



The RISC Course

Session #5 – The Healthy Masculine: How To Win in Relationship

Session Transcript

[0:00:00]

Christian: All right, friends, a big welcome to our living room. Once again we are, as very usual, Sonika and Christian. We're thrilled to be with you. So thank you very much for joining us.

Today is Session 5 of the RISC course. RISC is for Relationship, Intimacy, Sex and Communication. This particular number five we call the Healthy Masculine or we could say the Healthy Masculine Force. That is what we're going to be talking about and having you practice different things with tonight.

Sonika: One of the things we really discovered early on in our relationship is that our I I we tend to focus in on communication and intimacy and sharing our feelings, but there is another aspect of relationship that really requires our attention and that's the dance between the masculine and the feminine, our energy dance. Literally, we've got to put attention on what is happening nonverbally between us as well.

Christian: Yeah. And you know in the years we've been doing this type of work, we've only seen so many times that often when a couple, whether it's a straight couple or a gay couple or lesbian couple, it plays out for all couples and also for new couples coming together if it's just a date that often any of the partners could have all the right things to say. They can have all the right distinctions of tools to use in relationship and a great understanding of how to communicate non-offensively and still they would keep recreating a dynamic that just didn't work, that was not pleasing to any of them where they just didn't like the result they were producing between themselves. The key in that case is the nonverbal, is the energetic relationship between us.

Sonika: We'll start actually this session with a quote that we heard once from David Deida who does a whole lot of work with the masculine and feminine in relationship. He said this amazing thing. He said unsundered women attract unpresent men. So just sit with that in a minute. Unsundered women attract unpresent men.

We would say the opposite is also true so we kind of have our own quote that we've added to the mix, which is that unpresent men attract unsundered women or you could say unpresent men attract women who are more close. They're not so open in their heart of their bodies.

Sonika: So just to say here what is essential for us when we're tending to this energy in relationship is we want to create a relationship where we've got a present masculine and surrendered feminine. We can both change roles to take turns with all of that so that it's fluid. In order for there to be a healthy dance, we got to have both.

Christian: We want to say also up front as a disclaim is that when we talk about the masculine and the feminine and men and women, we know that an area that is right for generalization and misunderstanding. So we know that disregarding of the gender configuration of your relationships -- man-woman, man-man, woman-woman -- or anything else, there's still the interplay between the masculine and the feminine.

It's just because I'm a man in a man body and she's a woman in a woman body doesn't mean that I'm always the one inhabiting and displaying the masculine force and vice versa. It goes back and forth. It's domain specific and changes over time and we are well aware of that. Often when we do this, we talk in the lens of relationship. That is a straight relationship. That's the source of the shoes we stand in and speak from. So just to say that we well aware of that.

Sonika: Sometimes also another set of words we use to describe these two polarities or leader and follower and there's lots of different ways to talk about it. Specifically in dancing, if you've ever taken dance lessons, you know that sense of the leader and a follower in order for there to be a right dance. We'll talk more about that here.

Christian: Yeah. And as you might remember in the beginning of your relationship, most relationships, it was like there was this built-in dynamic and sexual tension or what you might have felt like electricity or you can feel your body and your skin tingling.

[0:05:04]

Sonika: Chemistry.

Christian: Chemistry, yeah. And that time there actually is both a hormonal and a biochemical cocktail that runs through our brains and through the blood in our veins and really has a great impact on how we feel. Plus, of course, there is the sheer newness of being with a new partner does a lot to create a certain feeling of excitement and electricity.

Sonika: Yeah. And the potential possibility of anything that could be. But that's we've been in a relationship for a long time, right? We settle into commitment and to know each other. We fall into our daily routines. The tension tends to disappear. We replace this passion and mystery with security and safety. That's what allows us to really settle into long-term relationship.

Christian: If we desire to have that feeling of electricity and aliveness and we call forth that, mmm, there is a dynamic tension required to create the spark and interest and aliveness in sexual desire. When it disappears from the automatics. You can say some of the automatic experience in the beginning. That's not to say it will disappear forever. Many of us think that, "Oh, well, it was lovely in the beginning. Now, I don't really feel that because I know you and we're done with the honeymoon phase. So yeah, all right, whatever."

Sonika: Now it's gone.

Christian: Now it's gone. It was nice while it was here. We don't see it like that. That experience is creatable. Only now it's on **[0:06:41] [Indiscernible]** created to be deliberate about it and it doesn't happen for us all by itself. That is what we're going to be talking about today.

Sonika: We want to be able to do it consciously. One of the things that we discovered in our work with people actually is that often we create fights and upsets and dramas and negative makeups, so we can create and experience this tension. Frankly, finding -- you've probably all heard that saying, right? Negative attention is better than no attention. Negative fighting creates a kind of tension that is better than flat and boring.

Christian: It's like this is better than...

Sonika: Yeah, total disconnection.

Christian: At least there's some life there.

Sonika: So we want to be able to create tension on purpose in a fun, lively, connecting way rather than a disconnecting, unpleasant way.

Christian: So a great analogy to begin to describe what we're talking about here is that of ballroom dancing, when you have two dancers. So Eric, you can show the next slide here with the dancers.

To have a successful experience of dancing at least in the kind of ballroom style dancing, there is a couple of things required: a leader, a follower and dynamic tension. We're going to show you that. Imagine that there is no leader here.

Sonika: Yeah, we're both just following, hanging out.

Christian: We're both waiting, following around, seeing what happens, waiting for someone to lead. I don't know if you can see that but the kind of dance that comes out of that is going nowhere, boring, kind of flat and pointless.

Sonika: It really describes a lot of couples after having been together for a long time, both people are showing up at the table. They're just hanging out. Nobody is really generating or creating anything, this sort of wave for hopefully the other person to bring something to the party. It's boring and flat and you don't really go anywhere.

Christian: It's also another way this would show up in a relationship is you might be really great at taking care of business and chores. You might have that down and you take care of your kids and take care of your work and the bills and the house and everything else. You handle a million things but in the relationship between the two of you, there's no life and what we would call dynamic, a positive dynamic tension. It's flat.

