

Sharing Your Desires - Queer Sex Ed Podcast: Episode 11

guitar intro

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Sara: Hello! And welcome to Queer Sex Ed. This is a sex positive podcast where we center queer and trans voices in discussions of sexual health, pleasure, and BDSM. My name is Sara, I use she/her/hers pronouns and with me is my co host.

Jay: And this is Jay and I use zi/zir/zirs pronouns.

S: So, hello! And welcome back and stuff.

J: Hello!

S: I was at a conference and that was really awesome and I met a lot of really wonderful people who are probably listening which makes me kind of nervous but excited. So, welcome.

J: I was not at this conference so I did not get to meet any of you fabulous people who are hopefully new listeners.

S: I know! I hope we can travel to more stuff together in the future because I think it could be really fun for us to meet folks together but...

J: That'd be cool.

S: Yeah we've had a lot of growth over the last week so, welcome to all our new listeners and all our new subscribers and if you enjoy the show please help spread the word, let people know about it. If there are people in your life who don't know how to listen to a podcast, that's something that I've had come up a lot. Like do them a service by like helping them download a podcast app or helping them figure out like how you can download them in iTunes or watch - you can't watch on YouTube because our YouTube isn't up yet but that'll be happening soon but for now it's not on YouTube. You can listen on the website like there's lots of different ways to listen. There are older episodes on Sound Cloud but I haven't gone back and updated those so I'll do that too. Yeah, help spread the show, figure out ways to let people know about us. Also, if you enjoy the show head to iTunes and give us a 5 star review because that also really helps us spread the word and helps stuff get out about what we're doing.

J: I also wanted to say welcome back to our listeners who've been sticking with us for a while here. It's been really great to get more questions and to stay engaged. It's been great to see more folks sharing episodes, sharing posts from the Facebook page and telling other people about it. You're really helping us reach more people so, yay to you!

S: Yay team Queer Sex Ed!

J: Yes.

S: So, this week we're going to be talking about sharing your desires. We did episode 9 two weeks ago was about identifying desire. So about how do you dive deep into yourself and figure out what do you like, what do you want, how do you want to have sex, how do you want to have relationships, do you even want to have sex in relationships at all. We talked about asexuality and aromanticism and we talked about lots of different topics in that show so we're not going to go back over all of that information. I'm sure some of this, Jay is like shaking zir head in a very frightened way. Don't worry we're not going to re record the same episode.

J: Hey now! It's not about frightened that would just - that would be a very long episode if we talked all about how do you identify your desire, how do you share it with other people then how do you explore it.

S: Exactly! Which is why we split it into 2 episodes.

J: It's true.

S: But I would highly recommend either listening to that episode after you listen to this one or going back and listening to it now before you get started on this. Either one I think would probably be fine. Anyway, so, before we get started with our topic of sharing desire we're going to dive into our word of the show.

guitar interlude

S: And then there's a word of the show theme and stuff that I'm going to record maybe but not probably this week but maybe next week and stuff? That's -

J: Are you just going to keep that in because that'd be -

S: Actually I'm just going to use that from now on. Let's just do that. **both laughing**

J: Alright.

S: Ok, anyway. So, this week we're going to be talking about the word "fetish" which has lots of different sort of meanings and interpretations and I think it's the type of word that people who are outside of BDSM and kink communities hear a lot but maybe don't know what it means very much. And even if you're in community I think there are lots of different understandings of what fetish means or how it shows up. So, we're thinking it would be good to just sort of have a little conversation about the different ways that fetish gets interpreted and used in the community and also a little discussion about the difference between fetishes and fetishizing something. So, we'll get into that in a minute too.

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J: This gets really complicated partly because this word has been medicalized so it's actually a word you can find in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. I believe versions 1 through 5, it's definitely in the last few and so it gets

talked about in these really negative kind of medicalized ways as a non-normative or inappropriate sexuality that can cause people distress. And so I think a lot of folks that are outside of kink and BDSM communities tend to hear about it or it's used, you know, in television shows or movies to be like "Oooohh this person's weird, they have a fetish for something!" And like, fetishes at their core are really just about attraction and sexual interest in things that have not been considered specifically sexual in the ways that we think about and talk about normative, quote unquote, sexuality. So that can be inanimate objects or parts of the body that are not your genitals because for some reason in the medical literature and the mental health literature totally fine to be real focused on the genitals but if you're focused on like feet or chins or fingers ooooo weird fetish thing! Which is just ridiculous!

S: And also a lot of this ends up being gendered too in a weird way, right? So like, if you're a cisgender man who likes breasts on women like we don't consider that a fetish. But like if you were like a cisgender women who likes nipples on men like people might consider that a fetish because we don't think of those as sexual. So there's ways that these terms are really malleable. And I actually think it's pretty similar to the conversation we had about aromanticism and asexuality where because those things have been medicalized and stigmatized and said oh, it's just like a sex addiction for aromanticism or whatever. It's really similar to fetish where it's like are there ways that having fetishes can sort of run your life or take things over or make it hard for you to focus on other stuff? Like, yeah totally. Just like anything else can. And are there times where people might need medical support or mental health support to figure out like "Oh my god, all I can think about is, you know, being whipped with a flogger and I can't stop thinking about it and I need to focus on other things and, you know, how do I get over that?" Yeah, there are times where people might need help around that kind of stuff. But we do this sort of medicalization of all kink and BDSM where we say if you have these interests or if you're into something that we don't see as normal enough or whatever else, then people kind of put into this bucket of like you're a bad or a wrong person, right?

