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Hello, this is the first live hang. I am joining into Instagram. But I'm also going to be hanging out with patrons who will come and go. And I will be taking questions. As the hour progresses, I'll stay on for the next 60 minutes or so. So hello, I welcome you to submit questions in the comment section. Again, the patron questions and comments will be prioritized. I also have some submitted questions from patrons as well as Instagram and Tiktok. So let's jump right in.

The first question, I will be keeping all the questions anonymous, by the way, because nobody has really shared that they're down to be open about their name being coupled with their questions. So just to play it safe. So telling others about being polyamorous, how do you approach that? as well as tips for partners meeting each other for the first time?

So this is a big question. In terms of the first half - telling others about polyamory, it really depends on who it is. So I have come out. I do view sharing about polyamory as a coming out of sorts. I have come out to different people at different times. I've been polyamorous for 10 years, and I felt that some people were safer to share that information with early and other people, especially family of origin or employers or people who were in positions of power over me, I shared that with later only when I felt secure. I don't feel you owe being out to anybody. And also it can be very liberating, if you do find yourself in a position to be out.

So yeah, I consider what are the power dynamics here? What are the risks involved? it is not impossible that somebody, like a parent or a family member could have ramifications, disown you, or cut you off from resources, things like that. There are definitely people who have employment morality clauses, if they work in the government or in education, right, there are risks involved with coming out. So I say it's a very personal decision.

But in terms of just telling people who don't have power over you who might just not understand, I usually lead with the feelings. I share first and foremost, I'm happy and no one's getting hurt. And I find that to be really helpful. Because a lot of times these conversations will be circular about the logistics, and "isn't it just cheating?". And all of the misconceptions, you find yourself in a position of educating the person. And often, it comes down to, "as long as you're happy." So I lead with that, cuts through a lot of the emotional labor on my part, right? And I'll say, Yep, I'm happy. No one's getting hurt. So just a heads up, this is what's happening. I wanted you to know about it.

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But in terms of the second half of the question, which was about having partners meet for the first time, I think the setting really matters, the context really matters. So are any of your partners feeling vulnerable? Or any of your partners new to this? I would factor all of that into the setting the activity, the nature. is it a group event? is it an intimate dinner? it's really going to be particular to the individual or to the polycule. But I think it can be nice to have a really low pressure group activity where you have something else to focus on. I've done a lot of like game nights, movie nights, walks out in the park barbecues, things that allow for there to be breathing room and allow for there to be space when partners are meeting each other so that there's not so much intensity. That's my personal approach. But of course, if there's conflict between partners or any other contexts that merits a bit more care and soft touch and maybe a bit more intentionality, then yeah, maybe you have a bit more of an intimate setting. So it's tough to answer questions like how do partners meet in a broad sense, because each situation will be a little bit different. if you are curious about your own particular situation, definitely feel free to reach out to me, and I can offer some more tailored feedback to your dynamic.

Okay, the next question is, what is the difference in polyamory, dating culture in America versus Germany's? Yeah, I've only been polyamorous in two nations and that varies, right? The religious background, the cultural mores and norms will vary no matter where you are. So in terms of my own personal experience, I've been in pretty progressive cities as an openly polyamorous person in New York and even in Orlando, Florida. I had community accessible to me. But I am from the south in America, I am from a pretty conservative community in America and I would not have felt safe being out in those spaces. So, yeah, again, it varies.

I've found a lot of beautiful people in America that are polyamorous. a lot of us had to stay in hiding. But social media is pretty magical, right? We can connect with other people digitally, even if we don't feel safe to meet people in real life. I've met people online and found mentors and community online in a way that I find to be really beautiful. In terms of dating culture in Germany, well I'm entering as a 35 year old woman with 10 years of polyamorous experience, so it's a little bit different than when I was a brand new baby polyamorous queer, in America.

And I've got good vetting policies. I'm pretty particular about who I let be close to me. I'm pretty adept at spotting - there's fuckboys everywhere of all genders. So yeah, I've minimized the amount of hassle that I've had to deal with, regardless of where I am just from proper vetting.

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So we got a question here from the live chat. What mono rules or concepts still influence you today that you wish didn't? Oh, my goodness.

So I would say couples privilege is a big one. we're taught that you find your person, you find your other half, at least in the West, we're taught that but in a lot of Eastern cultures, it's the same. So I would say continuing to unpack that, continuing to unpack the ripple effects of that. I no longer really subscribe to the concept of I need to find my person. I find my people and there's ebbs and flows and fluidity around finding your people. But there can be more subtle ways that it still infiltrates the ways that I operate, where if a partner that I've built something with finds somebody similar to me, I fear being replaced, at least for a little bit. even 10 years in, I'll still get those twinges of "am I at risk here", because we're taught from infancy that there's scarcity in the way that love is distributed.

