



smOdyssey, Inc.

Moderator Guidelines and Rules for Odyssey Forum

List Rules

The current rules of OdysseyForum are defined below:

1. Odysseyforum is an open email list for the discussion of BDSM, leather and fetish topics. Avoid discussing unrelated matters on the list.
In particular, discussions of politics are strongly discouraged unless they are kept very BDSM specific!
*A moderate amount of banter about one's life is tolerated, as sharing life experiences is part of what builds our sense of community. Such digressions should **NOT** detour the list from its main focus; excessive off-topic posting may merit moderator action*
2. If you are under 19, or are not interested in the discussion of BDSM, leather and fetish in a sex-positive atmosphere, please unsubscribe.
3. Discussion and argument are encouraged, but keep it civil. Personal attacks and name-calling are prohibited.
4. Please maintain the confidentiality of the list. Forwarding OdysseyForum messages without the author's permission is prohibited.
5. Please maintain the confidentiality of off list correspondence. Posting private messages without the permission of the author and recipient is prohibited, as well as an egregious violation of accepted netiquette.
6. Use of this list for illegal activities, or the discussion and promotion of illegal activities is prohibited.
7. "Personal Ads" on the list are prohibited. There are plenty of kink-friendly personal ad services on the web.
8. Commercial activity is not appropriate for OdysseyForum. Here are the guidelines:
OdysseyForum is not eBay -- please don't confuse the two!
It shouldn't be difficult -- eBay is a website with lots of pretty colors. OdysseyForum is an email list. It is NOT supposed to be the personals, neither is it the classifieds. The moderator staff allows a certain amount of leeway regarding the latter when folks are moving, or have lucked into/grown out of extra toys, etc.
 - OdysseyForum is NOT a place to engage in commerce. If you have items you wish to sell, a BRIEF post describing the general kinds of items you

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are moving WITHOUT PRICES and an email address for interested parties to contact you OFFLIST should be acceptable.

- If you are selling items on eBay, DO NOT POST ALL THE GORY DETAILS ON OdysseyForum.
A BRIEF post mentioning that you have BDSM items on eBay and a search term (i.e. your eBay userid) that subscribers can use to find them should be acceptable.
- No businesses or organizations may subscribe to OdysseyForum (only actual "humans")
- If you have started a brand new BDSM business, by all means let the other subscribers know. ONCE.
 - If you want to keep advertising your commercial (non-educational) enterprises, perhaps you should be negotiating advertising rates with smOdyssey.
 - (If you have a website and you'd like it considered for inclusion on the smOdyssey.com links list, email webmaster@smOdyssey.com . We don't charge to add links we accept for that list -- yet!)

9. Unless you can add something to a discussion, please don't reply. Sending a one-line "I agree" or "me too" does not add substantially to a discussion.
10. When responding to a message, unless absolutely necessary don't quote the whole message. Try to only include as much of the original message as is necessary to preserve the context of what you're responding to.
11. Messages with attached files are prohibited. The list server will automatically refuse them.
12. Any activities which make life difficult for the admin team are highly discouraged.
13. If you wish to discuss list rules or operation, please send your comments to OdysseyForum-owner@smOdyssey.com. The OdysseyForum discussion list is not the place for these discussions. (Engaging in discussion of the list operation **on the list** is called "Metadiscussion". Metadiscussion is not allowed on OdysseyForum).

Enforcement Current Policies:

Currently, the enforcement policies for OdysseyForum, as defined on the smOdyssey.com website, are as follows:

1. The admin team has been given the power to enforce these rules, and has been given the latitude to exercise their best judgment in enforcing these rules.
2. Enforcement may include ending a discussion topic/thread and/or removal of members from the list. Warning before removal is not required.
3. If you wish to discuss list rules or operation, please send your comments to OdysseyForum-owner@smOdyssey.com. The OdysseyForum discussion list is not the place for these discussions.

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(Engaging in discussion of the list operation **on the list** is called "Metadiscussion". Metadiscussion is not allowed on OdysseyForum).

