

Safety Manual

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Safety is Everything



BDSMCLASSES

Disclaimer: Please be advised, this manual is meant to propose and provide possible options for making your play safer. It is not a "how to" manual, nor should any of the options be construed as instructional absolutes. The author shall not be held responsible for any action taken or idea used by anyone who has read this manual. The author acknowledges that anyone engaging in any of these possible behaviors is assuming is engaging in personal at risk behavior which in no manner reflects on the contents of this manual or the author.

BDSM is extremely diverse and may take many forms. It is important to respect each other's kink. Not everyone will gain pleasure from the same activity. It may be of value to learn about kinks that may not be of interest to you. It will help you understand what you might see and it's possible that what you learn may not be a kink for you now but could become a kink for you later.

**Diversity is powerful and basic to SM.
No two people play the same....**

Knowledge and information are valuable for your own clarity on what SM/BDSM/kink, etc. is and isn't.

In this manual you may read about activities which have no interest for you whatsoever. Knowledge in all areas, even within activities you would not seek to personally engage in, is recommended. It will allow you, perhaps on a future occasion to better interpret what you may see at a public gathering or hear someone discussing.

In this short space, it would



be impossible to deeply explore all areas of BDSM. This is a basic guideline only.

SSC is an acronym that stands for Safe, Sane and Consensual. SSC became a credo for the SM communities at large. It was originally used by GMSMA (NY based gay male group) and adopted to be used at large at the NLA Conference in Texas in 1989. It means that all participants are committed to:

- ◆ Safety: taking all precautions and educating oneself in order to play as safely as possible;
- ◆ Sane: Being in a sober, non-medicated or otherwise impaired state to make "sane" decisions which will not recklessly endanger each other;
- ◆ Consensual: Each party agrees and freely

chooses to engage in the chosen activities.

RACK (Risk aware consensual Kink), a credo posited in 1999 by Gary Switch offered another point of view:

- ◆ Risk-aware: all participants are informed of the activities risks;
- ◆ Consensual: agreement to engage in activities is given knowing the risks;
- ◆ Kink: an activity that expresses an alternative sexuality

These are the most commonly used credo's. Another credo is PRICK (Personal responsibility, Informed consensual kink).

Regardless of which credo best fits your play, consent allows sado-masochistic activities to be a powerful tool to reach intimacy, understanding, intense physical and emotional states shared by two or more individuals. Sado-masochism, from an educated stance, does not resemble the out of control stereotypes at times imagined by the general public. SM is more of a vehicle for pleasure, fun, connection and personal expression.

Negotiations: A Primary Tool

Negotiation is a cornerstone of the SSC/RACK dogma. It is one of your most important tools as a player. This is where two or more people discuss their desires, goals, wishes, hot buttons, limits (what they will not do) and medical history in order to provide each other with enough information to have a satisfying mutual scene.

Some negotiations are very brief. For instance, if you are at a gathering and only wish to have a flogging, it may not be necessary to say more than, "This is where I like to be flogged. This is how heavy I

can go. I like stingy sensations and not thud and this is my safeword. However, other negotiations will last for months. Depending on how intensely you intend to play or how well you know someone. Discussions will vary.

The basics areas which should be addressed are:

- Medical history and medications
- Safeword (Have you (has anyone who played with you) ever safeworded? If so, why?)
- Emotional history / hot buttons
- Areas of experience

- Areas of interest
- Solid limits (absolute no's)
- Implementation experience
- Mentoring / Learning Experience
- Mutual goals of playing
- Sexuality (will it or will it not be involved)
- Fantasies

It's your responsibility to communicate what you want and expect- it can be the difference between a superbly satisfying scene and a tragedy. Speak freely about what you want and need before, during and after a scene.

Good Planning

Your environment is extremely important to the success of your scene. You should be aware of lighting, placement, stability and temperature.

Lighting

You want to make sure you have adequate lighting for all activities. Low lighting is frequently used to set a "mood" or help relax the bottom. Make sure that the lighting isn't too low that you would be unable to discern reddening skin. Colored lighting is at times used to achieve a certain affect. Be aware that red lighting in particular will tint the color of the skin and not allow one to see actual pigment. Make sure the light isn't placed so it would create a blind spot.

Placement

Be aware of your surroundings. Know the location of tables, other pieces of furniture and objects so if your bottom faints they won't fall and injure themselves. Most injuries which occur during fainting are due to striking an object while falling.

Be aware of hanging objects or anything that might obstruct your path or fall while you are scening.

Stability

Before utilizing any equipment such as crosses, spanking benches, slings, any and all furniture-like dungeon equipment, one should test it. You need to pull, push and check the stability of all pieces. Run your hands along the surface that may be touching your bottom, make sure there aren't rough spots, splinters and such.