J: Right.

S: So it's like, we have this fallacy I think, or sort of misconception that what you do sexually says a lot about who you are morally as a person. Or whether you're good or bad or what you do is ok or not ok. And the reality for me is like exploring kink and BDSM has made me a lot better person. Like I'm way better at communicating now, I'm way better at telling people what I want and don't want both like in kink but also like in business and in just community circles in general and activism. And other spaces in my

life have been improved by my ability to explore my kinks and fetishes and other things that I'm interested in. Because I'm a more whole and integrated person. And I know more about myself and what I want and what I like. And I'm sort of doing a lot less of like hiding under feelings of shame or fear or being worried that people are going to find things out about me that are, you know. And one of the things we talked about in the identifying desire episode was sort of about it's scary to look at your desires because you might open a box you're not ready to see yet. You know, if you open a box and in that box it turns out that you're really into feet or something and you don't know how to like do anything with that or you're really afraid of telling people that or whatever, sometimes it's easier to just leave that box closed in the first place for a lot of people. And I think fetishes can kind of be like that where we get worried that if you figure out that you like something that's really outside of the mainstream it means that you're a bad person or you're weird or there's something wrong with you or even worse, I think we attach it to other mental health stuff. Like it means that you're, you know, somebody who's dangerous. That you might be somebody who's going to cause violence to other people because you like certain things or have fetishes in certain ways.

[00:10:01]

S: And none of those things are really true. If you like feet or you like getting tied up or you like getting your ass spanked or you like getting scratched or being pierced by needles or whatever you're into all it means is that you're into that. It doesn't mean anything else about who you are as a person or if there's something wrong or right with you or anything. And so I think the intention in making these a conversation in the medical world might be a positive intention of like we want to help people who are struggling with really sort of debilitating versions of this that are taking over your life. But I think the impact is often to stigmatize all fetishes and all kinks and say all of them are signs of like depravity or signs of you being a bad or a wrong person.

J: Right.

S: Ok, so. Do you want to talk about the sort of what a fetish is, I guess? As sort of the next step?

J: Yeah, yeah. So, if we then think about kind of what a fetish is and how people use it in community to talk about it, pretty much all fetishes are considered kinks but not all kinks are considered fetishes. And kind of colloquially how fetish is used is to talk about something that you need to be doing or have or see or touch or put in your mouth - what else? - or put in another body part that is basically necessary for you to derive sexual

pleasure. Again, this kind of comes from medicalized language, a medicalized approach to it. And so some people would say yes, absolutely I need to worship my partners feet or I will not get off. Or I need to be wearing latex or I will not enjoy this scene at all. For some people though it's just something that really revs them up and really gets them excited. So I know someone for example who - lip piercings are the thing that really revs this person up. And so some people might then talk about like getting paddled as a fetish or they could just talk about that as an activity that they like to do and just talk about it as a kink. So, it's this kind of grey space particularly around activities that we kind of exist in so that's when I say like not all fetishes - not all kinks are fetishes but generally fetishes are considered quote unquote non-normative sex, so kind of kinky sex or non vanilla sex. And a fetish can literally be anything. Someone reading you poetry, balloons, leather, rope, feet, fingers, ears, butts, trees, grass, wood, the smell of sawdust like literally anything.

S: Wait, which kind of wood? Because...

J: Ok! *both laughing* Ok!

S: Because usually like kind of like we talked about before, usually things that we think of as explicitly sexual don't get considered to be fetishes. But you could think about like if you have a fetish for penises or for vulvas or for clits or for whatever like I would consider those fetishes as well. If like that's something that you're really into and focused on but like the way we think about it usually doesn't really think about it in that way.

J: Yes and I feel like that's giving cis people an out to be transphobic assholes. Ugh.

S: Hmm, huh. Yeah...I mean, I guess it is.

J: "I have a fetish for penises so I only, I can't have sex with men that don't have penises."

S: Yeah. Right.

J: I'm not saying that that's actually what you were saying at all, Sara, I just - anything that's-

S: No, yeah. Because well 'cause -

J: People make me angry.

S: It just makes me sad because the way I was thinking of it was like in a really positive and exciting way and you're right it totally would get used as an out for that kind of stuff. But, like some people if you've looked at the article that I wrote about dating and trans folks like, some people have responded to that article in a really shitty way by being like "I only think about being a gay man as being with penises." And I can't tell them not to be like that and so all I can do is offer like hey, here's the impact you're having, here's what you're missing out on, here's some ways to think about why that might be transphobic or why you might be, why that might come from assumptions that you're making or, you know, whatever. Like I can do that labor and try and educate people in that way but the reality is like people are going to do shitty stuff and that sucks.

J: It's true.

S: But, I think this division of like sexual parts and non-sexual parts is a really arbitrary division for me, I guess is more what I was saying.