Sonika: Two nice people.

Christian: If you have two people leading at the same time, it looks like this.

Sonika: This way.

Christian: No, no, no. We did that last time. No. We did -- no. That's because my way is right there. The words for that is power struggle, right? And you can tell we're still not going anywhere although we're expending a whole lot of energy. So when we ask people, how does it feel like when you're in a power struggle kind of relationship? A typical word we'll get is "It's exhausting. I spent so much energy and I don't really go anywhere."

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Sonika: A lot of people say, "It feels like a battlefield at home. We're fighting all the time. We're always fighting over who's going to get there or the remote control, who's going to have to be in the kitchen this time."

Christian: Which way of raising children. We don't prioritize or whose family are we going to visit over Thanksgiving, whatever the case may be.

Sonika: I made breakfast yesterday. It's your turn.

Christian: Right.

Sonika: You got it. So in order for there to be this dynamic tension that we're talking about, it really is just on ballroom dancing where you create a side ahead of time who's going to lead, who's going to follow. The follower, for any of you who have ever taken ballroom dancing which I highly recommend.

Christian: Go take a class and even if you've never done it.

Sonika: It's great relationship training, I tell you. So the follower they instruct us to be present like we are in our bodies. We're not surrendered like not here week.

Christian: Right. The follower can't just say, "All right, I'm totally relaxed. Just do me. Just show me where to go," because you can't lead like that. It has to be what we call dynamic tension so you can't feel that. We know we might be able to see but between our hands and arms, there's a very firm frame and extension.

Sonika: It's a little bit like when we talk in the first class about the full potential relationship. I'm here in my power and I'm fully present and so is Christian and we're both bringing all of our self here into this interaction. We're making eye contact. We're present. And from this place, I give Christian, in this case, our mission to lead. I give him leading. I let him take over this interaction and I'm going to allow him to move me wherever he would like to move me. I'm just going to let myself go. But I'm totally here the entire time. He's allowing himself to lead me.

Christian: You'll notice that the one who follows does so from a place of power, choice and presence. I can't just check out any more than the leader came. The leader is not better than the follower. The follower is not more fortunate than the leader. They're equal and the only difference between ballroom dancing and relationship is that in ballroom dancing, it's given in advance typically that the man is the thought leader and the woman is the follower. That does not follow in your relationship, in a relationship at home. It varies. It goes back and forth and

we want it to be able to go back and forth dynamically, fluidly and without big hiccups in the middle.

Sonika: We want to say a little bit more about this because we're going to accept the frame for how to be here with the healthy masculine. So we want to make a couple of points here to talk about why it's essential to pay attention to this energy and relationship and some of what's actually gotten in the way of us having this dynamic tension in relationship.

Christian: Why it's not so easy always? Why we might not be so good at it?

Sonika: So one thing that comes into play here in our energy dance is the feminist movement. When women claimed our power and our right to vote and our right to make a living, to not be dependent upon men financially or for our livelihood or even for having children. We value being in our power. We value equal relationships. We have really come to equate equal with same, right? All of a sudden, for us to be equal now, we've got to be the same in every area. The more we are the same, the less polarity there is.

One of the things that's happening more and more nowadays, so we went from men having the power and women being weak and subservient to now we're at this equal place of, "Hey, I'm just as powerful as you." From this place of equality and power, we actually find a lot in our work with people that women have a tendency to hang out in masculine land a lot especially when we are going to work or taking care of kids or managing the finances. We're doing all the same stuff that men used to mostly take care of. We're doing it and it's really challenging for us when we're out in the workplace making things happen to all of a sudden come home and be in our feminine flow, right?

[0:15:05]

So this tendency for equality calls for flat especially when we meet each other in that way in our sexual relationships, for example. We become like we're really equal and we're both really nice and we're both really in our power. There's no energy. There's no chemistry. We're creating that sense of aliveness and sexual spark.

Christian: I want to say, for some people, they're totally fine with that. I'm okay with that. It's just even and sweet and that's okay. And what we see is that often it doesn't stay okay for very long. It's like it removes the life of the relationship. We'll talk some more about a few other difficulties there are with this.

Sonika: Another thing we'll say and Christian alluded to this earlier as well is that this whole masculine-feminine, leading-following, it's not necessarily gender specific

or even role specific. It's more of this fluid interplay. I don't know if you can notice how Christian and I even lead this class. When I'm the one talking, he backs off and allows me to have the floor. When I'm done he steps in. He takes the lead. I back off. We keep playing this surrendered follower-leader dance is always at play. We are always attentive to who is in charge, who is the one who is presenting or speaking right now, who's the one who gets to back off. In that attention, there is constant movement. There's not a power struggle and there's not flatness. It's a very powerful place. Not only that but we notice that if you broaden out a little bit, Christian is the cook in our family. So he takes more the lead when it comes to cooking food. I'm more the follower. He'll tell me how to help him in the kitchen.

Christian: Sonika will take the lead and the lead in this case is equated with the masculine principle, the masculine force. Sonika will take the lead when it comes to tracking our money. I sometimes call her, she's our minister of finance. She's the one who keeps track of it, makes sure it goes in the right places and communicates with our tax person and all that stuff. She takes the lead there and I follow and trust her lead. She takes the lead and I give her the lead.

Sonika: Right. He takes the lead on making sure we've always got wood in the house or being able to burn our fire. I do more the laundry. I take over of that. This is where I take the lead and he'll ask if he can help. So it's also domain specific where we're one or the other in different domains and even in those domains it can change. Sometimes I'll cook the meal and sometimes he'd do the laundry.

Christian: Right. And in those domains the same potential trouble shows up and we demonstrated it with the dance analogy is if no one is taking a lead on cooking or finances or taking care of the house, it's **[0:18:16] [Indiscernible]**. If both people want to lead and insist on leading in the same domains, we often end up with these domain specific power struggles. So for example, you might recognize that a situation is like you might argue a lot over money. So domain specific power struggle. All right, cool.