Temperature

You want to be aware of the temperature around you. A bottom will not last long if it is too hot or cold. If it's too cold, the bottom's longevity may be altered. They may experience and process sensation differently. Remaining cold effects the muscles constricting them, changing the muscles ability to absorb impact. It's not recommended for long periods of time. If a bottom becomes cold, you may have a blood flow issue or someone who is about to go into shock.

Extreme heat is also dangerous. A bottom could be overcome with heat stroke. They may faint, become dizzy, or nauseous. If they do, give them plenty of water and you could place ice on the back of the neck or on the inside of the wrist to decrease body temperature.

Music

Music is an effective tool to enhance or control your immediate environment. It can create many different types of mood. Set the volume at a level that allows clear communication. Or place a second safety in place such as an object that may dropped if they needed to signal you.

Hydration

Staying hydrated is a very important element to any scene. It's advisable to drink 16 oz of water thirty minutes prior to any scene. The heavier the scene the better the hydration level. Keep water on hand during a scene also.

With a bit of forethought, you can help insure that your scene has all the necessary elements to provide a solid foundation.

Disgae: Protect Yourself, Protect Your Toys

Being aware of the medical issues and necessary precautions to stay healthy is the best gift you can give yourself and your playmates.

Hepatitis

Hepatitis is a major concern. This bloodborn disease is extremely contagious. Hepatitis is virulent outside of the body. If say, a drop of blood dries on a cloth and is moistened twenty-one days later, the hepatitis is re-activated. Getting a hep Vaccination is recommended if you intend to play with bloodsports.

HIV Transmission

HIV is transmitted by the mixing of bodily fluids between an infected individual and a healthy individual. Cuts on your hands, or elsewhere that come into contact with your play partners body fluid (not saliva) will expose you to the virus if your partner is infected.

There have been many debates over the years as to whether or not lesbians are at a lesser risk in transmitting HIV to one another. Most testing of women is taken when they are not aroused and they are

swiping a dry vagina. The CDC contends that vaginal excretions do contain significant levels of the virus which can infect another person ingesting or otherwise exposed.

STD's

These are sexually transmitted diseases such as yeast infections, bacterial vaginosis, pailloma virus, trichomoniasis, gonorrhea, syphilis, HIV and venereal disease. These diseases are all bloodborn and this does include menstrual blood and breast milk.

Protection

Wear latex or nitrile gloves over hands when touching, penetrating or fisting. Many people have latex allergies, in this case please use nitrile gloves. They are easily found at the drugstore. Latex allergies need to be taken seriously- your partner could have a severe reaction, stop breathing and die within minutes if they have an allergy to latex.

Condoms should be used over all insertables especially if you are not going to dedicate the toy to one person only. Do not use "natural" condoms.

These are made of intestinal tissues and the HIV virus can penetrate this material.

Dental dams or multi-layers of saran wrap (a single layer is not sufficient and too easy to break) work well for oral sex. You can also use a piece of a condom or a glove.

Never use a barrier on a cunt which has been used on an ass. Change gloves, change dams. If you don't you could create a serious infection.

Lube

Stick with lubes that are water based for vaginal penetration and silicone based for anal play. Many non-water based lubes will break down latex. A few of these are: crisco, oil based lotions, perfumes, mineral oil, suntan oil, vaseline, liqueurs, chocolate sauce, whipped cream and hand lotion.

Nonoxynol 9 kills HIV and many other microbes. However, some people cannot tolerate it.

The rule of thumb with lube is more, more, and then use even more.

Reactions: Being Prepared for Anything

You should be prepared for anything when you scene. Your best notion is not to panic. Remain calm and you will be able to address any situation well.

A bottom may go into shock. This is characterized by the drain of color from their face, rapid breathing, a cold and clammy feeling on the skin, nausea, sometimes shakes or they may even pass out.

If someone goes into shock, give them some orange juice and wrap them in a blanket. For nausea sometimes placing their head between the legs works or if you

place the feet high than the body. Sucking on peppermint candy also works well.

Remember different people react differently to all types of stimulation. The body will individually discern what is "trauma". A bottom could react at the onset of an activity, during the activity, or even when the activity stops.

Have water, a snack, and a blanket on hand. Blankets can be used to wrap floggers for traveling to protect the leather from bending making them convenient and useful.

Disinfecting Toys

For disinfecting toys of a solid non-porous material you may use soak in 1 part Clorox and 10 parts soapy water. Staphene works very well for non-porous materials.

For porous materials, like leather dildos, they should be dedicated. Always use a condom. You can give yourself a vaginal infection otherwise. For leather products exposed to bodily fluids like blood: 1 part Clorox, 10 parts soapy solution from saddle soap. You can also add in an oily reconditioning solution. Always recondition the leather item after cleaning in order to protect the leather from drying.

