

CHAPTER
44
Threesomes

Dear Paul,
I was originally writing for advice about having a threesome. But my husband and I have recently met up with a third person for sex, and the experience was great!

Bonnie from Bonneville

Dear Bonnie,

Back when I was doing my psychoanalytic training, threesomes were thought to be a very bad thing.

A few years later, a female patient told me that she and her boyfriend had decided they were going to try out threesomes, an *MMF* and an *FFM*. Having been a Freudian black sheep, I didn't sound any warnings, but I did make sure that we explored the fantasies and unconscious motivations.

As far as I could tell, the *FFM* went off without a hitch. But there was a problem with the *MMF* that threw my patient's poor boyfriend into an unexpected funk. Seems my patient ended up making the exact same noises when she was having sex with the new man as when she and her boyfriend made love. Her boyfriend was horribly depressed, realizing that "his" special magic could easily be supplied by another man.

So the first advice that I have for any couple thinking about inviting a third for play, besides talking it over for a couple of weeks and doing lots of research, is how you would handle it if you discovered that the new person gave your partner as much or more pleasure than you usually do. How would you feel if your partner was lavishing more attention on the third person than on you, although for some people, watching their partner doing it with someone else is one of life's little pleasures.

Consider a threesome only if it's something both of you are interested in, as opposed to when one partner does it just to please the other. Also, it's

a bad idea to try a threesome if your purpose is to help repair a relationship that is struggling. Your relationship needs to have a foundation of trust and love for threesomes to work. Plenty of you are thinking, “How could there be love and trust if the love of my life wants us to get naked with someone else?” To that I would say, love and trust are best defined by the beholders.

One of the first couples I ever interviewed about sex were in their early 70s and had been married for more than 35 years. They were church-going pillars of the community. The most important thing in their lives were their kids and grandkids. When I sat down in their tastefully-decorated living room, the woman said, “Why don’t you look through the photo album of our last vacation that we took with some good friends?”

Within minutes, my grad-student mouth nearly fell off its hinges. Not a single person in the pictures had a stitch of clothes on. Their vacation had been on board a special cruise for swingers. Then they said that just last weekend six couples had been going at it in this very living room. And then the man looked lovingly at his wife and said to me from the depth of his heart, “Mama here is the best little cocksucker of any woman in the group!” His wife beamed with pride and gratitude.

The second couple I interviewed wasn’t into swinging. They were soon to be married. They were madly in love and very pleased with each other sexually. They even invited me to their wedding, which was held in a fine church. They had a traditional relationship and there’s no way they would have ever had a threesome. We stayed in touch for the next two years, when their marriage suddenly split up. Divorce. I never heard from either again.

A few years later, I was having a conversation with a young woman about computer software. She eventually asked me what I did. After I told her, the volume on her voice suddenly dropped. She told me she lived with two men and was having sex with both of them. One was her husband, and the other was their roommate. This had been going on for a couple of years, and she said they were all very happy together.

So I gave up long ago on trying to predict what makes a relationship work or fail, and whether having a threesome was a good idea or bad. I figured it is a good idea for some couples, and a bad idea for others. I also gave up on any notions that swinging was for liberals and monogamy was for

conservatives. One of the complaints I've heard from people in the swinging lifestyle is how conservative other swingers often are politically.

How Many Wives Can Fit on the Head of a What?

Having a threesome is not an unusual fantasy. But what about those adventurous souls who actually want to try it? It's not like you can walk up to the reference desk at your local library and say, "My wife's birthday is coming up and she's always wanted to do a guy with a bigger dick than me—do you have any books on that?" or "The three of us live together and share the same bed; do you have any books that can help our parents understand?"

Threesomes can evolve in many different ways. They can be a once-in-a-lifetime event when your husband's old college roommate visited for the weekend, or it might be something you do a couple of times a month.

Adding a third person in sex isn't like adding another cherry to your banana split. Threesomes are a declaration of war on two-thousand years of marital tradition—namely, that if you want to include another person in your sexual mix, you are supposed to lie to your partner and cheat on the side. So caution is in order. A threesome revolves around the emotions of three people instead of the usual two. The potential for everything goes up—from the level of sexual excitement to the degree of hurt and anguish.

