

## **My boyfriend wants me to hit him** <sup>[1]</sup>

Dear Alice,

My boyfriend and I were telling each other some secret fantasies we both have. He told me he wanted me to release all my frustration on him and even hit him if I want while we have sex. This idea turns me on, but I really don't know where to start? Should I get myself angry before we decide to do that? Or should I just go read about being a *domme*?

### **Answer**

Dear Reader,

Talking openly about your previously secret fantasies can be a big step in a relationship — it shows a building of trust, willingness to be vulnerable, and the desire to explore together. It sounds like you and your boyfriend are at a unique place to try new things and support one another in that discovery. But before you switch things up between the sheets, taking your time and picking up your pillow talk where you left off may be a good place to start.

Many people take on different roles when they have sex, often referred to as “role-play.” Your boyfriend asking you to be more aggressive and physical with him during sex is one example of role-play. When one partner acts out a more powerful role (sometimes by hitting, restraining, biting, etc.) they may be referred to as dominant, while the other partner may be referred to as submissive. This power/pain dynamic in relationships often falls under the category of BDSM (Bondage, Discipline, Domination, Submission, Sadism, and Masochism). It sounds like you have some familiarity with the terms dominant and submissive. Power dynamics in healthy relationships, especially during sex play, benefit from a lot of communication — before, during, and even after roles are acted out. Each partner should feel physically and emotionally safe and able to communicate their needs throughout.

As someone new to a more physically dominant role during sex, taking the time to talk and establish guidelines you both can agree on first really sets the stage for playing later.

Here are some tips to get you both started:

- **Pick a neutral time & place** — Finding a time and a place will allow you to both speak comfortably and in depth about what you want and don't want sexually/erotically. It's a good idea to have this conversation outside of the bedroom, so as to avoid mixing business with pleasure.
- **Avoid assumptions** — Try not to assume either one of you already knows the ropes of how to navigate a fantasy. Asking each other lots of questions helps to clarify desires, fears, and boundaries. Making a commitment to do some learning together will help ensure that you are both on the same page.
- **Consent to consent** — One critical aspect of healthy sexual relationships is mutual consent, especially during role-plays. Agreeing to respect a "go," "slow down," or "stop" request — no matter what you are doing — is a way to establish guidelines for communicating each other's wants and needs clearly. There may be times when one person wants to stop or slow down, and there may be moments when one person wants to make sure it is okay to keep going. Discussing how to navigate those feelings before they come up will help you both feel prepared and safe.
- **Make a list** — Sometimes, it's helpful to actually put pen to paper and write out what you want and don't want. Try making a list of "yes," "no," and "maybe" columns for each of you. You can both write what you are completely open to sexually/erotically, what you are not interested in at all, and things you are maybe interested in, but just not sure about yet. This is a good way to learn more about one another, discuss boundaries and limits, and share ideas about potential role-play scenarios and sex. You can revisit these lists, as people's desires can shift or change over time.
- **Pick a "safeword"** — A "safeword" is an unambiguous word that will signal you or your boyfriend want to stop, slow down, or check-in. Some people simply use "safeword" as their signal. Others use "red" for "stop," "yellow" for "slow down," and "green" for "keep going."
- **Start slow** — Because it's hard to predict what you will like or dislike until you try something out, consider starting out slowly as you take on a new adventure in your sex life. Agreeing to be patient with one another and checking-in regularly can help you both along the way.

If you both agree to experiment with aggressive sex play, many BDSM practitioners advise creating what is known as a "scene," as opposed to using real-life frustrations as inspiration. Your scene is a guide for each of your roles during your agreed upon time and dynamic. Scenes can help partners maintain clear boundaries between reality and fantasy. Beginning to experiment with hitting, slapping, or other forms of "inflicting pleasure" can start with more gentle versions of the desired act (e.g. gentle pats that become progressively more firm).

Resources are available for introductions to BDSM guidelines and practices in print, online, and sometimes in workshops facilitated by community groups, sex toy stores (like [Babeland](#) <sup>[2]</sup> and [Good Vibrations](#) <sup>[3]</sup>), and even health promotion offices on some college campuses.

As far as working out those real-life frustrations, it's generally a good idea to keep them separate from the bedroom. Consider talking about those in a different setting with your boyfriend, a friend, or a counselor.

Learning more and continuing to talk honestly about what you both want (and don't want) can make your sex life more enjoyable, as well as increase intimacy in your overall relationship. Have fun and play safely!

Alice!

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Published date:

Feb 28, 2014

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