Now, there's scarcity in the way that resources are distributed. And I think there's validity to having a conversation of like, how is your time being spent? And how are resources being distributed? So I don't want to pretend that it's like all in your head, or that it's all monogamy culture there, there is validity to wanting to negotiate terms of how relationships get structured with your partners. And also, I'd say that the biggest thing that continues to be, it's shocking to me how much it persists, in very, like, tricky ways, and very nuanced ways is this idea that I'm not enough. And I'm grateful to not feel that way most of the time. But then it'll hit me when a petite blonde, who's into the arts and can communicate is dating one of my partners, like, am I being replaced? and so, luckily, I'm grateful that it will still pass, pretty quickly. I just want to validate anybody, no matter how long you've been doing this, that there can absolutely be twinges of that, well into polyamory. it doesn't mean you're bad at this, it just means you are still shedding some cultural conditioning.

Okay, we've got a question from the Patreon chat. What are some strategies and tips for entering a parallel situation with a metamour, after you already had a comfortable kitchen table vibe with them?

So entering parallel from kitchen table, I think it's all about setting expectations and setting boundaries, everybody being very transparent about why there's a change happening. saying, this wasn't working, that wasn't working. We all agree on that, right? So, I would like to do this less, I would like to do that less, I would like to know less about X. I would like to know less about my meta or maybe interact with them less for my own sustainability in this polycule. for my own mental health XYZ. And so in a way, that's not particularly blaming anybody, but just owning that what I'm going to participate in is going to be scaled back for now.

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And there's fluidity and flexibility that we could have more of a kitchen table dynamics on the road, if things feel differently. so based off of previous conflicts, or previous disagreements or just incompatibilities of personalities. It doesn't even have to be like a huge rupture. It could just be I don't really vibe with them, and I'm not really interested in hanging out with them. That's also a valid reason for parallel polyamory. I will be explicit, at least with my partner. And depending on how well I know my metas, I will also be explicit with them and say, I, this is what I'd like to do. and it gets negotiated, renegotiated like any other relationship, might. This is not always how our structure will look at any given time, forever. So this is just what's working for now, Or what's not working for now. And to let that those facts guide, the redirection of the negotiation of boundaries, if that makes sense.

I think we had another question here. Are you ever threatened when a meta gives what you can't? Personally not as much, though, that is real, right? I don't want to like say no, you're crazy. Personally, that is not my struggle. But absolutely, there are reasons to feel threatened, like, I'm unable or I'm not enough for my partner, I cannot give them this, therefore, I'm a deficient partner. Therefore, I am not satisfying them. I'm not fulfilling my duty. There's all this messaging that comes to us from again, from infancy - of you need to be your persons everything. And that is so much pressure.

And I feel like it's really unreasonable, I would never ask my best friend to be able to offer me everything, right. And if our partners are supposed to be some of our best friends, I feel like - Can't we extend that to romantic love? we put so much less pressure on our non romantic or non sexual friendships. And so I find comfort in the fact that yeah, we can absolutely extend that to our romantic relationships. So if a partner wants to go rock climbing, and I have no interest in going rock climbing, great, go enjoy that with someone who can do that with you so that I don't feel pressured to do that. just as a sort of superficial example.

But deeper than that, I think if a partner has a skill in communication, or has confidence, or has something that reflects what I feel I lack in myself, that's a harder one. And that is informative. saying, why am I particularly insecure around this metamour and not others? Hmm. It could be that I'm seeing a mirror back to myself of my own insecurity of what I think my own deficiencies are. critically its important to know that our partners don't always see us the way that we see ourselves. I've had partners be incredibly insecure about their bodies, or incredibly insecure about their income or their status in society, from their own messaging and upbringing and cultural conditioning. And I would say, "Well, I don't give a shit about any of that." and so to internalize that, actually, what I'm judging myself for as a deficiency is not in my partner's head, most likely. if it is, that's a different conversation. But the majority of

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the time, it's something that we are putting that pressure on ourselves to be different. And our partners are not expecting that. one would hope. So again, it's always tricky speaking in generalities, but I hope that that kind of touches on the question that was asked.

If we don't have more questions in any of the chats, I will go back to the submitted ones online. Okay, so do you think it's more work to be polyamorous? Let's put it to the crowd. What do y'all think? No, seriously, I don't think it's necessarily more work. I think it's harder to get away with not doing work in polyamory. How about that? Right. Ideally, sustainable and joyous relationships of any kind will involve a lot of negotiation and communication. and work on yourselves. But I think in monogamy, we have fewer stimuli pushing our buttons or reminding us of the work that we have left to do. So we can coast a little bit more. whereas in polyamory, you have to do some serious inner work of, yeah, if I'm going to stay in this, if I'm gonna have a good time, if this is going to be sustainable in any way, shape, or form. I need to do the work that I've probably been avoiding. or that I don't really want to do. And that is my thoughts on that. But I don't want to say like, oh, this is harder or this is more elevated or more evolved. I don't subscribe to that ideology. But rather, I think all of us have lots of work to do, and it's harder to get away with it if you're trying to date multiple people at the same time.

