

A one-on-one conversation with a professional tattoo artist. Learn how to prepare yourself for the world of tattoos and body piercing. Read about techniques to heal new body art and how to prepare yourself for the process.

Collecting Tattoos

**Buy The Complete Version of This Book at
Booklocker.com:**

<http://www.booklocker.com/p/books/3854.html?s=pdf>

Collecting Tattoos

Jeffrey Lyle

Copyright © 2008 Jeffrey Lyle

ISBN 978-1-60145-708-0

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, recording or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the author.

Printed in the United States of America.

Booklocker.com, Inc.
2008

Contents

Introduction	1
Getting Started.....	3
Common Questions.....	9
Artwork: What Works, What Doesn't	21
Everybody Has An Opinion.....	33
Finding The Right Professional Tattoo Parlor and Artist For You	37
Preparing Yourself.....	47
General Procedures.....	57
Healing A New Tattoo	65
Is It Infected?.....	75
From An Artist's Point Of View	81
About Body Piercing.....	87
At Your Own Risk.....	99
About The Author.....	101

Getting Started

Before rushing off to the tattoo parlor, I invite you to answer a few questions. There are no one answers for these; they are designed to make you think before you act.

- Why do I want a tattoo?
- What do I wish to express with my body art?
- Will the tattoo/piercing affect my social life?
- Am I secure enough in my career to have exposed body art?
- Is this an appropriate place on my body?
- Does the size of the artwork fit my body part?
- Am I absolutely sure I want my boyfriends name on me for life?
- Am I positive I want a tattoo for life?
- What if I don't like this tattoo in the future, what are my options?
- I know I want a tattoo, why don't I know what I want?

Collecting Tattoos

- With my health issues, should I get a tattoo?
- Can I take the pain of body modification?
- Do I feel comfortable with the artist I have chosen?
- Have I done all the necessary research for this lifetime commitment?
- How can I better prepare myself for a tattoo/body piercing?
- Can I afford a tattoo/body piercing at this time?

These are just some of the questions one should ask themselves, before going to the professional tattoo parlor. The more confident you are in this lifetime decision, the happier you'll be. I'll usually ask my new clients at least five or more of those questions listed. If they have a hard time with their answers, I will suggest they wait one month before receiving their new tattoo. I'll usually offer to do the tattoo cheaper if they wait it out. Every time my new client made the choice to wait, they changed their mind on the first design and selected something different. As the

Jeffrey Lyle

professional tattoo artist, I personally feel obligated to my new client with helping them to understand what they're about to get into.

Tattoos and body modification can change the way society views a person. Although you'll never find a prejudice tattoo, you will run into prejudice people that will judge you over that new neck tattoo or that tongue piercing. Sounds pretty silly doesn't it. We get to hear all the regrets in the tattoo parlor. So if the artist is trying to talk you out of doing that face tattoo, it's because their fully aware of the effect it will have on your life. They've heard the stories more than once. It's like asking the artist to do something they know you're going to regret. That is most certainly not what the professional tattoo artists want for their clients. For the professional, there is a deep respect for this ancient trade of body modification and when we are tattooing there is great satisfaction in giving someone a lifetime gift. There is much more to the story than just drawing a picture in the skin.

Collecting Tattoos

A unique relationship between client and artist develops over a few tattoos, and it feels like you have a lifetime friend. It is my goal to prepare you so you will feel confident in your decisions regarding body art. I'm going to discuss with you all of the things you'll need to prepare yourself before, and after receiving your new body art. Approaching professional tattoo parlors can seem a bit intimidating, but most professional artists are friendly. They can be very helpful and informative. Remember there is no such thing as a dumb question.

I'll discuss some of those commonly asked questions and talk about choosing designs and how the process of receiving a tattoo or body piercing actually works. We'll cover the healing of new body art and what to do if you get an infection.

I've placed some easy reviews at the end of a few chapters that will provide quick reference when doing your research. I put in some personal information to help with understanding everything from paperwork to proper care.

