



Core Principles of MDHL

MDHL is a dynamic that exists in and across a wide range of practices and relationships in the BDSM and Leather worlds. MDHL does not preclude one from participating in any kind of power or authority exchange from Master/slave to casual play. What makes a relationship MDHL is an attention to the Male Dominant/female submissive dynamic and a commitment to the principles we adhere to: Honor, Integrity, Tradition, and Respect.

MDHL focuses on the specific and particular issues that define and are defined by Male Dominant and female submissive interactions. Those interactions are determined by authentic and honest engagement with each other in a dynamic defined by respect and strength.

In exploring the tenets of MDHL we are committed to initiating discussions around the history, meaning, and what it is to practice a leather lifestyle as heterosexual Dominant men and submissive women, beginning with identifying four key principles: Honor, Integrity, Tradition, and Respect. Our belief is that these terms, while important aspects of any mature, adult, healthy relationship, incur special burdens within the context of our interactions.

In the context of MDHL:

- Honor is the principle that your actions are above reproach in terms of intention, consent, and dignity. To behave honorably means that you act in ways that are within the boundaries of your peers and community and that you are accountable to those who share your commitment to similar ideals, practices and beliefs. Honor is about consistent, appropriate behavior in both speech and action toward others.
- Integrity is one's own moral calling and the ability and will to act according to principles that one knows are right even in the face of obstacles. Integrity is the personal moral compass which directs our actions and justifies our behavior. It is accountability to oneself. Integrity is about consistent behavior in both speech and action in relation to one's own personal moral and ethical beliefs.
- Tradition is the path by which we acknowledge those who have come before us, both for their contributions, and their sacrifices. Tradition honors those who have helped set the ideals we aspire to and who have opened doorways to allow us to live our lives more openly and freely than our predecessors.
- Respect is the principle that we judge others on the basis of their actions rather than by criteria such as race, creed, religion, sex, gender, or orientation. This includes tolerance of difference, avoiding uninformed judgment, and acceptance of others' choices regarding relationships, styles of play, and other aspects of BDSM.

By committing to and holding these beliefs, MDHL can continue to evolve in productive directions, focusing on connected, mutually gratifying relationships and establishing standards for honor, integrity, tradition and respect that will allow us, as individuals and as a community, to grow and flourish.

