

I'd like to thank my wife and slave BlueFrost for her love, support, and surrender for nearly a decade. We've raised three amazing people to adulthood, and by all measures, you've been an amazing mother and role model in the home we've built together. You're a brilliant, phenomenal woman by every measure in my eyes. To Infinity And Beyond, BabyGirl.

I'd like to thank MsC for the invitation and the honor to be able to address the community so near and dear to me. You are my friends, peers, family, and loved ones. The Master slave community.

I'd also like to thank everyone that had a part in putting the conference together. As an MTTA Board member, I appreciate every hour, minute, and second, the conference staff, volunteers, and vendors have put into giving the event the best chance at success they could offer.

I'd also like to thank the hotel staff. Having sat in on more than a few planning meetings with the rest of the team, I know how much effort is being put into making sure all of the attendees feel welcome. Thank you.

Now with that being said...

MsC is back, y'all. (clap)

How many first-timers are in the room?

So the rest of you have been here in the past. Awesome.

It's been far too long. The last MsC was 3 years ago. Wow. 3 years, family.

My House's last M/s-related conference was when we visited some of our Ms family at South Plains Leatherfest in March of 2020, home of the International Master slave contest, currently produced by Sir Tomo, and formerly produced by Master, Jim, slave Marsha, and Sir Cougar

who are now enjoying a much-needed retirement after 20 some odd years. Where are our current International title holders Beast and Echo?

There's a video out there somewhere of this year's M/s contest head judge, and past International title holder, Sir Daddy Daun and my Frost doing the "rubbin' butts dance" as a greeting because we thought that was the best way to greet each other in those days. But little did we know. 😊

And speaking of the International M/s contest, for those that haven't already been following, get plugged in and be sure to follow our NE Master slave pairs this weekend as they compete to be the region's next M/s title holders and eventual participants in the international contest. As many of the other past M/s titleholders in the room will tell you, it takes a lot of courage, effort, and energy to be an M/s titleholder. But we're here to tell you it can be a lot of fun and extremely rewarding. From experiencing the Woo in the Southwest, the Zen of the Northwest, the Midwest's wild and free-spirited community, to Southeast's Funtastic party scene, my perspective on what it is that we do has never been the same. Having the opportunity to present to thousands of folks that live the same life choice as you do, exchanging ideas, is priceless. I wish that visiting other M/s communities around the country could be an experience everyone could have. As a titleholder, you're encouraged to travel abroad as an ambassador from the NE representing our hierarchical relationship models. And don't worry, the local community and MTTA raises funds yearly to provide our titleholders with a travel fund to cover part of the travel expenses. You can visit the silent auction this weekend to bid on fun things to take home to help contribute to the title fund. And if you get a chance, stop by and see them all offer a 5-to-10-minute workshop on Saturday. It's a

good chance to see them up close and personal before they hit the stage later in the evening if you don't catch them walking the halls. Good luck to all the contestants. You have the whole Northeast region and Canada's right coast supporting you. And for those of you who are still thinking about whether or not you want to compete in the future, the answer is YES!

Whew... that got me all tingly.

I missed seeing ya'll in person. I missed staying up to the early hours of the morning sharing stories about how we traverse M/s, the relationship tools we use, our communication styles, skills gained from both sides of the slash, our successes, and probably what shapes us the most, our endeavors that didn't go as planned and turned into learning opportunities.

Remember, as a part of our personal blueprint, we try not to cast a negative light on things that didn't go as planned by calling them failures. Instead, we remember to speak positively to ourselves and speak positivity to our souls. After all, a peaceful soul is the genesis of building a peaceful existence. But let me stop before I get to preaching up here and they have to turn on the music and play me off-stage.

But seriously, didn't you miss sitting in the restaurant, sharing a beverage and sharing stories about the most epic scene you'd ever watched, or better yet, where you were a participant and the experience had you floating in a cathartic bliss that you'll never forget? You know, just hanging out with like-minded people who were all about consent and great energy. I missed the MsC tent. Shoutout out to the tent. If that tent could talk...

Was it just me, or did you miss chatting with folks after attending a presentation; sharing notes and references? Exchanging contact info to

broaden your options for perspective? Exercising your ability to wrap yourself in diversity by immersing yourself in the thoughts and presence of others. Just good, healthy, affirming communion with other people that live and embrace hierarchical authority exchange.

Hey, y'all. We get to take selfies in front of the Leather Quilt. I'll tell you now, the line to take pictures before and after the formal dinner is serious. So, plan accordingly.

How many people know it's not just on display for decoration? Or that it is sometimes displayed only in part at various conferences and there are over 180 panels in total? If you're not familiar with the quilt and its purpose, I encourage you to visit the link to the quilt's history on the conference's website or read about it in the program. It'll add an extra memory to go with those selfies and family pics as there is nothing like face-to-face interaction. It's a refreshing reminder of how rewarding it is to be in the real-time community.

How many people fell in love with Zoom at the beginning of the pandemic, only to have that (NRE) New Relationship Energy with Zoom burn itself out in less than a year? Same. Me, too.

Can you hear me?

How do I raise my hand?