Okay - "what is your advice If you and your partner want different types of non monogamy, and meeting in the middle doesn't seem like a good solution?" So I invite this person to clarify a little bit if you have any specificity about the types. But in general, if meeting in the middle doesn't feel like a solution. Let's say you're practicing parallel polyamory, and one of your partners really wants kitchen table. That is potentially incompatible. If your partner feels like, well, I can't be in this, I can't not know my metamours. In that case, I would ask the person who wants parallel to explore why they want parallel, and the person who is insisting upon KTP to explore why they want KTP. And from there, see, what is the feeling that you're hoping this structure will resolve? or what is the fear that you think being in this structure, What do you fear will come up from it? Like, do you fear your relationship will fall apart? If you can't be in the same kind of dynamic? Do you fear that you won't be taken care of? what is the real need that each person is trying to have met?

By pursuing this solution, that can sometimes make it feel a bit more simple, and can make it feel a bit more clear what other potential paths might exist. So yeah, when I'm butting heads with partners about what the solution to our fears or concerns is, I start to break it down. Can we be a bit more explicit about what our fears are that we're trying to even solve? And then maybe the other person has an idea that we haven't thought of?

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So the person that asked that question just clarified - one wants an open marriage, the other one's full polyamory. So that could be potentially a path that is not compatible, necessarily. Like if the person who wants an open marriage is saying, you can't fall in love with other people, that is inherently not aligned with you pursuing polyamory. So that is a very tough conversation of potentially diverging paths in which you might renegotiate the structure entirely. Of like, do we continue romantically together? But again, I think my previous answer might still apply - of saying, What is it that I'm fearful of? What is it that I'm hoping to resolve here? And from there, maybe those solutions aren't the only ones, you know? Or maybe there can be a week or a month of experimenting with meeting in the middle and seeing, what do we discover about ourselves? If you really want to be certain that you've tried every possible solution, before parting ways, there can be like some trial and error involved. Before you see, well, is this fundamentally incompatible? Which unfortunately, happens sometimes. But yeah, I think it never hurts to ask these questions.

So more questions, okay. I invite anybody joining on Patreon or Instagram, to submit a question and let's chat. Okay, question. I really want to meet my metamour. But they are less enthusiastic about meeting. Do I just let them come to me when they're ready? What if they decide they never want to meet me?

If they never want to meet, well - we're not dating them, this is my opinion. So it might hurt, it might be a bummer. But I try to lend autonomy to the structure of whatever anybody wants, That I'm not dating. Oh, they want this kind of relationship. I'm disappointed. I can make myself available. "Hey, I'm around to meet you. If that might ever be of interest. I mean, no harm. I'm happy that you're dating my partner." All of the well wishes etc. But yeah, I think when people are meeting and forming a potential friendship, or forming any sort of relating to each other, you really need everybody to want to do that. In order for it to work. Otherwise, there might be hard feelings involved. It's disappointing that not everybody wants to have kitchen table polyamory, but I do think some people feel a bit safer having distance from whatever they've been through in their life. and I try to respect that to see what happens.

Next question. Do you think the work in polyamory should be done solo first, or that it can happen in relationships? Yes, both. So what I mean by that is you 'll never be "ready" to become polyamorous right? Just like people who have kids say, well, you're never feeling totally ready to have a kid. There's a lot that's discovered in the field. And so I feel that way about non monogamy. Absolutely read all of the things, listen to all the podcasts, interact with people who are living the kind of life that you want to live, and have what you want. immerse yourself in that kind of media and that

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kind of information. discover, what are my politics? What do I define as ethical, and in defining that, it can help to minimize struggles that are happening in the field of dating, in navigating relationship conflicts. we can go in with a best educated guess, of I think this is what I need. I think these are my values. This is what I'd like to try. And I often encourage trial and error in small ways like, oh, let's try communicating this way around dates, and then check in afterwards to see how it went. Was it good? Could I be better? Like, what do I need to feel safe? What do they need to feel safe? gently approaching, let's ease into, we're gonna get on dating apps. Now, how do you feel about that? How do I feel about that? Hey, I'm talking to somebody, I might want to go on a date with them this weekend. How do you feel about that? How do I feel about that? What do we communicate and when? let's try that. And then if we discover we have needs we didn't anticipate, let's adjust what we're doing, you know. And in that way, that's how you continue to evolve it as you go.

But I think entering with a baseline understanding of what your traumas are, what your triggers are, what your insecurities and needs are, what philosophy you are applying to non monogamy and does your partner or multiple partners agree? And also do you use those words the same way? Do you define cheating the same way? Do you consider the same baseline structure like if one person's relationship anarchist and one person is a bit more conservative, and in a hierarchical structure? it's very important to clarify that prior to inviting new people in. and so doing as much clarification as you can, prior and then continuing to talk as you go. It's both.

