

# THE SCHOOL OF WOMANLY ARTS

## The Art of Sensual Pleasure

### Simin, Age 38 – IT Director & Artist



Practicing the Art of Sensual Pleasure simply means owning your power. Sensuality means a lot to me, it is my essence, it is who I am. My sensual expression is my light, my connection to the divine. It is the truth that lives in my body and is undeniable.

When I'm regularly connected to my sensual self, everything is different, because I am grounded in myself. I am walking differently, operating in the world with more confidence, feeling calm and relaxed and thus able to express myself clearly. I come from a place of wisdom, I am playful, and turned on. Connecting with my sensuality helps me feel uplifted and to seek guidance when I need it.

The Art of Sensual Pleasure happens for me on three levels. There is the physical level – acknowledging the presence of my sensual self. The emotional level – sensing that I am supported, and held by a deep power within. And at a spiritual level, my sensuality is my wisdom.

### Paint us a picture of some of the ways you practice The Womanly Art of Sensual Pleasure in your daily life.

**First of all, sensuality is not just about sex.** I practice the Art of Sensual Pleasure using all of my senses. I especially use sound, taste, smell, and movement to connect with my sensuality throughout my day.

It's this practice that helps me stay connected to my divinity and my wisdom, which is so important, especially because I work in computers all day! It's a very heady job, and if I don't practice this Art regularly, I can easily get ungrounded and not present.

Here are some examples of how I often connect with my Sensual Pleasure:

- **Fragrances** really help ground me and connect with my body. I use pure essential oils often. For instance, I'll use lavender to calm me – I use it every night, or sometimes when I'm stressed. There is also a particular perfume that really turns me on, and I love to smell it when I'm intimate with my husband.
- Another way I use smell, as well as the sensual pleasure of beauty, is with **flowers**. I always keep flowers on my nightstand, for example. When I shop for flowers, I just feel into which bouquet wants to come home with me, depending on what I'm needing. Sometimes it's roses. Sometimes it's the fresh feeling of lilies.
- Then, there's **taste . . . I love flavors**. I especially love different flavors bursting in my mouth that surprise me. Taste is so important. Food is a very pleasurable experience for me. It's also something that I really abused for many years. Because I wasn't truly connected with my sensuality, I sought instant gratification through sugar and fatty foods. For several years, I was highly dependent on food as my source of pleasure. Now food and taste is just one of many ways I experience pleasure and tap into my sensuality.
- Music! When I listen to **music**, it's like boom, I drop into my body. If I'm very in my head and I've had a stressful day, and I feel disconnected, almost like I'm split between head and body, the easiest way I can tap back into my sensual pleasure is to sit at my desk and listen to music. Sometimes I just need to listen to a dark song and move my pelvis – just to feel my connection with my pelvis and my legs and my shoulders. That brings me back and grounds me in such an important way.
- On a daily basis, I also **acknowledge my feminine pleasure center**. I will breathe deeply into her, move my hips to awaken my pelvic muscles, and take any action to draw my awareness to her.

- Another way I really get embodied, feeling connected with my own body and the earth is **nature**. I love walking in the park, laying and rolling around in the grass. And hugging trees!

For me, practicing the Art of Sensual Pleasure has seeped into so many moments of my day, and how I navigate life.

## What can you remember about early messages, or experiences, you received around Sensuality?

I grew up in India. My childhood was surrounded by a lot of dysfunction, violence, stress and anxiety. Yet, as a kid, I really remember myself being so alive. I started self-pleasuring at a very young age. I think it was my way of staying connected, in some ways, to my divinity. I would dream about a better life, a better future. By self-pleasuring every night, it was my time to connect, believing that good was possible and I could get out of this.

When I look back on my journey with sensuality, it's like there have always been two aspects, or streams of energy — a darkness and a lightness.

On one hand, my early relationship with sensuality was filled with shame and unsafety. I had an experience with sexual abuse as a child, which created so much fear and shame around it. And on a cultural level, there was certainly fear that it was not safe for me to be open and to be sensual, or sexual. I struggled to stay connected with myself in what became a very unsafe situation.

Yet, on the other hand, there was this place inside of me that said, "No, that's not true, I'm not going to give up on this." My sensuality was somehow always a guiding light, an always-present knowing that I needed to be in touch with myself in this way.

When I came to America at the age of 25, I experienced such freedom in seeing how open people were about their sexuality — they could wear whatever they wanted to wear, and express themselves however they wanted to express.

I realized I could finally live the things I wanted in my heart.

It wasn't simple. For some time, I had such judgment of women who seemed to express their sensuality so freely. I remember once I saw this woman in a

beautiful dress, and she didn't have a bra on. And I remember these two conflicting thoughts — one was, "wow, she's so beautiful," and I felt the desire to be free like her. And then, snap, there was this other voice who said, "What if some guy molests her, what if she's unsafe? How can she dress that way?" I felt pain not being able to be that open and I longed to be free and empowered like those women who owned their sensuality.

## How did you come to the school, and what was your relationship with sensuality like coming in?

I met a few amazing SWA graduates through a movement practice called S Factor. I heard them refer to each other as Sister Goddesses, which was the first time I heard that word and it intrigued me. I heard about their experience with the school, and witnessed one woman's Mastery journey closely. I went to her graduation ceremony and enrolled in SWA that day.