J: I totally agree with you, it really is. And again it comes from this very kind of ideas of what sex is supposed to be and what focus is supposed to be and that focus should only be genital. And I - one of the things that I love to do is worship people's bodies, whatever parts they're comfortable with me worshipping with my mouth, with my hands, with whatever. Because bodies are amazing and sexy! Also to your comment about not being able to tell cis people to stop being that way, I don't know if it's just because I'm older or I have no fucks to give...Stop being that way!

S: Ok, fair enough. I can tell them to stop being that way. But there's no-

J: I can't make them, but I will tell them!

S: Right, that's what I meant. There's no magic word that I can say that's going to stop them from...yeah.

[00:15:15]

J: I want a magic wand to erase transphobia and transmisogyny.

S: I know, I do too.

J: Really even if we could just get rid of transmisogyny I'd be really happy.

S: Yeah...

J: So.

S: We're recording this on a day when a friend of mine called out Rose McGowan at a book signing and she said all this transphobic shit back to her. And then she got misgendered while she was being pulled away by security and all this fucked up shit happened with it but anyway. That's pervading our conversation today for sure of thinking about just like we live in such a transphobic world. Like we live in a world that is so invested in these artificial divisions between trans women and cis women and between trans men and cis men and non-binary people and binary trans people. And just all these artificial divisions that exist as individual categories but that shouldn't have like power and importance assigned to the difference between them but rather just exist as human variation. And it's really exhausting to be fighting transphobia all the time. It's really exhausting to educate about transphobia all the time. So, anyway, that was a little detour.

J: It's really exhausting - yeah, anyway. So, long story short with fetish, right? People use it in different ways then and so it can get even more confusing. Because someone again might say I have a fetish for spanking or spanking, you know, being spanked yourself or spanking someone else. Where someone else would just say I enjoy impact play.

S: Right.

J: And they're doing exactly the same thing and maybe in exactly the same ways but the way that they approach it is differently. And there's basically there's not one right way to talk about kink or fetish or BDSM is I think what we're really trying to get across. And so it's just really important for this word "fetish" that we complicate it and destigmatize it because fetishes are awesome!

S: Yeah. And I think it's a great example of finding the language that works for you but then being able to dive a step deeper than that. So saying like, not just saying like "I have a leather fetish." or "I have a latex fetish." Well, great but that could mean a million billion billion different things. And so, I have a latex fetish which means I want to be in my body suit or I want you to use these latex handcuffs on me or I need you to use this like toy on my in a certain way. Or, you know, I have a spanking fetish which means I

need you to spank me in this way, hold me over your knee, like, you know, I had a partner once who had like really specific ideas about the way that she wanted to be spanked. And other ways just didn't do it for her. And so, like I had to really learn about it wasn't just like the motion of spanking that was really turning on for her but it was like the exact specific way of being spanked and being held in a certain way and being put over my knee in a certain way. You know like, other pieces like that where it's more complicated than just saying that you're into rope or something or that you have a fetish for rope.

J: Right. Or that you have a kink for something or that you enjoy a kind of play, right? Because if I say "I love impact play." What does that mean?

S: *laughing* That tells me almost nothing!

J: Right! It means, ok you want me to hit you in some way. Where? How hard? With what? Do you want to be bruised? Do you not want to be bruised? What things do you not like? Do you prefer thuddy or stingy? Do you want - what position can you be in? Do you want to be bound while you're doing this? There's lots and lots and lots of things that you need to kind of figure out instead of just saying "I'm into impact play" tells your partner potentially nothing.

S: Do you want to be bruised, Jay?

J: I love being bruised! And I unfortunately heal bruises very quickly.

S: I know! I do too!

J: So they stick around for maybe 2 days and then they're just like, gone. One of the other things we had wanted to talk about was the difference between having a fetish and the fetishization of a group. So, there's a difference between saying "I have a fetish for leather." and, I'm about to use really fucked up language just FYI, and "I have a fetish for trans women."

S: Mmhmm.

J: Those are very very different things.

S: Right.

J: And so, fetishization requires the objectification of a person or persons based on particular things about them.

S: And that could be like their fatness, that could be a different identity stuff, it could be race, it could be transness, it could be-

J: Disability.

S: Yeah, disability stuff. Just like things that are core parts of human being identity or whether you show up or sort of the who you are as a person. And it's, yeah, like Jay said the problem is that it's fundamentally dehumanizing, right? So it's not about being with me as an individual human being it's about you just want to be with *a* trans person and it doesn't really matter who that trans person is, you just want to be with a trans person.

[00:19:59]

S: And one thing that's important to say here is that it's not that it's wrong to be attracted to trans women or to be attracted to trans men or to be attracted to like people who are fat or people, you know, who have like different body types or whatever. Like, it's ok to have that in your attraction sphere and be like oh because like I really like being with fat bodies or I really like having sex with trans people. Like all those things are great but I would never seek out somebody explicitly just because they are trans or just because they are fat. And that's really the bigger difference in that.

J: Yeah. And this gets into some really *heavy sigh* really deep stuff for folks, right? So like to say - for example for a lot of, particularly gay cis men but in gay men's communities to talk about being a "rice queen" which means you are attracted exclusively to asian men. Ooooookay. Do we need - I mean, we can unpack all the racist bullshit that's buried just in that simple phrase but then also again there's this kind of dehumanization of people to groupness. Which is inherently about power dynamics. Which again isn't to say don't find black people attractive, don't find asian people attractive, don't find Latinx people attractive, don't find indigenous people attractive, don't find white people attractive. It's just again it's this over simplification to groupness usually based on really fucked up stereotypes of race, of gender, of disability that are really really problematic.

