

**ENM 101** 

# Ethical Non-Monogamy

An introduction to Poly-Lingo – and thus the concepts behind it

## Quick question...



Do you know any lingo that is really helpful to an ingroup but terrible for outsiders?

# Turn to your **Neighbour** (if you like)



Give it 2 minutes each to come up with instances where

- "inside lingo" is helpful
- "inside lingo" is not helpful

The limits of my  
language mean the  
limits of my world.

Die Grenzen meiner  
Sprache bedeuten  
die Grenzen meiner  
Welt.

Ludwig Wittgenstein,  
5.6 Tractatus logico-philosophicus, 1922.

# Let's start with the name of this session



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Monogamy. the "norm" – doesn't seem to need an alias

(For some people in the ENM World this is a sign of the mono-normative attitude of society)

**ENM**

Ethical Non-Monogamy

CNM

Consensual Non-Monogamy

Polyamory

Self explanatory, isn't it?

# Polyamory : a definition

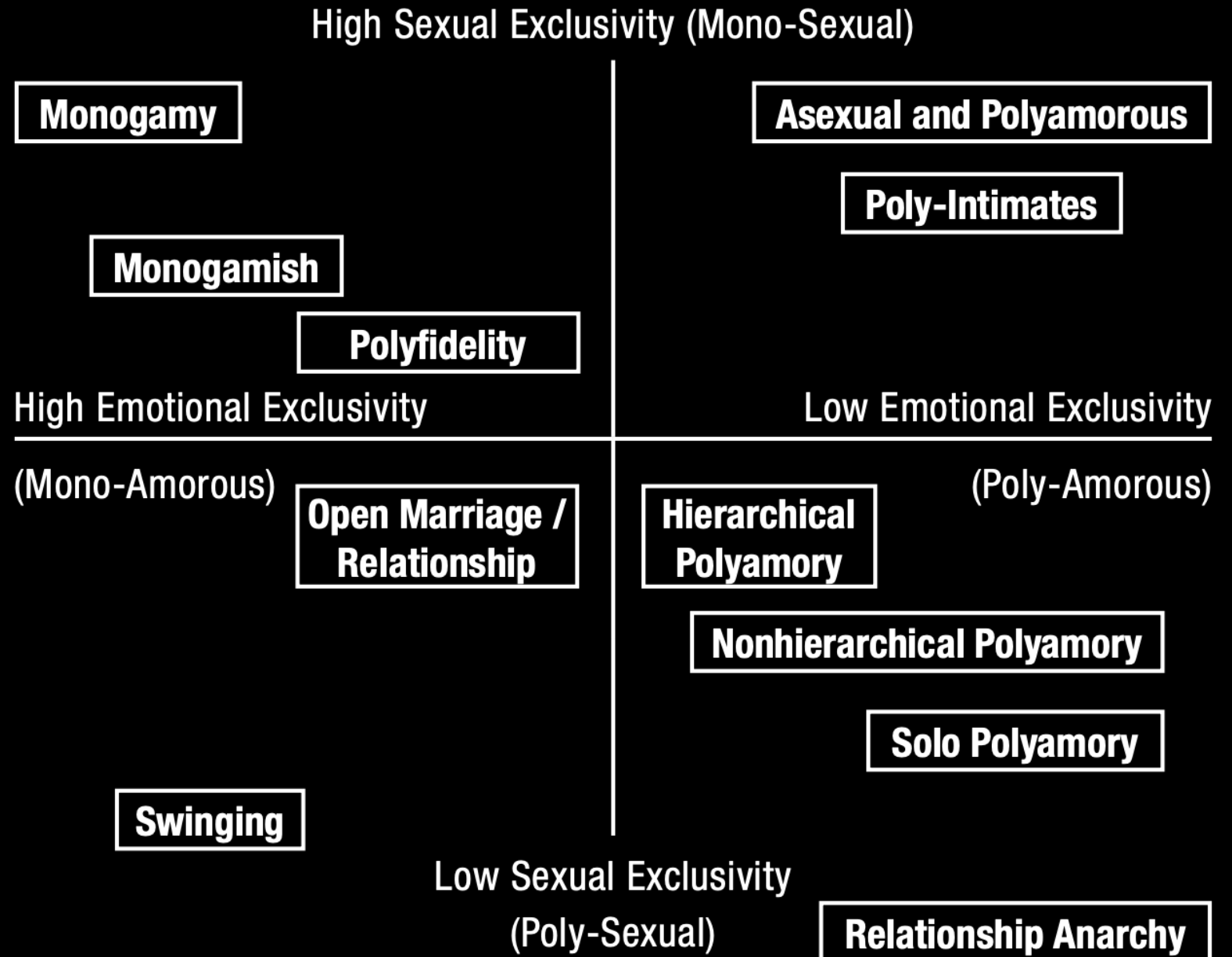


The word polyamory is based on the Greek and Latin for “many loves” (literally, poly many + amor love). A polyamorous person is someone who has, or is open to having, more than one romantic relationship at a time, with the knowledge and consent of everyone involved. A polyamorous relationship is a romantic relationship where the people in the relationship agree that it’s okay for everyone to be open to or have other romantic partners.