The Definitions

There are many ways that people have sex in numbers. So before visiting the land of three, let's consider the following:

Threesome—This usually means two guys and a girl, or two girls and a guy. One of the *Ms* and one of the *Fs* are frequently in a committed relationship, with the third *M* or *F* being a free agent.

Open Marriage—This is when a primary couple agrees that each other can hook up with outsiders for sex. The past few decades have seen an increase in couples who agree on the open-marriage option from the start. However, they usually don't announce this addendum at their wedding.

Swinging or Being in the Lifestyle—This is when an established couple gets together with a larger group to have sex. It has many variations, from when two couples enjoy getting it on in tandem, to sex in large party rooms where almost anything goes. While the swinging couples often form friendships, it is the recreational part of sex that initially draws them together. (The

term *swinging*, which replaced *wife swapping*, is now being replaced by *lifestyle*.)

Polyamory—A fluid state of friendship, love and sexual intimacy. Poly-people don't just get horny and have sex with anything that moves. There is romance, friendship and intimacy, but with more people than a husband or wife. (For more info, please see the resources at the end of this chapter.)

Wife Swapping—Wife swapping is a very dated term for anything couples did sexually that involves others. It also implied that the decisions were made unilaterally by men. As the authors of *Considering Swinging* point out, "It's the women who usually run the swinging show."





Let There Be Three

Why do people have threesomes? For starters—alcohol. Plenty of threesomes occur when three friends have been drinking enough to lose their inhibitions, but not enough to lose their erections. Threesomes created on the vapors of ethanol are seldom planned and seldom repeated. Threesomes that endure usually take forethought and planning.

Threesomes are often structured like a triangle or pyramid. At the base of the pyramid or threesome triangle is a male-female couple involved in an ongoing love relationship. The third person is the extra at the top.

The possibilities for what three people can do when they are together could fill a book. Why they decide on an *MMF* or *FFM* could fill volume two, although there's no reason why a threesome can't include three males or three females. If you don't know what you'd like to do and need a menu of possibilities, then maybe it's not the right time to be trying a threesome. While some successful threesomes just fall out of the sky, most take a great deal of planning and thought. Here are some things to consider:

In *MMF* threesomes, the chemistry between the men can range from "I'm fine with you doing her, but touch me with your dick and you're dead!" to "Oops, it just kinda slipped into my mouth!" The following chapter on [double penetration](#) discusses how if the two guys who are having sex with a

woman are seriously homophobic, things can get a little strange. At the other end of the spectrum, guy-doing-guy play can work out well if the men are willing and the woman is turned on by everybody doing everybody. It won't work so well if she's thinking, "My idea of fun is not sitting here watching my husband with a man's cock in his mouth!"

In *FFM* threesomes, the over-riding dynamic is often the desire of the women to experience more than the usual girl-hug and kiss. This kind of threesome is often about letting the women explore, with the man providing a safe, solid, masculine backstop.

There are many ways the male in an *FFM* can help same-sex exploration feel safer. The women might want him to be lying on his back, with one of them sitting on his penis while the other is sitting on his face. Both women are facing each other and they can kiss and caress while being connected to a man sexually. (This combination might be more comfortable when all three are on their sides.) Or maybe the women will be happier if he just watches and strokes himself, or if he joins one in doing the other.

Unless both women are totally into it, it's usually not a good idea for an *FFM* to focus around pleasing the man. *FFM* threesomes usually work better if the man takes a background role and allows the ladies' to lead. He should never try to script the threesome or try to set the tempo, unless it's a *BDSM* scene with a master and his two naughty slaves.

In a threesome, the women's orgasms are seldom the end of anything. They're more like the "fasten your safety belt" sign. However, the men's orgasms in a threesome can put a definite dent in the sexual build up. This may be one of the reasons why members in an *FFM* threesome often spend the night together, nestled in each other's arms, while in *MMF* threesomes the third-wheel guy usually goes home after the final wads are fired.

The Plan

Spontaneous sex is a special gift of the gods that is bestowed upon couples who have undemanding jobs with predictable hours, no children, and friends and relatives who live on other planets. For everyone else, planning and compromise are as important to a good sex life as the twinkle in your eye and bulge in his pants. Triple that for sex with three.