The next item we want to bring out here that can make this dance difficult and accounts for why it's not so easy is that culturally speaking across our culture today, men are really confused about this masculine force, how to apply it, where to apply it, with whom to apply it and how much to apply it. We have been, as a culture, we men have been trained to be confused.

On the one hand, we're being hammered with how we should express being masculine by competition and by winning and by getting ahead and making money and being successful and being strong and muscular and dominant and so on. We don't need to give you examples. You know that. But at the same time

we're also being hammered with downplaying or entirely hiding our feminine expression.

Show me a man who didn't grow up with some version of don't show your feelings. Crying is for babies or sissies. Suck it up. Be a man. Don't be girl like that was a bad thing. At the same time, we're also in our relationship women often being trained to downplay our masculine force. You can't just be dominant. You got to be sensitive. You got get into your emotions. You got to listen. You got to have compassion.

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Where do I go? It's like I'm trying to go in five different directions at the same time. Another thing which I relate to this material a lot personally I want to say because I've gone through all this confusion and challenge myself is I feel is forcing me. I feel that, for example, I can get really angry or really passionate. But I also have been seeing in the world what this masculine force has been used for.

I've been grown up watching television and the news and I don't like what I see out there. I don't like how men in general create violence and abuse and fear and war and destruction and civil war and terrorism -- all of it largely perpetrated by men. I don't want any part of that. I do not want to be a man like that.

So this force I feel in me, I'm kind of afraid of because look what it can do if you unleash it on your partners, on your kids, on the world. I don't want any part of that. So I put a lead on it. I put chains on it because I don't want that to happen to me.

Sonika: And with women in our powerful role and we're powerful equal women. With men not wanting to be associated with these male chauvinism groups are damping down their masculinity, we almost have a reversal in our relationships a lot of times where the woman -- and I know I'm speaking in generalities here so please bear with me -- where the woman is taking up the masculine space and the man is backing off.

One of the dynamics that we see a lot where we work with couples is that often the woman really wants to feel that masculine force. That's where we feel safe and protected and chosen and cared for and claimed. I'm yours and I'm going to be okay. When men are backing off with what we kind of fondly refer to as a question mark, that we don't feel them so we come and complain like, "Where are you? I can't feel you. Come on, show up." This has men feel even more confused about "What is it that you're wanting. I don't really know."

In my experience, in our experience working with thousands of couples, men want nothing more than to satisfy and make their partners happy.

Christian: Right. But we now have what we talk about as the question mark syndrome. So men with -- you can imagine here like there's a question mark hanging over my head in the way I approach you and in the way I approach relationship. We'll do a demonstration of it here in a little bit.

Sonika: So when that happens, the woman feels like you're not here. You're trying to be really soft and sensitive, figure out what I want, coming a little question mark, trying to figure it out.

Christian: And I can see that at home you must not be happy with that yet because you're still wanting something, pulling for something, trying to correct me. But I'm trying. I mean what do you want? It doesn't matter what I want to do. I just can't win here.

Sonika: Right. So that has may come in even more which reinforces your question mark, which reinforces you feeling less powerful, which reinforces me telling like I got to do everything. It's another version of downward spiral I suppose you could say. There's actually this really fun --

Christian: We want to show you a little humorous entertaining clip about this. So Eric, if you will load up the little YouTube video we have prepared here, and you'll see this is Brian Scott McFadden who is expressing this. So just watch this.

[Video Playing]

B1: It's really great to be here. I'm single. Thank you. And I'm excited because I just read this article in Cosmo, "What Women Want," said the number one thing women look for in a man isn't money or looks; it's sense of humor. But it turns out it does kind of depend on how poor and unattractive the guy with the sense of humor it. It seems there aren't limits. Sense of humor is great but if the guy is Quasimodo, all the knock knock jokes in the world are not going to help them out on the dance floor.

A woman said this to me recently. What does this mean? She said, "Brian, you get better-looking as I get to know you," which is supposedly a compliment, but it's actually kind of like saying, "Brian, now that I got to know your personality, your physical flaws don't bother me nearly as much as I want to."

But there are certain things that women like other than looks like accents especially the British accent. Yes, yes. And guys from England know this and I think that's why they're all doing it over there because then you're into it the

minute you land. Would you **[0:25:39] [Indiscernible]** your bags? I get it, you're British. You don't have to rub it in. But American actors love the British accent too. We do it in movies that don't even need it like Joaquin Phoenix in the movie Gladiator. "Father, I wanted you to love me. I would have done anything for you to be your son." Joaquin, you're in Italy. Why are you doing a British accent? That's bad acting. It should be like, "Papa, I wanted you to love me."

So what do women want? Guys keep asking and women keep us guessing. That's why whenever a man tries to figure out what a woman wants, he often looks like a cat chasing a laser pointer -- confused, disoriented but strangely hopeful. The thing is women seem to want contradictory things in a man. Women want a man who's ambitious, an achiever who is successful both professionally and financially who's not materialistic.

Women want a man who is solid, steady, consistent and reliable; who is fun, unpredictable and spontaneous. Women want a strong-willed, decisive man who takes a stand and doesn't waiver as long as he is flexible, open-minded, and could admit when he's wrong. Women want a lot. Women want a realist who is romantic, a guy who is serious but playful, who's confident but humble and horny but faithful.

Women want a man who is career-driven but family oriented. Women also want a man who is smart but not nerdy, caring but not needy, affectionate but not clingy, protective but not possessive, emotional but not neurotic, funny but not a clown, dominant but not domineering, and in control but not controlling. No problem. Good to know.

So take notes, guys, remember, all we got to be is strong but sensitive, tough but tender, masculine but gentle, and manly but vulnerable because apparently what a woman wants is a gay football coach.

Christian: Thank you. So granted that might be a tad bit exaggerated but the comic relief. Obviously, why it's so funny is that a lot of us can relate to a lot of what he's saying with these opposing qualities.

Sonika: We want it all.

Christian: Yeah.

