

Protecting Your Kink Identity

Part 1

Dating Kinky
May 2020

Vir Cotto

Content Warnings:

- This talk will cover adult topics, such as human sexuality, including non-normative sexual practices
- This talk will also cover upsetting topics such as outing

Introductions

Vir Cotto

he/him pronouns

Lifestyle Kinkster

Dominant Sadist

<https://vircotto.com>

vir@vircotto.com

@VirCotto on FetLife

Who is this series for?

- New Kinksters
- Seasoned Kinksters
- Kink Leadership, Event Organizers/Promoters

First Part of Three Part Series

- **Session 1**
 - **Understanding and Managing Risk**
 - **How to handle risks without getting overwhelmed or overworked**
- **Session 2**
 - Understanding and mitigating being tracked both online and offline
 - Evaluating information tracking and incorporating it into our risk planning
- **Session 3**
 - How to others and keep us all safe collectively
 - How to be a responsible event organizer and promoter with privacy in mind

The background features a dark, almost black, field with several glowing, wavy lines in shades of green and blue. These lines are composed of many thin, parallel strands that create a sense of motion and depth. The lines intersect and curve across the frame, with some appearing more prominent than others. The overall effect is a dynamic, abstract composition that suggests a digital or scientific theme.

What if someone finds out?

Outing

- *The act of exposing the non-normative practices of a person without their consent.*
- When someone finds out about our sexual practices that shouldn't and then either acts on or further exposes them
- The term originates with the gay community, but we're extending to other practices such as kink, power dynamics, furryness, age regression, etc.

We Have Reason to Worry

- People are fired (or not hired!) for being kinky
- People lose custody of their children for being kinky
- People are disowned for being kinky
- People deal with microaggressions for being kinky, even by therapists!
- (See the NCSF: “In their own words” series)

Famous Outings

- Jack McGeorge (2002)
 - UN Weapons Inspector in Iraq
- Jim Brown (2012)
 - British Columbia RCMP Officer
- Scott Chamberlin (2017)
 - New Milford, Connecticut Councilman
- Larry Garfield (2017)
 - Open Source Drupal Developer

Engaging the kink community

- Online
- Joining a fetish website/online service
- One on one chatting
- Participating in forums, discussions
- Posting photos/videos
- Online events
- In person
- Munches
- Classes/Workshops /Skillshares
- Play parties
- Conventions

Balancing Needs/Desires

- Fulfillment vs safety
- Risk is Personal and Changes Over Time
- This is risk management

Risk Management

- Just because something has risk associated it, doesn't mean we have to stop it altogether
- **Understand our risks – Severity and Probability**
- **Mitigate the risks through precautions**
- **Prepare for possible negative consequences**
- **Re-evaluate and iterate as necessary**
- **Practice Acceptance**

We already do this

- Use a different name on a website than we're generally known by
- Use a "scene name"
- Don't talk about our job or give out personal detail when talking about ourselves

Risk Awareness in Kink

- Risk awareness is an intrinsic part of BDSM Culture
- We're good at planning for physical and psychological outcomes of scenes
- We're good at post-event planning
- Let's apply that same thinking here

Risk Awareness is Personal

- What may be a threat to one person may not to another
- Types of threats change (outing vs abuse)
- Risks change over time
- Risk mitigation is harder to do retroactively

Categorizing “Actors”

