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SPEAKERS

Olivia

Olivia 00:01

Today is March 11 2023. I'm Olivia Newsom interviewing Ken here in New York City. Do I permission to record this interview? Yes, you do. Do you know you can stop recording at any time? Yes. Can you say your name, age and pronouns?

00:19

Yes, I can. I'm Ken Dubose. Age. I'm 19. My pronouns are any pronouns.

Olivia 00:28

How would you describe yourself? Oh, I. So can you talk about how you would describe yourself?

00:37

Okay. I would describe myself as an artist. I'm a system. And I guess like the many labels that I hold, like, I'm black. I'm a lesbian, like I'm trans. But I also think that I'm also very like, human but in a really in like an indescribable in like, the best way. Because like, labels, I mean, I do think they're helpful, but sometimes I found them like limiting. So like, in describing yourself, you typically like, use labels. But yeah, yeah, that's my answer.

Olivia 01:17

Can you tell me where you're from? Where you grew up? And what your childhood was like?

01:22

Yes. Ah, well, I live in Maplewood. But I'm from Middletown, Delaware. So, yeah. Childhood. I mean, it was alright, um, I'm a system. So that kind of tells you a bit. Um, but I did the best I could. Everyone kind of did the best they could.

Olivia 01:53

Can you talk about how being a system affected your childhood and your development and growing up?

01:59

Yeah, I didn't always know I was a system. But like, I knew that I always like, had like, people in my head and like, I was like, become different people, for different things. Um, I realized, I mean, at one point, like freshman year, I wrote an email to my therapist, I was like, I have multiple people in my head, and they talk, and they take control of me not knowing anything about di D, or system hood or anything like that. And she was like, You should tell that to your psychiatrist when you get to New Jersey. And I was like, Okay, I will. And then I didn't, I forgot. Yeah, real. Um, but it morphs my memory of that time. And like, back then I just have like little snippets of things. And I'm trying to like, put them together now with my therapist and stuff like that.

Olivia 02:55

Can you talk about your relationship to your parents growing up what that was like? Okay.

02:59

Um, they're great. I was always closer to my mother, though, than my dad. I don't know how much how much time you have. So I don't know all the time. Okay. Um, it was alright. There was some complex relationship, me and my dad, that I'm not really gonna get into. Maybe it'll come up again. And I'll kind of flesh that out. But yeah. About your siblings, Sasha is great. Sasha is my older sibling. Okay, okay. So my older sibling, my younger siblings are also pretty cool. I'm not as close to them as I am to Sasha. So probably because like the age gap, but they're pretty, they're close. I'd say they're closer, since like, my two younger siblings are close. And like me and Sasha are close. So since we're only two years apart, and so my brothers are two years apart them between me and score. It's like seven How many years is it? He's 1516 74 years four year gap. Between me and Kobe, it's a six or seven year gap. So my relationship to my siblings is pretty good. We love each other. But I was always closest to Sasha

Olivia 04:29

so can you talk about what middle and high school was like growing up?

04:32

Yes. Middle School, I mean, throughout the whole thing. I struggle with mental health a lot. Middle School, I guess I was bullied. I mean, I call it harassment. But which is just like a fancy word. But it was okay. Had some adversity. variances, but I made some good friends that I made one good friend, one really good friend. So we still talk often now. High School. So Middle School was hard in high school. I don't know if it was harder or easier, but still kind of hard. Yeah. I struggled a lot with mental health more so in I think it was became more overt in high school, because I was like hospitalized and I went on meds in high school and did the whole thing with a whole therapy thing. Um yeah, I met a lot of cool people. I learned a lot about myself, like, especially in high school. And I'm on the other side of it. Mostly, mostly. Yeah. So. Um,

Olivia 05:53

so can you talk about mental health mental illness? And what that was like growing up? It seems to be an undercurrent in your Yeah, childhood?

06:01

Definitely. Is

Olivia 06:02

you talk that,

06:04

yes, I can. I'm in middle school, it was mostly like, depression and anxiety. Um, because like I had in middle school, there was like, a period like sixth and seventh grade. I had friends. Like, everyone would tell me that I had friends, but I just felt like I didn't have like anyone. I felt like really, really alone. And I would sit at lunch by myself. I never sit at lunch by myself or I would volunteer to clean my teacher's classroom. So I would like go and like, wipe the table with my tears, whatever, because I was crying. One time. So very emotional, very, like movie. Main Character vibes from that. Um, yeah. So mainly anxiety, and depression during that period. Some psychotic symptoms, but nothing like crazy yet. And then freshman year. Well, let me back up a bit. Eighth grade I, well, I had this like, really long letter planned out to tell my parents that I was depressed and have like, a lot of anxiety. But then I went to the physician and they were like, I took the little depression anxiety survey. And that did it for me. They were like, you have depression, severe depression. I told my parents I still remember the day very vividly. And like, because I took a video and it comes up in my snapchat memories. And I'm like, Oh, I remember that day. Next day. They got me a fish. Because they were like, you're depressed here. We're gonna go get fish from. Yeah, I love black parents. Like damn. Like,

Olivia 07:51

you're my child has severe depression. Shit. Yeah.

07:57

Yeah, yeah. I mean, we have like, tough conversations and stuff like that. But oh, yeah, it was also doing self self some self harm back then. Um, yeah, I got a fish's name is Cirrus. He lives. He lives with me like four years. That's pretty cool. He was a he was a very good fish. Because he became like a symbol for like, I guess Joy getting better. Stuff like that. But High School. things. I think they got a little more, I guess, severe, more complicated. Because I would talk about these people in my head. And no one really knew what that was. And I didn't really find out what it was until, well, I went to I was hospitalized. And then I told them about the people in my head of the hospital and lady was like, You're so creative. And then I told her about I called them personalities. And she was like, you're very few. He's a creative soul. Because like you have a creative soul. And I was like, thanks. But I only have like one trauma memory back then, that I told her about. And she went and told my parents about it. Because there's there's not really confidentiality in the hospital. No, not really. So yeah, they went and told my parents about that, which I found out years later. So yeah, I had one trauma memory back then. And then progressing a bit further. started getting more memories back beginning of junior year, because I started having like these nightmares, and I still had those nightmares. Yeah, three years later. But yeah, and then I realized I was a system on and off. Because I was surrounded by like mental health professionals that like discouraged me from like, discouraged me from like, exploring the fact that I might be assistant they were like, where's Ken? But where's Ken in this, and I'm like, there's like, multiple people. I'm there. But they kind of discouraged me from like, exploring being a system and the

trauma memories. So out of college out into college, I've been exploring in that, and I was like, I have a system and then I haven't gone back since. Yeah. So hopefully that kind of answered the question. I talked very all over the place. Don't apologize.

Olivia 10:09

You're doing a really good job. Okay. So I'm going to take a step back from college. And I'm going to follow up on this question with within, like, the context of the question, just for some timeline purposes, which I know are really hard to do. Yeah. So would you feel comfortable talking about when you were hospitalized? Yeah. And why and for how long? Yeah.

10:36

Mental Hospital psychiatric hospital if it wasn't obvious, yeah. Um, I was really suicidal at the time, and I was having like, psychotic symptoms and stuff like that. Um, and I couldn't get any support at school, because I didn't qualify for them right away. Um, they did like a survey on me. And I'm like, you don't qualify for an IEP or like, ESS or any of them. It took me going into the hospital and almost like, killing myself for them to be like, Oh, now you can get the accommodations. And I was like, fuck you. Yeah. So then I went on home instruction for a bit. But you asked about the hospitalization. I was hospitalized for suicidal ideation and like, constantly being like, Well, I told my therapist at the time, sometimes I think about like, going up to the park tower and jumping off. And she was like, You're not going to school anymore right now. And I was like, okay, so I didn't go to school for like, maybe a week. And then, at one point, we were like, she told us to go to the hospital. No, the ER. So he went to the ER, they did a survey, and they didn't want to admit me, actually. I had to tell them like, I want to go. So then I did go, and I was there for a week. I was there for a week. Monday to Monday, I believe. I came in on a Monday, I was discharged the next Monday. Um, they just put me on a bunch of meds. I did a bunch of group activities. I got a call home twice a day. My first night I was on the floor crying because I missed home and I was like, gonna be call home. And it was like, 10pm and they're like, No, you can call in the morning. Yeah. Um, so it was alright. And I had a roommate the first night, but she was discharged later on. And then I asked for my own room, because like, I don't do well sharing rooms. Because like, I kind of need a place to like, kind of decompress, especially if it's with a stranger. It's just it wasn't working. So they let me have my own room. And that was really nice. But my whole my whole I've Oh, yeah, I then I went into outpatient program for like, maybe like two months, which was alright, that has his own stories. I have a lot of stories. If you want to share them, you can Okay. Um, our patient was alright, I was at Princeton house. It was just like in Jersey, but like, north. Um, it was all right. It was a DBT program. Which DBT it works for some it doesn't work. For others, it kind of works for me. Like, it's a bit like dear man and like the act. Yes. Lots of acronyms. And like skills. And then there's like, it's very structured. It's not like, like group and all that. It's like you're doing work and like you have homework and things like that, which was alright, I didn't really like my therapist, because at one point, I almost was hospitalized again. Because I told her that I was going to go home and drown myself. And then I did not go to end up going to the hospital because I use my skills. I'm like, I'm not going back. I'm not going back. So she did the intake. No, we didn't do the intake. I think we did the intake. And by the time we did the intake, which was like a few hours after I told her that I was going to drown myself. Um, a few hours after the intake. I was fine. I was fine. I was like, I'm fine. I'm on the right track now. And then she accused me of not wanting to be separated from my parents. She was like, that's the reason why you were hospitalized.

