

# Beyond Bowed Heads:

## Rituals for Dominance and Submission (and Life at Large)

Presented by Lee Harrington – © PassionAndSoul.com

Rituals are a key part of any D/s relationship, whether acknowledged or otherwise. From casual kisses at the door to formal slave poses, ritual objects such as collars to slave contracts, the BDSM world is rife with concepts of ritual – but what is a ritual? What are the levels of ritualistic interaction we have between one another? Let's look at our rituals in day to day life (including how to get out of work or parent space), sacred time, intense connection, erotic play, solidifying relationships, changes within relationships, and the taboo subject of the devastating loss of a relationship or its natural end. From terminology to developing codes of ethical interaction, this class covers a bevy of styles and types of interpersonal reactions that can help everyone in a relationship examine what they are already doing, and what they want to build together.

### Where I am coming from- my history with ritual and D/S

#### What is a ritual

- Ceremonies for worship or organization
- Ceremonial acts or objects
- A detailed method or procedure faithfully or regularly followed “my household chores have become a morning ritual”
- A state or condition characterized by the presence of established procedure or routine (these can exist beyond the person(s) involved)

#### Levels of ritual

- *Casual*  
aka Organic, Unintentional, Naturally Evolving, It just kinda happened, I guess it's just what we do or have done, Habit.  
These are the rituals we have that we rarely even notice.
- *Acknowledged*  
aka Caught, Verbalized, Noticed, Paid Attention To, Formalized Habit  
These are the rituals we have that we have noticed, usually because they were missing one day.
- *Formalized*  
aka Standardized, Written down, Verbally Anchored, Agreed Upon, Ritualized  
These are the rituals that were formally negotiated, discussed, talked about, or otherwise put into our awareness and then anchored there.
- *Structured*  
Historical, Classical, Cultural Habit, How It Has Always Been, Pre-Structured, Tradition.  
These are the rituals that have been around before we got there, and will likely be in place long after we have left. Examples include Old Guard, Gorean, Military, Monastic, Legal Proceedings, Religious Systems, etc.

## What is Dominance/Submission

- Master/Slave, terms for identity, other terms
- Terms of endearment and community terms
- The challenges of language and projections

## Rituals for

- Day to day life
  - Household chores
  - Greeting from the door/door opening
  - Transition into home/space
  - Wardrobe/Jewelry/Props
  - Food rituals
  - Body poses/non-verbal cues
  - Verbal cues
  - Terms for each other
    - What if you have kids/a life?*
    - What if you have other complexities in your life?*
- Play time
  - Formal vs. informal starts/stops
- Sacred/Intense time
  - Concepts of “call to order” in religion
- Other types of “Time” / Protocol Levels
  - Work, Family, Casual, Formal, Tribal, Vanilla, Private, Public, Office, Event
  - What changes your “level” of ritual/protocol?  
Terminology used, space/location, clothing/props, touch/body action, time of day/week/year, company/who around, formal ritual of transition, tone of voice, eye contact, breath, social/environmental cues
- Solidifying relationships
  - Slave contracts (length/type defined or undefined)
  - Jewelry/Wardrobe – and what DOES an collar mean?
  - Terminology
  - Branding/Marking/Blood
  - “Scene” weddings
  - Before the Divine
- Changes in relationships
- Ends of relationships
  - End of contract
  - Mutual agreement
  - Break ups or Divorce (and the legal issues)
  - Nasty/scarring breakups or Divorce
  - Death