

Introduction

Why this supplemental chapter?

In the 20 years since the Aquarian Teacher textbook was written, there have been cultural shifts regarding perceptions of sexual orientation and sexual identities. We've moved beyond the "traditional" binary sexual identities of male and female and strictly heterosexual attraction. This supplemental chapter on Humanology attempts to re-frame the ancient yogic information in the Aquarian Teacher textbook (particularly chapter 19) without the heterosexual bias.

The intent of this supplement is to absolutely NOT change the teachings of Yogi Bhanan or to dispute the ancient yogic principles. We do need to update the language so that it is clear that all people are included in the practice of Kundalini Yoga, and we need to explore how the fundamental principles can be extended to apply to situations that weren't addressed at the time those teachings were given. Our touchstone, based in the teachings of Yogi Bhanan, is that all human beings have the same infinite potential, and are equally deserving of our love, compassion and service. As teachers of Kundalini Yoga, we must accept everyone without judgment. As Yogi Bhanan said (quoted at the very beginning of the Aquarian Teacher manual, page iii), "There is no identity for you, except your Spiritual Identity."

Essentially Yogi Bhanan didn't address LGBT concerns uniquely; that is, he addressed it in the same way he addressed all ego-identities. If it got in the way of you being you, he challenged it. He taught that homosexual imprints come from the relationship with the mother, but the same is true for all of us—on any part of the sexuality or gender spectrum. He taught the polarities of human sexuality; but he came to believe that these same polarities he described in heterosexual relationships could be applied to homosexual relationships. He recognized that every woman has a man within her and every man has a woman with him. Human expression of gender depends upon the balance of male and female within the individual.

Over the 35 years that he taught in the United States, his position on homosexuality evolved. Essentially, he changed his mind, put aside any cultural imprints from his own upbringing, and came to see homosexuality as simply another human expression of identity, love and sexuality, among many. And in the end, regardless of your own personal labels—gay, straight, black, white—his final teaching was always this: "Just be you."

This question is asked and answered thoroughly in the training materials for teachers of Kundalini Yoga in pages 183-187 of the LifeCycles and LifeStyles Level Two Course:

"Sometimes we are asked whether a gay or transgender individual can become a teacher of Kundalini Yoga. The answer is of course, "Yes." Yogi Bhanan never made the distinction

or considered such a category: all human beings are of equal potential for honor and corruption, period.

“Sometimes we are asked technical questions such as if various mudras, which use a left or right side differently for men and women, need to be changed for individuals on various points of the sexual identity spectrum. Yogi Bhanan never commented or gave any general rules or guidelines on this. He did recognize that the dominant gender experience a person has may not correspond to the physical sex of the body. He also emphasized that even in the common gender experience, in which a person with a male body feels “male,” a man’s psyche is at least 40% feminine and vice versa in a woman! In other words, he sees gender as a dimension that varies in its mix and proportion across individuals.

“As yogis, we should be aware that the teachings of yoga, merger and polarity are universal and do not reject or restrict the creative expression of polarity in sexuality, personality or temperament. There are topics unique to many social, religious and political groups that are not addressed directly by Kundalini Yoga simply because those questions are neither the focus nor the expertise of these teachings. In the body of Kundalini Yoga teachings, there are no special topics, or body of kriyas, specifically for individuals along the sexual spectrum because all are influenced by the same energy, principles and laws of consciousness. All are welcome. All are served by their own consciousness—and the consciousness that comes from these practices supports everyone in delivering their best within their own lives and society as a whole.”

Here are a few selected quotes that reflect Yogi Bhanan’s position on the mother’s universal and powerful impact on a child’s development.

In child development, it is not that somebody is sitting there, taking a piece of meat like Earth or clay, putting some herbs in it, and cleaning it out. That’s not how the child develops. The child develops at a certain frequency of the electromagnetic field, in the processing of the mother’s neurons and her circulatory system and her nervous system. All of that allows the child to develop and forms the child’s characteristics—it determines whether he will be cool, calm, beautiful, wonderful, crazy, saintly, or horrible. The mother’s electromagnetic field determines whether somebody will be a criminal, somebody will be a prostitute, somebody will be gay, somebody will be successful, somebody will be a fanatic, somebody will be a religious cheat. Whatever the patterns of the electromagnetic field are shall live in the child. If you make six-bedroom house, it is not going to be a nine-bedroom house and it is not going to be a three-bedroom house. If you do not put in a bedroom or a bathroom, it is not the engineer’s mistake or the designer’s mistake. It is the owner’s mistake that the house doesn’t have a bedroom or a bathroom. From the child’s conception to delivery is the subtlest issue; it is extremely sensitive. . . .