Olivia 14:06

Why is that a bad thing? Yeah. Like even if that was the reason? Yeah.

14:10

So she wasn't my favorite. Yeah. And she would encourage me to like go to school and school just wasn't working for me in the right time. Because they, they were like, going to give me the supports. But I was like, at this point, since when you're in program you do like a half school, half program type thing. So I was doing NAB like go to school some days go to program other days are like do a half day typing. I don't really remember. But yeah, it wasn't working. So I went on home instruction for the rest of

Olivia 14:46

the year. Who was your teacher?

14:49

Oh, um, my guidance counselor who was she was very great. Her name is Miss Conway. She found tutors for me to come to the home and do things and classes that I couldn't get tutors for. I was like, email my teachers and like do the work on my own. So I was very content with just doing the homeschool thing for a while, but I did end up going back to school, the same high school with the accommodations. And that was really helpful. And I did it since I mainly because I missed acapella. And I missed musical. And I couldn't do that while I was on home instruction. They didn't let me Oh, yeah, they didn't let me like come in and do my activities. That's, that's yeah, that's the main reason why I went back. Because I enjoyed my activities. And I missed my friends too. So yeah.

15:38

When you were

15:41

hospitalized? Yeah.

Olivia 15:42

And in outpatient, yeah. Was your relationship with your parents strained at all?

15:50

I don't think so. But they did tell me that they cried in the car on the way home, I learned that I learned that like, a few weeks ago, new knowledge and new knowledge, because I asked him like, what exactly happened after you dropped me off because I knew I was very upset. But they were also very upset. And but they told me they were like, we just gotta keep going up. We can't go lower than here. We just gotta keep climbing and we got to figure out the way the best way to help you. So the relationship was really strange. Okay.

Olivia 16:21

So when you're talking about high school and talk about being bullied, and being harassed, yeah, I have to enunciate for the transcript. Oh, you don't have to enunciate, you're literally my voice struggles

to pick up and because I'm like stuffy, okay, if you hear me like hitting words in certain ways, AI works and the trends Yeah. And it sounds like bullies. Like why are you? Okay, that's why. Okay, so, um, talk about how you were bullied and harassed. Not that there's ever a reason for why I mean, kids bully you. But do you like what were they saying when they were a bully? Oh,

17:07

um, I don't know if I should name drop. I named Jonathan on that. Oh, you can name drop

Olivia 17:11

them. His name is Derek

17:13

buck. Derek. Yeah. Um, tell him right now. He would like steal my stuff and like run around the classroom with it and like, leave with it. That was that was how it started. Um, because he just wanted to make me mad because I was a very cheery person, which was a mask. Of course, I was very depressed at that time. But I didn't like let people know that. Right, of course. But I was always smiling always was very curious. I think he found issue with that. Um, so yeah, he do that. And eventually, I guess things kind of came to a head when he sexually assaulted me.

Olivia 18:00

So that wasn't fun. About Derek twice. Was this on campus?

18:05

Yeah. It's great dancing about it. I didn't say anything. Because I didn't remember it until Yeah, like, a year ago. Yeah. So that's not fun. No, but I forgot I totally forgot where where I was going with that.

Olivia 18:26

Hey, you were being bullied.

18:28

Yeah. So it stopped after that, though. So.

Olivia 18:32

Yeah. And was it just Derek mostly? Or was it lots of people on the school?

18:39

Mainly just Derek. Although his friends there was? Yeah. So

Olivia 18:52

I'm going to go back a little bit more okay. To when we were talking about the genesis of your system hood. Okay. And I put my glasses on because I realized I can't really see okay.

19:07

I mean, yeah.

Olivia 19:10

Like, interesting. Interesting. I'd love your little little change. Yes. This is so cute. Thank you very much. I want to crochet fun. Oh, yeah. But I feel like that takes effort. I mean, yeah. Anyway. Oh, yeah. We're gonna go back a little bit. Okay. And I'm curious genesis of your system. Guess what I said, the genesis of your system hood. And I was wondering when you started, like, how young were you when you started to realize that you had voices in your head that would sometimes take control? Okay. Hard. Yeah. But I'd say if you want to not play second age, you can tell the first story.

19:54

Okay, yeah, that's what I was gonna do. Okay, cool. I remember like in first grade and like kindergarten, I would like midday. naptime. I was like, listen to the voices in my head, like talk in our view, and do their little thing where, you know, I wasn't sleeping. Yeah, I was laying there with my eyes close. Yeah. Yeah. Um, yeah, I started doing a little bit of this work with my therapist. I'm like, finding out who the first altar was, and like my first memories and things like that, and like, placing timelines on things, because that's been really healing. That's good. Um, so yeah. I'd say the altars really came to be like, when I was like, five, no, no. My first memory, I was like, three, four or five, somewhere in there. I don't exactly massages in that first memory. So maybe I'll ask Sasha, and get an answer. Like how old I was. Since we were together. My parents were downstairs fighting. That was my first memory. I couldn't even speak in full sentences, but they were like fighting. And we were hearing like thumps and stuff like that. And my therapist is like, as traumatic was like, I guess so. But around that time, I guess I started to develop like, altars. But also, I guess, when I was five, because there was some sexual abuse during that time from a teacher in kindergarten. So things kind of started to like fragment during that time, like the home versus the school, people and like, everything kind of started to like, really break off there. But yeah, discovering I was a system moving forward a bit. It came up briefly freshman year, but then I moved and I changed therapist. And it kind of got lost in like the trying to get me medicated, and things like that. But then, like, sophomore year, I was like, I'm like, I have people in my head, and I name them. And I went to the hospital with that, like I told you, and then I left it for a while. And then I came back junior year when I started getting memories back. Like, I think I have these people in my head. And then like, my therapist was like, But where's Ken? Like, stuff like that? And not not very helpful, but kind of repressing the system? Like repressing the system? Hood a bit. Yeah. But yeah, it was like, on and off, because I'd be like, I'm a system. No, I'm not. And I would like, destroy all of my notes from them. And like the journal entries, and like, the things that they would do, and they just, they would sit, they'd still be there, like that. I'm like, shut up. And like in my head and stuff like that. So yeah, I don't do that anymore.

Olivia 22:51

When did you start allowing, like your, your other head mates in your alters to front or like to even show themselves out? Like, where did you like what's made? Is

23:01

that sorry,

Olivia 23:02

when did you start doing it? Okay. Well,

23:05

I think I was doing it for a while back, like five, six, all those ages, but consciously sophomore year, junior year, somewhere in there. But I remember, I went to a therapy session. And like, I switched midway, and she was like, we're gonna end this session, because I don't think Ken is here. And I was like, Alex was like, Okay. Which, now looking back wasn't too great. And that's probably why it took me so long. It's like really embrace being a system.

Olivia 23:36

Yeah. Therapy traumas real.

23:39

Yeah, I guess so. I guess you could call it that. It is. Okay. Yeah, that's fair.

Olivia 23:45

So as we're like, talking about your childhood system, hood sisterhood, like mental health seems to be like, the biggest prevailing narrative. Yeah, I'd say so for obvious reasons. Right. So when were times, if any, where you felt safe as a child? I know that's

24:17

a big one. This is like a therapist question. Okay, you don't

Olivia 24:21

have to answer it. If you can skip it. No, it's okay. It's a good question. I don't really know actually, you can think about it for a little bit. Okay. pause and think about it. Okay. can sit for like a minute or so while you think or do you want to go to the next question? No, I can think Okay, think about it.

24:41

I didn't really have a lot of times where I felt safe. Like Middle School. I remember I put on my headphones and like, come up with these fantasy worlds. And like these characters from this game I played, and I would like dance around my room, and like create these characters of living this perfect world. I felt safe then. But I can't really think of too many. Too many other things like back then, where I felt like really safe. Yeah, yeah.

Olivia 25:14

So with your, like, artistic expression, have you been doing that from a young age as well?

