

Service That Actually Serves US: Giving and Receiving What we Really Want

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Are you sick of being asked to scrub the toilet as if your partner expects you to cum each time you do it for them? Does having your Submissive shave their balls three times a day actually help you live a full and fulfilling life? Let's get down and dirty – talking about and working through exercises on establishing what service we really want, what we are able to give, and what drives us in service from all sides. Is it about effort, quality of outcome, detailed delivery, results, our resources expended... or getting hard/wet? Service is not just provided by Slaves and Submissive or Surrendering individuals – Masters, Mistresses, Mommies, Daddies, Boys, Girls, Lovers, and Friends will also get a chance to look at their desires and see what actually gets them what they actually desire.

There is this mysterious thing that gets discussed called “Receiving Service” and “Giving Service...” but what types of service? How is it given? What does it look like? Who gives it?

- The following are seven categories of service.
- Take 3-5 minutes to list a variety of types of service that you might enjoy or find useful, or are skilled in giving (or both!) for each category:

Giving Service

Receiving Service

Sexual Service

Body Care

Giving Service

Receiving Service

Administration

Household Chores

Family/Career

Social Services

When you are RECEIVING service (service can be given by dominant and submissive partners alike, it just takes different forms), what level of importance do each of these have in your D/s dynamic? If you are not listing the types of service you receive, list examples below... it is good to practice seeing what you are receiving in your life

Sexual Service	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Body Care	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Administration	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Household Chores	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Family/Career	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Social Service	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

When you are GIVING service, what level of importance do each of these have in your D/s dynamic? If you are not listing the types of service you give, list examples below... it is good to practice seeing what you are giving in your life

Sexual Service	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Body Care	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Administration	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Household Chores	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Family/Career	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Social Service	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

As we consider the types of service we receive, a wide variety of questions can come up from the brainstorming we did on activities:

- What does a specific type of service look like?
- How often is this service provided?
- Do these services require special skills or training?
- Can anyone do this type of service for you?

- What sorts of service do you consider “intimate”?
- Who serves you?
- How do they serve you?
- Which of these are needs, and which are desires?
- What is the goal of this sort of service?
- What opportunities can we provide for receiving service from those who want to give it?
- What do you find necessary/satisfying/enjoyable about a specific type of service?

As we consider the types of service we receive, a wide variety of questions can come up from the brainstorming we did on activities:

- What skills do you bring to the table?
- How can the tools you provide best be used?
- What services can you offer that your partner may not have considered?
- What sorts of service have you been asked to do that you’ve been uncomfortable with?
- Why was it uncomfortable?
- Is your partner able to receive this sort of service?
- How important is praise for having done service?
- Touch?
- Gifts or tokens of appreciation?
- Being noticed that the service was given?
- What would help you succeed in giving quality service?

Process or Outcome?

The following is a learning story to contemplate in the context of understanding the notion of process and outcome:

Once upon a time there was an experienced formal Master who had a Slave. The Slave was new to his world, but he gave the slave three tasks.

“Here are my boots and keys to my car. The fridge is completely stocked. By the time I get home tonight I want my boots to be cleaned, my car washed, and my dinner waiting on the table.”

The Slave took the boots to a shoe shine stand and dropped them off. He took the car to the car wash. He went to the beach and spent all day with his friends. On the way home he picked up the car, picked up the boots, and stopped by a restaurant to get food to go.

The Master was displeased.

Was the Master right to be displeased? Or just surprised?

The Slave did exactly as commanded. **So the question is: what went wrong?**

Different individuals have different drives when it comes to tasks.

Which part of this task or protocol matters to you?

- The amount of “sweat equity” they expended?
- The level of effort they made?
- The quality of the outcome?
- The process or details followed?
- The end result achieved?
- The quantity of resources expended?

Sweat Equity

If what matters to you is the amount of “sweat equity” was expended, you might be the kind of Dominant who likes to know that your boots were lovingly caressed for hours by the Slave. Thus, there is value knowing they spent three hours making it happen, that it was hard, or that they struggled because it’s the energy output that matters. Did they put all of their energy into it? Did they literally pour blood, sweat or tears? Did they work on it until they could do no more? This can be a perfect match for slaves whose love language is Gift Giving by explaining that you want the gift of their time, or Quality Time by allowing them to do the task in your presence.

