Chapter Three: Understanding Your Jealousy

Jealousy is a complex mix of multiple emotions. It can take place in many different situations: At work, with siblings, with romantic partners, and more. It mostly comes down to a fear of loss or change.

Envy is a close cousin of jealousy, but is not the same. Envy is when you want what someone else has; when you envy someone, you may want their job, their car, their lawnmower… or their partner. Whatever it is, they have it and you want it. Jealousy, on the other hand, is when you’re worried someone wants what you have. You’re afraid that they want your job, your car, your lawnmower, or your partner, and that they will take it from you.

Exercise 4: Jealousy Through the Lifespan
How have you handled jealousy?

Everyone has dealt with jealousy sometime in the past. You may have been jealous of a sibling who has taken parental attention from you, or of a coworker that may steal a promotion out from under you. It is extremely common to feel jealous and threatened in relationships when you perceive a person as more attractive or appealing than you in some way, and worried they will “steal” your partner from you. How have you handled it in the past?

Exercise 4: Discussion/Ask Yourself

- How have you handled jealousy in the past in non-romantic relationships?
- How have you handled jealousy in past romantic relationships?
- What, if anything, do you wish you did differently, or will do differently in the future?