Bonds of Love
An Introduction to the Art of Japanese Rope Bondage

Introduction
Bonds of Love is a wonderful opportunity to learn basic Japanese rope knotwork in a safe, relaxed and fun environment. The emphasis is on creating rope patterns on the body, essentially creating rope art! Everyone gets to tie and be tied, so you can experience both sides of Shibari.

Please note: all of the ties covered in this workshop are floor ties with the bottom’s feet firmly on the ground! Suspension bondage follows more and often different safety practices, and will not be covered in this class.

So what types of ties will we practice? All kinds! You will learn simple ties like wrist ties as well as more complex pieces such as chest harnesses and the exquisite Kikkou, or Japanese Rope Dress. As your skills improve you can then progress into more challenging ties, always with an eye to art and aesthetics.

In any bondage, the most important things are the comfort and safety of all involved. For that reason, Bonds of Love will put great emphasis on keeping your rope work safe. As well, in order to properly enjoy the class you have to be fully relaxed and happy so we will make sure you are always comfortable with the Class. If for some reason you are not comfortable with a certain tie or any other aspect of the class please let us know!

PS. You will notice our use of the terms Top and Bottom throughout the workshop. The Top is the person doing the tying, and the Bottom is the person being tied.

Learning Objectives
By the end of this workshop, you will be able to,

1. Consider the many reasons why men and women are attracted to bondage, and ponder your own motivations for exploring this exciting art,
2. Follow basic safety rules and practice rope work in a secure and healthy manner,
3. Practice 3 basic Shibari ties (wrist tie, leg tie, chest harness) and 1 intermediate tie (Japanese Rope Dress, or Kikkou).
Safety Points
Bondage can be sexy and fun, but it can also be risky and dangerous. What follows are some basic Do’s and Don’ts for both tops and bottoms.

- **Communication is Critical!** If something doesn’t feel right, let your Top know. Have a safe word and a safe gesture set up ahead of time. Lose your shyness and your ego, and talk about what you want to do. You may find that just the act of doing so can turn on your partner. Also, if a tie feels particularly good there is nothing wrong with letting them know as well :)

- **Know your Nerves.** Nerve damage is a serious risk with bondage. Signs of nerve damage include (usually rapid onset) numbness, tingling, tightness, stress, or sharp, shooting pains. Loss of strength can also be a sign of nerve damage. If any of these symptoms occur, remove or redirect tension, shift the ropes away or change position. When in doubt, untie the affected limb completely.

- **Disclose your health history to your top before being tied**, especially: diabetes, asthma, joint problems, blood pressure concerns and existing nerve damage. Also, please let your top know if you any implants such as breast implants.

- **Stretch before being tied up**, and move SLOWLY after being released from bondage.

- **Remove all jewelry before being tied.**

- **Know and respect the limits of your body** (flexibility, endurance, emotional, etc). You want to "push not shove" your limits! Remember--some ties take some time to undo; it is better to be able to state "I have 5 minutes left" than to be 5 minutes too late!

- **Don’t leave someone unattended in bondage.**

- **NEVER tie the rope around the bottom’s neck.**

- **Have safety shears close by at all times.**

- **Consider what would happen if the bottom faints.** If the answer is “they would probably die or be seriously injured,” don’t do it.

- **Provide a safe environment for your bottom when the bondage session comes to a close.** They may be feeling physically or emotionally vulnerable. A warm blanket, snacks/water and/or a warm embrace are good things to offer. Let their thoughts and muscles unwind SLOWLY. This is known as Aftercare, and is an important part of your responsibility as a Top.

- **Never practice bondage under the influence of drugs or alcohol.**

General Rope Safety Rules
Follow these general rules to ensure your rope is in good and safe working order.

- Before you start check your rope for any damage, frays, dirt, etc.

- Bodily fluids can accumulate on the rope, so make sure to wash your rope and/or have a set off rope dedicated for use on a given regular partner.

- Never use slip knots or knots that tighten under pressure.
Medical Concerns (anatomy)
To avoid injury, follow the following rules when practicing rope bondage.

• Do not place rope on or just below the Radial nerve. The Radial nerve is located on the outside of the arm in the valley between the triceps and the deltoid.

• Do not place pressure on the Brachial Plexus. The Brachial Plexus is located in the armpit, so never place any knots, bulges or joins in the armpit.

• Do not apply pressure to the Femoral artery. The Femoral artery is located about 4 inches below the groin and provides blood flow to the legs.

• Do not pinch the wrists. To avoid nerve damage to the wrists, do not apply rope to the valley between the hand and the bony protrusion above the wrists. Always tie below the bone, and tie so you can slip a finger between the rope and the arm.

• Regularly test for restricted blood flow or nerve pinches. Check the bottom’s skin temperature during the scene, and have the bottom squeeze two of your fingers together and monitor the strength of their grip periodically.

Workshop Outline
I. Introductions: So You Want to Be Tied Up? Why? - 10 minutes
II. Safety First! - 15 minutes
III. Stretch and Warm Up - 10 minutes
IV. Let’s Tie! - 1 hour
   A. The Wrist Tie - 20 minutes
   B. Chest Harness - 20 minutes
   C. Leg Tie - 20 minutes
V. Intermission - 15 minutes
VI. Types of Rope - 5 minutes
VII. The Kikkou, or Japanese Rope Dress - 1 hour

References
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http://www.bondage-erotique.com/
http://crash-restraint.com/ties/1
http://playgroundofthesenses.com/workshops/bondage_safety.pdf

Playground of the Senses
243C Main Street
Ucluelet, BC V0R 3A0
1.250.522.0226
http://playgroundofthesenses.com
kissme@playgroundofthesenses.com
https://www.facebook.com/playgroundofthesenses/