

Polysingleish

adventures in honest non-monogamy

Musings on Metamours

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*“Metamour”
(noun)
The partner of
your partner.*



https://polysingleish.files.wordpress.com/2015/09/img_7755.jpg

coordinating party outfits with a former metamour, and dear friend

Within the realm of honest non monogamy- and polyamory especially- I think that the significance of the metamour relationship is too

often overlooked and underplayed. It is strangely too easy to ignore the awesomeness of having your partners bond, and to be oblivious to the multitudes of relationships that come hand in hand when you are in multiple relationships with other people in multiple relationships. And, when metamours find themselves in opposition to one another, it can endanger multiple intimate relationships.

I’ve noticed that, when forging metamour relationships, many people focus on “getting along” first and foremost. It seems to be a too-common trope, especially amongst people still fresh to polyamory, that if you aren’t sexually attracted to them, then your metamour needs to be enthusiastically tolerated. I find that a little disappointing, personally. I’ve been there and tried that- tolerating my metamour- and I noticed that, for me, it affected my relationship with the shared partner.

At a very fundamental level, I believe we are all in relationship to one another. Even with the people we haven’t met yet. And, the moment you start engaging with someone who has multiple relationships, you are forging your own relationships to those relations. It’s kinda unavoidable.

I’ve become what would be termed a “Kitchen Table Polyamorist” (as opposed to the compartmentalised “Kitchen Cupboard” style of polyamory, or Parallel Polyamory where you know about your metamours but don’t talk about them). I enjoy not just meeting my partners’ other partners, I also desire to form friendships with them and have an enthusiastically positive relationship with them. And that kind of friendship can’t be forced, or feel obligated, it’s something I desire to be authentic.



[https://polysingleish.files.wordpress.com/2015/09/cowboy-](https://polysingleish.files.wordpress.com/2015/09/cowboy-kitchen.jpg)

[kitchen.jpg](https://polysingleish.files.wordpress.com/2015/09/cowboy-kitchen.jpg))

How do you prefer to organise your relationships?

Reality check: you won't like all your metamours, and they won't all like you. And, when that happens it will suck, and you may well find yourself wrestling with your inner [Perfect Poly Person](http://polysingleish.com/2015/02/09/the-perfect-poly-person/) (<http://polysingleish.com/2015/02/09/the-perfect-poly-person/>) and try to force yourself to like them. You might have metamours who end up (directly or indirectly) hurting you- even in ways that have nothing to do with your partner- and that pain may still be felt long after the relationship you shared is done (been there, done that).

You might have partners who refuse or are resistant to meeting your other partners, their own metamours. Your partners won't always get along, and may even hate one another without ever meeting. Over the years, you may experience the really not-so great metamours, the ones who stalk you at work and harass you day and night, who assault and bully you.

<https://polysingleish.files.wordpress.com/2015/09/friendship.jpg>) But what if your metamours were like your family, and you could purr and snuggle with them with as much ease as you do your partners? Dance with them at festivals? Laugh together into the wee hours of the night? Conspire about what shirt to buy your shared partner, and collaborate on birthday surprises?

What if you could even share a home with a metamour (independently of your partners) and develop loving and close familial bonds with them? What if they became not just metamours, but deeply connected friends?



Any healthy relationship is founded on knowing your mutual needs, wants, and desires. My advice is to treat your metamour not as metamour, but as a whole person. They are an entire human being, and you can embrace that there is the possibility of knowing them beyond the scope of the partner you share. Maybe all you'll ever do together is go for tea- if that's so, then I humbly suggest to make sure you don't just talk about your partner. Ask them about themselves. Learn what things they love, what make them tick, what they loathe, what excites them. In short, explore what it's like to get to know them just as you might with any potential friend, lover, colleague or acquaintance; don't limit them to the label of 'metamour'.

And, if you are reading this, and are struggling with a metamour, then I invite you to consider the following:

- What story or judgements might you have about this individual? Where has that come from?
- Are you picking up red-flags? (Red flags are important, don't let your inner PPP (<http://polysingleish.com/2015/02/09/the-perfect-poly-person/>) push them aside- talk about them with your partner, and/or address them with your metamour.)
- What could you do to reach out, and connect with your metamour in a meaningful way?

One day, I know I might find myself again with a metamour who I am not all that enthusiastic about, one who I have reservations about, or who just rubs me the wrong way. I'm not sure what I will do in that case, but I do notice that the practice of unconditional positive regard has helped me get over pre-judgements about people, reduce my experience of jealousy, enhance my capacity for compersion, and that I have better relationships in my life today, in general, than I did two, five, ten years ago.



(<https://www.facebook.com/geoanomaleye>)

At electroswing with two of my favorite humans- who also happen to be my metamours. Photo by Geo Anomeleye Shutter& Spore VFX, cropped with permission.

My metamours today are women who I love, am inspired by, share the dance floor with, and purr like kittens with. I have great memories of driving an overheating GM van back from Burning Man, with my metamour and I switching off driving and navigating as we refilled the coolant every hour and our partner napped in the back. Yes, we do all the ridiculous things you might expect, we conspire for birthdays and surprises, and while my sexuality with women remains with question marks, yes there are a few who I've made out with. Most of the time I've spent with my metamours has nothing to do with our shared partners though; it's been about us building our own connection. And, yes, sometimes they intimidate me, but mostly, they inspire me.

My metamours have taught me about new possibilities in unconditional love, and through the growing kinship, I find a sisterhood and healthy relationship with women that I've never had before in my life. There are still some metamours I haven't met, and some who I yearn to know more. And I have tremendous gratitude for all of them, because I know that it ain't always this good.

There is a full spectrum of relationship possibility open to you, you get to choose together what kind of relationship you forge with your metamours!

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