*Why do some of you like to dance and others don’t want to dance at all?
Why do some of you want to just drink all the time and others don’t?*

*Why are some of you escapist and others are not? Have you ever thought about the answer to these questions? Why are some gay and others are not? Why are some tall and others short? There is an answer for all this. But don't ask me. Ask a horticulture expert; he will tell you that if the seed is this, is put this way, and if the temperature is this, then it will grow this way.*¹

*Nobody is gay, nobody is a lesbian, nobody is a prostitute, nobody is a thief, nobody is a king, nobody is a president, nobody is an actor, nobody is rich, nobody is poor—it is all a result of the circuitry that we follow. And that is the total sum of the game of life. The game is set from the hundred-twentieth day in the mother's womb to the day of delivery. The rest is a workout. . . . This thing was recognized by yoga as a science. This is what yogic sutra says: "Man is born in the image of God; there is nothing good and bad."*²

It should be clear from his quotations and the training materials that sexual and gender identities are seen as part of the natural order and is not a subject to moral or social judgment. In the court of the heart we are all judged as human beings first and by our actions second. We are all here to thrive, share and uplift through unique identities as well as through our universal spirits.

Is it still important to even study male/female differences?

Absolutely! No matter how they are expressed in an individual, we all have both masculine and feminine energies within us. Understanding these energies, and how the play of this particular polarity expresses itself within us and in the relationships between us can be a great help in expanding our self-knowledge and our ability to consciously navigate our relationships. No matter how the polarity expresses itself for your self, it is also important as a Kundalini Yoga Teacher to understand the variety of ways that other people experience this polarity – so you can serve the infinite within them and support their journey to yoga – living unaffected by polarities.

For example, honoring of the divine feminine energy, the Adi Shakti, is missing from many cultures these days. Understanding, respecting, and strengthening this side of this polarity is helpful for everyone – of all genders and orientations.

Just like we study the three gunas and the 5 tattvas to better understand ourselves and world, we need to try to view the polarity of the divine feminine and the divine masculine without our cultural prejudices. Ultimately, we want to keep both aspects strong and balanced, using both as needed without being locked into a single mode of being.

Keeping the focus on masculine energy and feminine energy, rather than male and female, is perhaps the easiest way to read the Humanology Chapter in the Aquarian Teacher textbook. In almost every instance that the book says "Man" or "Male," simply mentally replace that with "Masculine energy" and "Female" or "Woman" with "Feminine Energy."

¹ © The Teachings of Yogi Bhanjan, *March 28, 1989*

² © The Teachings of Yogi Bhanjan, *March 31, 1989*

Yogi Bhanjan's teaching about how we all have both aspects within us, even the most stereotypical male has 40% feminine energy, is pretty radical and can be a powerful teaching to help us focus on how we all are the same on the inside, and take the emphasis off how it expresses on the outside.

What are some of the characteristics of the divine masculine and divine feminine energies? The masculine energy within us is projective, initiating, focused, linear. The feminine aspect within all of us gives us sensitivity, intuition, expansion, the capacity to be nurturing, and multi-dimensional and non-linear thinking. We need both sets of qualities to be a happy, high-functioning human being; and we need to honor and respect them both to have a healthy society. Neither is better or worse than the other – they are just different.

Recognizing that there are these two different energies gives a very different perspective on the typical gender-equality conversations. Yes, both masculine and feminine energies are equally divine, and equally important – but they are not the same! A person with a lot of masculine energy will bring a different perspective to a situation than someone with a lot of feminine energy.

What is LGBT anyway?

For those that are not familiar with the abbreviation, or its components, LGBT is an abbreviation for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender. Often this acronym is also used to encompass other sexual orientations and gender identities, such as Queer, Questioning, or Intersex, and sometimes the initials are extended such as LGBTQI. LGBT has become a mainstream self-designation by the majority of community centers and media in the United States and some other countries.

There can be many different definitions for any of the terms like “lesbian,” or “queer,” and the below list is not meant to be restrictive, complete or thorough. It is simply a primer for anyone unfamiliar, but it should be used knowing that individuals may self-identify differently.

Lesbian – A female who experiences romantic love and sexual attraction to other females. Can also be used to express sexual identity or sexual behavior regardless of sexual orientation, for example, one may identify as a lesbian and yet remain celibate or one may identify as heterosexual and occasionally have sex with women.

Gay – An adjective describing anyone, but particularly males, romantically and sexually attracted to members of the same sex. Can also be used to express sexual identity or sexual behavior regardless of sexual orientation, for example, one may identify as a gay man and yet remain celibate or occasionally have sex with women.