Safewords

Safewords have become a cornerstone of BDSM. Crafted by David Stein for GMSMA (August 17, 1983), safewords are a well recognized component of play. A safeword was initially invented as a shorthand language where the bottom could communicate that they were in distress physically or emotionally. A safeword can stop a scene and generally is a word other than No. This allows scenes to contain the word no and is convenient for rape scenes, for instance. It also allows the bottom to let the top know at any given moment if they are no longer okay with what is transpiring within the scene. Some scenes use two safewords. One word stops the whole scene, another word means don't stop the scene but change what you are currently doing. This also helps balance individual responsibility in the scene. Each person is responsible for themselves and for their communication of

Whips, Flails & Quirts: An Overview

Whips are generally considered to be bullwhips, single tails, signal whips, stock whips and shotwhips. Each is characterized by a single braided piece or fall extending to the end which usually has some



sort of "popper" attached. The picture to the left is a Morgan single tail (4ft.)

Singles, bullwhips can be anywhere from 3 to 12 feet. The longer they are the more difficult

they are to control. You can break skin with these implements and you need to be sure of your aim and strength. You should be mentored by someone whose skilled in this area before you ever try this on someone's skin.

Flails (top right picture) can be flat tails (see C in picture), round braided (see A), and flat braided (see B). All braided implements will create a stinging sensation. Flat braids are thuddier. Flat tailed flails will produce more of a thud. The shape of the ends of each fall will also determine the sensation. The more bluntly cut will be less stinging, the more angular the cut, the more stinging or the sensation. There are also cats. This term is usually indicative of braiding and the number of tails/falls (usually nine).

Quirts (pictured below) differ greatly from one to the next. They are



generally 12 to 18 inches of braided leather to which is attached a double piece of flat leather. Please see the picture: a) is a Morgan dog quirt; b) is a regular quirt of regular proportions. These whips, flails and quirts should have handles that are easy to grasp and weighted properly. The weight of the handle will dictate how the tails of the flail will fly. The longer the tails of the flail the more difficult it will be to control. Each of these will behave



differently, with the multi-tailed flails all the tails will not land at the same time or in the same area. Tails which are wrapped or knotted will land with more impact and more power. This "balancing" of the weight is what provides the extra oomph. Each one of these implements will feel differently and each are suited to different whipping/throwing styles. For the most part, the multi-tailed floggers can be thrown straight, in X formation, figure eights, in a circular motion, one stroke at a time or continuous ongoing motion. To know how these implements feel on your body before using them on someone else, some tops flog their thighs, palms of hand, or forearms to test the sensation. The more experienced can flog their own back. It gives you a good reference before using them on someone else.

Always maintain a straight spinal column and make movements that are natural to the body as you throw these implements. Mix up the movements to avoid a repetitive injury. Tucking your hand into the small of your back, palm facing out, will allow you to use your energy more economically as it allows her weight to disperse more evenly. (cont. on next page)

Bondage & Sensory Deprivation

Sensory Deprivation can be construed as a type of bondage. This form of play deprives a person of one or more of their senses.

Don't **blindfold** someone and then have them walk alone as they could injure themselves by running into objects.

Don't place the person where if they could knock over a candle if they move their arms.

Ear plugs, hoods, tape, plastic bags and gags are a few items that can be used for sensory deprivation. Remember not to completely block air passage. Gags can do that and if your bottom is gagged they also won't be able to call their

safeword. You can give them a silent safeword such as an object in the hand, stomping a foot three times, or other methods that are clear. Many prefer something other than an object in the hand, as it could be accidentally dropped. It's prudent to use silent safewords if verbal communication isn't possible.

(cont. page 6)

Whips, Flails & Quirts: An Overview

There are many positions that one can use to whip/flog a bottom. They can be standing, laying down, bent over a spanking bench or kneeling before you to name a few.

It's important to strike the spot you are aiming to hit. Whips are an extension of your hand. For the most part, you should aim with the tip of the implement. That is where the most power will be concentrated in the strike. Whips and such are tools which allow you to create sensation. The power inherent in them also needs to be respected. Bottoms should know what a good flogging is and isn't. It's a bottom's responsibility to take care of themselves and make sure they do not submit to something which will harm them. Bottoms should not lock their knees when being flogged while standing. This could cause fainting.

