



Polyam 101

Beginner Fundamentals for opening up
a relationship

101 Beginner's Essentials

Instructions

Shrimp Teeth's ACTIVITY SHEETS are designed to promote self-reflection. They consist of a series of questions to help guide your reflections, some can admittedly be difficult. It's best if you answer these questions as honestly as you can, try not to judge yourself too much. There will be answers you don't like and that's ok. We all have areas that we could use a little extra work on, these questions help you identify those sticky spots, it's nothing to be embarrassed about. When you come across questions that don't apply to your situation, you don't like, or simply don't feel like answering... then don't! This is not a graded assignment, I encourage you to use the tools within these pages that make sense for you! You are in charge here.

Introduction

101 Beginner's Essential aims to give you a digestible guide to opening your relationship and entering Ethical Non-Monogamy and/or Polyamory. Please note that this is a GUIDE and is not meant you give you all the answers. Ethical Non-Monogamy looks different for everyone practicing and I want you to start thinking about the ways YOU want to practice. It's totally ok if you're completely lost and confused right now. Let's just jump in!

Disclaimer:

Shrimp Teeth's ACTIVITY SHEETS are educational tools. The content within is not replacement for seeking guidance from licensed clinicians.

DEBRIEF CHECK-LIST:

Each time you finish a section, come back to this page and go through the debrief checklist!

Take some deep breaths, think about your emotional state. Can you identify what emotions you're feeling? It's ok if this is hard for you.

If it feels like too much, put these ACTIVITY SHEETS down and do something fun instead.

Your self-care is important.

If you feel energized, great! I love your stamina.

Reflect on what you've taken away

- What needs or desires are currently unmet, if any?
- What discussions must you have with your pals?
- What growth opportunity can you identify?
- What did you do well?
- What's the next step?

The golden rule: **Chill Out & Give Less Fucks™**

Fuck! What do I do?

Section 1: How in the world do you even begin practicing Ethical Non-Monogamy?

Fuck! What do I do?

Look, I get it, deciding to be polyam is scary, and you have every right to be freaking out. But take a deep breath, I promise everything will work out in the end. It might not be how you originally planned, but that's ok, one of the skills polyam will encourage you to learn is how to manage expectations and be open to new outcomes. If you're currently in a tough place, on a break with your current pal, considering breaking up, feeling unhappy and stuck, experiencing a bout of jealousy, the Shrimp Teeth Ethical-Non-Monogamy series ACTIVITY SHEET will try to help you find a path forward. Here's what I *suggest* you to do right now:

1. Stay together for the time being

If you are safe in your relationship and there isn't any abuse or foundational problems preventing you from doing interpersonal work, my recommendation is to remain in the relationship so you can implement a polyam structure based on your existing relationship

2. Commit to reading a book on polyam

Even if you've done it in the past, you can never know too much on this subject! Pick a new one and read it together.

3. Try collaborating with your pal

See if it's possible to come together and find solutions that are supportive for you both, instead of a winner-takes-all mentality.

4. Give yourselves an agreed period of time to work out the kinks of polyam

*I recommend 3 months if you haven't introduced any new pals yet, 6 months if you have new pals already involved. Agree that you will do your best during that time, and not break up or veto the existing relationships.**

5. Don't make rash decisions

Don't spontaneously start adding pals, decide to all move in together, plan an elaborate four-way marriage, etc.

6. Find professional help!

This ACTIVITY SHEET is not a substitute for therapy. Make sure that your therapist understands polyam concepts. If they don't please request they learn more in order to better assist you.

7. Find community!

Find the people who you can talk about this with (that community might be online).

8. Keep challenging yourself

You'll never get to a point where you're perfect at polyam. No one will! But remain curious and open to learning.

*NOTE: The reason I say "don't break up" isn't to force you to stay in a relationship that makes you unhappy, rather just to get you to understand that it's normal for the first months (most likely year) will be more turbulent. If either pal can run at the sign of trouble, you won't build the resiliency, communication skills, and flexibility required to sustain a ENM lifestyle long-term. Give yourself and your pals the ability to make mistakes, you're learning to ride a non-monogamy bike, and you're going to fall down from time to time, encourage each other to get up and continue practicing.