There are a small number of list rule violations that will result in immediate expulsion from the list:

- Underage membership (Rule #2)
- Violation of confidentiality of list traffic (Rule #4) or posting off list posts to the list, violating off list confidentiality (Rule #5)
- Engaging in illegal activities (Rule #6)

Members removed for violation of Rule #2 are welcome back when they reach the age of 19. Those removed for violation of Rules #4 and #5 will be removed for a minimum of one year (the actual length of time to be determined by the moderator team). Violation of Rule #6 will result in a permanent ban from the list.

Additionally, the Board of Directors may specify and require an individual's removal from the list for violations of the Code of Conduct, a breach of confidentiality, or other reason investigated in a formal grievance.

Violations of any other list rules will be collectively managed according to the following guidelines. 'Collectively' can and should be understood to mean that violations of any of the following rules are cumulative, regardless of which rule(s) is/are applied in each instance.

List rule violations will be handled on the basis of a "three strikes, you're off" policy.

1. On the first violation of a rule, the individual will receive a written warning. This warning will specify which rule was violated, how it was violated, and a notice that further infractions with result in moderator action.

** A public warning to the entire list can and will be considered a warning to every member of the list, collectively and individually, for a 72-hour period. The moderator staff will issue such a warning when they believe a topic or event has agitated the list membership to the point that such a reminder is valid and warranted. List members who subsequently break the rules can immediately be considered as guilty of a second violation of list rules.

2. On the second violation of list rules with one month (30 days) of the first infraction, the individual will receive a written warning, and typically be penalized in a less severe manner.
3. Second infractions *must* receive an individual warning.
 - a. A second warning can result in the individual being placed on moderated, or 'preview' status, for a period typically no shorter than one week (7 days) to one month (30 days.)

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- b. Any moderator action taken must be immediately followed by a private email to the individual, explaining the moderator action to be taken, and duration of the penalty applied.
 - c. Moderator notice to the Board of Directors, noting the individual's email address and the moderator action taken must be sent as soon as possible after the action is taken, and no later than within the same day.
4. On the third violation of list rules within 2 months (60 days) of the second violation, the individual will receive a written notice and will be penalized.
- a. Third infractions *must* receive an individual notice.
 - b. A third infraction can result in:
 - i. Any moderator action taken must be immediately followed by a private email to the individual, explaining the moderator action to be taken, and duration of the penalty applied.
 - ii. Being placed on moderated, or 'preview' status, for a period typically no shorter than one month (30 days) to 3 months (90 days)
 - iii. Being removed from the list for a period typically no shorter than 1 weeks (7 days) to one month (30 days)
 - c. Any moderator action taken must be immediately followed by a private email to the individual, explaining the moderator action to be taken, and duration of the penalty applied.
 - i. Moderator notice to the Board of Directors, noting the individual's email address and the moderator action taken must be sent as soon as possible after the action is taken, and no later than within the same day.

Moderator discretion for "chronic/habitual" infractions

The above guidelines will serve to govern most typical list behavior and interaction, but do address the case where a list member repeatedly 'tests' the rules. This activity refers to cases where an individual commits the same rule infraction repeatedly over time, or a case where it appears an individual's behavior and willingness to overstep the rules appears to be directly linked to the length of time elapsed since they were last warned/moderated. In such cases, moderator discretion is allowed, and may result in a quicker or stronger response, including the 'first' (most recent 'first') warning including being placed on 'preview' mode. Any moderator action taken must still be accompanied by notice to the individual, and subsequent notice to the Board of Directors.

Moderator discretion

In general, moderators are nominated and approved for their ability, among others, to make sound judgments and offer fair consideration. The guidelines proposed in this document are meant to provide a framework in which the moderator staff can operate, but do not constitute firm or definitive rules. Moderators may adjust the above guidelines to be more lenient or more strict to accommodate any given circumstance.

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Moderators do not possess crystal balls, and should not try to guess or assume motive when considering any issue. Moderators can and should, however, consider available alternatives to the action taken and any other factual information deemed appropriate in considering moderator action.

Emergency Moderation of the List

The list functionality includes the ability to administratively place the entire list in 'preview' mode. Moderators should not use this functionality except in extreme cases, including, but not limited to:

- activity on the list that could potentially legally harm the entire organization;
- activity on the list that has continued in gross excess of the rules, despite list-wide warnings.

