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Atlanta Poly Weekend Promotes Education and Growth

by Winnie McCroy
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From June 3-5, Atlanta, the Relationship Equality Foundation Inc. presents the Atlanta Poly Weekend, a fun, family-friendly, three-day conference promoting education and growth for the polyamorous community and its allies.

"As Polyamory and other forms of ethical non-monogamy become more visible in our media and entertainment industries, as well as becoming a rapidly growing choice of relationship style, many of the organizations like Relationship Equality Foundation have found that education is a key point in acceptance," said the Relationship Equality Foundation Board of

Directors. "We are not only educating our own communities in relationship skills and interpersonal communication but also the general communities of society. The more people know about ethical non-monogamies, like Relationship Anarchy, Open Marriages, and Polyamory, to name a few, the more understandable we as a people become."



(Source:S.Culhane)

During the three-day conference, participants will explore the intersections between the polyamorous community and other subcultures and movements. Participants will also discuss mainstream culture's growing awareness of polyamory and the impact of this awareness both on polyamorous individuals and society as a whole.

Speakers for the event include Dr. Elisabeth Sheff, Ph.D Sociologist, Rachel Anne Kieran Psy. D., Ms. Noel, Sarah Meng LAPC, Lady Steele, Marla Renee Stewart, Ricci Levy, along with more than 20 additional presenters.

Participants will have the unique opportunity to attend a wide variety of educational sessions on topics including everyday poly living, activism and community organizing, radical theory, and more, via lectures, workshops, discussion panels, and sharing of personal experiences.



(Source:S.Culhane)

"Polyamory is a very personal relationship style, with each person participating in it in their own unique way. Relationships are built using various methods. We as individuals need to grow, and the educational workshops, classes, and social interaction we provide at conferences helps facilitate that personal growth and helps us be better at what we do," said Board Members. "From classes on communication styles to STI's, and how to set up financial protection to how to choose a therapist, almost every class we have at Atlanta Poly Weekend is relatable to any relationship structure. Poly relationships are different in many ways from Mono relationships, however the keys to a successful relationship are nearly universal no matter

the configuration. And in order to maintain successful relationships, we have to grow as individuals, learn and accept new ways to practice our styles of love."

The conference is presented by Relationship Equality Foundation, a Georgia non-profit. Sponsors include the

National Coalition for Sexual Freedom, SouthEast Leather Fest, and the Woodhull Freedom Foundation. The event will benefit Lost and Found Youth Inc., Atlanta's only housing facility for homeless LGBT youth. AID Atlanta will be at APW all weekend including Friday Night when they will be offering free HIV Testing and Counseling to all. This will be open to the public offered by AID Atlanta hosted by APW and Relationship Equality Foundation.



(Source:S.Culhane)



"It is our belief that in order for stigmas and assumptions about our communities to be displaced, it is imperative to educate others about our relationships. Additionally, we as a community have a responsibility to ourselves to ensure that, in our rapid growth, we are teaching people who want to practice ethical non-monogamies the best possible practices in doing so," they concluded. "Over the past 40 years, society has lived by a particular relationship standard, Man + Woman = Child = Family. We are now seeing that families are being built differently: families may have no children; families may consist of three adults and they co-parent children; families may be one adult who chooses several others as family, yet they live

alone; and even more structures."

"One of the focal points of Atlanta Poly Weekend is the family aspect," they said. "We pride ourselves on being the only Polyamory conference in the country that allows parents to bring their children to the conference. We have an entire track of programming designed for children. Many of our organizers are parents. We feel that to exclude any part of the family is to exclude the element of family. No matter what your family looks like -- poly, mono, queer, trans, gay, lesbian -- we will welcome you, accept you, and we will grow as a people."

The Atlanta Poly Weekend will be held June 3-5 at the Sheraton Atlanta Hotel- Downtown, 165 Courtland St NE, Atlanta, GA 30303, U.S.A. Tickets are \$25 child/\$60 adult, available online or at the conference.

For information or tickets, visit <http://atlantapolyweekend.com/> or <http://relationshipequalityfoundation.org>

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Winnie McCroy is the Women on the EDGE Editor, HIV/Health Editor, and Assistant Entertainment Editor for EDGE Media Network, handling all women's news, HIV health stories and theater reviews throughout the U.S. She has contributed to other publications, including The Village Voice, Gay City News, Chelsea Now and The Advocate, and lives in Brooklyn, New York.

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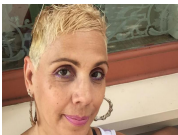
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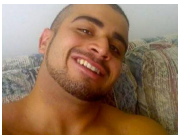
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