Questions

One of the first thing you can do is take some time to assess the skills that you'll need to strengthen if you hope to practice Ethical Non-Monogamy. I often hear, "if polyamory is so much work then how can it be worth it?" good question! For some people it IS too much work. Understanding where you are now can help you decide if this is worth it for you.

Rate yourself on a scale from 0 to 10

0 indicates no proficiency, you've never tried this and 10 indicates mastery, you got it!

How well do you manage jealousy?

Do you often fear losing your pals despite their reassurance?

How well can you set boundaries?

Do you consider yourself to be anxious?

Do you struggle with respecting other people's boundaries?

How comfortable are you sharing your emotions with your pals?

How well can you identify and communicate your needs?

Cool! Look over your ratings. How does this feel? Are you happy, energized, overwhelmed, fearful? Take some time to go back over this list and identify the areas that you're excited to strengthen. Here's the thing, my answer to the question, "if polyamory is so much work then how can it be worth it?" is always that the interpersonal growth is always worth it. Because no matter how many pals I have, what structure my polyamory takes on in the future, these skills carry over to any form of relationship.

Fundamental Skills

1. Be kind to yourself

You will fuck up, be gentle and try again, you'll do better next time!

2. Be kind to your pals

They will fuck up too, be patient and allow them the opportunity to learn too.

3. Be kind to your metamours

I promise your life will be easier if you can get along (or at least respect) your lover's lover.

4. Befriend your jealousy

Learn it, work through it, get comfortable being uncomfortable. Only you can resolve your jealousy, your pals are not responsible for resolving your jealousy.

5. Practice consent

All of your actions must be grounded in informed consent. That means disclosing new pals, being upfront about your STI status, and communicative about expectations as it pertains to physical intimacy. This also applies to emotional consent. Ask your pals if they're willing to hold space before hard conversations or talking about other pals, etc.

6. Practice safer-sex: No exceptions

If you aren't able to play safely, you probably aren't ready to handle the intricacies of navigating polyamory. You can focus on learning more about this topic first.

7. Do the work

You will need to unlearn monogamy, have good communication with partners, schedule, negotiate, etc. All of these skills need to be learned, commit to putting in some effort.

8. Commit to learning

Polyam will challenge you and force you to learn new skills & life lessons. Be open to learning, growing and being better in your relationship.

9. Compersion over competition

Be happy for your pals' happiness. There's an abundance of love to share. This is a practiced skill like most things in polyamory, give yourself permission to get better at it

10. Always strive for open and honest communication

Polyam cannot function if one pal is not open & honest, period. Sometimes it's hard to talk about certain topics, it can feel very vulnerable, but always strive to be as clear and forthright


QUESTIONS FOR YOUR PALS:

Looking at the fundamental skills, which ones do you feel you've already mastered? Which will need to strengthen? What fundamental skills do you think are important and want to add to this list?

Case Study

I'd never heard the term "polyamory" be put into practice until a few years ago. By then, my primary partner and I had quite a few years of "don't ask, don't tell" style non-monogamy (by that I mean: infidelity) under our belts. We both hated the conflict and dishonesty that came with trying to get our needs met. We had never considered the possibility of being honest about our outside relationships. It seemed like a recipe for disaster, but having tried the alternative, we decided it was worth taking a chance. We felt completely ill prepared to deal with polyamory, but knew we had to try if we wanted to stay together long-term. Together we read *The Ethical Slut*, which was very informative but also discouraging. I felt like I would never be good enough at handling my emotions, communicating, or being honest to make this relationship model work. We did a few months of couple's counseling and continued individual therapy to better equip us with some of the challenges we faced. There were a lot of difficult weeks full for challenging conversations. They forced us to look at ourselves and our shortcomings, as well as the strengths we brought to the relationship, and the improvements we want-

ed to make. It took us a long time to feel like our new relationship was in a stable place and that we were able to handle our other relationships too. There are still many days when I completely doubt our ability to handle and overcome the challenges that polyam places on us. Even as I write this, I feel like I'm not "good enough" at polyam... But even during our worst fights, my pal and I committed to our friendship and tried to find solutions to our problems. It took a lot of patience and compassion for each other to come to agreements on issues that sparked insecurities and fears. In the end, we came out with a relationship structure that we had never considered possible but that fit us both much better than previously. It was vital for us to learn, learn, listen, learn more, and put our new skills to practice. Like I said, none of this comes super easy. Either way, it's not a competition and the more that you can all commit to learning and helping each other along in a supportive fashion the easier it gets. Really the first step is ensuring that y'all are committed to doing this together, even if one person is pushing for this harder than the other.



