

*The
Five
Secrets
of
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*by
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The Goddess of all we desire – love, abundance, happiness- Venus’ image has been adorned, worshipped and coveted for millennia. So much more than muse, cupid or image-maker, Venus is a living presence, an invisible archetypal energy influencing many aspects of our lives. From the mysterious force of nature we feel on a first date to the on-off flicker of erotic chemistry with our steady flame, from the art of feminine mystique to the law of attraction to pleasures that curl our toes, Venus is as intriguing today as she was centuries ago.

I, too, adore Venus. Over the years, she has become my Muse, maybe for the same reason anyone takes up a field of interest: my Venus needed help. Over my years of Venus study I’ve wondered if many of her teachings aren’t secret ones, happening behind closed doors: in the container of our intimate partnerships, in conversation with our closest friends, our astrologer, looking in the mirror. Not one to advertise details of a troubled marriage, body image or financial need, out of the prying eyes of others we ask Venus questions, *Am I worth it? Am I lovable?*

In such private conversations Venus has continued to share five essential teachings through me. Why 5 secrets? Venus eternally traces and re-traces a star pattern in the sky. The elegant journey of her transit punctuated at each star point, Venus whispers... come, be with me, be ravished by me, discover me, drink me in and appreciate my awesome power. *Here are Venus’ five secret teachings.*

Number 1: The Secret of Pleasure

Aphrodite had a magical ability to make situations and people more loving, harmonious and beautiful not just for the pleasure of others, but for her own. Loyal first and foremost to experiencing erotic satisfaction, Aphrodite was the original lush. Judicious in her joys, promiscuous in her pleasures, no desire was off limits. Venus always indulged her desires, even forbidden or off-limits ones.

A healthy Venus never forgets to make her own pleasures central. How easy it is to forget this! But always, Venus is denied at a cost. Maybe you’ve seen this at work in your life: you want a vacation, to take an art class, redecorate your house, but think, *I don’t have the money, my partner won’t approve, I’m too busy to really relax.* We may need to pace some of our pleasures, but deny critical pleasures too long, and we risk winding up unhappy and miserable.

To have our pleasures and desires honored, we must foremost honor them in our self. Several years into my marriage, after diving feet-first into a five-person

family I became overwhelmed and burnt out. Everyone else's energy was always on top of mine, literally; the kids occupied one whole floor of our house. I knew the dynamics of our home needed to change, but every time I complained and asked for support I only received pushback that no one else wanted this change. Fed up, I finally enlisted the help of a therapist and Feng Shui consultant. We transformed the layout of our house and the energy shifted, but the real impetus for the transformation involved self-honoring. I could wait a lifetime for consensus, or I could honor what I wanted, take charge and make it happen. I learned: *If I honor my desires and take them seriously, others will, too.* If we're not fierce about what we want, the Goddess of Pleasure can be fierce with us!

No one practiced the skill of getting what she wanted than my dazzling friend, Angelique. With Venus in Scorpio on her Descendant/Seventh House cusp, Angelique was a charming and masterful dealmaker. When you had something she wanted, Angelique carefully considered her audience, and shuffling through her curated Rolodex of relationships, offered something exciting. If you were a music lover, she'd use her connections to get you concert tickets. If you loved cooking, she'd hook you up with a cooking instructor who happened to owe her a favor. She never hesitated to ask for what she wanted and here's what happened: people tended to give it to her. There's power in taking your desires seriously and making them central to your happiness. After all, who is more likely to have her desires honored: a person who puts the power of her own happiness in another's hands, or a person who knows she has the power to make herself happy?

You can apply this to your relationship. So many of us easily fall into the habit of complaining about our partner's lack of romance, passion or willingness. Many Venus complaints can be resolved by doing that thing we so often fail to do: *Ask for what you want. Then make it happen.* It only takes one spark to start a fire!

So...what's your pleasure? Do you prefer gelato or ice cream? Do you like to listen to Bach or Beck? Does silk turn you on or are you more of a natural flax linen guy or gal? It may feel risky following your pleasure, but the greater risk may be not caring. Carolyn Casey, astrologer extraordinaire, says that learning about our unique affinities and turn-ons actually connects us to our mission in the world.