Okay - "what's your opinion on open mono relationships?" do you mean like, open relationships for a duo that is hierarchical, that they are not pursuing romance with anybody outside of their duo, but they are available for sex? That is usually the nomenclature of open relationships, at least in North America and Europe, in the English language. The terms vary across cultures and across languages. But insofar as how I use these terms, and how my peers use these terms, open relationships, meaning we are prioritizing each other in this dyad in terms of romance, building a life together, offering each other key privileges. and I don't really find that to be neutral, you know. There absolutely are people who are down to play, who don't have too much time or they don't have any energy to build something with you. They're relieved at the idea of once a month hookups. there are absolutely people who are compatible with that, as long as everything is clearly explicitly communicated. because one of the worst things that we can do is invite somebody into a dynamic under unclear or even false circumstances. of just, them thinking they're dating us. They're building something with us, it's open to whatever might happen. and not being informed that there are ceilings to this, that there are rules imposed by someone who is a primary. if that hasn't really been communicated, That's when hearts get broken. And that's when there can be a lot of very avoidable harm.

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So yeah, if anybody's confused - what's the difference between open relationship and polyamory? Insofar as I use these terms, polyamory is when we have the option and the ability to love and build commitments with more than one person. An open relationship is a bit more of a traditional monogamous dyad that can have some sexual fluidity and casual friends with benefits outside of the dyad.

Okay, let's see some more questions. Welcome to everybody. This is very cool. "What about more traditional countries having absolutely no social infrastructure around polyamory?" I wish I had some lived experience around that. In particular, I do know that I have a lot of people in the East and the Middle East, some people in North Africa that are following me, and I just unfortunately don't have a whole lot of resources around that. But what I can do is I can start talking to some friends of mine who are from those nations. Or from cultures that are from those nations and see if there's maybe some resources that I can post online. Because I don't want to speak out of turn about communities that are navigating cultural histories that I don't really have any experience with. But my heart is with you. Because there absolutely are some places in the world that it's just a lot fucking harder to be queer, polyamorous, anything that's not from a religious norm of sorts.

Next question. Have you had success with de-escalation to friends? Absolutely. I've had success moving into friendships. So it's very important to negotiate, what do we do? What do we do now? Because in terms of how I use the word friend, that can include sex, can include romance even, and there's a lot of fluidity around that. And I, I enjoy that openness, and that we can scale up or scale down what a friend looks like. But if I'm taking a romantic relationship, and mindfully negotiating, that it is now platonic. It's very important to name what would be confusing for us to do now. Like, should we just meet during the day? I don't want to meet you at night at your home, I don't wanna have wine, that's way too much like a date, etc. like very clearly delineating - What do we do? And what do we definitely not do with each other, at least for now, until we feel a bit of distance from what we were doing?

And sometimes it does literally require distance, it does require time away from that pattern of relating to that person. Where you're just taking space, and sometimes that's needed to heal, to grieve, to mourn, to process, whatever feelings you are about the de-escalation. But if both of you feel fine about de-escalating, you're just not really sure how to be with each other, I think, unambiguous platonic things done very mindfully. Unambiguous pacing - do we hang out once a week, once a month, I definitely don't want to see every day right now? That kind of negotiation, in a very practical sense, can help to navigate it. And then based off of what you feel with each other, you can then continue to tweak. Like, actually, I thought it'd be cool with this, I

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realized I might not need to do that with you for right now, too. I don't want to be tickled, I don't want you to use that pet name with me anymore. Like very specific ways of separating - This part was romance. And this part is not romance. And we're doing this part now. no more of that. That can be a way to ease into a de escalation.

So uh, next question is - I just got broken up with one of my partners, it was left quite open the possibility of getting back together. but I have to heal before that could happen. What do you think I could do to be able?

That's very unique to each individual. Right? I don't know the context of this couple of shifts, I don't know the context of what it is you're healing from. So I would say to inquire, what is it I need to heal from? And let the answers to that question guide Self care, including what you don't do with them for now. What you pause doing. anything that would confuse you, would have you feeling like the wound is being picked out rather than being allowed to heal, to self advocate and be like, you're great, and I can't do that right now. Maybe another time. I've never regretted waiting. I've often regretted rushing into "Oh, I think I'm ready for this now", right? Like I've rarely regretted pausing. And I think that that can be really helpful to not act from a place of urgency. And instead sit still with the feelings and be like "what would hurt? What would be hard to know about? What do I not want to hear about what topics aren't on the table for us right now anymore?" Like setting those boundaries for yourself for your own healing? Not unlike how you might set a cast around a specific part of the body that just got broken, right? you need to have really firm bounds in order to heal otherwise it can keep getting hit again and again and again. I don't know if that's helpful. It's a little tough for me to try to speak in generalities. I am available for one on one chats if any of you would like to do that chillpolyamory.com

Okay, " Do you think mono poly relationships work?" Sure. Absolutely. There are plenty of people who are talking about, "I prefer to be monogamous. And I don't feel like limiting my partner". I think what's crucial in a mono poly dynamic is that there's always the option for the monogamous person to meet more people and it's not being imposed on them. I think that's the difference between something that can be consensual and beautiful, and something that is abusive and controlling, right? So we don't want one party to be like, well, I can do this, but you can't. no. hard pass on that. But in terms of if you naturally feel like, I don't have time, energy or desire to date other people, but absolutely, you go be your best self. And here are the ways you can take care of me, you know? Absolutely.