Jeffrey Lyle

Now it is up to you. Be patient in your search for the right professional tattoo parlor and artist. Look at several designs before you decide on a tattoo. Feel great about all your choices along the way, and you will be rewarded with a beautiful lifetime gift. I wish you the best of luck.

Healing A New Tattoo

After the artist has completed your new tattoo, the job is only half done. The next important part, the healing, is up to you. There are as many ways to heal a tattoo as there are artists to explain it to you. The truth of it is, everybody heals differently and you must find what works best for you. You and you alone are responsible for healing your new tattoo.

We are going to discuss many factors that can affect the healing of new tattoos. Since environmental circumstances are different, the challenges also are different.

Let's start at the beginning; the tattoo has just been completed. The artist may or may not give you some ointment to apply, or sell you a product to heal the new tattoo. Professional parlors will give you a care sheet with instructions on healing the new tattoo. You shake hands and leave the parlor pleased with your new tattoo.

Most professional tattoo parlors will use a protective covering for the first hour or

Collecting Tattoos

two during the tattoo's "weeping time", the time your tattoo oozes blood, ink, and other bodily fluids. They will use anything from paper towels, saran wrap, or non-stick sterile gauze pads. It's important not to leave these protective coverings on for more than a few hours. Do not let them dry to the new tattoo. If this happens, soak the protective covering with warm {not hot} water for five minutes or longer until the covering gently comes off. This will prevent ink from being pulled out of the new tattoo. Leaving the covering on the tattoo for prolonged periods of time can be unhealthy for the tattoo, as it could become a bacteria trap and possible infection could occur. Your skin will need to breathe in some fresh air to promote good healing.

Do not submerge the new tattoo in water for long periods of time. The skin will absorb the water and your tattoo will become slightly puffy and possible fading or spreading of the ink under the skin could occur. Taking showers will be fine. The new tattoo will be sensitive to hot water.

Jeffrey Lyle

After an hour or so you will want to gently wash the new tattoo with warm water and anti-bacterial soap. Use only freshly washed hands to do this. Bathing products such as sponges, loofas, washcloths, etc, should not be used on the new tattoo. It can lift off dead skin cells before their time, lifting ink out of the new tattoo. After washing the tattoo, make sure all the dried blood has been removed. Gently pat dry with a clean, lint free towel. At this point it is good to let the tattoo air dry for 5 to 15 minutes. This will prevent excess moisture from being trapped in the skin.

Next apply a very thin coat of ointment. Applying too much can suffocate the tattoo and prolong healing. It can also make your clothes goopy as well. If your new tattoo seems to be bleeding a lot after the first washing, massage the ointment into the skin to plug the pores. The less it bleeds the better chance for holding ink. Do not be alarmed if the tattoo seems to bleed a lot after the procedure. This can be normal. Tattoos can ooze bodily fluids for up to three days. Hard

Collecting Tattoos

to reach areas can be achieved by placing a piece of sterile gauze with ointment on a back scratcher. Apply ointment sparingly as often as necessary to keep the tattoo moist. This could mean as many as 10 times or more a day.

If exposed to an unclean environment, {construction worker, painter, etc}, wash the new tattoo frequently as well. Do not over wash the new tattoo. If you wash the tattoo every hour, the skin could be at risk of depletion of its own natural oils needed for healing. Your new tattoo is an open wound, and should be kept clean and moist for optimum healing.

Note: if your new tattoo develops a rash, appearing like little red bumps in and around it, the skin could be having a reaction to the topical ointment being used. Wash the tattoo thoroughly and apply a different ointment, preferably something fragrance free and petroleum based. Remember to use ointment sparingly. Some of the recommended topical ointments are; Vaseline, A+D ointment, Triple Anti-Biotic ointment,

Jeffrey Lyle

Bacitracin, Bag-Balm, Tattoo-Goo, Ink Fixx, and Tat-Wax. As an artist I've seen clients that have experienced reactions to one or more of everything listed. It can be a normal part of the healing process and rarely affects the quality of the tattoo. Fragrance free lotions are ok to use after the "flakey" stage. Lotions do absorb quicker and will need to be applied frequently. I never have been a fan of the "dry healing" technique. I believe the skin needs to be kept moist, and the ointment can also act as a barrier from possible air borne infections. Most all tattoo parlors will ask you not to use Neosporin; it's great for scrapes and cuts but can be a little strong for healing tattoos. It has been said there is an ingredient in Neosporin that draws foreign matter out of the skin and since ink is not natural, it too may be pulled out. Do not use peroxide or burn creams on the new tattoo, these also can have some pretty cruel effects. Your artist may have other helpful hints that are not listed here.

