

GREATER BODY AWARENESS AND SEXUAL ENJOYMENT THROUGH THE EROTIC POWER TRAINING: RESULTS FROM THE TRAINING PROGRAM THE ORGASMIC WOMAN

Annina Sartorius, MA; Franjo Makaja Milicevic; Yvonne Zehnder, MD
Komaja Foundation, Switzerland



INTRODUCTION

The impact of body awareness on sexual enjoyment is an important topic which has been discussed but not yet fully researched. We present *The Orgasmic Woman*, a thoroughly investigated self-training program for women who would like to enjoy more sexually. The program consists of techniques from the cognitive-behavioural and hypno-therapeutic fields and from Komaja's tantric training. This program, as an entity and especially its *Erotic Power Training*, which is performed daily, is designed for enhancing greater body awareness as well.

To have awareness of the body while it is in rest and while it is in motion - as well as in sexual activity - means to become as sensitive as possible to the body's processes and states. Then the body becomes a reference point of being in the world (Hutchinson, 1994). This focus on body awareness, as well as being non-judgementally present in the body, make it possible to have flexibility and conscious choice about what one senses, feels, thinks and does. In this mind-body-awareness (Rytz, 2009), sexuality can be lived in a passionate, mindful and loving way.

SCIENTIFIC BACKGROUND

The role which body awareness may play in female sexual response has received little empiric attention up to now. A study conducted by Herbenick (2009) showed that women who feel more positively about their genitals find it easier to orgasm and are more likely to engage in sexual health promoting behaviors.

Seal & Meston (2007) demonstrate with a sample of women with sexual dysfunctions and negative body image, that awareness of one's body is related to increased subjective sexual response in conditions where cognitive distraction does not occur. Physical appearance concerns seem to have similar negative impact on female sexual function, as do men's problems about erectile function.

Korff & Geer (1983) study shows that women who were asked to pay attention to body or genital cues during sexual stimulation had higher correlations between the subjectively perceived sexual arousal and the physiological sexual arousal than the control group.

Sexual enjoyment, body awareness and self-image of women between 50 and 82 years were studied by Gruchalla et al. (2003). Self perception of the body as being attractive correlates highly significantly with the psychological well-being. Women who find their body attractive experience themselves more sensual than those who self-report low in attractiveness.

Social pressures are seen as the main issue which lead to a negative body image in women in a meta-analysis by Swinson (2010) over more than 170 studies: body dissatisfaction is a powerful and consistent trigger of a whole range of unhealthy body-related behaviours and is significantly linked to depression, anxiety, sexual dissatisfaction, and low self-esteem. Psychotherapists such as Orbach map a progress of alienation from the body, with a raising degree of denigration, self-hatred, self-doubt and a poor degree of body awareness (2009).

THE ORGASMIC WOMAN

The Orgasmic Woman is an intensive three month self-training program for women who would like to enjoy their sexuality more and enhance their sexual wellbeing. It consists of techniques from the cognitive-behavioural field and from Komaja's tantra training. For a detailed overview go to our website www.theorgasmicwoman.com.

The program is conceptualized in three steps

The participant should pass through the three units of exercises stage by stage (three exercises involve visualisation, love training and work with archetypal images; three cognitive behavioural exercises to strengthen self awareness and self discovery; and three tantric exercises - to explore

what gives pleasure and to play with arousal and orgasm). In addition to these three units of exercises, the women perform daily supplementary exercises as an essential part of the program. The central goal of these exercises is the strengthening of the pelvic floor muscle and the improvement of awareness of this and the anal area in order to intensify sexual arousal and orgasm.

Results from the study of the *The Orgasmic Woman* program

Overall, the study (n=78) showed a significant effectiveness in improvement of sexual satisfaction (p<0.05*) and improvement of sexual arousal (p<0.05*). Furthermore women without previous experience in Komaja's tantric training (n=42) profited significantly more from the program than the other participants with a significantly higher level of sexual functioning, indicated by the overall score in the FSFI at the end. Also, they showed a significant improvement of sexual satisfaction (p<0.05*), of sexual arousal (p<0.05*) and of sexual desire (p<0.05*). (For more detailed results see the abstract *The Orgasmic Woman – A Training Program for Sexual Wellbeing*.)

One of the supplementary exercises is the **Erotic Power Training**, which is examined more in detail in this study. It consists of three exercises which help to increase sensual pleasure and to gain playfulness and control during making love.