The next part of this chapter is about some of the planning and logistics that are involved in having a threesome. It is divided into four sections:

1. *More Than a Fantasy, But Not Yet a Plan*—things to consider when considering a threesome. 2. *The Pre-Penetration Plan*—from how to find a third wheel to pre-penetration negotiations. 3. *Let the Party Begin*—possible positions and positions on what’s possible. 4. *The Morning After*—don’t let the dawn get you down.

More Than a Fantasy, But Not Yet a Plan

This chapter assumes that your threesome is made up of an established couple and a third wheel. That isn’t how it needs to be. There are debates about whether threesomes are best when they are made up of three individuals versus a primary couple and a third wheel. There are also debates about whether the third wheel should be a friend, an acquaintance, or a stranger. There are no studies on these options, only opinions, and good luck finding any two that fully agree. These next sections are written as if the primary couple is the main audience. A separate section for “the third wheel” follows.

A number of these suggestions are from Suzy Bauer’s e-book, *Step By Step Threesomes*, Nina Hartley’s *How-To Threesome* series of videotapes, and from Violet Blue’s chapter on threesomes in her book, *The Ultimate Guide To Sexual Fantasy—How to Turn Your Fantasies into Reality*.

💡 When you are first discussing the possibility of a threesome with your partner, avoid blurting out a list of potential lovers, such as “Your friend Ally would be sensational!” or “I’m sure Jason would add a great deal!” What your partner will hear is that you can’t wait to screw someone else. If your partner is receptive to the idea of a threesome, you might ask who he or she thinks would make a good third.

💡 Anticipate that the threesome could sour your relationship. And what if one of you fell for the third wheel? Be sure to discuss these possibilities and strategies to deal with them ahead of time.

💡 Try to imagine the sight of someone attractive and alluring having sex with your partner. Your partner is laughing, flirting, sighing, and enjoying intense pleasure with this person. How will you deal with it when it happens during your threesome? Are

there ways you can signal your partner if jealousy is getting the better of you, so she or he can help reassure you?

💡 In a threesome, an erotic connection can sometimes build between two of the participants, with the third person being left out. This is fine as long as the third person enjoys watching, but can result in a major pout if he or she feels excluded. How will you deal with this when it happens?

💡 What if your threesome is an *MMF*, and when the third-wheel guy drops his drawers, you and your partner drop your jaws? What if nature blessed the boy with a package of penile perfection? Ditto if you are a woman, and the second female has the kind of body that a woman only gets when she's cut a deal with the devil? Are you prepared for this kind of situation?


💡 Before trying a threesome, why look at some threesome porn that shows the different positions and possibilities?


💡 If you are considering an *MFF* threesome, you can simulate it by going to a upper-end strip bar where you can pay one of the girls to do a lap dance for you. It might give you a sense of the buttons that are pushed. However, think three times before taking a nude dancer or prostitute home for a threesome. She might be so experienced that it gets strange. It's better to stick with someone whose sexual perspective and experience level is closer to your own.


💡 If you are considering an *MMF*, both of you might see what it's like to be in a strip bar where male dancers are the ones who get naked. Since they usually don't allow other males in the audience during male stripper shows for women, you might need to visit a bar or club where there are gay dancers who get naked. Even if your guy isn't into the same-sex aspect of an *MMF*, it will give both of you a sense of what it might be like to have another naked male in your presence. Besides, it could be worth a chuckle to see other guys trying to pick up your husband.


Whether the dancers at a strip club are male or female, it is unlikely that the third wheel in your threesome will be quite so uninhibited or look like he or she spends hours each day at the gym.

Creating a Pre-Penetration Plan

 To prepare for your first *MMF*, the woman might consider getting a dildo and butt plug for practice. She can simulate different penetration scenarios with her partner and the toys, which can help the actual threesome to be more manageable rather than overwhelming. (Most *MMFs* don't do double penetration. But just having a penis in your mouth at the same time that you've got one in your pelvis will provide a lot more man than most women are used to.)

 Having a threesome with a friend can deepen your friendship, or it can seriously mess it up. And while it might be good to have a threesome with someone you know and trust, it's not such a good idea if he or she has a secret crush on you or your partner. Likewise, an ex boy- or girlfriend could make a good third, or a horrible third.