Allies

- On your side
- Could be a person
- Could be a app/tool
- Active vs passive

Neutral Parties

- Often isn't a person
- May change position

Opponents

- Work against you
- Often a person
- Active vs passive

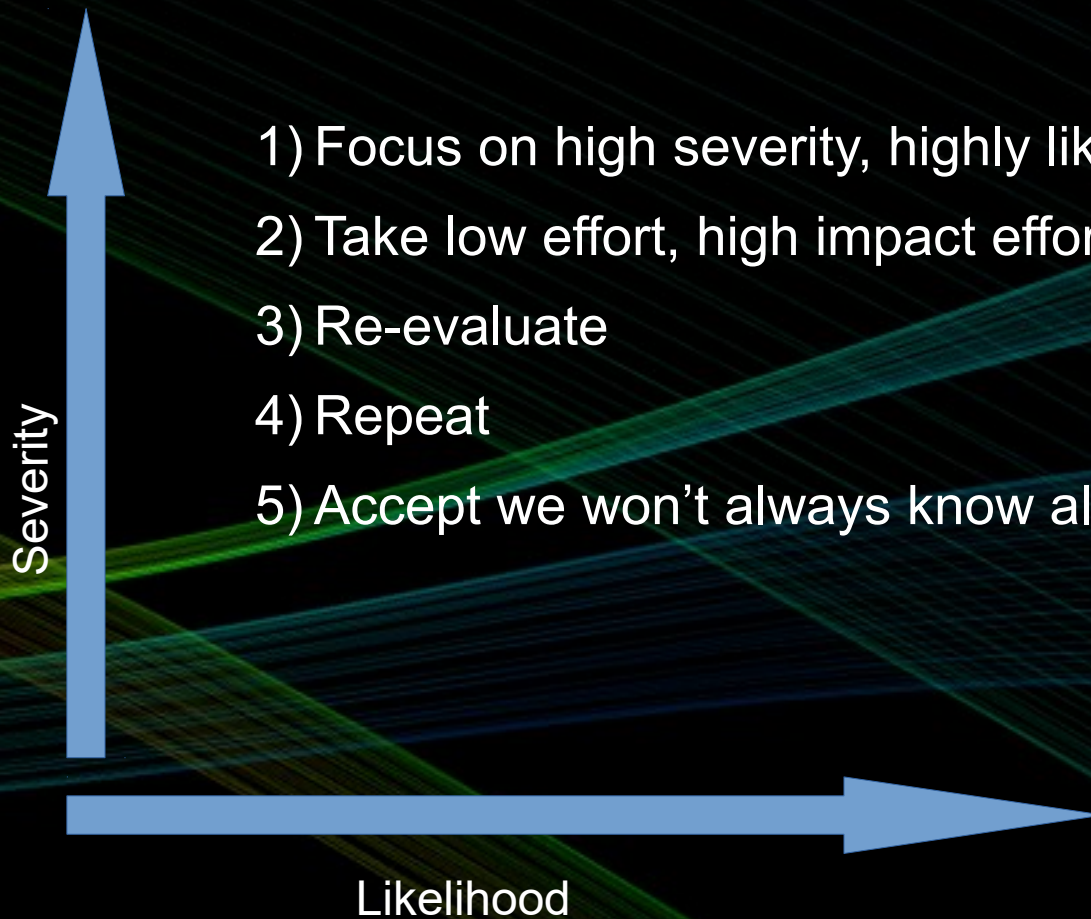
Some examples of actors

- Your Partner(s)
- Your friends
- Former partners
- Kink orgs/vendors that have your government ID name (including CC transactions)
- Your bank
- Your ISP/Mobile Provider
- Any online service that has advertising
- Social Media (Facebook, Twitter, Fetlife)

Severity and Probability

- Can be hard to quantify
- Go with your gut
- Focus on the simple stuff first
 - Some action is better than no action!
- Decide if you want to address it
 - Sometimes it's healthy to say "I choose not to address this"

Deciding Which Threats To Address



- 1) Focus on high severity, highly likely threats
- 2) Take low effort, high impact efforts first
- 3) Re-evaluate
- 4) Repeat
- 5) Accept we won't always know all the threats

Mitigation and Remediation

- How easy it would be to mitigate a risk?
- We should take easy steps that have a big impact first
- Remediation is usually more difficult

Examples of Mitigation

- Not sharing personal details
- Playing at public events rather than “taking someone home”
- Being thoughtful about who we out ourselves to
- Stay tuned for Part 2 of this series!

Small, Easy Mitigation Steps

- Use a “scene name”
Or at least don't give away your full name
- Have a separate email address for kink activity
- Use a second phone number for kink activity
- Don't post photos with easily identifiable features of yourself

Remediation Concerns

- Base Needs
 - Money (Job), Housing
- Psychological Needs
 - Friends, Love, Intimacy
 - Bad Press/Reputation Attacks
- Spiritual Needs
 - “Third Space”/Community
 - Sense of Purpose

Post-Event Planning

- Identify your allies
 - Especially the people in your life that provide love/joy
- Have a self-care plan ready
- Find someone who could take over your social media
- Talk to the people in your life that matter and consider coming out to them on your own terms

When Someone You Love is Kinky by Dossie Easton

Threats Phases

- Before

All your thinking/planning here. Identify allies and take steps to mitigate

- During

During the threat stress is high

What needs will you have during that time?