25:22

Kind of. I've always enjoyed. I enjoyed it like casually. Like I remember when I was younger kindergarten my teacher and my friend were arguing over if I was a good artist or not, but from like, Can can't draw kid is a terrible artist. Yeah, my my teacher, she was my friend though. She was she's upset. But my teacher was like, Ken is a great artist. And I was so spacey because I had just been taken aback and been sexually assaulted by the teacher. That's, yeah, um, so I was very out of it. But I

remember that memory. So I know when I was doing like art back then also, but it became really serious. And I like more. I took it more seriously. Um, what year was that? I'd say junior year, when I started exploring my gender, my sexuality. That's really one. I started exploring, which I like questions in there. later on. But

Olivia 26:22

did they let you bring art into the group home? We like to make art when you were hospitalized?

26:28

Yes, I did art therapy and I want to be an art therapist. You do? Yes. Oh, that's

Olivia 26:32

so cool. I think NYU has an art therapy too. And it's really good for whatever you should apply. Yeah, I think so. Okay. The art therapy students. Ooh. Because I took ceramics my last semester. Yeah. And so fun. They were the studio monitor at the time because they let art therapy students do that for money.

27:00

Okay, so interesting. Yeah. Also

Olivia 27:02

Jinx in this project. Another trans disabled lesbian also wants to be an art therapist.

27:08

Class. So cool talk. We should

Olivia 27:11

Yes. You know, Jinx. You're really Yes. Oh, my gosh. Yes. Yes. Three.

27:20

Oh, from a 3020. Okay.

Olivia 27:24

I don't know how you're gonna coach Mark either day. Literally couldn't tell you. How are you opposed? Work? never learned to none of my business. Yeah. Also here. So training what I was talking about, okay, we're gonna go to, I'm skipping some questions I'm skipping. I'm skipping eight, nine and 10. Okay. Unless you feel really strongly about answering them. But okay. Like, I just want like how we're talking. I feel like there was other things that were more important to us about your childhood? And I feel like these would be reaches. Yeah. Because it wasn't really something that I think was something that you were considering. In your childhood. Yes. Very obvious reasons. Yeah. There were more pressing matters. Yeah. So I'm going to ask you who are what influenced you the most growing up doesn't have to be positive?

28:15

Yeah. When I was when I read the question, probably safety. Yeah.

Olivia 28:20

Can you talk a little bit more about that? Um,

28:26

yes, I can. Wait, let me

Olivia 28:30

look at it. And if you want, sometimes it can help if you like. If you want, I can give you a pencil. And then you can like doodle or write while you're thinking because I feel like that also helps as well.

28:44

He's also very helpful. Thank you. Yeah, those

Olivia 28:46

are for you to keep really my favorite fidgets my favorite stems and it came in a pack of 10 and I was like, I want to bring some freakin but then I literally forgot. But those are for you.

28:59

Thank you so much. So so cool. Yeah, if you want

Olivia 29:03

you can like you can like do to Lin talk I feel like sometimes that can help okay, if you want to No pressure. I cool Yeah, but I was just asking you who were you the most going up and then you said safety Yeah, ignore me while I walk around ah,

29:23

I did say safety

29:30

the way that I act, I guess in the things that I would do. Like really based off of what was safest for me and like, what would my therapist said something? She said something really good. I can't exactly like remember it word for word. But she was talking about how I would make myself like less threatening because One of my alternates does that. Like she's always smiling and her name is even joy. But she ran away to the to the forest in my inner world, which caused mayhem in my system recently. Because she felt like she had the mask all the time. Because her name is Joy. And she's always smiling, but that's not how she really feels. So yeah, I guess what influenced me the most growing up safety, but will make me the most the least threatening, and like smell a lot of like self soothing mechanisms, and like what my triggers were, I mean, I didn't really think of it as triggers back then. But like, and leaving the little things I do now. That'll like, keep me safest because I have a thing with bathrooms. Which is why I don't drink a lot of water because then I have to go to the bathroom. Especially when I'm on campus.

Olivia 30:54

I do the same thing. I hate drinking water. I don't like drinking water from cups because it reminds me of nighttime. When they would like give you a cup to go to bed. Yeah. Yeah. straws.

31:07

Oh, wow. Yeah. Yeah.

Olivia 31:11

But yeah, I saw like, when you're talking about safety, self soothing and masking, the need to make yourself less threatening. Was that because of people looking at you from the outside? Or were you feeling like, like, where did that feeling of being threatening come from, like that need to mask being threatened?

31:35

Um, I guess it comes from like, people choosing me out of a crowd to be the one to like, I guess suffer? I don't really know if that's the right word. Okay. But like, out of all the people, I mean, there probably is more but like, out of all the people, they chose me. Like, how can I like make that? So I'm not chosen. If that kind of makes sense. That makes sense. Okay.

Olivia 32:06

So what self soothing practices did you create as a child

32:13

music, music, music was a big one. Probably also our Legos as a very big Lego builder since I had an altar. His name is Malibu, he's nine. He's never eight or nine. But he was he was during that time. I was like, gender also kind of was morphed during that time, I went through like a tomboy phase. And before that, but also, the toddler phase is probably in response to some of the sexual abuse and to make comments on like, the girly things that I wear. So like the skirt and you call me as like Princess or whatever. Um, so that might also be like a part of the repulsion from like wearing pink and also Sasha likes pink. And I was like, I'm not going to like pink the Sasha likes pink real Yeah. Um, but back to the question your self soothing art Lagos Rainbow Loom. I was a big rambling van. Like I, I just had a memory comeback, where I'm sitting at my Lego table. And I was like, learning how to do the fish tail as what's called the fish tail. Yeah, I was learning how to do that. And I would like make little things and I would like listen to the people in my head be like That's so cute. Make the sleeve these colors next. And I've now realized that was my altar called Alex before he transitioned because I didn't. A lot of the dates for my alters are not right. I was like, came along when I was like, 13 It's like no, I've been here since you were like five so yeah.

Olivia 33:50

What kind of music

33:54

I guess like music that kids would like, yeah, Party Rock, though. I definitely didn't my my eighth birthday party and everyone went crazy. And it was like a swimming party at the pool. And we're the

party of the pool. Like the party, my mom my sock monkey party, but I had at this like pool place this indoor pool plays and everyone was like swimming, and like Party Rock played. And everyone went crazy. And I love that song. So like music that like kids would like not anything like really interesting, Beyonce. We have the Beyonce DVD that will play in the car. VeggieTales I remember VeggieTales I just remembered VeggieTales like maybe like a week or two ago. And I listened to the music and I started crying because I'm like, Oh my gosh, this reminds me so much of like, the good parts of my childhood. Yeah. Yeah.

34:48

Pizza angel. I remember crying the peace Angel. My mother was in the hospital, which is not a good memory. But pizza angel is very it's a very emotional song

Olivia 35:02

because of the timing,

35:03

yeah, yeah. And a lot of the songs about God, I was like, I was watching this, like, compilation or whatever it's called. And like a lot of the songs were like about God and I'm like, I didn't realize that growing up. I mean, I probably did, but I didn't like really connect the dots. So like this like stuff they're talking about. And then with my own faith journey and stuff like that, so, yeah.

Olivia 35:27

So now we're gonna move into like the second section, which is about your sexuality. Okay, so when did you start thinking about your sexuality? And when did you start realizing that you might be queer or not straight? Okay.

35:44

Seventh grade, I'd say seventh grade, because I had a crush on this girl and her name was Savannah. Savannah Thompson.

Olivia 35:53

I Savannah,

35:55

she's probably I hope she doesn't see the stitch, she probably won't. She's straight. Um, she lives in Delaware. But I had this very big crush on her and every time we would sit outside and stand outside the ELA classroom, for my seventh grade class, I just look at her. I'm like, she has such beautiful hair, her skin this looks so perfect. Like stuff like that. And I was like, What is going on with me? Like, this is not right. Like, what is happening? Am I not like straight like normal? Um, so yeah, that's when I first had like an inkling like, or like a feeling that wasn't straight. Yeah. I didn't actually confront it until eighth grade, though.

Olivia 36:39

Talking about that process, what was confronting it like? Um,

36:44

I had asked my dad, like, is being gay a sin or something like that? And he was like a cut is, and I was like, Oh, my mom overheard it. She was like, okay, she went, she like, backtracked. And she's like, it's not. Yeah, so she backed up. She's like, God still loves you. And then, like, a few days later, I came out of like, bye to them. And then a week later, I came out as lesbian to them. And I count as lesbian to my friends and like, funny story. This is like, totally on a tangent. But my friend at the time, I told I told them at like, my friend's birthday party, but there was like, four of us would be like, in a friend or whatever. And I told them I was, I was, I said, I was gay. I had a thing with I had a thing with the word lesbian. I was like, I would always say I was gay, which is a question in there that I have a story for. Yes. Um, but I said I was gay. leave just one person, Evan. He probably said I knew it. And then a few years later, he came on as a trans man. Okay. And then I came out as a trans man. All the homies are gay. Yeah, essentially. So yeah, I really confronted in eighth grade. And I was like, that was my first section. I wasn't even doing the gender thing yet. Like, gender wasn't even in there yet. But I was, like, I'm a lesbian dash gay. Which, yeah.

