

Introduction

She was raped by her boyfriend on her fifteenth birthday, three months before we met. I was the first person she told. The moment she told me, I was overcome with a wide range of emotions. The strongest: rage. From time to time, images would flash through my mind of throwing this unnamed, faceless boy against the wall and hammering nails into each of his testicles. At sixteen, this experience was more than I was emotionally equipped to handle.

Anjali and I went on to have a multi-year relationship. Her rape trauma was ever-present. As deep and intimate as we were emotionally, it always felt like there was something in the way between us. The trauma also manifested physically: I have distinct memories of sitting on the bathroom floor at two o'clock in the morning, holding her hand while she was on the toilet screaming in pain from near-constant UTIs and bladder infections.

Unconsciously, I began to internalize the idea that men and “maleness” are dangerous, especially men’s sexuality. As a result, I cut off the connection to my own masculinity. The pain of my confusion, anger, and helplessness haunted me. From this place, at eighteen years old, I made a choice that would alter the course of my life: I would devote my life to creating a world in which men wouldn’t dream of committing such atrocities.

Fast forward ten years, and at the age of twenty-eight, I was struggling. My tumultuous relationship with my long-term girlfriend at the time was a wreck. On top of that, I still had the strong sense that I was supposed to do something big in the world, and yet I wasn’t doing much of anything. I was living at around the poverty line, barely making ends meet, each month afraid I wouldn’t be able to pay my very minimal rent. After a while I got the sense that these two things—the powerlessness I felt in my relationship and in my lack of movement toward doing something meaningful in the world—were somehow interconnected.

It was at this time that I came across David Deida's book, *The Way of the Superior Man*. Initially, I was triggered by the things I was reading; his ideas around masculine-feminine dynamics seemed to fly in the face of the feminist education I received at university. The ideas he wrote about seemed so absolute. I had learned that concepts of masculinity and femininity are social constructs. They're not real. We make them up. You can do anything, be any way you feel like.

I had spent the previous ten years railing against any notion of gender, asking myself, *Why must it be "masculine" and "feminine"? Can't we all just be human?* And here Deida was presenting a very particular way of being, which he called the "superior man." Deida presents men and women as inherently distinct from one another and proposes that we treat women and men quite differently, especially within romantic relationships. I had learned to treat men and women the same; we're more alike than we are different.

However, I was at my wits' end—I didn't want to lose my girlfriend, whom I adored. I was desperate and didn't know what else to do, so the next time an argument began between us, I decided to try a technique from the book. Instead of reacting to her anger with my own anger, as I had always done, I caught myself and practiced staying steady—not taking anything she was saying personally, not defending against anything, not trying to prove my point or show how I was right. Instead, I simply let her be angry.

I was amazed at how well it worked. Instead of the usual experience—both of us ricocheting off of each other, getting angrier and angrier, becoming more and more volatile, and feeling like we were just leaving more scars on each other after it was over—it dissipated rather quickly. After our tiff, she came back to me with softness, openness, and love. When I shared with her the passage from the book that had inspired the change in my reaction, she looked at me with a smile and said: "Keep on reading, baby."

And so I did. Despite my hesitancy, it was working. More than anything, though, Deida's book helped open my eyes to just how disconnected I was from my masculinity, and more than that, how utterly afraid I had been of it.

While I didn't agree with everything David Deida put forth, I decided that 2007 was going to be the year that I actively explored my masculinity and what it

meant to me to be a man in this world. In this sense, I am incredibly grateful to Deida and this book for acting as a catalyst for what would prove to be a profound journey of transformation.

I needed to make very clear to myself from the start that this exploration was not about me trying to fit into the very box that I had previously shunned, but rather, to break myself free from any boxes. I declared to myself, *Screw what society says. Hell, even screw what David Deida says. I'm almost thirty years old. Let me figure out what being a man means for me.* I set out to answer and live into the questions: What is this thing called masculinity? How do I find the beauty and good in it? What are the qualities and values it has to add to my life? And how do I find my own right relationship with it?