The first few days the new tattoo should be washed 3 to 4 times a day. Be sure

Collecting Tattoos

to continue washing the tattoo no less than 2 times a day for the duration of the healing process. If you are using well water to wash with, it may be a good idea to rinse the new tattoo afterwards with distilled water. Well water can have bacteria that could cause an infection.

Between 3 to 5 days after the tattoo has been healing, you should notice the tattoo is getting “flaky”. This is dead skin cells falling off, and is a normal part of the healing process. Generally the larger the tattoo, the more flaking that occurs. The tattoo at this stage is harder to keep moist and may require ointment frequently to keep from becoming too dry. A new tattoo generally will not scab over {a thick layer of hard crusty skin}. If it does, do not pick at or scrub off the scab. It will fall off in time. Applying a thin layer of ointment and wrapping the scabbed area with a sterile non-stick gauze pad for a night will help soften the scab for easier healing. Immediately after this stage of flaking as the new skin cells are forming, the new tattoo will appear faded. The fresh new skin cells will

Jeffrey Lyle

have a “milky” appearance. This can make the red ink look pink. As the next few weeks pass, the skin will mature and become transparent and the new tattoo will look bright again. This process takes anywhere from three weeks {small tattoos or outlines} to five weeks {larger tattoos}. It is always best to let the tattoo heal completely before getting a touch-up. This way you’re not fooled by the milky skin, thinking the new tattoo has already started to fade. Working on a tattoo that isn’t fully healed could cause severe tissue trauma and excessive scabbing. Be sure to stay out of tanning beds, direct sunlight, and lakes and pools for the duration of the healing process. Avoid shaving over the new tattoo until it has healed for best results.

After the tattoo is completely healed it is a good idea to use sunscreen for those days at the beach. Lotion for clients with dry skin will keep that tattoo looking bright as well.

If you have any trouble with healing of the new tattoo please see your artist immediately. That’s the artist’s signature you’re showing off and they also would like

Collecting Tattoos

you to take care of their work. Some artists get upset when you don't seek their counsel at the first sign of trouble. With a new tattoo things can go from bad to worse very quickly, because it is an open wound. Don't worry, the artist won't get mad and scold you. They'll be glad you care about their work and healing your new tattoo properly.

Jeffrey Lyle

Easy Review

- Smile, you finally did it
- Remove protective covering 1 to 2 hours after receiving tattoo
- Wash your hands before washing the tattoo thoroughly with anti-bacterial soap and water
- No bathing products such as sponges or washcloths are to be used on the new tattoo
- Pat dry with a clean lint free towel
- Air dry for 5 to 15 minutes
- Apply a thin layer of ointment
- Wash tattoo 3 to 5 times daily
- A+D ointment, Vaseline, Bag-Balm, Tattoo Goo, Tat-Wax, and Ink Fixx are all good topical ointments
- Never use peroxide or burn creams
- Lotions work best after the flaky stage
- If you feel you might have an infection see your doctor
- Allergic reactions to ink also appear like an infection

Collecting Tattoos

- Wear loose clothing while healing new tattoo
- If a scab occurs, wrapping for a night will help
- Large tattoos can take up to 5 weeks to heal
- The number one spread of infection is unwashed hands
- Clean and moist are two key words to remember when healing a new tattoo
- See your artist at the first sign of any problems

A one-on-one conversation with a professional tattoo artist. Learn how to prepare yourself for the world of tattoos and body piercing. Read about techniques to heal new body art and how to prepare yourself for the process.

Collecting Tattoos

**Buy The Complete Version of This Book at
Booklocker.com:**

<http://www.booklocker.com/p/books/3854.html?s=pdf>