# &&&&&&&&&&&& &&&&&&&&&&&

Here's the basic concepts again as a refresher - or if it's your first time, as an introduction.

much of wider society, and many definitions are still being actively debated.

Plurality is still relatively unknown to

# &&&&&&&&&&& &&&&&&&&&&&&

in life as any singlet does. same autonomy, privacy, and participation recognised and understood, and have the tor plural systems' right to exist, be Plurality is also a movement - advocating psychological, or incidental. And of course, 'nuderstood as spiritual, cultural, experiences - whether they're personally M upwny  $\Lambda$  indeniably human provide support and community for those Plurality is an umbrella, attempting to understand ourselves and eachother. put to offer more options with which to not to have more people be openly plural, To this end, the intent of plural advocacy is

Shattering Expectations 7# ...ni səunimoz əbinə s mətsyz A

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#### **Establishing Foundations**

#1

#### А System's Guide To Plurality

*An informal crash course for systems* and singlets alike.

#### Relevance (Continued)

.evelves.

model may decide to keep it purely to singlet model, and even those using a plural nuderstand as plural might still choose a means someone with experiences others choose the model that works for them. This oi sleubiving individuals to exactly what those experiences are is less describe their life experiences. Knowing best way (or, indeed, the only way) to plural identity model do so because it's the phenomena. Those that choose to use a describe widespread, pre-existing plurality is a new term, but one that seeks to  $\mathbf{W}$  ancy, it's productive to understand that

> This resource is for everyone - systems and singlets, know-alls and know-nothings read it, share it, surpass and disagree with it, adapt it, revise it - if you're working towards understanding and acceptance, it's all yours.

What this *isn't* is academia - every thought in these pages was acquired through observational understanding and lived experience, not by reviewing existing literature. This is a firsthand account, so reference it that way if used.

A System's Guide is a layered overview of plurality intended to provide a ground-up intuition for the nuances of plural experience. Through this intuition, it aims to provide not just a passing understanding, but a familiarity sufficient to befriend a system you know - or the one inside.

#### Purpose

#### Kelevance

attention-seeking. their experiences dismissed as baseless not classified under DID) can equally have diagnosis (or those with plural experiences e inonitw smajays letuid, "gnixif" abaan ot plurality as a disordered delusion that just Personality Disorder) can inspire dismissal diagnoses like DID (previously Multiple largely met with skepticism. While berceived as "in the brain"), plurality is gender or sexuality (or anything else As with non-conventional differences in

This "singlet" model of identity suits the majority of the population. However, there is a significant minority (roughly 1 in 50) that instead utilise a "plural" model. These *plural systems* identify multiple "selves" within their body - each with potentially differing attitudes, memories, or even (by exchanging control of their body) voices, skills, and relationships.

Conventionally, we treat a human body and an identity as a one-to-one relationship. A body represents (or, contains) one person, and while they may change over time, they remain the same individual.

#### Plurality

#### Terminology

another. be able to directly communicate with one similarly to "roommates". May or may not a plural system (aka its members) - used Headmates - The individuals that comprise

tronting common. not black-and-white, with partial and shared tront" of the body; at the wheel). Usually of the body they're in (i.e. being "in the Fronting - A system member having control

universal, but a common experience. and "switching out" to the back). Not of the body (i.e. "switching in" to the front Switching - Headmates exchanging control

# &&&&&&&&&&& &&&&&&&&&&&

Whether you're talking to a system, or considering what's inside yourself, here's what not to take for granted.

Plurality encompasses a range of experiences poorly defined by any one conception.

## 

above, this language refers to nuanced issues in the outside world - but as with the striking, complicating, sometimes dangerous; or young would all appear to present instinctive animals, or as unintelligent, old,  $s_{\lambda}$ 

janterpretation of the language we use that usis only through this per-system themselves can convey the ins and outs of. experiences that only the individual system

others can gain a genuine understanding of

ont experiences.

