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Hello and Happy Sunday, I hope that you're having a beautiful day and a beautiful week. Today let's talk about "there's not enough time, not enough stuff, not enough, something – fill in the blank – right?" And a lot of times that can be valid in that, resources are finite. And sometimes it can be imagined, in that, love or emotional capacity is not finite. And so how do we really parse those things, especially if sometimes it can be really confusing? Or they're muddled and mixed in with each other? Let's talk about it.

And a quick Editor's Note here, I decided to split this discussion into two parts, at least to start. I imagine it is such a rich topic that there may be additional parts to follow in the coming weeks and months. But today, we'll be focused mostly on finite resource distribution, meaning, you know, time money, things that are quantifiable, and I'll go into that in a bit. Whereas next week, I will focus more on renewable resources like energy, sexual desire, I'm going to be splitting it up like that. I also – in this video – re-recorded a couple of parts, just so that I could add more clarity and nuance. So you'll see my outfit, switching in and out. But I hope that it does improve the quality and the comprehensiveness of this video to the best of my ability. Okay, let's get into it.

So we'll often describe this as "scarcity mindset", of just imagining that everything is scarce, and therefore I need to hoard or I need to fight other people to get my needs met. And unfortunately, that tends to be the world in which we live, that everything is sort of broken down in that capitalistic framework, that sort of lens through which we're viewing everything is like, "I need to get to the top" or "I need to get mine and look out for me and hoard resources, because there will not be a community that takes care of me, there will not be enough to go around." The idea that people inherently do not share or they're looking only out for themselves. It's sort of this defensive position that I've been guilty of taking in the past, which is looking around and thinking, "nobody will have my back unless I scratch and claw to get what I need". And that absolutely had showed up in my polyamory before, I don't doubt it will show up.

Again, this is a fear response. And sometimes people in our lives will reinforce it and will create false scarcity, when it doesn't need to be that way. And so I think it all starts with kind of unpacking "what is it that I think there's not enough of?" Why is that language is even being used, of "I'm not enough, why am I not good enough? Why am I not enough for them?" Or "I'm not getting enough, I'm not getting enough time" or "I'm feeling an ache, I'm feeling some kind of lack around what I'm

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getting, or what I'm not getting"... just sort of breaking down what it is that I'm feeling ache around. What is it that I'm feeling fear, or lack around? and just naming it can be a place to start.

So, finite resources are kind of the easiest to name, right? Because they are the easiest to literally look at and point to – property, time, money, food – anything that you can count or quantify, or section off, rope off. That is, inherently not available at all times to all people. And so it can be really tricky, especially if time management is ever an issue or especially as our lives get very busy and very full with work and with kids and with family and all of that, it can be really tricky to make it still feel like everybody is secure and safe. That can be where there is a lot of territorialism, that can be where there is a lot of fear.

Maybe conceptually, we don't mind our partner's life getting fuller and bigger, taking on new jobs or adding new partners, things like that. But we fear "I'm going to get less now because, I'm looking at the numbers, and it's demonstrably not possible for us to keep doing this with their life expanding". And so that can really put people in kind of a panicky mode. How do we really go about starting that negotiation, and that conversation?

First and foremost, I think we have to get out of that panicky mode, calming down, getting our bearings. "who is my support network? Do I feel safe with my partner? do I trust my partner? Are we teammates?" if I don't feel like we're teammates, if I don't feel like they have my back already, it's going to get worse if I feel like there's scarcity around finite resources. And so that could be something to unpack first is, if I already feel like I'm not getting enough with you, if there's already a conflict.

I think even in structures where people are attempting egalitarianism, they're attempting to create anti hierarchical power structures, there will be asymmetrical distribution of resources. But that's not inherently a problem, right? It's about equity, not a perfectly equal distribution of stuff. We can't just look at, "Well, you're spending more time with that partner, so clearly they are your primary." that still does not automatically mean that the person with the most stuff is having some sort of power over you, or being able to dictate what you're able to build. If a person that I'm not dating is calling the shots on what I get, that's a hierarchy. But if you are saying you don't want this with me, that's a relationship that we both have agency to negotiate. That's not automatically hierarchy. Does that make sense?

It's really important for that hinge to not be passive and to say "no, this is what I want for me", because it's very easy to throw the other party under under the bus and say like, "oh, but they need this or they want this or they'll be mad if I don't." But then you

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are implying there's hierarchy. Hinges can often say, "well, I want to make everybody happy." To rush and put out this fire over here and put out that fire over there. And so they're constantly doing a shell game of their time and money and saying, "Oh, well, this person's mad. So now they get more, and that person's mad. And so now they get more." That is not sustainable, that will make everybody involved actually not happy. the people are not "pleased", including yourself.

