



CONSENT

Sometimes called the 11th Principle, we all like to think that we understand consent and are only ever respectful in our interactions with other burners, but unfortunately consent violations do happen at burns, and it can ruin someone's experience - or worse.

Consent is a framework we can all use to ensure no one is subject to the unwanted actions of others. Consent isn't just about sex, it is needed before acting on any desires involving others, including non-sexual touching, using other people's belongings, and taking photographs. How does one become a highly consensual person?

Here's a step-by-step guide.

1. KNOW THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN WHAT IS YOURS AND WHAT BELONGS TO OTHERS

This seems straight forward: **MY BODY IS MINE, AND YOUR BODY IS YOURS**. But have you ever had the impulse to pinch a baby's chubby cheeks, or swat a friend's bum?

You saw it, it seems irresistible, it's right there, so it's yours to touch, right? No, it's not!

GAINING CONSENT IS THE KEY.

2. ASK FOR WHAT YOU WANT FROM A PERSON WHO IS ABLE TO CONSENT

Regarding **sex**, to consent under law, one must be of a **legal age** to consent and physically able to consent, not unconscious, sleeping or too intoxicated.

The last one can be tricky, so it is generally better to wait until everyone involved is pretty **SOBER**.

Next, you need to **ask for what you want**. This can be scary, because you might hear «no» and feel rejected or embarrassed. But this gets easier with practice.

3. LISTEN TO THE ANSWER

After you have asked for what you want, you need to wait to hear a **response**.

SILENCE IS NOT CONSENT.

If the person does not respond, wait until you hear an answer. Let the other person know that you will not proceed unless they tell you «YES». If they respond «NO», accept the no. Do not try to talk them out of their no or persuade them to change their answer. NO is the answer.

4. SHOW GRATITUDE FOR ANY ANSWER BUT ESPECIALLY «NO»

A true master of consent not only accepts the answer but shows gratitude for the answer. It is easy to show gratitude for affirmative answers, but it is even more important when someone says NO.

Saying NO can be **hard**. People often fear being seen as uncool for saying NO. We must remember that **saying NO is part of Radical Self-Expression!**

5. KEEP CHECKING IN

Even after one has received a YES, **keep checking in**. Check to make sure each new action you make is ok before you take it. **Be aware of a partner who becomes still or silent**; check in and make sure they still consent. Some people become still or silent when they are scared or feel traumatised. You may have done nothing wrong, but the person you are with might suddenly feel unsafe for some reason.

Check in, **STOP** what you are doing, and **WAIT** for your partner to **VERBALLY CONFIRM** they still **CONSENT**.

6. STAND UP FOR CONSENT

Lastly, as masters of consent, we should always be aware of those around us. We are often confronted with situations that seem questionable.

You can and should **CHECK IN ON OTHERS**, even strangers.

Do you feel safe? Are you okay? Do you need to find a safe place or friend? Is everyone here fully consenting? These are all good questions to ask in uncomfortable situations. Be willing to help a person in a non-consensual situation get to safety, whether it is to Malfare or to their friends.