Facing Challenges ۶# ... ni sənutuos əpinə s mətsys A

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#### **Shattering Expectations**

#2

#### А System's Guide To Plurality

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#### Words

meant to be meaningless to an outsider, but of the outside world. This language is not to describe our internal experiences on that As pluratfolk, we model the language used

.it gaiveying it. meaning is being inscribed by the system it can't be taken at face value - as its

Minos, but might resemble them. A "sexual fo Ilua shi ton si sidmasa not Ine Bull of

and obviously implied. System members Introd, many see this as largely unimpactful e the serious a body with a local with a body with a relationship" between headmates can sound

attitudes and mannerisms, or they just might be widely invested in displaying their with the names of fictional characters could

eachother sublings might refer to a Tike the look! System members that call

easily be using sibling to mean headmate! resemblance, bond, or rivalry - but could

> As pluralfolk, we always lay *between* the extremes of our bodies containing one person, and of being a multiple-bodied group of people. A system might have names for each of their members, an overall system name but no member names, a system name and member names, many names per member, two headmates that share a name, a few members without names, and more!

#### Names

A body and an individual is not necessarily a 1:1 relationship. Conversely, not everyone under the plural umbrella can be modelled as "multiple people in a body". Plurality is a queerness of cardinality, encompassing all the fuzzy lines where we can't state that 1:1 relationship in all senses. These system *configurations* are diverse, and represent a variety of lived experiences - whether it's a system of ~7, 31, 2, 1,000,000, or 1\*.

#### Numbers

With this in mind, systems may feel that

others to some extent. by one headmate always "smearing" across or somewhere in between - rapport accrued , eadmates, individualised to each headmate, relationships to others exist mostly across all

### **Villesue**

- səʌjəswəyi pueisiəpun məisys lenbividi nderstand oneselt as plural, but can help an and deliberate actions - aren't necessary to cultural truths, psychological mechanisms, bne leutitiqs gnibuloni - "seititesuso" experiences owe to a specific cause. These additionally believe that their plural model is right for them, but some systems systems have reasoning for why a plural sol their own plurality. Most Each system has an individualised

We are - it doesn't matter why". even if that understanding is "we are how

> Appearance In most of our society, how you appear is a key part of your identity and individuality. Pluralfolk can rarely make exclusive claim to the appearance of the body, so selfperception often differs between headmates - whether different styles on a similar body,

> or a totally different body entirely, a shared

understanding of how someone appears on

this *meta-physical* level can be key to

making social connections.

#### gender as distinct from sex, plurality necessitates understanding gender as distinct from the body. Owing to that "gut feeling" of gender, different parts of a system often have their own pronouns, gendered language, and relationships to words like "trans" and "cis".

Like trans-ness necessitates understanding

#### Gender

#### Annanty

what makes them unique. system member helps convey and express - the form (metaphysical appearance) of a and machines, spirits, monsters, or software tantare. Anthropomorphic animals, robots reach this conclusion intuitively and without point" (the body) to dispel, pluralfolk often Authout an odvious "human starting appearance of a system member need not be nonhuman subcultures, the metaphysical Like furries, therians, otherkin, and other

#### Relationships

 share gender, but differ in sexuality! ... opinions - share interests, but differ in tastes Headmates may share beliets, but differ in almost completely individualised. memory might be totally contiguous, or - satiemes, but where exactly varies headmates. The answer always lies between is in what stays constant detween A notable variance in system configuration

# &&&&&&&&&&& &&&&&&&&&&&

Here's what to look out for in the wild. and what that one internal conflict might just boil down to.

without and from within.

Systems are challenged in their selfacceptance, day in and day out, from

#4 – Gaining Familiarity

...ni səunimoə əbinə s mətsyz A

navigate this to avoid unnecessary conflict. and systems are otten torced to caretully

- isuni to level a seruper meters a level of trust

Engaging with the stranger, more complex

having similar experiences, or personally

fargeted it they resemble debated characters.

 $p\lambda$  (performing the set of the state of the crossified by the set of the se

ίοωυ ιαθημίες, systems may even be attected

np discourse). Through similarities to their

-constant for pornographic tan art (aging-

sout bing discourse) and those

τουνευτιουσηλ-υπλεριτην τείδαιουσητρε π

larger online debates around depictions of

behaviour but have little capacity for actual

pue (saitinabili , saorariaque , identifies, and

activities that resemble outside-world bad

harm. Notably, these conflicts resemble

seeing past this moral pant requires a

around reinterpretations of (young)

and singlets alike.