**Turn back to
DEBRIEF
CHECK-LIST**

Current Relationship Inventory

Section 2: How well can your current relationship handle Ethical Non-Monogamy?

Current Relationship Inventory

Alright, you ready to jump in? It's time to think about the state of your current relationship. What's prompted you to look into opening your relationship, what are you excited about, what fears do you have? These are some intro questions to ask yourself and your partner to see if polyam feels right for you. If possible, I encourage you to fill out this activity sheet independently and have your partner do the same, then compare answers. It's good practice for you to start talking about these topics. I've found that the couples who have good communication and are able to be vulnerable with each other have an easier time when they decide to open up. If you know that's not your strong suit, that's fine too, it just might require you to give communication a bit more thought. Ok so please take some time and write out (draw out, sing out, or however else you want to do this) the following questions

Questions

- 1. Why do you want (or not) to open your relationship?**
- 2. Be honest with yourself: are you ready for polyamory?**
- 3. Is this a last ditch effort to save your relationship?**
- 4. Are there unresolved maladaptive behaviors or patterns in your relationship that will need to be addressed?**
- 5. Do you feel like you have to be polyam in order to stay with your current pal?**
- 6. Where are you in the process of opening your relationship?**
- 7. What is your experience with being polyam? Is this your first time being polyam? If not, what went right/wrong previously?**

Case Study

When I opened my relationship, I was about a decade into a relationship with someone I described as my “buddy who I married for health insurance, who’s my forever roommate, and who I love to death and trust more than anyone but not *like that* even if he does and I don’t know how to tell him I’m *gay gay*”. Fuck. It was a little complicated. We’d had quite a few instances of infidelity in the past and I’d been talking to him about how I didn’t like monogamy since college. However, I’d never had the right words or framework for polyamory. When I came out, I had to be honest about how the romantic and intimate parts of our relationship didn’t feel right for me. It was really difficult for both of us to reconcile with the mismatches in our sexual and romantic orientations. Ultimately, we recognized that the relationship we did have, though far from perfect, was absolutely worth holding on to. Understanding that primary partnerships didn’t necessarily have to be romantic, we decided to try working things out together. We talked a lot about what we envisioned for our future, what we both needed, the current desires that weren’t being fulfilled. It was a ton of really difficult conversations stretched over an entire summer that resulted with us deciding to redefine our relationship entirely. We threw away the expectations we’d had for our previous re-

lationship and renegotiated every aspect (from physical to emotional intimacy, to expectations for our shared house, to guidelines for communication and everything in between) to fit us both as individuals rather than to conform to a standard of compulsory hetero-monogamy. The result looks something like this: we continue to own a house and live together, each with a separate bedroom, we share meals whenever we’re both home, and schedule deliberate nights to hang-out. We both date separately and continue to be honest with each other about what we want and need. And above all we have an understanding that things can and do change. We agree to talk about issues, boundaries, and expectations as they come up and to share insecurities and jealousies with each other, while feeling comfortable to ask for validation and tangible support when appropriate. We understand that things aren’t and won’t ever be perfect, but we give each other compassion and kindness when mistakes are made and allow space for personal growth moments to happen. We’re definitely not the best at polyam, but we’re committed to making it work out because we do care a lot about the life we’ve built together and cherish the things about each other that make us happy.

COMMON ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

1. Why do you want (or not) to open your relationship?

There's no right or wrong answer to this question. We all have different reasons for wanting to open our existing relationship. Most people fall into three categories: either there is an unmet need in the relationship that is causing tension or there is a dissatisfaction with "traditional" (as defined by compulsory monogamy) relationship structures that feel limiting or otherwise uncomfortable. Both of these answers recognize that a single partner cannot meet all of your needs, and that's ok. The last category is that you don't want to open your relationship but somehow feel like you should. That can be a hard place to be in, but it's not impossible to exist in a happy polyam relationship when you might want a more monogamously oriented one. Ultimately, that is your choice. Whatever your reason for opening, polyam can teach you great lessons and provide growth if you approach it thoughtfully.

