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# What Really Happens During "Young Swingers Week" at a Clothing-Optional Resort

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By the time we arrived the clothing-optional resort in Jamaica [called Hedonism](#) for [Young Swingers Week](#), my boyfriend Jesse and I had already been on vacation for five days — and hadn't had sex in even longer.

We'd been staying at a fancy, romantic resort down the beach in Negril, Jamaica. [Azul Beach Resort Sensatori Jamaica](#) was an all-inclusive experience filled with food so good it became the center of our days, a luxury California king we slept on opposite sides of, and complimentary Champagne bottles we didn't drink. Don't get me wrong, we had a good time — it was impossible not to in that kind of luxury — but if I was hoping our problems would be erased on vacation, I was smoking too much Jamaican ganja (guilty as charged).

We'd hit pause on going on dates with other people a few months prior, after a big fight that both was and wasn't [about nonmonogamy](#) nearly broke us up. The result was the same as the other times we've closed our relationship over the last three years: less anxiety (for me), less sex drive (for both of us, especially him), and a feeling of putting a Band-Aid over our potential incompatibilities (or

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were they simply growing pains?).

While being with Jesse — my first open relationship — has shown me I definitely don't want monogamy, I've never been sure I'm as polyamorous as he is, either, wanting ongoing, serious relationships with other people. Actually, I know I *want* them — it just still hasn't happened for me. Despite my near-constant interest in new romantic experiences, I haven't seemed to attach to anyone else for more than a month. I've sometimes wondered if maybe I'm more like a swinger: romantically monogamous, sexually adventurous. By attending Young Swingers Week (which is open to any couples 18 to 45ish), I hoped to find some clarity.

Upon our arrival at the infamous clothing-optional resort Hedonism II Negril, we were led to the sign-in table where we could choose between three necklace colors we'd wear as shorthand: green for "open-minded but inexperienced," red for more experienced but "depends on the situation," and blue for "DTF" — aka down to f\*ck. There was also an option to add a white bead, which meant that you were "allowed" to do things without your partner. In order to get one, you both had to take an oath together saying you consented.

I knew he would have preferred blue.



Hedonism feels a lot like naughty Summer camp, and Young Swingers Week packed a schedule of activities meant to facilitate just that kind of bonding. The first was the nude pool welcome party, where a sea of over 150 bodies were packed in like sunburned lobsters for the swapping.

In broad daylight, a woman was already being eaten out while another was getting f\*cked next to her in the hot tub. Nobody blinked. ("I don't mess with the hot tub," one veteran later told me. "Let's just say there's a lot of stuff floating on the surface in the morning." Like most of my hygienic concerns for the next few days, I buried that unwanted information as deeply as possible.) This is part of the magic of Hedonism, Young Swingers Week or not – every body is a good body, and you can do whatever you want, whenever you want, so long as there's consent.

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We stripped down, and almost immediately, two couples came over to us and started making not unintelligent conversation. Surrounded by two new naked women now, Jesse became animated in a way I hadn't seen in weeks. My resentment began to grow. I found them attractive myself, but in my jealous state, these women were now my rivals – especially the one who bore my middle name, which is also the name of Jesse's lover. *Perfect. Just perfect.* My anxiety began to rise.

That first night, I refused to check out the "playroom," where the swingers go to swap, watch, or be watched. I felt pressured and Jesse felt restricted, especially since men aren't allowed in alone. We had a big fight, one of our worst. The morning after, I tried to push him away, told him to go off without me.

"I'll go get you a bead. I don't care what you do," I maturely bluffed.

"No. It's no fun for me unless you're having fun. I want to do everything together here. I'm not going to pressure you. You call the shots this week, OK? You have total control."

With those words, his explicit offer to act like swingers – prioritizing the relationship above all else, giving me total veto power over his actions – put me at ease almost immediately. I started to feel safe. Open. Maybe these people were onto something.







We attended a talk by Michael of [Michael and Holli](#), a couple in the lifestyle that's famous for their escapades on [Playboy TV's show Swing](#).

According to Michael (who, in addition to being very friendly, is getting his PhD in psychology), swinging can encompass anything from soft ("anything that goes within your boundaries and rules, and their boundaries and rules, up to and including foreplay, but not penis inserted in vagina") to full swap ("everything I just said, but penis can be inserted in vagina"), voyeur ("people like to watch"), exhibitionist ("people who like to be watched"), and a fifth category of people who don't participate but are just sex positive ("that's not a test you get at the doctor").