Bisexual – Romantic or sexual feelings toward both men and women or romantic or sexual attraction to people of any sex or gender identity

Transgender people are people who have a gender identity, or gender expression, that differs from the sex they were “assigned” at birth (generally based on

the baby's genitalia). The opposite of transgender is cisgender, or just cis – which is when a person has a gender identity that matches the sex they were assigned at birth. Other identities that fall under this umbrella are gender fluid and gender queer.

Queer –

An umbrella term for sexual and gender minorities that are not heterosexual or not cisgender. Queer identities may be adopted by those who reject traditional gender identities and seek a broader, less conformist, and deliberately ambiguous alternative to the label LGBT. Other sexual identities also fall under this umbrella, such as pansexual. As this is a reclamation of a word used to denigrate sexual minorities, if you do not identify as queer, use this word judiciously.

Intersex – Previously referred to as hermaphrodites (which has fallen out of favor as perhaps misleading or stigmatizing), intersex refers to people with variations in sex characteristics that do not fit the typical binary notions of male or female.

Chapter 19 - Humanology

This section offers an attempt to update and expand each subsection of this important chapter.

a. The Power of the Mother

Everyone has a biological mother, and the yogic teachings on how impactful the mother's health and entire psyche is on the developing child are important. The biological mother has the strongest impact on the child during the time of pregnancy.

After birth, families come in all shapes and sizes, including same-sex couples, one parent families, multi-generational families, and other diverse forms. Yogi Bhanjan's teachings on the huge impact of the mother on the upbringing of a child (after birth and ideally after the 40 days) apply to the child's primary caregiver including birth mother, father, adoptive parents of any gender, etc. Because we all have both masculine and feminine energies within us, parents should be conscious to expose the developing child to both polarities, encouraging them both within the child, and helping them develop effective and conscious strategies for interacting with people of all gender expressions.

b. Living as a Man or as a Woman

The science of Kundalini Yoga and White Tantric Yoga is based on the law of polarities. Its underlying assumption is that all creation is borne out of the polarity between Unmanifested and Manifested energy. This is played out in all

aspects of our interactions as spiritual beings having a human experience. Gender expression is another manifestation of these polarities. Gender identity exists on a continuum with masculine on one end and feminine on the other. Most of us exist on a spectrum in the fairly narrow range of 60/40 to 40/60 masculine to feminine energy, even for the most “stereotypical” male or female. So, we are much more all alike than different. At the center point is an expression of non-binary gender identity – people who relate to gender in an even more fluid way, seeing themselves as neither or both masculine and feminine. Because we live in a world of polarities, and Kundalini Yoga is based on these polarities, we don’t yet have the consciousness to understand these teachings from a non-binary perspective.

Yogi Bhajan taught that masculine traits are related to certain chemical changes in the womb – the acid bath. It is an interesting, and open question if the acid bath for male children is any different for LGBTQ children. There is some scientific evidence that the presence or absence of testosterone in the fetus and amniotic fluid are linked to both the development of physical genitalia and later sexual orientation. Research in this area is still not conclusive.

While we don’t know definitively, the acid bath may be less prominent in some people – allowing them to express both masculine and feminine polarities later in life (or to express one identity that may be different than their biological gender). Having the flexibility as parents and community members to respond to a child’s fluctuating sense of gender will help the child remain authentic to their own experiences as a human being – regardless of the cause.

- i. Ways to fulfill destiny for a man and for a woman: Yogi Bhajan taught that there is one way for “men” and 4 ways for “women” to fulfill their destiny. Seva and bhakti as a path to liberation are probably available to everyone. But interpreting the heart of Yogi Bhajan’s teachings on this, it is likely easier for someone with more feminine energy to perfect the yoga of service.
- ii. 2nd arc line of a woman – What happens with that in gender fluid situations? Again, this may just be interesting but unanswerable questions until either science or our consciousness develops further to be able to answer these sensitive questions.
- iii. It says that it's easier for a male or female child to establish their identity with the mother is stable in her identity as a woman, and the father is stable in his identity as a man. What about same-sex couples?

Having two parents, both being stable in their identities, whatever those are, is what will be best for the children. Given that the child will have both polarities within them, exposing kids to strong examples of both masculine and feminine energies will help them develop in balanced

ways themselves – both within themselves and as they relate to others. But even same-sex couples will exhibit this polarity, so there is no need to worry or to think that same-sex couples would do any less a job as parents as heterosexual couples.

iv. Primal Nature of a Male and Female

It would be best to mentally replace each instance of “male” or “man” in this series of sections in the manual with “masculine energy,” and “female” with “feminine energy.”

v. A Female has Six “Tracks”

This section talks about a woman having 6 tracks to her mind and men having one. Perhaps a way to update this section while maintaining the core truth beneath it is to simply say that the stronger the feminine energy within you, the easier it is to handle multiple things at once.

