BONDAGE FOR BEGINNERS

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0.1 INTRODUCTION

12:00 - 12:10

1. Welcome to Bondage for Beginners

Thank you for coming today

2. Introductions

MC introduces themselves, with pronouns Instructors introduce themselves, with pronouns

3. What is this class about?

MC: what do you like about this class?

Quick poll

Who's taken a kink class before?

What are we doing today?

Today you'll learn a robust set of skills for doing kink together:

- 1. Obviously, we're gonna learn technical skills
- 2. Just as importantly, we'll also cover core kink skills (define)
- 3. And how to put it all together to have great kink with your partner

0.1 INTRODUCTION CONTINUED

12:00 - 12:10

4. How does the class work?

This class is equally for bottoms and tops

Bottoms are full partners and have as much to learn as tops

The class is divided into 3 modules

Each module has a technical skill and application of that skill

Each module begins with lecture and demo

Learn core skills Get an overview of technical skills See how it all comes together in a scene During lecture, focus on learning "why"

Each module ends with pod time

We'll break into small groups to practice This is the time to ask questions, get help with accommodations During this phase, focus on learning "how"

There are no formal breaks: do self care during pods Pods are also a great time for adaptations for bodies & play styles

5. Before we jump in, some logistics

Point out bathrooms, water, exits Wear what you like, but keep bottom bits covered Covid: wear your masks, we tested this morning

6. Single students

If you didn't come together, don't tie together We have appropriate content for singles in each pod

7. Consent!

It's the first thing in your handouts because it's the most important thing We'll talk about it a lot, starting now:

- Ask before touching
- We'll ask before touching, it's OK to say no (we can still help)
- No photos, no phones: step outside if you have to use yours
- We'll model some negotiation, but prior negotiation has also occurred
- We're professionals: we won't hit on you, please don't hit on us

1.1 NEGOTIATION

12:10 - 12:15

1. Communication is the secret to good kink

Like relationships, kink is better when you communicate well Kink is complicated and benefits from some specific skills

Negotiation happens before a scene

Plan the scene and set yourselves up for success

In-scene communication during after the scene

Keep everything going well

Aftercare happens after the scene

Bring the scene to a graceful close and take care of each other

2. How do you negotiate?

Negotiation should be a fun, sexy collaboration *Give a personal example*

Use your words: neither of you are mind readers Ask, don't guess

3. Talk about yourselves

Negotiation is somewhat different with new people and existing partners But always do it

Likes and wants Limits Physical safety and health issues Emotional state

4. Talk about the scene

Establish consent

Do we want to do this or not?

Plan the scene, starting with how you want to interact / feel Check in about in-scene communication and aftercare

5. Helpful resources

Negotiation sheet in the handout is an idea starter, not a checklist Also: link to Not A Checklist

1.2 KNEELING POSITION

12:15 - 12:25

1. First demo: basic kneeling position

Fun & versatile position that only uses the single column tie

Negotiate

At a minimum, conduct a brief negotiation Ideally, incorporate some material from Negotiation Top should ask for something that the bottom declines

Tie the kneeling position

Kneel

Tie the wrists together

- Talk about antiparallel vs crossed
- Fundamental skill: do what works for your body
- Can also tie in front (good option for tight shoulders)
- Mention the bar tie as an option (covered in Module 2)

During the demo, bottom should ask for an adjustment

Now what? Building a scene

Spanking / chest play Sex: oral and/or bent over for fucking

2. Bottom perspective: microadjustments

Rope and body change over time Microadjustments are little changes for comfort and safety Feet fall asleep? Change ankle position (flex vs. extend) Too much pressure on wrists? Adjust shoulders

1.2 KNEELING POSITION CONTINUED

12:15 - 12:25

3. Negotiate

How'd it go last time? What shall we change this time? Let's make it more secure, more d/s, and more intense

4. Tie a more intense kneeling position

Fundamental principle: more secure means better technique, not tighter Is your intent to truly immobilize, or to communicate immobility?