Sonika: All right. So in summary here and we want to actually get into doing some exercises to play with this, in order to dance with each other, we've got to be able to have a nice balance between this leader-follower, this masculine-feminine, this lead and surrender aspect in relationship. In our experience, we've got to be able to be good at both in different areas at different times so that

we're both framed the best of ourselves to everything. That said, we also really want to be able to give each other the lead from time to time and come in creating that dynamic tension with each other.

[0:30:07]

Christian: Right. And just like in dancing, if I don't know how to be a great leader who can inspire trust and safety and following, I'm not going to have a partner who will have faith and trust in my ability to lead or, in other words, someone who can't open their heart. On the other side, if I can't follow or if I don't know how to surrender safely to my partner's lead, I'm not going to have a partner who is a confident leader because I make it difficult for them to do that. Hence, we got the statement that we opened with: unresent partner attracts an unsundered partner.

So we need to learn how to tend to this energetic relationship and feel at ease with our own both ability to surrender and our own ability to lead and take a stand and say, "Here, this way." That's what we're doing now.

Sonika: And it also means being able to step into the healthy masculine and I want to just say for a minute about this and we're going to play with this a little bit here and some exercises is that it can be really scary sometimes for men to be able to step into that power for fear that they're going to be too far over on that spectrum and women are going to be dissatisfied.

Christian: Yeah. Or that she's going to see me as a controlling bastard or angry or too forceful or -- what do you call it? Not respectful? What's the word for that?

Sonika: Disrespectful.

Christian: Disrespectful -- thank you very much -- or insensitive. I don't want to be accused of that.

Sonika: So for purposes of this interplay that we're about to do in this conversation today, we're going to focus in on how to consciously cultivate and play with these two energies so we can create this tension in a conscious, good, fun, positive, loving way. To do that, we're going to invite -- for those of you who are doing this with your partner -- we're going to invite the man to take the leader role and for the woman to take the surrendered or the following role. If you're in the same gender relationship, totally fine. Just decide ahead of time who's going to play which role for purposes of exploring this.

After this call, if you would like to play with the opposite, we're not going to have time to be able to do both sides of it here in this hour and a half together, but

you'll have an opportunity to at least do one side. If you want to play with the other, please do. It's very important for us to be able to experience this energy and make ourselves feel at home with both sides of it.

Christian: And in case you're doing this on your own, if you own out by your screen here, decide which role you'll practice. So just say, "Okay, I'm going to practice the masculine leader role or I'm going to practice the feminine surrender role." And then when you get a chance, ask someone for permission and then try it out with them. Ask their permission first.

Sonika: All right. So are you ready? We're going to do a couple of different exercises here and we'll demonstrate them for you over here.

Christian: All right, cool. So now we want you to practice the question mark here. We'll bring you into this here. We want you to deliberately and exaggeratedly practice having a question mark over your head and coming to your partner.

Sonika: So the unhealthy masculine.

Christian: The unhealthy or the doubting masculine. Let's just say that the case in point here is that I would like to have sex with my partner. Now, I'm going to come at her with a question mark over my head asking for that.

Sonika: And it's also going to add in a slouched powerless posture. He is not quite sure --

Christian: Yeah, exactly.

Sonika: Kind of assuming that he'll probably not going to want to.

Christian: Which is what is in the backpack around of me and men when we have a question mark over our head is what's running in the background is I don't know. Is she really going to work that? Probably not. It hasn't been that great as of late. I don't know. I don't think she finds me that attractive. Or there is a doubtful conversation running in the background. So my physical posture is one to match that. So you could try it. You're going to try it at home. In a moment, your posture is of one who isn't sure.

So if I were to come at her with this, it might look and sound like, "Hi, honey. I'm thinking it would be kind of cool if -- I don't know. You probably wouldn't want to -- it's been a long time since we --

Sonika: I'm already gone.

Christian: I hadn't even started yet and she's already checked out. As you can tell, I'm not exactly checked in full power either. I'm trying to find the right things to say and I don't know. I don't want to come on too forceful and be a jerk about it. I'd like to be sensitive. You know, what do you think? Maybe later we could -- you know, it's been a long time and the kids are asleep already. I think we do have a time. Maybe if you want to get naked later and -- I don't know.

[0:35:31]

Sonika: Okay, great. I think you've demonstrated it perfectly. So we want you to do that with each other. So whoever is taking on the leadership role, you want to take on this question mark posture. You're going to ask your partner for sex or to go out on a date. Either one is fine. And I want you to ask with this whole question mark posture. Those of you who are receiving your partner pay attention to what you experience when they come in in this doubting way, in this powerless question mark.

Christian: With the question mark over their head.

Sonika: So go ahead and take a minute to do that with each other. Turn to make eye contact just like we did.

Christian: If you're not standing up already, go ahead and stand up while you do it. Take on a doubting posture. Speak doubtfully like I just did but just try to -- if you have more time, just try it a couple of different times, say a couple of different things and we'll tell you the next step. All right, go ahead.

All right, take another 20 seconds to wrap up. All right. Good job so far. Turn your attention back over here please.

One thing we hear countless times from, in this case, the woman role, when men come to them is they say, "It feels like it's somebody I have to take care of." I mean those exact words. And I don't want that. I already had kids. I don't need another one. It's the sentiment and what is often spoken.

Sonika: And another way of saying that is it throws me into the masculine. If I now have to take care of you, I'm now in the masculine. I'm more in the active role. I'm less in the surrendered, open, following role.

Christian: And even if I am in the open surrendering role, it's more like I might be towards a brother or a kid. But you can't mix that with sex, for example, and an adult relationship if you're going out on a date or with your partner. Those two don't go together.

Sonika: All right. So here, we want to give --

Christian: Thank you for whoever shared that.

Sonika: Yes, really beautifully spoken. So we want to present another possibility here and we're going to give you a couple of different exercises to play with the energy of this.

Christian: So for this purpose, the man is still in the same role as the one who is going to be making the request. Here's what we're going to try. Go ahead, if you can, just stand up already. Just stand up right now and listen to our few instructions here. For those of you who are in the man's role, stand tall. If you could see me, I would stand -- if I stood full up, I would stand this tall. But for purpose of being in the camera, I'm going to come down a little bit, okay?

