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All righty, Welcome to another Live Chat. cameo from little Lio there. I am so happy to do these. And I'm always happy for the engagement, especially with folks that I don't really engage with very often. If you're not at the pen pal level, maybe we even haven't had direct dialogue. This is such a lovely place to answer your questions, or just shoot the shit, really continue this relationship. because I really want to know how I can continue being of service, what resources do you want? What topics matter to you? So anyone who joins in the chat, feel free to comment, any of your questions in the chat box, and I will do my best to prioritize those. Okay. So let's jump into it.

The first question that was submitted, is, "so I want to get better at vetting people. But I'm not really sure what questions to ask, what do you suggest?" This is a really good question. I think a lot of people really struggle with discovering while they're dating somebody, oh, you're actually not aligned with me? Or oh, we're actually not a good match. And that's gonna happen as you get to know somebody, but is there a way that we can discover that information sooner? really name any deal breakers earlier, so we don't go through unnecessary or preventable stress.

So when it comes to vetting, I think it really depends on what you're vetting them for. And it's not always possible, I think, to ask direct questions for that sort of thing, because there's so much that is unconscious or unexamined in people that they might not even be able to articulate themselves. their views or their biases, if they haven't really done that work. So when it comes to finding out someone's explicit worldview, political view, or how you view polyamory, we can ask explicit questions, we can be a bit more direct. And I think a lot of people see that as a green flag to direct questions, at least I do. Because there's a search for clarity, there's a search for proactive communication.

And so in that way, anything that's in the conscious mind of, focus, or positionality, within polyamory – that can be explored to see, do we have a fundamentally similar outlook on the world as well as outlook on polyamory and power structures and value systems? Because that is the bedrock on which we build close relationships. If there is some difference there, it doesn't mean you can't know that person, it's just good information to have as early as possible.

I think there can also be explicit questions about structures, say you want to know if somebody is hierarchical, for example, we can ask that. But a lot of people are in denial about that, too. This is what I mean about, there's only so much that an

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explicit question can reveal. So in that case, I might offer hypotheticals of, okay, so your partner and you, you're married, you live together, I get that that is not always automatically hierarchy. If you were to come to your wife and say, I've fallen in love with somebody else, Do you know how that would play out? can you tell me a specific situation And really put your feet in that hypothetical future? Because whatever answer, or even just body language that comes from the hypothetical could inform a lot more than with, dialogue. Some people experience that as being confrontational. So read the room , it's not always, I think, appropriate. It depends on how you know that person, but hypotheticals can really be demonstrative in my experience.

So, but in terms of something like isms , are they ableist classist racist etc? Or to what degree right, because we've all got these internalized isms. I went out on a date with somebody once who mentioned on the first day that he used to be unhoused. And he used to live out of his car and went through maybe a five year period of living this way, and said that he always mentions that on the first date, because he wants to see the reaction of the person. not as a, I mean, maybe it could be seen as a test. but he just wants to really Get a sense of whether we share the same values? And at my – what I would consider my lowest point, would you be there for me? Would you have compassion? Or would you recoil? Would you judge that? and so sometimes just sharing and opening up about ourselves, which we do anyway in the getting to know your process with people can be revealing of how they react to that? Do they go silent? Do they flinch? Do they scrunch up their face? Do they relate in and ask questions with curiosity and compassion? Anything like that can be a way that I vet people.

As well, I think it's important to vet people about consent, which is so difficult to do, because we all are coming to romantic or sexual situations – if you are romantic or sexual – with our own histories. that we've all experienced somebody not really respecting our boundaries, not respecting our consent in some way, shape, or form, even if it wasn't a romantic relationship. And so there can be degrees to how important that is to know upfront. So usually, I just pay attention, right? I again, I don't want to test somebody, I don't want to be maneuvering games to study them. But I just want to keep in mind how they respond to smaller versions of things. If I get sent a nude that I didn't want, but we are dating, we are flirting. Can I push back on that? And how is that responded to? Is it like, oh, my gosh, absolutely. I'm so sorry. Let me make it right. Or is there silence? Or do they keep doing it, even though I was explicit about my boundary? any kind of lower stakes – compared to in-person sexual interaction, for example – lower stakes circumstance that we can notice their response is usually indicative of how they would respond in some larger stakes scenarios. And so that can be really informative.

