



EMBODY

By Sossity Chiricuzio

Perspectives

Embody – Sacred Sexual Deviance

by Sossity Chiricuzio, PQ Monthly

November, 2017

Content warning: non-specific mentions of sexual abuse.

I've had thousands of conversations about sex in my lifetime. I've discussed it with doctors, teachers, and workshop attendees, fellow feminists and students and queers and educators. Lovers, friends, partners, and strangers on the bus. Hundreds of people at a time, from a stage, and huddled in a corner with someone folding into themselves out of shame and fear. People have consistently found it easy to talk to me about sex, and I consistently feel it's part of my work in the world to do so.

It's also an enormous subject, layered and fraught with intersecting issues and gifts, challenges and dangers.

It's also something that has been used against me, and something I've had to reclaim. I'm a survivor of

sexual abuse—as a child, a teenager, and an adult. Sex started off as something wonderful; a loving exploration of myself, a series of consensual and empowering experiments with a friend, and a topic handled honestly and without shame in our family. It became a dangerous trap out in the world when I was six, and it took me over a decade to reclaim that joy and sense of ownership of my body.

Kink was a large part of that reclamation, and has been my best tool for being grounded and present and empowered in my body, and my sexuality.

I didn't know it was kink at first. It was just something I did, alone, and then with other people. It was just part of sex, as far as I knew. Just part of having a body, and nerve endings. I remember when I was eight and learned the trick with a sewing needle and the palm of your hand. That you could stitch a line right across it, without pain or blood, if you were careful to stay shallow. Even though a fingernail lightly drawn across the same skin could produce shivers, or pain if it wasn't so light. Even though that same skin registers heat and cold and soft and rough in an instant. It became harder to hate a body with that kind of superpower.

It was an easier way to explore, especially as it was totally outside the realm of what my perpetrators did to me. The signals from my nerve endings didn't feel like panic, or betrayal. Just information. Just my own body, doing body things.

The first time I had consensual sex as an adult, it was a fast and dry situation with my gay high school boyfriend. Not so much sex as smoke screen, and not repeated. For the two years after that, sex was something to do, meant to punish myself or others, sometimes chosen, sometimes survived, but almost never involving strong sensations. Just numb friction and frustration. By the time I was initiated by a loving lesbian couple at eighteen, my body was a tangled mass of thwarted hunger and sorrowful confusion.

They used hands and bodies and toys and textures and temperatures, with plenty of eye contact and negotiation. They teased and indulged, eased off and climbed, until finally we all broke through a wall together, and my body felt like my own again. At least for a blissful twenty four hours, though I learned I would need to listen to my body consistently, and to reclaim various parts of myself over and over again. Kink, like any kind of sex, is not an easy solution, or the answer to everything.

It can, however, be ritual. Medicine. Magic. It can be be a path to our own shadowy places and back again. It can be a safety net we weave for each other, or ourselves.

I am not saying it is the right tool for everyone, but I will say that it is often a part of our tool kits, even when we don't recognize it as such. Those nights that we 'get wild', or how we sometimes like to bite our lovers, or how we feel about certain items. Those fantasies that we don't share out loud. The birthday spankings we look forward to all year. I will say that kink is often just what's on the other side of the line from what each person considers 'normal sex,' and that crossing lines is sometimes a wonderful adventure.

I will also say that if you are curious and want to explore, to approach it thoughtfully. Do research (by which I do not mean pop culture offerings,) ask questions, pay attention to how you respond, proceed slowly. Consensual is key, including with yourself. Exactly the same suggestions I would make for any kind of sexual exploration, because we all deserve more of that than we've been taught to believe.

I found sacred in my sexual deviance, I wonder what you might find in yours?

Sossity Chircuzio is a writer and columnist based out of Portland, Oregon. She is a regular contributor for PQ Monthly and focuses on social justice, communication, community, and changing the world. You can follow her adventures online @sossitywrites and find more at sossitywrites.com.