Why is it that good girls go for bad boys? Or what’s going on when your wife switches from Glenda the Good Witch to the Wicked Witch of the West? The answers to these questions are not simple, but there are answers.

It’s common for all of us to have a strong suit of behaviors that we play to and a weak suit that we hide. Carl Jung would call this our front and our shadow. The challenge is to appreciate and understand the natural duality in our partner. And even to take responsibility. We chose them for who they are and that shadow side is something we really do want.

It’s pretty common lingo to talk about how much dog a man has in him. A woman wants him to be loyal and wild, fearless and faithful. We could say the same thing about our wives. We appreciate their fierceness and their comforting presence. The challenge is to honor both sides of their nature; the loyal and the wild.

In our public life, we learn to be socially acceptable, responsible adults who truly care and are patient and forgiving. But this public persona may be only a front because a deeper, more passionate or risky side lies below the surface. In the light of day, one aspect is evident. But behind closed doors, another creature lurks. A person may present as cool and aloof, but only those closest to them know the richness and intensity that resides within.

He may be a hothead, or she may be an ice queen. But we love him or her because we know the truth of who they are; the deeper, more intimate aspects of their character.

The wise person knows and appreciates the dual nature of their partner.

And there is strength in this duality. A one sided person is not only boring but also vulnerable. We need some alternatives to respond to the varying demands around us. Action is important but so is inaction. Do you know someone so righteous and perfect they are intolerable. Their righteousness leaves them isolated. But also the wild one with all energy and passion is impossible to keep up with, they are not boring, but tiring.

It’s bad juju to pretend we don’t have both sides, and even worse to resist it in our partner. Healthy partners complement each other.

The good husband can recognize and honor his wife’s sovereignty and vulnerability. She may need to be a little girl at times and later turn into “she who must be obeyed.” The good wife appreciates his need for toys and his single minded devotion to his job and to her. Don’t be offended; instead appreciate the richness and variety of life with your soulful and complex mate.

By the way, good girls fall for bad boys because they intuitively know the strength and independence hidden below. A rich life follows for the one who can harness this dog into a loyal and fierce partner.

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