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I do think sometimes there's a combination of explicit questions and noticing how the person responds. I've asked people before their feelings on Kitchen Table, just hypothetically broadly, theoretically, right? How do you feel about that? Have you ever experienced that playing out in practice? are you open to it, but it's just never really fallen into place? do you feel really awkward about it and unsure of how that would work out? there can be explicit dialogue about something. And then also to notice how words match actions. if then I am bringing up a partner by name in an anecdote, if there is discomfort with that? even after we've kind of laid the ground rules of, yeah, absolutely. I want to know about your people. I don't want there to be hiding or , if there is a recoiling, if there is an absence of commenting on it, or noticing it or giving a shit about it... I might then bring that into the explicit and be like, Hey, do you not want me to mention their name? Or , just clarifying what boundary they need. Because I don't think that that's really a problem to have Parallel, I have Parallel with a lot of people, especially people who are going through some heightened sensitivity and just don't want exposure to feelings of insecurity, or want exposure to it on their terms right now. And so then I'm not the one prompting the stimulus, I let them come to me and bring it up. But all that to say, that's sort of a mix of explicitly talking about it and then noticing, do their words match their actions? that is definitely a way that I get a better sense of the person standing in front of me. So I consider that vetting too.

But yeah, we don't want it to feel like we're interviewing somebody, we're scrutinizing somebody or checking off boxes. We do want to be self protective, if we know our buttons, if we know our traumas, if we know what is a fundamental deal breaker. and so that, I don't know, maybe something in that spectrum of explicit and implicit action can suit the specific thing you want to vet for. Because I think it really all depends. What are you reading for? What are you scared will happen , and in what ways could you, you know, troubleshoot a scenario where you understand how they'd respond in that situation without waiting for that situation to actually transpire. I hope that answers your question.

Okay, we've got a question in the chat. I was wondering if you could go over the notion of a care plan and share examples of what we can rely on when one's partner starts a new relationship. I struggled to identify and express my needs, or what could make me feel safe.

Any elaboration on specifics that you might be willing or able to share, all of it will stay anonymous in the recording. But this is so context dependent , care plans are very context dependent. But in general, it's very common that we don't really know what will make us feel better, right? We just know what is exacerbating any

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reactions, trauma responses, things of that nature. So in those cases, I'll often kind of reverse engineer a boundary, or at least an educated guess at a boundary. And then there's trial and error of, oh, I noticed that when I saw the bruises on you from the kink party, I noticed that I started feeling a lot of shame about my own sexual repression. And I started feeling jealous. And I was visually imagining the person putting those marks on you, etc.

Okay, now I know what I want to stop happening. And what kind of circumstances could create that? And so I was like, would you be down to be more mindful? At least give me a heads up, if there's an unavoidable bruise I might see so that I can know that, and not just be surprised, passively. can you? Would you be willing to just hide, wear a shirt around me in those cases until you've healed? Or at least again, talk to me about it, and to see where I'm at that day if I still need that accommodation in order to not start spiraling? Right. And so it's not that we want to force the people around us to control their words and behavior so that we don't get triggered. But rather, we can notice what is the trigger? And then start naming specific examples, and then say, Okay, well, maybe this is a start at a boundary or a care plan. how you can come home and care for me.

So in terms of pre-emptive care plans, it's essentially the same of, oh, this week, I was fine. I felt not as disrupted or disturbed about you on your date, compared to last week, which I was spiraling a lot during your date – what was different? You know, was it better or was it worse, and just noticing in real time, what circumstances might be driving the knife in or twisting it. and then that can inform, okay, let's next time try something that could mitigate or offer an equal and opposite reaction to that.