Tie the kneeling position again, but add ankle tie

Add a blindfold

Psychologically powerful, helps bottom stay in headspace Slight pressure on eyes keeps people from wanting to open them Be careful of eyes, facial marking, hemp dust

Add a gag

Rope gags are cool but high risk - facial marking, hemp/jute allergies Think about your communication strategy Wash your rope afterward

<u>5. Bottom perspective: maintaining awareness in headspace</u> Define **headspace**

Headspace can make it hard to pay attention to physical / emotional well-being

- Monitoring hands for signs of nerve damage
- Speaking up if something doesn't feel good

Ideally: develop the ability to notice issues and speak up
If that isn't possible / desirable: tell your partner & plan accordingly

1.3 NERVE SAFETY

12:25 - 12:30

1. Nerve damage

One of the most common injuries from rope, can be life-changing But can be well-managed

Take this seriously: choose your risk profile, but don't be lazy

Four key things everyone should know about nerve damage:

1. Some ties are much riskier than others

Most dangerous by far: suspended TK / box tie (explain)
High risk: suspension, TK, pulling on wrists, anything on upper arm

2. Nerve damage is a time-sensitive emergency

Nerve damage gets worse the longer you're in bondage The faster you fix the problem, the better your prognosis

3. Take all warning signs seriously

Might feel tingling, zinging, numbness, might feel nothing No reliable way to tell if you're taking serious damage

4. Nerve damage is cumulative

Even non-symptomatic damage accumulates over time If you sprain your knee repeatedly, expect permanent damage

2. Nerve checks

Handouts contain some basic nerve checks You don't really need them for anything in this class But vital to know and use if you do high-risk rope We're happy to teach them one on one if you're interested

3. Circulation

In most people, circulation loss isn't a primary danger But makes nerve damage more likely

How long is OK?

If pale, blue, cold, or numb, take rope off immediately If red, purple, warm, and sensitive, 20 minutes in healthy people

Exceptions: diabetes, peripheral neuropathy, other conditions

• Consult with a medical professional!

1.4 SINGLE COLUMN TIE

12:30 - 12:35

1. About the single column tie

Define **column**

One of many single column ties

This is the best beginner one: super simple, hard to do wrong

2. Tie it while class follows along

1. Double the rope and find the bight

Define **bight**

2. Tie a lark's head around the column

Pass the bight around and go through it By itself, this isn't enough because it tightens

3. First reverse tension

Demonstrate how reverse tension locks everything in place The reverse tension makes a U, just like the bight did

4 & 5. Add another wrap and reverse tension

6. Adjust wraps

Neat and even, two fingers fit side by side between body and rope

7 - 9. Tie a half hitch

Make a triangle Go under all the wraps Back through the triangle

10. Finish

Pull it snug and test it

3. Tension

Define/explain **tension**Subtle but super important
There's no universal "right" answer
Correct tension is safe and feels the way you want it to feel

Bottom perspective

Your partner will be paying attention to the tie You should pay attention to tension and give feedback

Tie it while class follows along again

1.4 SINGLE COLUMN TIE CONTINUED

12:30 - 12:35

4. Placement & snugness

Think about safety, comfort, security

Safety

Some body parts are safe, some call for caution.

- Pretty safe: chest, ankles, lower legs, thighs
- Approach with caution: wrists, upper arms
- Never: joints, neck

Comfort

Wrists: try to avoid immediate proximity of wrist bone

• Can be helpful to grab rope / knot

Ankle bones suck. Make it loose enough to hang below.

Security

Rope goes from thick places to thin places If you put it in a thick place, it'll slide to a thin one

1.5 POD

12:35 - 1:00

1. Coiling rope

This is a simple technique: students can follow along the first time

Extra credit

Quick way to mark dirty rope: tie a knot in the bight Coiling rope together after scene is a nice way of reconnecting Opportunity for bottoms to do a service for a top (if they like that)

2. Single Column Tie

- 1. Double rope and find bight
- 2. Clockwise around leg, through bight (lark's head)
- 3. Reverse tension
- 4. Clockwise around leg again
- 5. Reverse tension
- 6. Check neatness and adjust tension
- 7. Make triangle, pointing toward body
- 8. Keeping triangle, go under all wraps
- 9. Back through triangle
- 10. Cinch and test

Common errors to watch for

On second reverse tension, go through original bight Drop the second reverse when they tie the half hitch Leave slack in the half hitch (make sure it's snug)

Going further

Point triangle in direction you want the rope to exit Demo how cuff will roll if pulled in wrong direction

2 step process for snugging the half hitch Build the cuff in the direction you want to pull

3. Kneeling position

Students with extra time can practice the kneeling position. Focus on:

- The subtleties of tying on different body parts
- How small changes affect the feel of the tie

4. Single students

Single students should spend any remaining time working on refinements of the single column tie.