Focus on executing your plan, mitigating the threat, and self-care

- After

After the main threat, you will have aftermath to address

What can you do to remediate?

Will you need to make any changes to your life? Will they be small or large?

Short term or long term?

Putting it all together

- Map out your threats by severity, likelihood, ease of mitigation
- Consider the actors in your life and their categories
- If it's easy- do it!
- Make a plan if necessary

Consider your immediate needs, long term needs

Ask for help from your allies

Acknowledge Accept, Iterate

- Once you've prepared for an incident/several incidents, then you need a break.
- Acknowledge the work you've done
- Accept the risk you're taking
(or don't and stop the risky activity)
- Re-evaluate your decisions in the future and iterate on the work you've done

Acceptance

- Even the best laid plans, or the most precaution sometimes isn't perfect
- Control what you can control, and learn to accept what isn't
- Anxiety and fear can sometimes be worse than the thing you're afraid of

Iterate, Iterate, Iterate

- Keep going over your risk analysis every so often
- Your life situation may change and your risks may be different as you evolve
- Being out may not be possible for someone close to your
- Iterating on your plan keeps you active in the process

Example: Attending a Rope Convention

Benefits

- Learning to do rope safely
- Meeting the partner of your dreams
- Community connections
- Getting to take a class from that famous rigger whose photos you love
- Being able to get sexy photos of you to post online

Risks

- Needing to give the con your wallet name
- The hotel requires your credit card and wallet name
- Someone might recognize you at the event
- Someone might see you spending time with other people who look different or are talking about rope/kink in public places
- You might come back with a rope related mark

Browsing a Kink Website

- Scenario: Someone at work sees you're browsing a kink website.
- Likelihood ?
- Severity: ???
- Steps you could take:
 - Don't use your work computer to browse Fetlife (or social media in general?)
 - Don't use the wifi at work to browse Fetlife
 - Be aware of shoulder surfing
 - Don't use any Fetlife notifications/apps (they keep you logged in)
 - Only browse Fetlife in private mode to prevent history from being available (other suggestions?)

Posting Photos Online

- You like posting sexy photos of yourself online
- Likelihood: ??? Severity: ???
- Mitigation Possibilities
 - Don't post photos with identifiable features
 - Remove photos
- Remediation
 - Remove photos once they're found to stop the spread

Rope Convention Risk Analysis

- Being seen by someone from work
- Credit card breach from Hotel
- Information breach from Kink Org/Ticket Company
- Being seen near the event?

Rope Convention: Mitigation Steps

- Stay at a nearby hotel, or stay in a friend's room
- Get a credit card in another name (this is entirely legal), and or book your hotel in another name
- Stay at the event and don't go to dinner with other kinksters you don't know

Non-Privacy Scenarios to Consider

- Being found (though not outed) by family
- Abusive Behavior by a socially connected community member
- An accident (as top or bottom)
- Bullying as a result of speaking out against a socially connected community member

The background features a black field with several glowing, wavy lines in shades of green and blue. These lines are composed of many thin, parallel strands that create a sense of motion and depth. The lines curve and intersect across the frame, with some appearing more prominent than others. The overall effect is a dynamic, abstract pattern that frames the central text.

Thank you!

Preview of Next Session

- Learn about computer, mobile phone surveillance
- Learn about how your location and purchase history is tracked
- Learn how to use technology to protect yourself
- Learn how to evaluate new technologies or services privacy implications
- Using this knowledge with what we've covered this session to help you make better decisions and further mitigate your risk

Resources to Learn More

- Holistic Security
<http://holistic-security.tacticaltech.org>
- *When Someone You Love is Kinky* – Dossie Easton & Cathrine A. Liszt
- *Playing Well with Others: Your Field Guide to Discovering, Exploring and Navigating the Kink, Leather and BDSM Communities* – Lee Harington and Mollena Williams

Questions!

- Thank you to all in attendance or viewing!
- Special Thanks to Nookie Notes and Dating Kinky!
- Question time is now and feel free to reach out in the future!
- **Vir Cotto**
- VirCotto on FetLife
- vir@vircotto.com
- vircotto.com