Areas not to whip or flog:

- eyes, ears, nose, mouth
- the neck (front or back)
- the spine
- joints (elbows, knees, wrists, ankles, etc.)
- tendons
- ligaments
- organs which are close to the surface of the skin such as kidneys
- the middle of the back (waist) that is the location of kidneys
- from the knees down (knees and feet are very vulnerable)

Areas which are good for whipping

or flogging are:

- muscular or fatty areas of the body
- padded front and insides of thighs (not where it connects to the hip)
- the sweet spot of the ass
- across the shoulder blades

Now there is considerable debate as to whether or not one should flog and/or bruise breasts. There isn't any empirical evidence to support that they shouldn't or that it is okay to do so. Some people believe one should not bruise breasts as it could make one more susceptible to fibroid tumors and the development of cancer. The only suggestion that seems clear is not to create deep bruising on breasts that are cystic or fibrous.

You want to make sure that when you whip/flog that you don't wrap. Wrapping is when the tips of the flogger or whip curl around the surface of the body such as shoulders, sides, and hips. It's one thing to intentionally wrap— it's another to wrap because your aim is off.

Use your whole body when flogging, not just your arm. This can help you avoid injuries to your shoulder.

Genital Whipping

With this type of play you want to make sure you have cleaned your

whip well after. Or, you can use a garter belt, stretch a dental dam over the area and then flog it. One option is to flog while you are holding a finger over the clit. That can allow the person to take more as it is covering the most sensitive part.

Hygiene

Keeping your whips and flails clean is imperative. You must clean them well, condition them to keep the grain and leather in a state which will be healthy for the leather to stay supple.

Disinfecting leather is particularly important if body fluids have come into contact with it. This can be difficult if the material is braided.

Sometimes you can get a dry cleaner to hand dip the item. However, if this is not an option, perhaps you need to dedicate the item. If this is not possible, clean well as explained earlier. Pay special attention to all the nooks and crannies. Another possible solution is that a bottom keeps their own whips and floggers that are to be used only on them and offer the top use of those items. Or bag the item, keep it sealed for twenty-one days and then clean normally.

Flogging can be experienced as soft, hard, deep and even spiritually intense. Check in periodically, watch your aim, keep your body aligned and allow yourself to fly.

Canes, Slappers and Crops

Canes, slappers and crops also create highly different sensations.

Canes in particular can be heavy play. Canes are usually fairly thin implements (see C of picture). The top item is a doubled rod made of acrylic. If the item is any material other than bamboo or rattan, then it is a rod not a cane. The two canes under C are made of rattan. Canes can cause enormous bruising and can bludgeon. The thinner they are the stingier they are. These can be used rhythmically or in traditional sets of six. This is heavy play as they can gather an enormous amount of strength. Canes generally create a long sensation and you may need to wait between strikes giving your bottom a chance to recover and process.

Slappers (A in picture) and **crops** (B in the picture) come in many varieties. The tip may be small or large and this will greatly effect the sensation which these implements can create. The thinner the tip the stingier the sensation. The wider

the tip the deeper the impact and greater thuddy feeling. The wider the tip the greater disbursement of power delivered by the implement. Crops and slappers also vary in their "bounce-ability". The less bounce an item has the deeper into muscle the sensation will go.

Some slappers have a metal piece placed down the middle of the implement to enhance strength and



stability. This will also increase the wallop greatly.

One of the advantages of implements of this nature is that they are more easily aimed. Generally, these implements will not wrap. However, some canes which

are extremely thin, will wrap and they will bounce onto the hip after the body of the cane has already come down on the buttocks. This can be extremely painful and is a thought to keep in mind. Options.

Generally the point of the greatest force will be concentrated in the tip of the implement.

It is highly recommended that you practice first on an inanimate object such as furniture or a pillow. This can help you get a better idea of how the implement will react to your differing swings. Also testing these objects on your own body is smart and recommended so you get a feel for

how powerful the implement is and what sensation this implement will give to your bottom. The areas to strike and not to strike with these implements are the same as the areas to strike and not to strike as floggers and whips.

Bondage & Sensory Deprivation (cont.)

In bondage there's a few rules of thumb that generally will see you through any situation.

Generally the wider the mechanism on the wrists or ankles the better (say two inches). It's possible to pinch nerves if the equipment used is too thin. By pinching nerves, you can do permanent damage. When restraining wrists you should be able to place one finger inside the device that way you know it's not too tight. If you begin to experience any tingling, numbness or coldness in your hands or feet during bondage, you should let your top know immediately. The bondage should either be lower or adjusted

completely then. A bottom in bondage should not be laid face down, they could suffocate. Also, metal manacles tend to get heavy and dig into the flesh after a time. Check this periodically to make sure you are not cutting into flesh.

Bondage which can tighten without the tops knowledge should be avoided. It can cut off blood flow, pinch nerves or if it is around the neck, suffocate them as well.

Sensory deprivation is a form of bondage as well. Gagging is one area of concern within Sensory Deprivation. If you stuff cloth in a mouth the cloth will absorb the saliva

and a person can gag and choke because they do not have the proper lubrication. They could also swallow some of the cloth into their throat and choke.

