

7 Treasures of BDSM

The 7 Treasures is my collection of Keys to successful practice in BDSM, and are just as valid outside the lifestyle as within. These are sourced in part through experience, observation, and consolidating common denominators of SSC, RACK, and The 4-Cs (caring, consent, communication, caution).

Awareness of Self

One needs to have [awareness](#) of the self in two key ways. For one, it is about Intent; your needs and limits, goals and desires, the fears and what drives them. This is about your vision of what you want to happen and what you wish to avoid. Without the awareness of intent, you cannot judge what fits for your vision. The other is about awareness in the Now, as the present unfolds; how you experience sensations, emotions, and the stream of messages from body, mind, and soul. This is the dialog both within yourself as much as it is about dialog you need to have with your partner. Without the awareness of the Now, you cannot judge the use of safe words, signs, or encourage further.



Informed Consent

It is not possible to ask for [consent](#) if you have not been fully honest, open, and transparent to the best of your ability. Without the information needed for the entire picture to be appreciated by a prospective partner, true consent cannot be granted. The whole picture of risk changes

when moving beyond desires and limits, and into the challenges of physical and/or mental health, current medications, PTSD or triggers, relationship status, prior experiences, etc. If you are withholding critical information just so another will play with you, then you are manipulating them and the situation. Manipulation cannot lead to consent.

Respectful Communication

[Communication](#) is far more than being able to “express yourself” or make yourself be heard. Certainly that may be challenge enough for some, but for many, it also requires the need to be both purposeful AND respectful in how you both speak and listen to others. This is corrected in part by having a clear intention in what you are trying to communicate – why are you about to say something. Then also one must be respectful in its delivery and in listening to another – how are you about to say something or hear and listen. Don’t just express, diatribe or conduct “dueling monologues”. Instead, use a combination of mindful speech, active listening, and non-verbal communication.

Awareness of Risk

Are all parties involved aware of the risks involved in any BDSM play being discussed? Don’t just accept someone’s dismissal of the needs to review possible risks. You must ENSURE everyone is on the same page with risk, shared good and bad experiences, and how they have managed themselves and past situations. Learning from our lessons is the only thing that turns a mistake into something valuable. Those that have improved over time will find a certain pride in their journey and should be fully prepared to disclosed those they shared that journey with. Put another way, are you prepared for the possible [regret](#) if something goes awry, and have you done all you can to mitigate that from happening?

Responsive Preparedness

With risk comes the need for methods of mitigation, preparation, after care, watch signs, etc. This is not just physical, but just as much mental and emotional. You need to assume a stance of responsiveness to change and steps in preparedness. There is planning for you, your partners, the environment around you, as well as adapting as the situation as it unfolds. If need be, make the call to cancel any BDSM play if the rest of the environment seems too unstable, if moods or emotions are running afoul. The more elements that are out of your control, the more risk there is in a situation. Use foresight versus hindsight.

Responsibility/Accountability

We are all accountable for the actions and outcomes of a situation we are an active participant in, whether or not those outcomes or actions were intentional. We are on the right path when all information has been disclosed, when dialog is constructive and respectful, and awareness has been mutually assured – but still ALL parties are responsible for how a scene may play out. How we choose to respond, as active participants of life, makes the difference between leading with our best, or falling into a mental trap of passivity and victimhood, which only causes misfortune to repeat itself.

Due to the risks inherent in BDSM, your reputation for responsibility and being able to accept accountability for action makes all the difference in the world.

Caring, Compassion, Empathy

The ability to care for another has been identified as a fundamental aspect of the human condition. Caring requires we have Compassion, and part of compassion that is Empathy. Compassion is *an active choice* to want the alleviation of

suffering in others and ourselves. This is primarily achieved by acknowledging that we all share the same limits of the human condition, our vulnerability and our mortality – we all suffer, and we all die. Empathy is the recognition, acknowledgement, and understanding of the other's suffering through an intimate appreciation for what it is truly like to be in the other's situation, from their perspective. *It is through empathy that we establish a deep connection of mutual vulnerability and intimacy with the other.*

-Sir Vice

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