Before learning the Womanly Arts, I was having trouble with my communication at work, I was unhappy and looking for my pleasure in life, I was feeling victimized by my history and childhood, I had not valued the good in my life. I had an amazing husband (still do), a wonderful home, we were financially well, but I always felt like something was missing and that it was not enough.



My first course at the School of Womanly Arts opened me up to sisterhood and living my life pleurably. I loved the intimacy on the calls and also that I got to connect with so many Sister Goddesses internationally. The women in the course filled me up with love and attention in such a powerful way. I was able to heal my relationship with my mother, and begin to step into my leadership at work.

I had been exploring my sensuality at S Factor before I came to Mama Gena's, and yet I felt that something was missing in my relationship with my sensual pleasures. There was a disconnect. I struggled in being orgasmic and I had become a victim to my own body not knowing what turned me on truly or not understanding what was going on physically with my body. There was a feeling of numbness around sensuality. There was no aliveness or softening or surrender in my body.

## What struggles, or obstacles did you experience in your practice of this Art, and how did you overcome them?

I was struggling with not knowing how to turn myself on and that was affecting my relationship with my husband. I was really frustrated by it. I really wanted and needed to know what was going on! I desperately wanted to understand what it was that I needed to do. I wanted to fix it.

And also, there was this really deep longing in my heart to have and know myself fully. Friends would tell me what a great dancer I was, how hot I was, and I couldn't take it in fully. I would feel like, "Okay I know you think I'm hot, I feel hot – but why the &\*\$# am I not having orgasms or enjoying sex?!"

There was this image of what "hot" meant, or what "sex" meant. It was a very masculine idea – the image of multiple orgasms, sex for hours, so goal-oriented. There was too much attachment to that goal, and I had yet to discover the feminine way to sensual pleasure.

When I first read the chapter about sensuality in Mama Gena's book, I was so surprised. I was confused – how is this sensual? Because I was coming from the masculine idea that a woman's sensuality is about the physical act of sex, with the goal of orgasm.

When Mama Gena taught us about the Art of Sensual Pleasure, I felt this surge of energy just gush through my body. It hit somewhere in my system and I just started to cry, and feel such grief about not being as open as I thought I was, and wanted to be.

As I started to uncover my sensual self, I hit against another struggle. I quickly saw how much power, how much wisdom, was inside of me, rooted in my sensual self. And there was a big part of me that didn't want to be powerful. I wanted to be small. I wanted to hide.

I also experienced so much judgment in myself. Judgement of myself, judgment of others. I realize now that the judgment in many ways was a form of protection. Something would happen when I would feel really open and unleashed, and I would want to judge. And then immediately there would be yet another layer of judgment – I'd judge myself for judging! I have learned to be gentler around this – it's one thing to notice where I fall into judgment, but now at least I try to drop that additional layer of unnecessary judging the judgement. : )

With awareness, and the wonderful support of the Sister Goddess community, I released a lot of old pain, letting in how beautifully sensual I really am, knowing that I have so much life in me and can bring so much aliveness to others just by being my sexually and sensually powerful self.

By practicing the Art of Sensual Pleasure, **I stood up for myself and stepped into that place which stood for me.** Which has always been there, I just didn't know it.

**How else has your relationship with sensuality shifted?  
What changes have you seen in your life as a result of practicing this Art?**

**In my marriage,** so much has changed.

I was 16 when I met him, and he was 19. We've been together now for 22 years. We were friends, we studied together, we migrated together from India to America. We established ourselves, and became citizens.

We have gone through so much, focused a lot on surviving. Back then, the pleasure was missing in our sensual connection – even though it was there in other forms. But there was a very strong part of me that kept desiring a very strong, full sexual life with my husband.



Practicing the Art of Sensual Pleasure opened up such important conversations and experimentation with my husband.

Now, post-Mastery, we are enjoying a wonderful new phase of our journey together with so much more ease and pleasure in our sensual life.

**I can even see the shifts at work**, because of my practice in the Art of Sensual Pleasure, and how it helps me stay grounded and confident within myself. I used to be so needy, I lacked confidence, needed approval. I'm not doing that anymore.

Really, this Art affects every aspect of my life.

Now, not only is my Sensual Pleasure safe, but it's where I feel my power.

My work around sensuality at SWA was all about claiming my power, claiming my life.

In SWA, I could merge the spiritual with the sexual.

It is an ongoing journey and I am grateful for the exploration and for the sister goddess community that is holding a beautiful space for my healing.

## If you had to name one thing, what has helped you connect with your sensual self the most?



What I want to emphasize is that what we put our focus on is where the energy runs, and then it becomes easy for us. I am now in a place where I can be walking down the street, and experiencing such pleasure in my body. It's not something that anyone can see, it's just about my own awareness and connection with my body's ability to feel pleasure, in any moment.

So, put simply, I think practicing the Art of Sensual Pleasure starts with putting attention on our sensual self, in any way. Maybe that means smelling flowers each day, or taking time to connect with your body through music, or laying in the grass, or self pleasuring. Once you

begin to put your attention there, it becomes easier and easier to grow your capacity for pleasure.

– Sister Goddess Simin

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Now it's your turn.

Take a moment to reflect on The Art of Sensual Pleasure, in your life. How do you get into your body and experience sensual pleasure? Where are you struggling around sensuality?