

INTEGRATING SEXUALITY AND SPIRITUALITY

—The ISIS Survey—

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FIRST, PLEASE TELL US SOMETHING ABOUT YOURSELF: Check the alternatives that best describe your experience, adding whatever information may be necessary.

1. Age _____ Gender: Female Male Crossgender Occupation _____
2. State and/or country you live in _____
3. Highest education completed 1 Grade School 2 High School 3 College 4 Masters 5 Doctorate
6 Post Doctorate
4. Ethnic identification (check all that apply) 1 Caucasian (White) 2 African-American (Black) 3 Hispanic
4 Native American 5 Asian 6 Other (please specify) _____
5. Yearly household income (round numbers) \$ _____
6. Religion you grew up with 1 Roman Catholic 2 Protestant 3 Fundamentalist Christian 4 Jewish
5 Buddhist 6 Mormon 7 Atheist 8 Agnostic 9 None 10 Other (please specify) _____
7. Religious affiliation now 1 Roman Catholic 2 Protestant 3 Fundamentalist Christian 4 Jewish
5 Buddhist 6 Mormon 7 Atheist 8 Agnostic 9 None 10 Other (please specify) _____
8. Political philosophy 1 Liberal 2 Conservative 3 Other (please specify) _____
9. Attitude toward abortion 1 Pro Choice 2 Anti-Abortion 3 Other (please specify) _____
10. Sexual Preference 1 Heterosexual 2 Bisexual 3 Lesbian/gay 4 Other (please specify) _____
11. Relationship status 1 No current partner 2 Married 3 In a committed relationship 4 Separated 5 Divorced
6 Widowed 7 Other (please specify) _____
12. Number of years (or fraction of years) with current partner _____
13. Gender of current partner 1 Male 2 Female 3 Crossgender
14. Disabilities/chronic illnesses 1 Cancer 2 Heart Disease 3 HIV/AIDS 4 Diabetes 5 Arthritis
6 Depression 7 None 8 Other (please specify) _____
15. Experience of sexual abuse 1 As a child 2 As an adult 3 Never
16. Addictive use of alcohol and/or drugs 1 In the past 2 In the present 3 Never

17. Here are some comments people have made about sex and spirituality. Check *all* that reflect your experience.

- 1 "Sex usually means intercourse."
- 2 "For me, sex is much more than intercourse; it involves all of me--body, mind, heart, and soul."
- 3 "I associate spirituality mainly with going to church."
- 4 "When I open myself to warmth, desire, depth, expansion, and trust, there is no separation between sex and spirit."
- 5 "Sex is for conceiving babies and has little to do with spirituality."
- 6 "It's through my senses that I often experience God."
- 7 "All my life I've been told that people who love sex *too much* will go to hell."
- 8 "Mainly, sex means connection with my partner."
- 9 "Sex is physical, but it also involves love, romance, even mystical union."
- 10 "For people who have been sexually disappointed or hurt, consciously giving and receiving sexual pleasure can be healing."

2.

18. Sexual romance and religious worship have many kinds of symbols and rituals in common.

(check *all* that you associate with both your sexuality and your spirituality)

- | | | | |
|---|---------|----|------------------------------|
| 1 | Candles | 7 | Special foods |
| 2 | Incense | 8 | Words of comfort |
| 3 | Flowers | 9 | Words of love |
| 4 | Wine | 10 | Laying on of hands |
| 5 | Music | 11 | None of the above |
| 6 | Dancing | 12 | Other (please specify) _____ |

19. When I use the word "spirituality" in the context of my sexuality, I mean: (check one)

- 1 Spirituality but not religion
- 2 Religion but not spirituality
- 3 Spirituality and religion combined
- 4 Other (please specify) _____

20. To me, it seems sacrilegious to talk about sex and spirituality together

1 Yes 2 No

21. What do sexuality and spirituality involve in your life?

(For each pair of statements, check line segment closest to statement that best reflects your experience)