With all dynamics you want to negotiate, what do I need? How can you take care of me? But there is no one way to do this in a sustainable fashion. It's just about

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analyzing, like, who's involved? And what does everybody want? What does everybody need? And let's figure out some solutions to that which can very much include one person staying monogamous.

Okay, next question. I'm new to my own queerness and polyamory at the same time. Any suggestions for good resources and books, I'm trying to learn what I like and I want out of my relationships, and it feels like a lot.

It can be a lot, right? Like, it's kind of like a second puberty to discover your queerness. And it's very wild, as a late blooming queer myself to feel pretty confident in terms of straight presenting dynamics. just, if I'm hooking up with a cis man, I feel like an adult woman. But then if I'm hooking up with a woman or even a trans afab person, I feel like a 13 year old person, again, because that's the limit of where I let myself explore my queerness coming up to puberty, right. And so there can absolutely be that, that weird, disorienting mix of how old you feel. And just to, like, enjoy that and talk about it. And I have found a lot of value in being really transparent, and saying, Hey, I'm a baby queer, and I don't know what I'm doing. But I think you're cute. is that cool?

if people have skittishness around dating a baby queer person, or a baby polyamory person, that's valid. maybe they've been burned, or maybe they don't want to be in a role of educator, or somebody that's just more experienced can de facto be a bit of a power imbalance. And so maybe some people just don't want that, and that's fair. So I try to communicate upfront what my experience level is, and what I'm doing and where I'm at. And if someone says, that's great. Sure, or I'm also a baby queer, let's play and see what we like. that can really take the pressure off, because you don't have to know what you're doing. We just have to communicate where we are and how we feel and navigate that. as more information becomes available.

Ok - Polyamory books and resources? poly secure, it only came out in 2020. And it's already one of our go to Resources. I like stepping off the relationship escalator as well, that has been really helpful with sort of zooming out and thinking, Wait, what are all of these things that I take for granted that moving in with somebody is automatically more committed and that I can never live with anybody else. like, just questioning what we have taken for granted as a norm. I would say start with those two books don't overwhelm yourself. Those are my first two that I usually say to start with in early non monogamy. And yeah, if you want more recommendations, I have a host of other things, but I don't want to bombard a person with a reading list.

Okay, how do you manage other crushes where you're into people who are monogamous or hetero or both? That's hard. That's a personal decision, right? Like

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some people have a higher tolerance for that. I personally have a low tolerance for unrequited love or unrequited attraction. that hurts too much for me, individually. some people are like, I can accept that. And can set up a boundary and recontextualize what we have. So listen to how you feel and see what might be sustainable for you. And that might vary person to person, you might really have intense feelings for somebody and say - I don't know if I can hang out with you in a platonic way without feeling hurt, and that's valid. But other people, it doesn't even escalate too much. And you're just like, okay, I can put a cap on this and put this in the not-an-option box. Because Absolutely, everybody deserves to be with people who are so excited to be with them. and want to explore everything that you have to offer, and want the same things that you want. And so don't waste your own energy and break your own heart by pursuing people who are not available, which can include people who are not available for the structure or sexuality that you have, but it can also be like they don't have the time for you or they are, not physically available to give you what you want. like not to break your own heart by pursuing unavailable people. Let's maybe leave it at that.

Okay, next question is, right now I'm in a state where the idea of polyamory feels not enough. And monogamy feels too suffocating. the fears keeping me from trying anything at all.

That is valid, I spoke on this a little bit earlier in the hour, it does vary a lot, from location to location, what is available for you. but beautifully, there are so many digital communities where we can at least not feel alone, right. And I have actually started more than a few connections online long distance and there was even kind of a safety in that of me just like not really feeling like I knew what I was doing and liking the pen pal aspect of it and crushing from afar and going slow inherently because we couldn't see each other every day in person. So that might be something to explore and see for you who you meet, but even if it's not a romantic connection just to meet other community and potentially meet mentors who help you, not feel alone and what you're discovering about yourself. That is, that's a nice place to start right? There's no pressure that we all have to be dating just because we think we're polyamorous or we know we're polyamorous. I have gone long stretches of being single as polyamorous. It's not about how many people are in your roster. Or what sex you're having, Or what dates you're going on. It's about like, how do I realize I love people? And how do I relate to people? and finding community in that. And most of my long term relationships have come from platonic community, the pursuit of community and then I met people that way, and it just happened and it felt a lot more organic and less stressful than pursuing a dating app.

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Okay, more questions, anybody who's joining the Instagram chat or the Patreon chat, feel free to submit anything that's on your mind or your heart. we got 20 more minutes in our chat here. So I will go back to our submitted questions ahead of time.

So - "I'm having trouble with separation dates, I'm in a throuple and having time alone with a certain person is hard to balance. advice?"