So for example, if it's like I'm spiraling, because I'm imagining them having sex, and I'm feeling really lonely, and I'm judging my body and all of this – that is something that has happened so many times, to me in and out of different relationships. So then I might ask, the next time, would you be down to having some kind of interaction in the few days before a date or, a scene where we're playing with kink, or even just walking out in the park some some kind of intimacy, where I can feel grounded in my connection with you, reassured in my connection with you? And would you be open to, specifically reassuring me about these things, showing how much you're attracted to me, and that you are not comparing the two of us even though my brain is. so, ways that we can sort of create tools and specific external things that we can point to when our brain is not, not being your friend, when our brain is really searching for threats? Can we preemptively create reassurances? and that can help over time, ease it a bit, because it starts to feel a little bit more balanced. And it's hardest in the beginning, care plans. There's so much trial and

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error and it can be easy to get a little bit hopeless. and be like, Well, we had a date beforehand, and I was still angry and scared all night. Yeah, but was it 5% Better? Did you bounce back after six hours instead of staying awake all night? Right. we're looking for progress and not perfection. We're looking for feedback from our own trial and error of – was it a little bit easier, did it address the specific pain points that I've been able to name? and that is something that only you can design. but that's kind of Also the benefit of having this introspection, is we can design really granular specific actions that could make us feel comforted and make us feel safe.

Hopefully, your partner will be down to do that extra work. hinges can sometimes feel frustrated, especially if they're in new relationship energy. Getting all drunk on love over here. And I often encourage hinges to keep in mind that the intensity with which they're pursuing another relationship, if their existing commitments start to notice less time, less energy, less responsiveness, it will create the narrative that you're removing one thing and giving it to another. and so to stay vigilant of continuing to foster care and love and security with your existing commitments, so that during this transition period, where yes, it's changing, the polycule is changing, a new person is added – that their relationship doesn't have to change, right? Or, if it does, it can be restructured in a way that still has your needs met or still feels like a secure attachment. during a period of change, we're always wondering, what else is going to change? Where does it end? You know, and so if our nervous system, and if the critic in our head can have a demonstrated track record of actions that our partner has taken to prove our fear wrong, that can really help us until we get to a place of stability. Its hardest in the beginning , but with time it gets easier.

Next question. This holiday season, I have to spend time with ignorant family. I know you've mentioned on Instagram, you've had to do the same. How do you survive? Okay. Big question. I hope I can do it justice. And also, again, very context dependent. But I think around this time last year, I created a resource of examples of dealing with ignorant Questions or comments from people.

I think it really matters, the tone of the relationship, are you on friendly terms with this person? Did they just ask you a well intentioned question about STIs out of legitimate concern, but it was still an ignorant question that made you feel shamed? That framing, in that context, and that type of tone of relationship is different. Compared to if someone who has always slut shamed you, and has had power over you comes and sort of asserts that you're dirty now and you're getting STIs, or whatever, It could be a similar question about STIs from an ignorant person, but – Who is it? And how are they asking it? Because in the former, I might even be, depending on my energy level, I might even be compassionate and, in an educator place, to a sincere question. versus I would have my guard further up with the other,

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and just remove myself from the situation. Or if I'm feeling strong, assert, you can't talk to me like that ? So, tone of relationship type of relationship context.

I will often come kind of equipped with one liners that I can just say, if I can anticipate the type of person and what they are probably going to be snarky about or comment about, I can count on being like, Okay, well, Google this phrase, or Google this book , smarter people than me could explain it to you. If you're really curious, here's a resource , go be curious. Google is free . And if it is something that's a bit more distant, or you don't feel like getting into it, if a great grandmother says something , and you still want to be respectful, but you don't really want to get into it. I will often respond to what I imagine is what they're trying to say. I had an elder in my family Say, Well, aren't you afraid you'll never fall in love? And I didn't really understand that question. because my real response is, well, I've fallen in love many times , but I really didn't want to get into it with her. And I think she was saying, Aren't you worried you're not going to find the One if you're fucking around like this? some version of that. but what I also heard of the subtext was she loved me and was concerned for me, and she expressed her concern in an ignorant and kind of insulting way. and I can respond to the subtext, I hear you that youre concerned for me, I hear you that you love me. I love you, too. I am happy, I am safe. and just going to the end result of, if they're actually needling or asking prying questions that imply genuine concern or fear, I'll often just end with, I'm safe, I'm happy. That's all you need to know.