2.1 CONSENT

1:00 - 1:05

1. Let's talk about consent

You've seen a lot of consent talk in this class Now let's talk about it more explicitly Because good consent is the single most important kink skill

- Kink creates unique opportunities for consent-related harm
- So kink requires uniquely good consent skills

Unifying principle: Ask, Don't Guess

2. Affirmative consent: yes means yes

Old model: "no means no". Stop if they ask you to. New, better model: "yes means yes". Get permission first. We call this affirmative consent

A yes must be:

- Unambiguous
- Fully informed, understanding all risks
- Freely given, without pressure or coercion

Treat anything less as a "no"

3. Substance use

Intoxication reduces judgment and ability to consent Morally and legally, impaired people can't give valid consent

You're all grownups, and we know some of you mix play and intoxicants But be clear about how much risk you're taking on We'll talk more about managing risk later in this module

4. Practice consent skills during this class

This is a great time to start leveling up your consent game

5. Finally, a warning

If you're new here, be careful

Plenty of kinksters and instructors talk consent but don't practice it Just because someone is good at kink doesn't mean they're good at consent

2.2 LADDER RUNG

1:05 - 1:10

1. Ladder rung

Fundamental building block Once you know it, you'll see it everywhere Why "ladder rung"? If you put a bunch together, we call that a ladder

2. Demo on torso

1. Single column just below butt

Only works if secured at both top and bottom

2. Make a 90° bend over the navel

Hook with one finger, bend 90°, (making an "L") Go around torso

3. Make a plus shape

Pass under then over the bend, making a plus First rung of ladder

4. Make a ladder

Make another rung on the lower chest Add as many rungs as you want

5. Secure/tie off

Make a half hitch and you're done But only if tension is maintained

Basic ladders are prone to shifting and falling apart

3. Demo a more secure ladder

Two wraps and a half hitch at each rung

4. Ideas and applications

Run a ladder down each leg and tie them off to the side of the bed Wrap someone in a sheet and tie a ladder up their whole body Tie the legs together with a ladder Use a ladder rung to turn a column tie into a face-up chest harness

Important: pulling on the connectors will cause cinching

Only attach to the intersections

5. Bottom perspective

Keep an eye on the tightness and security
Pay attention to changes over time (e.g., rungs moving into joints)

2.3 BAR TIE

1:10 - 1:15

1. Bar tie

Specialized two column tie What's a two column tie?

• Like a single column tie, but with rope between columns

Bar tie is especially handy for accommodating limited flexibility

2. Demo

1 & 2. Two wrap column tie around arms

No reverse tension on second wrap

3, 4, 5, & 6. Build a spiral wrap between arms

7. Go through space between rope & arm

Bottom should ask top to leave a little more space Option: finish now with a half hitch

8 & 9. Ladder rung in middle of bar

See? We're using the ladder rung already Use this if you want to tie it off

Keep the tie in place for demoing Hands Behind Head

3. Notes

Can go to pretty much any amount of separation Makes a great handle

4. Bottom perspective

Can end up very tight Practice giving good feedback

2.4 HANDS BEHIND HEAD

1:15 - 1:20

1. About hands behind head

Fun and versatile position Especially good for predicament, pain play, and chest access Similar to kneeling: experiment with blending them

2. Demo

- 1. Bar tie hands together in front (if not already done)
- 2. Bring hands behind head
- 3. Add 2nd rope with lark's head Mention: can just keep going if you have enough rope
- 4. Tie a ladder rung right under the butt

3. Variation: add crotch rope

Negotiate for crotch rope Briefly touch on sexual content & STIs, get explicit consent Bottom should ask top to make it sexy, top should decline

