

The Conscious Feminine in Action

By Sheila Broderick

We live in a world where Masculine values predominate. Masculine values are linear, exclusive, hierarchical and divisive. Feminine values are inclusive, non-hierarchical and based on individual experience. This does not mean that they are wishy-washy, naive or inferior. What they are is seeing, thinking, feeling and experiencing life from a different perspective.

Many people are literally and metaphorically dying for lack of Feminine Consciousness. The reality that women and some men experience is regarded as less important. It is only when women become empowered that they will stand for their own values.

I would like to give some examples of how the Conscious Feminine operates in different ways from Masculine Consciousness.

Mind over Matter:

This implies that the Mind is better than Matter – it is often applied to the body – if you think your way through pain this is seen as an achievement. Whilst it might be important to do this sometimes, the fact that this belief exists without the opposite, Matter over Mind being equally prevalent, means that there is no balance. It means that there is no choice for people when they are approaching problems concerning their body and mind. The body (as Matter) is regarded as inferior – the mind knows better/more than the body. It is rare for someone to ask: “What is your body telling you to do?” – “What does your body need?” Indeed lots of people act as if they do not have a body other than as a vehicle to carry around their mind, to have sex or to be dissatisfied with.

A better, more feminine way, would be to allow Matter *and* Mind; this would mean that the body is of equal importance and for some people more important than the mind. Listening to the body would not result in people being lazy or living purely for pleasure or whatever the Masculine Consciousness fears. It would mean a reverence and respect for the wisdom of physical matter and living life from that as a given.

The lack of relating to the reality of human beings’ bodies accounts for the way animals are treated: as secondary, lesser creatures to be dealt with, in any way humans think fit – even if that includes ultimately doing damage to themselves as has happened through the mistreatment of farm animals in feeding them antibiotics and making cannibals of animals who are herbivores.

Mind over Matter has also led to the way that the Masculine has defined what is Spiritual – the majority of approaches to spirituality – whether traditional or new age, are transcendent. The physical body has been interpreted as bad: a vehicle for temptation and something to be ‘got rid of’. This has taken many forms, through

fasting, flagellation or transcending the body through thought and meditation. The way to 'enlightenment' is to sacrifice and moderate the needs of being human. A feminine approach to spirituality incorporates the experience of being human, including being incarnate in a body. This would be an appreciation of the wisdom that comes from the Depths.

Another aspect of Masculine Consciousness is that we have become perfectionists in as much as we think we have to be articulate and be out of touch with our emotional/physical experience before we speak. There is very little room for finding out what you need to say whilst actually speaking – the Masculine **judges** and holds up to scrutiny the acceptability of what is spoken: it can be merciless. Some of the time I work in a hospital and my job brings me into contact with women who are receiving treatment. Time and time again I hear women say 'I know this sounds stupid ' and then they go on to ask either a profound question or something that really matters to them. All the time people are silenced because they cannot ask or say what they need to. This is so injurious to individuals and to us as a whole because we end up living falsely and feeling like we are wrong. People collude with the Masculine Consciousness despite the reality of their lives and how uncomfortable they are about turning themselves inside out to conform to values that do not fit. They think *they* are wrong, not the 'system' in which they live. Living in a Conscious Feminine way would alter this – there would be an appreciation of experience, the knowledge and confidence that this is a valuable place to speak from.

Finally, this morning a woman, who I supervise, was telling me about an Organisation that is working in a person centred way with people who have learning disabilities. She went on to say how the statutory authorities expect the organisation to classify and evaluate the work according to outcomes and targets. This is a contradiction – it is not possible to work in a feminine, person centred way and then judge it by masculine criteria. It is the masculine criteria that need to change. All too often experience must fit theory – theory is seen as good, experience is only valuable if it fits the theory. Evaluating from a Feminine perspective would put experience first.

© Sheila Broderick. June 2003
The Centre for the Conscious Feminine
PO Box 1168
Kingston upon Thames
Surrey
KT1 3WQ.

www.consciousfeminine.org