You don't owe an explanation to anybody. You don't owe defensiveness to anyone. If you're exhausted, if you don't have energy for this person, you don't have to respond at all. Some people are determined to misunderstand you. Some people will absolutely project their ex husband cheated on them and that's their only exposure to non monogamy, and so now you are a symbol of their pain that's not resolved. We can't really take all of that personally. Even though it is difficult if it's family, there's an inherent personalness to it. We, yeah, we just come equipped with educated guesses of, what am I walking into? What might I be able to shortcut in my mind and just say, so that I'm not frozen on the spot trying to figure it out.

And then I'll also have people on deck – I mentioned this, I'll usually, if I'm walking into a situation or this dinner might be rough , are you around if I need to text you, or if I need to even step outside and call you and just hear a validating voice are you around? And so I might just position some people to be able to balance what I'm experiencing and keep me grounded. And if that's not possible, I've had people record validating voice messages for me so that I could listen to it when I was having a hard time. just including people who are not making us feel those things. And reminding us that we will be returning to our chosen family soon , and this is not

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forever. sometimes you just survive it. So yeah, my heart is with you. This is something that most queer people let alone polyamorous queer people or you know any other intersectionality of judged and marginalized person. Yeah, we definitely feel it. You're not alone in experiencing that.

Okay, next question. I have just a question about who you follow on social media, what accounts you recommend or podcasts you like? Oh, easy one. Okay, so if it's about polyamory, specifically, I've really like @antimononormative. They are an indigenous creator who's actually in an academic sense, studying mononormativity and so I'm getting so much from them processing what they're learning and what they're writing about each week. @Lavitaloca34, a very seasoned veteran polyamorous person really puts out a lot of thoughtful things. It's not necessarily polyamorous but @EricaSmith.sex.ed is a sex educator who is specifically focused on purity culture. And so if you happen to grow up in a sexually shaming environment, religious or otherwise, that has been really helpful. and has also supplemented my sex education, which was dogshit you know, I didn't even know the parts of my own vulva as an adult cis woman right? And to not feel ashamed of that right? Because we're not in control of who educates us on what the system's priorities are. So Erica Smith Sex Ed has really been great at educating while alleviating shame and encouraging like – Fuck you shame, fuck you purity culture. and kind of fostering a strength in it and a self awareness.

Y'all know I support @polyphiliablog. We've done workshops together. I love Kat Blaque. She is a trans creator who doesn't always post about polyamory, but when she does, it's just like, you've been doing this for a long time. it comes from a place of calmness and self knowledge and levity, and so I get a lot from that. @RemodeledLove is great especially if you are a parent, she and her partners have created parenting resources within polyamory, and she's just tough as nails. Mono parents are constantly coming for her and she's constantly getting her account attacked and I just admire how she's continuing to educate with grace during that time.

And yeah, I think beyond polyamory content, if you're interested in things that I follow – it's usually video essays and media analysis on like, cults and fascism and you know, light hearted fare. Munecat, We're in Hell, Shaun, FD Signifier, Some More News, the podcast Behind the Bastards I listen to pretty regularly... So yeah, I don't want to get off too much on an unrelated tangent, but if that generally interests you – video essays in and around that political activist space, while also being comedic and culturally informed. you can always message me and I can send you a more thoughtful list that's not as spontaneous.

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Okay, more questions. I mostly feel secure in my current relationship. But if she goes a few days between texts, I start to feel stressed, I want to lash out or even break it off before she breaks it off with me. I want to block her and all of that. How do I stop feeling that way?

Oh, my heart. Who are the anxious babies in the room right? that is so relatable to really want to cut and run, shut somebody out before they shut us out, that sort of thing. And to feel securely attached until they go a few days without texting us. And now we're feeling this really disproportionate response to want to lash out or block them, suddenly, that sort of thing? You are not alone. That is very common. So for me, I mean, I'm still working on this, insofar as how I respond to the impulses. Luckily, I don't really do it anymore, but how did I get from point A to point B? where I used to just very much go hot and cold.

