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Men'sHealth

THE 4-WEEK KINKY SEX CHALLENGE

**If you've been wanting to experiment with power dynamics
and other forms of BDSM, now's your chance.**

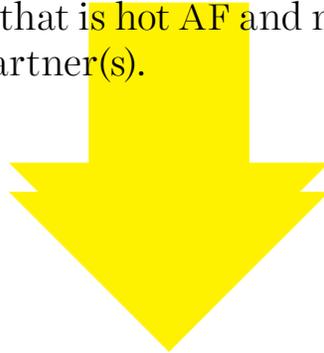
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THE 4-WEEK **KINKY SEX** CHALLENGE

IF YOU WANT to bring kink into the bedroom, you've come to the right place. It's okay if you're not sure how to venture forth into the world of BDSM, because a) we're here to help, and b) simply having the desire to expand your sexual repertoire is super sexy.

In this guide, we'll use the terms "kink" and "BDSM" interchangeably. BDSM is an umbrella term that stands for bondage and discipline, dominance and submission, sadism, and masochism. There are tons of ways to practice BDSM, depending on what you're into, but it tends to focus on sensory, pain, and power play between trusting partners. Also, know you don't need to buy a ton of expensive gear or become a Dungeon Master to kink up your sex life. BDSM is super accessible. In fact, you can start right here.

WELCOME TO YOUR 30-DAY KINKY SEX CHALLENGE:
4 weeks of exercises to help you bring kink into the bedroom in a way that is hot AF and mutually satisfying for you and your partner(s).



Over the course of the next 4 weeks, you'll learn:

How to play with power dynamics.

**How to talk about kink and erotic
desires with your partner.**

**How to actively use kinky exercises
to engage all your senses.**

FYI, our use of the word “challenge” isn’t meant to be some call to Manly Action. This guide is about learning how to access your taboo desires in a way that is compassionate and exciting. It’s about being willing to learn, adapt, and grow your skill set, whether you want to be the submissive partner or the dominant partner.

These exercises are customizable and should be used with a flexible mindset. At one point, we’ll encourage you to try being both the dominant and submissive partner. If that’s not your jam, and you’d prefer to stick to whichever role feels most comfortable (and hot) to you, that’s OK! This is about discovering and leaning into what works for you. Take 10-20 minutes after every single time you engage with an exercise to debrief. What worked? What didn’t? Was it enjoyable? What could have been better?

It’s important to note that kink isn’t for everyone. If you’re not feeling it, that’s OK, too! “Don’t try to force something that does not feel good to you, even if it’s desired by your partner,” says Taylor Sparks, an erotic educator and founder of the online intimacy shop Organic Loven. “Consider it a fun try, and move on to what pleases you.” Check in with your partner throughout this challenge to be sure you’re on the same page.

**All right.
LET’S DO THIS.**

(continued III→)

WEEK 1

Exercise 1:

Find a sexy clip and compare notes.

A desire to try kink usually comes from somewhere. Maybe you enjoyed *Fifty Shades* or *Secretary*. Maybe you saw it in porn. Either way, bringing that erotic kindling to your partner can be a fun way to get the creative juices flowing.

HOW TO DO IT: You want to find something from a neutral lens: i.e., something that isn't entirely focused on male pleasure and punishing women. For inspiration, visit bit.ly/3ukjB24 to explore our favorite ethical porn sites (because we should all be paying for our porn).

When you find something you like, be sure to get your partner's consent before showing them the video. Invite them to find a kinky clip they enjoy, too. This can be a fun show-and-tell experience that gets the conversation about kink going in a safe way.

Exercise 2:

Make a Yes, No, Maybe list.

A Yes, No, Maybe list can help couples find common ground on what they're itching to try in bed. You each make a copy of the same list of sexy activities, and independently mark 'yes,' 'no,' or 'maybe' next to each thing. When you compare lists, you'll both be on the same page with what you're interested in—and *not* interested in. Maybe you'll discover you're both curious about spanking, bondage, or dirty talk.

HOW TO DO IT: Make a list of every kinky activity you can think of (or search for an existing Yes, No, Maybe list online). If you're making your own, here are some ideas to include:

- BITING
- BLINDFOLDS
- BONDAGE
- COSTUMES
- DIRTY TALK
- FACE SLAPPING
- NIPPLE CLAMPS
- ROLE PLAY
- ORGASM CONTROL
- PEGGING
- SPANKING

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Exercise 3:

Verbally explore a fantasy.

Now that you've seen some kinky clips and made a list of activities you'd be willing to try IRL, you have the building blocks to construct a BDSM fantasy and share it with your partner. A verbal fantasy—as in, telling a sexy story—is a good place to begin because you get to bring your partner into the fun without the risk of crossing boundaries.