Pleasure Affirmation: *Venus is rapturously receptive to all my secret desires, pleasures and wishes. I dare to please myself and I am received.*

Number 2: The Secret of Relationship

When she spots her paramour, Venus alights with sensual fascination and a come-hither allure. Sending shivers up and down our spine, her presence compels flirtation, laughter and conversation. Cleverly matching her energy to

ours, she telepathically intuits our deepest desires. We sense she could become anyone we want her to be and feel arousal stir within. She is the original courtesan, the seductress in the arts of erotic love and she compels the initial stages of a romantic possibility. We exclaim, “I love foggy mornings” and our love interest says, “So do I!” We make goo-goo eyes and marvel at how much we have in common. Our similarities, likenesses and complementarity (for instance: one person’s strength is business, while the others is creativity) magnetically draw us together. This is how Venus connects and cements our favorite soul mate bonds.

Venus comes on strong and naturally at the beginning of a romantic relationship. We fall in love, feel youthful and playful (no matter our age), laugh, have fun together, and find one another irresistible. New to one another, we tend to play up our assets and hide our weaknesses in order to become more desirable and seductive. But the idealized image we initially project to our lover must change. **If we want someone to fall for our whole self, and not just its bright likeness, we need to show both our bright side and our authenticity.**

I once dated a chameleon-like man who changed colors in the blink of an eye. I responded by matching his mood and behaviors. “*I can become who you desire,*” my energy all but screamed (as if I knew who that was). Of course the relationship floundered, then failed. Neither of us was being authentic. When we aren’t being authentic with one another, neither is our connection. Even as we do it for Aphrodite’s most cherished value, love, Venus misrepresentation can be deceptive and confusing for both people. “What happened?” we ask, parting ways... leaving both of us wondering who the other person truly is.

Embodying Venus

In Botticelli’s famous painting, *The Birth of Venus*, Venus rises from the sea on a half-shell. One hand over her sex and another over her breast, to her right the winds of change are blowing her way and threatening to send her careening off balance while to the left a woman awaits with a robe. Venus is doing the delicate tightrope act that we all must do in relationship: remain self-possessed and centered while being pulled by our environment and the people in it. Have you ever tried to achieve this for an extended time? It takes skill! Yet Botticelli’s Goddess suggests we adopt a certain attitude or comport. Pushed and pulled by other people with different motives, ideas and desires for her, she remains in charge and gracefully centered. I believe *Venus*’ possessive gesture communicates more than modesty; she reminds us that we mustn’t lose touch with our self.

Venus’ dual rulership illuminates how to achieve this balance. Venus rules two Zodiacal signs: Libra and Taurus. Here we learn a little more about how she works in life, as well as her shadow. Empathic Libra is adept at achieving harmony, Taurus, security and self-possession. Compromise is Libra’s strength

but it can be a shadow: who among us hasn't compromised our self for a relationship and ended up alone? Taurus helps. When the Scales tip too far from center, Taurus' stubbornly insists on our need to be valued and honored, helping us to stand up for our self. And when our headstrong nature might cause us to narrowly focus on one note or perspective— Taurus' shadow, Libra's ability to walk in another's moccasins, diplomatically negotiating win-win situations for all involved, moves mountains. Together, Libra and Taurus instruct: when you are centered in your own values and value, you are flexible enough to honor others.

Centered in her self-worth and value, in partnership Aphrodite fluidly moves between being the sparkling 8-carat diamond and the setting that enhances the brilliance of her partners. One role is not more

powerful than the other, and they do not compete - speaking to Venus' prowess as both supportive partner and leading lady centerpiece. Whereas Hera, the other mythical Goddess associated with marriage, raged when she was disrespected (by husband Zeus) and cajoled when she wanted something, Venus, more like an expert art director standing behind the orchestra curtain, strategically shuffled the deck, rearranging situations and people to advantage—centrally her own. *Try this at home:* if you're feeling unfulfilled about a relationship or situation, step into your center. Act as if you were this *Venus* – sensitive to others, self-honoring and magically powerful. How can you make the situation work for you?

