

# AFTERCARE:

Never underestimate the importance of negotiating this closing ritual.

A

**Attentiveness** – This includes intimacy: cuddling, caressing, hugging, kissing, massaging, and whispers. Free the bottom from bondage. Have a change of clothing packed. Control body temperature. Get warmth by: blankets, clothing, socks, slippers. Cool down by: drinking water, slowing your pace, move to cooler location. Relax your muscles & mind. If bottom is flying, cover eyes from bright lights. Negotiate beforehand what you will need.

F

**Fortify** - Your body's needs: hydrate by drinking water or juice, eating food, sugar, medications, and nicotine. Clean up: use the rest room, wash your hands & face, administer first aid to wounds and collect your thoughts. Rest: a large amount of energy was exerted & endorphins raging through the body. Prepare beforehand how to give aftercare & clean up the scene. Discuss 3<sup>rd</sup> party aftercare. Know any medical conditions for both Top and bottom.

T

**Transition** - A huge Power Exchange took place. Develop a way to Empower yourself. Reclaim the power dynamics within your relationship. Refocus your temperament. Find the balance in your roles. Acquire your natural disposition of mind, body & spirit. Allow different gear speeds to drive you so that you can operate smoothly. Develop rituals to define the end of the scene. Feeling safe and secure requires reestablishing your former protective walls and defenses.

E

**Express** - Giving & showing gratitude to your partner(s) is paramount in emphasizing the scene had meaning. Recognize your appreciation for the hard work just displayed. A heart felt "Thank You" goes a long way. Acknowledge the importance of your connection that you just shared. Affirm your care and concern, be supportive and listen. Consider what you can do for/to one another to 'ritualize' the ending of the scene.

R

**Recovery** - It takes time to: sober up, decompress, collect one's thoughts, and recuperate in order to be independent again. Cognitive thinking, emotional stability, and full motor functionality are all regained with time. Determining how much follow up is needed depends on the players, the intensity of your scene & the psychological depth of the mind that was pierced. When problems occur and things go wrong; react quickly, decisively, and assertively. Prepare & acknowledge your options for scene breakers/stopper, oops and rough landings.

C

**Communication** - Be supportive and listen to each other. Did you exchange contact information? Call, talk, email, visit, & journal: within hours, days, weeks, and months. 1-800-Flowers.com. Negotiate personal needs for both partners. Tops are "psycho" not "physic" – share your feelings and give them feedback. Tap into your spirituality and how that can affect your balance of energy. The feeling of abandonment & low self-worth are common a day or two post-scene. Are you experiencing delayed "crashing" – Top/sub drop?

A

**Analyze** – Understand your feelings: hurts, pains, euphoria, disappointments, regrets, and pleasures. Assess your immediate & long term needs. Did you have an emotional release? Were any landmines uncovered? What did your tears or laughter mean? Tops & bottoms can experience regrets and remorse following a scene. Do you need reassurance & validation for your actions? Endorphin levels take time to stabilize causing physiological responses. Self-aftercare may be necessary – give permission to pamper yourself.

R

**Reflect** - A critical reflection upon the scene is a natural process and should be explored by both players. Were the expectations, goals, and/or limits reached? Were they realistic? Was the scene effective? What elements could be changed? Was the equipment used adequate? What "mental" barriers or wounds were opened and now need attention to heal? If there was an audience, were they affected? What precautions should you take next time? How did your Comfort Zones affect your play? Don't let your pride interfere with your passion.

E

**Explore** - Future possibilities to play again with this person. Find ideas to be researched. Determine which skills to improve. Redefine your don't list and questions to ask. Locate areas of uncomfortably to avoid. What is on your wish list? Don't have the mindset of "got to play-itis". What changes do you need to make with your negotiations? Where are you now? What have you learned? Realize there is no 'one' standard procedure, magic formula, or technique for aftercare. Make it what you need and what works for you and your partner(s).