*An informal crash course for systems* 

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System's Guide

To Plurality

#3

**Facing Challenges** 

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Syscourse

Most of this discourse relies on generic system being visible becomes unacceptable. "weitd" of "problematic" line above which a most systems and purported allies having a ostracized for specific experiences - with On a finer level, all kinds of systems are

Taken this way, all our examples can be .madi language that describes them. interpretations of plural internal experiences

imade objectionable. The Minotaur is

irresponsible caretaking, immaturity, and to snothinitab talgnis no based noisuloxa animals in the outside world can be entorced moral expectations of family, children, and copyright intringement, and the cultural and

Sultivit - man guildmasar satembean no disrespect "real tamily", *fictives* are

accusation of incest, rape, and bestiality.

cultural appropriation, intrasystem

relationships are cheating, familial terms

innumanness - along with the occasional

"endogenic" systems are acceptable - rather

online discourse is twisted towards whether

appropriate to use, or even possible to

than whether these classifications are

objective categorization of all systems,

as it does, even in yourself. However, by

that you possess an objective and correct

ateritable - there's no way to validate

Vilenian si sin l'ila deemed unacceptable). I his is naturally

which is deemed acceptable), or through

("traumagemic") "emuan dguord" sisixa;

exclusion tocusing on whether a system widely propagated online, especially

Sysmedicalist beliefs and language are

some other mechanism ("endogenic", which

sisixa maisys a nosear and to gaibine average

propagating the two key terms as an

complex and must be a fabricated delusion, the privacy of a system is irrelevant compared to keeping others aware of abnormalities, and the needs and desires of a system can be dismissed in pursuit of

definitions of plurality emerge. When

utilized, these may leave one system objectified as "fun costumes", ...

the most widespread root of sysphobia is *singlet-normativity* - the idea that singlethood is a privileged default expected of everyone. Because wider society is not exposed to plurality, deviations from singlet behaviours and experiences can lead to rejection, distress, and danger.

Outside of basic non-acceptance or misunderstandings of the nature of plurality,

This creates a pressure to be "normal enough" that affects systems far beyond self-acceptance. Whenever a system unrepresses (or "gains") a new headmate,

... and another deprived of systemhood in being seen a "purely individuals" – and without a widespread diverse definition, questioning systems are left wondering if they can call themselves plural at all.

they're challenged with the question - how

#### msileoidamsyz

and OSDD diagnoses exclude many systems This targets a substantial population - DID trom what should be their peers. (e.g. accusations of "taking" systemhood) support, and experience targeted sysphobia systems are excluded from communities and models of plurality. Through these criteria, otherwise adhering poorly to medical systems for lacking a medical diagnosis, or Sysmedicalists are those that ostracize

ward discharges. rejected voluntary medical procedures or genuine danger to themselves in the form of (including a pressure to get "fixed") or even recommendations and poor practice means diagnosis, whereupon a mix of limited on systems who fit these criteria to get a like personal distress. It also places pressure traumatic history and self-reported criteria ρλ τος μαιτιβ ρειπλατιβ οπ ιπάινταμαί

common analogies, it can feel like a risk. Impostor syndrome, and the feeling that you might be being plural wrong, is pervasive though some turn this fear on others instead.

many headmates can a system have without becoming unacceptable? Faced with normative pressure, "a System of 4" feels more believable/acceptable than "a System of 40" - even when both systems are comfortable. Whenever a plural experience doesn't line up with the simplest, most restoring normalcy via medical intervention. In this rejection of diversity, limited

Through a lens where singlethood is the only "normal", plurality is unacceptably

Normativity

.9ntt9b

## &&&&&&&&&&& &&&&&&&&&&&

Here's what some of those oft-alluded *plural experiences* tend to be, to a system or to an observer.