If you like that kind of thing, adds sexiness, predicament, and intensity

Demo

- 1. Bar tie hands together in front (if not already done)
- 2. Bring hands behind head
- 3. Go between legs and ladder rung around waist Experiment with going on either side of genitals or over the top If you like, tie a knot over the genitals
- 4. Probably want to wash your rope afterward

4. Variation: secure the arms

Put a frapped column tie around each arm to prevent wriggling out Remember: technique, not tightness

5. Safety

Hey! What about falling risk? We'd better talk about bondage safety

2.5 SAFETY

1:20 - 1:30

1. Let's start with some specific safety rules

These are on the inside cover of your handout

Rule 1: no solo bondage

Breaking rule 1 is how most kinky deaths happen Don't tie yourself up while you're alone Don't leave someone alone when they're tied up

Rule 2: be vigilant about nerve damage

Most common cause of serious bondage injuries

Rule 3: don't fall

Easier than you think

Risks: hands tied, feet tied, tripping on rope, rope high

Rule 4: have a cutting tool

Fastest and most reliable way to get out in a hurry

Rule 5: no suspension (yet)

Suspension is very advanced and very risky

Rule 6: No neck rope (yet)

At your skill level, neck rope is categorically unsafe Some of the risks are obvious, some are not obvious Some neck rope is high risk but reasonable with advanced skills Some neck rope is categorically irresponsible

2.5 SAFETY CONTINUED

1:20 - 1:30

2. Kink is risky

Kink is inherently risky. You have a responsibility to:

- Understand the risks
- Decide how much risk you're willing to take on
- Manage risk appropriately

RACK

Many people use RACK: **Risk Aware** Consensual Kink If you don't understand the risks, it isn't RACK Informed consent is an essential part of affirmative consent

Risk profile: what types of risks you're willing to take

Different people have different levels of acceptable risk:

- Professional bondage model: willing to take lots of risk
- Competitive swimmer: super risk averse about rope marks
- People who use hands: risk averse about nerve damage in arms?

Bottoms and tops have equal responsibility

Common but unwise for bottoms to defer to tops about safety Both:

- Must understand and manage safety
- Have their own risk profiles

2.6 POD

1:30 - 1:50

1. Ladder rung

Demo by tying around your waist and working down your thigh

Variations

Do more than one wrap at each rung (comfort)
Tie off each rung (stability)
Make a ladder around both legs (finish around waist)

What to watch for

Pulling on the connector will make the downstream ladder rung cinch

2. Bar tie

Demo between your thighs

Finish with a half hitch or center ladder?

- Half hitch is more secure if not tying off
- Ladder is more symmetrical for tying off

For speed, you can hold rope in a bundle while building spiral

Demonstrate

3. Hands behind head

Key adaptations for different bodies or preferences:

- Add more space between hands (perhaps enough that the bottom can lower their elbows)
- Anchor around the butt, or between the legs, or around the waist, or under the breasts / pecs.

Further adaptations:

- Tie while sitting in a chair, with the hands tied off to the chair.
- Tie in a kneeling position, the the hands tied off to the ankles.

4. Single students

Work on refining the ladder rung and bar tie

Lock the lower legs together (column tie at ankles, ladder rung below knee) Ladder all the way up the legs

Column tie the ankles, kneel, ladder rung around waist

3.1 TYING OFF

1:50 - 2:00

1. Tying off means tying your partner to something

Why tie off?

- Keeps your partner from getting away
- Immobilization
- Vulnerability

What do you tie to?

Sturdy furniture: beds, chairs, tables, stair railings

What do you tie with?

Leftover rope if there is some Otherwise, add rope with a lark's head

Key safety issue: no suspension

Including things that could turn into suspension

2. Round turn & 2 half hitches

This is our preferred knot for tying off Demo around a torso

- Turn
- Round turn
- Half hitch
- 2nd half hitch

If you can remember the name, you can remember the knot It's a great knot, but unsafe to tie on people

3. Demo: Improving the kneeling position by tying off

Begin with kneeling over the bed (or a couch)

Let's tie off the hands!

- Separately to either side
- Together to the headboard

Let's tie off the legs!

Thighs pulled apart to legs of bed

Other ideas

Spread eagle (optionally with hands to headboard)
Seated in chair

3.1 TYING OFF CONTINUED

1:50 - 2:00

4. Bottom perspective

How does tying off change the position?