This action can only be taken by consensus of a majority of the available moderators, and must be accompanied by immediate notice to the entire list and immediate notice to the Board of Directors. It is not required to immediately provide a duration for the action, since it will most likely be dictated by circumstance, but subsequent information should be provided to the list within 24 hours by either the moderator staff or the Board of Directors.

Contention/Appeal Appeal Process

Any member of the list may address a general question to the moderator staff at odysseyforum-admin@smodyyssey.com. The moderator team should acknowledge all messages, and endeavor to reply within one week. In periods of heavy list activity, this should be a best effort, and the community is asked to be considerate and forgiving on this point. ;)

Any member of the list may file a complaint regarding behavior on the list, or violations of the list rules, by sending email to odysseyforum-admin@smodyyssey.com. The format of such a complaint is open. The moderator staff must acknowledge, consider, and respond to all complaints within a week, sooner if possible. The moderator staff may, but is not required to, notify the Board of Directors regarding any complaint.

If the moderator staff feels that the complaint filed pertains to the smOdyssey, Inc Code of Conduct or a violation of the polices of the organization, the moderator staff will refer the complaint to the Board of Directors immediately.

In the event where a member of the list is dissatisfied with the response of the moderator staff, or wishes to contest a moderator action, the list member may refer the issue to the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors is always the final authority on OdysseyForum.

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Internal Moderator Policies

1. Any moderator may issue a warning to the list as a whole, or to any individual member of the list. A “CC” copy of the warning must go to the moderator staff.
2. Any moderator may issue a second warning and place a member of the list on moderated status. A “CC” copy of the warning/notice must go to the moderator staff. Duration of the penalty must be determined by a majority of the available moderator staff. Should the moderator staff feel that the action taken was in error, the action will be immediately reversed, an apology written to the member in question, and a summary written to the Board of Directors within 2 days.
3. Any moderator may issue a third warning, and place a member of the list on moderated status. A majority of the available moderator staff *must* consider and determine penalty in the case of a third rules infraction.
4. All correspondence any moderator is engaged in *must* be copied to the entire moderator staff.
5. The moderator staff must make every reasonable effort to respond to administrative list requests (subscription, delivery issues, etc) within 48 hours.
6. Moderators should provide notice to the entire moderator staff at least one week (7 days) prior to an extended period of unavailability. At least one moderator should be available to oversee the list at any given time. Should the occasion arise where no members of the moderator staff will be available, the moderator staff should notify the Board of Directors immediately.

Oversight

Board Oversight of the Moderator Team

The Board of Directors must approve all members of the moderator team.

The Board of Directors may remove any member of the moderator staff for cause, and must provide written notice to the moderator in question explaining the action. The Board must also notify the remaining members of the moderator staff of the action.

The moderator staff should be reviewed and (re-)approved by the Board of Directors annually.

If the Board of Directors overrules any moderator action or decision, the Board of Directors should notify the moderator staff in writing with an explanation to assist the moderator staff in future decisions.

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If the Board of Directors has issue with the behavior of any moderator, the Board can invite that moderator to executive session. This is the proper forum for all corrective conversation with a particular moderator, or the moderator team as a whole.

Roles and Responsibilities

There is only one job responsibility on the moderator team, and that is the position of Moderator. There is a need, however, to designate one 'first among equals' as Lead Moderator for administrative purposes. This position has, in the past, been called "Listmaster" but this alternative designation implies a seniority where none need exist. The Lead Moderator has equal voice and equal weight of vote as the remaining members of the moderator team in issues dealing with list management.

Moderator

Any member of the moderator staff holds the title and responsibility of Moderator. The duties of Moderator have been clearly laid out earlier in this document.

Lead Moderator

The Lead Moderator has the same duties and responsibilities as any other member of the moderator staff with regard to list management functions. The Lead Moderator, however, also serves as a point of contact with the IT Coordinator and/or the Board of Directors. When available, the Lead Moderator will speak as the voice of the moderator staff when delivering routine reports and reports of moderator action to the Board. The Lead Moderator will also speak for the moderator staff when addressing appeals of moderator action, unless it is the actions of the Lead Moderator in question (In such a case, the Lead Moderator will recuse him/herself and allow another member of the moderator team to address the issue.)