



POLYAMORY

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Introduction

Dictionary definition: *the practice of engaging in multiple sexual relationships with the consent of all the people involved.*

Quote from a polyamorist: *all three of us live together, me, my boyfriend Michael and my other boyfriend Eric. We are all very happy together.*

What do you know about the idea of polyamory?

What do you think about it?

What do you think of the relationship described in the quote above?

Could you live a life like this? Why/why not?

Reading

Polyamory comes from the Greek word poly, meaning many and the Latin word amor meaning love. The literal translation is many loves — the idea of having and being in love with many lovers at the same time.

The culture of polyamory is well-known throughout history. There are many references to it but usually, it has been associated with men having many wives or lovers. There are stories of kings having many wives and sometimes hundreds of concubines.

Then there are the references to women having many lovers too. Nepal and China have certain minorities where the women can choose many lovers.

Now today there is a growing re-emergence of polyamory.

In the eighties and nineties, people may have formed monogamous relationships due to the panic that AIDS caused around the world. But today people have started to find that they love more than one person and thus are having relationships that other people might find confusing.

When asked to define polyamory, many polyamorists cannot

pinpoint exactly what it means. The closest that anyone can get to an exact meaning is ‘to spread the love’.

This has caused outrage in certain circles.

Christian groups notably object to the idea of polyamory as it is regarded as a sin in the eyes of God. The polyamorists do not see themselves as sinful. In fact, they believe they are expressing more love than many others by showing their true emotions to the world.

So today, we can see many relationships in which two men may cohabit with one woman. Everyone is happy. The woman spends time equally with both men.

In one such relationship, three people spoke about their love for each other.

“I was in a relationship with Tim,” said Sophie. “And we were very happy together. We had an open relationship and we met other people but always had the utmost respect for each other.”

“We were together as just a couple — a dyad,” said Tim. “Then Sophie started to express feelings for my best friend Robert. It was obvious that she loved him. Then she asked me if we could form a triad — three people living together.”

Robert has known Tim since they were in high school together.

"Tim is pretty much my best friend ever," he said. "But when I met Sophie, I knew she was very special too."

Since then all three people have lived together.

"It's just amazing," said Sophie. "We are all so happy together."

Robert agrees. "I'm living with the two people that I love the most in all the world."

Tim added: "It was kind of strange at first — and there have been some heated discussions — but Sophie seems so happy. I've never seen her so happy before so I guess that's a good thing."

Polyamory is growing rapidly. There are thousands of people living in polyamorous relationships today. Some people argue that it is just another term for 'sleeping around' but the polyamorists see their lifestyle as simply loving and expressing love to each other.

Reading Comprehension Questions

Where does the word Polyamory come from?

In which countries could women choose many lovers?

What was one of the causes of monogamous relationships in the eighties and nineties?

According to the article, is there an exact meaning of the word Polyamory?

What is the closest meaning?

Name a group that is opposed to polyamory? Why?

In the triad's relationship, which two people were together first?

Describe the relationship between all three people. How do they all know each other?

What does Sophie mean by 'an open relationship'?

Who initiated bringing Tim into their relationship?

What does Sophie think of this relationship?

What does Tim think of it?

How about Robert?

How do some people regard the idea of polyamory?

Essential Vocabulary

polyamory	Greek
Latin	associated with
concubines	minorities
re-emergence	monogamous
panic	pinpoint exactly
caused outrage	regarded as a
sin/sinful	true emotions
cohabit	utmost respect
pretty much	heated discussions

Exercise

Write down all the words and phrases in your vocabulary notebook. Look in your dictionary and find the meaning of each word. Write the definition next to each word.

Then make up your own sentences using each word or phrase.

For example:

Notebook—*a small book with pages of blank paper that students use to make notes when studying.*

"I left my notebook at home so I was unable to make any notes

in my English class.”

What Did You Say?

Look at all the extracts of things people think about polyamory.

- Are they for or against polyamory?
- State why you think so after each quote.
- Do you agree or disagree with each opinion?

I think as long as they are not hurting anyone else it doesn't matter what they do.

I think they're weird. How can they live with two other people and say they love both of them?

Someone will get hurt eventually.

I don't agree with it but it's none of my business.

Live and let live I always say!

Jealousy will raise its ugly head sooner or later.

Who cares what they do? It's their life!

Discussion Questions

What do you think of the idea of polyamory?

Could you have a polyamorous relationship? Why/why not?

How do you think someone knows they are polyamorous?

Do you think a polyamorous relationship can be equal? How?

What would be the difference in a polyamorous relationship between two men/one woman and one man/two women? Is there any difference at all?

Is it possible for one person to love two others equally?

What are the benefits of a polyamorous relationship?

Are there any downsides to it?

Is it harmful to society? In what way?

Divorce rates between traditional married couples are very high. Is a polyamorous society the conclusion?

Writing

Write three diary journals about a person that realises they love two people equally.

All three people know each other and the person writing the diary wants to propose that they all live together.

Write about the person's thoughts as he or she struggles with their emotions during this time.

Credits

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