You should be particularly cognizant of sensory deprivation with someone who has vertigo. I do not recommend sensory dep. in that case.

A very important factor of bondage is to discern if your partner has any medical reasons why remaining still, or with arms in a certain position stressing joints, etc. could be dangerous and extra painful for them.

Penetration: Anal and Vaginal

General Penetration

Penetration can be oral, anal and vaginal. Many items can be used for penetration: hands, candles, dildos, fists, etc. The list is endless. Just stay away from objects with sharp edges.

All anal or vaginal penetration should take place with a barrier in place, condoms on insertables and gloves on hands. This is necessary to inhibit infection and the transmission of disease. A glove or condom that has been in the rectum should never be placed on or in the vagina. You may go from the vagina to the rectum. Never use condoms and gloves twice.

Non-oxynol-9 is a common ingredient in lubes. When used with a barrier is it effective against the transmission of herpes, HIV, and other STD's. You can check your sensitivity to latex and lubes by self experimentation. If you experience irritation, consult your physician.

Anal and vaginal penetration are two entirely different subjects from a safety perspective. These orifices are made of different tissues and each has unique needs and

characteristics.

Anal Penetration

The tissue in the rectum is capable of absorbing materials placed inside the rectum. For this reason take care with what you insert. For instance, if you give an enema with wine, you can make the person quite drunk and it can be toxic. Using alcohol is not recommended. If you use Crisco, the rectum will absorb the calories.

Rectal tissue is not as elastic as vaginal tissue. It needs to be worked slowly. Lube is your best friend with this activity. When you think you have enough- use more. Make sure you apply lube beyond the initial ring of the ass. You want to make sure it's gotten all the way in. The rectum does not create any natural lube like the vagina.

Tearing rectal tissue is extremely easy. It is also dangerous to the bottom. If you ever see blood- stop immediately and go see a doctor if the bleeding doesn't stop. You could have toxins seeping into the bottoms system and it could be fatal.

You should always wear gloves and have your nails well trimmed.

Any little hang nail or piece of roughened skin is capable of tearing rectal tissue.

Vaginal Penetration

The vagina does create it's own lubrication. However, at times, it is prudent to use manufactured lube. Vaseline should not be used vaginally. It does not break down well and can cause an infection at a later date. Water-based lubricants are less likely to irritate and any oil based lubricant should not be used vaginally (vaseline, baby oil, lotions, etc.).

Fisting

Fisting is not where you insert the entire fist at once. It is when you place the hand finger by finger into the orifice. The hand forms a fist naturally once inside. If your having trouble use more lube and change the angle of your hand.

Note: If you have long nails and intend to penetrate someone anally or fist them, it is highly recommended that you place cotton balls in the fingers of the glove and make sure your fingernail is well seated in the cotton ball. This will ensure that you do not scratch or split tissue indiscriminately.

Fisting...

Tuck your fist and make sure it's in a position that the hand will close around it. Generally when the fingers are beginning inserted they will tend to overlap and bunch. This is normal. If you are meeting resistance, change the angle, use more lube and go slow.

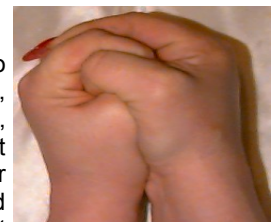


This is the general configuration you will feel when fisting. Your hand may be compressed when fisting. Always listen to the body you're penetrating. She/he is your best source of information. Next, is a picture of how double fisting is done. You penetrate with one hand, and insert one finger at a time into the fist already



inside. (Many women are unable to take this)

Remember to go very slowly, finger by finger, until the next hands finger are wrapped inside the first hands fingers. Use lube sparingly. The watch words are more, more and more lube especially if your fistee is post menopausal or has had a hysterectomy.



Clits, Clamps and Clothespins

Clamps and clothespins and other implements which pinch the skin together are very easy to use.

These items can be placed on fleshy or fatty parts of the body. Generally they are not connected to muscle. However, that also can be done. If you do that, expect deep bruising and extreme pain.

These item can also be placed on the genitals. Below is a picture of clamps of differing strengths and use. The very tiny one on the left is used for the clit. The ones in the middle can be used for nipples or the clit as well. The larger clamps on the right hand side are generally used for the labia minora or majora. Clamps are wonderful on nipples



and for genitorture.

Below are very small clips (middle and right) and a clamp (on the left). These can be particularly nasty. They are so small that they can really hurt because they do not



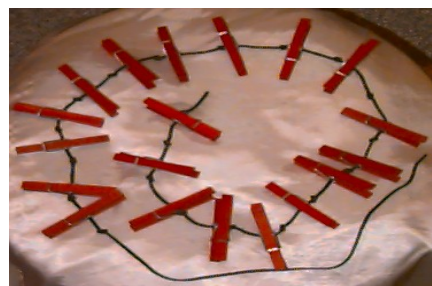
disperse the pain over a large area.

