

The Relationships Show: Episode 76

Cindra

Welcome to The Relationships Show. I'm Cindra Banks.

Luke

And I'm Luke Skewes. And our show is inspired by learnings from our past and present relationships with ourselves and others.

Cindra

We are bringing you this podcast to empower you with the knowledge to understand and better navigate the relationships in your life.

Luke

Our mission is to spread the love. And you can help us by sharing our show and following us at The Relationships Show. Thank you for listening.

Cindra

Hey, everyone, welcome to Episode 76 of The Relationships Show. I am Cindra.

Luke

And I am Luke.

Cindra

And we are pretty happy to be here. Despite Luke's robotic voice. (laughs)

Luke

I'm super stoked to be here. I'm just trying something new.

Cindra

I was, it was a little strange. A little strange. Hope you've all had an amazing week. And we hope that you enjoyed the last episode. We have really enjoyed bringing you the last couple of episodes all about embodiment. And, it's something that we are really, really passionate about and do pretty much every day and do with our clients. And so, I would love to know how you all went with the last two episodes. And if you did the homework that the beautiful women that we had on prescribed. So, let us know how you went with that.

Luke

Yeah. In our world, our new rescue Greyhound is coming along. He's chilling--

Cindra

Turbo.

Luke

Turbo. He's chilling out a little bit to his new home environment, and to the little children in his life. Still, you know, still some issues--

Cindra

Still some issues--

Luke

--not gonna lie, still likes to sneak up and lay on our lounge and put hair all over it, and bark at us from time to time. But, you know, that's life. We also got a really great new addition to our family recently called a robo vacuum--

Cindra

(Laughs)

Luke

--that's making the dog hair situation more manageable. And the robo vac's really great. I'm happy to have it as a part of the fam.

Cindra

Luke has named him Rob. And Rob is hard at work pretty much every day making sure that we don't have hair all over our feet. (laughs)

Luke

Yeah, so feeling super privileged that we can afford to get a robo vac.

Cindra

Absolutely.

Luke

But...it was a must. And I'm happy that we got it.

Cindra

Yeah.

Luke

So, our episode today is the second episode that we've done with this amazing human, Ariella.

Cindra

Yeah!

Luke

She is on Instagram @queerdatingcoach. And she helps kind queer folks date better so they have the courage to go after what they want in dating and in life.

Cindra

Yeah, she was on Episode 71. So if you haven't listened to that one, definitely worth looking back and tuning in. She has a lovely energy as well, which is why we wanted to get her back for a second time. This time, we're talking more about non-monogamy and open relationships. This is a topic that gets requested all the time from you guys and from clients and--

Luke

People in the streets.

Cindra

--people in the streets!

Luke

At the gym.

Cindra

(laughs) You all wanted to know more about non-monogamy and open relationships. So, this episode is all about boundaries, rules, how they work, myths. And, it was really cool to hear Ariella's experiences as well, because they're a little bit different to ours. And, she also recommends some amazing resources. So, even if you're not interested in exploring non-monogamy--

Luke

It's still really educational.

Cindra

I think it's really cool to have--yeah, a bit of a perspective around it.

Luke

Yeah, for sure.

Cindra

So, yeah, it was a great chat. Dive in--again, even if this idea challenges you, I think it's really cool to lean in--

Luke

Yeah.

Cindra

--and to find out a little bit more about, you know, why does it challenge me? And is it just because I'm holding this traditional idea about how relationships should be? And does that actually work for me? Could I actually open my mind up to, maybe not even practicing non-monogamy, but maybe just opening my mind up to accepting the idea--or even not accepting the idea, but actually opening your mind up to understand why other people would, you know, be into this idea. So, I highly recommend that if you have just

switched on to this and you're unsure about the topic, lean in and allow yourself to be a little bit uncomfortable and allow the challenges to come up, and open up your mind just a little bit. So, even hearing about this concept.

Luke

Totally. We do this episode from a place of love and sharing, in that non-monogamy isn't for everybody. Just as much as monogamy isn't for everybody. And your own personal conscious choice is what's important to you. And we just thought it was important to share our piece and our perspective on non-monogamous relationships. And, yeah, we really hope that you enjoy the conversation.

Cindra

See you on the other side...We have an amazing guest, who is back for the second time-

Luke

Round two.

Cindra

--this year, to talk about open relationships. So welcome back, Ariella, to our podcast.

Ariella

I'm so happy to be here. Thanks for having me.

Cindra

You're welcome! And you were on an episode a few weeks ago talking about dating, which was really cool. And...we were just having a quick discussion before we jumped on that some of the things that we discussed seem to be getting used pretty well by people, so that's always good.

Luke

Yeah, definitely.

Ariella

Very exciting.

Luke

Yeah, I've been--I went straight after our last podcast and sent links to it to some people that I knew that, you know, could use your support and guidance. And, I've been referring to the podcast, to other people, to coaching clients. And yeah, so it was an amazing chat. And the ripples have been, you know, expanding into my life.

Ariella

I love that. I actually am doing the same thing. If I am with a client--and I had one client last week where she wanted to talk about what happens when what we're calling, what you guys have coined "getting stuck in the chat."

Cindra

(laughs)

Ariella

When she doesn't know how to make a move or take something further, and we didn't have time to address it in the coaching. And I didn't have another availability coming up. So I was like, "Alright, you know what? I'm just gonna send you this podcast episode. And this will give you a place to start with how to not get stuck in the chat or how to take responsibility for making a move to kind of get out of the cycle of perpetual conversation." So, I'm glad that is useful and helpful to people.

Cindra

Absolutely. So, that was Episode 71. If anyone wants to go and flick back to that one.

Luke

Yeah, we'll refer to it in the show notes as well. But, I've been using from that podcast, taking responsibility for your needs. You know, we've been

reflecting, both of us, and with other clients and stuff. We've been reflecting about a situation about how we wish it would have gone a different way. Or, you know, how we saw it going a slightly different way. And then asking ourselves "What could we do next time to take responsibility for that to happen?" And ,you know, that's a big, big thing.

Cindra

Huge.

Ariella

Totally.

Luke

Yeah. Yeah.

Ariella

Totally, yeah. And I think that that's huge also on first dates, too--yes, with taking responsibility for changing up or getting out of the chat if you're getting stuck in it and whatnot--but also taking responsibility for how certain conversations are going. Even conversation topics, like, what are you talking about? So many people come to me and are like, "I hate small talk." I can't remember if we talked about this last time, where they're like, "I hate small talk." And I'm like, "Literally, everyone that's ever sought out coaching with me has said that--"

Cindra

(laughs)

Ariella

--and everybody feels like they're the one person that hates small talk, and I'm like "Everybody hates small talk! Nobody likes it! There's nobody that likes it."

