# Psychotherapist advises on navigating evolving relationship dynamics in an open same-sex marriage



In an advice column published by The Guardian on May 14, 2024, written by Pamela Stephenson Connolly, a US-based psychotherapist specializing in sexual disorders, a man in his early 30s seeks guidance regarding changes in his relationship. The man, married to a man in his mid-50s, explains that their relationship dynamic has shifted notably since their marriage. Initially, each had clearly defined sexual roles within their open relationship that began at a sex party. Over time, however, his older partner, previously a dominant "top," has shown an increased interest in being the "bottom" and no longer penetrates him, even in group settings. This change includes a new tendency toward jealousy concerning other "tops" the younger man attracts. Moreover, the inquirer found his husband browsing escort websites, which led to further frustration.

Connolly suggests that these shifts might be a manifestation of "top burnout," often prompting a temporary change in power exchange preferences. She recommends tolerance and support during this explorative stage while emphasizing the importance of loving and patient communication. This understanding might aid the couple in navigating their evolving relationship dynamics. Connolly does not advocate for confrontation or blame but encourages an open dialogue to express feelings and understand each other’s perspectives.

For more personalized advice on sexual matters, Connolly encourages readers to write to her at a designated Guardian email, although she notes that not all queries will receive a direct response due to volume and advises them of the publication's terms and conditions.