HOW TO DO IT: Set up a quiet, comfortable, private space for the two of you to engage with each other. Take turns sharing your fantasies. They don't need to be highly elaborate; you can simply explain how you picture kink being present in your sex life. For example, you could say: "In my fantasy, I imagine you dressed up as a sexy nurse giving me an exam." Or, "I imagine you tying me and up and spanking me." Keep it direct and simple.

"Don't worry about initial awkwardness," says Dr. Nazanin Moali, a licensed sex therapist. "Just consider it a fun playtime geared for adults."

WEEK 2

Exercise 1:

Choose safe words.

A safe word is a non-sexual word designed to stop all sexual play in its tracks. While usually used in BDSM scenes (kinky role-play routines where one person is dominant and the other is submissive), a safe word is important for all kinds of sex. This word basically means, "I need to take a break," "I'm uncomfortable," "I don't like this." It's a hard STOP.

HOW TO DO IT: Choosing a safe word is a collective activity, because everyone involved needs to be comfortable with the word. When we say safe words are "non-sexual," we mean it, because "no" doesn't always work. (For instance, if you're engaged in a ravishment fantasy, saying "no" might be part of your or your partner's character.)

Feel free to have fun with your safe word! It could be "banana," "apple tree," or "sailboat." The "traffic light" method can also be a good place to start. If you're enjoying something (or want more of it), you can say, "Green." Green means go. If you're not into it, are in pain, or are experiencing any kind of discomfort or anxiety, you say, "Red." Red means stop. Simple enough.

(continued **III** *→)*

Exercise 2:

Try sensation play/temperature play.

BDSM isn't always about pain. It's also about experiencing new sensations—about engaging your body and mind in new ways. Plus, if you're not one to jump right into spanking, handcuffs, riding crops, or other forms of kink, playing with different sensations (think: silky scarves, feathers) and temperatures (think: hot body-safe wax, ice cubes) can help ease you into the rougher stuff.

HOW TO DO IT: Both people should have an opportunity to be the giver and the receiver. Sparks suggests using a silk blindfold to remove sight and thereby heighten the other senses. Then, if you're the giver, focus on your partner's erogenous zones. We suggest starting with the chest, stomach or back. (You never know how your partner will react to this type of intense sensation, so it's better to start with tougher areas of the skin.) Using a cold/hot/silky object, try tracing circles on their body. Then, go up and down. Keep them guessing.

Next, move to their nipples. Run the cold/hot/silky object around their nipples and then over each one. Take note of how your partner responds. If they are clearly enjoying themselves, venture to other areas they might enjoy. Focus on the inner thighs and hip bones. If you want to engage their penis or vulva, make this the last area to explore.

Exercise 3:

Try Masturbation instruction.

Masturbation instruction lets you show your partner how to touch you, Moali explains—but you'll also play with power in a more direct way than in previous exercises. Since so much of kink is about dominant and submissive roles, this is a way to practice your Dom/sub energy by giving instructions on something you know very well. (If you're wondering why the "D" is often capitalized in Dom, it's a way to denote a clear-cut power dynamic. Even the way things are *spelled* in the BDSM world can be HOT.)

The person who is being pleased is in the dominant role, while the giver is following instructions in order to serve. Both partners should have a chance to play giver/receiver.

HOW TO DO IT: Set up a warm, comfortable, private space to play. If you're a fan of toys, feel free to bring them in, and always have lube handy. The person who is giving instructions and being pleased is in the dominant role, while the person following instructions is in the submissive role. Both partners should have a chance to play giver and receiver.

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If you're in the dominant role, give clear and simple instructions. If something feels good, encourage your partner to keep doing that thing. If you'd like them to adjust speed, move somewhere else, or do something differently, say so. This isn't about being critical; it's about learning which roles work for you, and what about each of these roles is appealing. Do you like being in charge? Do you prefer serving your partner? Do you like a bit of both? There's no wrong answer!

WEEK 3

Exercise 1:

Impact Play 101: Spanking.

For some people, pain is pleasurable. Erotic spanking is a great starting point for pain play because it's super easy and doesn't require gear, Moali says. When we say "erotic spanking," we mean spanking or being spanked for the sexual pleasure and excitement it brings. Erotic spanking can be gentle or painful, depending on what you and your partner agree on beforehand. (FYI, spanking is also referred to as consensual impact play.)

HOW TO DO IT: The spanking should be relegated to the buttocks and upper thighs—fleshy areas that cause a more muted pain, and where the impact won't do damage to any internal organs, like the kidneys. The key is to cause pain in a way that is enjoyable for the person both giving and receiving it.

