

I'm in love with my sister!

Hi everyone, and thank you so much for tuning in to Love & Libido with me, your host, Dr. Emily Jamea. Today is our first Q&A episode, and I am so excited for this because I really believe that nothing makes us feel more connected to other people than hearing stories from people just like us. We all have questions about our relationships and our sex lives, and there's still a lot of taboo and shame that surrounds some of these concerns.

And so I love that I have this platform and can give people an opportunity to share their stories and to share their questions, because I want to take some of that taboo and stigma away and shine a light on what are some very, very common issues so that you guys don't feel like you're so alone. So without further ado, let's get into our first question. So our first submission comes from Tim in Cincinnati.

He writes, I am in love with my sister-in-law. I have been in love with her always. My confession is that I would love to have sex with her.

I know she feels the same, however, she wouldn't dare do anything at all. What should I do? Ooh, this is a tough one. So my first question for you is, what, if any, deficits do you think exist in your relationship with your wife that is making you turn your attention to her sister? I think that a lot of times we start looking elsewhere, sometimes just out of pure curiosity, but other times it's because maybe there's something missing in our primary relationship.

And so I think it would be really important for you to spend some time thinking about what's going on in your primary relationship that maybe has you looking outside to find answers and, you know, especially before you were to act on anything. The other thing I want you to think about is you say that you're in love with her and you really want to think about what that means. There are sometimes we have the feeling of love and that's based more on curiosity or infatuation versus intimacy and commitment.

So we can have a really, really strong attraction to someone and a curiosity about that individual, but I really don't think that until you have spent significant time with a person and you're open about your feelings with them and there is some level of commitment or experience that you've shared together. And really, I think the key here is that there's openness about your feelings. You can't really say that you are in love with that person.

I think what you're describing is more of an intense curiosity or even infatuation with your sister-in-law. And so I want to caution you on using the word love here. You may see qualities in her that are different from what you have than what your wife has.

And you want to just think about what's attracting you to some of those qualities and that can, I think, shed some light on maybe some things you need to pay attention to in

your primary relationship. The last thing I want to say is you want to be really, really careful here. My advice to you would be to establish very clear boundaries.

I would avoid spending any time alone with your sister-in-law. You have to be aware of what could happen if your feelings were to come out and certainly what might happen if you were to act on them at all. This could be really devastating, not just for your marriage, but for the family as a whole.

I think that your wife would probably feel really betrayed to know that you've been harboring these feelings toward her sister. And so it may be best for a period of time until you feel like you have more control over your feelings or hopefully until they can subside and you work on your marriage a little bit that you really try to minimize your interaction with her. If there's a large family gathering, focus on talking to other people in the family and try to keep your distance from your sister-in-law.

I hope that helps. Okay, let's go to our second submission. My wife and I have been married for 28 years.

We are in a good place emotionally, mentally, and sexually. We've gone from having sex about twice a month to having sex one to two times each day. This has been going on for the last year and a half.

We've been talking and exploring the possibility of the lifestyle slash non-monogamous swinging with other couples, community, and threesomes. Has there been any research on this and how it affects couples? What are your thoughts and what would you advise in going down this journey? Thank you. C and L. They don't say where they're from.

So my first thought is that you identify a lot of strengths in your primary relationship. You say that you're in a great place emotionally, mentally, and sexually, and that is awesome. I think it's ideal to be in a pretty healthy place in your primary relationship before you venture out into exploring sex or relationships with other people.

A lot of people venture into non-monogamy because of a big relationship deficit, and while to an extent that can be okay, and we'll talk about that in a minute, you want to at least feel like you're in a really good place emotionally with your primary partner. Because as we start to expand and share our emotional resources, for some couples who aren't in a good place, that can put a real strain on the relationship and can trigger feelings of insecurity or jealousy. And so I think it's awesome that you guys are in a pretty good place already.

It sounds like your sex life is in a pretty good place and you're just looking to expand on it. I think that that's also really great. It sounds like you guys, to an extent, feel pretty mutually satisfied, but maybe you can acknowledge the fact that you both have really high sexual needs at this point, and maybe you can't meet each other's needs a hundred

percent.

