Chapter Four: What Triggers your Jealousy?

You’ve defined what jealousy means to you, but do you know what triggers that feeling? There are small and big triggers, there are subtle and blatant triggers. Some may be from your past, and some may be from a gut feeling that something is wrong. No matter what the trigger is, you have to find it in order to work on the jealousy that has been triggered.

Exercise 5: Guided Imagery exercise to visualize your jealousy triggers

This exercise takes place mostly in your imagination. You will be asked to go through various steps in a situation you think or know makes you feel jealousy, but instead of finding the whole situation triggering, you’re going to narrow down your focus to the exact moment that sets it off. It is from here that we can build up the tools to help deal with this jealousy.

It is worth noting that the example solutions given in this exercise may be problematic in real world scenarios. In the examples, rules are put into place to curb the jealousy reaction. As you’ll see in future exercises, rules like this only treat the symptom, not the underlying jealousy trigger. There will always be something else that will trigger the jealousy, and you can’t expect to continue to make up rules to give in to the reaction.

If you do introduce rules like that, realize that they are only a temporary fix to what could be a permanent problem if work and reflection is not done. Those rules are like taking cold medicine when you’re feeling sick; they can help mask the symptoms, but only so much. Your body needs to do the healing itself - you can’t take DayQuil forever! Similarly, you have to work on and heal your jealousy and insecurities, because these rules won’t protect you forever.

Exercise 5: Discussion/Ask Yourself

- What is a trigger that you didn’t expect?
- What didn’t trigger you that you thought might?
- What are the feelings that you felt when the jealousy was triggered? Use the feeling wheel on the next page if you are having difficulty coming up with words for your feelings.
- What are some alternatives to creating rules to contain jealousy?


This work for Metro Detroit Polyamory is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License.

This work for Metro Detroit Polyamory is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License.