Cindra

(laughing)

Ariella

But really taking responsibility for, okay, if you hate small talk, and you're finding yourself in small talk, how do you change the conversation? How do you take responsibility for changing the conversation to be something that you find more engaging? So that's another huge way that I find people can take more responsibility for how things are going instead of accepting how they're going and not having any agency in seeing that change. So.

Cindra

Yeah, definitely.

Luke

It's kind of like this three position reflection, like you think about a situation that didn't quite go the way you wanted. And you think about what your role was in that. And then how the other person--why they reacted the way that they did. And then from an observer's point of view, what advice would you give to yourself next time for it to be different?

Ariella

Totally!

Luke

Yeah...it's been super, super helpful. Yeah, especially in dating with us, as well, on dates that we've gone on. So, yeah. Thank you.

Cindra

(laughs)

Ariella

I'm glad that it's helping! I feel like this is very mutual and giving people the language of understanding when they're getting stuck in the chat or what you were saying last time, Luke, about having...I feel like you were really good at naming what is happening and hoping to change the temperature by actually naming. I feel that those are huge, valuable things I got from that episode as well. So, thank you.

Cindra

(laughs)

Luke

You're welcome. So you're in, you're in New Mexico right now.

Ariella

Yeah, baby! New Mexico.

Luke

Yeah. (laughs)

Cindra

A little road trip.

Luke

A little road trip through the snowy desert.

Ariella

Somehow, somehow, this is a road trip through the snowy desert. For sure.

Yeah, so I'll be in New Mexico for about the next week or so, and then I'll make my way down to Austin.

Luke

Ohh, Austin! It's interesting there.

Cindra

I love Austin. Yeah. Big fan.

Ariella

I've never been. I'm excited.

Cindra

Big, big fan. Yeah.

Luke

I heard it's, from Cindra and other people, that it's a really liberal part of Texas. It's really arty and there's a lot of queer culture there. And it's much-- it's a lot different the perception that I had of the state of Texas.

Ariella

Yes, totally. I think that that is true from what I've heard as well. And, fingers crossed.

Luke

Yeah.

Cindra

Yeah!

Ariella

But also traveling during COVID, especially through the states, it is very different. What I see when I show up different places, it's kind of like, "Alright, how does this town react to this thing?"

Cindra

Mmm, yeah.

Ariella

So it's kind of--here where I am now in Albuquerque--it's kind of a bit ghost towny, so I'm curious. But I think in Texas, since they just got rid of, you know, mask mandates and whatnot, I think it will be more lively. So, there's a matter of evaluating the world around me and also evaluating my own comfort level in response to the world around me as I'm traveling. So it's--

Cindra

Yeah.

Ariella

--there's a lot of checking in happening.

Cindra

Yeah, yeah. Austin's super fun. You'll have a really great time. So, today, we're talking about non-monogamy, and we kind of touched on this a little in the last episode we did with you, because we were kind of talking about dating from, I guess, a place of we're in a relationship and our dating is kind of, you know, secondary to that. And, this is something we get asked about a lot. A lot of people ask us about open relationships, they ask us about resources, and how to do them, and what they involve, and all that kind of thing. And we had such a great chat with you last time that we thought let's do it again and talk about non-monogamy. So, maybe we can start by you can maybe tell us a little bit about your experiences and kind of your learnings and things like that through non-monogamy, to start with.

Ariella

Sure. Yeah, for sure. So first, I'll say that I am obsessed with non-monogamy and obsessed with it as a relationship orientation. Sometimes that's what people call it. And a way of life. And, personally, in my life, I feel like there was life before I learned about non-monogamy and life after. I really do feel like it was that big of a difference in my life. And I attribute a lot of my communication skills, my interpersonal skills to non-monogamy and learning about non-monogamy. And the way that I view the world, and my ability to ask for what I want is very related to the pillars of non-monogamy that I have learned. So, my kind of non-monogamy journey started unintentionally-- when I was in college, I had a partner who I had asked to be open, not really knowing what that meant. And then in 2017, I also had a partner who I'd

asked to be open. Again, not really knowing what it meant, and kind of feeling--judging myself for having these needs that weren't being met by the relationship, and I wanted it to be met outside of the relationship, and not having much language around that. So in 2017, after that second kind of openish relationship ended--which both of those open relationships were not done well, by any means. (laughs) After that ended, there was an event happening at House of Yes, which is a venue in Brooklyn that I feel like you two would spend a lot of time at--

Cindra

(laughs)

Ariella

--outside of COVID and if you were in the States. So there was an event happening that was presented by an organization called Curious Fox. And I'm obsessed with Curious Fox and I'll talk more about them after, but they were basically hosting a one-day symposium on polyamory called Polyamory 101. It was a day of lectures that you could buy tickets to and just get taught about non-monogamy. So I went with a girl I had dated previously, and we weren't currently dating at the time and she was like, "I think this is for you. I think this is for you. I don't know if it's for me, but I think this is for you." And I was like, "I think it's for me too!" And literally from that point on, I was like, "Okay, I identify as a non-monogamous person, and I will live my life that way." It was really an overnight situation. And the thing that spoke to me so much was from Effy Blue, who runs Curious Fox, that's their organization.

And what they had said--they had articulated this concept called Relationship by Design, which really, really spoke to me. So basically, how they explained it was that if you love to cook, and your partner loves to play music, and you're moving into an apartment together, you're gonna make sure that your kitchen is nice enough for you to cook in, that you have a place for them to hang their guitars up, or whatever, a place where they can play music. And that just in the way that we would decorate our apartments and make sure that our homes exactly support the people inhabiting it, that is how we can design our relationships. And I was like, "My life's changed."

Cindra

(laughs)

Ariella

And so I was like, "Okay, I'm changed forever." So that's kind of where my journey started with non-monogamy and it's evolved through, you know-- that's where it started. And then I had a three year non-monogamous relationship that ended during COVID, where I was really practicing all the time, and getting super comfortable and uncomfortable in what non-monogamy has to bring up. So, that's a bit of the origin story of me and non-monogamy.

Cindra

Mmm. I love that, Relationship by Design.

Luke

Yeah.

Cindra

That's so cool. Yeah.

Luke

I was in the car with a friend of mine and her daughter--I'd say she's maybe thirteen year old daughter. And she's like, "Hey mom, who's this dude?" And she's like, "Oh, it's my friend, Luke." And she's like, "Yeah, but you have a boyfriend." And she's like, "Yeah, but he's just my friend." And she's like, "Does your boyfriend know that you guys are hanging out?" And she's like, "Yeah yeah, they're their friends, too." And this little girl was, you know, a little bit thinking about that. And she's like, "Are you married?" And I'm like, "Yeah." And she's like, "Where's your wife?" And I was like, "She's on a date." And she was like..."What?" And so, you know, I explained it to her. I let her ask all of her questions and explained it to her. And her mom was like, (whispers) "I am fucking loving this. I am loving this--go, go!" And so we stopped for some food. And her mom said, "Hey, you done with this darling?" to her daughter and she's like, "Yeah, it's a lot to take in." And I said, "Look, relationships can be like the ones that you see in Disney. But they don't have to be like that for them to be a good relationship. For them to be a good relationship, you both just need to be, you know, I guess, happy in the relationship and having needs fulfilled somehow in that relationship." And I said, "Does that make more sense?" And she's like, "Yeah, I guess so.

