



Balancing Mars and Venus in Each of Us

Excerpt from *The Relationship Handbook: How to Understand and Improve Every Relationship in Your Life* by Kevin B. Burk

When we think of ourselves first and foremost as human, we've taken the first step towards regaining our balance. Gender does not define who we are. Gender is nothing more than a biological point of view. Once we take 2,500 years of ego- and fear-based conditioning out of the picture, the main difference between men and women is whether we have indoor or outdoor plumbing. We are not our bodies. Our bodies are nothing more than a suit of clothes worn by our spirit. The main differences are that our spirits wear our bodies for longer than our bodies wear our clothes, and our bodies are harder to dry clean. Men and women do have different points of view, but what matters is that we are all human. And every human has equal amounts of masculine and feminine energy.

It would be easier to embrace this truth if we had a better understanding of exactly what "masculine" and "feminine" really mean. Our current definitions are inexorably linked to gender, sexuality, biology, and the ego-based lie of male superiority. We have lost touch with many of the qualities that were once associated with the feminine. In order to rediscover these qualities, we have to go back more than 2,500 years and explore the culture of Ancient Greece.

The Ancient Greeks were the last civilization to include reasonably healthy feminine archetypes. Of the twelve Gods in Olympus, five of them were women. Until very recently, though, we only embraced three of the feminine archetypes. Women could be sex objects, in which case they connected with the archetype of Aphrodite (or Venus, in the Roman pantheon), the Goddess of Love, Desire and Beauty. Women could be wives, in which case they connected with the archetype of Hera, the wife of Zeus and the Goddess of Marriage—who, despite her tremendous strength and cunning, was repeatedly forced to be subservient to her philandering husband. And women could be mothers, in which case they connected with the archetype of Hestia, the Goddess of the Hearth and protector of the home. These three archetypes embodied the sum total of the feminine for more than 2,000 years. The male ego successfully suppressed the powerful female archetypes of Athena and Artemis, who collectively embody feminine strength, skill and mastery.

Athena was the Goddess of Wisdom, Reason and Purity. Severing our connection to her archetype was no small feat, as Athena was one of the most revered and respected of all

of the Olympians. In fact, the city of Athens is named after her. Athena was fair, just, and an incredibly powerful warrior. She was the embodiment of feminine strength. While Ares, the God of War (and the Greek counterpart to Mars, the Roman God of War) was wantonly destructive, childish, violent, aggressive, and ultimately a coward, Athena was proud, strong, and courageous. More importantly, Athena would only fight in order to defend the city—she would never initiate any conflicts, and she always preferred diplomacy to warfare.

Athena is the archetype of the female warrior. Female warriors are in no way inferior to male warriors: Time and again, women have proved that they are in every way equal to men on the battlefield. The difference is that female warriors do not fight in the same way that male warriors do, nor do they fight for the same reasons. Male warriors fight to attack, while female warriors fight to defend. The female warrior archetype has returned, however. We see it when Sarah Michelle Gellar beats up vampires and saves the world (while still maintaining every ounce of her femininity) in *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, and when Lucy Lawless battles warlords, gods and monsters alike in *Xena, Warrior Princess*. More recently, we see Guinevere portrayed as a warrior in Walt Disney and Jerry Bruckheimer's 2004 film retelling of *King Arthur*.

Artemis, the Goddess of the Hunt, is the archetype of the female athlete. In every way, she was the equal of her brother, Apollo. Artemis has returned as a useful archetype for women today, thanks to the popularity of women's athletics. Women now have role models and opportunities to explore their physical strength, and test and improve their skills through competitive sports.

We have always measured "masculinity" based on strength, power, and skill, but these qualities are as present in women as they are in men. Women were supposed to be delicate flowers who needed men to protect them. The truth, however, is that while men may have the edge over women in terms of brute strength, that women often surpass men in skill and dexterity. Once we take biology and reproduction out of the equation, men and women are very evenly matched. So what then, are the truly "masculine" and "feminine" qualities? The masculine principle is focused, expressive, and direct. The feminine principle is diffuse, intuitive, and receptive. The feminine principle provides the container to support the masculine energy. Masculine energy expands, and feminine energy contracts. Any action can be "masculine" or "feminine" in nature, depending on how it is applied. Warrior energy on its own is neither masculine nor feminine. It becomes masculine when we attack in order to expand our borders; it becomes feminine when we fight to defend and protect our tribe from invasion.

It's true that men tend to be more in touch with the more "masculine" or yang aspects, while women tend to be more in touch with the more "feminine" or yin aspects. But not being aware of or familiar with our complimentary nature doesn't mean that we can't learn about it and express it. This, in fact, is the reason that men and women form relationships with each other. Our partners are our mirrors, and when men and women relate to each other—whether that relationship is sexual or not—what we see reflected is our complimentary nature. We see the parts of ourselves that we haven't integrated or owned yet. And through our relationships with the opposite gender, we learn how to connect with and own these parts of ourselves, and experience true balance. We need to learn to acknowledge, accept and embrace these two complimentary natures. We each

have both Mars and Venus within us, and we need to learn how to appreciate and express them both.

Kevin B. Burk is the author of [*The Relationship Handbook: How to Understand and Improve Every Relationship in Your Life*](#). Visit <http://www.EveryRelationship.com> for a **FREE Report on creating Amazing Relationships.**



About Kevin B. Burk [or, who is this “Kevin” person, anyway?]

Kevin B. Burk has had a life-long interest in astrology and began self-study in 1992. Kevin has been studying Astrology formally since 1995, and currently holds a [Level IV NCGR Certification in Astrological Counselling](#).

Kevin's approach to Astrology is a Spiritual one, and he both uses and advocates Astrology as a tool to gain greater understanding of ourselves and our Spiritual Path. Kevin is the author of [Astrology: Understanding the Birth Chart](#) and [The Complete Node Book](#), both published by Llewellyn, and [Astrology Math Made Easy](#), published by Serendipity Press.

In 2005, Serendipity Press will release two more astrology books by Kevin B. Burk: [Ask Kevin](#) (a collection of “Ask Kevin” articles from this site), and the [Astrological Relationship Handbook](#).

Kevin specializes in human relationships, and is the author of [The Relationship Handbook: How to Understand and Improve Every Relationship in Your Life](#) (Serendipity Press, 2004). He travels across the United States conducting [relationship workshops](#).

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Kevin was born on [October 24, 1967](#) in New Orleans, LA. He has a Scorpio Sun, Cancer Moon, and Gemini Ascendant.