And so to actually just sit and be like, "what would be sustainable? And what do I want?" it is okay to want to spend the majority of your time with one person, that's my – maybe unpopular – opinion. you can't force yourself to want equal amounts of time with everybody. You can't force yourself to want the same things with everybody. That's not real. That's not... nobody wants that with every single connection, because every connection is different. And every connection is incomparable. And so we can't, again, going back to equality versus equity, we can't act like "everybody is the exact same, so therefore, they get the exact same stuff". But we can take into account power roles and say, "I would like to spend more time with this person, but I don't want that person to be more powerful. I don't want that person to be able to control or dictate or have undue influence on what I do over here".

So how do we actively push against that? Maybe if I'm living with somebody, then they get a couple's privilege. And I have other videos on couples privilege versus hierarchy, right? Couples privilege is a benefit or the absence of a disadvantage that a dyad would get that other people don't have. So this person has a couple's privilege of more time and access to me. And we are financially intertwined in some ways, and so they get a little bit more of my money, we have more active conversations about money and resource distribution. It would be very easy for, even with an anti-hierarchical intent, for that couple's privilege to then be wielded in a hierarchical way. That if the cohabitating partner were to feel threatened or territorial or jealous, then to leverage their privilege into a position of power. And to say, "Well, I'm not comfortable with you going out on a date because of money. I don't want to control you, but its because of money." Okay, maybe it is actually about the finite resource of money. Or maybe it is – consciously or unconsciously – the attempt to wield power over somebody. And this is really what we have to keep interrogating every step of the way. What are my motivations here? Does this sit right with me? Is it actually about the resource only? Or is that being leveraged in a way that non negotiated power exchange is being trojan-horsed in?

So, I don't have any judgment, I don't cast any blame. It can happen to the best of us unintentionally, we all fall back on our fears, and survival instinct. The "I gotta get mine" or "I won't have enough" response, that is a very common and relatable

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impulse. It's just that we want to be sure that in every way, we are acting in accordance with our values. And that does take some rigorous self introspection.

On the topic of non negotiated power, I would say maybe the majority of the time we don't have the ability to negotiate who does and does not have power. I have the ability to decide if I'm going to leverage my tiny little bit of power over you or not. Or if I'm going to divvy up my tiny bit of expendable income in this direction, or in that direction. However, we don't get to decide how much we're paying in rent, for the most part, we don't get to decide how much our income is, for the most part, you know, we don't get to lift our friends and our partners out of poverty just because we want to, there are power structures at play that are limiting one or all of us in different directions, that are pulling us and giving us scarcity that is thrust upon us. And that really needs to be factored into these negotiations. We really need to talk about class.

First, we need to consider historical class experiences, right? If you're in the same tax bracket with your partner today, that does not mean that you grew up the same. I dated somebody where we were in the same profession, we made the same amount – they actually made more than me – but they grew up poor. And so when they would come over and I had an empty fridge, it would hit a trigger for them because they grew up experiencing scarcity and lack of ability to know when their next meal would come. that can create traumas, that can create a lot of triggers and we need to be able to see each other in that.

And so how did I take care of that person? Well, they let me know that an empty fridge is a trigger for them. So I had a few different options. One, I could choose to do my grocery shopping to fill up my fridge, on the day before the day of when they were going to come over, if I did have a more sparse fridge, and they were coming over, I would let them know like, "Hey, if you need any water, if you need something from the fridge, let me know I'll get it for you." So there are a variety of different ways to accommodate each other, if we frankly discuss what our buttons are, and frankly discuss how we could alleviate that for each other.

Another aspect of historical class disparity is considering the extended family and extended community from which a person came. Because that same person that I was dating, they made a fair amount of money now – pretty comparable to what I made – and they gave a lot of their income to their parents, their siblings, their neighbors, you know, that they care about and grew up with. because they're still experiencing poverty. And if you have more resources, you want to distribute it to the people who need it. their mom was struggling to pay rent, or their cousin's car broke down, so even though I was dating somebody that essentially made a similar

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amount to me, and in a vacuum there would not be disparity between us, There was still this pull and this stressor and this desire to support their community. And so who am I to say, "No, you need to spend more money on gifts for me"?

Maybe on our dates, I would pay a little bit more if they had just given a lot of money to their community that week, right? And maybe then if I'm struggling, if I just got hit with a huge car insurance bill or something, then they might pay a little bit more for me that week. And so there can be this sort of flexibility in this negotiation. But we talk about all of it. The whole picture needs to be factored in. and again, I'm not saying we martyr ourselves and be like, "Oh, well, they're all struggling. So I will take nothing". Causing self-inflicted wounds is not helping in the long run, right? There's not a one size fits all solution, because it's so context dependent. But that is something that I think is really critical to keep in mind.