Sonika: I'm a little shorter.

Christian: Yeah. I want you to pretend men or I'm just going to speak as if it's me but I know you might not be a man but who is in the man's role. Stand tall, spine straight, just like you would do in yoga or martial arts; you always try to keep your spine straight so you can breathe better. Full breath. Pretend your heart is wide open. Literally, imagine in your mind for a second you're opening your heart. That is one of the ways we take this force that I have and make sure it's also safe and loving at the same time as it's forceful, powerful, compelling and directional. Keep my heart open while I do it. Cool.

So I want you to make eye contact with your partner and pretend you are piercing her eyes into her soul with the presence through your eyes.

Sonika: It's like you're penetrating her with your presence is like how I think of it. You're sending energy to her through your eyes.

Christian: Okay. So here, you don't have to do it yet. You can just take it on piece by piece and then we'll set you up to actually do it in a moment. I want you to put your hands on her. You can see here I have my hands on Sonika's shoulder firmly. Put attention in your hands so she can really feel you in your hands.

[0:40:08]

I'm not squeezing the life out of her shoulders but it's firm. There is no doubt in her mind that I have a grip on her.

Sonika: Yeah, a lot like having my -- take a little kid's hand when you want to make sure they follow you across the very busy street. It's that kind of firm, loving hold.

Christian: And it's present. I'm here with you and my heart is open. And here is what you're going to say. You're just going to say, "I want you. I want you." When you say it, make sure you stay present no matter what you perceive your partner's reaction to be. So even if I perceive that her reaction was one of "No," or she's backing off, I'm not going to back off. I'm not going to come into her face either. I'm just going to keep standing tall and straight and present and open-hearted no matter what she does, no matter what her facial expression says. "I want you. I want you."

Sonika: So you're just going to take and communicate all of your love and your desire through your eyes, through your touch and it's like you're expressing this masculine force in this healthy loving way. And really what you want to communicate to your partner through your eyes, through your words, through your touch is "I am right here. I am right here. I've got you. You're safe. You can be with me. I love you. I want you. I'm right here. I've got you. You're safe." Really that is the communication of your words, your eyes, your hands.

Christian: And now for women or the ones in the woman's partner's role, when you hear your partner say, "I want you," and be present with you like that, just take it in. It doesn't mean you have to deliver a certain something. It doesn't mean you're going to have to get naked in half an hour. It doesn't mean any of that. Just take it as here's a partner who wants you. We would say, take it as a good thing. You can think about it's a lot better than if he didn't care about you at all, that he actually wants to be with you. So try taking it on like that.

Sonika: Yeah. Or even granting him space to step into this lead role like wow. I get to let go and let myself be taken care of here for a moment. Let myself be held a little bit for a moment. I don't have to be holding it all myself, which is a really big thing for us women who are hoping so much more in this culture than we ever had to in the past. So it's a little bit like, "Oh, wow, you got it. I can let go a little bit. I can totally let go because you've got me."

We're kind of saying, "I want you." You could also try different language here and there. You could say, "I've got you. You're safe. I'm right here with you." Play with those couple of different words and even see as you try it on those different ones what produces different responses in both of you as you do that.

Christian: And as you try it, make sure you stay standing tall and straight and present and open-hearted. So even if I might be trying on different things to say, "I want you, I love you, I'm still staying right present right here with my eyes and my heart and my hands."

Sonika: So notice he's not collapsing in his body. He's not backing off. So even if I feel like I'm like, "Don't do that," he's going to stay with me no matter what I do literally. Just like taking a little kid's hand across the street. If the little kid fights to go run and look at an elephant down the road, you hold firm. You don't let go and say, "Okay, fine. I guess you don't want to be with me." You stay there. You don't let go. So play with that a little bit and just notice what you experience between the two of you to do that.

So go ahead and do that with each other. So the person in the lead role, stand tall, firm in that healthy masculine, heart open and just make sure you're penetrating her with your eyes, your voice, your hands, your touch and just try those couple of different phrases, "I want you. I'm right here. You can let go."

[0:45:01]

Christian: Okay. Go right ahead. Just stay present with each other. Stay present. Even if the silence draws out, it's okay. Stay present with your eyes, your body and your hands. All right, go ahead and gently and firmly disengage. And then bring your attention back over here.

Sonika: Well, I'd tell people jump on. I'll just say a couple of things here. We are, as we said earlier, men have been so trained to be sensitive which I got to say I really appreciate as a woman. I appreciate that Christian has been trained to be sensitive. And when sensitivity is replaced with doubt and this tentativeness and this question mark trying to read me and react to my read rather than coming and creating.

So remember in one of the first classes we talked about our tendency to react rather than create. And that is one way we do that, right? If I come in as the question mark and I'm now reacting to what I think you want and what you like and what you don't want, I'm in a reactive victim role rather than a powerful creative one.

Christian: Rather than connected to what is it that really inspires me, what is in my heart is really telling me to do? What is it that I truly would like and need and want and desire here?

Sonika: So while the sensitivity is intended to grant space for me to be able to come in and meet him and so he can know, "Oh, wow, she really wants me. It's okay," then he can go for it. Instead, a question mark tentativeness inspires sensitiveness and fear. And really what is wanted in this dynamic energy dance is for whoever is in the masculine role to come in with decisiveness, firmness, power, presence. And from that place, you're going to inspire the other person to meet you there.

I actually when Christian in that way, I feel safer. I feel like he's got me, as I said earlier. I feel like I can let go. And there are lots of ways we play with that energy in our relationships to keep them going. Sometimes when we work here out of our house and we'll be passing each other in the hall and Christian --

Christian: I'll just stop and let her feel my physical presence. Give her a big kiss. It might take only 10 seconds but in those 10 seconds I am totally present with her there. I'm handling her. I got a firm grip on her when my heart is open and she knows that it's not dangerous. It's not threatening. It's not demanding. It's present and forceful at the same time.