Olivia 38:09

Can you talk about what your first exposure to queerness was?

38:14

Um, I didn't remember it. But I looked back at that. The letter that I gave to my parents, but it wasn't it was a note on my phone. I think I texted it to them or printed it out or something. And then I was talking about how I first learned the word in fifth grade, when I was using it as an insult. Like people in my class. I wasn't bullied in fifth grade, they would make comments on without me because I had like, these tics. I was friends with this guy named Aiden, Aiden. He had Tourette's also. Um, but I had tics back then, because I was like, I got very nervous muscle trauma. And I would like break the skin of my fingers all the way down. All the way down to like my knuckles and all that on all of my fingers. A neighbor kind of make comments about that. And I was glad to use like this party during class.

Olivia 39:00

Yeah. I know the exact party that you're talking about. Really? Yeah. Yeah. fucking funny. Did it smell weird? Yeah, yeah. Yeah. I was in fourth grade. Oh, really? Yeah. I know the exact hallway because I was always in and out of the guidance counselor's office. And it was guidance counselor, buddy. Oh, really? Yeah.

39:22

I got I got home from home. Oh, you had home party? Yeah, the parents have this party from home

Olivia 39:27

smelled weird. Fingers smoke. Yeah.

39:32

But I would use it and then eventually I stopped around like seven through eighth grade. I stopped I would also put my feet which is a bit gross. But yeah, something happens. Yeah.

Olivia 39:48

So now we're going to we're still going to talk about we're still in this section. Okay. But now I'm going to ask you about struggling with your identities. Okay. Um, Can you talk a little bit about if you've ever struggled with them? And if lesbian or dyke ever felt scary to you to identify with?

40:08

Okay. Wait, can you repeat that? Again? I'm sorry, my brain?

Olivia 40:13

No, don't apologize. So it's these questions. It's Question 21 and 22. And I said, How could you ever struggled with Dyk or lesbian or your gender identities? And

40:22

okay, so, the first one ever struggle with my identities? Yeah, it's been a long time coming to like, being a lesbian again. Because like, I went, I would change my, like, not change my gender, but my gender. Like, I went, I went through like, every single set of pronouns that you can, like, imagine, throughout the past, like four years, just trying to figure out myself and like, a bunch of labels also. Like, I'm not even gonna give you a whole timeline, because I can't even remember. But yeah, I struggled with gender. Like my sophomore year, I had a partner, um, we had broken up, but they had come out as non binary. And then as soon as, as soon as they saw, I was like, I've struggled with my gender for too, sometimes. And then that same day, I was like, I'm trans. I just, I knew it was I wasn't like the, oh, I might be trans, like, on and off type thing. For me. It was like that day, I'm like, I want to be a guy. Like, I know, I know these things. Which, sometimes I wish it was different. But I think if it was different, I wouldn't have come to the conclusion. But yeah, I struggle with gender. And then it's been an on and off thing, not on and off. But like, I knew I was trans from then on, but just like finding what pronouns and like, what labels, I guess feel best to me and like, name and all that. So I'm finally at a place I think, where I'm like, this is this is who I am. But did the words dyke or was being ever Yes, here. Yes, it did. And I wouldn't call myself a lesbian. I'd be like, I'm gay. I'm gay. Like, I have a story freshman year. I was like, I don't know if I was visibly, like gay or like a lesbian. But I probably was, but this one of their black girl asked me, she said, Are you a lesbian? I'm like, Yeah, I'm gay. And she was like, so you're a lesbian? And I'm like, I'm gay. Was like, it was this thing. And I'm like, Yes, I'm a lesbian. Yeah, so that word was definitely scary for some time. And like, I'm not I'm not like them. Like, I'm not a lesbian. I'm just gay girl. Which has its own. Yeah, yeah. But eventually, I did come around to that word, and I was like, this is kind of way I'm gonna play God at the time a girlfriend, but I, I believe that they're trans now. And I don't really know what their pronouns are. They kind of fell off the face nerve, which I assume that would happen after they graduated. Didn't really like it here. Yeah. But yeah. A partner. I got a partner at the time. We were both lesbians, I think. And then we both came out as trans. So yeah. Interesting.

Olivia 43:17

Can you talk about coming out? And if you came out multiple times before? And like, does the phrase coming into your identity resonate more with you?

43:26

It does, I looked at that question. I was like, Oh, my gosh, that makes a lot of sense. Like, I never thought. But, yeah, I guess the first coming out was to my parents, and then again, as a last like gay data lesbian. I say gay analysts because I used the term gay at that point. But really, it was like lesbianism. Um, I've come out a lot of times, like a lot of times, and at this point, it's like, I don't really come out anymore. I'm just like, I'm just gonna be like, I know who I'm at the point where I'm like, as long as I know who I am. I don't really care how like other people really see me, which has been very good for me. Like before, I really cared how like I was perceived and things like that. I was like, I need to transition physically because other people will see me this way. And now I'm at a point where I'm like, I want to physically transition because that's how I see myself and I think that'd be really good for me. And stuff like that.

Olivia 44:29

Yeah. So can you talk about how you rediscovered lesbianism? Oh, yeah, I did.

44:39

Yeah, um, I left it because I'm like, I'm a gay male. Back when I was realized, I, I, I did the trans guy thing for a because I thought that was it was only like, one way or the other at one point. So I was like, I'm a trans guy. And that felt good for a bit. But then I realized I'm like, I think I've used he they pronouns and I didn't let me say Do that I was like, I'm not gonna do that, because it doesn't make sense being a trans non binary person. So I didn't do that. I just kind of repressed it. And then I don't know if I did the gender fluid thing, I think I'd said did the gender fluid thing then? And then I went back to see her and then I went to them for a bit. It was the whole thing. Um, what was the question? How did you come back to that? Oh, yeah. Um, so it's really been like an on and off type thing. Sometimes. Sometimes I'm like, well, well wait. When I realized that I wasn't actually a trans guy. I was like, So what is my sexuality? And I'm like, am I pan? Am I bisexual, and I did those things for a while. And it just, it didn't. I mean, it was okay. I was I was like, I guess I'm queer. So I did the queer thing for a while. And then more recently, like this year, I was like, taken, when this year I've been like, feeling much better, about like, my identity and coming into myself and all that. It's probably also comes hand in hand with being a system and like, accepting that accepting a lot of things about myself and like memories coming back all that stuff. I think in in the midst of that, I've kind of realized that this is who I am. And I actually it was like, a month ago, or like, a few weeks ago, I was like, I'm a lesbian. Like, that's right. And like, that's been right. But I just never really wanted to, like, put that out there. And I talked this out and I said, like, yeah, you're lesbian. I'm like, so you know. And so I was like, yes, I've been do do or not dating a man. Like, I was like, that is my truth. That is my truth. But Sasha kinda let me cover that myself. too. Yeah.

Olivia 46:57

I'm going to ask you a separate related question. I'm going to ask you now about how your gender journey impacts or works with you being a system.

47:08

Oh, yeah. I think that's why I bounced around so much. Because different people would take control of my gender. Not because I didn't want to deal with it like me, can I want to deal with it? So it'd be like x at one point, the he they thing? It'd be like, Nan, but the she her thing. Like I felt I use she her

pronouns, but I'm like, I'm not. Sis. It was weird. It was kind of weird. It was like, it was a weird position to be in at one point. Because, like, my gender identity was constantly changing. And I, and then, but I wasn't attributing it to being a system. I was just thinking that I was just weird, and like, gender fluid or whatever, which I am gender fluid, like Kenny can, it's, but I guess it's the host taking control of my gender. And not like having it bounce around, has been the thing that's changed. But it definitely has impacted my gender. Because it's kind of ping pong is all around as people come up and do their own thing, and like we are using, they then pronouns and it's like, then I come back and I'm like, I don't know, I guess that works. Because I didn't want to like actually take charge and be like, This is who I am. Because I would cuz I would be taking those identities of them and putting it under Ken, is that makes sense? Yeah. And then it was like, That's not who I am. I got to figure out who can is and that's been a thing in therapy finding can is not can like the name that the system in the body goes under became the altar. And that's been a thing. That's been a journey. So

Olivia 48:58

can you talk about what's been like finding Kendall alter? Okay.

