witnessed is that there's this chronic "doing," that we are totally engaged with in our culture. Keeping up with work and keeping up with technology and keeping up with media, and family and life. And so it's a constant doing. I believe so deeply that it requires an actual pause, and I call it the sacred pause. And whether it's taking a bath, or having a meditation, or a walk in the forest, or just lying down and being quiet for a few moments, to be able to engage in that dialogue with the body, to be able to hear the messages that the body is giving about the next impulse towards movement, sound, touch, desire. Creating a quality of quiet.

Goddess Erica

Impulse. I love that. That it's used in a positive way. Because often impulse is framed negatively.

Karen Yates

Mm hmm. Oh, this is beautiful. I'm glad. Okay, we got to get back to back, keep going.

Goddess Erica

I like to think of it more as an intuition. Really listening, and listening to your inner voice, that it feels impulsive, because it goes against all of those filters that we place for ourselves, based on our social conditioning, based on what our role expectations are. Being able to act on impulse safely is so liberating.

Karen Yates

Yes, yes. And I'm reminded of -- I'll be, say, in bed with someone, and there is a moment where I have an impulse to do something, which seems kind of odd, it doesn't seem typical. And it will open up. It's like opening a door, you know, because like you said, this -- I love what you said about impulse being... Well, it's so negatively framed in our society, right? Because -- and I would say this kind of comes from this religious framing that we all have grown up with. Because even if you did not grow up religiously, these religious ideas do seep into Western culture, right? Which is, there's impulse that must be squashed. Because it's wild. It's going to lead us astray, we must stop impulse. [laughs] But impulse is part of eros, right?

Corinne Diachuk

I think there's a difference between impulse and a compulsion to do something. And if I'm compulsively behaving in ways that I know are not bringing me joy, it's a different frame for me than an impulse.

Brandon Hunter-Haydon

I think that's such a valuable distinction, and one that we can kind of parse out, conceptually and intellectually, that people have to come to know for themselves. Part of claiming, and in many cases restoring, the erotic is ascertaining the difference between your compulsions and your impulses, right? What compels you, what impels you? How do you know the difference? How do those two things feel different in the body? And then you can link that to other things like values, like what values might that thing be linked to? Is that a value that is yours? Does that belong to you? What may be a different value instead, that actually resonates with the energy that feels more impulsive, that which is arising in you? And so I think that's important that we talk about that stuff too, when we get to education, because just thinking about the root -- like education literally means to draw from within. We forget that. We think it's just sort of like disseminating information, and overlaying that over top of any sort of chaotic force of the organic individual, when in reality education is to draw from within the understanding and the wisdom about something, whether it's an applied knowledge or not. I think that so much of it is an attitude and an approach. And one sometimes has to be patient with that, unless you have a really great teacher. You have to really be patient with yourself. I mean, it takes courage to do that. I'll segue into another thing I

was really reminded of: What makes room for that to happen is essentially what reminds me of play. Children know their impulses. They know in the moment, in relating with other children in the phenomenon of play -- that stuff is wrung out of us in many regards, through both our cultural and largely our economic compulsions, actually wring a lot of our play sensibility out of us, and replace it with consuming. So those of us who are missing that feeling of activation without fear, which is essentially neurobiologically, that's what play is: activation without fear, right? It is the elevated heartbeat, it's the sweating, it's the adrenals. It's the dilated pupils in the moment, but you're not afraid. There's no mortality to it. And that arises in all sorts of consensual activities. And I think that when we embrace that in the erotic as well, that's a powerfully reclaiming force, puts oneself in the body. So I think being able to bring in all these things, to name it within the context and also to help draw that force from the individual, that's really where at least I see my work as a therapeutic educator. That's where I see my work.

Karen Yates

Hmm. What would you say to folks who are like, gosh, this conversation is really juicy, I'm digging it. I feel stuck, or I feel like I'm in a rut erotically. How do I stoke the fires of erotic creativity? What sort of specific guidance can each of you give people listening for steps even, if you will?

Goddess Erica

I think there can be three steps that you can take: meditate, masturbate, conversate.

Karen Yates

Love it.

Goddess Erica

It's not a word!

Karen Yates

I love it. I think it's pretty damn good.