It kind of came first with a conscious intention to want to not respond that way to people anymore. And the end goal was not to be a better partner, necessarily, the end goal was to not be so rash that I pushed people away. when that extreme of reaction might not be necessary, to try other tools before I pick up a hammer. And so, yeah, consciously saying, I want to break this pattern of actions, I know that I do this throughout history. And so speaking to my therapist, lamenting with people who get it and just saying, Oh, God, of course. that can really help to lighten it, because it is so common.

And then the biggest thing for me is slowing down, adding space between the reaction and the action. And that's very difficult to do when we feel elevated, when we feel activated. But when I have an impulse, as much space as possible I can put between that idea and acting on it, the more I have an ability to assess if that is coming from a grounded place. would Me all the time do that, or is it just Me when I'm activated? would I tomorrow, regret what I did today, that sort of thing. And so adding space. I've needed people, I've just needed help to do that. Right? it's not something that comes naturally, because it's a survival skill. If you're traumatized, if you had people that you can never trust, if you've had to raise yourself or grow up fast all of that, it is very common to want to cut and run. and I have a video on my Patreon from a few weeks ago, when do we cut and run? I go into some specifics about when it is proportionate versus disproportionate. So that might also be of service.

But yeah, adding people in adding space. I have this impulse, let me text somebody instead, let me reroute that impulse and text a friend of mine saying I really want to do this, right. I might even lean on other partners. If we have that kind of relationship of talking about who we're dating. I say, I really want to be reactive, block this person,

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and then we might even laugh about it, right? And it can really take the power and intensity out of it to include other people in that impulse and just process it. You still can do it, but at least it's been informed a little bit more by people who reflect our values and can mirror back to us. What we usually want to do and if this is us acting or a trauma response acting.

Yeah, and sometimes we have, I have the kind of relationship with the person where I'll even say that. once I'm calmed down and not as activated, I might come to them and say, Hey, just so you know, when I go X number of days without a response, especially if it was a vulnerable thing that I texted you, I start to think this way. my brain starts to do this. and owning it, not blaming the person. Not like, oh you didn't text me back so I had a hard night. That creates this adversarial position. But instead just owning – this happens to me when these circumstances transpire. So what do you think, is it something you want to do, or able to do, to respond a little bit faster? at least to certain kinds of texts? and then it can be negotiated. maybe that person doesn't want to change what they're doing. So then we can choose to change what we're expecting of them, and maybe not wanting a specific type of relationship with them anymore. That can all be sorted explicitly, if the person is down to talk about that kind of thing.

So that's really how I've been breaking that pattern. And luckily, keeping a lot of amazing people in my life, right? when we cut and run out of self preservation of, I want to break up with them before they get a chance to break up with me. We're breaking up with people, we're leaving people, we are making ourselves isolated. out of fear of being cut off and isolated, we are isolating ourselves, right. And that is usually disproportionate and unnecessary. And we could lose really valuable connections from that rash impulse and reaction. So yeah, adding space, including people in that and trying to go slower, has felt really empowering. that I am acting, I am not just letting my impulses control me. You know what I mean?

Next question. I'm dating someone who is sexually insecure, and is finally opening up to me, but now they surprise me with nudes when I don't want them. And I feel nervous pushing back on that because they could shame spiral and stop opening up to me.

Okay, yeah. I think this could potentially apply to dating someone with any severe insecurity that they're slowly making progress on. But when they misstep, how do we continue to hold boundaries, give feedback, push back, when we don't want to be the prompt that makes them shut again, right? Because it took so much work for them to get to a sharing space. It depends on what kind of relationship you have with them, right? if it is a close longer term relationship, it could be that it's discussed

a little bit more explicitly, a little bit more bluntly. But if it's somebody that is tender in our dynamic, and maybe not feeling like such a secure attachment, and then also we compound that with, they're not so secure about this topic... I'll usually, regardless, be grounded in a validation of the growth that they're making. Like, I'm so glad you're feeling really comfortable, I know how hard this is for you. I want to celebrate the hard work that you've done. – just leading up front with validation, because I do want that to come across in my response. I do want them to know that I feel that way, at least in this question it tells me you're wanting to encourage the growth that they're making, right? So. And then I'll say, would you be willing to ask me before you send a nude? I've noticed I want an ask before I get that, right? And so in first validating the person, we might lower their defenses a little bit. They are not jumping immediately to – I'm bad, I'm wrong.