Of course, in every relationship we've got to know when to give, when to get - and then when to sweeten the deal. Venus knows when a little sugar (a kind gesture, courtesy, gift or solicitude) would offset tart resistance or spicy attitudes. Even Mary Poppins appreciated, "A spoonful of sugar helps the medicine go down!"

Number 3: The Secret of Art

Harmony, beauty, balance and symmetry – it's what artists create. When we gaze at a piece of beautiful art, listen to music or steep in artfully crafted prose, our entire being relaxes and breathes, *ahhhh*. But how do artists create this thing called art? A great painting is simply a combination of shapes, textures, colors, no single color or shape remarkable on its own, and yet when synthesized and matched with other colors, shapes, it is magically rearranged into a balanced beauty, a work of art. Venus, the Artist, creates relaxation from tension.

Artfully pairing opposites, people objects, ideas, colors and shapes, so they become complementary is Venus' dominion. Artist Georgia O'Keeffe found small flowers held something larger than life and expressed that on the canvas. Frida Kahlo created beautiful paintings from her pain and despair. In the Thoth tarot, the Art card is the Alchemy card, representing the ability to change something base (lead) into something precious (gold). **The Artist always seeks a**

thing's inherent worth and beauty no matter how ugly or difficult, then reassembles it into something precious and beautiful.

Art is not confined to the studio. As our interpersonal differences contrast with each other, Venus, the Goddess of Art, asks us to look at our relationships from another angle. She asks us to consider that the other person's reality is inherently valuable, even though it is not our own. When differences flare, she is that wise voice in our self: *Does the Other have something valuable to teach me?*

Opposites attract, in art and in life. Venus' marriage was a dramatic example of this dynamic tension of opposites. Aphrodite, the woman who could have any man, was wedded to Hephaestus, a club footed forge smith. She was outraged: why should she, the Goddess who lived for passion, marry this lame heathen? Yet it was he who created the magical girdle that gave Aphrodite her power.

This story reminds me of my client, Pia. Pia was plagued with negative thoughts about her husband Rick's inadequacies. A remarkable businesswoman, over the course of the twenty-five years they'd been married, Pia was able to reinvent herself as the times demanded it, keeping them both financially viable through ups and downs, college and kids. Yet Rick never seemed to have found his way. It was as if, Pia complained, he was content with underachieving. Now, Pia was starting yet another chapter of her life, as a published author and questioning whether she should leave the marriage again, she skirted despair. I wondered aloud if the relationship held power for her, if for no other reason, because she was still in it, and thriving? We named all the things she'd gained from their partnership: kids, careers, and material for a book (which featured witty, wry and wise anecdotes about her marriage). This relationship gave her the security to fulfill her self. From all appearances *this partnership empowered her*.

To make our messy life into gorgeous art, Venus asks us to marry our bright side to our undesirable and undervalued side, the Hephaestus in our self –unwanted, lame, and not so glamorous. We can do this through a partner, and we can do this every time we work with the parts of our self we find unlovable, unacceptable, unwanted. Always, it's hidden work. A dark shadow counterpart to the desirable Aphrodite we carry, when we marry our shadow and bright qualities, we integrate and become whole. Dark and light, plain and precious, ugly and beautiful, unwanted and wanted, when we integrate it all ... we make life and love into Art.

Number 4: The Secret of Magic

Venus magic alights naturally at the beginning of a relationship, but keeping erotic fascination alive over time takes some finessing. Any long-term partnership will eventually face aging, illness, fatigue and run-of-the-mill stress.

We may even experience a loss of libido for the person we love, finding them less attractive than we once did, or feel less than attractive ourselves. Over the course of our life, our razzle-dazzle can periodically fizzle, leaving us feeling flat.