Goddess Erica

You know, sit with your fantasies, and get comfortable with them, try to push them further. Give yourself permission to push them further and explore them. Visualize those fantasies while you're pleasuring yourself. Get a sense for what really gets you off. And then talk about it. Talk to your partner, talk to your friends, talk to yourself, talk to the dog. You know, even if you never go through with the fantasy, brainstorming

with another person not only opens you to bigger, sexier ideas, but it also brings you closer to the people around you. It again allows you to open that connection, that feedback loop. Like I said, Tantra is in everything. It's in our conversations. If we only allow ourselves to be open and receptive to it.

Karen Yates

Let me ask you, Goddess Erica, getting back to Tantra. I'd love for you to speak just a bit about moving through the day tantrically, if you will. I don't even know if that's a word. But moving through the day, allowing the loving embrace of the world, or the sensual world, to inform one as one walks through the day. Can you talk a little bit about that?

Goddess Erica

Yes. So actually, I want to touch back on something that Brandon said, the drawing from within and also the childlike play. I'll touch on the childlike play thing first. I went through dominance training with Midori and --

Karen Yates

One of the great rope teachers. Frame Midori for folks, Goddess Erica.

Goddess Erica

How do you frame Midori? She's a force of her own. She's known for her rope, she's known for her fashion with rubber, but she also has a very dominant energy about her. And she shares that with other people. I would describe Midori as someone that is very helpful to look towards. One of the things that she taught during my training was that BDSM is -- and I'm probably going to say it wrong -- she has a very specific way of saying it, but BDSM is childlike play with adult privileges and resources. You have that freedom, that fearlessness to do the playful things that come to your mind impulsively, and when done in a safe, consensual way, we have the resources and the ability as adults to take that to a whole other level.

But I also wanted to talk about the idea of drawing from within when you move through your day with Tantra. It's about having little conversations with the voice inside of you. It's about asking yourself at any given moment: Does this feel good to me? Is it feeding me? Is it actually giving me something that I need? It's interesting, because you can do things that are thankless -- that are seemingly thankless -- that still feed you in some way. You know, I don't like doing the dishes. But I love having a clean house, you know? So how do you approach that with gratitude for being able to give yourself that thing? How do you nourish yourself physically and mentally and emotionally, whether

it's appreciating your own body as you watch it, whether it's, you know, looking into your own eyes for an extended period of time to really connect with yourself, whether it's gazing into the eyes of someone else for an extended period of time to connect with them, whether it's speaking your truth, even if it's hard, even if it's a hard conversation. All of that comes from drawing from within, and pulling from a tantric mindset.

Karen Yates

Thank you for that, Goddess Erica. 100%, that's what I have to say. 100%. Corinne, you know, when I was at school, there was a lot of talk when I first came on board about enduring, and how -- what Goddess Erica just said reminds me of some of the early teachings from the school. Like, are we physically enduring? Just sitting in our chair, or day to day like, checking in: Where's the pleasure here? How can we bring more pleasure just to the quotidian moment? So Corinne, I would love for you to talk about that, and also suggestions for folks who want to open up more erotically.

Thank you, Goddess Erica. So much of what you're speaking very poetically aligns with the teachings of embodying consent, and the practice that I have of guiding people to be able to notice all the moments throughout the day whether you're in a place of a "yes" or a "no," or you need to negotiate with oneself. Before you ever imagine the pressures of relationship dynamics, or gender expectations, needing to come back into yourself first. So I love how you so clearly laid it out: meditate, masturbate, and then communicate. And that flow fits so beautifully, meditating in the moment. Noticing our bodies are giving us messages all the time: about our preferences, about our resistance, our hesitation, our desires. But most of us are too busy in our brains, doing what our brains are brilliantly designed to do -- not going to diminish the importance of our intellect. But if we can create that quiet enough to listen to what the body is telling us, like so many times throughout the day, I might notice, oh, why am I sitting in this uncomfortable position right now? It's really not necessary. But for some reason, I have been raised to believe that there is a certain amount of discomfort that just is associated with life. And what an incredibly freeing experience to discover that oh, actually, I am needing to be in consent with myself first. What feels like a yes. What do I get to renegotiate in my own body first?

I love this, "being in consent with yourself first." Wow, that just dropped in. I don't think I've really thought about that. This idea of consent with oneself first. That is something.

Goddess Erica

I really do love that too. It's something that I tell my orgasmic birth clients. From the very beginning, you are in charge. Even when you are in a position of seeming powerlessness, when you are compromised. When you are in pain, when you can't communicate. You're still in charge. You're in charge of yourself, you're in charge of your body, it belongs to you. And reclaiming that. Because we are taught from a very young age to accept discomfort in ourselves, to ignore those inner signals that say, "I don't like this," in order to be more palatable to the outside world. And it's so unfair. I love that. I love that.