S: Yeah. Or sometimes too it's about sort of like bolstering your own credentials, you know, of being like- I've definitely felt- we talked a while back in the threesomes episode

about unicorn hunting. I think that's a really specific type of fetishization where it's like a really specific type of like bisexual woman, usually cis woman, to join a relationship for a threesome. Like that type of- is a really specific thing but that hunting dynamic comes up in other types of fetishization as well. Like there are definitely times where I've felt like cisgender women sort of hunting me a little bit as a trans woman. Not because they're really interested in me specifically but because they've never been with a trans woman before and they feel like I'm their way to try it or something like that. And it's like, I think there are healthy ways to approach that attraction-

J: Totally.

S: To say like "Hey I'm attracted to you. I've never been with a trans person before. I know that you've like done sexuality work and so you probably have some insight into what it would be like and I'm just interested in how can I explore that in a safe way." Like there are definitely ways to have that conversation but don't see people out just because of their identity or just because of their body. Which is really more what we're talking about with fetishization.

J: Yeah... No, and it's just more complicated than that too because there are definitely communities of folks that self identify as chasers and folks that are looking for chasers, you know, folks who for example are amputees who are looking for amputee chasers. Or trans people that are looking for trans chasers. Or fat people that are looking for fat chasers. Because that feels affirming or kinky or consensual objectification or whatever it is that kind of is getting them off too. So yeah it's -

S: Consent is the key word though, right?

J: It's about consent.

S: Consent is the keyword where it's like there's nothing wrong with consensual objectification it's the non consensual objectification piece of it. So, yeah if you're seeking people out for that that's kind of a different piece, yeah.

J: And a lot of times - sorry. I was just going to say a lot of times with fetishization you don't find out that you're being nonconsensually objectified until later.

S: Yeah, that's what's happened for me before, yeah.

J: And that's - that, that is really awful!

S: Yeah, it feels really shitty. Ok, any other stuff you want to mention about fetish?

J: Uh no but ask us more questions about this. Or fetishization and let's have some more conversation about that. I think we're probably going to talk more about that later too as we kind of dive more into kind of groupness and identities. And it's stuff that's - it's hard to talk about it and we want to talk about it more so please ask us questions and engage in conversation with us.

S: Yeah, totally.

guitar interlude

[00:24:33]

S: Our next part of the show is our topic and this month for February we're talking about kink. So, we're talking about BDSM and kink and different types of sexual activities that fit under that and how do you identify what you want and how do you talk about what you want. And we'll talk about submission and dominance in the future, we've got some other stuff coming out but for this episode we're going to talk about sharing your desires. So, episode 9 - identifying desire is the episode where we talked about diving into your own stuff. So in there we talked about how do you ask yourself questions, how do you figure out what you like, what you want. How do you investigate different things like you can watch porn, you can go on Tumblr, you can talk to your friends, you can talk to partners about what they like and maybe that shows you something you like. You can even just write down, find lists of different kinks and do a yes/no/maybe list. So, all that stuff is in that other episode. So if you're interested in that, go back and listen. But right now we're going to talk about how do you share your desires with other people. So, one thing that we want to start with is even before you're going to talk to somebody about your desires, there's some good sort of like ground rule things or like other ground work to lay. So, Jay, do you want to mention some of those really quick?

J: Sure! And so, we dove into a lot of this in episode 9 but it's just kind of in thinking about approaching a partner or partners, whether potential or current, that you want to do something different or new with to make sure that you know what your deal breakers are. What do you absolutely need in the relationship, what do you absolutely not need in the relationship, in sex, in kink. Are there things that if they're introduced would be immediate hell no, I'm done. Are there things that if they aren't there it's also a hell, no I'm done. Or a this isn't working for me. Right?

S: Yeah. For me like one of those is like forced gender play, you know? It's like if that's something other folks are into it's never something I'm going to tell other people not to explore. And I also realize that a lot of trans people might have discovered their trans identity through gender play. Or it might have been the only thing that was accessible to them and so I totally get that. And it's really triggering for me and so if like a partner needs gender play to be a part of the relationship that's going to be a deal breaker for me. And that's not anything wrong with me or wrong with them. It just is something that I've decided is not going to be a part of my relationships. It might be something where for poly they might do that with other people and then come back and do other stuff with me. So, it's not that like having that desire like taints somebody or makes them like unable to be in the relationship with me but if it's something that they really need to get off or something that they really need to be into sex at all it's just never something that's going to happen for me. And you might have other stuff. It might be age play is a no go for you or it might be scat or peeing is a no go for you. Or blood is a no go or spanking is a no go. Or rope because you had a really bad rope experience. Whatever it is for you it's ok to have those boundaries and limitations. Just because you're in the kink community doesn't mean you have to be into everything or try everything once, keep doing something just because your partner wants to be doing it. But the other piece of that is it helps to know what those are ahead of time. So, don't wait until you're in the situation where you're already trying something with somebody and then you're like "Oh actually, this isn't something that I wanted to be doing." If you already knew that ahead of time it's probably easier to communicate that with them for later.