When I made that decision, I had no idea just how powerful and transformative this path would turn out to be. At the time, I thought it was just me. I thought that this was a journey I needed to go on because of my own fucked-up relationship to masculinity. It took me years to realize that though my personal set of experiences were uniquely my own, large numbers of men today grapple with their masculinity and understanding of what it means to be a man, and that the intentionality and intensity with which I was to undertake this metamorphosis would take me from being afraid of other men to becoming a leader of men.

We are living in a time in which notions of masculinity and femininity and the roles of men and women are being questioned and have become more fluid than ever before. In previous generations, the roles for men and women were much more clearly defined. You were given a clear road map, and you were simply supposed to follow it.

This increasingly outdated roadmap, however, has broken down. The rigidity of those roles has felt more and more confining for men and women alike. We have had several generations of women increasing their status and power within our society, breaking out of predefined boxes of who they are supposed to be as women, and demanding their choice to be anything they want to be. These radical changes have become increasingly uncomfortable for us as men. They have forced us to look within, reassess our own outdated programming, and evolve our understanding of masculinity and what it means to be a man.

I began to realize that I had been operating under a strong belief that there was no real difference between men and women other than what society creates. I thought, *Fuck that—I will not live in anyone's box. You will not label me or tell me how I am supposed to be.* Little did I know that I was still imprisoned in a cage of limitations, only a different set of them. Instead of making my feminine attributes wrong and repressing them in order to fit into what I was told a man was supposed to be, I had made my masculine attributes and energies not OK. In defiance of society's expectations of what a man should be, I repressed and rejected my masculine attributes and energies and retreated deeper into my feminine, which somehow seemed safer. At least I could not become the monster that so haunted my fifteen-year-old girlfriend.

During my transformation process, it was clear to me that I wanted to keep all of the positive aspects and qualities of myself that I had gained through exploring my feminine for so long: my connection to my heart, my compassion, my sensitivity, and my attention to beauty and aesthetics. It was important to me that I integrate these qualities in a way that allowed me to continue to explore and develop them even further, while simultaneously, intentionally exploring the qualities of the masculine. I broke all social convention and rules of decorum and gave myself permission to find deeper truths that I couldn't find within the cultural stories of "how things are supposed to work."

I crystallized a new vision of possibility of the man I wanted to be, and then, step by step, consciously created myself into being him. I reinvented myself, inch by inch, both physically and psychologically.

I dreamed up an alter ego that I called "the Erotic Rockstar," and in doing so entered a powerful seven-year crucible of exponential personal growth through my sexuality. Given the depths of my early wounds around masculine sexuality, and with so many confusing and conflicting messages all around me, I wanted to know how to walk a path through life as a fully expressed sexual man while holding on to my integrity and staying in alignment with my values. *How do I unleash my sexuality without becoming one of "those guys" whom I hold in such disdain? How do I live and express in a way that does not cause harm to any of the women whom I connect with?*

As I dreamed him up, much of this "ideal sexual avatar" had qualities and ways of being that I did not identify as having. That, however, was where the game

got interesting. I could either continue to identify with these notions of self that were clearly not working and justify doing so by clinging to the idea of “that’s just who I am,” or I could try on other ways of being. I chose the latter, and in doing so, I brought the entirety of my life beneath a microscope.

The Toltecs, ancestors of the Mayans and the Aztecs, used the phrase “not-doings” to describe the things that exist outside of our habits, our “doings.” The concept of not-doings requires you to do that which you normally do not do. In so doing, your experience and identity cannot help but exponentially expand. Your capacity to encounter different experiences, which leads to a deeper and broader understanding of self, is activated. Ultimately, as I came to believe, we are not the persona we like to think of ourselves as. You are definitely not the one whom you try to project out into the world. You are neither the clothes you wear nor the skin that houses you. Underneath all of that is a core essence, and that essence is not to be confused with those other things that may spring forth from the essence. That core essence, beneath all the perceived identity, persona, and social signaling—that is who you are. This core essence has limitless expression and possibility.