Corinne Diachuk

I just want to say one more thing about this, because the invitation was to offer suggestions about how to cultivate more erotic creativity. I recently had this internal feeling of like, Oh, I have to have a safe place to come home to in my own body. Otherwise, I will not be able to explore. Creating the safety within my own body. And then I want to acknowledge that -- how many times has that happened, where something was presented to me, and my initial response was a yuck, or a tension, or a pulling away? That's a message from my body. I could listen to it and then stay safe, or stay smaller, stay comfortable. But if I have that real secure sense of my own home, my own safety and my own body... How many times has it happened, where it was a yuck last week, but this week, I'm doing a Google search about it, or I'm checking it out on Pornhub. Like, somebody asked me if I wanted to do that, and it was a no, but it became a yes. So like, leaning into the discomfort, in my experience, is actually where the erotic charge is. If I don't have that safety of my home, I'm not going to be able to explore.

Karen Yates

I love that. I love that, because I think we're conditioned that if it is a no, if we're feeling a no, that it's always going to be a no and stop investigating. But we have to know ourselves well enough, we have to have that safety, to say, "Okay, was that a no that was springing from fear, because we don't feel like we've got a safe place inside?" What is this no? Brandon, what do you have to say?

Brandon Hunter-Haydon

Well, first of all, I'm really just kind of drunk on the words that have been pouring forth from everyone here. And I find myself, in this moment, just swirling in this cup, as it were. And I'm really grateful for that sensation. It also makes it harder for me to get out a coherent thought. But I guess what I would say is that what it feels to me as though we're really pointing to is that being in relationship with others, it's why human beings are still alive. Our capacity for relating, and trusting one another is the whole reason we

are even still here in the first place. And if we can extend that understanding and that deep survival sense to ourselves and recognize that we are in it, we are in an active relationship with ourselves right now. And so, just to tease out what I'm hearing from the other two, really is to acknowledge that you are in a relationship with yourself. Every impulse, every compulsion, every sudden reaction that you have, the things that you're drawn, to the things that you feel yuck about -- stay curious. How can we cultivate an attitude of curiosity about all of our responses, and then use that curiosity to relate to ourselves, and to maybe deepen our understanding, and investigate that a little bit more? Because that's also what's going to be hot with another person, too. And that, I think, that generates that kind of self-consent that we're really talking about here. Because then what we're building is trust, and trust is sexy as fuck. It is super sexy when you trust yourself in a given scenario, your yeses and your nos. And you have enough structure to be like, you know, I don't actually know how this is going to go totally. And that's alright, because I know I'll be alright. And I know I can lean in where I want to lean in. And I know I can take care of myself if I need to take care of myself. If you can do that with yourself, you can do it with another person. That is super hot.

Karen Yates

Curiosity is one of my favorite words ever. So thank you so much for saying that.

Yeah, me too. Me too. Is there anything burbling up for folks as we sort of wind down this conversation?

Goddess Erica

I think if we have one takeaway from the the crux of this conversation, is being okay with allowing yourself to come first. It's something that a lot of people struggle with. They want to put other people first. And that's noble. But you you can't -- you know, it's kind of like being on the airplane. You can't give someone else oxygen if you're passed out. So you have to really take care of yourself. You have to feed yourself, you have to give yourself what you need. And you know, feeling safe in your body. Feeling like you are empowered within your personal shell is a stepping stone for so many breakthroughs for so many people. And you know, it just takes stepping into that, and getting-- because it's scary to step into that. But once we do, it's like that "Wheee!" down the roller coaster.

Karen Yates

Hmm. Yes. I mean, I'm just thinking about, you know, when you are with a partner, and someone is so, say, externally focused, and you're not with yourself in the exchange,

that's where impulsivity dies. That's where the juice will just dry up, because it becomes like a script. Like, I'm going to stick to this scenario that I'm in, looking to you. Are you pleased? I'm not looking at me -- am I pleased? It becomes very deadening, I think. And that's where a lot of people are, you know, in the ruts in their relationships. It's become very rote.