It can be scary to lose touch with the magic. Maybe, we think, it's a natural consequence of aging, motherhood or stress. No matter our age or stress levels, if it's missing, we can get it back. **“The magic” relies on our playful, sensually erotic Temptress energies, and to bring the sparkle and magic to our partnership we need to feel it inside our self.**

Magic isn't something that arrives by candlelight or in a Victoria's Secret shipment; we *generate* magic by nurturing the atmosphere for it to happen. What nurtures this Temptress energy, for you? For many, getting enough sleep, having creative and relaxation time sets the space for spontaneity, joy and affection, as does caressing your body with positive messages and doing things that simply feel good. If our Venus becomes obscured by the domestic demands of partnering we must remember to make her creative, fun, joyful, erotic urges a sacred priority. We can be a partner, wife and mother without sacrificing our Temptress.

And we need pleasure. To feel magical, sexy, juicy and shimmery, the Goddess needs mirth and pleasure to sprinkle down like a warm summer rain. And she needs it now. Not one to put off today's pleasures for tomorrow, sensual pleasure is, in fact, a way of restoring equanimity to the body. Jean Shinoda Bolen, author of *Goddesses in Everywoman*, says, “When an Aphrodite woman's body signals that it's out of balance she looks for an opportunity to experience the pleasure of returning to homeostasis. E.g., jumping into a cool creek on a hot day.”

Our Venus needs us to spring for organic cherries and weekends away in the country, mountains or by the sea. She needs us to rest, as a spiritual act, to take the time to reacquaint our self with our body in a yoga session, or a midnight dip into a hidden lake. She needs Goddess sisters, for heartfelt talks that extend into impromptu dinners. She does this to renew her feminine wellspring. When she does this, just as dewy newness follows a springtime rain... magic follows.

Ways to nurture your inner Temptress:

- Work less, sleep more
- Take one down day or creative play date a week
- Love your body: get a massage or facial
- Make play dates with your woman friends
- Take a yoga class, spend time in nature
- Give your body positive messages
- Buy something inexpensive that makes you feel good

- When you do have energy, don't spend it all. Save some for your self.
- Ask: "What turns me on?" Your Venus sign is a wonderful guide for this.

Number 5: The Secret of Attraction

Have you ever played with the law of attraction – to attract money, a partner, a new job, computer or car? The law of attraction is popular because it works. All laws of attraction originate with Venus, the Goddess of Attraction.

Attraction is a quality of spiritual energy: it is feminine, receptive and magnetic. I like to think of this magnetism as a powerful spiral of invisible energy that, when directed through your imagination, is capable of pulling people, things and ideas into its vortex. To understand this feeling in your body: imagine standing in the center of a spiral, an attractive force at the center of a vortex, with the wind and elements at your command. Male or female, we all have this power to attract.

The Hindu Vedas call this feminine power Shakti. She is a fertile source of abundance, creativity. Shakti doesn't need to manipulate or seduce others through compulsion. She draws them to her with the quality of her creative and spiritual energy. Shakti embodies feminine wisdom, the quiet confidence of spacious knowingness, and the ability to create. Through focused use of this energy she attracts whatever she wants and needs be it love, success, or power.

Beauty, sensuality and money are attractive, and they attract, because they are energetically receptive and magnetic. These things are powered by the spiritual energy of Shakti. All material appearances are like streams connecting to a great ocean with Shakti as the Source, and we can always go to the Source.

Venus Shakti

We cannot separate our innate magnetism from who and what we draw toward us. This is a law of attraction. Students of astrology know this law is reliable because we see it in action all the time. A woman with Venus in Sagittarius attracts professional bachelors; a man with Venus in Scorpio attracts jealous mates. Depending on how in touch we are with our Venus energies, we either attract from the lower expression of Venus or align with the higher vibration.

You already possess Venus Shakti, your own personal law of attraction: your Venus sign. Your astrological Venus demonstrates that *how and what* you attract is already in your energy field. Just as you gravitate toward certain ideas, people and away from others, your Venus sign expresses a unique to you magnetism. And just as like draws in like, as you get to know, engage and nurture your Venus energy you will pull in the right type of relationships, things and experiences you

love. As you embody your Venus, you literally become more attractive.