So that's really touching on historical class disparity and the repercussions and ramifications that continue to follow you throughout life. What about class disparity present day? like you're dating somebody who's just in an incredibly different tax bracket than you and experiencing stressors on a different level? This is happening for me, currently, I'm dating somebody who is a single mom to two kids, one who's disabled and has special needs. She's also a teacher, and she's still in school, you know, so she has very limited time. She lives kind of far about an hour and a half away. And she is really stressed with resources. What do we do when I have very flexible time? I work for myself, decide when I do what. Financially, I'm stable, I'm finally stable, it took years, but I'm finally feeling stable.

So we take a look at what percentage would feel proportionate, based on income and ability and all of that. Currently, I'm paying for like 75-80% of any restaurant we go to, any event we go to. And this goes back to the conversation of equity versus equality. If we are giving everybody perfectly equal stuff, and I'm requesting a 50/50 split of the bill. And saying, "you come to me, and then I come to you. And then it's perfectly equal". That does not factor in, what the weight and the stakes are. me coming out to her is not a huge deal to me, but her coming out to me is a big lift. And so 50/50 does not feel and is not 50/50 in terms of how it affects people. So when we factor in where everybody's coming from, some people give a bit more, some people receive a bit more. But equity is when we all get to a more equal feeling destination.

I do want to add that while I have like a 75-80% payment agreement with her on what we do, It is still a 50/50 decision making power. If I were to say, "Well, I'm paying for this, so I get to decide what restaurant we go to," or "this is my dime. So you know, we're going to do what I want today," that would be perpetuating the systems of

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power that created this mess, right? That would be choosing to recreate class oppression. Let's watch that because it can be really easy to slip into. We can feel entitled. "Well, I gave more so I should get more." You know, it is really tricky. Because what are we doing here in this relationship that we're building? Are we building a relationship with a subordinate? or do we want a relationship with an equal? because while we can't create equal systemic conditions, we can make sure that they feel heard, that they have agency, that they get to decide where we eat just as much as I get to decide where we eat. We are not weighting and rooting the power in financial or resource contribution.

So I did touch on that briefly, talking about the historical disparity. But if there's a present day disparity in our extended network, that can ripple out, that can affect us. So for example, I was dating somebody who then started dating somebody who lost their housing. my Metamour is trans and got kicked out of their home by their family. It's unfortunately a really common experience. And so that was an inequity that was outside of their control, they're suddenly unhoused, sleeping Sofa, to sofa to sofa. Our shared partner pretty immediately was giving more resources to them, which meant that there was less in terms of what they could give with me. I started to feel jealousy and fear and anxiety about their expanding relationship, fears that my emotional security would not be maintained and that I would be abandoned, all of that came up. And it was in conjunction with this resource distribution conversation.

we wound up negotiating that they would give me a bit more creativity, a bit more intellectual and emotional energy, I would now pay a bit more in what we split, because they just had less, they were giving more to someone who had even less than them. "okay, if I'm going to be giving more, because I do want everybody to be good. And I do understand the context of this. But I don't want to resent you. So how do we figure this out?" and they wound up coming up with very creative dates, free dates, finding ways to take financial pressure off of what we were doing or coming up with, like, "oh, we could save money here". And "I think you would really love to explore this botanical garden for a night", you know, they came up with ideas that would be giving to me, a lot of touch and a lot of care and a lot of emotional presence. gratitude for understanding the complexity of it. So like, how can we balance that out? and my partner was really effective in taking care of me, warm and fuzzies, helping me feel emotional abundance. And if we feel that, if we know that, if I have a sense of security, then that fear of abandonment started to go away, and that feeling of territorialism started to go away. And now suddenly, I don't really mind it.

And when I did meet my Meta, I felt warmth towards them, I felt so happy to support them. And eventually down the road I helped pitch in to get their top surgery, like

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there was a whole lot of community care. we can lift each other up, we can help each other feel like we are on equal footing to the best of our ability.

So many people I've met who have a lot of resources, who are hoarding their resources... I unfortunately, when I worked in tech, I did encounter some millionaires and one billionaire. And they really seemed really fearful a lot of the time, like they were very arrogant and cocky and threw their money around and seemed to have this sort of inability to conceptualize other people's struggle. I think there's a sickness that when you get to a certain level of resource hoarding, you start to become a bit delusional or living in a different world, in my opinion. But I noticed with them a lot of fear of losing what they had. a lot of micromanaging. one person who was actually making seven figures a year, got very upset about a \$15 charge on their cable bill that they didn't approve, and they were on the phone for like an hour, trying to challenge this \$15 charge. and things like that really illustrated to me that people with a lot of resources, it doesn't mean they feel secure. that the resources themselves are not actually providing emotional stability and security. And in fact, a lot of people who are at the top of this pyramid are so terrified of losing their status at the top of it, that they are hyper vigilant and stressed all the time. They don't want to give and they don't want anybody to take. and more and more and more, it's not soothing their desire for security. And it's definitely not aiding in their desire for community, right? There's a lot of isolation that can come from that behavior.