**Also:**

## **An axis in the continuum**

From: Polysecure : attachment,  
trauma and consensual  
nonmonogamy / by Jessica Fern  
Thorntree Press, 2020



**FIGURE 4.1:** The different types of nonmonogamy.

# Relationship Escalator



That pattern that sounds very 1950s: To casually spend time together, to date "steady," to get engaged, then married, move into a house together, and have children, then live at that plateau, that "top floor," until death; that is the relationship escalator



# ENM Ethical Non-Monogamy / CNM Consensual NM



Any consensual relationship structure in which individuals engage in multiple sexual or romantic relationships simultaneously, with the knowledge and agreement of all parties involved. This approach prioritizes open communication, mutual respect, and honesty to ensure that all relationships are conducted in a way that aligns with the values and boundaries of everyone participating.

ENM is an umbrella term encompassing a variety of relationship styles, including polyamory, open relationships, relationship anarchy, and swinging. Each of these practices operates under the core principles of consent and ethical treatment of all individuals involved

# ENM & Polyamory – some questions



So there are no couples in ENM?

There can be couples, but if the construct becomes more complex there is a different term that's often used in ENM settings

## Polycule

A romantic network, or a particular subset of relationships within a romantic network, whose members are closely connected. Also used to describe a sketch or visualization of a romantic network, as these drawings often resemble the depiction of molecules used in organic chemistry.

# ENM & Polyamory – some questions



So, you know the other partner(s) of your partner(s)

Depending on the type of ENM you either do or you don't. In Polyamory the norm is that you do. And because the relationship with these people is so important there is a word for it

## Metamour

(Literally, meta with; about + amor love): Two people who share a partner, but are not romantically or sexually involved with each other. For example, if you have a partner who also has a spouse, you and their spouse would be metamours, or if you have a boyfriend and a girlfriend who are not involved with each other, the two of them would be metamours to each other.

# ENM & Polyamory – some questions



But what happens if one of your partner falls in love with someone new?

In an ideal world you would have the same feelings you would have for your growing up child who falls in love for the first time: You'd be happy for them and wish for them that it will bring them happiness

## Compersion

The state of happiness, joy or pleasure that comes from delighting in other people's happiness. In nonmonogamy, this term is more specifically used to refer to the positive feelings experienced when your lover is having a positive experience with one of their other lovers.

# ENM & Polyamory – some questions



But won't that have a negative impact on my own relationship situation?

Maybe, but not necessarily. Since ENM relationships are usually not exclusive it doesn't mean the end of your relationship with that person. Many times it brings a new kind of energy into the existing relationship(s), called

## New Relationship Energy (NRE)

A strong, almost giddy feeling of excitement and infatuation common in the beginning of any new romantic relationship. New relationship often follows the beginning of a relationship (as opposed to desire for a relationship), and can last as long as several years.

Commentary: Some researchers believe that new relationship energy is the result of the hormones oxytocin and vasopressin, which are released by the brain during the start of a new relationship and after a mother gives birth and are believed to have a role in emotional bonding and in the feelings of happiness and well-being that often accompany the start of a new relationship.

# ENM & Polyamory – some questions



So I can just go about and have affairs without any regret?

**No**



# ENM & Polyamory – some questions



So I can just go about and have affairs without any regret?

In most forms of ENM the societal rules about faithfulness and fidelity are replaced by explicit agreements between all parties concerned. Not adhering to these agreements is still considered..

## Cheating

In a polyamorous or swinging relationship, sexual activity with people outside the relationship may or may not be seen as cheating, depending on the context of that sexual activity and whether or not it violates the agreements of the people in that relationship. Even in such relationships, most commonly sexual activity without the knowledge and explicit consent of the other members of the relationship is likely to be viewed as cheating.

# ENM & Polyamory – some questions



And do you have to get along with all these partner's partners?

There are many different ways in which metamours (the partner's partners) can structure the polycule. Two phenomena have gotten their own names

## Kitchen Table

## Polyamory

A style of interacting with each other that is so close that many members of the polycule could sit together at the kitchen table in the morning without any awkwardness. Several days in a row or even constantly

## Garden Party

## Polyamory

A style of interacting with each other where it is okay to be together as the whole polycule (or at least with larger parts of it) at a garden party every once in a while, but only once in a while



**? Questions ?**



**Q & A** for the panel on day 4

# Join our Signal group