That makes more sense." But, Relationship by Design. It's, so many people tell themselves that I'm not good in relationships, or I'm bad at relationships, or I'm always the reason that relationships end. Maybe you're not having the right relationship for you?

Ariella

Yes! Exactly, exactly. And I think the part that I'm so obsessed with, as it relates to non-monogamy and Relationship by Design, is the fact that you could design your relationship and design your apartment exactly--after the design process, it might look like a monogamous relationship. It might look from the outside, like any other apartment, but the fact is that you intentionally put all the pieces there. It was built from the ground up, which is the concept that I hold on to and treasure for dear life. Where it doesn't matter what my relationships wind up looking like in the future, they will be built on a foundation of non-monogamy, because we are having the hard conversations at the get go. What is the purpose of the relationship? What are our needs? And how do we want those to be addressed by the relationship or not addressed by the relationship? And moving from there and expanding from there. So it's the design process that I find to be so integral to healthy relationships, regardless of whether it winds up that you're monogamous. Does that makes sense?

Cindra

Yeah, yeah, absolutely. And I think, for a lot of people, they might not even act on the non-monogamy piece. But it's knowing that they have the space to

explore and knowing that, you know, maybe for some people their version of non-monogamy is we can like perv on other people and talk about it. Like "Oh, wow, you know, that human's really attractive, I find this person really hot." And actually open up that space, because even that space in kind of a relationship that you see depicted in a movie, you know, people are like "Oh, how dare you say that that person's attractive! Oh, I'm feeling so upset because you think someone else is attractive!" So maybe it's even just opening up that space and playing with that a little bit, you know, and that piece takes so much pressure off. Just being able to say, "Oh, wow, I find that person really attractive." Being able to say that when you're in a relationship, it just, it makes it so much more fun and playful. And also, it allows you to just acknowledge human nature, like human nature finds people attractive.

Ariella

Totally, totally. And in trying to work within an entirely monogamous lens in the way that we've been taught, is like putting on blinders a lot of the time, and trying not to engage in the world around you, because that might make your partner feel uncomfortable, or whatever it is. And I find the blinders to be incredibly unnatural, and also not conducive to my own growth and connection as a person. I want to be able to take the blinders off. And actually, no, I want to look at who's in the room with me (laughs). I want to be able to acknowledge things, I want to be able to tell you that I think someone's cute, I want to be able to flirt with other people, or flirt with them in front of you, if that's something that you find fun. You know, we can play and make up the rules that feel aligned for us, and I think that that is so

important. And something that also with the natural, the human nature part of it, is that we are animals! And, it's not actually that common that people stay monogamous to one person their whole lives. You know, a lot of this was handed to us and taught by societal norms, and what the institution of marriage, how that helps keep people kind of in these controlled bubbles, and, you know, land ownership and wherever this evolved from. That it's not exactly evolving with us as human beings. So, Esther Perel, who's a famous relationship therapist, talks about acknowledging the third. How knowing that if you're in a monogamous partnership, or if you're in a partnership, there will always be a third present, whether that's your partner's coworker that makes you feel a little nervous, or whether that's, you know, people that they may see on the street that they might find attractive...there will always be other people in the picture. There is no way that the two of you can exist within a vacuum. So she basically just encourages you to talk about the third.

Acknowledge the fact that you're both living and breathing human beings and have the conversations about what is it that you want to do about that?

Because, allowing the third in that way to be part of the conversation from the get go, will exactly what you're saying, allow a lot more freedom and space, regardless of what the actions and behaviors wind up being after that. It's really about the ability to talk first.

Cindra

Yeah, for sure. And the freedom I think that that brings. And the growth and expansion, like you were saying, you know, you have to have these conversations that sometimes are a little bit confronting and are a little bit

challenging, because if you've only previously had monogamous relationships, you've never had these conversations. I'm going on a date, how does that feel for you? You know, I'm feeling nervous, how are you feeling? And what are our boundaries? And, like you said, what's our intention with this relationship? And, you have to have these conversations that really any relationship should be having anyway. However, the nature of a monogamous relationship means that you don't really have these conversations, that it's all expected. And it's all kind of these loose expectations. So when someone does break those expectations, when someone doesn't fulfill them, then shit hits the fan in a monogamous relationship, because I haven't had these conversations.

Ariella

Right. And I feel like a lot of that comes down to assuming what the expectations of the relationship are. And a lot of that is given to us.

Cindra

Yeah.

Ariella

Which I think is a real lack of clarity--

Cindra

Yeah!

Ariella

-- to know why I'm--what the boundaries are. If we just talk about it, it's a lot clearer.

Luke

Yeah!

Ariella

And then we can actually see how we want to operate.

Luke

Yeah, I had a conversation with somebody about that we're in an open relationship, and they said "Oh, that never works. You know, I never see that working for anybody. Somebody always breaks the rules." And then they followed it up with, "I don't even look at anybody else other than my partner." And I was like, "Well, bullshit, but sure."

Cindra

(laughing)

Luke

I call massive bullshit on that. But, you know, if that's your belief, that is totally fine. And I said "I kind of disagree." I would think my perception is that people in open relationships or non-monogamous relationships actually

have far more communicated rules and boundaries than people that aren't, or that are in a monogamous relationship. Most of their rules and boundaries are assumed or not spoken about, or, like you said, passed on to you, as vague and, sort of, by not knowing what you can and can't do, you kind of end up thinking that you can or can't do really anything!

Cindra

Yeah.

Ariella

Yeah. And then it's more taboo, if you're talking about heteronormative relationships, the whole trope of I can't be friends with people with the opposite gender, and all that kind of bullshit comes into play as well. And I also think it's interesting in talking to non queer or non...(laughs) okay, non queer or monogamous. I was gonna say, non non-monogamous, and I was like "This makes no sense."

Cindra

(laughing)

Ariella

Sometimes I'll ask them if they're getting into a relationship, or they're talking to someone, and they're like, "I think we're maybe gonna be boyfriend and girlfriend," or whatever it is. I'm just like, "Out of curiosity, what's making

you want to do that? Why a relationship?" And it really stumps them.

(laughs)

Cindra

Yeah!

Luke

Or, have you guys talked about what the expectations of that relationship looks like?

