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To most people, the word fetish refers to any “sexually arousing stimuli” (Scorolli, Ghirlanda, Enquist, Zattoni, & Jannini, 2007). The stimuli referred to in this usage of the term fetish includes features or parts of the human body, situations, activities (such as BDSM), and objects (Holvoet et al., 2017).

#### Do I need my fetish to get off?

Oftentimes fetishes simply “enhance sexual interest or satisfaction” but aren’t necessary for either (Scorolli et al., 2017). Multiple studies have found that the presence of one’s fetish was not required for sexual arousal for the majority of participants (Rees & Garcia, 2017). However, the participants of these studies did report higher satisfaction during intercourse involving their personal fetish (Rees & Garcia, 2017). Participants from these studies have stated that sexual activity, either fetish or nonfetish, does provide satisfaction but many preferred intercourse involving their fetish.

#### Fetishes are interpersonal.

Studies and knowledge pertaining to fetishes are scarce, but slowly more research is being conducted (Holvoet et al., 2017). As more research is conducted, a few researchers are choosing to study the interpersonal aspect of fetishes rather than the solitary autoerotic aspect, which was the main focus of research beforehand (Rees & Garcia, 2017). In a study researching sexual object fetishism, participants, on average, rated solitary fetish activity as sexually satisfying whereas partnered fetish activity was rated as very sexually satisfying (Rees & Garcia, 2017). The study’s findings suggest that a partner does not become superfluous when a fetish develops. Instead, the partner becomes essential for the full expression of their partner’s sexual fetishism and plays an important part in their partner’s erotic experience (Rees & Garcia, 2017).

#### References:

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