Becoming familiar with plurality is a process that rewires the brain.

strange, intuitive, and counter-intuitive

# 

# 

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τηροιπαί bonus chapters are available at

That's it! Thanks for reading <3

 $\mathbf{W}$  systems, to be known is often a source of

patterns and body language, and talk openly

system with a rare moment to relax and let

conflict/feelings between system members.

differences, and even helping to mediate

the system can provide better support -

spitting unhappy fronts, perceiving subtle

ot a system, and recognize its inhabitants

extra-system relationships, too. Over time,

Of course, plurality adds layers to forming

fondly. Through this process, triends outside

sguitands can come to understand the workings

strangeness of plural existence can provide a

terror - but it can also a source of peace.

about their own experiences and feelings.

headmates, be less cautious over speech

their guard down - front less popular

The tolerance of a friend towards the

and singlets alike.

*An informal crash course for systems* 

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System's Guide

To Plurality

#4

**Gaining Familiarity** 

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## **Ynumacy**

leave notes, and others still can't do either! systems can converse in their head, others between headmates varies wildly. Some Within a system, the ability to communicate

However, by observing how others interact there's no way to toster positive bonds. Without direct communication, one assumes

.relationships. foundation of non-verbal intra-system develop opinions of eachother – the with the world, system members still

Intrasystem relationships are quite unlike a ears burning when someone says your name. ug thoughts without being in the front - like eachother, or even bubble up their teelings speak to triends about how they teel about 'qu things their headmates struggle with, Without a word, system members can still

you've likely realised, they simply do not relationship between two bodies, but as

.9d of b99n

**O**ver time, you become accustomed to these differences between fronts. As a system, this may help fronts settle, foster acceptance for your own differences, and possibly help you learn to switch deliberately. As an observer, recognising fronts by sight and sound becomes easier – which while not infallible, may help you understand a system more.

At first, switches can feel strange. The sensations are unfamiliar, be it like "waking up", a new pair of glasses, or a sliding-intoplace sensation inside your head. They can look strange, too - daydreamy eye-glazing, sudden adjustments in posture, wincing, and so on. It's not necessarily accidental, mind stretching, yawning, scrunching your nose, and clearing your throat can all help deliberately settle in a new front. This works because different headmates tend to utilize the body differently: posture, gait, voice, expression, or even "resting" face.

### Switching

outside and in, parts of that 'new taste' start otten begin to recognize the old - from In the process of discovering the new, you expression, tastes, and so on. teels right: in identity, language, seltprovide - sufficient space to feel out what where you can find - or as a triend, can this begins with a period of exploration, process of connecting the old with the new. Settling as a system or headmate is a unique

trom long ago that's returned somehow. triend might recall a mannerism or interest points in your past that telt just like it, or a to seem tamiliar. You might remember

new aspects to express and embrace. and only occasionally encounter entirely 'meet new parts of ourselves like old triends, Lucongy this process, we (and others) re-

> **O**f course, a system may instead choose to signal a change of front explicitly. The obvious "hi, it's [name]" is functional, but can feel objectifying. Instead, swapping name tags or accessories, signatures in chat messages, or even just polling for guesses can help keep friends in the loop.

Switching and fronts also help to inform a

Rapid switching, co-fronts, blurred/empty-

feeling fronts, and front 'variations' can all

challenge a "system of residents" model –

but another model (e.g. a system of *aspects* 

combining into fronts) might accommodate

Through acceptance of strange experiences

and new interpretations, systems are able to

stay familiar to others and themselves.

Models change, systems mature, and

plurality surprises us with unexpected

experiences – but by keeping eyes and

minds open, it's recognisable all the same.

this easily.

system's internal configuration model.

#### Discovery

challenges and form connections. masking and unmasking skills to face internal conflicts, and develop functional each experience, resolve early-system distressing. Over time, you learn to navigate with world teel suddenly clumsy, messy, and choosing to accept it can make interacting Encountering your own systemhood and

isolating, too. You rely on others, within and capable of. But it's intimidating, and treeing, a new experience that the system is - Botore. For some, that's a nice teeling tasting something you've never imagined Being new teels uniquely strange, too - like boundaries of what's acceptably normal. triends – and the ways you might push the sti bne maisys ant to another and its be scary too. You naturally worry over the Feeling new to an already settled system can

outside the system, to accept your place in