Ariella

Right, or what the intention is, or what the purpose is, or what you're hoping to get out of it. Because a lot of times I find in myself, too, where you're like, "Oh, well I've, you know, been seeing them for a couple of months now, and I guess that's, you know, the next thing to do." And I just find entering into relationships with that kind of mentality is...is just not my favorite way. And it feels very much like that is the path if we're following quite linear relationship patterns, and, you know, ending in marriage and kids, and whatnot. And of course, I know that your marriage is designed very differently than what the traditional marriage is designed like. But, it all is kind of people stepping on this path that they don't even realize that they're stepping on. They're just like, "Oh, I was told to walk here." And then there's a lack of consciousness about it.

Luke

Yeah.

Cindra

Yeah, definitely. And we're not saying that non-monogamy is for everyone. And, I also think that everyone should consider what they want to do when they come into a relationship.

Ariella

Yes.

Cindra

There is options. I feel like--well, definitely for me, probably until I started listening to Dan Savage's podcast, the Savage Lovecast, I had literally no idea that an open relationship, or non-monogamy, or polyamory was even a thing. I literally don't know, because we live in Australia, and we live in I guess it's a bigish city, but it's not really compared to, you know, you guys over there. And there was definitely no examples for me in my life at all of an open relationship. And, I'd never heard of it before. So I didn't even know it was an option until I started listening to these podcasts. And then I was like, "Oh, that actually sounds really good for me." And I was really interested in that idea because of my sexuality, and that having that relationship would allow me to keep exploring that and honoring that as well for me. So, that kind of intrigued me and brought me into the idea. However, if I hadn't listened to that podcast, I probably wouldn't know it was an idea, and I would have kept

being these relationships, and feeling like the other part of me wasn't really fulfilled. So, for a lot of people, they don't even know it's option.

Ariella

Yes! I'm curious, were you two in--is this your first non-monogamous relationship, or were you in non-monogamous relationships before?

Luke

No, it's our first one, so we're, you know, we're still pups at this. But--

Ariella

That's okay, we're all pups at everything!

Cindra

(laughs)

Luke

Yeah, exactly. And it's kind of, even the fact that we're sort of pups at it, the fact that we've started talking about it, there's been more people even in our hometown that have been living, you know, in non-monogamy but secret, you know?

Cindra

Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Luke

Like it's, you know, something that's not spoken about. You know, only certain people know about it, and they've been speaking about it more and sort of come out of the woodwork. So--

Ariella

Cool!

Luke

Yeah, it is really--it's really cool.

Cindra

Yeah.

Luke

Yeah, I remember listening to Dan Savage's podcast as well, and he spoke about what you were saying earlier, how, you know, humans aren't really sort of traditionally great at being monogamous for a lifetime. And, you know, you talk about somebody who's been married for fifty years and, you know, they kiss somebody, or cheated, you know, once or twice over fifty years. And people say, "Oh, you know, they're terrible in a relationship." And it's actually, you know, when you look at human history, they're actually pretty good at monogamy--for fifty years, that's pretty good! That's pretty good at

monogamy, I think. And, you know, he even talks about the difference--he has this funny scale that he works with on people breaking monogamy. You know, he'll say, you know, "I think there's a difference between somebody having a drunken pash on a work trip, or sleeping with your sister at the wedding." You know?

Cindra

(laughing)

Ariella

I guess partner's sister? (laughing)

Luke

Yeah! Yeah, well, your partner's sister, like the wife's sister or the bridesmaid at the wedding.

Ariella

Yeah.

Luke

And it's like, you know, there's different scales to it, even for people to be considered, you know, a terrible person in a relationship.

Ariella

Totally.

Luke

And then just having those conversations. Somebody asked me at an event that I spoke at a couple of months ago, "Do you have to be in a non-monogamous relationship for it to be a conscious relationship?"

Ariella

Interesting.

Luke

Yeah. And I said, "No." I said, I said no. I said, "As long as you have, I think as long as you have a discussion around what's expected out of the relationship, you both talk about it. Talk about rules, boundaries, what you want, what your desires are in that relationship, and even if you choose for then it to be non-monogamous, or monogamous, that's conscious to me. That's a conscious choice.

Ariella

Yeah.

Luke

You're not doing what's just expected out of a relationship.

Ariella

Totally. I think that's the same thing with the design. If you design your relationship and then it looks like a monogamous relationship...great. Enjoy it. That's great. As long as you know the purpose and the intention behind the boundaries and rules that you're putting into place. And if those are yeah, we don't sleep with other people, and we don't flirt with other people, then that's great. As long as you talked about it, and it's not assumed, then yeah, I agree with you, then it is inherently conscious, because you are looking at things that you would not traditionally be looking at.

Luke

Mmm. Totes.

Ariella

Something else I find interesting about non-monogamy, is the perception that it's a free for all.

Cindra

(laughs)

Ariella

And, you had said earlier, that often non-monogamous couples have a lot more boundaries and rules than traditional monogamous couples might even. So I'm curious to hear about your experience, and maybe some of the

agreements and boundaries that you two have. And I can share some from my past that I felt like were fun.

Luke

Yeah.

Ariella

And, I also want to say it's interesting, sometimes I'll go out with people on dates, and they'll know that I'm a non-monogamous person, which makes them feel like they can have a wandering eye a bit, when we're out together. And so I've also had to be like, "Hey, I'm not non-monogamous in every single moment, when we're out together. And I want you to focus on me."

Cindra

(laughing) Eyes on me.

Ariella

Eyes on me, baby. Or if they're really wandering eye, I'll be like, "Hey, seems like you need to go take a lap. Go take a lap, see what's around, and then come back here. If that's what feels good to you." You know? So there's kind of a lack of clarity of how is non-monogamy handled in any kind of moment?

Luke

Yeah.

Ariella

Because this visibility to flirt with other people when you're out and whatnot, usually happens when you're more in a partnership, and you have those agreements, as opposed to the process of getting to know each other can look quite the same as getting to know someone when you're not monogamous?

Cindra

Yes.

Luke

Totally.

Ariella

When you are monogamous rather.

Cindra

Yeah.

Luke

That actually came up in that conversation where I said, "Oh, and you know, so what if someone breaks rules, then maybe you need to change the rules?"
You know, depending on how big the rule break is.

Ariella

Yeah!

Luke

Maybe that's a discussion. "Hey, that rule didn't work. Maybe we need to re-discuss the rules." So yeah, they've kind of been fluid first. We started with, you know, not a whole lot of rules other than everything was transparent.

Ariella

Mhm.

Cindra

Yeah, so the person going on the date could share as much as they wanted and the other person could ask as much as they wanted pretty much, or not anything. So, we've kind of been pretty open about that. And, the only kind of rule that we had was just not anyone in our immediate circle.

Ariella

Yeah.

Cindra

Because Newcastle where we live is very small. So--not that, I mean, everyone knows what our relationship is anyway, because we put it on the internet. But, yeah, just no one in our immediate circle. We don't want things

to get messy and yeah, so that's kind of pretty much--and then obviously not when we have the kids here, like that's kind of obvious, I feel.