As I stepped more deeply into the identity of the Erotic Rockstar, I let go of the notion of *this is who I am, and this is who I am not*. I let myself try on completely different ways of being, and my life became a laboratory in which to experiment with what actually works and what doesn’t. *How do people respond in the real world to different ways of being and interacting?* And, arguably most importantly, *what feels good in my own body?*

Living into the Erotic Rockstar archetype provided both a decadent and a harrowing path of learning that led me to more than two dozen countries around the world, a seemingly endless stream of incredible lovers, and a rather mixed reputation. As people projected their fantasies and ideals onto me as well as their own wounds, I was treated as a god by some and the devil incarnate by others.

My seven-year chapter as the Erotic Rockstar ultimately came to a harsh end so that a new chapter could begin. From its ashes, the Evolved Masculine was born: a new, potent archetype that I envisioned and began to live into, one that brought along all of the hard-won teachings of the Erotic Rockstar, metabolized

them, and added new levels of understanding that could come only with the benefit of hindsight.

The Erotic Rockstar was a trailblazing step forward on my evolutionary path. It eventually led me to cultivate and create the more expansive masculine archetype of the Evolved Masculine. The Evolved Masculine could not exist if it wasn't for the Erotic Rockstar. Most of the wisdom I bring forward I learned through lived experience (often the hard way), and much of that was through the real-life laboratory of the Erotic Rockstar.

I am not a perfect embodiment of the Evolved Masculine archetype, as the Evolved Masculine is a dynamic, emergent unfolding of my ever-evolving vision of masculine potential. (I falter regularly.) The Evolved Masculine is, however, the North Star that guides my journey. I point my nose in its direction, and I walk. I have fallen down. I have made mistakes. I have gotten lost, but my North Star helps me to reorient myself and find my way once more. Over years of intentionally holding this beacon in my sight, I do get closer and closer. I increasingly embody the qualities of the Evolved Masculine—certainly far more than if I weren't holding this vision in the first place.

As I lived increasingly aligned with the qualities of the Evolved Masculine, I eventually became inspired to create an eponymously named company to support other men to become conscious, evolved versions of themselves. This company, The Evolved Masculine, now serves men globally, teaching them about masculinity, sexuality, and healthier ways of relating to women. The Evolved Masculine, both archetype and company, is meant to provide a modern and aspirational model of masculinity for the twenty-first century.

We have an incredible opportunity at this time in human history, an opportunity to rewrite the codes of masculinity and what it means to be a man. Women are making it abundantly clear that the old ways are not working for them and will no longer be tolerated. OK, so now what?

In recent years, the backlash against toxic masculinity has grown exponentially, but I know from my own journey that we need more than simply examples of men behaving badly and strong, shame-inducing messaging about what not to do. My life before the Erotic Rockstar is an example of the unintended negative consequences created when we primarily focus on the problems associated

with men and masculinity. What we need are strong, positive role models of what is right and good about men and masculinity—and yes, this needs to include examples of positive masculine sexual expression.

What if I told you that there are aspects of our programming of what masculinity is “supposed to be” that are causing more harm than good, but masculinity itself is not toxic?

What if I told you that your core masculine essence is important and valuable, that sexuality can be a gift, and that you have incredible value to add to the women in your life?

I want you to know that you have far greater capacity to create who you are in the world than you have been told.

I want you to know that no matter how messy or fucked up your childhood or life experience has been to this point, you still have the ability to create an extraordinary life and to be an extraordinary man.

I want you to know that while the times are changing and there is an increased spotlight on men’s behavior and the more toxic expressions of masculinity, that being a man is *good*. There is a lot of beauty and power in being a man. Recreating the world to allow for women and the feminine to flourish doesn’t need to be at the expense of men. We can adapt to the ascent of women’s power in such a way that we become only more of who we are capable of being as men.

I wrote this book as a man who is primarily attracted to women for other men who are oriented similarly. That said, I know that people of every orientation and gender identity are grappling with their understanding of and relationship to masculinity. I see you, I honor your path, and I both invite and encourage you to apply the wisdom herein as best relates to your relationships or personal preferences.