49:04

Yeah. I'm I'm still doing it. Yeah. Yeah, it's still a process. Um, but at one point, I like erased can the altar I'm like, I'm not kidding. And it was a whole thing with in therapy and all that. But I think it's because I didn't like who Kim was. It was a lot of self hatred back then. For a lot of different reasons. But now I don't hate myself. I don't hate myself anymore. Like I think I'm pretty cool person actually. Because like back then my therapist was like, What do you like about yourself? And I'm like, I have cool hair. And that is it. But now I can say I have like like a lot of things about I think I'm a pretty cool person. But if Finding can also has been it's been like finding out my gender going on that journey with myself finding out my role in the system, which I am the host. But I don't know, I don't know how to define. I don't know how to define. I still don't know how to find what it's been like finding Ken the altar. But yeah, I guess if I had to say what it was, it'd be like finding my gender. Finding the things that I like, yes, finding the things that I like and enjoy and my art style, and things like that. I'm setting boundaries with the gender stuff, and not not like having a ping pong to like different people every single day. Yeah, that is my answer. Final answer. Yes.

Olivia 51:05

So we're gonna talk about how clothing impacts or firms your identities or your lesbianism clothing, makeup, tattoos, piercings, other body mods and forms of gender expression, how does IT Assist, affirm your lesbianism? Or your gender? Okay, long question.

51:26

If you want to read it, yeah. Can I keep this here? Of course, okay. For a lot of it does that for a lot of us a lot. It's not even just can. I remember when I first came out, clothing, like finding new clothing was a thing. Because I could like put on the clothes that I have, which was like, a skinny jeans and flannel. And I'm like, I just looked at it like, yeah, and I was like, I don't I don't that wasn't the look I was going for. Um, I mean, now. Now it might be look, I'm going for it. But back then it was like finding clothes, which was like the most masculine masculine clothes, which I wouldn't wear today to this day. But back then I was like, this affirms my gender. This is what I want to look like because I wanted to be the most

masculine to make up for being trans I guess. And not being a sis man. And also back then I was like, I always wanted to be sis I was like, if I want to be sis, wish I was born a man born male, and things like that. I don't wish that anymore. So I think if I was born male, I'd still be trans truthfully. But clothing has been a big thing. Now in current times, clothing is a lot jewelry. Like I want to get more facial piercings, but my parents are not a fan that I'm still going to do it. But I just got to do it in like doses. Oh, yeah. You can't do all them at the same time. No, because I wouldn't want to do that anyways, too. But I want to get a lip one do it. Gap. But I have I have things going on with my look like I'm I like the skin around against flaky. So I'm like, is it smart? Yeah, do

Olivia 53:06

that. Really. You can just like us. You can get under the piercing and around. It was like Oh, for some things. Yeah, Tina.

53:12

Yeah, that's fine. And then I was thinking I was thinking to either one. I wanted to get more than this small story. I want to get more facial piercings and just piercings in general. I want my nipples pierced off. So do it. I'm like, if I keep my chest I gotta get nipple. nipple piercings do it anyways. Not for a minute though.

Olivia 53:31

What are the piercings make you feel like how do they affirm your identities?

53:36

Oh, I don't know how to put in the words.

Olivia 53:40

But you can talk about when you first got your septum.

53:43

Yeah, that was that was really cool. This jewelry spoke to me. Like I didn't get like the regular hoop, which probably more people in my system would have liked. But this little sun shaped one really spoke to me when I was in there. And I'm like, I gotta get it. I was like, That is Ken. Which goes back to the ken thing. Like who is Ken? Thank you feel really good. Yeah, like, I think they look really hot. But also I was talking to my parents about this and they're like, I express myself in fashion. Like why do you have to express yourself through like tattoos and piercings. Sasha is more of like a tattoo person not I'm more into piercings and I like that's, I guess how your generation expresses themselves and things like um, so I guess it is a form of expression, but it kind of also plays into like my identities a bit. I don't really know how, but that's okay. You don't have to explain how it's enough that it just does. Some things just are. Yeah, makeup also sometimes Sometimes. Sometimes. I feel lazy though. I don't really I'm gonna have the

Olivia 54:49

energy. Also with masks like physical makeup just like doesn't make that much sense. And yeah,

54:55

like I like red lipstick and stuff like that. It just doesn't make sense to put.

Olivia 54:59

I agree I agree. Sometimes I put it on like when I have zoom classes. Yeah. Like, that's enough.

55:06

Yeah, I would just do the red lipstick. And I'm like, That's good. That's good. But I can't really do that anymore. I'm the only one in my class was wearing masks too. So scary. Yeah, it is quite scary. And my all my professors have gotten sick this semester. And I'm like, oh, like, no, that's why you should wear a matte black hole. Sorry, guys. I've COVID Again. Again, we're gonna do this one. Okay.

Olivia 55:30

Can you talk about how the art making process has influenced your lesbianism and your other identities? Yeah.

55:37

So I remember I talked about how I remember I talked about how, like, when I first started getting into art, again, like serious this time, it really played into like my gender identity. That was at the same time, I was like, figuring out gender stuff, and I come out as transgender. And I started like drawing digitally and doing a lot more art. So they're definitely connected, because they happen at the same time. So at least the gender aspect of it. At least for the gender aspect, I wasn't a lesbian at that time. But yeah, they influence each other, they pour into each other. It's like, the art that I make influence in the art that I see on, like socials, or whatever, influences my identities. And it influences my art, in my identities, influenced my art, but my art also influences my identities a bit. I don't know, it's kind of weird, but it makes sense to me. Yeah, Mark making process focuses a lot on how I'm feeling. And like the things I want to become, unlike, excuse me, like gender, and like, the direction I'm going and things like that inspires me. I guess. That's what I'm trying to say.

Olivia 57:06

Can you talk about artists therapy?

57:07

Oh, yeah. I said that in my set that

Olivia 57:11

in my thing, didn't I? I don't know. I don't remember. Okay.

57:16

I did say that. And not in this. But in my Oh, and your form.

Olivia 57:21

You did say that? I did. You did talk about artists therapy. Yeah,

57:25

that's been a big thing. Because even for my therapy assignment, sometimes she makes me do art. But beyond that, I do do artist s therapy a lot of the time. Because like, how I'm feeling and like things I'm going through and impacts like my art. Like I made this this like cubism portrait of this little girl, and she was like, decapitated. But it was like these bright, whimsical colors and like a cartoony style. And that had a lot of symbolism behind it. Sometimes it's like things like that, that are like overtly. Like, dis settling, I guess, like overtly connected to like some thing that's going on in my head. But a lot of the time is just like, I want to do something that makes me feel euphoric. And I'm like, I'm gonna sit down and I'm gonna sculpt something. Or mess it down, and I'm gonna do some oil pastel work, or I'm gonna paint and stuff like that. So that feels very therapeutic for me. Do your other alters also make art they do. Certain ones do. Like Joy likes watercolor dev like sculpture. She appeared to me in a dream where she was talking about sculpture and I woke up and I'm gonna code went about my business. And I was like, Who is that my dream? Because like a lot of my offers come about through my dreams. And I'm like, Oh, that's a new altar. That's how joy came about and that's how but they've been a lot they've been around longer than that. Yeah. But that's how I like first like recognize them I guess. Um, but they do do some art. Sarah likes to sing play guitar but she she's definitely we don't really play the guitar. A lot. Girl is that written by Sara was Galaxy girl. Yes, Galaxy girl. Yes, it was and it's written out another alter my system. Okay, she said she has a crush on which I had a thing against alters dating for a long time. Yeah, but I recently let Alex and no not Alex X and Lily start dating. Okay, that's good. Yeah, they can happy. Yeah, they are. It can mean a sex dream with them. And I was like, Do you like shit? I was like, damn. I have well, I know I've asked them that they had sex and they and I didn't get an answer. And then the next, like night had a sex dream both of them. I'm like, dude, like, okay, and then we dealt with it and I was upset for a bit but who knows is Sarah and we don't even know. We don't know. willows sexuality, which is why Sarah and Willow are not dating yet. I think. We don't know we'll have sexuality. Because we likes to be mysterious. Okay. But, but

Olivia 1:00:35

mysteries in one way.

1:00:38

Um, she likes to let me find out things about her instead of me instead of her, like telling me yeah, um, but Lily was like, she's, she's definitely a lesbian. So we will see, we shall see. Or I hear it from other people in the system. Yeah.

Olivia 1:00:59

So I have a question about your artmaking. In Ghana world. Okay. You mentioned I don't even remember how long ago forest.

1:01:06

I mentioned something about a forest. Yeah.

Olivia 1:01:09

Do you draw your inner world?