The clamp in this picture is particularly good with nipples that are already pierced. They disperse the pressure across the area well and hold the jewelry in place so you don't have to worry about ripping.

The longer you leave these items on the deeper and more painful the experience will be. These items function by stopping blood flow temporarily to a small area. When the blood comes back into the area, you will feel a rush of pain. This pain can be controlled by using your hand to re-clamp the area thereby controlling blood flow back into the area. This may be helpful if your bottom is having a heavy reaction to this activity.

If you ever use a clamp or clip and see that the skin is getting white, generally this means that the clamp is too tight. It's cutting off blood to the area. That is not a state you wish to perpetuate for long. Naturally, the area will slightly change in color, but watch for severe changes and act accordingly (remove pin or loosen).

The below picture is a zipper. When using this item (apply to fleshy/fatty area and take cord on end and pull off in one motion), be



aware that flesh can be ripped. You can come into contact with body fluids. Clothespins are so cheap and these so easily made, please throw them out and simply make a new zipper. The wood is generally so porous that you just can't adequately clean it. Or you can bag the item as mentioned previously.

Wax: Temperature & Color

The concerns with wax are: 1) temperature; 2) staining clothing; 3) placement; and 4) type of wax.

Temperature is controlled several ways. The higher the candle is held above the body, the cooler the wax will be when it hits the body. Temperature can be changed by using doubling techniques. This is an advanced method. Do watch the content of blackening wax, this is indicative and will help you monitor temperature. Beeswax burns at a very, very high temperature. Some people choose to use it. Generally

this is discouraged because it does burn very hot. Paraffin burns at a lower temperature and is recommended.

Candles with color tend to stain and burn much hotter. Your bottom could also have an allergic reaction to the chemicals that make the color or the the scent of the candles. If you wish to color the wax on a bottoms body you can melt crayons. Test them first. Also be aware if this gets on clothes it usually will stain. On occasion, it is possible to get wax stains out of cloth with a semi-

warm iron.

Be aware of splattering and wax running into curves, crevices (like genitals) and skin-folds. Waxing over hairy areas can be removed much easier if you use baby oil. Also if you are going to drip wax onto another object, that object will conduct the heat. Plastic will melt and that's extremely dangerous. Never remelt wax on skin.

If the skin is scaled or burnt, please see the burn section of this manual.

Breathing: Asthma, Muscles and Spirituality

Generally, breathing is something we don't think about. It's simply something we do. In scene, one should be aware of breathing and pay special attention to the rhythm, rate and depth of your bottoms intake of air. Breathing well is pivotal to the success of any scene.

A bottom should breathe evenly and take full deep breathes. If your bottom is breathing faster than thirty-six intakes per minutes, you need to stop and evaluate. Perhaps simply a break or slowing down is in order. Make sure you don't begin heavy play again until their breathing has slowed and is more even. Hyperventilating is not a lovely addition to any scene. Should this occur place bottoms head between their legs and have them breathe into a bag.

It's important to make sure that you are giving your body enough air to deal with potentially stressful activity. When your body is under stress, breathing in through your nose and out of your mouth will significantly increase your ability to deal with pain, your stamina and feeling focused. Airating your blood and muscles will help your body and keep you clear minded as well.

Using breathing as a point of focus can be helpful. It may have a calming effect and allow you to focus precisely on your body. This, for some, is an invaluable technique for settling into their scene.

Breathing can also be a primary component of attaining spiritual play for many. It can be connective

between a top and a bottom if you get into the same rhythm of breathing or are directive or controlling of breathe.

If someone has **asthma**, it is definitely a piece of information you wish to have prior to scene. It's recommended that their inhaler is close at hand at all times. Ask them what the best methods of treatment are beforehand as they may not be able to tell you when they are having difficulty breathing later.

With someone who has asthma one should be aware of certain types of play. For instance, use of alcohol on the skin could be inhaled and cause an attack. Use of smoke (fire play, cigar or cigarette play) can also incite an attack.

Party Etiquette & Helpful Hints

Sometimes we all find ourselves in awkward situations if we aren't entirely familiar with party etiquette. If you keep in mind a few basic concepts, these situations may be easily avoided. A simple apology will also generally be enough to extricate yourself from one of these situations as well.