Okay, so yeah, when you are in a triad, you are in 4 relationships, A-B, A-C, B-C, and ABC, right? So to be very intentional with the time that you plan on your calendar, and literally look at your calendar and say - is there more energy invested in just the three of us together or just me and this one person and not me and this other person? and getting pretty logistical about, "let me plan more time with this other person." Obviously, it varies, situation to situation. people have different work schedules where people live further away from each other, there are structural and practical barriers that need to be accounted for. But even like - I've had, I've had very complex polycules in COVID across oceans, and still figured out ways to allot time and energy and intentionality into building each relationship. including if there was a group relationship, that is a separate amount of time because it's a separate relationship than you and one individual. So yeah, talking with everybody about, Hey, I feel like there could be maybe a little bit of rebalancing. or what do you think if we did this? I usually try to be solution oriented. Hey, I noticed I kind of want more time with you. And that's not a slight against everything we have been doing. What do you think are some potential solutions? and to enter with a question mark in the negotiation with our partners. not necessarily have an agenda or even a solution but have it be a collaborative discourse where you find solutions together that might be practical and sustainable.

Next question is, "how do you manage poly saturation?" I put my dating apps away. And I accept, I'm at my limit. And it's hard because there are a lot of hot people in the world and a lot of interesting and compelling people that we want to spend our time with. But I try to keep going back to the concept of sustainability, like what is sustainable? And if I start flirting with this person, would it be really inconsistent? Would that be confusing to one or both of us? if I go out on a date with them, and then don't text them again, for a month and a half? Because I just don't have the time. Is that causing harm? And I try to be pretty explicit with that. I don't figure it out alone in my head. if there is somebody that I'm interested in, or multiple people I'm interested in, I say, I level with them. I say, Hey, I'm pretty poly saturated at the moment. if that changes, are you down to hang out, if time becomes available? what do you think? and a lot of polyamorous people will really, really appreciate that transparency. And that will be a green flag. if somebody says, Hey, I'm poly saturated. But I'd love to know you. If that ever changes, hit me up. I'm around. there's no rush,

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there's no stress. And I would much rather be exploring something with somebody where we can actually put the time and energy into figuring out what this is, rather than it be really inconsistent, because that can cause a lot of anxiety and disappointment. And then you might actually lose the opportunity to know that person, if you try to know them in the wrong way first. that could hurt feelings and maybe cut off some opportunities. So I pause. I gotta level with myself on what I'm literally capable of doing.

So hello to so many cuties who are joining, this is very exciting. Maybe I'll do this a little more often. Okay, so feel free to submit questions here in the chat or on my patreon. patron questions do get prioritized.

So the next question is, "I feel so grossed out about my partner being sexual with somebody else. And I really want to heal from that. But I'm not sure how." So I think that's really interesting to observe about ourselves and to not shame ourselves. A lot of us come from very sexual shaming spaces, right? And so it can be hard to parse and unpack, Why do I feel disgusted by a sex act? Whether that is my partner or somebody else, or somebody doing something with me? There can be a lot of reasons that disgust arises. And I don't moralize that, I just observe it and ask why. I wonder why this exists. I wonder where this comes from?

Disgust is a natural reaction, like if we are around rotting garbage, we feel disgust right? Because we need to get away from that, there might be something diseased in that. And so a lot of times misconceptions about non monogamy can be a repulsion, there can be a repulsion to perceived risks. "Oh, that's dirty. I don't want to be anywhere around that for STI reasons or just like sexual shame reasons". it's important to be unpacked because it might not actually be a risk, but rather the perception of a risk. or to be disgusted at them having sex with somebody else. "I don't want to think about that. I'm nauseous at that." Does that mean that you feel really fundamentally unsafe? Do you feel like you're going to be abandoned? what is it that your body is trying to protect you from with that disgust? and so to explore it and really unpack what information its trying to tell you. Its just information.

And it is possible to move through that, if you can have that need. or that fear was addressed in different ways and healed in different ways. often through therapy, but also through care plans with our partner. how can our partner take care of us, where we feel safer when they're out on the date? or how can they like not overshare so we dont have a mental picture? I still don't want to know mental pictures. it's helpful to have boundaries around what it is that we know, because not everything is necessary for us to know. so self-inquire further if you notice disgust, if you notice panic, any reactive or anxious, knee jerk... its trying to tell you something.

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Okay, more. "I just came out to my partner as polyamorous and you were the first resource I found." Everything that I say comes from lived experience. And so if anything I ever express doesn't ring true, I can absolutely recommend other people, because there's so many different voices speaking to this. but I'm so glad that anything that I put out there might be of service because you're not alone. And I've valued so much people who walked this path before me and gave me tools. So I didn't have to make the same mistakes that they made, and so forth. So that's largely why I want to be visible is, one, normalize this shit, because it's really not that big of a deal. And to be of service because it can be so hard to find people who get it and understand that we feel safe with.

Okay, next question from Patreon. I recently learned that my Metamour was dishonest to my partner. My partner is ready to move on. But I'm having a harder time with that. Is this normal? How do you move past feelings of protectiveness and resentment when you know it's no longer productive?

