

What is a D/s Relationship?

D/s is short for “Dominance & submission”. The essential elements of a D/s relationship are that One of the participants be Dominant, and one submissive.

There are only three rules in D/s:

- **Safe:** The relationship and activities must be physically and emotionally safe for both Dominant and submissive. Even “edge play” must fall within the boundaries of safety.
- **Sane:** The relationship and activities must fall within generally accepted norms of sanity. Anything outside those norms would ultimately result in a lack of safety. Certainly, there are those that enjoy “insane” activities, but they fall outside the boundaries of what is considered D/s.
- **Consensual:** Both Dominant and submissive must agree to each aspect of the relationship, and the activities within it. And in order to give consent, one must be fully informed of the activity, it’s potential dangers, and give a fully informed consent.

The specifics regarding the relationship are highly personal, unique and will vary from relationship to relationship. But as a general rule of thumb, most D/s relationships are characterized by several elements. First, the submissive determines what part of his/her life to offer as a gift to the Dominant. The Dominant in turn accepts that gift. There has to be a balance here, and effective communication is essential. The gift of submission **MUST** be equal to that which is accepted. If the submissive offers more than the Dominant wishes to accept, there will be an imbalance. The submissive will have unmet needs that the Dominant does not wish to fulfill and will ultimately result in unhappiness for both. If the Dominant accepts more than the submissive offers, there will also be unhappiness for submission that is not offered cannot be taken. The submissive will be resentful that the effort is being made to take what has not been offered, and the Dominant will be frustrated at not being allowed to Dominate that part of the submissive’s life.

Communication is an ever-present theme in any kind of relationship, but is even more essential to a D/s relationship. You will see and hear of this theme of communication throughout any discussion on D/s. And in this instance, both the Dominant and submissive must be on the same page, Each understanding exactly what submission is offered and accepted, and negotiating until that balance and understanding is achieved. Most D/s relationships, but not all, also include some form of BDSM (Bondage & Discipline, Sadism & Masochism). Again, communication is essential in determining your compatibility in these activities. There are wonderful BDSM worksheets available online at websites such as www.castlerealm.com that you can exchange.

Negotiate interests where necessary, but My experience has been that you should resolve to find one with very similar interests from the start. Beyond these two generalizations, D/s is whatever you want it to be. Watching, reading, learning and discovering yourself and with your One is a wonderful experience. Enjoy it. Pick and choose what works for you, and incorporate it into your lifestyle. Remember, it is your life and your relationship, not anyone else’s. Make it personal, make it unique, and make it yours.

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