1:01:11

I do not. But I can vividly see it. But I've never tried it. I've like made maps. That's like the maps, I did make a map on one point of like, the, of the main room when I was like, first finding it out, because Willow was the one who told me about, like, I was like, I just I just don't have it in the world. But one night, she's like, really showed it to me. And I was like, I gotta write this down. And she was like, just wait, like, let me finish telling you that first. And then I went and I made like a little map. And I have a document on my phone on like everyone's room. And like, what everything looks like it I don't have everyone's room now. Because not everyone has shared with me what the room looks like. But for the ones that have shared, I have it documented. But I haven't like actually, like run it out of a Pinterest boards. But I don't know. I know. I wouldn't be able to do it. Justice. Yeah. Yeah. Something should stay inside. Yeah.

Olivia 1:02:11

So can you talk about art consumption? And how like looking at other people's art, photos, paintings, like movie you mentioned how you like musical theater? Yeah. And and like those kinds of things and how it's impacted or helped your lesbianism or your gender in some way. Like affected it in some way. Yeah. Do you in some way? Yeah. Oh, sorry. I mean, yeah, water, throat gets dry when you talk a lot.

1:02:43

Okay, all good. Okay. Yeah. So my Finster account? Well, no, it didn't, it was not a sense to at first, it was my fanfiction writing account. Oh, I shared with my partner at the time, we both have fan fiction writing accounts, that we only let each other fall, right. It's very intimate relationship, right. Um, so that's what the count was. At first. I promised this however, and, and then it started as data first, but then we broke up and I was upset. And I was like, I'm deleting all of these. So I didn't archive them. I deleted all of them. In the moment, I was like, I really should archive these I know, I'm gonna want them back. But I deleted them even have like images of, like, places that they were in the thick and things. Just very detailed. It was very detailed. Okay, you'll just make more, I guess so. So it's the cat started as that and then it became like my little gender diary. And then it became a Fenster. But I, I wasn't, I think the thing that ever worked for me. It never worked for me. So then it became my art account. And then I started like consuming art, like trans are gay art. And like, I was like, Oh my gosh, it's so beautiful. Like, I'm beautiful. Like, it's these people and like these depictions of lesbianism and like transgender. Ness, I guess it's beautiful. How can I Why am I over here hating myself, right? So yeah. And like, I guess mainly art. Photography also was fizzlybin. Pretty cool. Like seeing like, other trans people or other lesbians. I'm like, Oh, my gosh, you're so happy. Maybe I can be happy. In theater. I don't. I have a complex relationship with theater. Because I haven't done it since high school. Because in high school, it was a very like favoritism piping like the same people. We'd be the leads a year before. Yeah. leads the next year. Yeah. And like to chose the chosen ones, I guess. Yeah. Like if you But like chosen, then you would like at least I was always in ensemble which was a terrible audition or also, because I just got so anxious and then I would get up there and I would like not do as well as when I rehearsed. So I have a complex relationship with theatre, I still have nightmares of me like auditioning. And like being getting a lead and then like losing it because I haven't done a good job and like everyone else in the dream knows the script, but I'm I don't know the scripts because I haven't been in the dream. It's so weird. It's so weird. I think I had one of those dreams last night actually. Yes,

Olivia 1:05:37

woke up in afraid. I'm gonna, I'm not gonna audition well

1:05:45

be Yeah. haven't viewed a lot of scenes awesome. I've post like, first exposed to zions in my like typography class when we all had to create scenes. But I love it. It's so cool. It's so cool. Love to view more. Okay,

Olivia 1:06:03

so can you talk about how race informs your interactions with the lesbian community?

1:06:10

Yeah, I don't really have interactions with the lesbian community truthfully. Because partly because it was a lot of reasons. I think the main reason is because I recently I didn't like seek lesbians basis, because I didn't know that I was lesbian. I'm like, I don't know if that space is for me. Because I don't know if I'm lesbian. But now that I am, I'm like, community could be cool. But also I go to a Catholic school. Like they don't like openly advertise the price of I know that the pride club exists. And I'm like, in the group me and on the email threads. But the kind of guy like go in the shadows to like, operate and like we can't like openly advertise stuff because it goes against like the Catholic mission or whatever. Like my my friend that was a senior at the time she since graduated, but she was telling us about she was telling me of like all the tea on campus. And she was telling me what to call it. Do your Simon some gay movie, do your sign on his gay, they were trying to, like advertise this movie and to like, for like people to come see it. And the school wasn't letting them because they went against like, the Catholic mission, and stuff like that. So I think that's maybe a little bit of the reason why I don't really Oh, the question was about race. Oh, my gosh, literally fine. Um, but I Oh, yeah, it was about race. But I went on talking about listening. Make sense? Do okay. But I feel like I can only have one or the other. Yeah. Um, cuz I'm like, if I'm in a black space, um, like, a lot of times the only trans person or like the only queer person, especially in the Catholic University. Like there's, I mean, the queer people exist. Yeah, they exist. But we kind of gotta, like, go on to like a loop. Because I gotta be underneath the route of it. Like underneath. I don't know what the what the phrase is. But I still don't see like, I can only have one or the other, or I'm in a queer space. And I'm like, the only black person or like, I'm talking about queer spaces, as I haven't really been in a lesbian space. That's okay. I've been in queer spaces, I'd say. And I was like, the only black person. No, there was one other black person, but I think he, I mean, he was very like, conforming, I don't know what the word is. Also true scum. Or the trans medical lists. Yeah, back man, man IV trans during that time, where like, the trans meds were out and like people in the true scum or whatever it Calvin gara Yeah, like the 2017 20 I was saying that you don't need dysphoria to be trans back when it wasn't cool. Yeah, like an app. People were looking at me weird. Like I was in this some tea time group that's like transgender support group. And like I said that and that cause waves, like how do you know that they're actually trans? Like, know themselves? Best dude. Anyways, I went on a tangent. But that was crazy. That was crazy being trans at that time, and I was like, the only black person in that group at the time, because I don't think I don't think the other black trans guy went to that group. But yeah, I feel like I can only have one or the other. When I want both. Yeah. Yeah.

Olivia 1:09:32

Can you talk about how mental health mental illness neurodivergent see and disability inform your interactions with you could even say your own lesbianism. Okay. And then you can talk about queerness and building queer community. You can do one and then the second one that you can talk first about how it impacts your lesbianism. Oh my And then community and then community. Okay. If that makes sense? No, it does. Okay.

1:10:06

Oh, mental health mental illness. I know. I know. He said not to write disability there but is very obviously you

Olivia 1:10:15

use mobility. Yes, I do. You want to talk about why you feel hesitant or felt hesitancy about claiming disability?

1:10:23

Yeah. Cuz like at the time of doing the intake I hadn't passed out. And like really had to confront my, like issues. Yeah, like, so I'd like passed out and then I'm like my parents were like, what happened? Can Have you been getting lightheaded and like dizzy and I'm like, yeah, for a while. And they were like, can I then I went to the doctor at one point because it was getting worse, and then they diagnosed me with postural hypotension. Which I, okay, okay. Um, which pretty much means that my blood pressure lowers whenever I stand up or go from like, length to sit in your pocket? That's not what they diagnosed me with. Oh, but, but that's what I think it is. Yeah. Truthfully. Because I have like, Yeah, but and like, they couldn't connect dots. When I was up at the doctor's. They couldn't like, they always let me down. I'm sorry, but they always let me down doctors, but they couldn't connect the dots. I'm like, I have nerve pain. I get nauseous, like whenever I go from sitting to standing, and my blood pressure didn't actually lower when they took the test. My heart rate just got crazy high. And like, see a POTS, essentially. Essentially, I look my therapist was even like pots. And then I was like, No, and she was like, interesting.

Olivia 1:11:45

I was like, see your pots? And you're like, No, no, okay,

1:11:48

not what they said. But I'm gonna go back next Friday and be like, I don't know if I can say this

Olivia 1:11:54

again. I can't be your doctors and you're paying them for a service. I

1:11:58

mean, you're right. Okay. Um, can I also get this nerve pain? And I've had that for years. I've had that for years. And like my legs and my feet, my hands. And I think like, the thing is my when I stand straight, it's not like it's like this.

Olivia 1:12:19

Ehlers Danlos Syndrome. Are you also autistic? Yeah, that makes sense. A lot of us have that.

1:12:26

Fun like, thing where you can go like that? Yeah,

Olivia 1:12:29

I can't do that. You should talk to Jake's because James has like basil vago thingy. They like pass out. Oh, whenever they like, stand up or like get injections or like inverted? Yeah.

1:12:45

Like when I was younger, I could take my legs and put them behind my head. You don't do that anymore. Like EDS. We will say okay, I'm like, I'm gonna do one thing at a time. I got to do one thing at a time. The joint pain? Yeah.

Olivia 1:12:57

Okay, like the nerve payment or, like the internal issues. Okay.

1:13:05

You see it? I'm glad you see. It feels

Olivia 1:13:07

pretty obvious. Yeah, you read it. I mean, the only reason why you need a doctor is so that you can get treatment. Yeah.