This book was written to help you reorient your worldview and remove your limiting beliefs about masculinity, women, sex, and most importantly, yourself. Some of the ideas may initially seem crazy or “out there” to you on first read, as they may fly in the face of everything you have ever been taught to believe. I am not asking for you to believe anything I write simply because you have read

it. I have never worked that way, so I certainly don't expect you to. Be a skeptic but an open-minded skeptic.

If I have learned anything in this life, it is that there is far more going on in this universe than I could possibly understand. With this understanding, I do my best to always allow room for possibility that exists outside of what I already know, and for possibility that exists beyond my current belief systems. The possibility exists that what sits in front of me in this moment has the potential to take my entire worldview and flip it upside down to the point that everything I think I know would no longer be relevant, and I would have to recreate from scratch my understanding of the universe and how it functions. This can be a bit intimidating, but it is also incredibly exciting and, most of all, powerful.

This book is filled with hard-won insights that I wish I would have known as I was maturing as a man. This is the manual I wish I had had. It is filled with stories of the most difficult points in my life, ones I had to go through to gain my understanding about masculinity, sex, women, and being a man. I invite you to walk the path of The Evolved Masculine with me.

In Part I: Self as Creator, we will explore the perspectives and paradigm shifts that I used to radically reinvent myself twice over so that you can use them to do the same. As we walk down this path, you will be challenged to take full responsibility for your life and your ability to wholly re-envision yourself as a man of your own conscious creation.

In Part II: Lessons of the Evolved Masculine, I share stories of my own journey of discovery with the intention of inspiring you with possibility for your own life. These stories highlight some of my biggest mistakes and deepest flaws and vulnerabilities. As uncomfortable as it is, I know it is important to share, as it was only through these experiences that I learned the potent lessons that helped me know what the qualities, values, and principles of the Evolved Masculine are. Each of these qualities and principles I had to learn, often the hard way. I did not embody or understand them until I was confronted by the pain of their absence. Now, although imperfect, these attributes are consciously part of who I am and what I stand for in the world.

In Part III: Sexual Self-Mastery, we will focus on reprogramming how you relate to your body, your sexuality, and your pleasure. You will learn about the Four

Gates of Sexual Self-Mastery and the Four Tools for achieving it. You will learn to connect to your sexual energy as an *energy*. By learning to master that energy, you will experience total choice around ejaculation, feel more pleasure in your body than you have ever known before, and learn to have non-ejaculatory, energetic orgasms and multiple orgasms. You will learn how to channel your sexual energy for greater pleasure. Something in her body relaxes when she no longer has any concern about whether you will come before she is ready or not. This opens both of you to whole new worlds of pleasure, surrender, and orgasmic possibility.

In Part IV: Understanding Women and the Feminine, we will tackle the big questions about women: What does she really want? Why does she do the things she does? You will gain a better understanding of what is going on with women on a larger collective and cultural level, and learn how to better understand the particular woman in your life. You will finally come to understand what it is that women are craving from you, and how to show up so that she feels fully met physically, intellectually, emotionally, sexually, and spiritually. You will learn the inherent value that you have to offer the women in your life, and come to a deeper understanding, acceptance, and healthy integration of the feminine that exists within yourself.

And finally, **Part V: The Path Continues**, discusses where this path has led me, and how you can best integrate the teachings in this book to move forward into the rest of your life as a more whole man more firmly rooted in your own Evolved Masculine.

My intention in writing this book is to invite you to unlearn and even shatter your previously held perceptions of what it means to be a man and to become more full, integrated, and empowered as a result. I will challenge you to let go of everything you think you know about sex, and in so doing, open up to whole new worlds of power and pleasurable possibilities. Additionally, releasing your outdated beliefs about who women are, how they are, and what they want, and looking at them with entirely new eyes, will allow you to have connections and relationships that fulfill you both.

You have the chance to create something entirely new, to examine yourself and the prescribed rules of manhood. Throwing away the old rules opens up incredible freedom in the sense that anything is possible, but along with that

freedom comes a responsibility. If you can do or be anything, then you must decide: What do you really want? What is your deepest truth? Who are you really? Who are you choosing to become? And are you willing to step fully into your power and responsibility for creating yourself and your life?