 To find a third wheel who is not a friend or an acquaintance, swingers have clothes-on get-togethers which you might check out. Other possibilities include the Internet, certain apps, and ads in magazines or papers, although print media should be a last resort. The ads need to be carefully worded and carefully placed. Also, keep your eye out for single moms. After doing threesomes for a number of years, Suzy Bauer and her husband were thinking back over the numerous women who had joined them, and it suddenly hit them that the majority were single moms.

 If the prospective third wheel is an unknown entity, protect your identity. Only provide a cell-phone number or an e-mail address. If they then contact you, set up a face-to-face meeting at a neutral location where you can meet with your clothes on. Discuss things like setting up personal boundaries, safe-sex precautions, and what you hope to get from your threesome. If the pre-

penetration meeting doesn't increase your desire, or the chemistry doesn't feel right, consider it a message from the heavens above that you don't have the right combination. If you do want to go through with it, you might try having your threesome in a hotel room instead of your home until you get to know the person better.

💡 Before your clothes-on pre-sex meeting, decide what is and isn't off-limits. For instance, one woman might be fine with a third wheel giving her husband a blowjob, but will morph into a psychotic puddle if the third wheel and her spouse French kiss. So make a list of the things that you'd like to encourage and discourage. Discuss them during your pre-sex meeting.

💡 If a man is being invited into a threesome with an established couple, he needs to have a thumbs-up from the primary-couple's male partner, as in "Don't worry, I won't kill you if you fuck my wife." One way to do this is for the male of the primary couple to bring up the subject of a possible *MMF* threesome to third-wheel male candidates. Likewise, for an *FFM*, the alpha female needs to invite the other woman to join. There are exceptions to these rules of the threesome jungle, but respecting them will serve you well.


💡 As with any situation where a new partner is involved, you need to protect yourself against sexually transmitted infections. Do not take a stranger's word that he or she is disease-free. Be sure to use condoms, plenty of lube, and any other safe-sex precautions that the situation warrants. Also be sure to protect against unwanted pregnancy. And if you are having an *FFM*, and the *M* is going to be double-dipping into the *FFs'* vaginas or rectums, he'll need to change condoms when going from one girl to the next, and from one orifice to the next. So have a bunch of condoms and lube handy.


Let the Party Begin

First and foremost, consider the following advice by Nina Hartley from her *Nina Hartley's Guide to Threesomes* videos:

“Start slow, with lots of teasing and foreplay, kissing, petting, massage. It’s likely two of you will be part of an existing couple where you know each other’s sexuality better than the newcomer, so don’t rush. Take your time bringing the newcomer into the situation. Unlike us [porn stars], you aren’t making a movie. You don’t have to be so goal-oriented. Let things unfold naturally instead of pushing for the kind of acrobatics you see in porn. It may take more than one get-together to make it all work, so don’t be discouraged if the first threesome ends up with a double blowjob or handjob. It may take time for the three of you to get comfortable enough for actual intercourse. It is not necessary for all three partners to be equally engaged at the same times. Kicking back and watching can be exciting, too. Don’t assume that dicks in every hole at all times is a measure of a successful threesome. Do the easiest things first, and see what develops. Don’t forget to talk about your feelings after-ward. You’ll want to learn as much as possible from each experience.”

As for other suggestions from various parts of the universe:

 Be sensitive that you are inviting a perfect stranger into your love-making lair. Don’t assume that he or she has a clue of what to do or how to be. This is the moment of truth when what used to be 100 percent fantasy becomes 100 percent reality, which is not always the prettiest of transitions. Be gracious, kind, and offer the level of reassurance that you would want someone to offer you. The third wheel is not a fuck-bot who is there at your convenience, unless you are paying by the hour.

 Just being naked together, feeling relaxed, and opening up sexually is a major accomplishment. Pay attention to the chemistry of the threesome rather than to your own need to get off. Don’t try to script your threesome. It may take a couple of times together before the three of you find your groove.

💡 Your primary concern in any relationship should be that your partner feels loved and valued by you. This may mean paying more attention to your partner than to the third wheel—unless you agree that one of you mostly wants to watch. This doesn't mean you should be anything less than welcoming, but the chances are good that you didn't have children with the third wheel, and you don't share a mortgage and car payments.

💡 Be sober enough to legally drive. If you are too anxious to proceed without getting stoned or plowed, consider it a sign that this isn't something you should be doing.