Where's the chat?

Or that one person that forgot to mute themselves before yelling at the dog to shut up...

Or that other person that left their cell phone camera on, giving us all the Blair Witch experience while their camera phone bounces around... often upside down.

Or that person that forgot they didn't have pants on from the waist down and stood up a ½ a second too early at the end of the call?

It was fun in the beginning as video calling with friends from around the globe wasn't necessarily *new* to most of us. The new part was it was our **ONLY** way to connect for months on end at one point.

During the height of the pandemic, I think we all recall seeing or attending at least one online conference. Not sure about you, but I was thankful for them. I'm sure we'll see a few of them continue to happen in the future as it proved to be a great way to get community members involved in an educational arena that might not have otherwise had the opportunity to attend. Shoutout to FLAME and MsC Worldwide.

Family, have you seen this year's educational opportunities? Just wow. There are some new and new(ish) names in our presenter ranks. I can't wait to see new, fresh, and diverse perspectives; especially in the areas of Ethics, Consent, Race, Inclusivity, Equality, Mental Health Care, Protocols and Rituals, as well as Diversity as a Construct. I've already attended a few classes and picked up some new perspectives. Thank you to all of you that are taking the time to present and share your experiences with the attendees. You're greatly appreciated and we couldn't do this without you.

We lost a lot of wonderful souls since the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic. I lost a biological sister to COVID and I'm sure I'm not the only one that experienced loss. The events of those days were straight out of an epic novel or movie. Did you all see, what's now an iconic representation of COVID's impact in the US of the drone shot of Times Square? Barren. Not even a cab. Just the flashing lights from the billboards. Eerie.

And how about the almost as iconic shot of central Las Vegas in the summer of 2020? The streets were completely empty. It was bizarre to see. Picture a tumbleweed blowing down the main drag. Y'all know what Vegas usually looks like in the Summer.

2020 was also the last time some of us saw beloved members of our M/s community. Earlier today at 12:30 we had our Candle Lighting Memorial service to pay tribute to several of our siblings that have moved on. It was a cathartic moment for a lot of us in the room. For those that weren't there, I'd like to give you a few seconds to reflect on the memories you've made with those lost. Feel free to shout out their names if you'd like.

When we think about those that are no longer here, we think about how their absence may have affected us personally, as well as their peer groups. In some cases, they may have been a pioneer in their own right, bringing diversity in thought or much-needed change to their local community.

So, let's have a quick chat about the theme of the conference.

Celebrating our Diversity.

We all know what diversity means, but so that we're all working from the same sheet of music I'll share the definition in the context we're using it.

Diversity is "the practice or quality of including or involving people from a range of different social and ethnic backgrounds, and of different genders, sexual orientations, etc."

That's a mouthful, but it would benefit us all if we understood what it means, as well as what it doesn't mean.

Riddle me this: How valuable would it be to have the perspectives from an intentionally curated set of souls when decisions are being made that affect the masses?

Think "Board of Directors for People Who Like to Do Kinky Stuff."

True, you can "phone a friend" to get their words and opinions, but wouldn't having them have a seat at the table be much better?

Diversity is needed when we're *having* conversations about how to "do" diversity because too many times the de-facto answer is to check "all of the boxes" for the sake of optics. That's in general not the best approach because there's more to it than checking a box.

Let's start with it's not JUST about race, ethnicity, gender identity, or sexual preference. It's about ALL of those things and a lot more.

More like **diversity in thought**.

If everyone at the table thinks the same, change has a snowball's chance in hell of showing up. Bring people into your circles that healthily challenge you. People where you can partner in mutually beneficial ways, and where your journeys are equally enriched.

And more like **diversity in life experience**.

Everyone sitting in this room knows that how one person practices their hierarchal relationship might differ dramatically from how you may operate yours. And that's alright. Folks will live the lives they choose to live and we should celebrate that level of diversity and life experience. And for the record, celebrating others doesn't mean you have to do anything differently in your relationship than you're doing now. It's called **empathy**, or the ability to understand and share the feelings of another.

And diversity in **talent**

A huge percentage of successful teams, and not just in the traditional sense of sports, are successful because the members each bring a talent that benefits the entire group.

Diversity in **abilities**.

Recovering from two shoulder injuries gave me a unique perspective on accessibility.

Diversity in **age**.

All of us were 21 once, and the choices and decisions we made when we were 21 are likely very different than what we might do today. So what makes us think the 21 years olds of today would be doing the same things we did when we were their age? Let's capitalize on finding new ways to accomplish things, and better yet, allow ourselves to evolve in real time.

And you're correct, not every situation calls for every soul to have a say in the "thing", but as the adage says "When everyone is included, everyone wins."

So, I'm happy to say that this year's educational opportunities will speak to each of those areas, and in every case, by the subject matter expert; as it's their lived experience.

Diversity is the genesis of what makes us all human.

Diversity can also make life more rewarding.

I encourage each of you to exercise your ability to broaden your horizons by attending as many classes as you can during the conference. Take notes. Make some new friends. And above all else, enjoy yourselves and celebrate being back home with your M/s family.