Sexuality Involves

- | | | |
|---|-------|---|
| 1 Excitement | _____ | Boredom |
| 2 Honesty | _____ | Deception |
| 3 Caring for others | _____ | Caring for self |
| 4 Numbed senses | _____ | Heightened senses |
| 5 Intense body pleasure | _____ | Minimal body pleasure |
| 6 Intense inner vitality | _____ | Minimal inner vitality |
| 7 Constraint | _____ | Liberation |
| 8 Integration | _____ | Fragmentation |
| 9 Oneness with self | _____ | Distance from self |
| 10 Oneness with partner | _____ | Distance from partner |
| 11 Oneness with a power greater than self | _____ | Distance from a power greater than self |
| 12 Worship | _____ | Blasphemy |
| 13 Other (please specify) | _____ | |

Spirituality Involves

- | | | |
|---|-------|---|
| 14 Excitement | _____ | Boredom |
| 15 Honesty | _____ | Deception |
| 16 Caring for others | _____ | Caring for self |
| 17 Numbed senses | _____ | Heightened senses |
| 18 Intense body pleasure | _____ | Minimal body pleasure |
| 19 Intense inner vitality | _____ | Minimal inner vitality |
| 20 Constraint | _____ | Liberation |
| 21 Integration | _____ | Fragmentation |
| 22 Oneness with self | _____ | Distance from self |
| 23 Oneness with partner | _____ | Distance from partner |
| 24 Oneness with a power greater than self | _____ | Distance from a power greater than self |
| 25 Worship | _____ | Blasphemy |
| 26 Other (please specify) | _____ | |

22. Which *one* of the above statements would you say is *most* true:

- (1) of your current SEXUAL experience? _____
- (2) of your current SPIRITUAL experience? _____

23. Sex needs to have a spiritual element to be really satisfying. (check one)

- 1 Always true for me
- 2 Sometimes true for me
- 3 Neither true nor untrue for me
- 4 Seldom true for me
- 5 Never true for me

24. With which of the following has sex been a spiritual experience for you? (check *all* that apply)

- 1 Husband
- 2 Wife
- 3 Committed partner
- 4 Casual encounter
- 5 Affair while committed to someone else
- 6 Self
- 7 None of the above
- 8 Other (please specify) _____

25. Sex has been *most* spiritual with which partner in Question 24? (write in number) _____

26. Sex has been *least* spiritual with which partner in Question 24? (write in number) _____

27. Which of the following have contributed to sex being a spiritual experience for you? (check *all* that apply)

- 1 Being in love
- 2 Conceiving a baby
- 3 Being pregnant
- 4 Having no fear of getting pregnant
- 5 Feeling committed to my partner
- 6 Feeling free of responsibility to my partner
- 7 Feeling safe
- 8 Experiencing a personal crisis
- 9 Feeling in control
- 10 Feeling controlled
- 11 Being in the mood
- 12 Aggressive thrusting
- 13 Danger
- 14 Drinking or drugs
- 15 None of the above
- 16 Other (please specify) _____

28. Which *one* of the above circumstances has contributed *most* to spiritual sex? (write in number) _____

29. Which *one* of the above circumstances has contributed *least* to spiritual sex? (write in number) _____

30. Which of the following have you done to help bring a spiritual dimension to your sexual experiences? (check *all* that apply)

- | | | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|----|------------------------------|
| 1 | Made eye contact with my partner | 9 | Kissed soulfully |
| 2 | Shared deep feelings with my partner | 10 | Played music |
| 3 | Lit candles or incense | 11 | Danced |
| 4 | Bathed | 12 | Fantasized or daydreamed |
| 5 | Enjoyed special foods | 13 | Laughed together |
| 6 | Meditated before getting physical | 14 | Let go of control |
| 7 | Made love in a special place | 15 | Did nothing special |
| 8 | Touched reverently | 16 | Other (please specify) _____ |