Psychologically powerful: being spanked like this is different Important takeaway: small changes have big impacts on headspace

Positional fatigue

Tied off bondage is more strenuous, can cause fatigue / cramps / strains

Strategies

Warm up (not stretching!) right before scene Add flexibility to your regular workout routine Move around / shift strain from one location to another Get good at monitoring your body and giving feedback Be an active participant, not a passive recipient

3.2 IN-SCENE COMMUNICATION

2:00 - 2:05

1. In-scene communication happens during a scene

Negotiation, **in-scene communication**, aftercare Keep things going in the right direction, fix problems

No in-scene negotiation!

The one thing you shouldn't do is negotiate new activities
If you're drunk, you can't make good decisions or give valid consent
Same thing if you're in the middle of a scene
In-scene negotiation is for risk-tolerant experts only

2. By default, use your words

80% of the time, the best way to communicate in-scene is with words "Hey, can you adjust the rope on my left ankle?"
But 20% of the time, we need something more specialized

3. Stoplight system: red, yellow, green

Red means stop and talk about what's going on Yellow means getting close to some kind of limit Green means keep going / more

4. Safeword

Something's wrong: stop and check in "Safeword" is standard—we strongly recommend it

5. Non-verbal signals

Why?

Some people find words hard during play
Gags and loud environments make verbal communication hard

Hand squeeze: squeeze back is OK, anything else is not OK 3 of anything, especially taps Squeaky toy or dropping keys

6. Reading your partner

Really valuable supplement to words (cannot replace them) Learn your partner's tells Communicate your tells

3.3 CRAB POSITION

2:05 - 2:15

1. What is the crab position?

Way better for sex than spread eagle Great for penetrative sex, oral, access to genitals

Before we start, let's talk about warmup Especially important before more restrictive / extended ties

Demo face up, forearms to inside of calves

• Forearms to calves, not wrists to ankles

2. Face up versus face down

Face up: more comfortable, better access, pairs well with tying off Face down: more immobilizing / helpless, can cause neck strain Try them both and see which you prefer

3. Arm & leg variations

Forearms on inside

- Harder to close legs
- Challenging for face down

Forearms on outside

- Comfortable, less exposed
- Better for face down

Limb locking

- Our favorite: comfortable, sustainable, immobilizing, exposed
- Not good for face down

Square lashing to thigh

- Very comfortable, good for inflexible people
- We can show you the square lashing if you need it

4. Types of ties

Frapping vs no frapping

Ladder: two ties on each side is much more immobilizing

3.4 POD

2:15 - 2:35

1. Tying off Procedure

Column tie on one leg
Add rope with lark's head if necessary
Tie off to furniture or other leg with round turn & 2 half hitches

Going further

Try splitting the rope and tying off to 2 places Experiment with getting slack out of the system

2. Crab

Procedure

Find a position you like (face up or face down)
Find an arm position you like (inside, outside, limb locking)
Tie forearms to calves

Options for accommodation

Square lashing: forearm to thigh

Going further

Experiment with tying off
Try multiple column ties on each side for better security
Try a ladder between forearm and calf

3. Single students

Single students can go deeper on previous ties or tie the mermaid

The mermaid tie

The mermaid is just a ladder up both legs Begin with a column tie around the ankles Ladder up the legs Secure with a ladder rung around the waist

3.4 POD CONTINUED

2:15 - 2:35

4. What to practice with the remaining time Get better at the column tie

Experiment with tightness
Try tying different body parts together

Play with the ladder rung

Build a ladder up the leg
Build a whole-body ladder
Mummify your partner with a sheet
Can you ladder the forearms together?

Tie your partner to things

What body parts can you tie off?
What angles are most effective?
Can you tie off a ladder?
Tie a limb to furniture with a frapped tie

Comfortable bondage is good bondage (usually)

How tight do you like it? How many wraps? How do you avoid the ankle bones?

Crab tie

Try different arm positions
Crab tie with chest harness, and attach the two
Crab tie with all four limbs tied together

Kneeling

Kneeling with wraps around torso and legs

5. Finding the right headspace

How do you want to feel? How do you not want to feel? Small changes make a big difference: pay attention!