- Do not touch anyone else's toy bag or toys that are hanging for a scene. It's good form to ask for permission first regardless of whether you are a top or a bottom.
- Do not touch a bottom or submissive who is in a collar without permission from their top. Some people feel it's fine if the collar does not have a lock on it, however, I would suggest asking to clear any doubt.
- Do not assume by someone's looks how they wish to be addressed. Ask them.
- If you see a scene that makes you uneasy, you may simply walk away. Interrupting a scene is not good form. You always have the option of asking the DM if what is going on is ok.
- Always remember that a top needs "whip space". This is the surrounding space that it will take to throw a whip or flogger. Walking behind a top and into a top's whip space can interrupt the scene or you could get hit.
- Do not speak or laugh loudly near an on-going scene. It can interrupt the players, disturb their concentration or may feel intrusive.
- If possible, give each scene at least six feet of space. On occasion this is not always possible due to space limitations. Do your best.
- If you're new and don't know too many people, a wonderful way to get to know more people is to ask your hosts if there is anything you can do to help.
- Most people are pretty approachable. If a top did something in a scene that interested you and you'd like to find out more about that activity, most tops, or bottoms for that matter, would be open to talking to you about what they did. A compliment goes a long way to starting a conversation.
- Please and thank you aren't about D/s or M/s, it's simple courtesy. Play nice and be polite in general.
- After a scene has ended, give the players some time to wind down before approaching them.
- Ask your host/hostess if they need any help with clean up or set up, this is very helpful and not practiced nearly enough by many of us!

Fire Play

To play safely with fire, you should have these items on hand: 1) two bath towels that are wet; and 2) a small fire extinguisher.

Make sure you and your bottom don't have any clothes, untied hair, nails, etc. that could easily catch fire because of their close proximity. Know your environment. Make it as non-flammable as possible. Fire may spread in an instant. Don't panic. Calmness will allow you to handle any situation quickly and adequately. Also, learn how to use your fire extinguisher beforehand.

Make sure your bottom understands that fire travels upwards. Sitting up as a reaction to fire is not a good thing. Instruct your bottom not to move away from the fire either. You need to maintain a close proximity so you may wipe the fire out with your hand.

Don't use alcohol that has a higher alcohol content than 70%. The other solutions burn hotter and longer. I do not recommend scented alcohol (such as Wintergreen) as there are oils in it which will make it burn longer and hotter. Generally do not use another chemical unless

you have been trained to do so by an expert.

Be cognizant of the area you intend to play with: a) is this hairy area; b) is there scar tissue; c) is there an open wound? d) how close is this to the face, head hair, eyes, fingernails?

Hair will ignite and you can say good-bye to it immediately. Make sure your bottom is cool with this. Scar tissue may be more sensitive, ask your bottom. Test the area. You can do fire play over an open wound, however, this may lead to scarification and therefore I would discuss this fully with your bottom. Face, head hair, eyes, cunts and fingernails are not good places to run fire. As to cunts, it's hard to control, there are so many folds, I don't recommend it. Now there are exceptions. I personally have used my fingernails as torches. It worked well for fear tactics. I brought it close but never placed it on the bottom as there are chemicals in my nails and I didn't want to deal with a chemical burn. Dipping one's fingernails in a glass of water will easily take care of the flame. Your manicurist can take care of the rest.

Never let a flame burn on skin, immediately swipe the flame with your hand. Even if you don't see a flame- come behind it with your hand. You may not see it, but it could be there and burning your bottom.

Also, sometimes torches drip, be aware of this, be ready for it. Keep your eyes on the flame and on the skin. Make sure that whatever is beneath you is not highly flammable. I watched a shower curtain torch up at a play party from just such drips. I recommend wearing shoes that are not open toed. Alcohol may pool on occasion, be aware of this and put it out immediately. Avoid cracks and crevices. Use smaller areas, they are easier to control. Don't blow on it- this will only spread it. Don't slap it, this can spread it. Don't do fire play over an area you've waxed even if you can't see particulate. It's there.

This activity should be a mentored skill. Proceed with caution, be fully aware of the risks and have fun.

Burn Care and Types of Burns

If a someone is burned the first items to attend to are: 1) move the victim away from the fire; 2) put the fire out; 3) if the person's clothing is on fire they should be rolled in a blanket or doused in water (only use water if this fire was not created with alcohol. Alcohol floats on water and all you will do is spread it); 4) cut away smoldering clothing, do not pull; and 5) if the fibers adhere to the skin tightly, don't pull, douse in water to loosen.

Types of Burns

A first degree burn is characterized by red, painful skin with no blisters. It ordinarily heals in three to seven

days. It is limited to the epidermis. A sunburn is a good example of a first degree burn.