And so, you have every right to go in that direction. But I'm grateful to have been exposed to those people, because it really helped me shift my worldview and be like, "that looks really unattractive and undesirable". And so that helped me in my negotiations and my one-to-one relationships and my community relationships. I don't want to be like that. I don't want to be adversarial with the people in my life. I don't wanna be adversarial with my extended network. I would like to soften, to give and redistribute. and trust that if and when I were to slip, if I were to be in need, they would rally and give to me as well. Right? The feeling of community provides security like, there's impending doom in the world and we've got each other's back. And I'm not alone.

It's not to say that everybody's trying to have a non hierarchy or an anti hierarchy. That is my approach, but I think it all goes to show how important it is to talk about these things. Because if you do not want equity – if by design, what you're building is inequitable – anybody who is at a disadvantage needs to be able to picture that. Not just say, "in theory, I don't mind being a secondary" like, no. "Do you mind getting less stuff, always having less power, always being in a lower position? Always mattering less? Are you cool with that?" And some people might say yes, and genuinely feel like yes. But a lot of times, when people are actually sitting with that

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reality of inequitable distribution of things, then they rethink it. And then they're like, "maybe I don't want to set myself up for heartbreak, maybe we just shouldn't start, if this is going to prepare us for some kind of heartbreak or big melodrama down the road." And again, that's uncomfortable, and that can be sad, especially if you're like, "Well, I want to see where this goes, I don't know what we want with each other. Let's leave it open." But we have to talk about the realities. what is going to be distributed, and how and you won't be able to change it – if you're a secondary you don't have agency by default to be able to renegotiate that. So like, Are you cool with that? That's actually getting consent to a hierarchy. and that... my approach is always around harm reduction when it comes to hierarchies. People are going to do it. So how can we make sure that the people with less power are the most informed to be able to make their own decisions on that kind of thing?

So yeah, I think finite resource conflict is one of the more common ones that we'll find, especially because it can be indicative of priority that was not disclosed, or it can be indicative of a power structure that was not disclosed. And so even though you're fighting about days on the calendar, you might actually be fighting about where you stand in that person's life or what you're building with them. And so it's not to trivialize it, like, "let's just get out Google calendars and find a solution". it might actually be, when you scratch the surface, a deeper conflict about if you share the same values. And are you building the same thing? That can be complex.

If it literally is that you're on the same page about everything, and it's just about time management, back in April of 2022, I have on my Patreon, a written resource called "7 time management conflicts and how to resolve them". If you're like me, and you benefit a lot from concrete examples, something specific you can wrap your mind around, then maybe that resource will be helpful for you, a jumping off point to start negotiations with the people in your life.

But if it is about something deeper and more foundational to what you're even doing here together and the relationship like if it's about the structure itself, or the power dynamic itself, I usually my approach is I table the conversation on the resource, right? I'm Let's actually put aside the calendar because this isn't about the calendar. This is about what I mean to you. This is about am I actually a secondary when you said that we weren't doing hierarchy, that sort of thing. So then I go to that deeper topic first. And that is usually a heavier lift. But it can be a bit more of a direct path. Because if I stay squabbling about the calendar, maybe I get a day or two more on the calendar, but it hasn't really like that's a bandaid, it hasn't really gone in and done the surgery that's needed about, the underlying deep, bare bones of the structure itself. Like maybe that's what needs to be addressed our theory and our beliefs and our desires and wants and needs. All of that comes out. It expresses itself in where

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we put our time and energy. And so yeah, I think it's a fair question to ask if it is literally just a logistical issue. Or if it is a values based issue, power based issue, priority based issue, because I don't want to be talking logistics, when really what you want and what you need, will never give me what I want. And I need, if we need to break up if we need to decouple or like do something different. Let's actually talk about the real reason we need to do that. Because it won't be because of just time management. It won't be because of just resource distribution. It'll be because we want different things. And so I like to not beat around the bush and talk about that pretty directly whenever possible.

Anyway, that's what comes to mind for me today. I hope that you have a beautiful day, a beautiful week. This is coming out on Easter Sunday. I think so I hope you're having a lovely Easter if that's your thing and you celebrate it. I will talk to you later.

xxx