Luke

Yeah. And...yeah, so it's not sort of something that's around the kids. Our family unit is sort of our tight family unit in that sense. And, one of the things that we learned, although we really enjoy talking about each other's dating experience, it's really nice to hear about the connections that you have, and it's even kind of hot to hear about, you know, the sex--

Ariella

Uh huh.

Luke

--is that, this is home base, this is our priority. Our relationship is our priority. And if any point, either one of us, you know, wants to, you know, pull things up and say, "Hey, I'm not comfortable with this. I need to talk about this." It's not like, "Oh, that's your shit, I'm going on a date." You know, we talk about it. And, one thing that we learn, although everything's really transparent for us, and we do have the right to ask and share, one thing we realized that doesn't feel so good is to look at each other's messages to the other person. Because, although we both know that there's that messaging there, or that conversation, seeing somebody else's intimate words to somebody else can feel a little bit icky.

Cindra

It's too much.

Ariella

Oh totally, I would never do that

Cindra

It's too much.

Luke

Yeah.

Cindra

I think at the start, we really wanted to be in--not involved, but we really wanted to be transparent. And here's a message, do you want to read it? And then I was like, "Oh, I actually can't, it's making me feel sick." (laughing)

Ariella

Totally, which is also really interesting. And I think that that will be an interesting point, for people that are kind of new to non-monogamy, or have never explored it, to hear that we have our own things that make us feel kind of squishy and insecure. And it is not just free for all compersion happiness for your partner all the time. It's like, no, I have actual boundaries that make

me feel good or make me not feel good. And, I need to practice honoring those, understanding those, and expressing those.

Luke

Yeah.

Cindra

Yes. And I think if you didn't feel--if you didn't feel something, then you probably, your primary relationship maybe isn't that great? You know? I feel like jealousy--

Luke

Is a real thing.

Cindra

People think, "Oh, well, you probably don't get jealous." I'm like, "I'm jealous as fuck!" I get jealous, and sometimes I feel a little bit kind of self conscious or something, you know. And that's normal. That's a normal reaction. So, people think, "Oh, I could never do that. I'd feel too jealous. You do you still feel jealous. It's just that--

Ariella

Yeah.

Luke

That's normally got a lot to do with you. It's like, "Oh, I'm feeling kind of jealous. I just need to sit with this for a little bit and process this. And then I'll come back to you with what I think it's about." And you come back and you're like, "Oh, so I think the reason why I'm challenged by that thing, or, you know, what happened is because of this." It's not like "you made me" or--

Ariella

Of course.

Luke

Yeah, so that's definitely one thing and that transparency that we share with each other, we also have to and really do share with the people that we date, as in, hey, this isn't like my primary relationship. So, if that's not suitable for you, if you're looking for a primary relationship, then that's probably not what this could be for you. And, yeah, and they're like "Well, so do you talk to your partner about this?" I'm like, "Yeah, but if there's something that you would like me not to share, or there's something that you really do want me to share with my partner, then, you know, you just tell me that too."

Cindra

Mmm.

Ariella

Totally. And for people that are new to this, too, what this is called, Luke and Cindra's-- how their operating is hierarchical polyamory or hierarchical non-monogamy, which is what my past partner and I did. Where we do have a primary partnership that is kind of the entity that we take care of. Like you said, the relationship feels like the priority. It's not just, oh, if you're uncomfortable, you have to deal with that. Where a lot of people also operate in polyamory or non-monogamy that's non hierarchical, and are seeing multiple people and have multiple partnerships. But my main experience is with hierarchal as well. So, this is one type of non-monogamy out of many, many different types of orientations and whatnot.

Luke

Yeah, totally. And if anybody's listening, and what our experiences and examples are, aren't exactly what you're experiencing, if you're looking for more of a polyamory, multiple primary relationships, then, you know, send us a message, because we actually have, you know, a few really cool resources and people on Instagram that we can sort of forward you to, and I'm sure Ariella does as well.

Ariella

Totally.

Luke

So--

Cindra

Yeah, this is just our--

Luke

This is just our experience.

Cindra

--of what works for us, and--

Ariella

For sure.

Cindra

--I think, just going back to what you were saying about, you know, everyone thinks that it's a free for all, and we have spoken about this before, but just in case you're new to our podcast: No, we don't fuck other people every single weekend (laughs). New Castle is small. Tinder here expires very quickly, and we don't have that much time. So (laughs)

Ariella

Yeah.

Cindra

You know, if it flows and it feels good, then we will make or will create time.

Luke

Yeah.

Cindra

And like you said, our relationship is a priority. So Luke and I, you know, are pretty busy, we coach, we have the kids one full week every fortnight. So, you know, bringing someone else into our worlds, I always am very upfront. I'll tell them: "I'm very time poor." So, you know, it's just gonna have to kind of work when it does, and just being upfront about that as well. And also there came a time last year that towards the end of the year, when I said to Luke, "Actually, let's just close this down for a few months, you know? I feel--

Luke

Yeah, it's really--I'm feeling really overwhelmed with business stuff and Christmas coming up and school ending for you. Let's just call it the way it is. Do you want to shut dating down for a little bit? Maybe we'll, you know, see what what the new year brings? And we're like, "Yeah, cool." And once it was cold out in the open, yeah, we both agree that we're just gonna focus inward on the relationship for a little bit. And then, you know, see what the future brings.

I love that. I had a similar experience with my last partner, too, where we were, we would often open and close depending on what was happening.

Cindra

Yeah.

Ariella

And depending on--sometimes what can happen in non-monogamous couples, I don't know if this is your experience or not, but sometimes what happens is that there's a lot of conversations about non-monogamy, and not a lot of conversations about things other than the relationship and how it's going. And you can be kind of too intense in that we'll be super conscious "Is everybody's being taken care of?" And we miss out a little bit on what would a normal couple do tonight? Probably watch TV and not, you know, dissect the future of relationships and how it's going and blah, blah, blah. So my--I've seen a therapist at the time, who was a poly positive therapist. Which, if you were seeking out a therapist, I would definitely recommend seeking out someone who has an understanding of alternative relationships, so that there's no judgment and bias coming into the room with you. So anyway, she was kind of like, "Why don't you two close the relationship for two weeks." And she suggested that we read my two favorite chapters of Ethical Slut, which are Jealousy and Agreements. And she was like, "Close the relationship for two weeks. A lot's going on. Don't talk about the function of the relationship, don't talk about the structure, all that kind of stuff. Close it. In two weeks, make a time to have a conversation where you can open it

back up and decide what your rules are moving forward, and your agreements and whatnot. And my partner and I would go from doing long distance to doing in person. And so every time that the circumstances of the relationship changed, we would also have another meeting to decide, okay, what are our agreements for when we're doing long distance? What are the agreements for now that we're back in the same city and all that kind of stuff? So it is more, even the non-monogamy is fluid.

Luke

Totally.

Cindra

Yeah, yes, yes. And that feels good for us as well--

Luke

That it's not set in stone.