If you had asked me five years ago about erotic creativity, I would have found a lot of joy in describing the BDSM work that I was doing as a pro-Domme, and the sex work that I was doing and the excitement of the new experiences that I was having. And I just feel that it's kind of important for me to name right now. Being in such a sex-positive world, personally, and being surrounded by such brilliant educators as yourself, for me, what became kinky was the idea of a committed monogamous relationship. And I actually felt a little bit of shame come up about having that as my kink. And what has been super challenging and super joyful for me this year is actually allowing myself to have those desires, and actually leaning into a committed, monogamous partnership, and being willing to be seen in all of my challenges, and the ways that I've been limiting myself and my fears, and the fantasies that I hadn't told anybody before. Like, wow, to actually have a person in my life now to share that with has felt super edgy, and tremendously rewarding. So I leaned into my fear. And I found something really juicy.

Brandon Hunter-Haydon

That's really beautiful. And I'm really glad, I'm really glad that you shared that. I feel really appreciative that you shared that. I've had my own similar experience, related to that. And I think what that reminds me of again, is looking at -- when we relate to ourselves, we're discerning what has been compulsive. And monogamy is compulsive in our culture. There's a whole values and economic organization structure that superimposes that upon us, on our consciousness. But to be able to have conscious monogamy, to be able to shift, to live in these other worlds, and look at it again, and then like it, to remain curious about this thing that seems like such a given, but then find your own, find your own energy and your own eros in that -- that's amazing. And that is my only true goal, I would say, as an educator, or as a therapist, with anyone: what are your conscious desires? What does it look like when you're consciously giving-- what Goddess Erica was talking about before brought up in me this idea of making an empowered offering. When you give of yourself because you know how to put yourself first, that is rich. That's a rich gift, because you know the value of it for yourself. Therefore, you know what you're actually giving. You're not performing for the sake of being more palatable, or for some other kind of security. And we all do that in

our own ways. I don't mean to judge that. But really discerning when you're doing one and when you're doing the other. I just really am appreciative of that share there.

Goddess Erica

I think there's this misconception that because there are other options, that the base offering, or the one that that we're all so familiar with, is no longer valid. It's all valid. It's all valid, because it's all personal. It's also incredibly subjective. And there's no wrong way to do it. Because there are, you know, however many people in the world. That's how many ways there are to do it.

Karen Yates

Hmm. Wonderful. This has been a fantastic conversation. Thank you, Goddess Erica. Thank you, Corinne Diachuk. And thank you, Brandon Hunter-Haydon. I hope to have you all on again.

All Panelists

Thank you. Thanks again.

Karen Yates

You can find information on all our guests in the show notes as well as a link to purchase the book "The Erotic Mind."

[music under] Wild & Sublime is also sponsored in part by our Sublime Supporter, Chicago-based Full Color Life Therapy, therapy for all of you, at fullcolorlifetherapy.com. If you would like to be a Sublime Supporter, showcasing you and your business and supporting us at the same time, contact us at info@wildandsublime.com. And now it's time for my Sermon on the Pubic Mound®.

[music out] I talked a little bit about transcendence at the beginning of this episode. And I wanted to read something from "The Erotic Mind" by Jack Morin, since we talked about it in our conversation. He writes, "In peak sex, you may become so self-expressive, so clear about who you are and what you want, that your sense of self actually expands. You may move beyond the confines of habit and identity, and enter an altered state of consciousness known as transcendence. Transcendence connects us with the great mysteries of life. Our natural response to genuine mystery is usually to remain silent. When we try to explain what has touched us, we run the risk of distancing ourselves from the experience, because our descriptions are inadequate to convey its fullness. Those who have transcendent experiences during peak sex usually don't consciously seek them out. Instead, these experiences unfold naturally from a

level of participation so all encompassing and free that the self is released from its normal constraints. When we surrender to a transcendent experience, we glimpse our universal aspects, moving beyond the limitations of the ego and its illusions of separateness. Yet the great paradox of transcendence is that while self-consciousness totally disappears, we know more clearly than at any other time exactly who we are."

[music up] Next week, bisexual? Pansexual? Heteroflexible? What's up with that? Plus, we answer heartfelt audience questions. Thank you for listening. If you know someone who might be interested in this episode, send it to them. And please, if you like what you heard, give us a nice review on your podcast app. I'd like to thank Wild & Sublime associate producer Julia Williams and design guru Jean-Francois Gervais. Theme music by David Ben-Porat. Our media sponsor is Rebellious Magazine, feminist media at rebelliousmagazine.com. Follow us on social media @wildandsublime and sign up for newsletters at wildandsublime.com. [Music out]