1:13:13

But they were like, they told me to hydrate more. And what's wrong water aren't you like maybe try exercising for the nerve

Olivia 1:13:23

pain like like yeah, exercise for your nerve pain. Like like

1:13:27

so like maybe that'll help and they were like it maybe can be caused by medication. So he went off one of my meds and I don't feel any better.

Olivia 1:13:35

No. Do you feel okay, going off the meds?

1:13:40

Yeah, it was a pretty low dose and it was it was said to cause postural hypotension which is what they diagnosed me. Yeah, I think it's a bigger issue than that truthfully. But it did take me off of that and I've been okay. Okay. Yeah, the only reason I was on it was because my other med caused me to lactate that meant

Olivia 1:13:57

offset that okay.

1:14:00

That one Yeah. So anyways back to the question so yeah, I was like take off disability Yeah, so I did Yeah, you did and I appreciate that now

Olivia 1:14:13

it's back now

1:14:14

it is back it is very much back me my cane with a bow on it. Um, but how does it inform it interact with the with the lesbian community and with my with myself? I'm not so queer spaces I guess because I don't have like anything okay. Think about this my gosh I guess I stopped myself. Um I don't I mean what's the disability thing? That's that's quite new. Like before like maybe like a week ago. I wouldn't have considered myself disabled still. But after watching a lot of videos, YouTube videos, and things like that, like why disability isn't a bad thing. I was like, Wow. This could be kind of kind of cool. Actually. Not cool. But I Yeah, yeah. Um, the back to the question. I'm so sorry, guys. Okay, mental illness in neurodivergent safe. I'm like, I am autistic like it's not. I did get testing done and she was like a probably autistic writing get like a straightforward answer. But I have like, I did it. I got to sit down because I needed an IP. And the school was like, not giving me one. Yeah, so I did get the testing done. But then they were like, we're not doing this but doing our own testing. So we pay for the testing

Olivia 1:15:52

and then for no fucking reason. Isn't that like, \$1,000? Like, I don't remember how much it cost.

1:15:57

It was expensive though, I believe. Um, she's very nice, though. But I started seeing faces on the wall midway through. So I had to go to my psychiatrist.

Olivia 1:16:05

Yeah. You're like, Hey,

1:16:07

I'm like, is there a physical wall where you're seeing it? And she's like, No.

Olivia 1:16:11

Yeah, you're like, Okay, sick.

1:16:14

I tried to continue and she's like, um, go? Yeah. And then they put me on the meds. I keep getting off.

Olivia 1:16:25

Um, you're talking about claiming disability for yourself?

1:16:28

Yeah. It's kind of like the same process like claiming queerness for myself and claiming like lesbianism for myself. Like, having to see it in practice before. I'm like, this could be not a bad thing. Yeah, that makes sense. That makes

Olivia 1:16:45

sense.

1:16:49

But was queer community? I don't know. How was it formed? Oh, for my interest. I didn't read the question correctly. I was too. I'm so confused. Oh, yeah. I like was queer community. I'm like, I never know, like, how much if I should show up as can refresh as sharp as the Rosie system. Because like, I'm not the only querent. A lot of my system is clear. Like, it probably would help them. If like they could, I don't know, they probably should build their own community also. But typically, it's like Ken is out, or someone else is out pretending to be kin. I still haven't gotten past that whole masking thing yet. Although I did tell my whole typography class that I did have the ID and that was me. I did and I had to go through many critiques for that. So

Olivia 1:17:47

they did credits on your art about being a system.

1:17:52

Yeah, not like about the content, but they it's like art classes. They kind of have to but you know, they were very nice. They're very nice. But yeah, it was hard, though. It was hard because it's so personal. It's so personal to me. Yeah, yeah. Yeah,

Olivia 1:18:12

I would have just said I'm not doing it. Yeah, I probably could have done that. Not you. I meant the students. Oh, not doing okay. Like, what are the ego? Like, you don't have to do anything. Like I like, like in a class, you're like, you're paying to be there. I would have just been like, I'm simply not going to critique this. Like, it's just I mean, you Brian, what are they gonna critique? Yeah. D ID 101. zine about your own system. The fuck are they gonna say?

1:18:39

It was mainly things about formatting.

Olivia 1:18:43

Sorry, I'm not sorry. I meant what I said. Yeah,

1:18:49

it's making me see in a different way. I was like, I'm not going to do anything so personal anymore, though. Like, fuck me.

Olivia 1:18:58

No, not fuck you. People. We don't do things. Yeah, they do things. I'm like, you literally didn't have to. You could have like, walked out, not you. But like that we could have walked out. You could have told Professor you're not going to do it could not have paid it. Like if you guys if most of you didn't do it, it wouldn't have mattered. Also, if one person didn't do it, it wouldn't have mattered. Yeah. People said Okay, anyways.

1:19:23

I talked about mental illness. I talked about disability. I don't know about neurodiversity. I mean, you have to

Olivia 1:19:32

answer that. Okay. Do you ever feel like like being a system or being multiplayer disabled, negatively impacts or informs how you make friends? Or if

1:19:43

Yeah, cuz I'm like, I'm like, when is the time to tell them I'm a system? Because I'm like, it's gonna come up. And I've, I've taught a few people and it's like been, it's typically been pretty well received, and typically been like, Oh, that's really interesting. They don't ask got like the trauma aspect of it? Or anything like that anything like I like I like having my worst nightmares or whatever. But like, what what is your problem or stuff like that? That didn't actually happen? But I don't know I don't know about I don't know about disabled because I'm a little worried about that actually. Because like now I have this like cane that I have been using it for like a few days actually, not very long isn't helpful. It's very helpful actually. Yeah. But I guess I don't know if this is relevant, talk about it. But recently, I've been more worried about like going places, and like doing activities. And like, not knowing how my body is going to react. And like, if I'll be able to like, go, it's also it's like a bigger than that issue though. Like, if I wanted to go to a club, aka after school club or something, I have multiple things going on. Like when I go out at night, I get really dissociated, which is why I don't go out at night. Um, but also I get dizzy when I stand up and when I walk, so that hinders what I can do. Um, I take meds that's at this normal though, I just I've always taken that's not always but for like, years. So that's a pretty normal thing for me. But I don't know, I guess this would be a new thing though. Figure out the disability and mobility thing. Because before, it's not that I didn't have the issues before. It was I didn't give a fuck. I was like, I'm just gonna walk a bunch of places. And I just felt like shit, though. So I'm like, I can't do that anymore. Especially after I passed out and like treat your body better. I know. That's a thing. I'm like, I can't keep just like going from laying in and completely up and start walking. Like I kind of got it. Because a little bit kinder to my body, I guess. Which is hard. It's always been hard for me. But my parents like you've always said you've just always stumbled and I'm like, that is proof. Like, you don't need a cane because you always kind of stumbled around like even when you were a child and I'm like, right. Anyways, anyways, okay, what's the next question about gender? Okay. This is just this one. Yeah. Okay. How does your gender identity form your interactions with the lesbian community? Can you talk a little bit about what it is like being a non binary lesbian? Do you feel like gender non conforming identities are ignored within the lesbian community? How do you think race information? Gender identity? Oh, that's a lot of questions.

Olivia 1:22:40

Yeah, you have to answer all of them. Okay, that's the one I'll just like you can?

1:22:44

Um, I don't know. But I talked about my worries with having lesbian community talking about it. Um, sometimes I'm like, because I'm trans and also because I want to physically transition to look more masculine. I'm like, How will people receive that? Like, I think in the right lesbian spaces, it'll be received well, but in my like, Catholic school pride club, would that be like an accepted thing? We're like in my like Maplewood both that they shut down. So that's not even like the HMI New Jersey chapter shutdown. So it's not like I can even go back. But I worry about that. And I'm like, I also worry about being desirable, I guess. Or like when anyone with any lesbian want to date me because I like on HRT or things like that. But I think that's more of a me issue. And something I still need to work through. What's it like being a non binary lesbian? I think it's pretty fun for them cool. Like, being a trans masculine has been like that. So like, cool. Like, it's not the only reason why I'm a trans mask lesbian, like a non binary lesbian. Like, it's, it's because that's what feels right to me. But I also do think it's pretty, pretty rad. I'm also it's confusing to people who, like, if I haven't explained that to my parents, I don't think I ever will. Um, because I don't think they'll understand like, the duality of like, wanting to look like more masculine and also being a lesbian because like, I feel like their definition is like, Girl I can grow like, yeah, that's not how, what it is. Um, so I typically either bring up one or the other. Like, I'm not typically like, talking about both. Or talking about it at all, like everyone in my classes uses she her pronouns for me, and that's okay with me. Like, some of them know, I'm trans because it's come up before. A lot of them don't and like that's, that's okay. As long as they call me can I'm, that's my main thing. Has race informed my gender identity? Oh, wow. It's okay if you don't have an answer. I don't know if I have an answer. Excuse me actually get some water. Yeah. Reflux. I didn't even eat anything. Right? Yeah, I've always had reflux. So I did go to the doctor about that. And they caught another instance of him letting me down but Maya

Olivia 1:25:29

has really bad acid reflux. Oh, really? Yeah, she takes meds everyday for it. But the highest dose of meds

1:25:37

Oh, hi. She's like Magda. I get what combined it and I can find the store. I used to take a prescription one, but they charges like \$60 every time. Yeah, so it was cheaper in the store. Which Yeah, um, we take that I've been on it for a while which I don't know how good it is to be on it for like a while. But yeah, we'll see. We'll see to get yearly endoscopies.