J: Yeah. And so for me for example, you know, I have a number of kind of deal breakers that would be like if you're not able to do this, this is not going to work in the long term. It might work for a night. My threshold for a night or a short term relationship is much lower than it would be for a sustained interaction. So, for example, you know, someone who does not like to do aftercare or cuddling is really a deal breaker for me. It's not going to work in the long run because that's something I absolutely need to recenter. Particularly having that in sub space. So it may just be we could never actually do any sort of play or kink. And that's ok. It's just for certain- so it- in some ways deal breakers are also about certain activities or certain parts of a relationship necessarily they're not necessarily about the entire thing. Although they sometimes can be. Like if someone cannot communicate with me honestly, I am not going to be in a relationship with them.

S: Mmhmm.

J: So, yeah. Know your deal breakers. And then, yeah, know your other boundaries like Sara was saying. Know what your hard nos are, your squishy nos, your maybe yeses, your absolute yeses. Which again those are not necessarily deal breakers but things in the kind of scope of activity that you want. So, where does kissing fall for you? Where does touching fall for you? Where does all these kinds of kink delightful things fall for you? Where does group sex fall for you? Figure kind of those things out and then also have a sense of what your triggers are as well as you can. Sometimes they come out of nowhere and you didn't realize they were there until you touch it. And you're like "Oh shit!" So, at the very least then have an idea about, you know, how you will communicate with someone if you are triggered. So that could be, you know, as we mentioned before, having another color that you use or another word that you use as a safeword that indicates that you're triggered. I use blue instead of red if I'm triggered. And then be able to tell your partner or potential partner what they can do to support you when you're triggered. So is that just you need to go, you just need to be done and out? Do they need to like lay on top of you like a human weighted blanket? Which is what I need. Do they just need to like lay next to you and talk quietly to you? Do they need to put music on to help you? Like what is it that you need? And that's so that you can know if I'm triggered, this is what needs to happen.

[00:30:11]

S: Right. Another thing too is that your hard nos or your boundaries or your other stuff like might be different in different spaces or different types of relationships, right?

J: Oh yeah!

S: So, like for me if I'm in a long term relationship with somebody, kissing is an absolute necessity for me. Like I have to be able to kiss. I enjoy kissing a lot, it's a really important way for me to share energy with people and grow intimate with people. And I just love the feeling of kissing a lot. It's just really really important to me and so it would be almost impossible for me, I think, to have a long term relationship with somebody who didn't enjoy kissing very much. Except for one person. *both laughing* Who Jay and I both know who that is! It's not Jay. Jay and I kiss quite-

J: It's not me! I love kissing.

S: -basically the entire time. But for example like when I'm playing with somebody in a dungeon for a lot of people is a hard boundary. They're like I don't want to kiss. And while I'm always kind of bummed about that, I always bring it up. I'm like "Would you be

interested in kissing?" And I think it enhances my sort of kink play in a way that I appreciate. I'm more willing to be flexible on that of like yeah, ok, somebody doesn't want to kiss. I'll still play with them. I'll do spanking or scratching or nipple play or, you know, whatever else because we're not really building a long term relationship and so your- what your boundaries are in certain places might be different depending on the type of relationship you're in, the space that you're in, where you're at - all that kind of stuff.

J: Right. Or if you're doing cyber or Skype sex or something else like that versus in person sex, those can be very very different too. Because in some ways for some people cyber or Skype can be more fantasy based.

S: Right you might not like fear play or you might not like rape scenarios or something if you're in person because it might get too triggering but it might be fun to do that through like text chat role play or something like that.

J: Totally. And those are all great. And so just kind of have a sense of that. And this does not mean- you're going to hear me say this a lot through this episode - this is not about perfection or total mastery or full knowledge because there's no way that you're ever going to know everything about yourself or partners. You're going to keep exploring that, you're going to keep learning things which is amazing and it's so exciting to me to always be able to like find new things to do. And new things to figure out about myself like "Huh! That was fun! Let's do that again. I never thought about that before." Or I did and it was not ok before but it is now. And those are all ok as long it- if it shifts or if you didn't realize that something was a trigger, that's all ok just kind of have a sense of where you are and what you're going to do to respond if things shift.

S: Totally. Yeah that's how I felt about fisting you. I was like "Fucking...this is awesome! Why didn't I ever try this before?!" *laughing*

J: Right. Well, you didn't even realize you were fisting me at the time...

S: Well, that's true. It was kind of like accidental fisting for a second and then it was on purpose fisting after that.

J: *laughing* Yes, well...

S: Or like the time where you squirted on my face and I was just like "I didn't know that I would have liked that but now I do!"

J: Yup! I did warn you! *both laughing*

S: That's true! I went into it with full knowledge. But I think the thing that's happened to me is I've had sex with people who were like "Yeah, I squirt sometimes." And it's just like not happened, you know, and so I just kind of thought it was like and you were like "No, basically every time!" *laughing*

J: This is why I own so many blankets. Oh and actually a quick correction from a previous episode where I accidentally was talking- I was talking about positional wedges and blankets made by a certain company that can kind of protect the bed from getting soaked. I said they were Fascinator, they're not Fascinator. The company is called Liberator.