Working with individuals who value Words of Affirmation, we must remember to praise the amount of effort they gave if that is what matters- especially when the quality did not turn out the best (it is possible to destroy someone’s spirit by saying “oh well, I guess I’ll fix it later” if they spent hours trying to make it perfect for you). For Physical Touch inspired individuals, a scratch on the head and a smile will make all the difference to show that the time spent mattered. The simple sentence “It would really mean a lot of you could do this for me, even though I know it’s hard,” or similar statements before assigning a task can inspire Acts of Service individuals.

Though some people may find “extra value” in the things they had to work hard to get- this is not true for all humans.

Personal Effort

Perhaps what matters to you is how much of themselves they put into the task. Did they try their hardest, did the best they could do? Do you value that they tried? If they tried their very best, and did it all for you, does it leave you feeling pleased? They showed they could do, and did it all for you.

When individuals drawn to Personal Effort are paired with those who find their love through physical touch, a long resting of the hand on their back and an acknowledgement through eye contact that you see how much of themselves they poured into the project can be invaluable. Acts of Service and Words of Affirmation people can be reached through a verbal statement of how much the effort extended means to you. Those who like Receiving Gifts might appreciate

getting “gold stars” for their effort that they can claim later, or be treated to something as a thanks for hard they pushed themselves. Those who are focused on Quality Time might appreciate having you around while they do the task, curling up in the same room afterwards, or having a discussion about how hard they worked, among other options.

Quality of Outcome

How good do you want it done? Are you using the right tool for the job? For dominant individuals who praise quality of outcome, the Slave in the story might have done it perfectly! They wanted excellence, the slave had the resources to make it happen well, and everyone was happy. The end. Fantastic.

Be aware though of the personality of those you are working with. Words of Affirmation folks are more likely to succeed again next time if they know how to do the job better- e.g. “This was good, and I appreciate it, but next time, I’d like it done exactly this way.” Consider taking the time to correct behavior and show the best outcome possible; using their hands to fix the act can be especially helpful for Physical Touch Slaves.

Process or Details

For those concerned with the process or details of a task, explain your desires step-by-step! Until we know they can do the act perfectly, the details are important. Do not assume that when you say, “I want you to get me water” that they will know to bring it in a glass instead of a plastic cup, or that they will know to bring it bent on one knee.

If you are process oriented, are you open to suggestions? If not, or not now, make sure that is clear, e.g. “I don’t care if there is a “better” way to do it - I want it done MY way.” Some dominants may choose to explain the point of their details and desires (which can be helpful for Autism spectrum folks who may not understand why you “want them to waste their time when there is a much better solution at hand.”) Others choose to let the program run and explain later (Mr. Miyagi in Karate Kid, for example). Some prefer it simply their way without explanations; if this is your view, consider how psychic your slave needs to truly be to serve you.

End Result

Did the car get washed? Good. The end. End result dominants may seem like the easiest to serve, but can be a challenging match for those who like to serve with excellence, desire critique, or require additional direction.

If we are looking for an end result to be achieved, does this submissive have the skills or resources at hand to get the job done? Asking a technophobe slave to design a website may serve well for a personal effort driven Dominant, but may not actually get the job done. Do they know who to hire? What needs to go onto a website? Are we setting them up for the success needed to get our desires met?

Quantity of Resources Expended

If money is tight, the behaviors of the slave in the story are atrocious. What resources are at hand? People? Money? Time? Energy? Space? Spending four hours hand-detailing boots may be a perfect fit for a home-stay slave who needs to be encouraged to meditate, but is not the best resource spending for a slave who needs to work a full time job and help raise two children.

The effects of expenditure of resources can hit both sides hard. If my submissive partner has disabilities that lower their energy each day and I order them to detail my boots, they may not be able to play or have sex with me that night. How much my specific partner can reasonably do and still stay sane and healthy are necessary for sustainable systems of submission.

