Part 1: Understanding Your Jealousy

Chapter One: Is an open relationship right for you?

This first chapter doesn’t necessarily focus on jealousy itself, but rather starting down the path of open relationships and seeing if this is even a good idea for you. Facing and working on your jealousy can be a very difficult, painful, and stressful thing to do. If you decide to open up your relationship, it is absolutely essential to commit to this work. Even if you decide to be monogamous, the work might be worth it.

While monogamy is assumed for many people, polyamory is also not something that is even considered by most of these people. Many people assume that monogamy is the default or even only option. It’s time to look at your options and decide what path you are most comfortable following. Even if you’re already in a polyamorous relationship, it can be helpful to go over these exercises to figure out why polyamory works for you.

This is a judgement-free chapter (and book!); there are no right or wrong answers, and neither polyamory or monogamy are better or worse than the other. A lot of these exercises can be done alone, but it can also be helpful to compare with your partner(s).

Exercise 1: Your Relationship Role Models

You may not have answers to all of these questions, but that’s fine. The point here is to pin down what you view as healthy, and what is important in a relationship to you.

Exercise 1: Discussion/Ask Yourself

- What do you think is the healthiest relationship you have seen in person?
- What do you think are key relationship habits and skills for a healthy relationship?
- What is the most important skill to you?
- What is the skill you think you need to work on the most?
- Can you think of any fictional relationships that display healthy relationship habits?

Exercise 2: Clarify Your Relationship Orientation

What works best for you?

Relationship orientations can work in the same way that sexual orientations work, for the most part. While the Kinsey scale has its problems, it can serve as a good guide for relationship orientation. On one side are people that can only be happy in monogamous relationships - for these people, even mono/poly relationships are probably a bad idea. In the middle are the people that can be happy in either a monogamous or polyamorous relationship, but may lean towards one or the other. And on the other side are the people that can only be happy in polyamorous relationships. This exercise can help you understand where you fall on this spectrum.


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Answer these questions as honestly as you can. This will help you figure out what benefits of both monogamous and polyamorous relationships are helpful for you.

Exercise 2: Discussion/Ask Yourself

- Do you believe relationship orientation exists on a spectrum? Why or why not?
- Share, if you’d like, what orientation the exercise shows that you may be. Does it surprise you? Why do you think that is?
- Does your relationship history reflect your relationship orientation?
- If you have a partner (or partners), do they share your relationship orientation?