That is complex. So when we learn that our metas are mistreating our partners, that is to be explored - what the boundaries are there. I've had partners get ghosted, and I felt like I wanted to fight that person, right? I feel protective, I love this person. And that's not my fight. that won't be received well. that's me injecting myself into a conflict of which I don't belong. and so I can hold space and support my partner with their pain, or with their struggle. But for me to try to seek justice, like that's more for me than it is for them. I think that's more for me to resolve my own upset feelings than it is to provide safety to my partner. So I try to focus on providing safety and care to my partner. If my partner were to come - let's say, an extreme version - if my partner were to come to me and say, my other partner is abusing me. I might have to draw a firmer line and say, hey, I really don't want you to be abused. How can I support you to leave an abusive situation? and I still let the person being harmed in the situation guide me on how to best support them, because we cannot help people to do things they don't want to do. We cannot make people care, we cannot make people stop caring, you know. And so to recognize what is within our control, which is to be of service, to be supportive to people that we love, and to ask, hey, what do you need? I've got your back. how can I help you get to a situation that you want to be in?

But if it's not such an extreme situation like abuse, which might require some sort of intervention. if my Meta was dishonest, if my partner keeps dating that person, I might need to set more boundaries. it's really depends on the people involved, but I might need to set more boundaries around what I know. if I'm like, "hey, you told me all of the shit that they did to you that they said to you, and now you're still going out

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with them, it's hard for me to forget that. it's hard for me to move forward knowing that they have the capacity to do that. So maybe you seek support about this from other people, maybe I'm not the person to be your support around that specifically." And that can sometimes help to prevent triangulation, to prevent me from inserting myself into somebody else's conflict. to set more boundaries around what they even seek support from me with, what feels appropriate. I've had to do that with friends and siblings of partners. And we learned, okay, maybe it's not so helpful for Morgan to know those details, because it causes more of a stir than it heals. A lot of that is discovered as you go, right. But, yeah, if there's any specific conflicts that anything that I speak to in the general sense is not really resonating with, I'm available to chillpolyamory.com to have one on one chat so that I can offer a bit more tailored feedback. because it is tough to cover every possible situation.

Okay, any ideas about how to start basic polyamory when switching from monogamy? Again, you can start with poly secure, ethical slut, stepping off the relationship escalator. There's all sorts of beginner books that will be introductory about unlearning monogamy bias, and sort of confronting what it is to explore this part of yourself. And also, I asked people usually okay, well, you've probably done a fair amount of work as an adult about figuring out what your values are. what your politics are. So what are those? let's start macro: are you an anarchist, are you a centrist, Like? What do you define as ethical? What do you feel we owe partners? what do we feel Independence looks like? and what is your ideal form of non monogamy? Like what do you want your partner to ask of you, or not ask of you. and just asking these sort of hypotheticals, while they are still hypothetical can help to troubleshoot how you might want your structure to go.

And so yeah, whatever you do know about yourself already, about what your buttons are, your vulnerabilities, your traumas, your triggers, and also what you see as morally just and how society should function. that can often, from a macro level, be boiled down to an interpersonal one on one level. what you feel is an appropriate way for partners to treat you and you to treat them and relate to each other. And that can be a jumping off point to figuring out what kind of non monogamy you pursue. There's a lot of different ways to practice non monogamy and a lot of those are incompatible with each other. I don't really date hierarchical people anymore, I might hook up with some as a third or something if I feel like being a unicorn for a night, but like, I don't really pursue a relationship with a hierarchical person because I'm a relationship anarchist, and I don't want somebody else's rules to be imposed onto me. I want to be able to discover what this relationship is and not have any externally imposed ceilings on it. And so in knowing that I'm a relationship anarchist, I can communicate that upfront, and then weed out the people who practice polyamory different from

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me, and then hopefully minimize the amount of confusion or miscommunication. or heartbreak that might ensue.

Okay, "what do your care plans look like, that you usually ask for when you feel unsafe?" So this is very particular to the person right? For me, I have chronic anxiety, agoraphobia, a panic disorder, which is very physical in nature. And so some of my care plans are literally physical, where I'll have heavy blankets, I'll have something cold on my chest, I'm de-escalating my nervous system. And this has been therapeutically helped, right? I'm not a therapist, ask your therapist, right. But my first care plan will be literally de-escalating my body and my nervous system, because it can be so dysregulated.

And then from there, a lot of it will be about figuring out how much do I know, when do I know it? because we can take our best guess, hey, I'd like to know after you hook up with somebody that you hooked up with them. And I'd like to just know, in a very clinical way, this is the protection we used, we had sex. And if they did everything that I asked them to do, and I discover, oh, actually knowing after the fact made me entirely anxious the whole night? Because I was just wondering, is it happening now? Or is it happening that like, it wasn't helpful for me to know after the fact? So could you give me a heads up, hey, it might happen tonight. So just assume I'm having sex like to err on the safe side. And then I'm actually calmer. and so some of this is trial and error, you just see, this is what I think will help me feel safe. Let's try that. oh, actually, I think maybe another thing might help me feel safe. And this can lower the stakes on the negotiation, because you're doing a little bit of like, A/B testing. what feels like it helps you specifically feel most secure in terms of what when you know it.