31. Which *one* of the above choices has been *most* helpful in bringing a spiritual dimension to your sexuality? (write in number) _____

32. Which *one* of the above choices has been *least* helpful in bringing a spiritual dimension to your sexuality? (write in number) _____

33. How have your spiritual beliefs led you to express your sexuality more fully? (check *all* that apply)

- 1 By affirming that love is good in all its forms and expressions
- 2 By teaching that making love is holy
- 3 By opening me to risk deeper intimacy
- 4 By giving me faith when I've felt like running away from pleasure
- 5 By sanctioning my feelings of longing and passion
- 6 By making the physical part of relationship into a sacrament
- 7 Other (please specify) _____

34. How have your spiritual beliefs prevented you from expressing your sexuality as fully as you might? (check *all* that apply)

- 1 By giving me the message "good girls don't"
- 2 By making sexual desire a source of guilt
- 3 By making the body a source of shame
- 4 By teaching that sex is not for pleasure, but for procreation (conceiving babies)
- 5 By teaching that pleasure is more important for a man than for a woman
- 6 By keeping me from exploring sexual taboos
- 7 Other (please specify) _____

35. Has anything else in your life prevented you from experiencing a sex-spirit connection? (check *all* that apply)

- | | | | |
|----|------------------------------|----|--|
| 1 | Childhood abuse | 9 | Pregnancy |
| 2 | Abuse as an adult | 10 | Parenthood |
| 3 | Drinking and/or drug use | 11 | My partner only thinking about physical kicks |
| 4 | Depression and/or anxiety | 12 | Not loving my partner |
| 5 | Physical disabilities | 13 | My partner not loving me |
| 6 | Worry about how I look | 14 | Sex isn't that interesting to me |
| 7 | Getting older | 15 | Spirituality isn't that interesting to me |
| 8 | Not having a partner | 16 | I've never thought of spirituality as a part of sex before now |
| 17 | Other (please specify) _____ | | |

36. Which *one* of the above choices has *most* prevented you from experiencing a sex-spirit connection? (write in number) _____

4.

37. Have you ever experienced sexual ecstasy? 1 Yes 2 No

38. Have you ever experienced spiritual ecstasy? 1 Yes 2 No

39.-40. Some people feel that experiences they associate with sexual satisfaction are similar to experiences they associate with spiritual satisfaction. What do you associate with your sexual satisfaction and/or spiritual satisfaction? (check *all* that apply)

	39. Associate with Sexual Satisfaction	40. Associate with Spiritual Satisfaction
Release of body tension.....	1	1
Release of emotional tension.....	2	2
Heightened senses	3	3
Clarity of understanding.....	4	4
Surge of energy	5	5
Peace and serenity	6	6
Feeling loved and accepted.....	7	7
Feeling loving and accepting.....	8	8
Oneness with self	9	9
Oneness with partner	10	10
Oneness with nature	11	11
Oneness with a power greater than self	12	12
Other	13	13
(please specify) _____		(please specify) _____

41. Which one of the above experiences is *most* essential to your SEXUAL satisfaction? (write in number) _____

42. Which one of the above experiences is *most* essential to your SPIRITUAL satisfaction? (write in number) _____

43. In a moment of SEXUAL ecstasy have you ever had a sense of experiencing God/Universal energy? 1 Yes 2 No

44. In a moment of SPIRITUAL ecstasy have you ever felt a surge of sexual energy? 1 Yes 2 No

45. Please indicate how important the following concepts are for your present life situation (circle numbers below)

	Not at all Important	Extremely Important
1 Sexuality	1	2..... 3..... 4..... 5..... 6
2 Spirituality	1	2..... 3..... 4..... 5..... 6
3 Religion.....	1	2..... 3..... 4..... 5..... 6

(Optional)

Below or on a separate piece of paper, please say more about your sexuality and spirituality. How did you discover that sex can be spiritual? What are your most memorable experiences--by yourself and/or with a partner?