Ideas for headspace

Tickling scene: spread eagle
Feeling held and comforted: whole body ladder

D/s: arms behind back, blindfold Exposed/vulnerable: crab, gag

4.1 FINDING YOUR KINK

2:35 - 2:45

1. What is your kink?

We just spent 3 hours talking about how to do the thing you want to do Let's take a minute to talk about what you want to do If you're like us, it'll take you a while to figure that out

- Actually, most of us are still figuring it out
- It's more complicated than it sounds

Figuring this out is a ton of fun, and is key to having good kink

2. Sometimes it's about specifics

Our friend T is a shoe fetishist "What do you think is more erotic? Brown soles or black soles?" For him, that kink is super specific, about very tangible things

Maybe you really like tight bondage, or red ball gags, or thigh-high stockings

3. Sometimes it's about the hobby

For most of us, bondage is partly a hobby We get together with friends, talk about the latest hot tie, nerd out It's pretty much the same as model trains, or rock climbing

4. Sometimes it's about the engagement with your partner

All 3 are valid, but this is our favorite Focus on tone more than specific acts Really subtle: details are so important

5. Personal story goes here

6. How do you figure it out?

Cast a wide net for inspiration:

• Classes / porn / movies / parties

Get good at parsing out what works for you

The bondage was dumb, but the costumes were hot

Iterate and experiment

- How could you dial it in better?
- What else might scratch that itch?
- Get good at talking with your partner

4.2 GEAR

2:45 - 2:50

<u>1. Rope</u>

6mm / 1/4" works best for most people

We recommend two lengths

15': 4 of these30': 1 of these

What type of rope?

How does it feel on your skin? How does it feel to tie with? Price Aesthetics (avoid black rope)

Three good options

- Hardware store synthetic: \$0.20 / foot
- Nylon (Dye Addict Rope): \$0.75 / foot
- Hemp (Twisted Monk): \$1.20 / foot
- Jute: better for more advanced people (why?)

If you buy bulk hardware store rope, you'll need to cut it

- Wrap with duct tape
- Cut through it with your tool

2. Speaking of which: cutting tool!

Always carry a cutting tool Test your tool & get used to using it

Standard and best choice: EMT shears

- Sometimes included in kits
- Otherwise: Clauss titanium coated

Other choices

- Rescue hook (may be better for small hands / weak grip)
- Not knives!

Practice cutting rope with your cutting tool!

4.3 AFTERCARE

2:50 - 2:55

1. Aftercare

Negotiation, in-scene communication, **aftercare**Brings the scene to a graceful end, take care of each other
Can be one of the best parts

2. Immediate aftercare

Coming down from the endorphin high Maybe physical care: food, water, blanket Maybe cuddling or sex, maybe social time Aftercare needs vary: negotiate them in advance Remember that tops need aftercare too!

Problem solving, analysis, planning

Address harm that occurred, learn from successes and mistakes Important to do it, but be smart about when you do it

3. Delayed aftercare

Often 24 - 48 hours later Email / text phone call? Many feelings and reactions take time to emerge

4. Drop (AKA sub-drop or top-drop)

Common and often unexpected Most common after difficult, intense, or new activity Can happen even if a scene went really well

Similar to an endorphin crash or short-term depression Do self care and support each other

5. Aftercare for this class

You may find you need aftercare after taking this class Especially if kink is new or complicated for you Check in with your partner and take care of each other If you're solo, think about self care or support from others

4.4 CONCLUSION

2:55 - 3:00

1. Thank you for coming

We had a great time—we hope you did also. What next?

2. About Full Circle Kink

We're a professional, values-driven kink organization We think kink should be super fun, and also super ethical That goes double for kink instruction

We have tons of great stuff on our website

- Upcoming classes
- Free handouts
- Detailed tutorials for this class and lots more

3. RopelnSeattle.com

Great place to find classes, parties, events

4. Our next class

What / when / where? What's it about? What makes it cool?

5. Class rope

Monkey pox: please put it in the dirty rope bin

6. Wrapping up

Individual instructors pimp their events & classes

Thank our hosts
Invite hosts to talk about themselves / their events

Go out in the world and have fun!