And so you're looking to see if maybe sharing some of those needs or exploring those needs with other people would be a good option for you. So that's good. And it sounds like you've already talked about it a little bit, because you say you've been exploring the possibility.

And so that tells me your communication is really strong and really that you have good intimacy in your relationship. Broaching the subject of non-monogamy can feel really scary for a lot of people, and so the fact that you've already put your feelings out there, to an extent, I think is awesome. And so I think that's another really good strength.

So really, I think in a lot of ways, you guys are the ideal couple for this. You ask if there's been any research on this, and to answer your question, yes, there has. I actually interviewed the author of one study, so you could go back and listen to episode 11, where I interviewed Martha Kauppi.

She did a really comprehensive research study on polyamory and its effect on couples. And she said some things, well, really, she said a lot of things that I liked. And one is that when you open the conversation about non-monogamy, you want to tell your partner that this is what she describes as a collaborative exploration, not a decision-making conversation.

You want to give your partner plenty of time to assess and process their own thoughts and feelings. And she cautions people on going into, quote, persuasion mode, which can make your partner immediately shut down. And it sounds like you are doing this collaborative exploration with your partner already.

A lot of times, there's one person in the relationship who's done a ton of research about non-monogamy, and they maybe have spent a lot of time clarifying their feelings about it and identifying what they want from it. And it's like they come to their partner with a whole outline of what they've considered over the past six months. And their partner, for them, maybe it's not something they've ever considered at all.

And they can feel really ambushed. And so I think the fact that you and your partner are just gradually beginning the conversation, and it sounds like you're already being really collaborative about it, is a good thing. The other thing Martha and I discussed was communication.

So we talk a lot about how important communication is in relationships. And this is especially true for couples who are in non-monogamous relationships, because there's always boundaries that may need to be renegotiated or reestablished. And there's always little adjustments that you might be making over the course of time.

She said something that really stood out to me, and she said that there is such a thing as

overcommunication. And I think of this, and I think she's right, if this is something that you're going to explore, you have to be comfortable with a little bit of ambiguity. I've worked with couples before who are considering opening up their relationships, and it's like they want to spend six sessions going through every possible scenario that might happen and how they would respond to it.

And I just, I'm with Martha on this one. I don't think that that's wise. I think that there are definitely some high level boundaries that you need to establish.

And you know, you always want to feel safe to bring up any feelings you might be having with your partner. But sometimes it's not always a good idea to get into a ton of nitty gritty detail. And so I think that's an important principle to keep in mind.

You ask about research. So this is something that's only been studied, I think, more deliberately in the past few years. And so we're still collecting data on it.

But I do want to share a couple of studies. There was a 2020 study that was published in the Social, Psychological, and Personality Science Journal. And they did not find any evidence that consensual non-monogamy negatively impacts life satisfaction or relationship quality with the primary partners in a romantically involved couple.

On the contrary, they demonstrated only positive outcomes for couples who decided to open up their relationship. And so I think this study did provide some evidence that consensual non-monogamy can be a really healthy, viable relationship option for some people. According to the study, those who engaged in consensual non-monogamy experienced significant increases in sexual satisfaction, particularly if they did so with the explicit goal of addressing sexual incompatibilities within their relationships.

So it sounds like to an extent, you and your partner feel pretty mutually satisfied. And this is maybe an add-on to that. But what this study is saying is that if there are sexual incompatibilities within the relationship, let's say, this is something I see in my office from time to time, someone has an interest in a specific kink that their primary relationship partner really has absolutely no interest in participating in, that consensual non-monogamy may be a really good option for that person with the interest.

They could then find a partner who shares the interest and have the opportunity to explore that consensually. And that takes a lot of pressure off our primary relationships. We live in a society these days where we expect a lot out of our primary romantic partner, and that can cause some relationships to snap.

And so I think that for some couples, consensual non-monogamy can take some of that pressure off. Other studies have shown that couples do better in non-monogamous relationships when they're, quote, more communal in nature, meaning that they're people who are really comfortable with other people meeting their partner's needs.

These are people who have more of a village mentality, I think, when it comes to you know, interdependence and meeting each other's needs.