💡 Don't be afraid to stop half way through the lovemaking to talk about what's going well and what could be going better. With three, you need to huddle often.

💡 There could be a time during an *MMF* when the woman is on all fours and is doing oral on the guy who's in front of her while the other guy is behind her and thrusting, aka "spit roasting." The male who is thrusting into her vagina or rectum needs to check in with her about rhythm and depth, since his thrusting might be causing her to gag on the penis of the guy who's in front. Likewise, the guy in the front needs to establish with her a comfortable pelvis-to-face distance. Both males need to be aware that the woman is between a rock and a hard place. You will probably need to work out a nonverbal signaling system, given what's in her mouth and all. Likewise, during an *FFM*, if the man has his penis inside one of the women who is giving the other woman oral sex, he needs to check in with her about the best speed and depth for thrusting. Otherwise, his thrusting might be making it difficult for her to keep her lips around whatever it is they are around.

💡 Make sure your phones are turned off and the kids are safely away at their grandparents'. Use a hotel or another location if there's any chance that teenagers might show up, and don't even think about doing this when you are on-call.

The Morning After


No matter how enjoyable your threesome may have been, expect that you will wake up the next morning with worries and bad feelings. After all, you've just violated the expectations of mostly monogamous society. If some people in this day and age still feel shame after they masturbate, imagine what you might feel after having two penises in you at the same time or your first same-sex experience while your spouse was watching.


No one should leave the morning after with self-doubt. Take the time to express your thanks and gratitude to one another—to both your primary partner and to the third wheel. If you enjoyed the experience, it's important to send the third wheel flowers if she's a woman, or something manly if he's a guy. Be sure the card has both of your names on it, and maybe even a separate line from each of you if you are an established couple.

While you have each other to talk over any morning-after doubts with, the third wheel has only him- or herself. The flowers or gift will help with that process. Do not slip up on this one. Talking it over with your partner the next day and doing something nice for the third wheel are as important as all the planning that went into making the threesome click, especially if you had a good time.

When You Are the Third Wheel

There is a certain freedom in being the third wheel in a threesome. If things don't go well, you can avoid seeing the others again. They probably live together and won't have the option of avoiding each other. On the other hand, they still have each other and can comfort each other.

 If you are a woman, it's likely that a big part of an *FFM* threesome is for you to explore sexually with the other woman. If it ends up being all about pleasing the man, consider bailing early, unless he's the chair of your dissertation committee. Be sure to discuss it with the couple ahead of time.

 Always meet with the couple ahead of time to get a sense of your chemistry together. Talk about the things the three of you might like to try. Whether you are male or female, it's an important time to discuss the kinds of things you will and won't do. Come up with safe words that will either slow or stop the action if

you find yourself feeling overwhelmed. Discuss everything from sexually transmitted infections to birth control. Don't assume that because they are a couple they have their act together.

💡 You will most likely be joining an established couple with lots of history together. As a third wheel, you will need to deal with the reality that you won't be coming first, or not metaphorically, anyway.

💡 You will be having an experience with three separate entities as opposed to two. You will be dealing with each of the others as individuals, as well as with them as a couple. The couple may have its own dynamics that are different from those of the individuals who make it up. This is not a problem in some threesomes, but in others, the mind-fucking can outpace the body-fucking. You didn't sign on to do couples therapy. If you find yourself being placed into that role, BAIL!

💡 Things might go spinningly well, or they might get very weird. If the threesome starts to get weird, don't hesitate to suddenly remember an important meeting or a sprinkler in the yard that you are sure you left on. Do not be afraid to call it a day, no matter what stage the threesome is in. Do not for a moment be intimidated because it's them against you. If you suddenly start feeling that this is the wrong time and place, don't hesitate to grab your pants or purse and make yourself history. Be sure to drive to the location separately, or have an escape route that doesn't depend on them.

💡 The three of you will have a much better time if you don't feel the need to prove what a sexual all-star you are. This is a time to blend, rather than stand out, unless they have specifically asked you to have your way with one member of the couple while the other watches.