As you own your attractive power, you can use your imagination and creativity to cook up all kinds of good trouble. On an elemental level you can tap your Venus element (Fire, Earth, Air, Water) for law of attraction work. For instance, my Venus is in watery Cancer so successful law of attraction ritual relies on pairing my intuition with my feelings. My spell work is facilitated by water, but an Earth sign Venus develops magnetism through nature and Earth-based spiritual practices. A Fire Venus gravitates toward visionary work –spirit and vision quests – and draws results from those experiences, while an Air Venus sign has an aptitude for mental law of attraction work (mantra, meditation, affirmation).

We are lucky to be alive during a time when metaphysical teachings that used to be secret, once hidden in the caves in the Himalayas or in royal libraries, are now available to us. Law of attraction techniques are everywhere and when combined with knowledge of your Venus sign, abundance and love are at your fingertips.

Yet many still confuse superficial attractiveness, good jeans or genes, with their true ability to attract, in turn negatively affecting our self-esteem and choices. In order to be a mighty Aphrodite, to move through the world with confidence and grace, we need this final secret more than ever. **Your attractiveness is not dependent on anything external. It is a quality of energy.** I don't know about you, but I find this knowledge incredibly liberating. Once released from the cultural belief that my power to attract was a material commodity (and one I would always fall short of reaching), I was free to draw from my deepest values, sensibilities, loves and joys. I hope the same happens for you, because life becomes so much more fun once you start living from your Venus!

Attraction Affirmation: *I possess mystique and allure. As I express my magnetism, I am attracting everything I want and need.*

Bonus: My Venus Has Fallen And She Can't Get Up!

We all want to wake up with Venus' joy and feminine confidence every day, but sometimes our connection to the Venus in our self falters. We may be vague, confused about or uncomfortable with our femininity. Perhaps we feel our sensual eroticism never fully bloomed. Venus may even be an unknown, unexplored territory in our self.

If your Venus is in an enchanted slumber, how did she lose her way?

- We habitually make others desires central instead of our own
- + Having our desires met is often dependent on another's approval

- + Our female role model(s) had conflicted feelings about her own femininity happiness, body, self-worth as a woman, sensuality, pleasure
 - + We have unhealed sexual abuse or trauma
 - + We've absorbed the media messages that tell us who we are capable of being
 - + We're stressed out (the enemy of relaxation and pleasure)
 - + We want to be creative, have our talents appreciated, do what we love, but we don't
- =My Venus has fallen and she can't get up!*

No matter how disconnected we've become from Venus, we can awaken at any time. To wake up, we can individuate our Venus by learning the separate the cultural and familial fantasies, projections and misunderstandings we've absorbed over time from our true deep self. For Venus, individuation is an act of righting ancient misunderstandings we've been carrying in our feminine lineage, and perhaps the lineage of all women. Individuation is waking up to the truth of who we are, and that we are each beautiful, beloved, blessed in unique ways. Just as there's a formula for falling sleep, there's also one for waking up.

- Learn to identify the oppressions in your life and relationships
- Understand how messages about your femininity has shaped you
- Heal any wounds or violations to your erotic, sensual body
- Vow to take your satisfaction seriously, i.e., don't wait for your partnership to fail to claim a crumb for your self
- Celebrate and honor feminine values (culture doesn't typically do this)
- Know that to have your desires met you must ask for them
- Learn how to give others the information they need to please you
- Strengthen and revive your Venus through understanding your Venus sign

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About Jessica Shepherd

Jessica Shepherd has studied astrology since 1992 and has been practicing and writing about astrology since 2003. She specializes in counseling people through transition, personal growth & awakening. Author of [A Love Alchemist's Notebook: Magical Secrets for Drawing Your True Love Into Your Life](#) and Venus Signs (Llewellyn, January 2015), she has written for various international print and online publications, including Astrology.com, Astrocenter.com and her astrology blog [Moonkissd.com](#).

More from Jessica (Available on Amazon.com):

A Love Alchemist's Notebook: Magical Secrets For Drawing Your True Love Into Your Life.

Karmic Dates & Momentary Mates: The Astrology of Love Affairs. - *Coming Fall 2014*

Venus Signs: Discover Your Erotic Gifts & Secret Desires Through Astrology. – *Jan 2015*

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