



Chapter Nine: When poor time and energy management is the culprit

Many people lack the skills to keep ONE relationships afloat and keep one lover happy, much less two or more. It takes a lot of time and energy to sustain multiple relationships, as relationships have a lot of moving parts that all need time and maintenance. And keeping your own life going smoothly, including career, family, friends, sleep, and other

important activities requires good self-care. This is crucial to keeping your sanity, and to be rested enough to be physically and emotionally present with each of your partners. Excellent interpersonal and communication skills are a "must-have" to solve problems that will inevitably come up in any open relationship. Being able to consistently give your partners enough time and energy is even more important to your relationships' survival.

A lot of poly break ups are due to what some poly people call "kid in a candy store syndrome." Jason explains: "You meet all these great people and you jump into relationships with them, convincing yourself that you have enough time and energy for three or four relationships. But then you just can't keep up that level of energy and some relationships unfortunately will fall through the cracks. Maybe you could handle four relationships when you were 23 years old and didn't have kids, or a demanding career, or maybe you could manage that many relationships when two of them were casual, but then one of them becomes more serious and you can't fit everyone into your schedule anymore."

Or maybe you were giving all three of your lovers enough to satisfy them, but then a family member has a health crisis and you have an added time commitment taking care of them. Or you have a baby, and suddenly have no time for anyone, or you get a promotion at work and are working more hours, or one relationship is in crisis and needs more of your time.

At the start of a new relationship, everything seems effortless in the rosy glow of newfound love. However, nine months later, or a year or two years later, the excitement calms down enough to notice all the problems and incompatibilities. Suddenly, the relationship becomes a lot more time-consuming and requires a lot of energy for processing and problem-solving. At that point, managing multiple relationships can become quite a strain, and often one relationship (or more) will become a casualty.

The reality is that open relationships generally require some advance planning, and sometimes very complicated planning. While spontaneous romance sounds great in theory, in real life, it is usually incompatible with polyamory. Keeping two or more partners happy usually requires each partner knowing that they can count on regular dates, and that they can plan the other components of their lives, rather than waiting until the last minute to possibly get some time with a partner.