

Consensual Non-Monogamy

By [Tina Suppi](#) - June 29, 2022



Photo by Dmitry Dreyer

With 1 in 5 people having previously been in this type of relationship, there is an increasing interest in consensual non-monogamy. Consensual non-monogamy (CNM) can run the spectrum from swinging to polyamory, open relationships, polygamy, and more. CNM can be casual or long lasting. As we become more open to different lifestyles and develop a greater desire to be completely fulfilled, consensual non-monogamy is becoming more acceptable.

Consensual non-monogamy (CNM) relationships are defined as a relationship style in which all partners openly and consciously agree to the possibility of having more than one sexual and/or romantic or intimate relationship at a time. The characteristics of the relationship, whether it be swinging, polyamory, open or polygamy, is determined by and agreed upon, by all partners involved. Although consensual non-monogamy has been around for many, many years it is still considered taboo.

So why does it seem that we are just now seeing or hearing a lot more about CNM? This may be because technology and social media has enlightened people about how common CNM relationships really are. Society has taught us that monogamy is the only way to have a relationship however, monogamy is not suited to everyone.

Some view consensual non-monogamy as cheating.

What is cheating or infidelity?

Cheating is the act of having a sexual, intimate, or romantic relationship with a third person outside of a traditional couple, without consent. When people are in a consensual non-monogamous relationship everyone involved is aware of the dynamics of the relationship and everyone gives consent. Consent and communication are very important in all relationships including CNM.

So, why do individuals choose to be in a consensual non-monogamous relationship?

One reason people expressed, is that it is difficult to have one partner who meets all of their needs, sexually and emotionally. People have also said that they feel that multi-partner relationships allow the opportunity to explore different interests such as kinks and queer identities, it offers more sexual fun and adventure.

Some people also see CNM relationships as an opportunity to broaden their sense of self and to experience more variety in non-sexual activities. This is a way to reduce pressure on any one given partner to share a broad variety of common interests. Although most couples do make time for one another's hobbies because this promotes togetherness in the relationship, CNM can provide a certain degree of ambiguity for all involved.

A question that people have is how can someone love more than one person?

Humans are capable of loving multiple people in multiple ways, they do it every day. We love our partners, parents, friends, siblings and offspring, all in a variety of ways. When a person has a child, they love that child. When they have more children, they do not take the love away from the first child and spread it out amongst the other children, they love them all the same as their children. This is just like CNM; the love is the same with every partner and every partner is valued for what they bring to the relationship.

People who engage in consensual non-monogamy do so for many different reasons. While sex is one of the reasons people engage in CNM it is not the only reason. People have stated that it is also about being true to oneself and being psychologically satisfied.

Whether you choose a monogamous or consensual non-monogamous relationship, the key for a successful relationship is making sure there is communication and consent so that all partners are satisfied.

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