Cindra

Mmm. And I never wanted it to be. I think pretty sure I said to you at the start, "Oh, you know, we might change our minds." And I was like, "We might change our minds and decide to be poly, and decide to have full other relationships." We're open to that. We're open to being monogamous or open to the structure changing over time.

Ariella

Yeah!

Cindra

And that's just feels to me like life, you know? We don't just stay the same person, we change and we ebb and we flow and we go and we--with whatever's happening. So for us, keeping our relationship stuck in something that's maybe not working, that just didn't feel good. So knowing that we have the capacity to change it around is--feels really good.

Luke

Totally.

Ariella

Totally. And it's the--you know, being in a relationship, we hope that we are encouraged to continue evolving as individuals. And it's just allowing that same grace to be granted towards the relationship entity, the relationship structure itself. That it too can evolve, so that we're all kind of growing and moving and not stagnant and seeing what else we need and where else we're going to get that as things change over time.

Cindra

Yeah.

Luke

Yeah, I think it's one big thing for a lot of people that I speak to about it, that stops them from even having the conversation around, you know, what can we design this relationship for other than what it is right now, is that whatever they might discuss, they might HAVE to do. Like if somebody brings up, "Oh, I've always wanted to try non-monogamy." They don't even want to ask the question because they're worried to hear it, because if they hear it, then they might have to do it. Otherwise the relationship is over.

Cindra

Yeah.

Luke

And then even if they decide, "Yes, I want to try a non-monogamous relationship," then that's what it is for the rest of time, whether it works or not.

Ariella

Right.

Luke

It's got to be fluid. We're fluid humans, we change, our needs change, our wants change, our boundaries change.

Ariella

Totally. I would be curious how--I'm thinking about how would I coach someone through that. And it feels like my main piece of advice, if someone's afraid to have the conversation first, because of it immediately meaning that something needs to shift, or whatever it is. Sometimes I like the idea of bringing up a hard conversation, and then being like, "We can't act on this yet."

Cindra

Yeah.

Ariella

Let's take time to marinate on this thing. I had a client a couple weeks back, who had been seeing someone for months, and their relationship was not really physically intimate. They weren't having sex, they were kissing on occasion, whatnot. And they really wanted to bring up to this person that they're seeing, like, "How do I--I want to start having sex with this person. How do I talk about it?" And I was kind of like, "You can have the conversation and also, let's talk about this first, and not have sex. Let's still not have sex, let's just let this kind of marinate and see how it goes." So even if you're someone that wants to have a conversation about non-monogamy, you can bring it up and be like, "This is not-- I'm not ready to dive in yet. This is something I want to start thinking about. And I'm really curious to have you marinate on this. And then let's talk about it in a couple weeks and see kind of how things are feeling. In the meantime, if we want to, I have a

couple of book recommendations if you'd be interested in learning more that way. And then we can kind of have more of an informed conversation and see how things feel. And, if it feels like a no to you, I want to figure out how we can make you feel really comfortable and see if there's any wiggle room there, or whatever it is." It's just allowing more space around the conversation itself. What would you say about that?

Cindra

Yeah, definitely. I mean, we did that at the start. You know? When we started dating, it was kind of pretty not long into that time where I said to **Luke**, you know, "How do you feel about monogamy?" (laughs)

Luke

So it started with, we'd been dating for a little bit, and then we just sort of clipped in and said, you know, "are we boyfriend and girlfriend now?" And we were kinda like "Yeah!" And then **Cindra** was like, "So on the weekend, this weekend coming up, we're not gonna have the kids, I'd like to pencil in some time to talk about our expectations of this relationship."

Ariella

Hell. Yeah.

Luke

And I was just like, "Yeah, sounds great. Cool. Oh, cool. Cool. Cool. Yeah. Pencil it in. That's great." I was like fucking shitting myself.

Ariella

Sure.

Luke

But, I was also really excited, because I was--you know, our conversations are normally very, you know, alive. And, you know, bring a lot of growth and they're fucking brilliant. So, haven't had a bad one yet, what's to be afraid of?

Cindra

(laughing)

Luke

And then leading up to it, I was like, "Oh, so this is kinda driving me nuts. Can you give me a little bit more context around the expectations piece, so I know what I can bring to it?" And Cindra was like, "You know, non-monogamy, monogamy this that. These things, these things, the kids. Just, you know, for you to think about." And I went away with some friends and I was like, "So I'm pretty sure she wants to be polyamorous." And they were like, "Has she said that she wants to be polyamorous?" And I'm like, "No." And they're like, "Cause that's probably not really healthy for you to assume

that that's what it's gonna be." So, yeah. Cool, cool, cool. And then we had the discussion and talked about non-monogamy. And I think Cindra's question was, "So how do you feel about monogamy?" And I'm like, "Well, yeah, we're boyfriend and girlfriend. That's what, that's what you do, right? That's a relationship. Right? That's great. Monogamy is great." And she's like, "So how's it worked out for you in your past relationships? No judgment, but have you ever broken the monogamy?" And I'm like "Oh, yeah. Yeah. Yes. That's a yes." And she, then she, you know, totally schooled me on that, you know, that's not what our relationship has to be. And it could look like this, especially since we're both queer.

Ariella

Yeah.

Luke

You know? And one of my friends that actually, when I've spoken to them before about it had said, "Maybe she just wants to talk to you about non-monogamy around the fact that, you know, you both like, you know, people that are, you know, just the gender that's in this relationship."

Ariella

Yes.

Luke

So, maybe that's what it could be. And then when we talked about it, I was just like a massive breath of relief, like "Oh, this make so much sense. Yes." But we also said-- Cindra said "This--nothing has to change today. This is just the conversation today. And then how about we schedule some more time during the week to sort of come back to it with some decisions?"

Ariella

Yes! Amazing. That's so good!

Luke

Yeah, this queen over here!

Cindra

(laughing)

Ariella

You nailed it!

Luke

Yeah.

Cindra

I think, yeah, I think I had built myself up, because I knew that I wanted to have a non-monogamous--I knew that I wanted to be non-monogamous in my relationships. So I think I was like, "Right, I have to do this from the very start, not leave it. I have to make myself clear. And if Luke doesn't respond to it, then I'll deal with it. You know, I'll decide what I'm gonna do about it, but yeah, I think I'll just, let's just get it out upfront." And, I think that was so much easier than waiting until we were...whatever, you know, waiting until we were three months in, waiting until we were moved in together, waiting until we loved each other, or whatever it may be.

Ariella

Totally.

Cindra

It was just like, "No, let's get it out upfront" and offer him the opportunity to learn more, basically, that was, you know...

Luke

Yeah. Ugh, how many people have we spoken to that have said, "Oh, I've always wanted a non-monogamous relationship, but my partner would never be down with it." And you're like, "Have you ever asked them?" And they're like "Oh no, I could never!"

