
Clinical Practice Guidelines for Working with People with Kink Interests

DECEMBER 2019

Developed by the
Kink Clinical Practice
Guidelines Project
kinkguidelines.com



Citation:

Kink Clinical Practice Guidelines Project. (2019). *Clinical Practice Guidelines for Working with People with Kink Interests*. Retrieved from <https://www.kinkguidelines.com>

Guideline 1: Clinicians understand that kink is used as an umbrella term for a wide range of consensual erotic or intimate behaviors, fantasies, relationships, and identities.

Guideline 2: Clinicians will be aware of their professional competence and scope of practice when working with clients who are exploring kink or who are kink-identified, and will consult, obtain supervision, and/or refer as appropriate to best serve their clients.

Guideline 3: Clinicians understand that kink fantasies, interests, behaviors, relationships and/or identities, by themselves, do not indicate the presence of psychopathology, a mental disorder or the inability of individuals to control their behavior.

Guideline 4: Clinicians understand that kink is not necessarily a response to trauma, including abuse.

Guideline 5: Clinicians recognize that kink intersects with other identities in ways that may shape how kink is expressed and experienced.

Guideline 6: Clinicians understand that kink may sometimes facilitate the exploration and expression of a range of gender, relationship, and sexuality interests and identities.

Guideline 7: Clinicians recognize how stigma, discrimination, and violence directed at people involved in kink can affect their health and well-being.

Guideline 8: Clinicians understand the centrality of consent and how it is managed in kink interactions and power-exchange relationships.

Guideline 9: Clinicians understand that kink experiences can lead to healing, personal growth, and empowerment.

Guideline 10: Clinicians consider how generational differences can influence kink behaviors and identities.

Guideline 11: Clinicians understand that kink interests may be recognized at any age.

Guideline 12: Clinicians understand that there is a wide variety of family structures among kink-identified individuals.

Guideline 13: Clinicians do not assume that kink involvement has a negative effect on parenting.

Guideline 14: Clinicians do not assume that any concern arising in therapy is caused by kink.

Guideline 15: Clinicians understand that reparative or conversion therapies are unethical. Similarly, clinicians avoid attempts to eradicate consensual kink behaviors and identities.

Guideline 16: Clinicians understand that distress about kink may reflect internalized stigma, oppression, and negativity rather than evidence of a disorder.

Guideline 17: Clinicians should evaluate their own biases, values, attitudes, and feelings about kink and address how those can affect their interactions with clients on an ongoing basis.

Guideline 18: Clinicians understand that societal stereotypes about kink may affect the client's presentation in treatment and the process of therapy.

Guideline 19: Clinicians understand that intimate partner violence / domestic violence (IPV/DV) can co-exist with kink activities or relationships. Clinicians should ensure their assessments for IPV/DV are kink-informed.

Guideline 20: Clinicians strive to remain informed about the current scientific literature about kink and avoid misuse or misrepresentation of findings and methods.

Guideline 21: Clinicians support the development of professional education and training on kink-related issues.

Guideline 22: Clinicians make reasonable efforts to familiarize themselves with health, educational, and community resources relevant to clients who are exploring kink or who have a kink identity.

Guideline 23: Clinicians support social change to reduce stigma regarding kink.

Resources for Clinicians

Websites

The Network / La Red

<http://tnlr.org/en/>

National Coalition for Sexual Freedom (NCSF)

<http://www.ncsfreedom.org>

The Alternative Sexualities Health Research Alliance (TASHRA)

<https://www.tashra.org>

Community-Academic Consortium for Research on Alternative Sexualities (CARAS)

<https://www.carasresearch.org>

Kink Knowledgeable

<http://training.kinkknowledgeable.com>

Diverse Sexualities Research and Education Institute

<https://dsrei.org>

Multiplicity of the Erotic Conference (MOTE)

<https://www.mote-con.org>

Kink Aware Professionals (KAP)

<http://www.ncsfreedom.org/key-programs/kink-aware-professionals-59776>

Books

Kleinplatz, P.J. and Moser, C. (2006). *Sadomasochism: Power Pleasures*. Binghamton, NY: Harrington Park Press.

Langdridge, D. and Barker, M. (2007). *Safe, Sane And Consensual: Contemporary Perspectives On Sadomasochism*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Ortmann, D. and Sprott, R.A. (2013). *Sexual Outsiders: Understanding BDSM Sexualities and Communities*. New York: Rowman and Littlefield.

Shahbaz, C., & Chirinos, P. (2017). *Becoming A Kink Aware Therapist*. New York: Routledge

Weinberg, T.S. (1995). *S&M: Studies in Dominance and Submission*. Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books.