Though it sounds risque, swinging is probably the (emotionally) safest possible way to practice nonmonogamy. Most everyone I met over the course of Young Swingers Week (many of whom were around 30 and had been together over eight years) said they only have experiences together as a couple and keep things extremely casual. They all emphasized that swinging is about sexual novelty and strengthening your relationship. If there is any ongoing communication with a lover or couple at all, everyone I asked told me they do things like keep it to group text to avoid attachments forming outside of the context of the primary partnership.

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For swingers, any sex you have with other people should serve to increase satisfaction with your commitment, and one "should go as fast as the slowest person," Michael emphasized over and over.

He also listed a few "dos and don'ts."

**Don't:** "Push your partner." Don't trap ("OK, I'll do this for you, if you do that for me."); don't be fake just to make your partner happy ("If you do something you really don't wanna do, I guarantee you this will come out later."); don't allow someone you want to play with to push you past the boundaries you set up with your partner ("It is a 'we,' not a 'me.'").

**His Dos?:** Negotiate instead of compromising ("A negotiation is a win-win. Compromise truly is a win-lose."); do this together ("And if today you are exhibitionists, but tomorrow you talk and decide on a full swap, and then in three weeks from now you decide to just be voyeurs, that's OK."); be honest ("Know what your desires are and share them with your partner."); use protection ("The only thing I want to take home is a memory, not an STD."); and attempt new things within your and your partner's rules and boundaries ("As a couple, as partners, do what makes you feel happy, not others").

This is part of the magic of Hedonism — every body is a good body, and you can do whatever you want, whenever you want, so long as there's consent.

Listening to Michael's talk, I knew that some of the rules most swingers follow are too restrictive for me and Jesse — we both want the option of having experiences apart and like to have some sort of emotional bond with the people we sleep with. But the foundation of security swinging seems to promise — that the long-term strength of the team trumps the whims of the individual — made sense to me as I tried it on. Even if I *philosophically* believe the purest sort of love isn't about ownership, knowing I had power over

Jesse's actions is what allowed me to relax enough to *act* on that belief. The openness he desired to see in me, ironically, only felt possible because I knew I could restrict him.

That night, I suggested we go to the playroom. There, I saw the woman with my middle name from the pool. With my newfound security, she no longer felt like my rival. As we began to kiss, I remembered one of the greatest gifts nonmonogamy has given me: coming into my queerness.

I both did and didn't surprise myself when the offer came flying out — *"Do you guys want to come back to our room?"*

As I watched Jesse have penetrative sex with someone else for the first time, it hurt a little, but in a good way. Sharp pings were immediately turned into rolling pleasure, a sensation the poly world likes to call "compersion." It was kind of like watching a sexy movie, only one staring my leading man. I saw how handsome he was, how attentive and skilled. At one point, I even blurted out proudly, "You'll like that, he's so good at that position." She did, and I felt enamored with both of them.

When the women had come (in true swinger fashion, the men both saved their n\*t for their respective partners), the couple quickly and politely excused themselves. No pillow talk. I didn't feel used, but I did wish I knew something more about them.

From that day on, Jesse and I were filled with desire for each other. We had sex every day, multiple times a day, but it was more than that — we appreciated each other in a way we hadn't in months. He continued to let me have control, and I continued to feel open and not jealous.

Still, there were things that slowed me down. When I found out that same couple had played with at least three others in the first few days — and I witnessed them in the playroom sharing a Magic Wand with another woman without protection the next night — I started to worry.

While swingers are known for using condoms for "P-in-V" sex religiously, I also didn't see anyone

asking for STD test results before they played (despite the fact I usually make it a rule to ask, I'm sorry to say I didn't either), using condoms for oral sex (pretty standard, Michael confirmed), or cleaning sex toys before sharing them. I ended up forgoing the woman's offer to use her strap-on on me. It was tempting, but it just didn't feel worth the risk anymore — for me or the team.

Jesse understood and continued not to pressure me, deferring to me as the "slowest person" Michael mentioned in his talk. Each night, we fell asleep in each other's arms, holding onto our newly appraised property like the market was only going to continue inflating.

When it was time to leave after only four nights, I felt a familiar sadness, the same kind I felt upon leaving Hedonism the first year I visited. It was back to the world of closed doors and clothes, fights and laundry. Or could things be different now?

I'm not sure, but I do know this: our trip reminded me what I like about nonmonogamy in the first place: the potential it has to make me see my relationship and self anew, to feel free and committed at once. And for that, I would highly recommend Young Swingers Week to anyone, monogamous or not. You don't have to do anything you don't want to do. Sometimes, it takes an atmosphere of total liberation to remind you of that.



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