And -would you be willing to- is probably my favorite way to open a boundary request. Because it implies, you don't have to, I'm not telling you that you have to do this, would you be willing to – and if you don't, then I probably will change how I'm interacting with you. But, I'm not trying to force you to do something. especially if from sexual shame or sexual insecurity, that could have been a factor in how they got to this tender place in that subject matter to begin with. And so yeah, just kind of sandwiching the firm boundary request with validation, then, I noticed this made me feel a little uncomfortable. And saying, I'd love to do this instead – offering an alternative action for that person rather than just saying you did something wrong. would you be willing to do this instead? it can be more solution oriented.

And we can't control how someone's gonna respond to us, we can't control if they're gonna hear us the way that we intend, we can't control if they will shame spiral, and you know, start to pull backwards on their vulnerability with us. that is bigger than us, we didn't cause the root of that. So we are not powerful enough to cure it . And if we happen to have a conversation that sets that off, if we've done as much as possible to be mindful and be thoughtful, while still asserting a boundary, I just don't think the shame spiral or the reaction is necessarily something we can do anything about. We always want to be mindful of how we're talking to a sensitive person, if we want to get along with that sensitive person. But then if we do everything possible to be respectful and kind, then their disproportionate response is part of their own healing that they need to do. And I need to work on detaching and not feeling responsible for their emotions. just letting them feel whatever they feel.

because if I'm not setting this boundary, then the next person will set the boundary and maybe not in a kind or thoughtful way. maybe they get ghosted by that person, or the person yells and snaps at them, right. And, so, this is something that the person needs to experience a boundary on. And I'm happy to do that in a caring,

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gentle way while still respecting myself. And, obviously read the room, put it in your own language, I don't want people to, take my words and treat it like a template, because that would sound really awkward coming from someone who doesn't speak how I do. so you know, make it your own, speak with your chest. And just the spirit of what I'm saying, is really what I'm trying to get across.

Next question. Any pointers for someone who is just getting comfortable with polyamory as a fitting way to express love, if that makes any sense?

Any elaboration that you would be willing to do could help me give more specific and effective feedback, because just getting comfortable with polyamory that could encompass a very big umbrella of experiences or insecurities. But in general, if you are newer to this, just continuing to absorb the community and speak to people in person if possible. Most major cities do have meetups. But just, if that's not possible, there are discord chats and Facebook groups and, Instagram accounts and tick tock accounts that can just passively and ambiently reflect back this value system, just surrounding ourselves with people who also live this way can kind of normalize it for us and calm any stress. And we can absorb tools and suggestions and vocabulary and all of this to really figure out what resonates.

There's a lot of exploration in the beginning. But number one, find community – like if you're stranded on an island, number one, find freshwater. if you are entering polyamory, number one, find community in some way, shape, or form. And a lot of us do find that online because it is not always accessible in person. But we need to know that we're not alone. And we need to troubleshoot solutions with people who have lived experience. Because theory is not enough. We can read every book, and that doesn't do shit for us in practice, right? we can be really, really smart and feel like a four year old in our body, right? so that's the only thing that has helped me move through discomfort and stressful situations and confusing uncharted territory. where do I go? there's no map for this? people have gone before you. And people probably have been in the situation you're in, and that can not only be validating, and make you feel sane, and make you feel not alone. But it can be practically very effective. so that you don't have to make the same mistakes they did. My mentor saved me so much headache and heartbreak. Because they're like, Oh, I understand why you want to say this, but it might make them do that. I'm like, Oh, well, I don't want to make them do that so I'll say it differently. You know, I got to prevent a conflict ahead of time. And so, mentors but also peers, friends, non romantic, non sexual connections that we can just, feel like a sense of togetherness is, I guess my broad feedback to people.