These are people who know that maybe it's unrealistic to meet 100% of your partner's needs. So those are just a few studies I wanted to go over with you. But yeah, I think overall, it sounds like you and your partner are in a pretty good place, and it would definitely be worth having a conversation.

Okay, our last question comes from Max in Georgia. He says, I am 36 years old and am concerned because I have a small penis. I also cum really quickly during sex.

What can I do? Okay, so my first thought is, or question I would ask back to you, is why do you think your penis is small, and why do you think you cum quickly? Is this feedback you've gotten from your sexual partners? Or are you basing these self assessments on, let's say, what you're seeing in porn? Because the fact is, most people, if they're comparing their penis size to what they're seeing in porn, are going to think that they're smaller than average, because the average penis in porn is significantly larger. And the other thing is that anyone who's comparing how long they're lasting to what they're seeing in porn is probably also going to think that they can't last very long, because we're seeing people, and these are actors, who appear to have a ton of ejaculatory control. And so you're going to see sex scenes that go for a long time, and that is definitely not representative of the average sexual encounter.

And so just be very mindful as to where your self assessments are coming from and who you're comparing yourself to, because if it's from porn, everyone's going to think that they're inadequate in some way. So definitely don't compare yourself to what you're seeing in porn. The average penis is about 5 inches erect.

And I think a lot of people, when they hear that, might be kind of surprised, again, because what we typically see is significantly larger than that. So it's only about 5 inches erect. And on average, most penis owners ejaculate within 5 to 10 minutes of rapid stimulation of the penis.

That's really not that long. So let me give you a few tips on coping with maybe a smaller than average penis. First of all, let's assume for a second that maybe you're in a heterosexual relationship and you think that the only way you can satisfy your partner is with a big penis.

If you talk to most vulva owners, a lot of them will say that the most satisfying parts of the sexual experience are pretty much anything except for intercourse. There is a lot that you can do with your hands, with your mouth, and even with toys that can be really satisfying and pleasurable to your partner. So it's so important that you find a partner who you can talk openly with, not just about maybe what your insecurities are, but how you can pleasure them in a way that is mutually satisfying.

There are even toys out there that you can use during intercourse that can add to a sense of fullness during the encounter. There are things like the WeeVibe or even using a butt plug or something like that could make it to where a woman's vagina maybe already feels a little bit full. And so then once you insert your penis, it can create a more intense satisfaction for her, assuming that maybe your size is important to her.

And so it's just so important to talk to your partner and to be open and to really maintain a variety in the kinds of things that you are willing to do sexually. I think when we narrow sex down to just like penis-vagina intercourse or just intercourse, whether that's with a vagina or with an anus, I mean, there are just so many things, more things that we can do that are really satisfying to people. And so you just need to talk to your partner about what some of those things are.

One of the best things that you can do for ejaculatory control is called the stop-start technique. So a lot of penis owners can identify when they're approaching that point of no return, meaning once they're past that point of no return, ejaculation is inevitable. You wanna do a lot to strengthen the mind-body connection and build awareness of your arousal so that as you're approaching that point of no return, you can back off for a bit and let arousal subside.

Maybe you stop for a second, any stimulation on your penis and focus instead on doing something to your partner, and then you can start up again. And then you can decide together if that's important to you when you want ejaculation to happen. And I think this is intuitive for some people and for others, it's not.

A lot of people have this idea that you should be able to go all night long and only come when you want to, but physiologically, that's just really hard for a lot of people. And so the best thing you can do is build mind-body connection and strengthen your awareness of your arousal so that you can back off when you're approaching that point of no return. I hope that helps.

We have lots more questions that I have saved, and we'll address those in upcoming episodes. I wanna thank you all for your candor and openness. I know these are tough things to bring up, but I think it's so important that we're open.

And I know that a lot of my listeners are gonna get so much value from listening to this episode because you were brave to put that question out there, but a lot of people aren't. And so I wanna thank you again. We will definitely do more of these episodes, so be sure to subscribe so that you don't miss a thing.

And if you do have a question, visit loveandlibido.com to submit it. You can type it up and send it in through my online form if you wanna do that. You can also record your question if you like, and you always have the option to disguise your voice.

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