2. Be honest with yourself: are you ready for polyamory?

Let's be honest, polyam can be a complete fucking disaster. If you're not ready to put in time and effort into personal growth, relationship maintenance, emotional management, and communication then perhaps polyam isn't the best fit for you. Managing one relationship can be challenging enough, and unfortunately when you're juggling multiple it can raise some challenges that don't come up in most monogamous ones. Ultimately, polyam requires learning new skills. It's important to ask yourself how much you're willing to commit to learning before you launch yourself head first into this, lots of feelings can be hurt and relationships damaged if you don't approach polyam thoughtfully.

3. Is this a last ditch effort to save your relationship?

I'm not going to lie, if you're trying to open your relationship as a last ditch effort, things might not work out super great for you. I'm not saying this is impossible, I just caution you to be careful. I hear a lot of couples who are going through rough patches in their relationship want to add others, I understand the appeal. I would take some time to address some of the issues in your relationship first and hold off a bit. Once some of the foundational challenges are addressed, I encourage you to revisit the topic and see if polyam is still right for you. It's much easier to go into polyam with a strong primary relationship, than with one where lots of problems are likely to arise. Give yourself some time to grow, polyam isn't going anywhere, you can always revisit these conversations

4. Are there unresolved maladaptive behaviors or patterns in your relationship that will need to be addressed?

For many people, being in a monogamous relationship means that certain maladaptive behavior patterns can go unaddressed. Maladaptive behaviors often present themselves as: poor communication skills, codependent tendencies, insecure attachments, unresolved jealousy patterns, etc. Polyam often stirs up these sorts of issues. It's normal for you to identify some pain points in your current relationship, we all have them. It doesn't mean that you can't practice polyam, it just means you should pay attention to that when conflict does come up. Start brainstorming ways you can do a little more work around those issues. Perhaps: a book on jealousy, a non-violent communication class, couple and/or individual therapy, etc.

5. Do you feel like you have to be polyam in order to stay with your current pal?

Babe, I feel for you. I've been in both the position of asking a reluctant partner to open and I've been the reluctant partner who didn't want to open. Both are hard! And if your partner wants to start seeing other people, I understand how helpless it can feel. Many couples go through this, and it's absolutely normal to have fears around being polyam. I encourage you to take some time. Talk to your partner about what a reasonable timeline could look like for y'all. Commit to doing more learning during this phase and then reevaluate where y'all stand. It's ok to ask for a little more time, as long as you aren't using this as an excuse to control who your pal can see and when.

6. Where are you in the process of opening your relationship?

I commonly hear things like: there is someone new that one person is interested in, someone cheated and wants to keep seeing the other person, some couples are just interested in polyam as a theory and want to see how they can benefit, some have already been polyam with varying degrees of satisfaction. Wherever you are, give yourself some credit for making it this far. The fact that you're reading this means you're already doing a lot to make this work and I applaud you for it, keep up the good work!

7. What is your experience with being polyam? Is this your first time being polyam? If not, what went right/wrong previously?

Those I talk to have had varying degrees of satisfaction with previous experiences with polyam. For everyone (including myself), there were things they could have done better. It's ok if you haven't had the best experiences in the past, it doesn't mean you can't do a little better in the future. I've fucked up so many polyam relationships, it's HARD to figure this out all the time. But I notice myself get better each time as I practice the skills I need to and get a bitt more patient, more compassionate, less jealous, more secure, more honest, and more communicative with each try. My philosophy is to have the best intention and continue trying.

**Turn back to
DEBRIEF
CHECK-LIST**

Your Vision of ENM

Section 3: How in the world do you even begin practicing Ethical Non-Monogamy?

What are you gaining from ENM?

Whether you're the one who wants to open your relationship, or your pal is the one pushing for this, it's important to understand what YOU are getting out of polyam. Most people wrongfully assume that Ethical Non-Monogamy is just about sex. Spoiler alert: it's not. In fact, for a lot of us, sex is only a tiny part of the reason we seek to practice this relationship style in the first place. There can be numerous benefits such as deeper friendships, removing restrictive labels, allowing more flexibility in romantic relationships, alternative child raising support structures, and beyond. I want you to take some time now to reflect on what you think you'll gain from Ethical Non-Monogamy. Of course, I would be remissed if I didn't mention the loss that also comes from Ethical Non-Monogamy. It's important to take some time to consider the trade-off. For example, practicing ENM means you'll likely lose the perceived sense of security that monogamy offers, are you ready to have to learn a completely new way of finding security in your relationships? You'll also most likely lose the privilege of acceptance from our compulsory monogamous culture. Have you thought about how this might impact other aspects of your life? I'm obviously not trying to scare you, however, I often hear people "trying out" ENM without thinking of the consequences or doing it only in the hope of having more sex. Trust me there are easier ways to "just fuck" than trying to maintain multiple relationships.