So one of the tensions to give you men in this case is that your force is required, it's healthy. It comes from a good place. The only times where the masculine force gets used for destructive purposes is when it's not guided by an open heart, when it's not guided by love, when it's guided by doubt or anger or fear.

Sonika: The other thing I will say too is when he comes in with great presence, then he is available to notice if I am not quite a match for him right now. So if I'm in the middle of something, he's totally present with me. He comes in really strongly and I'm pulled back. He will soften but he will stay here. He will dance with me and he's more apt to dance with me when he is powerfully present than when he's backed off in tentativeness. He's more apt to notice the subtleties in me when he's totally present than he is with these **[0:49:20] [Indiscernible]** fear.

Christian: Why that is when I come in being sensitive, we might call it. Now, sometimes it might be a great powerful present sensitivity but often my sensitivity as the man coming in is not that. It's really a sensitivity that has its focus of not being a jerk, of not provoking an adverse response, of not being judged for something. All my attention is already consumed by the bad things that might happen basically.

Sonika: And remember what we talked about before, energy follows attention. So I've got all my attention on not, not, not, what am I going to be more of? Exactly that. So instead, you want to be present in your power and that invokes in the person who is feeling that just like a little kid. They feel safe like, "Oh, dad has got me. I can let go. It's okay. I'm not going to get run over by this bus."

[0:50:26]

You know, what's great about what you said is that in the beginning of relationship, there is all this attraction. We move with each other with this confidence and this desire and this surety like, "Ah, you love me and I love you." We're more able to come in with that creative force.

So one thing that's essential and why we do the other classes before here is for the person to be able to come in with that kind of power and presence. They have to be living in a different story. I'm valuable. I'm wanted. They got to identify themselves as their full potential. They got to be moving from the experience they want to create. They've got to be coming in assuming their partner loves them and wants them and that it's good and that's going to produce a positive result.

Christian: So I really want you to take notice of what she just said and then we'll bring on the next caller who volunteered. When you assume, which I often do as the male partner here, I'm not sure if she wants me to come to her for sex or come for whatever.

So I come in with the assumption that, "She might not want me." I'm already here. I'm at such a disadvantage thinking to myself she might not want me. That's a terrible thought. I feel awful being with a person who might not want me because what does that really mean about me? It means I must not be very attractive. I means I must not be very worthwhile. It means I must not be very important or very successful or very powerful or very confident.

Sonika: It turns into one of those self-fulfilling prophecies.

Christian: It does indeed. But when I can live in the makeup, in my true value, I make that up. I've taken that on. I just believe it now. She wants me to be with her. She wants me here. She wants me -- period. Even if she says no three times in a row, that doesn't mean she generally doesn't want me. She still wants me. She wants me to come forward. And I'm a good guy. I'm a good man and this force that I have which includes my sexual attraction and desire is a force of love and a force of good. It is innocent. It is not tainted. Even though I have seen a million myriad men out there behave in a way that has their desire and sexuality and masculine force seem very tainted. It is not. It is pure and good and clean and innocent.

Sonika: All right. So here we want to do one more exercise here today. We want to either play with this creating dynamic tension here. So what you're going to do is you're going to put your hands on each other's shoulders and you can't see our feet but we have one foot in front of the other so that --

Christian: Men would know it as base position.

Sonika: All right, base position.

Christian: So you're solidly grounded.

Sonika: And you're just going to push against each other a little bit like kind of that dynamic tension in ballroom dancing where I'm giving myself and Christian is giving himself.

Christian: Right. And notice if you're like me, you have much longer arms than your partner, I'm not pushing so much on her shoulder. I'm letting her push on my upper chest and my shoulders here, and that's how I use my body. My hands are just resting on her shoulders.

Sonika: We're just going to play with notice that we're kind of going back and forth. Christian is kind of giving himself, I'm giving myself. There's a little bit of movement so we're not static like this where we're sort of stuck.

Christian: We're not aiming to find a static point here.

Sonika: We're just playing with like I'm giving a little, you're giving a little. You're backing off and you want to make eye contact and play with each other, a little bit like how you might be if you were playfully wrestling where you're both bringing all of yourself, you're making eye contact and you're playing with this energy of give and take, total presence like, "I'm here, I'm here, yeah, yeah." See if you can find that point where you're playing with this energy.

Christian: One more thing you can do is when you do it, you can just give it more and more force until you can feel, okay, that's a little too much. Okay, then you dial down a little bit. It's okay if you say more or less. But other than that, don't use words here. Just stay connected with your eyes and you could say, "More, more, more. Yeah, more, more, more."

[0:55:07]

Sonika: And just play with finding that point of energy exchange.

Christian: If you're doing this by yourself, you can actually try this on a wall. It's not the same. We get that but it's a start. Try it on a wall and play with your own forcefulness and then backing off and forcefulness and backing off.

Sonika: All right. So do that for a couple of minutes here.

Christian: And stay connected with your eyes the whole time. Keep playing a little more. Back and forth. Back and forth. A little more, a little less, a little more, a little less.

Sonika: Yes. You can create some playfulness between you as you do that. You really find that sweet spot. You can recreate that chemistry, that attraction.

Christian: All right, go ahead and come to a close for now. Deep breath. Feel yourself. And then bring your attention back here. We definitely want you to do this at home. I know you already are but once the class is over, try it some more.

Sonika: Yeah, play with this. We suggested earlier, dancing is a really great way to play with finding that energy, that dynamic tension because that's what they teach in a dance class. We're taking a bunch of dance classes and the instructors said they could tell because a lot of people come to take dance lesson when they're about to get married. The instructor said they could tell during their instruction of these couples who's going to make it and who's going to get divorced depending on how they were in the dance. If they were in power struggle or nobody was really there versus two people being completely in their power, full potential, being with each other on a fiery playing of each other.

So one more thing here and then we'll see if we have any other comments. So here's another thing to play with and we'll do our best to get --

Christian: We'll step a little further away here and we'll speak up nice and loud so you can hear us.