But as well - taking care of a partner who has a lot of vulnerabilities. Especially if you feel particularly insecure with one metamour. "they're so much better than me, you're gonna leave me for them." That whole line of thought, I'll often book end dates in the beginning, where they go on a date, and we have a date beforehand, we have a date after and that sort of teaches my body that I'm safe. that they're not going anywhere, right. And so that, to me is the difference of like, yeah, we can intellectually understand something and still be completely emotionally dysregulated. So if that's the case, having a conversation doesn't always soothe it, it doesn't always feel like a care plan. In that case, I might have my partner hold me, and just take care of me like I'm a baby or a child. And after one or two experiences of feeling secure, of feeling taken care of. I don't feel scared because our bodies need to see a pattern of behavior that proves our fear wrong before we can feel secure. So unfortunately, that takes time. So in the beginning, it is the hardest because we don't yet have that track record. But the longer you're with a partner who does what they

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say they're gonna do, and doesn't fulfill your fear of being abandoned or being exploited or whatever your fear is. as long as that continues to happen, then it gets a lot easier. So just know what your buttons are and what your biggest fears are and try to take your best guess at what could help you feel safe. And then compare notes after. Was it better or worse? What should we try next time?

Okay, let's see more questions. "I really appreciate especially when you've shared in the past, the struggles you faced in polyamory, good to hear that things can be hard. And that doesn't mean it's necessarily wrong for you. "Absolutely, I don't think I've ever really talked to somebody who had a breezy time 100% of the time right off the bat, right? Like it's an adjustment because we are raised with a specific set of expectations when we are romantically relating, and even if we don't really want it, or even when we feel weird, like, Wait, why do I have to get married? Why do I have to have kids? Like, why is that what you do? you know what I mean? It's still - there's a comfort in the normative nature of it. And so diverting from that path creates anxiety, because we don't have a roadmap really for how that's going to look.

And it can be exciting, because it's like jumping out of an airplane. But it can be terrifying, because it's like jumping out of an airplane. And so we really need support, we really need to know that we are around other people, even if it's just digitally, if we don't have physical access to community, that we are not alone, and that we don't have to figure anything out alone. And that can really take the edge off of those hard nights. I will plan, if I'm having a really vulnerable night, I'll plan to have a hang with a fellow polyamorous person on that night when my partner is out. our support systems are the pillars that hold up the building, right? And without that it feels like it's crumbling down on us. So mixing metaphors now. But you get what I'm saying. lean into people, people are the answer, at least in my experience. And that's also why I make myself available for peer chats and shit. Because we don't always have people immediately available, who get it and can approach with compassion.

So we're in the last three minutes of this hour long chat. that kind of flew by. what do y'all think? I don't know, this was kind of lovely but my voice is getting a little sore. So I'm just gonna scroll through and pick a random question. Let's see here. "What does relationship anarchy mean to you?" what a beautiful way to close out our chat.

So relationship anarchy is actually a term that I discovered, after I created my chill polyamory page, a few different people were like, Oh, I practice RA. And I was like, what's that? this is in 2018. And so I think that can also speak to how our understanding of relating to other people, as well as our ability to communicate, it will evolve over time, because we continue to learn more about ourselves every year, and in every relationship.

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And so, for me, relationship anarchy means that no external systems will be imposed on whatever I build with a partner. So that means, if they have a relationship with another person, any rules between them won't control what we build, right? if their other partners are insecure, that doesn't mean they leave my date to go comfort them. So that kind of tangible, How does theory relate to practice? It's like, I don't want external hierarchies specifically to, change what I'm allowed to do.

But also, I think it can be a path to mutual aid, not unlike political anarchy. of focusing on community, focusing on solidarity, class solidarity, worker solidarity, as well as like, how can we together from the ground up support each other. And this extends to my polycule as well. Yeah, I'm not dating my metamour. But they're in need of housing, let me hit up who I know to support them, and really feeling the security of, I'm not relying on the state, I'm not relying on my partnership, I'm not relying on the system or a structure to take care of me. I'm relying and kind of relieved by the existence of community. and all of my anxieties, of all of the world is ending, and all of these things could go wrong. I kind of get soothed by the fact that I have fellow people who are in it. that even if we're not tight, we have solidarity, and we will have each other's back. And so that's kind of what relationship anarchy means to me, is that everybody with whom I relate in a community matters. and can have access to resources according to need. to me. I don't know if that answers your question. But yeah, in short, no, no external structures dictate what I build. That's the biggest part I think.

So this was super fun. I hope you guys liked our chat. Again, chillpolyamory.com If you want to have a one on one. always happy to do that. If you'd like to be pen pals, or want my weekly resources, it's on patreon.com/chillpolyamory, and I think I'll do these monthly Hangouts on Patreon. I might not always do them live on Instagram. So yeah, hit me up there. I'm around. I'm accessible. I'll talk to you later. Bye bye.