💡 If you are a third-wheel guy in an *MMF*, seek the other M's approval before trying something with his partner, even if she's

inviting you to do it. It's not like you need to check with his attorney, a simple moment of eye contact and confirming nod are all that's needed. Likewise, if you are a woman, you're not there to upstage the other woman. Be respectful, and the chances are good you will get pleasure back in spades.

💡 Ah, the single-dude dilemma. It is going to be significantly more difficult for a single man to find a willing couple for a threesome than it is for a single woman. It's the same problem with almost every species on the planet, be it a single bull elk, sea lion or homo sapien.

💡 This is probably just a bunch of psychobabble nonsense, and even if it isn't, it's no reason not to have a great time. But try to think about any less-than-conscious reasons that might be propelling you, as a single person, to have sex with an established couple. Freud might wonder if it has something to do with unconsciously wanting to outdo one of your parents. Some of Freud's followers might wonder if it has to do with wanting to be loved and taken care of by an idealized mommy and daddy. Again, we all do sexual things with motives that could fill anyone's psych book. That's no reason not to enjoy them. But being more aware of it can sometimes help us from getting stuck in situations that aren't always the best.

💡 Make sure that someone knows where you are going, including the address and phone number. You don't have to tell them the truth about what you are doing, but leaving a trail and an expected return time is never a bad idea. This is just as true for males as for females. The only exception would be if you already know the people. While joining an unknown couple for sex is probably no more dangerous than joining an unknown single for sex, taking precautions is in order.

💡 Just because they are married and say they are disease free, don't believe it. Be sure to bring your own condoms and lube.

Threesome Resources:

Diana Cage's book is definitely worth getting if you are exploring threesomes: *Threesomes, Fulfill Your Ultimate Fantasy*, Alyson Books.

Suzy Bauer's *Step By Step Threesome* e-book is very helpful. However, huge blocks of text from Lori Gammon's *Threesome* mysteriously appear in Bauer's e-book. Hmmmm. The focus of *Step By Step Threesome* is mostly on MFF threesomes. Again, while it is very helpful, Bauer's e-book, should have been less than 100 pages instead of 236. Do people really need quotes from Mark Twain and Dr. Seuss when they are trying to learn about threesomes? Many of the book's generalizations should be ignored. Still, it is money well spent if you are thinking about threesomes. Be aware that Bauer uses the Internet marketing hard-sell approach, and you might be hammered with ads if you sign up on her website at www.StepByStepThreesome.com.

While Lori Gammon has plenty of things to say in her book *Threesome*, she has a need to quote studies from *Cosmo* like it was *Scientific American*, and her enchantment with the so-called superiority of women in all matters of sex is a bit much. If women's brains and sexual nature is so darned wonderful when compared to men's, why include men at all in a threesome?

The *Nina Hartley's Guide to Threesomes—Two Girls & a Guy* and *Nina Hartley's Guide To Threesomes—Two Guys & a Girl* videos show many of the possible combinations, as long as you realize these are porn.

Violet Blue has a helpful chapter on threesomes in her book, *The Ultimate Guide to Sexual Fantasy—How to Turn Your Fantasies into Reality* from Cleis Press.

While Luna Grey's *The Kinky Girl's Guide to Dating* from Greenery Press, isn't about threesomes, it is a fine read for anyone who is thinking about stepping outside of our culture's traditional parameters for sex.

Resources for Open Marriage and Polyamory:

This is a complex subject and deserves a great deal of research if you are interested in exploring and pursuing it. The following resources are among the best that are currently available.

Tristan Taormino's *Opening Up—A Guide to Creating and Sustaining Open Relationships*, Cleis Press. This is one of the best books available on the subject of open marriage and open relationships.

Redefining Our Relationships by Wendy-O Matik from Defiant Times Press is a book on non-monogamy or love-based anarchy that a lot of people find to be very helpful. It packs a lot in its 93 pages.

The Ethical Slut by Easton and Hardy is considered by many to be the Poly Bible. The 2nd edition is available from Celestial Arts.

Loving More. The Loving More website is an online portal for all things polyamory. The information is helpful and the site is highly regarded by people who practice polyamory: www.LoveMore.com.

For an introduction to the swinging lifestyle, you can't do better than Dana and Ed Allen's *Considering Swinging* from Momentpoint Media. Don't let the low price confuse you, this book is recommended by many.



From the **Guide To Getting It On** — 8th edition
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