

A Brief Dictionary of Risk

With examples as it applies to the kink community

Author's Note!

Whether or not we are aware of it, risk evaluation is something that we all do every day of our lives. As kink enthusiast, it is even more important to be consciously aware of the risks involved in the activities we undertake. This writing, while not meant to be a comprehensive guide, will hopefully provide you with the vocabulary to talk about risk in a meaningful way.

About this Document:

Each term below (save for **RACK** which is a term that long predates this document's origins), includes **Commentary** from the author, and one or more **Examples**. All examples are in the form of paired statements. The *Risk* statement is a potential bad outcome, whereas the *However* statement is a potential positive outcome or reason why someone would participate in that activity.

Begin Terminology

Risk (As used in this document)

Risk is exposure to the chance of injury or loss.

Commentary:

Those four words: **exposure, chance, injury, loss** are at the core of understanding risk.

Risk Awareness

Risk Awareness is to be knowledgeable about the chances of injury or loss for a given situation.

Commentary:

As a kink participant, how much you know about the risks of a given scene is hugely important as that knowledge can be used to protect yourself against the possibility of the scene going badly.

Examples:

***Risk:** Improper use of a fur/faux-fur flogger, such as around the neck area, could lead to the bottom getting hit in the eyes.*

However: **Proper use of a fur/faux-fur flogger** has a very low chance of hurting someone, and can be used as a warm-up, or for sensory play

RACK

An acronym for “**Risk Aware Consensual Kink**”, which many, the document author included, feel is a more accurate term than the previous “Safe Sane Consensual”.

References: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Risk-aware_consensual_kink

Risk Tolerance | Acceptable Risk

Risk Tolerance or Acceptable Risk is the maximum amount of risk that one is willing to accept or endure.

Commentary:

All activities, even those outside of kink, have some risk involved. Weigh the reward against the chance of injury or loss. This sets the bar for risk tolerance/acceptance.

Examples:

Risk: Fire play has a **moderate** chance to cause **severe burns**.

However: This type of play can also have a **therapeutic** or **relaxing effect**.

Risk: Impact play has a chance to leave **severe bruises** or cause **organ damage**.

However: The endorphin rush can be **joyful** or **exhilarating**.

Risk Mitigation

Risk Mitigation are the steps taken to reduce the chance of injury or loss.

Commentary:

Knowing what could go wrong, and taking steps to avoid those situations can transform a high-risk situation into one that is medium or low risk.

Examples:

Risk: Equipment used in rope suspension can **catastrophically fail**.

However: Having **sufficient padding** underneath the participant **can reduce the chances** of the participant getting hurt.

Risk: Not knowing how to use a single tail can lead to severe injuries such as bleeding, or loss of vision.

However: Attending a class, and practicing on non-living targets, can reduce the chances of the participant getting hurt.

Post Mortem (*BONUS POINTS*)

Post Mortem is the act of examining a situation, and discussing what went wrong, and/or what went right.

Commentary:

Kink scenes **can and will** go badly. The severity, and frequency are largely dependent on how well the above topics were communicated. Even if a scene has gone without issue, it is important to review what can be done differently to improve future interactions.

Examples:

Risk: During a well-negotiated scene the giver (top) uses language which is problematic for the recipient (bottom). The recipient decides to conclude the scene early. A few days later, the pair discuss what happened, and have chosen to revise their boundaries/limitations for future scenes.

However: Several individuals have concluded a scene which all participants were able to enjoy without issues. During the aftercare, each participant shares their favorite interactions, and have decided to continue trying new things together in the future.

Additional Note from the Author:

The term “Post Mortem” was borrowed from the author's own work experiences while participating in “incident handling” discussions, and felt like a fun addition despite the morbid/tragic phrasing.