Questions

- 1. What do you hope to gain from polyamory?**
- 2. What are you afraid to lose?**
- 3. How will your current relationship change?**
- 4. Be honest: Can you accept change?**

Dream Scenario

Questions

1. How many pals would be ideal?
2. Describe characteristics of your ideal pals
3. What values would be upheld in your ideal relationships?
4. What would your ideal home-life look like?
5. Describe your ideal metamours

Common Answers

1. There's no right or wrong answer for this. Personally I tap out at three intimate relationships because... I'm tired! Here's a tip: think about how much time you're ready to dedicate to each relationship then add an hour minimum of relationship work per week, is that manageable for you?
2. Characteristics like: honesty, trustworthy, communicative, vulnerable, compassionate, kind, sensitive, understanding, etc!
3. Open communication, engaging in safe and consensual intimacy, respecting one another's boundaries, interpersonal growth are all fabulous ideals!
4. There's no right or wrong answer. I suggest you throw away everything that you've been taught about HAVING to settle down in a nuclear family, and ask yourself what makes you happy to come home to?
5. Respectful! Thoughtful! Trustworthy! While you don't HAVE to have a close relationship with your meta, it can be really nice if it all works out... this is about dreams after all

Nightmare Scenario

Questions

1. How many pals is too many pals?
2. What are you afraid will go wrong?
3. What nightmare stories have you heard or experienced about polyam?
4. How would you "fail" at polyam?
5. Alright, I know this is what you're scared of, let's hear about your nightmare meta!

Common Answers

1. Relationships take work. Many people get really excited about dating and end up with too many pals. Anticipate your capacity, don't bite off more than you can chew
2. Cheating, jealousy, having too many hard feelings, your pal leaving, you leaving. All of these are common fears
3. Oof everyone (myself included) has fucked up polyam in more ways than I can count. From cheating to terrible threesomes to polyam burnout to blowouts lots can go wrong
4. If the emotional upheaval far surpasses the growth that you're seeing for yourself, polyam might not be working the way that you're currently practicing. It's important to know when it's time to get out and reassess
5. A disrespectful gorgeous demon who swoops in, steals your pal, boils your pet, sets your house on fire, rips your heart out, chews it but doesn't swallow, and poops on your floor (Duck Butter). Yikes.

Unlearning Monogamy

Harmful assumptions of compulsory monogamy:

1. You are always looking for THE ONE
2. Following *the rules* (patriarchal heteronormativity) will lead you to find THE ONE
3. Your relationship with THE (right) ONE will last forever. Relationships that end are a failure
4. When you've met THE ONE, you'll stop being interested in other people
5. You can count on THE ONE to meet all of your needs
6. Sex can only be shared with THE ONE. And if they indeed are THE ONE, all of your sexual preferences should align.
7. It's normal to be possessive of THE ONE. By definition, they can only be THE ONE for you!
8. Sleeping with someone else means there must be something wrong with your relationship
9. Infidelity is better than having to knowingly ~share~ THE ONE
10. If THE ONE becomes interested in another person, then you must not be THE ONE! That's because you're gross, ugly, you smell strange, and you'll never be happy because you suck (See you would NEVER let someone else talk to you like that. Tell that voice to zip it!)
11. You must be the best, otherwise you probably aren't THE ONE
12. Romantic relationships trump all else. Friendship is secondary, as is individuality
13. Jealousy is uncontrollable. Making THE ONE jealous is a shitty thing that you should avoid doing
14. Communication is largely implied and prescribed by *the rules*
15. Certain preferences (as arbitrated by *the rules*) are better than others

Compulsory vs. Ethical Monogamy

There's absolutely nothing wrong with monogamy! Monogamy is simply a relationship structure. It absolutely does not determine the health or *success* of a relationship. There is absolutely nothing wrong with deciding you want to exclusively be with one person as long as that decision is deliberate and everyone agrees to the boundaries and expectations of the relationship (like any other structure). The problem exists with the word **COMPULSORY**. Suddenly we are talking about a societal-level ideology that places long-term, romantic, monogamous coupling as the central focus of our relationships. This negates the fact that many people feel more comfortable having "primary" relationships that aren't romantic, that aren't long-term, that aren't exclusive, that don't have to be domestic, that can't or won't be sexual.

