

## Navigating Negotiation

### Land Acknowledgement

We want to acknowledge that our event will take place on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded Indigenous territories of the ʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), sk̓wx̓wú7mesh (Squamish), and selilwitulh (Tsleil-Waututh).

### Definition

Google defines negotiation as “discussion aimed at reaching an agreement.”

Colloquially, negotiation can also mean:

- Bartering
- Bargaining, pushing for as much as you can get
- Compromise is expected

In Kink we mean:

- Looking for a win-win situation
- Finding common ground
- Communicating interests and boundaries
- Inclusive not exclusive

### Communication

Brainstorm: what gets in the way?

- Safety, coercion
  - Neutrality, power dynamics
  - Reputation, desire to be perceived a certain way
  - Competition, with others or with oneself
  - Vocabulary, not having the words
  - Shame, wanting to experience but “at a distance”
- Brainstorm: solutions?
  - Choose safe environment
  - Neutralize power dynamic
  - Accept everyone makes mistakes
  - Consider one’s own needs carefully versus desires
  - Learn Vocabulary ([needs inventory](#), [feelings inventory](#))
  - Counselling (list on MVK FL group, Dragonstone)
- Actively Listen
  - Open body language
  - Eye contact
  - Repeating/paraphrasing
  - Asking clarifying questions
- Have an idea of what you want
- Be confident without being aggressive
- Be clear on your needs and limits

Communication styles vary. Do what works for you, and be open to what works for others.

## Communication to Avoid

- Avoid passive, aggressive, or otherwise abusive communication
- Passive
  - “I think...” I’m done soon, etc means they are
  - “Whatever pleases you” almost never means that - usually “whatever I fantasize about that pleases you”
  - Bottoms may not want to be in charge, but they are still important and have needs.
  - Tops sometimes use passive communication too
- Aggressive
  - No True Scotsman “If you were a true [submissive, Domme, etc]” then... (manipulative, abusive, major red flag)

## Negotiation Content

What should be included in negotiating D/s?

Talk about Who You Are

- Experience Level (be honest - it's okay to be inexperienced)
- Condition of one’s health (physical and mental - it's okay to share)
- Medications (and how to use them)
- STI status, testing regimen, and policy with others (again, it’s okay to have them)
- Current relationships/STI risk profile
- Availability

Talk about What You Want

- Needs (for health, etc)
- Desires (feelings you want to have, then actions to encourage those)
- Intent (why are you doing the power exchange?)
- Aftercare (for top as well)

Talk about What You Don’t Want

- Hard limits/boundaries
- Soft limits/negotiable in future
- Triggers

Princess Kali says Aftercare is for if things go right; a Trigger Plan is for when things go wrong.

## Vetting

- Much easier to do if they’re involved in a community
- Risk remediation - do everything you want in a least risky a fashion as possible
- “Trust and Verify” that they are who they say they are and are safe (by asking others)
- Important to be respectful, and to ask people other than they recommend asking
- Ask the people they tell you to ask who else you should ask
  - They may not be able to say what they think, but might know others who will
- Avoid gossip or unnecessary detail
- Try to separate concern for your safety from the “bitter ex”
- Ask multiple people

- Vet everyone (community leaders are not above being dangerous)

### Red Flags

What are your red flags?

- Ego (not to be mistaken for confidence)
- Dishonesty
- Disrespect
- 'The bitter ex'
- Emotional health
- Drug/alcohol use

If someone doesn't respect your little boundaries, they probably won't respect your big ones.

Reg Flags don't mean that you shouldn't play with someone or that they're not a good person

Is it a deal breaker for you?

### Pushing Boundaries

-It can be really hot, challenging, satisfying experience

OR

-It can be violating, uncomfortable, even traumatizing

When is it okay to push boundaries?

- Only when it's negotiated PRIOR to playing
- Never play in a way that was not pre-negotiated
- Avoid negotiating halfway through playing (you or your partner may not be in the right state of mind to make a proper decision)

### Summary

- Negotiate for a fuck yes! (Limits are very important, but negotiate inclusively not exclusively.)
- Play within pre-negotiated ideas (you can always negotiate more things than you use)
- When something comes up mid scene, decide to talk about it later (always another scene)
- Clear, open, honest communication