Sonika: So often in relationship where we talked in the first class about how we're complaining for change, often what is underneath our complaint is this sense that the other person is unfair and we want more, and the other person tends to resist. So what we want to play with also here energetically is whoever is pulling.

Christian: And in this case we're going to tell you to start with have the woman be the puller and the man be the resister of whoever is playing those roles just like we do here.

Sonika: All right, so I'm pulling. He is resisting. And what we're going to play with here energetically is we're going to play with Christian coming in all the way with presence. We're just going to have him do that until I change on my own.

Christian: And so instead of reacting to her pull by trying to get the heck out of here, I'm going to instead react to it by stepping closer, by stepping into it, by stepping into presence like this. Do it again. Pull. You can imagine that somebody wanting, wanting, saying, "More, more, more."

Sonika: And often how it shows up is "You **[0:58:25] [Indiscernible]** around the house. I don't feel like you're **[0:58:28] [Indiscernible]**. You're not really present." Right? I could go on and on.

Christian: I don't know if you can see but I'm stepping in and I have my arm around her on her shoulder or in the small of her back. I wanted her to feel both my physicality and my presence with my eyes, my open heart and with my body. Okay, one more time.

Sonika: Notice what happens to my complaint when he steps in. You're not here. I feel like you're opposite **[0:59:05] [Indiscernible]**. I tell you, man, this is a little secret. You step in like that.

Christian: Most it will take care of 50% of all the complaints that are present in a relationship because 50% of all the complaints, all of them are really about "I can't feel you. I can't feel you. Where are you? Where are you? Show me more of you?"

Sonika: I want more of that healthy masculine force. So when you can meet a woman's complaint or her dissatisfaction or unhappiness with stepping into presence instead of going away which just has her come after you even more is to instead step in and notice what gets produced. Notice how her body changes. Notice what happens.

[1:00:03]

So go ahead and try that with each other. Person in the feminine role, I want you to pull. Person in the masculine role, I want you to step in and notice what gets produced. Step in with powerful presence.

Christian: And then stay there for a good extended time and then do it again. And we'll have time to do it a couple of times. Go ahead. All right, try it one more time.

Sonika: Once you step in, so if you're the one in the masculine role, step in, hold her, stay in eye contact until she breaks it. She will let you know when she's filled up. You just stay in there until she breaks it.

Christian: When she got and received your communication, your presence, you'll know.

Sonika: Yes. She'll disengage in some way. She'll look away. She'll pull. She'll be done and you will know. So you just want to stay in there. Don't be the first one to break it. Stay in there until she fully feels your presence. We really want to encourage you to play with that, to take that on for this next week. So if you go ahead and come on back here with us --

Christian: Please do try it in a little more expanded time after the class. We're aware we're cutting a little tight but we want to give it to you so you can go practice it.

Sonika: So we do homework first to show --

Christian: Yeah, let's do that. So how else can you play with this energy and take this on once we send you out to your week? Eric, if you'll put on the next slide here. We'll put it on a couple of times so you can take notes. And these are all ideas for easy ways to play with this.

Sonika: So we already said the first one, take the advanced lesson.

Christian: Yeah, just go take a waltz lesson or any couple ballroom dance lesson.

Sonika: Another one, chase each other around the house.

Christian: Literally, chase each other. "All right, I'm coming to get you. I'm chasing you down the hallway."

Sonika: We do that often and I'll tell you it's like it will take 30 seconds, one minute and it is fun and it is engaging it and energizing.

Christian: Take turns leading and following. Literally, say to each other, "Okay, great, I know we have a night planned out on Thursday," or whatever or "we normally watch television on Thursday night together. How about we play that? I'll take the lead on that. I'll decide what we're watching. If we're eating popcorn with or without butter, and next time next day you do the other thing." Literally, like that, the simple day-to-day stuff.

Sonika: Throw each other on the bed. I'll tell you, we actually have a whole workshop we do just on the energy dance so we're cramming here as we can in an hour. And I will tell you that men and women are surprised by how much force women like and want.

Christian: If it is force delivered with presence and an open heart. If it isn't, not good. But most of us, all of us, that's where the force is coming from.

Sonika: So play with the energy and try it on and you might want to play with going a little risk crossing the line to find out where it works because if you always stay on the safe side, you might not find out how much force is really required, what you really like.

Christian: For those of you who are doing this with a partner, you could just get permission in advance and say, "Hey, if you have your permission to play with this the next week so I don't have to ask you every single time. I'll just get your permission now. What do you think?"

Sonika: Yeah. And just play with how much force you like. What is required to create that tension between the two of you? We're creating that spark, that energizing chemistry, that inner playful interactiveness that we have in the beginning of our relationship.

Christian: The next one is you simply grab your partner and lead him or her somewhere. So I'll take Sonika and say, "Hey, you're coming with me. We're going this way." All right, great. Or I'll take her hand. You can see that when I grab her hand and I'm just saying, "Come, come with me. We're going this way now." And we just go down to the end of the hallway and go back or we go outside in the yard and take a round. "Just come with me." It gives that experience of I trust myself to lead you. She gets to get the opportunity to trust me, to lead and for her to surrender. It's fun. This is fun. It will put a grin on your face.

Play with how much force you and your partner like. So that's this -- oh, you already said that one. Sorry. My bad.

Sonika: No problem.

Christian: Create what we call touch points throughout the day and don't ever stop doing that. A touch point is we pass each other in the hallway. I stop her for five seconds and say, "Hi, baby. Remember me?" That's it. Or she's working at her computer, I'll come over, and just come in and say, "Hi, honey. I love you." Each of those are a touch point. Put them into your day.

[1:05:03]

Sonika: You can do a blinded folded thrust walk. I'm going to have you close your eyes and I'm going to lead you around. And say vice versa. It's really great. Just watching for both people would be in both parts and just share with each other what comes up as you do that.

Christian: Yeah. The last we have on here is decide something. Make a plan with no question marks. If you'd like it for help, you're going to agree in advance to say, "Hey, this week I'm going to make a plan about something. Are we cool with that? Great." But just do something. Sign on for a class. The RISC calls, for example, could be an example. Maybe you did, let's take the RISC course. Let's go to this restaurant on the weekend. Make a decision. Decide something. Take a direction.