1:26:04

Yeah, ticket an endoscopy. You gotta do it every year.

Olivia 1:26:08

Depending on it, she

1:26:08

told me she didn't find anything. Yeah, but

Olivia 1:26:13

good every year, depending on how severe it is. Like if you don't feel like it's getting better. You should get them. It's not getting better. You should go back. Okay.

1:26:23

Yeah, so I was also having a lot of stomach issues and they didn't find it just like you felt like very mild sensitivity dairy. And that's all I came back and I will Touchstone gigs effort every single day.

Olivia 1:26:33

Do you think about like, I say CSA like and how that affects your your body? Yeah, yeah. Yeah, it is also a thing. Just something to think about? might be why? Yeah. Like, have all these autoimmune diseases. Can you talk about why you might not have any lesbian friends?

1:27:04

Yeah, I think because. Oh, no. It just wasn't something that I was really thinking about. Yeah, until recently. Yeah. Um, I think Havey is a non binary. That's fine. That is fun. And that's already a friend that I have. Since he did post something about like being a lesbian. It's like, Oh, that's nice.

Olivia 1:27:30

don't realize something's just don't come up.

1:27:32

Yeah, yes. Um, I have a lot of trans friends. I'm friends from high school that came out as trans, either before or after they left high school. Also have a future. I have like a few trans friends from college, specifically one that I have a crush on, but they're in a relationship, like for now. Okay, I mean, yeah, yeah. Um, but it's something that I just really didn't think about. And it's not super accessible. Um, I mean, that there is a private club, and I could go and possibly make more lesbian friends. But always find I'm the oddball on campus. Like, I have like my big spiky headphones. And like, I'm an art major, and I haven't met any other art majors, like in my whole time being there. I've not met graphic design majors, but I've not met anyone was my major. So I just always feel like the odd one out on campus, which I'm like, should I transfer? The but that's, that's a whole nother thing. And like, at the time of going here, going to Seton Hall, I wasn't thinking about I was just like, I need to go somewhere. And I went to the closest one. It's literally seven minutes away from my house. Stay at home. Yeah. Which is why I went that's the big reason why you want to say no, no. Um, it might be good. I mean, it's comfort. It's where my comfort is. Yeah. But yeah, it's good to have comfort. Yeah, it is. But at some point, I've thought about living on campus, but it just doesn't make sense with the amount that it is and the fact that I live seven away yeah. So it does not it just doesn't seem worth it just for a little bit of independence. But yeah, I guess those are the reasons why I don't have any lesbian friends. I'm gonna probably do have lesbian friends, honestly. But we, I don't know, I don't really reach out to people. Why is that? Such so much of this shit going on in my life? Yeah, um, but I'd like to. I just sometimes don't like the person I become when I'm around people who aren't my family. So I kind of morph myself to become a version of them that they want me to be, which is probably another trauma thing. If I really

think about it. I'm also feeling like I had no friends and like we just wanting to have friends, being like, I just gotta have them like me. So yeah, sometimes I don't really like the person I become like a people pleasing person, when I'm around my friends, not friends, but just around people, which is something I'm also working on being more authentic. And like my true self, because I'm like, if I was my true self, I'm not sure if they would still like me. But that isn't really a meat problem. And I think that'd be better for me, actually. Anyways. So, um,

Olivia 1:30:38

what does identifying as a lesbian mean to you?

Olivia 1:30:47

Does it mean that you can talk a little bit about coming back to lesbianism? Okay, it means to you like, I feel like that's a good transition into it.

1:30:58

Yeah. Um, I feel like back then. It felt more definition, like, but not like the actual like, experience, it felt more like, I'm a girl. I like all the girls. I'm a lesbian, I'm gay. And I think that was that. But this time around is feels really different. And like, in a good way, doesn't feel like I'm running from the label anymore. And running from like, using the word lesbian. Like it did before. Like, before I was like, I'm gay. I would like kind of shy away from using the word lesbian unless it was like, in a slang way, which is not the best. But this time around, it's it means something a lot more significant. And, like, more embodying of like my experiences and like, less appeals less like definition and like, this is what I'm supposed to do. I kind of just do. I know, the label feels less scary and less restrictive. Yeah, freedom, for me means something that's like very, like entangled with my gender. Which is how everyone else sees lesbianism which is kind of unique, but it's how I see it. Like, I see it, like interlocked with my gender. They not interlocked but they like do a little dance and dance. Yeah. Yeah. Hopefully that answered the question. You did. Okay.

Olivia 1:32:48

So, can you talk about what lesbian communities you wish existed?

1:32:55

Ooh. I think they exist. I just think I got to find them. For like, opened myself up to like, venturing out. Because like, I was, I would say, like, a lesbians of color space or like a disabled lesbian space, or like, lesbian systems, but I think that exists. I just gotta find it. And like, opened myself up to finding it. Yes, it's evident by Sasha and Sasha's friends, like Sasha has found lesbians of color. So it's like it exists. But in my world, it's like, I don't really have that. Like I wish to have that and I know I will. I know I will wear this I hope I will. But I'm going to try and find something like that. Yeah, so I don't think that they don't exist. I just think I'm not in those spaces currently.

Olivia 1:33:57

What does lesbian Joy mean to you and when are you happiest as a lesbian?

1:34:12

Think about that yeah,

Olivia 1:34:14

you're good thing. Let's be enjoying music

1:34:23

make some water.

Olivia 1:34:24

Get some water. Yeah, we're almost done

1:34:35

okay there's a lot of things I'm thinking of a lot of different things.

Olivia 1:34:43

You can say them all. Okay?

1:34:49

means like freedom it means love. Like a sim. It's like a symbol for love. For me. Love of myself. Love of other people love of the world of community

1:35:10

passes to me I think of just my joy, because that feels like lesbian joy, the mic mic joy, gender and my joy and like putting bows on my, it's all interconnected for me. Like disability like all my identities kind of like live in like a little soup together. So it feels like it was mean to me means a lot of different things my brain. Um

1:35:47

yeah, it's in the SU park together with like, my gender and disability, and all these different things is life. It's like, the fuel to live

1:36:09

I think I'm still finding what it means to me, which is why I'm having such a hard time. I think there's gonna be many more moments. brav really? No, let's be enjoyed. He's like, but I'm thinking like back to like moments, trying to think of like moments, where I felt like a like that lesbian joy. I guess when I thought that my first girlfriend, and like that, that interaction of like, we will call each other like wifey. And like girl is my girlfriend and stuff like that, um, but without actually being romantically involved. But then we were so that I think of that as lesbian joy. I also think of

1:36:59

like

1:37:06

I just had a moment, but let's get to my brain

Olivia 1:37:09

I think of that.

1:37:14

I also think it's like, not as like, strict and like confined to like relationship relationships, like, spaces. It feels more personal, like a lesbian joy. Doesn't feel like somebody else like oh, it only happens during with this person during this time. It feels like a overarching type thing. And I'm like, does that qualify as lets me enjoy like putting bows on my cake? Yes, it does. Because that's when I'm fifth the first like when I'm thinking of No, Mike, I think it's more like broad than being like this just joy within this lesbian context. So I guess with that in mind, putting bows on my cane is sharing space with Sasha and another black trans lesbian

1:38:17

getting dressed in the morning, which is a struggle because I have to get up like my closet is like in this like Cove and I have to get down and then up and down in the novel, which is not good for the up and down thing to getting dressed in the morning and I look at myself in the mirror and I'm like I look good, which is something that I was never able to say before I would just throw on clothes just to throw on clothes, and just to get dressed and not really caring what I looked like because I didn't care about myself. So I guess it's also seeing how far I've come throughout my life. Just like embracing myself and sisterhood and disability and everything that I am

Olivia 1:39:01

so that to me is lets

1:39:02

me enjoy everything that encompasses me.

Olivia 1:39:05

Is there anything else you want to talk about?

1:39:09

I don't know. I probably think of something tonight.

Olivia 1:39:13

That that you can write it down and then add it to your collection.

1:39:16

Okay, I think so. Yeah, gosh, we did it.

Olivia 1:39:26

We did it. You did it. Actually all you

1:39:31

see is fun. Okay, that's it. Bye