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Okay, next question. If you're trying to go from monogamy to non monogamy is that escalating or de escalating the relationship? I'm with a partner looking for more connection, but she doesn't feel comfortable with me doing the same so I'm confused.

So you're trying to go from monogamy to non monogamy – That is a common question. That is something that really depends on the people involved because if one person in the dyad does not want non monogamy, we cannot conjure that desire in them. Period. we cannot make somebody want it, or feel safe in it. it might be in those cases a fundamental incompatibility that shifts the entire nature of the relationship. Right. And so that is my first question is – does everybody involved genuinely feel attracted in some way to this concept for themselves? Or is there a reluctant or obligation, a willingness to say yes because they don't want to lose you, that's different. And that in my experience is a lot less sustainable.

If the request for non monogamy is coming on the heels of some kind of cheating or attraction to a specific person, that can also heighten the stakes, right? I've not really seen it go well, to cheat and then transition to non monogamy with the person who cheated was still there. You know, there's so much broken trust. It's such a mountain to climb to reestablish a new dynamic. and that, so, yeah, does the person want it genuinely? And that is a hard question to answer.

But if yes, if some part of me feels like I would do this, even if I wasn't with you. Okay, then each exploring resources, doing all the reading, doing all the podcasts, in connecting, like I said, with community, talking with people, seeing what words resonate, what terms resonate, what sounds like it might be nice? that can be part of a negotiation. But really, a negotiation can only happen if both people want to build towards the same thing, right? if one person is trying to build this way and the other this way, it's just not going to be sustainable in my experience. So yeah, immersing yourself in as much knowledge and around as many experienced people as possible, can inform you about what the next steps of the negotiation might be. And I usually suggest going very slow, and talking a lot. everyday checking in almost , I don't think it's possible to over communicate during such a dramatic shift in dynamic. Definitely not for the faint of heart.

Yeah. So, okay, so there's just a few minutes left, if there are any last minute questions. So I guess I'll use the last couple of minutes just to unpack what around polyamory I've been exploring for myself. navigating with a partner who was socialized to think that my value depends on a sex drive, right? it's hard to shake those messages. I've been doing this for a decade, trying to be mindful for longer than that. And those insecurities can still pop up if we're not vigilant. So that is, that is

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something that I appreciate the prompt to explore further. And as well, I also, if somebody goes several days without a response, might feel a desire to reject them before they reject me. That is a really old habit and self protective impulse that I also still struggle with. And luckily, I have a rebound time that's faster, I don't act on the blocking, or lashing out or sending a wall of text , I don't act on that. I haven't acted on that I should say, in a long time. And I'm grateful for that.

So that is the hope that I can offer is, while we will still carry our trauma responses and our worst impulses with us into whatever we're building, we can develop safety nets and put distance between the impulse and the action and surround ourselves with people who have our back to behave differently, despite that impulse still being there from time to time. So it's not about achieving some sort of perfection or ridding ourselves of any quote unquote negative response, right? That is not possible. And if that is how we are defining success, then we will always be dissatisfied or shaming ourselves. No, it's not about eliminating that, from our experience. It's about figuring out new tools to respond. And not just running with those impulses or letting those impulses be in the driver's seat, right? Can we put them in the backseat? To say, I see you, I acknowledge you and I'm going to make a more slow thoughtful choice here so that we can be in charge of how our relationships unfold. or at least how we respond. So I appreciate the prompt to speak about that as well because I also still struggle with that.

Okay, well, thank you so much for joining. I know that these live chats are not always at a convenient time for everybody. So this will go up on Patreon and after the chat, I will work on that tonight. And yeah, I will have another chat in probably four to six weeks in the New Years. So if any specific questions, especially if you're not a \$9 and up patron, any specific questions that you would like to see addressed in that chat, just feel free to DM me on Instagram or Patreon. I hope you have a beautiful week.
Bye

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