

Self-Evaluation

If you are considering an open relationship, first evaluate yourself thoroughly and honestly to determine whether venturing beyond monogamy is right for you. Here are some questions for you to contemplate, write about in a journal, or talk about with a friend, partner, or therapist:

What are your beliefs about monogamy?

- If you've been in monogamous relationships before, how did you feel in those relationships and how did they work or not work for you?
- Do you believe that someone can love/be in love with more than one person at a time?
- What role does sex play in your relationships? How important is it to you? What does it mean to you?
- Can you have sex without an emotional attachment? How are sex and love related or not related?
- Have you ever had a "fuck buddy" or "friend with benefits"? What worked and didn't work about the relationship?

If you are currently in a relationship:

- What is the state of the relationship? Does it feel stable and secure?
- What are the most common conflicts you have?
- Do both partners want to explore a different structure?
- Do you have sexual needs, desires, and fantasies that aren't being fulfilled?

Imagine your partner having sex with another person. It's important to be brutally honest, not censor yourself and really let yourself feel what that would be like.

- What feelings does that bring up? What would be your worst fear?
- What would the best case scenario of this situation look like?
- What would be an absolute deal breaker?

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How do you handle feelings?

- Do you consider yourself a jealous person? How you deal with intense feelings like anger, jealousy, and resentment?
- Are you able to determine what your boundaries are and communicate them to others?
- When something is bothering you, most often, do you keep it to yourself or share it?
- Do you have the ability to communicate openly and honestly, even about difficult issues?
- When conflict arises, how do you usually handle it?

How available are you?

- Do you have the time to nurture and grow more than one love relationship?
- Do you have the energy to devote to several different people and juggle multiple lovers?
- Do you have access to potential partners who have nonmonogamy experience and strong relationship skills?
- Do you have the self-knowledge and communication skills to be in an open relationship?