A second degree burn (also referred to as a partial thickness burn) effects all epidermal layers and extends into the dermis. There are two classifications: a) *superficial* which involves only outermost part of the dermis and is very painful. Characterized by mottled skin, pink or red and blanches with pressure. This will heal in ten to eighteen days without permanent scars; and b) *deep* destruction down to the last layer of dermis. The burn will be moist,

blistered and mix with areas of mottled red and white patches. The skin does not blanch and may not be painful. Healing may take weeks and leave scars, if this burn becomes infected, by definition it becomes a third degree burn.

Third degree burns are the destruction of all epidermal and dermal layers right down to the subcutaneous tissue. Skin may appear charred, leathery or pale and dry. Usually there is no pain as the nerve endings have been destroyed. Healing occurs with skin grafting or scarring.

Burn Care and Types of Burns (continued)

To treat a first degree burn immerse the burned area in cool water or apply a cold compress within an hour of the injury.

For second degree burns, apply cold, do not puncture the blisters. If you use vitamin e or aloe on the

wound in the days to follow, it will aid the skins healing process.

To treat a third degree burn cover the wound with dry dressing and be aware of the victim's body temperature. Get the victim of a hospital or doctor immediately. This

is serious and unless you are a medical professional, you are not skilled to handle this medical emergency.

Burns are the second most common cause of accidental death and to be taken seriously.

Blood Sports: Piercing, Suturing and Cutting

Piercing, suturing and cutting have many overlapping areas when it comes to safety.

Where to and not to Pierce/Cut:

- Neck, face (though it's done), toes, fingers, spinal column, collar bone, hands and lower back
- Avoid major nerves- you're generally safe if you avoid the areas listed above.
- Places to pierce are thighs, upper arms, forearms, sides, and torso.
- The abdomen, labia, nipples are pierce-able but you should have advanced skill sets.

Make sure you have alcohol, betadine, gloves, gauze, sharps container and a towel on hand.

Check your environment. Make sure nothing can fall on your bottom or that anything is near that they or you may bump into when piercing them. Keep your environment as clean as possible.

Make sure you have good lighting. Don't pierce over veins that are protruding from the skin. Gather everything you need when you start so you don't have to leave your bottom.

Wear gloves always. Even if you are fluid bonded the various particulates under your nails will place your bottom at risk of infection. Short of soaking your hands in betadine, working it in

under your nails, allowing it to dry fully- your hands aren't clean. I recommend spraying your gloves down with alcohol to clean them. Alcohol cleans but it is not a disinfectant. Betadine is. Clean the area you intend to pierce, suture or cut. Soap and water, then alcohol will do for piercings and suturing. Always use betadine or surgical prep solutions for cuttings. For betadine use, apply, make sure it is completely dry and then wipe down with alcohol to remove the stain from the betadine. In suturing if you are adding decorations, please clean them first with alcohol.

Your worst enemy here is Hepatitis. Please see the section on disease for more information.

Never pierce, suture or cut beyond the third layer of skin. If you cut into the third layer of skin, many people will scar. It is possible to get a scar from a first layer cutting as well. Temporary piercing, even with small gauges, may scar as well. The more melanin the thicker the skin and more likely that the skin will scar. All skin is unique, it will vary in thickness, color, healing ability and time.

It's possible that you could hit a vein or artery. Arteries are generally well below the third layer of skin, however, this is not always the case. If you hit either, don't panic. In the case of piercing, we're talking about a very small hole, a pin prick. Put pressure on the wound with gauze. Bleeding should stop in

three to seven minutes. With cuttings, the damage may be much greater. If you can't get the bleeding to slow considerably or stop within ten minutes, call 911. Have a towel on hand to catch any blood that possibly escapes from the gauze. Lay it below the bleeding area.

I recommend using only scalpels for cuttings. Some people use knives, However, I feel that since they tend to tear the skin it is not your best option. Scalpels were made to cut skin and therefore offer a cleaner line. Do not use scalpels or needles that have been previously used. Though these items are incisive, they dull with use. Needles are made to penetrate skin once. They dull quickly- sometimes they are used to "etch" a cut. Scalpels do dull but not as fast. Change them as you feel more resistance.

These aren't safer forms of play. You do your best to minimize your risk but the risk is greater for the transmission of disease as you are working with body fluids. Please dispose of all related materials for this type of play in and Sharp's container. Do not throw the Sharp's container in your regular trash. You may usually drop them at a pharmacy or hospital without questions.

I highly recommend mentoring before attempting this form of SM. There are many skills which go into this form of play. Be thorough, cautious and study hard.

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Catherine Gross, PCC resides in New York and Baltimore. She was taught in a hands-on tradition and believes in the benefits of direct learning. She has taught at IMsL, Floating World, Leather University, Black Rose and for many groups and private gatherings across the country. She produces SouthEast LeatherFest and is a Life Success Coach. She believes learning and laughter is at the core of creating good solid play and hopes you may gain some tidbit from this manual to further your pleasure and play.

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