

The Curiosity Check

A beginner's guide to kink, desire, boundaries,
and having the conversation.

You can be curious without committing to anything.

NOTICE / NAME / NEGOTIATE

01 / START HERE

Curiosity is not consent.

Kink is an umbrella for interests and dynamics that sit outside what someone considers conventional. It might involve sensation, power, anticipation, roleplay or ritual.

You do not need a label. You do not need a partner. You do not have to turn every exciting thought into a real-life experience.

FANTASY

Something that lives in your imagination.

CURIOSITY

Something you would like to understand better.

INVITATION

A specific possibility you may want to discuss.

A FEW QUESTIONS TO SIT WITH

What is the part that actually interests me?

What might I be hoping to feel?

What am I not interested in?

DESIRE IS INFORMATION. NOT INSTRUCTION.

02 / READINESS

Are you ready to explore?

Not a test. No score. Just seven questions worth answering before you make anything happen.

		YES	UNSURE	NOT YET
01	Does this genuinely interest me, rather than feeling like a way to keep someone?	☐	☐	☐
02	Can I talk about both what I want and what I do not want?	☐	☐	☐
03	Can I say no, pause, or change my mind without fearing consequences?	☐	☐	☐
04	Can I hear another person's no without pressuring, sulking, or arguing?	☐	☐	☐
05	Can I tolerate disappointing someone sexually?	☐	☐	☐
06	Have we learned about this specific activity, including its risks and limits?	☐	☐	☐
07	Is there enough trust, time, and room to talk before and afterward?	☐	☐	☐

A "not yet" around consent or safety is a reason to pause, not a challenge to overcome.

03 / YOUR INVENTORY

What actually interests you?

Mark one for each theme. Your response can change. A maybe is not a promise; a no needs no defense.

	CURIOUS	MAYBE	NO	LEARN
Sensation & texture touch, textures, sensory contrasts	☐	☐	☐	☐
Anticipation & teasing pace, suspense, delayed gratification	☐	☐	☐	☐
Power & control leading, following, negotiated roles	☐	☐	☐	☐
Roleplay & imagination characters, stories, scenarios	☐	☐	☐	☐
Words & praise language, tone, encouragement	☐	☐	☐	☐
Restraint only with specific safety knowledge	☐	☐	☐	☐
Rituals & rules agreed routines, structure, ceremony	☐	☐	☐	☐
Being seen or watching privacy and everyone's consent	☐	☐	☐	☐

An interest in a category is not agreement to every activity within it. Discuss specific acts and risks individually.

What feelings or experiences stand out in my answers?

04 / CONVERSATION

How to say the thing.

Start outside the bedroom, when nobody is under pressure to make a decision. You can make room for honesty without making a demand.

TO OPEN THE CONVERSATION

"I'm curious about something sexually, and I don't know how you'll react. Would you be open to hearing it?"

TO LOWER THE PRESSURE

"I'm sharing a fantasy. I'm not asking you to agree to it."

TO MAKE ROOM FOR THEIR ANSWER

"You don't have to be into it. I just want us to be able to talk."

TO DECLINE WITHOUT SHAME

"I'm not comfortable trying that. I am happy to tell you what I think about it."

TO RECEIVE A NO

"Thanks for telling me. I don't want you doing anything you don't want."

TO CHANGE YOUR MIND

"I thought I'd be into this, and I'm not. I need us to stop."

THEN ASK

"What, if anything, interests you?" "What feels off-limits?" "Where do our interests overlap?"

05 / NEGOTIATION

The conversation before the act.

A shared yes requires more than chemistry. Get specific while everyone is clear-headed and able to consent.

WHAT, EXACTLY?

What are we considering? What parts are in and out?

LIMITS & BOUNDARIES

What is a hard no? What needs a separate conversation?

RISK & PRACTICAL DETAILS

What do we need to learn? Health, safer sex, privacy and equipment?

STOPPING & CHECKING IN

What words or signals mean slow down or stop immediately?

AFTERCARE & FOLLOW-UP

What support, space, comfort or debrief might we each want?

STOP means stop. A safeword or signal is useful but never cancels an ordinary "no" or "stop." Silence is not a yes.

06 / AFTERWARDS

What happens after matters.

An experience can be exciting and still bring up unexpected feelings. Make space for the full answer, not just the flattering one.

Aftercare might look like water, a snack, quiet, closeness, space, conversation, or checking in the next day. Ask; do not assume.

What felt genuinely good?

Did I feel free to stop or change my mind?

What surprised or unsettled me?

Is there anything I need to talk about or repair?

What would I want more of, less of, or never again?

A successful conversation can end with "no," "not now," or "I need to know more." You still learned something important.

07 / KEEP LEARNING

Keep learning. Stay curious.

A short workbook cannot replace activity-specific education, consent, or careful risk assessment. These are places to keep learning.

CONSENT & NEGOTIATION

National Coalition for Sexual Freedom - Consent Counts

**A MORE DETAILED INVENTORY**

Scarleteen - Yes, No, Maybe So

**SAFETY & CONSENT EDUCATION**

Scarleteen - Safety & Consent

**FIND A KINK-AWARE PROFESSIONAL**

NCSF Kink Aware Professionals Directory

**ONE IMPORTANT CAUTION**

Neck compression and breath restriction can cause serious injury even when consensual. Do not treat this workbook as instructions for any high-risk practice.

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Therapy and coaching centered on intimacy, identity, and relationships.

For adults 18+. Educational reflection only; not individualized clinical advice or a substitute for consent or professional instruction.