Sonika: And just be with what comes up. Use it as a learning opportunity for both of you to find out what is required to create that energy because that's where we feel alive and passionate and connected. That's where we're going to be talking about sex here is it's essential also for our dynamic sexual relationship.

Christian: So your homework for this week which Eric will bring up in a moment is pick one or two of these ideas that we put up and decide we're going to pick these two and then practice them this week. And the other one is be aware of your energetic stance. Monitor yourself and notice, "Oh, did I just do that with a big question mark over my head?" And it's okay if you do. Don't worry about it. Just say, "Oh, yeah, you know I noticed that was one of those question mark times, wasn't it? Let me try that again." And then you come in with not a question mark, with a whatever, exclamation point or an arrow. And pick two of these suggestions. Eric, if you put up the next slide, the suggestions again, so you can pick two of these or write them all down because they're all great ideas. Why don't you do that? Sonika is going to send us off by reading this little piece that she wrote a while back.

Sonika: Actually, we'll put this up on -- can we put this up, Eric, on the discussion forum so people have that?

Christian: Oh, that would be great.

Sonika: We'll make sure to put it up there so you don't have to be writing all this down. You'll just have it or we'll send an email to you. All right, I want to read you this piece about why this is so essential. So this is a piece I wrote about my appreciation for Christian's willingness to step into this healthy masculine.

Christian and I had been busy, distracted, more in our heads than our hearts and bodies but didn't hope that we had an incomplete communication in the space. Nothing major but enough to create distance between us. Our bodies had a few weird aches and pains. We weren't experiencing much flow in our workday either. We felt a bit flat and all I was definitely not in my feminine, receptive, loving flow, more in my masculine beingness.

So last night we told the truth, cleared the incomplete communication, shared our respective feelings of flatten off. We look squarely at the changes that need to be made in our business to energize us and free us up to do the work we love. We honestly confronted the risks that we've been avoiding stepping into. And then came time for the very much needed sinking into our hearts and bodies with each other and lovemaking.

I surprised him without a bit of dread about the whole thing. My body was so close that mostly I felt like I didn't want to open. I didn't want to melt. I could watch my mind wanting to rush out to the kitchen to eat something, to watch something on television, to check my phone or email for messages, anything to avoid sinking and melting. I gave into my mind and left the room, ate an apple, and responded to an email but I couldn't hurt off the inevitable forever.

So eventually, when it was time to go to bed I put on a shirt as a sign of sorts of my guarded unopen heart. I dare to tell the truth about my resistance to opening. I told Christian I didn't want to open to him. Now, thank God I'm with a man who knows my deeper yearning, to melt into love and God through our bodies and hearts and sex, to let go of resistance and to be truly present, to love and be fully open in my heart.

So he doesn't pay much attention to my words because he's listening to what is underneath my words. Take me. Make me open. Melt my closed heart with your love. And so he meets my resistance with his strong yet gentle persistence presence. I feel the strength of his hands and body as he wraps his arms around me and holds me close. I push him away like he stays with me. He kisses my face and neck and keeps holding me. He kisses me and senses my closed lips. He tries to tease me out but I turn away from his eyes and lips and I try to hide in his chest. He stops for just a second to see if I'm serious, to check with. He really should back off.

[1:10:00]

I love that about him, his heightened awareness and sensitivity to my body language and nonverbal communication. His checking in enables me to feel safe. I know if I really wanted him to, he would back off. But deep inside, underneath this closed heart and body is a desire to truly open and surrender to love, to melt. S

o I encourage him to stay, to continue to love me in spite of my shutdown. He needs that reassurance to proceed and this is where us women can help or men. It helps him stay present, helps him know he's doing the right thing, quickly reassured he keeps being there with me relentless with his kisses and eyes and touch. He knows I will eventually open, that I won't be able to keep resisting as well his approaches.

And he is right. Within minutes I start to cry then I sob. My whole body releases the built-up tension and resistance in myself through my unstoppable tears. I can feel my body relax more and more through my crying and my heart begins to soften. He just keeps holding me, telling me it's good that I'm crying. He knows that my tears are essential to my opening.

These tears eventually stopped and then I'm laughing and looking at him and touching him and opening my mouth and heart and **[1:11:17] [Indiscernible]** to him and he meets me there, in this sweet, soft, open, loving, powerful presence place. And in the end we are melted and soft, a puddle of love laying in each

other's arms. We appreciate God and each other for this delightful place of love and softness and strength and presence where all is well and good and right.

It never ceases to amaze me how I need to cry to soften myself out of the masculine and back into my flow, an easy, open, feminine heart. If he didn't stay with me, if he took my resistance personally and stopped and turned away, I would never get to drop down into my tears and melt. We would never get to wash away all the disconnect and reset ourselves back to love.

How grateful I am for this powerful transformational power of presence and for having a man in my life who can funnel that presence through his eyes and body and call forth the deepest parts of me and my love. It's just a great -- I have that experience often sometimes -- well, not often but I have that experience where I get into my masculine and it really requires his masculine presence staying with me to help me drop down into my feminine. It takes his presence, his leaderfulness to inspire me to drop down into my surrender.

So thank you so much, everybody. Really play with this energy. It is risk doing it. I know it's a little scary when we're used to hanging out in equal safe land. Really there is so much to be gained from being willing and able to step past our comfort zone into this place of powerful engaged energy.

Christian: That's a good energy. It's innocent and pure and good and clean and comes from nothing but love and it can be trusted. So go play with it. Pick out some of the ideas we had and try it out.

Sonika: Any questions, comments, please do come to the RISC discussion forum. Ask us. We're happy to engage with you whatever your experiences are. Please don't hesitate to do that.

Christian: Have a wonderful time till we meet you next week, same time and place. We'll be talking about sex next week.

Sonika: All right. Thanks, everybody.

Christian: Thank you.

Sonika: Thank you, Eric.

Christian: As always for making everything work. See you guys.

[1:13:51] End of Audio