Watch or Ask Culture?

In some parts of the world, we are a part of “watch” culture. You come in, are silent, stand to the side, and watch what is going on. You pay attention to the way folks interact with each other, what the spoken and unspoken rules are, and when you are finally feeling confident, make small forays into interacting with others. In watch cultures, we are expected to be attentive, and “understanding” is highly valued.

In other parts of the world, we are part of “ask” culture. You come in, ask what the rules are, and abide by them. Laws are written down, and when confused, you can turn to others and expect to be given clarifications in many cases. In ask cultures, we are expected to follow rules, and “knowing” is highly valued.

Most of us are part of both watch and ask cultures. However, in the world of dominance and submission, it is important to consider what your dynamic is more inclined towards. Should someone “expect to have noticed” that you prefer following details more than end results, and expect those in service to you to get cues from how others serve you? If so, you are likely working in a watch culture in your power exchange. Do you clearly spell out that what matters most to you is the Quality of Outcome, to the exception of all else, and expect those in service to you to always inquire any time there is confusion? If so, you are likely working in an ask culture.

Being aware of what culture your systems are based in can help everyone involved. Some folks may have never operated in a watch culture if they grew up in a world of instant gratification and internet search engines at their fingertips. There are those who have been doing formal protocol dynamics for so long that they may honestly not think of asking, but rather doing what they were told based on what they think they know.

Process or Outcome Exercise

Part 1)

- 1 = Not important; 10 = extremely important and/or essential
- Bonus question: How would you define each of these terms, beyond or within the definitions provided above?

What matters to you for service overall?

Sweat Equity	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Personal Effort	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Quality of outcome	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Process/details followed	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
End result achieved	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Resources expended	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Notes:

Part 2)

Our answers for overall service may not always be the same when applied to a specific type of service. For example, someone who may usually be focused on resources expended may say “damn the expense” for taking care of their best leathers or when making a meal for visiting family of choice.

Consider a specific type of service you have an emotional investment in: what matters in that specific case? Consider repeating this part of the exercise on another piece of paper for other specific types of service, or using this lexicon (or inspired lexicon) to discuss when your preferences change from their day-to-day norm.

What matters in a specific type of service?

Type of Service:

Sweat Equity	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Personal Effort	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Quality of outcome	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Process/details followed	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
End result achieved	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Resources expended	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Notes:

A Note on Predictive Service

There is a myth that abounds in D/s that there are psychic slaves and Masters, property and Owners, pets and Mistresses who can predict what you need before you even know you need it. Its not psychic powers... though, if it is, see above.

So, where do these powers come from?

- **Become aware of body cues**
When Mistress gets stressed out, she starts balling up her fists. When she is stressed out, she likes a mocha. Thus when Mistress balls up her fists, I will get her a mocha, bring it to her.
- **Learn your partner**
When we walk outside, Sir likes to have a smoke and talk. Whenever we go outside, I will make sure to have a lighter on me, just in case today is a smoking day. Or that they like water when talking a lot.
- **Keep notes/cheat sheets**
What are their favorite wines? How do they like their water delivered? What is their favorite fast dinner in case we are in a rush? By having these things pre-sorted in a spread sheet, notebook, on your phone, or the complex files of our minds, service people look psychic.
- **Go for the obvious needs**
Is my Master hungry? Thirsty? Cold? Tired? Needs to use the restroom? Take her meds? Bored? Lonely? Offering a power bar, a water bottle, blanket, an arm to get up and walk to the restroom, her inhaler and a pleasant conversation after a scene looks like “super-Dominant,” but really, its going through the obvious ones first before asking “is everything okay?”
- **Act without attachment**
Bringing a cup of water and being told “no thanks” does not make you a bad service human. It means they did not want it is all. Try and try again, learn what works for them! Their reactions in most cases are rarely about you, its about their internal journey.
- **Talk to other service humans**
What is in their tool kit, physically and energetically? Network- what ideas do other people have? People often surprise us with the simplest things.
- **How do you know when/how to give service without being told?**