Ariella

Right? It's interesting. And some people feel like, "Oh, I know I want it, but I want to establish a foundation first." And I'm just like, "What does that really mean, though?"

Cindra

Yeah.

Ariella

So in my experience, too, when I met my last partner, we were gonna be-- when I had first introduced myself, and we were just friends, I was like, "I'm queer. And I'm non-monogamous. And that's what you need to know about me." And now when I'm dating people, if I'm hanging out, if I'm just, you know, hanging out with someone for a night or whatever, then it's not necessarily a conversation that needs to be had. But if I'm hanging out with someone over and over, and it seems like things are skewing maybe relationshipy or intimate...y? (Laughing) Oh yeah, intimatey, sure! If things are skewing towards, you know, more intimacy, then I'm like, "Okay, we should have a conversation about this. Because for me, this is a hard line."

Cindra

Yeah.

Ariella

So in my own life, I know that I want non-monogamous relationships. So, if this is something that we do want to see continue to evolve and move forward, then this feels like we should start to have a conversation about whether we're both on the same page about that. It doesn't need to be a conversation about what our agreements would be. I don't feel like I'm there yet. But I want to be really transparent with you that that will be something I'm looking for in my future relationships, so you need to have that information.

Cindra

Yeah.

Luke

Yeah, totally. And that's similar to how ours played out in that I went straight into our conversation by saying, "I don't think I could have another girlfriend at the same time as you as a girlfriend, because--or a boyfriend or any other friend relationship, because this is a lot in my life right now." And she was like, "Oh, no, that's not what I'm talking about. Let me clear it up." And then it was like, "Well, so do we start" and all of my fear responses are coming up. So I'm like, "So do I, you know, do I start sharing you like now? Are you going out tonight with somebody?" And I'm like, "I like the idea, but it's kind of-- it's a lot for me."

Ariella

Yeah.

Luke

And we're like, "No, no, no, let's see what happens here, in this. That's the future of the relationship that I want." So it was very similar.

Ariella

Totally. I also think it's interesting in this fear response coming up, even the thought that you were like "Oh Cindra's gonna ask me to be polyamorous. I don't know if I want that." And your friend's like, "What? Did she say that? Why are you assuming that? Or is it safe to assume that?" Or whatever. I also find this comes up a lot when I was with my last partner, I'd have a lot of jealousy about the person. He saw one person continuously throughout our relationship. And I saw many, many different people. (laughs) And sometimes we saw people together, which was really fun too. But, he would always go out with this hot tall blonde girl with a bangin' body. And I was like, "Fuck! This isn't making me--it's bringing up all of my childhood insecurities."

Cindra

Mmm.

Ariella

So, in navigating our own fear responses and our jealousy in that way, one of the frameworks that I used that I was taught--probably through Curious Fox where I had gotten a lot of my non-monogamy information education--was the "I have a story in my head" framework, which Brené Brown says the story I'm telling myself is whatever it is. But just to offer that as a way in into some of these conversations after getting consent to have a difficult conversation, but as a way to start of like "Okay, what is the story in my head? I have a story in my head that you're gonna ask to be polyamorous and I am you know, I'm not prepared for that, I don't know what I'm doing, I feel like I need a lot more resources, whatever it is." Or for me, I have a story in my head that, you know, banging a hot blonde lady is gonna be a lot more fulfilling for you. And, you know, whatever it is. So, that is how I wind up navigating a lot of difficult conversations so that I can take responsibility in what it is that my brain has totally kind of construed. And the intense narrative that I'm being delivered and that I need clarity on.

Luke

Yeah, totally.

Cindra

Mmm. Yeah. Yeah, we use a lot.

Luke

Yeah, we use it a lot. I didn't have that--I hadn't watched that Brené Brown, you know, or read her stuff at that time. So I didn't have that language tool, which is an amazing tool, but I think I said something along the lines of, "I'm a hundred percent in on this. But obviously, since I've never done it before, I can't promise how I'm gonna react the first time we do it, but I'm willing to see what that looks like." And, at this point, it doesn't feel scary. But that doesn't mean that it might not feel scary, you know, when it comes time.

Cindra

Yeah.

Luke

And I was pretty upfront and honest about that. And then as the days went by, and I started to really process what it meant and the liberation and the, you know, the freedom that it meant, I got really fucking excited about it. But, to be honest, it was months before we actually...it was a while before we acted on it. And it--

Cindra

I think I kind of acted on it at the start...

Luke

Oh, you did, yeah, yeah. But...there was--well, there was a couple of spontaneous things.

Cindra

Yeah, yeah.

Luke

We were just out and about. And you know, something popped up. But it was months before we started actively dating--

Cindra

Pursuing it.

Luke

Pursuing it. Yeah.

Ariella

I'm curious, what were your agreements? Or what are your agreements now around spontaneity or around more planned hangs? Do you--

Luke

Spontaneity's kinda the dream, right?

Cindra

Spontaneity is a dream, but honestly, I mean, with everything that's happened, I mean, things are things are open pretty normalish here. And, we don't really go out that much. (laughing)

Ariella

So when you're saying spontaneity is the dream, are you--is it cool for one of you to meet someone while you're out, and then just kind of be like, "I'm not coming home tonight." That kind of stuff?

Luke

That would be--

Cindra

Yeah.

Luke

Yeah, pretty much. Yeah, that would be fine. Yeah.

Cindra

Yeah. I like spontaneity piece, but it just doesn't really happen very often--

Luke

Yeah.--

Cindra

If ever. (laughs)

Ariella

Yeah, it's interesting. I--the way that my last partner and I did it was, if we were to meet someone when we were out, we would have to make voice contact with the other person. Because the way that we operated was we would get each other's blessing, essentially.

Luke

Yeah.

Ariella

So and we had a lot of interesting agreements that went along with dating other people, which I can share some of them.

Cindra

Yeah!

Ariella

One of them was, if I was going to go on a date with someone else, I would have to plan a date for the two of us. So, when I was asking for his blessing, essentially, I would be like, "Hey, I want to go out with Ashley on Wednesday. Can I take you out on Saturday night?" So I would have to have

a date for us planned within the same, one week's time, so that we weren't just putting energy into other people.

Cindra

Yeah.

Ariella

And we were doing two dates--we could go on two dates a month. We didn't really text people too much. We had a lot of boundaries. So we didn't really text the folks that we were going on dates with that much. And the other thing that we would do, is that we would put money in a date fund whenever we went on a date with someone else. So--

Cindra

That's cool.

Ariella

We were--it was really fun. So if we went on a date with someone in person, and then we were still gonna take each other out, we put five dollars into the date fund. And if we were doing long distance, where we couldn't plan a date for the other person--well, at least that was before we are all getting creative with, you know, online dates. But, when that was like, "Oh, we can't possibly go on a date if we're not together in person," we would put twenty dollars in a date fund. And right before the relationship ended, we cleaned out the fund. (laughs) We had hundreds of dollars!