S: Liberator, yup. I thought about that as I was listening back to that episode.

J: Yeah, the blankets are Fascinator and then I think the wedge I have is Jazz maybe? But yeah, the company is Liberator.

S: So, Fascinator is a type of-

J: Blanket.

S: And it's blankets that you use that's specifically are like to keep fluids from getting onto the bed, right? So it's like one side is kind of like soft and you can get like velvety or like other sensation. If you're like me and you have like sensory stuff. I'm like velvet is a no go for me, I have to have other sensations so. But and then the other side is sort of like a more-

J: Silky.

S: Silky type thing. And then in the middle is- is it plastic? Or?

J: Yeah, it's just a plas- it's effectively like a plastic sheet. But because it's encased in fabric then you don't have that horrible sweaty thing that can happen with plastic sheets. I hate plastic sheets. *laughing*

S: And it also doesn't like sound the same way. Like it's not a really obtrusive sound and it's easy to lay on, it's comfortable so.

J: We might need to put that somewhere else but that's fine.

S: Put that conversation? Oh, I don't know. It's fine, we'll just leave it where it is.

[00:35:00]

S: I mean, when I edit it might end up somewhere else but I think there could probably be a good spot for it.

J: That's what I mean, yeah. Ok. Someday we will record live and just like people will hear us going "Ahh we'll move that somewhere else!"

S: Yeah. I think a thing that happens to a lot of podcasters is the more that they podcast the less they care about like tangenty like getting off on stuff a little bit. Where at first you're very like rigid about. I don't know. I like having just the conversation flow where it flows but. Ok.

J: That'll probably end up at the end of the episode for the *inaudible* people listening.

S: The blanket part? No we should put that in.

J: No, no, no. The conversation we were just having.

S: Oh, about podcasts? The meta conversation about podcasting? Yeah.

J: Yeah, we were being meta. It's fine.

S: Yeah, it's- that's all I know how to do.

J: So, anyway! *laughing*

S: So! *laughing* The next thing that we're going to talk about is how can we build relationships where it's safe to share our desire in the first place, right? So, one thing that happens with a lot of people that I know like, if I'm talking to friends of mine who I talk to polyamory- talk to about polyamory but they might not know very much about it. Or people who are in sort of monogamous cisgender straight heterosexual - those are the same thing - relationships who haven't really thought very much about sort of the set up of their relationship or really talked very explicitly about their boundaries. I find that

sometimes the idea of like bringing up getting tied up or getting spanked or getting, you know, throat fucked or whatever by your partner seems scary because you might not have that level of vulnerability. And so to tell your partner something like that might be really terrifying but you might also have not told your partner that you have a lot of student loan debt or that you had an abusive childhood. Or that you, I don't know like other vulnerable stuff that's hard to tell somebody. So if you don't already have good communication where you're talking about vulnerable stuff in lots of different areas of your relationship, talking about your feelings, about your emotions, about what comes up for you, about what's difficult for you, all that stuff then yeah, it's going to be really hard to talk about this stuff. Because it's going to feel really outside of the realm of what you're used to discussing in your relationship. So, one of the good ways to make sure that you are able to talk about your desire in your relationship is just from the beginning start by having really authentic and direct communication. And for me, I've talked about this in other episodes, but this serves as kind of like a precheck for me. Where it's like if I go on a first or second date with somebody and I'm being really vulnerable and communication about my feelings or my thoughts or being into them or wanting to kiss them or just whatever else and somebody else gets freaked out about how direct I'm being, then that tells me a lot of information of like oh, we're probably just not a really compatible fit right now. You know, versus I just had a first date a few weeks ago and a second date a few days ago with somebody who we like dove straight into vulnerable communication about how we came out and what we like to do during sex and how we like to kiss and all this other different stuff. And it was really refreshing to just jump into that and be like yeah, this person is a good fit for me! And this communication style is a good fit for me. So, it's going to be easier to talk about kinks and sexuality if you're also just talking about other things regularly in your relationship anyway.

J: I would also say that you can use kink and sexuality as a way to kind of test out vulnerable communication to then use in different parts of your relationship. So it's not something that if you don't start it from the beginning that you can never do. This could be an arena that you could start that communication and then be able to use it in other ways at other times to say "Hey, when you did this thing I felt this way." or "I felt really upset." or "I felt like you didn't care about me or like I was being ignored." And have some conversations about conflict or other kind of scary things if you started talking about sex and kink first and desire. And honesty and directness and authenticity and vulnerability are really really fucking hard because it requires you to put yourself in a place where you in some ways pull off most or all of your armor to be able to connect with someone. To be really really honest about what you want and need and are looking for. So, have compassion for yourself struggling with it. Have compassion for partners

who are struggling to do that. And again, this is not about perfection, this is not about mastery. Throw your perfectionism out the door if you have it. This is about-

S: But Jay I've had it for so long! *both laughing*

J: This is about trying and trying and getting better and making it work with yourself and your partner or partners. And that's really good like try it out! And it's so totally worth doing to be able to say "Hey, you know, we've been having-" if you've been with that person for a while "Hey, we've been having sex in these ways, I really want to try this because I think it would be really hot." Or if you're just negotiating with a new partner, you know, these are the things that I find really hot. What do you like to do? Are you interested in any of those things? So refreshing once you start having these conversations. Sometimes though I will say even for me it's really hard to start them.