I. Vajroli Mudra is an exercise for strengthening the pelvic floor muscle. It is important because through it women can increase sensual pleasure for themselves and also for their partner.

Results: 87% of the women reported that this exercise helped to give them a greater sexual enjoyment.

II. Tribanda exercise is another exercise for strengthening the pelvic floor muscle and for getting more awareness about the different parts of the area and of the possibilities to integrate it in the love play. Furthermore, it involves the pulling up of the vital powers from the perineum upwards to the chest.

Results: 70% of the participants answered that it helped them to bring more vitality into the chest.

III. The Taboo Exercise consists of massaging of the anal muscles. This was a challenging exercise for many of the women.

Results: At the beginning, 79% of the women had negative emotions (such as fear, disgust, shame, guilt) in relation to this exercise, however by the end of the training 58% of the women reported that these emotions changed into positive ones, such as self confidence and courage. 47% of the women reported sexual arousal during doing the *Taboo Exercise*. 60% of the women reported that while doing the *The Orgasmic Woman* they included the anal area in their sexual activities more.

To summarize

In general, having completed *The Orgasmic Woman*, the women felt more connected to their body than before doing the training:

Not at all:	5.3%
Somewhat:	14%
Very much:	30.2%
Extremely much:	44.2%
No answer:	2.3%

In general, having completed *The Orgasmic Woman*, the women liked their bodies more than before the training:

Not at all	14%
Somewhat	14%
Very much	46.5%
Extremely much	23.2%
No answer	2.3%

The following reports by some of the participants of *The Orgasmic Woman* give an insight in the plenitude of experiences the women gained for greater body awareness and more sexual pleasure.

Diary entry of a 27 year old woman from Central Europe:

I had never seen my vagina until practicing this training. I used to consider myself a sexually free person. I had beautiful and long lasting loves making with my current partner. I didn't have problems to experience orgasm while making love with my partner or during masturbation. I touched my vagina and I didn't feel any shame in that. Also, I didn't feel any negative emotions about it. Quite simply I hadn't seen my vagina. It didn't happen until this exercise with the hand mirror and exploring it with my fingers.

It was a miracle to look at my vagina. I discover how beautiful it is. How powerful! But, also I was surprised to find out how many things are "found down there"... The whole training and my commitment to the exercises, the excitement which each exercise was bringing to me, the joy after the discovery of my body with its sexuality - all this helped me to SEE my vagina.

Diary entry about the Taboo Exercise, written by a 37 year old woman from Southeastern Europe:

Before doing "The Orgasmic Woman", I never played with that part of my body (the anal area) or allowed my partner to touch it. I didn't have any experience before. It was a real taboo. I have never explored that area, it was a forbidden place, I was not allowed to go there.

The "Taboo Exercise" was a real challenge for me. I started the massage of the anal muscles very carefully while I was taking a shower. With time the feelings like shame or guilt slowly started to disappear.

After the training I accepted the anus as natural, as normal part of my body. And also now I enjoy when my partner touches it. It is a new excitement in our love-erotic play...

Diary entry of a 21 year old woman from Southeastern Europe:

Generally I had feelings of disgust while I looked at vaginas, and most sickening was to look at my own vagina. I felt repulsion to touch it. I had an unexplainable pain in my stomach and feelings of fear and uncertainty. Each time when I used to look at my vagina I saw dark spaces. I had the thought: my vagina is not worthy! After the exercise with the hand mirror (to look at and examine the genitals with my fingers), I discovered a completely new world in my vagina. The dark space was transforming into a red flower. At the beginning I was very careful and with fear of touching that "disgusting" part of my body. But, slowly after a few times trying, and after reading the instructions given in the training program and speaking with my contact person, I was more relaxed and less disturbed while exploring my vagina. I even started to enjoy this exercise, and it became one of my favorites in the training. Now I am in love with my vagina!

Diary entry concerning Vajroli Mudra and Tribanda written by a 25 year old woman from Southeastern Europe:

This exercise was the first in the training and I started with it, but as in earlier attempts I did it without success. But because it was recommended to repeat this exercise during the training, I was really persistent and dedicated to get it right. In combination with Tribanda it was better. The exploration of my body with the touch also helped me to do this exercise better. In the end I managed. I began to contract some of the pelvic floor muscles also while making love with my partner, and there was more excitement and I felt more sexual pleasure. I got the impression that I can control my body through this exercise and that I can really train it for nice goals.



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