

May 6, 2004

Transcendent Sex: When Lovemaking Opens the Veil

An Evening with Jenny Wade, Ph.D.



Jenny Wade is a highly respected author and researcher in consciousness studies. In her new book, she explores what the ancient world called Sacred Sex. The stories presented in *Transcendent Sex: When Lovemaking Opens the Veil*, told by ordinary men and women, reveal that people just like us can suddenly experience powerful energies while making love that transform their view of reality.

Her fascinating book is based on the narratives of 91 women and men who were not using drugs or engaging in any practices or techniques designed to bring about an altered state during sex. Their stories are amazing, touching, funny, heart-warming and inspiring. For these men and women, going to bed as they had always done suddenly turned into an awe-inspiring experience that forever changed the way they understood both themselves and reality. They experienced profoundly the power of the body and of sexuality as vehicles of realization.

Dr. Jenny Wade is a core faculty member of the Institute of Transpersonal Psychology (ITP) and a consultant to business. She is also the author of *Changes of Mind: A Holonomic Theory of the Evolution of Consciousness*, which experts have called “stunningly original” and “a tour de force construction of an exciting theory.”

In her groundbreaking new study on sex and spirituality, *Transcendent Sex: When Lovemaking Opens the Veil*, she reports that profound spiritual experiences may occur during sexual intercourse between ordinary men and women. Approximately 10-12 percent of adults may have these experiences at least once in life. However, people have been reluctant to talk about how the act of lovemaking can trigger intense episodes that feature characteristics identical to the highest spiritual states documented in diverse religious traditions, the annals of yoga, and recent research on shamanism.

According to Dr. Wade, “The ordinary act of lovemaking can be the most widely available path to higher consciousness. People who have experienced a transcendent episode during sex usually believe they have tapped into divine forces, even if they are atheists or agnostics. I call the spontaneous altered states that occur during lovemaking transcendent sex,” she explained, “because people seem to go beyond, or transcend, the boundaries of the natural world and the normal limitations of self. These experiences are so extreme they change people’s views of sex and spirituality. They have literally changed people’s lives.”

Dr. Wade, a developmental psychologist specializing in research on naturally occurring altered states of consciousness, conducted extensive interviews of people who said they had had unusual experiences in the course of making love when they were not drinking, using drugs, or practicing techniques like Tantric yoga to induce an altered state during sex. The 91 people whose stories are told in her book are normal adults, most of whom were reared in traditional Judeo-Christian homes. They had no special training in the esoteric erotic arts.

“What these ‘naïve subjects’ said happened during sex is phenomenologically identical to descriptions of mystical states achieved by shamans and spiritual adepts in contemplative Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam,” Dr. Wade said. Related research by Abraham Maslow, Stanislav Grof and many others, suggests that such incidents are quite common, although they have not been studied in depth before.

These lovers, unlike spiritual seekers, are not trying to bring about these profound experiences, and, consequently, they are not prepared for the impact on their lives. They find themselves catapulted into a different reality or participating in events that are normally considered impossible. Dr. Wade found that these happenings are so counter to normal experience that the vast majority believed they were of a spiritual origin.

We hope you will join us for a thought-provoking talk by Dr. Jenny Wade, followed by a lively conversation amongst all of us, about a fascinating, little-known transcendent phenomenon produced by one of the most basic of human experiences – sexual love.