Cindra

Wowww.

Ariella

Yeah. And throughout the relationship, we would be like, "Oh, should we grab, you know, should we grab a hundred dollars from the date fund tonight and spend it?" You know, so we would kind of, we would have this thing to pull from which was also really fun.

Cindra

Yeah, that's cool.

Luke

That is cool. And yeah, we've got similar rules, I guess. Like, you don't want to be laying in bed, you know, with your partner, and then them, you know, texting. And we're not perfect at this. We've had to pull each other up at times. You meet some new person that's really cool, really interesting. And it's exciting. And sometimes you're like, "Hey, babe, you know, remember, remember the thing?" And it's like, "Oh, yeah, shit." You know? "Yes, you're right. Sorry." "It's cool." So, but since those times where we've been like, "Hey," or it's been like, "Hey, should we make this a thing now?" You know, I don't love the texting. So, it's like, "Yeah, actually, that should be a thing."

Cindra

I don't love the texting just with anyone. (laughs)

Luke

Cindra's not huge on the text flirts.

Cindra

I'm not, i'm not. Absolutely not, absolutely not. I'm like "No, let's just meet. I don't want to be on the text."

Ariella

Totally. I'm the same way. But it's an interesting thing that you're articulating as well, where this is--so that was really fluid. You found your rules kind of organically based on what was coming up and how you were handling it.

Luke

Yeah.

Ariella

Yeah, like that is so natural and beautiful how that comes about, too, where it's not--it doesn't have to just be like, "Okay, I know I want this, this, and this. This is what I'm bringing to the table in the negotiation piece." It can also be like, "Oh, you know what? I've been seeing this thing, and it's not

sitting totally right with me. How can we evolve the language around this? Or how can we address this piece?"

Cindra

Yeah.

Ariella

So that it can feel more comfortable to both of us?

Cindra

Mmm, yeah. Oh, I feel like we could go on and on and on, but we also should make this manageable for people to digest. And I feel like if people want to reach out to you, they can a hundred percent do that. If people want to reach out to us, they can a hundred percent do that. And, you know, both you and us would love to support people around this as well. So, you know, more than happy to kind of coach people around this. Because, yeah, I feel like both of us are really passionate. All of us are really passionate about designing your relationship. It's so cool.

Luke

Yeah, it's kind of our dream. It's kind of, you know, one of our big dreams to start supporting more people with, you know, relationships by design, like you said.

Ariella

Yeah. And I would recommend for folks that are really curious and don't know where to start, *The Ethical Slut* is kind of the user manual of non-monogamy. It is kind of--takes you through a bunch of relationship orientations, can give great ideas on certain types of agreements. Like I said earlier, the Agreements chapter and the Jealousy chapter I think are really, really important. *Ethical Slut* is required reading, along with *Mating in Captivity*, for my future partners. They must read it before we enter into a relationship.

Cindra

(laughs)

Ariella

So I really, really recommend it. And also, like I said multiple times, Curious Fox has a podcast. They're an organization. They used to have in person meetups based in New York and have lectures and talks and nights and parties where people could get to know each other who were in the non-monogamous community, but they've been doing virtual events, and they also have a podcast still going. So, if you are in search of community or more resources, those are definitely my two main plugs.

Cindra

Amazing--

Ariella

Besides us. (laughing) Besides the three of us.

Cindra

Yeah, aside from us, obviously.

Luke

Yeah.

Cindra

Yeah, and there's a amazing human in Australia who we had on the podcast ages ago, called Vixen Riot. And she does a lot of work in the poly community. So, if anyone needs a direct, you know, kind of resource for that.

Luke

Yeah.

Cindra

And she recommended some amazing online communities here in Australia as well. So--

Luke

Yeah.

Cindra

--definitely let us know if that is your jam.

Luke

Ariella, at the moment, is pumping out some incredible content. So if you're not on her mailing list, get on it. Because the ebooks that she has been releasing lately are just fire. So, get on it.

Cindra

Yeah. your Instagram is just @queerdatingcoach, isn't it?

Ariella

Yep, yep. And I'm not sure exactly when this podcast episode is gonna be airing, but I'll be doing my first group coaching program starting in May. So if you want to have more information about that, then the email list is the place to go. And you can always send me a DM on Instagram, just saying like, "Hey, I'm excited, and I'm waiting, and I'm interested." And I can tell you more about that or get you on a bit of a priority invite list. So, feel free to reach out with anything and everything related to that.

Cindra

Awesome! Well, thank you so much for your time. And, it's so lovely to chat and have you on again.

Ariella

Yeah, back at ya! Thanks for having me, I really enjoyed both of you.

Cindra

Such a fabulous chat!

Luke

Boom.

Cindra

Boom, there you go. (laughs)

Luke

Mic drop.

Cindra

Really cool to talk all things non-monogamy with Ariella. And, I really love her perspective around it. I feel like for a lot of people listening to this, I hope that hearing our conversation allowed you to be a little bit less scared and intimidated by the idea. We hope that we explained it well and that we made it pretty clear about our experiences and, you know, just know that this is our experience. And this is our--you know, we're literally just talking from what we have experienced, and your experiences might be a little bit different. So, if you feel like you want to reach out to us for support around this, you know

where to find us @consciouscouplescoaching on Instagram and all the links are in our bio there. And, I'm sure you can reach out to [Ariella](#) for support, too, @queerdatingcoach.

Luke

Even, you know, some of the some of the dating gods--dating advice gods that we referenced in this--Dan Savage, Esther Perel, The Curious Fox. There's some great books there: The Ethical Slut and Mating in Captivity. You know, be curious, see what else is out there, educate. And then, you know, make future decisions and choices based on what's good for you.

Cindra

Absolutely. And making it--well, it's like anything. It's making an informed choice and you have the option to make that choice for yourself. And really following and honoring that. I think that's what these kind of relationship by design concepts are all about when it comes down to it. So definitely go and follow [Ariella](#). And, obviously go and follow us because we will love that. And this episode has actually really inspired us to think about ways that we can create spaces for non-monogamous people in our community. So, if you are in our hometown, yeah, keep your eyes peeled. And if you want to help us (laughs) build a community, then please let us know. Because, yeah, I think that we're really passionate about, I guess, bringing non-monogamy into the light. Not saying it's for everyone, but bringing it from the shadows and the unknown into the light. So. That is what we are going to be thinking about. So let us know if you're keen to help us, join us. In the meantime,

make sure that you're sharing this with anyone that you think may be interested in knowing more about non-monogamy.

Luke

Yes. We would love to hear from all of you on this and if anybody needs any guidance or support around this space, then reach out and we're happy to point you in the right direction or if we can support yourselves, start that conversation.

Cindra

Please do give us a rating and review if you're listening on Apple podcasts and make sure you subscribe so you don't miss an episode. (Music plays) We can't wait to see you again very soon!

Luke

Byeee!

Cindra

Bye!