[00:40:25]

S: Totally, yeah. It's like a both/and thing where it's like I can never imagine going back to the types of relationships I used to have where I didn't talk like this with partners and everytime I'm with a new partner like putting that foot off the edge and jumping into the pool every time is still just as scary. Like it gets easier in some ways because you get better at the language that you want to use and how you can lay that groundwork. And the other thing that I'll say, too, is ask consent. Like ask people like "Hey is it ok if I ask you a really vulnerable question." or "Is it ok if I share something that might be a little scary for you right?" or like, ask somebody and if they're like "Mmm, no, not right now. I don't think I really want to have that conversation." or whatever, then it saves you the embarrassment of like starting a conversation that the other person isn't ready to have yet, too.

J: Right. So for an example of kind of a situation in which I had a hard time in person initiating what we had talked about over the internet for a very long time. I recently reconnected with some partners after we had stopped seeing each other for 10 years.

S: Yaaaaay! Yeah, yeah, yeah!

J: We had a 10 year reunion.

S: Yes, yes, yes! Yeah you did!

J: I did! And the first night that we were together like, trying to for all 3 of us to reconnect and renegotiate and like re figure out what we were doing was really different than how it had been, you know, 10 years ago when we had been playing and fucking on and off. So it was just a kind of re figuring that out. Second night? Much easier, much better. But it was just like to start like we'd had the conversation, we had an idea of what we were doing but then to like actually initiate activity we were just like "Uh...." and I was sitting there just like "Uh...well...I'm just..." *laughing*

S: Yeah. Well and there was a time in my life where that didn't happen really recently. Which is when I came to come see you. And part of that was- we talked about it in another episode that some of that was my own mental health stuff. Like I was just dealing with a lot of family trauma and depression and anxiety and like other things that were coming up for me that I feel a lot more healed from now. But another thing too is like I was definitely interested in trying to like play with you and the person that you cohabitate with and I was interested in sort of like what would that look like. I'm kind of attracted to that, it would be kind of fun to like co-dom Jay together. Like, it'd be really interesting in that. And I just straight up froze. Like I just never even brought up the conversation. I didn't know how to say it, I didn't know how to like- the words just never came out of my mouth. Like there were times when we were sitting together and it was just me and them and like i could have started that conversation and I just didn't. And I think originally I thought it was all mental health stuff and then looking back now like as you're saying that about the people that you went to go see I was like "Oh, yeah, like I kind of had that experience too." Where like- even if I wasn't ready to play that week that I was there we could have laid some groundwork about things we could have done in the future or things we might have been interested in at other times. And I just like never even started the conversation. And part of it was because I was just like scared of rejection, scared of putting myself into a situation or a part of the relationship that like wasn't ready for me yet. Or, you know, I have a lot of like trauma around being a third and like some other stuff from abusive relationships and so some of that came up around being like, I don't want to ruin your relationship or I don't want to like cause drama in your relationship. Which, I know I won't like you're shaking your head because you're like, I know we both are like of course that's not what's actually going to happen because we've worked through a lot of that trauma together. But like, there- those landmines are still there for me and they still come up sometimes when I'm not expecting them.

J: Yeah and I will also say that, you know, in this situation my nesting partner had also been really clear that they were not going to start talking about or initiate anything

because you were coming to our house and in our space and because of other stuff, right, they were like "I don't want to cause any discomfort."

S: Mmhmm.

J: You know, so, but anyway. That is a conversation for a different day. But there was still some of this kind of like prework about like how do we create a situation in which truly authentic consent can happen and that that's not potentially triggering and that's not like causing discomfort. Which was, you know, which was a kind of conversation about sex.

S: Well and I think part of this too is like trusting yourself to move slowly and just be like "You know what, if it doesn't happen this time it doesn't happen this time." It's not the end of the world. Like, yeah we might have missed out on an opportunity to do some stuff together that we could have both been interested in but I trust that there will be other opportunities in the future for that to happen at some point. And so- and even if you and I break up and we're not together I trust that there will be other times with other people that I'll have time to do all that stuff in the future.

[00:45:13]

J: Totally.

S: So, you know, part of this is also trusting abundance and being like if I bring up these desires to somebody or I start this conversation or, you know, whatever and this person rejects me or leaves me or doesn't want to be with me or whatever. Like, that sucks and it's ok. Like, I'll survive that. Like, I'll be able to deal with this break up or I'll be able to deal with this person being out of my life as much as it hurts because there are other people out there who will love me and want to be around me.

J: Right. And it can get more complicated, right, if it's the first time that you're feeling a certain way with someone. Or the first time that you found somebody that's particularly interested in something you're interested in or, you know, if you'd never been a switch before and this is the first person that made you feel like a dom or a sub. Or another- or you'd never subbed for anyone before and this is the- you- this was the first person to make you feel comfortable and then it can feel like oh my god, if I don't try to do everything at once or if I don't stick this out or if I, you know, then I'm somehow never going to find it again. And it's just- it's just not the case, right?