Questions

1. What has monogamy taught you about relationships?
2. What are some assumptions you have about polyamory?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUR PALS:

1. What polyamorous concepts are important to you?
2. Why do you practice polyamory?
2. What things do you like and dislike about monogamy?

Learning Polyamory

1. There is not a single person who can meet all of your needs all the time
- 2 You and your pals are responsible for creating a relationship that is meaningful and supportive for y'all
3. Relationships end. That's a fact. The end of a relationship does not signify failure. It is possible to transform the type of relationship you have with other people to better suit your needs.
4. Attraction to other humans is normal! People are hot, interesting, amazing! It's normal to crush, it doesn't mean you don't love your other pals. You can be upfront about your attraction to other people
5. Everyone has different needs, that's ok! Being honest with yourself and recognizing what your pals can provide, and what they can't allows you to remove pressure from certain aspects of your relationships that are incompatible. You can focus on the things that bring you both joy.
6. Sexuality is vast and complicated. The quality of your relationship doesn't necessarily have to be aligned with your sexual compatibility. It's ok to have different sexual relationships as long as it works for you
7. Ownership mentality has no place in your relationship. Everyone is a free individual, that doesn't mean you can't consider your pals' wishes (you absolutely should!) but it means that controlling each other leads to hurt, frustration, and regret.
8. Sharing sex can be a joyful and empowering experience outside of your primary relationship. Being honest about your sexual needs is the first step to getting what you want.
9. Cheating hurts because no one likes being lied to and deceived by their pals. Cheating can occur even within polyam relationships, opting for honesty and open communication is the foundation of having a long-lasting relationship
10. Your pals love you for who you are as a unique individual. Their attraction to other people is based on the fact that they are also unique and different from you. This isn't a competition between y'all. Everyone can exist in supportive, nurturing relationships with each other
11. You don't have to be the best (that's a hard thing to accept at first), but you're just as worthy of love even if you don't WIN in every aspect and instance. Again, this isn't a competition. Focus on being uniquely yourself.
12. Relationships are as varied as the people in them. There is not one type of relationship that is inherently better than the rest. The BEST relationships are the ones where y'all can be your authentic selves and share love, respect, and support. It doesn't matter what the relationship is with the people that make you feel this way, it's the most valid.
13. Jealousy is inevitable. You will get through it, you will learn from it, you will become more resilient, you will survive. Getting down to the bottom of your jealousy is a journey that you should embrace. Pretending you're fine or that you don't experience jealousy will only create a pressure-cooker effect. Don't blow up. Recognize the feelings as they come and remember to breathe through the difficult emotions
14. You have no idea what other people are thinking, and likewise they aren't mindreaders either. Talk about your experiences, emotions, fears, insecurities, desires, hopes, needs, everything. The more you can communicate openly and honestly with your pals the easier it will be to manage strong emotions and complex relationship structures.
15. Preferences are personal. There is no "right" or "wrong" preference as long as they are respectful, consensual, and done with integrity for yourself and your pals. The world is your oyster, dive into what you love, what you want, even if it's not "traditional"

ACTIVITY SHEET Debrief

Now that you've had some time to ask yourself some questions about what you want and don't want from polyam, asked your pals some questions, and started to learn polyam while unpacking compulsory monogamy, take a second to evaluate how you're feeling. Again, it's ok if you're still feeling overwhelmed. This was only the Beginner's ACTIVITY SHEET series. If you're still stoked to practice ENM (I really hope you are!), and you've started dating some pals, head over to the Apprentice's ACTIVITY SHEET series. You'll learn how to define roles, practice compassion, unlearn ownership, and establish jealousy rituals. Fun!

Questions

- 1. What do you hope to gain from polyamory?**
- 2. What are you afraid to lose?**
- 3. How will your current relationship change?**
- 4. Be honest: Can you accept change?**