Decide beforehand how many times you're going to give/get. Five slaps is a good place to start. Use the palm of your hand. Check in between spanks to see how the receiver is feeling. Do not hit your partner with your full force (unless they ask for it). This is about power and control, not causing intense bruising. For more information on erotic spanking and to get even more detailed instructions, check out our complete guide here: bit.ly/3quuoX

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Exercise 2:

Bondage 101: Handcuffs.

Are you remembering about ~50% of the scenes from *50 Shades*? If so, it should come as no surprise that handcuffs are a straightforward way to play with power dynamics. Handcuffs are like starting at the “shallow end of the pool,” as they are quite non-threatening, Moali says.

HOW TO DO IT: Invite your partner to choose handcuffs with you. When you're shopping around, make sure you don't pick metal handcuffs. They may look fun, but they can be painful AF. For more fantastic handcuff choices, check out our complete list: bit.ly/3tzw3vB. (That said, you don't necessarily need to buy handcuffs if you get creative. You can use items around the house, such as a t-shirt or necktie, to create makeshift cuffs. Always keep a pair of safety scissors nearby in case you or your partner need a quick out.)

Once you have your cuffs, start by handcuffing your partner's hands in front of their body. This way they can put their hands above their head. You can also try cuffing them around a bedpost. Take turns being the cuff-er and the cuff-ee.

Exercise 3:

Practice forced orgasm.

Forced orgasm may sound like something of the “degradation” variety, but in practice, it is anything but. Basically, if you're being “forced” to orgasm, you get to lean back and let your Dom do all the work of giving you pleasure.

This activity is called “forced orgasm” because the sub is willingly (and enthusiastically) giving up control. It's a kinky power play game where the Dom gets to call the shots and the sub gets to enjoy. “It can be so thrilling to control your partner's orgasm or to have that power exchange with them,” Sparks says.

HOW TO DO IT: The sub is usually lying down or leaning against something and tied up (with the handcuffs you just purchased, perhaps). The idea is to make sure the Dom has as much access to the sub's body as possible. The Dom then pleases the sub until they are “forced” to orgasm.

Of course, the sub isn't really being *forced* to do anything; it's all part of the agreed-upon power play. BTW, this play goes very well with dirty talk, so don't be afraid to be creative. A (pre-discussed) “You're a good little slut” can go a long way!

WEEK 4

Exercise 1:

Hair Pulling

Hair pulling is another easy and fun way to play with pain. By holding the submissive's hair, the Dom has total power over them, which can be highly erotic—but still performed with care. Not everyone is going to be into it, so be sure to discuss if this is something your partner would be into.

HOW TO DO IT: Gather your partner's hair into a fist at the base of their neck. Tug gently. If they are enjoying it, go a bit harder. Stay consistent. Don't jerk your hand, as this can be more painful than pleasurable.

Exercise 2:

Bondage 201: Ropes.

Rope is a fixture in the BDSM world, but we're only introducing it in week 4 because, frankly, rope can be unnecessarily complicated. But never fear, you don't have to turn anyone into a human chandelier. This exercise is about trying things out with very simple knots. The goal is to play with power dynamics and get used to the feeling of the rope as a tool.

Don't hit up Home Depot for supplies. Your standard rope is really rough and can cause abrasions. Twisted Monk Rope's collection of ropes are by far the best on the market.

HOW TO DO IT: Take your partner's wrists and gently tie them together, much like you'd tie veggies together before boiling them in a sauce. The easiest way to do this safely is to tie their wrists into a loose knot or a bow.

Always have a pair of safety scissors readily available so you can cut the rope, if need be. Communicate and check in throughout the play. Once the submissive partner is tied up, proceed to any of the other exercises we've laid out in previous weeks.

Exercise 3:

Impact Play 201: Paddles and Crops.

You've mastered spanking (just kidding, you're not a master yet... but someday!). Now it's time to level up a bit, so to speak. It's time to try paddles and crops.

You don't need to go and buy anything if you don't want to. You can easily make use of a plastic kitchen spatula or a wooden spoon. (Just be sure to thoroughly clean them before going in to make dinner tomorrow night.)

HOW TO DO IT: Just like with spanking, you want to stick to the upper thighs and buttocks. These fatty areas offer more cushioning and less risk.

Start with 3 strokes and check in. If your partner gives you the green light, try 3 more. Communication is crucial for making this work, just like with every exercise on this list. "Experiment with how hard or soft [strokes] feel," Moali tells us. "Everybody is different." Take turns playing the dominant and submissive roles.

Getting kinky is super fun and a great way to explore your sexuality and boundaries. We hope you've learned a lot and feel ready to take on the rest of your erotic life by storm.

Feeling knotty?