



Best Practices for Consensual Non-Monogamy

Consensual Non-monogamy (CNM) is the practice of giving informed consent to simultaneous, multiple sexual and/or romantic relationships. This can include polyamory, open relationships, swinging and relationship anarchy. Some people may desire and/or identify with CNM, but not engage in it. Keeping in mind the variety of CNM relationship structures and activities, consider the following when evaluating your own practices:

1. Do you feel you have an equal say in deciding your relationship agreements with each of your partners?
2. Do you feel you have enough information to understand and to agree to any potential risks involved, and inform each other about any change(s)?
3. Do you fully understand both the desires and the boundaries of the other participants?
4. Are you aware of cultural differences and are you making sure that the language you're using has the same meaning with everyone involved?
5. Are you able to consent to who will be involved in your activities prior to beginning?
6. Are you able to consent freely, without facing coercion, force or manipulation?
7. Are you aware of your choices about STI prevention and pregnancy planning and/or prevention? Are these choices being respected by all of your partners?
8. Are you free to withdraw prior consent at any time during the activity?
9. Are you basing your consent on your autonomous desires rather than what you are being asked to do or rather than what you've seen someone do with other people?
10. Are you basing consent on what you've agreed to rather than making assumptions based on what you've seen someone do with other people?
11. Are you aware that consent to one thing doesn't mean you have to consent to anything else and that current consent does not imply future consent?
12. Do you feel that you understand everyone's limitations or barriers to their ability to consent to the planned activities, such as age, diminished mental capacity, or use of drugs or alcohol?
13. Do you know that you can request changes to help you feel safe? For example, you could have somebody nearby during the activities, or you could also have other people present to verify that you are heard and consenting.