vi. A Woman Thinks in Ideas, a Man Thinks in Problems

Similarly, can we simply say that the stronger the feminine energy within you, the more likely it is that you'll think in ideas than problems. But regardless of your physical gender, or your gender identity, you can certainly have aspects of both. So, it is good to recognize how you operate, and how others operate, so you can be sensitive and conscious.

c. Relationships

- i. "Woman wants her husband to give her security. The man wants his wife to give him support." This would be a fascinating topic to discuss with people of different gender identities. Is it accurate to say that a more feminine energy, regardless of gender, will look for security more, and the masculine polarity will look for support? For a lot of cis-gendered people, these phrases point to some deep truths. Understanding them can really help us see more clearly what is driving behavior within long-term relationships.

If you don't resonate with these phrases, and you've applied your consciousness to them to see if maybe they are true but lurking in your unconscious, then just learn them as something that may be useful for some of your students. It is also important to remember that these phrases point to a much deeper set of tendencies than we may at first assume. Of course, all of us want both support and security. No matter what our identity or orientation, we all will experience days when we long for security more than support; and vice versa. This portion of the Humanology teachings is bringing to our awareness that at least in cisgender people, there are undercurrents deep in our unconscious minds that strongly influence our life choices – especially our intimate relationships. A longing for security and a longing for support are just two of the expressions of the feminine-masculine energetic polarity. As

we accept people with every different mix of those two energies, we can be alert to how they express in this realm of unconscious longings.

- ii. One Soul in Two Bodies – Again, masculine energy and feminine energy can replace the words “man” and “woman.” Any two people in a long term, committed relationship can merge in this same way Yogi Bhanjan taught that in each relationship one partner is the lover and the other the beloved. Determining these roles creates a stability in the relationship over time. These roles are found in both heterosexual and homosexual relationships. The lover is more the giver and the beloved the recipient of the lover’s gifts. Problems in relationship happen when these roles are confused.
- iii. The same interpretation applies to the next two sub-headings, “A Woman Regulates the Relationship” and “The Man as the Electro-Magnetic Field of the Family.” The feminine and masculine energies will play these polarity roles in a relationship. Every relationship can be made stronger and healthier by looking for how these archetypes are showing up. And by not confusing “equal” with “identical.” Of course, both partners are equal in contribution, in importance, in deserving respect. But it is important not to think of, or treat, the two polarities of masculine and feminine as the same.
- d. Auric imprint – While this section always seems to be thought provoking when introduced in a teacher training course (especially for poly-amorous practitioners), it also raises several interesting questions for same sex couples. What happens when 2 women sleep together? Do both get aurically imprinted? Or not? When two men sleep together is there no imprinting? While we await science or extremely sensitive yogis to help answer these questions, it’s good for everyone to remember that sexual relations have a deeper impact than most Western people give them credit for. As beings with 10 bodies, it is important to view sex as impactful for more than just our physical bodies.

Beyond the Textbook’s Humanology Chapter

Outside of the Humanology Chapter in the Aquarian Teacher manual, there are several other instances where Man-Woman language is used. It is important to remember that Yogi Bhanjan never addressed how these technologies would apply, or need to be modified, for people of various gender identities. There could be other interpretations and other ways people could apply these specific Yogi Bhanjan teachings to transgender or gender fluid people. This is simply our suggestion.

Below are some examples of exercises that have specific, different mudras for men and women. In each, the recommendation is to use whichever form of the mudra corresponds to the gender identity with which you are more strongly identified. This could evolve over time and may not always correspond to your birth gender, but it is not usually a casual change. If you feel that your masculine energy is stronger, use the masculine form of

the mudra. If you feel that your feminine energy is stronger, then use the feminine version of the mudra.

- a. Venus lock
- b. Buddha Mudra
- c. GRD Chant for rhythmic harmony
- d. Kundalini Yoga Meditation: Stress Backpack Meditation #3 (in Vitality & Stress)

In summary, we have the blessing to live in a time when social views of different sexual orientations and different gender identities are changing rapidly. We support and applaud the expansion of love and acceptance to include everyone. The Teachings of Yogi Bhajan are based on ancient yogic science, grounded in deep truths about the human experience. In the spirit of full inclusion, we have the chance to explore how this technology works for people of different sexual identities, and how the universal polarity of the divine feminine and divine masculine energies plays out in individuals and relationships that were not explicitly addressed in Yogi Bhajan's teachings.

This supplementary chapter attempts to frame this exploration and offer some thoughts as to how it may be approached. We welcome discussion, debate and disagreement with this approach because in the end, we're all human, and we all benefit from practicing Kundalini Yoga as taught by Yogi Bhajan.