

## **Part 1 - "Submission, Growth & Decision Making"**

**Many things in our D/s lifestyle may seem contradictory. Yet upon closer examination they make perfect sense. And one example may be the issue of decision making.**

**On the surface, it would seem that a submissive need only be responsible to submit and obey, and that decision making is incompatible with their role in a power exchange relationship. But I would suggest that upon closer scrutiny, these seemingly contradictory responsibilities are in fact related and co-existent.**

**Many power exchange relationship dynamics include an expectation that the submissive share with their Dominant the issues and problems they encounter during the course of their daily lives. It may be in any facet of their lives as submissive, husband/wife, parent, employer/employee, friend, sibling, son/daughter, etc. The purpose of this sharing is so that your Dominant understands what is going on in your life, and is best able to play an active role as the need arises, and to understand what issues may affect your emotional status and even your level of submission.**

**You may expect that your Dominant will solve these problems for you, or make decisions on your behalf. And truth be known, we Dominants love to step in and be problem solvers. But wait just a moment.**

**Does repeatedly solving all of your problems enhance your personal or lifestyle growth? Does it teach you to be a capable and independent decision maker in a way that you know is consistent with what your Dominant would expect of you? Certainly not. It restricts and retards your growth as a person, reduces the level of confidence in your ability to make "good" decisions (an exceptionally relative term), and teaches you to rely upon your Dominant as a crutch, rather than relying upon them as a partner in a relationship.**

**And for those of you that might now be screaming... "Hey, Master/Mistress is SUPPOSED to make all the decisions" I'd like to point out that they don't. Nor can they. A Dominant picks and**

**chooses which decisions to make, but it's impossible and unrealistic to say that they make ALL the decisions that arise in an average day.**

**The doorbell rings, should you answer it? Your nose itches, should you scratch it? Chicken is on sale at the supermarket, should you buy some? A magazine arrives in the mail, should you read it? Unless your Dominant is prepared to follow you around 24 hours a day, you're going to make hundreds if not thousands of decisions on your own.**

**Especially when apart, the most a Dominant can hope for is to have taught a submissive how to make decisions that they would approve of. The actual number of decisions a Dominant will make for you is dependent upon your unique relationship and what you both find fulfilling and personally pleasing within that relationship.**

**I find that most submissives are good decision makers. What some may lack is self-confidence in the decisions that they make. And so, those Dominants that feel an obligation to their submissive's personal growth often endeavor to help them develop that confidence in their own decision-making.**

**You may have noticed that we Dominants often encourage submissives to discuss their problems with us, and that we tend to ask a lot of probing questions. Those questions help our submissive find out how they truly feel about a situation, and assist them in considering all sides of a possible course of action and the consequences of that action. Tempting as it may be, we don't (always) simply administering a solution.**

**A submissive will gain confidence in their decision-making abilities by knowing that their Dominant would not let them fail. (Important Note: There are situations when allowing someone to fail is an important learning process... particularly if a headstrong submissive is intent upon making unilateral decisions on their own. That issue is another topic for another time).**

**This is a vitally important concept in the process of gaining confidence. A submissive needs to trust that in discussing the situation and keeping their Dominant informed, they have given**

**“oversight” responsibility to their Dominant who need not make the decision for you. Knowing that they would not allow you to make a dreadful decision will bring you all the confidence you need in your own decision-making.**

**At some point, very important or difficult decisions may become too burdensome for a submissive. A submissive may worry too much about the problem, the decision they have made, and the consequences of that decision. Self-doubt can be, and is, a vicious and self-destructive force. And it can be very unhealthy.**

**In fulfilling that “oversight” responsibility, a Dominant may see that a submissive has reached a point in which growth has ceased, and self-destruction has begun. That will only be evident if you as a submissive continue to share your thoughts and feelings. Similarly, a submissive may ask to have that decision making burden lifted. This is the part of your “Dominant’s Owner’s Manual” that can help you maximize what you get out of your Dominant.**

**When that burden becomes too great, and it begins to creep into your mind in an unhealthy way; when you can’t help but focus upon it, when your sleep is affected, when you no longer have peace of mind, you can unburden yourself.**

**Ask Master/Mistress to make the decision for you. In doing so, you are no longer responsible for the decision or its consequences. And while your Dominant may make the very same decision that you have made, in relinquishing your responsibility, you will find peace of mind.**

**Initially, a submissive may find themselves reaching that self-destructive point quickly. But each time, under the watchful eye of their Dominant, they gain a little more confidence, become a little more skilled, and can go a little bit further. And such is growth. A little at a time.**

**All this may seem self-explanatory. And yet many submissives don’t want to feel that they are a burden to their Dominants. They try to solve problems on their own. Many submissives purposely don’t**

**share their problems, concerns and feelings for fear of rejection or being judged as incompetent.**

**But the fact is that in taking on that “oversight” responsibility, we Dominants feel needed, useful and fulfilled. While the very nature of “responsibility” may seem distasteful to you as a submissive, you must remember that it is a fundamental part of who we are as Dominants.**

**Don't prevent us from our obligations as Master/Mistress. Not just for your benefit, but for ours as well. Here are a few helpful hints regarding problems and concerns:**

- **No problem or concern affects just you. If it bothers you, it also affects your Dominant.**
- **Nothing is too big, or too small. The fact that it bothers you is all that counts.**
- **Always share your problems, concerns and feelings. Don't deny yourself the peace of mind that comes from knowing that Master/Mistress will never let you fail.**
- **Don't always expect solutions. Expect to grow in your decision-making abilities under the watchful eye of your Dominant.**
  - **When the problem or the consequences of your decision becomes overwhelming, you can find refuge in your Dominant. Unburden yourself of the responsibility if need be.**

**I hope these useful thoughts will help deepen your relationships, and more effectively meet your needs in a healthy D/s relationship.**

**Rover**

**Copyright 2002**