S: Yeah.

guitar interlude

S: So, the next thing that we really wanted to talk about is some practical tools for how can you have these conversations. So, what are different ways you can structure that conversation, what are different tools you can use and what are some different things that help us get into navigating these things.

J: Mmhmm. So, part of this in, also in like having these vulnerable conversations is in some ways like figur- thinking through what's going to make it easier for you, what do you need, and what's your partners need. Like does it need to be face to face? Is that the most comfortable thing for you all? Or do you want to do some negotiation online or over the phone before hand? Do y'all want to write each other smutty stories about fantasies that you have? Which is lots of fun! I'm not a very good writer but I do enjoy receiving them. And then figure out like-

S: I need to write some smut...ugh. If you've listened to the Bed Post Confessions show that's something that I wrote and I want to write more stuff like that.

J: So, you know, and then based on what you write each other like figure out where things are overlapping. Do you need to kind of work off of a yes/no/maybe sheet like we had introduced in episode 9, even if your partner doesn't want to work off of that would that make things easier for you?

S: One thing that I'm thinking of is like what type of communication works the best as well. So like you were saying writing. For me like chatting works really well so like Facebook chat or texting or whatever, you know, one of the biggest way that Jay and I keep in touch is we just sort of Facebook chat each other throughout the day. And it also is an easy way because I can sort of do voice to text because I don't like typing very much and then I can read through what I wrote before I send it versus like when I'm on the phone- I like talking on the phone. Sometimes if I had like a really good date or fucked somebody and it was awesome or something I'll call Jay and sort of just like word vomit gush for 2 hours about like this awesome sex that I had.

J: It's delightful!

S: I love those conversations. But there- if I'm trying to have a really serious conversation about something the phone is a hard way for me to do it because I just get

muddled. I kind of lose where I'm at, I can't go back and read pieces that I said earlier or like I say the same thing over and over again. Or I lose track of what I'm trying to talk about or sometimes I get really ADD and I just like go off down rabbit holes all the time. Which like when I'm just telling Jay about like a fun hook up that I had it doesn't really matter if I go down the rabbit hole and talk about anti-fascism. But like if I'm trying to have a really serious conversation- *Jay laughing*

J: Anti-fascism is my kink.

S: Yeah, uh-huh well, I mean seriously it's definitely mine.

J: It should be everyone's! *both laughing*

S: But like phone is not a good way for me to talk about desires or do like negotiation or set up scenes or any of that stuff. But like face to face conversations are a little easier for me to do that with. So, figure out which communication style works for you and set boundaries around it. Just be like "Hey, I really want to have this conversation with you, is it ok if I call you because that's easier for me." or whatever.

J: And then be open to them saying no, it's really better to do it in person and just kind of figure out what's going to work then, right? It can also be not just in the means of communication but also in kind of how you're talking about it. So, is it easier to kind of talk about the abstract ideas of things that are interesting to you? Or like the concrete of these are the things that I want you to do to me. Because those are very different and depending on the person, talking about, you know, "With you this is what I want to explore." could be an easier way to have the conversation than "I generally like impact play in these kinds of ways." or, you know, impact play is really interesting blah blah blah. But that could be the entry point for someone else and that's also fine.

S: Or it could be the stories. It could be like you just write a really smutty story that like kind of is a role play that you're interested in or that's got different activities that you're interested in and like that could be your way to explore. Somebody can say like, hey I noticed there's a lot of bondage or consensual non consent or, you know, whatever else in this scene like are you interested in trying taht with me? Would you ever want to talk about- you know? There are lots of different ways to get the conversation started around this. Porn is another thing we've talked about a few times.

[00:50:40]

J: Absolutely.

S: So, watch porn together if that's something that you enjoy doing. And I actually really enjoy like the very like academic process of watching porn together. Like not to get each other off but to like pause and zoom in and get really close and like look at like how's the technique of the spanking that she's doing or, you know, just *laughing* I'm very um, I'm uh like an aspiring film major sometimes about that kind of stuff. And I really want to like get in on the nitty gritty of that stuff. But for other people that's like totally unsexy and so it really just depends on like what is the most authentic way for you to have the conversation and what works best for you.

J: Yeah. And think about where you want to have the conversation too. So if you're going to do it in person where do you want to be to have this conversation? Do you want to be at your place? At their place? At whatever place you're hoping to fuck? Do you want to have some sort of conversation before you go to a dungeon or a play party to play together? Or if you're at a dungeon or a play party, where do you want to do it while you're there to be able to talk about things and negotiate? Another thing- something that works really well for me honestly is to have the conversation over food. Because food is very relaxing and delightful and it's just nice to be able to like share a meal with each other. And for me I also like to meet at kind of a neutral place like a restaurant and have a conversation there. Quietly so no one else is like listening- like nonconsensually being forced to listen to us negotiate getting fucked. Or hit or whatever. And like that's actually for all of the people that I have fucked or played with in the last forever, the first place that we've gone to negotiate that has been a restaurant. *laughing*

S: Yup! Except I didn't know it was a date or a negotiation until after we were like already making out and then I was like "Maybe this is a date."

J: Yes, making out in my hotel room with your top off...maaaybe this is a date!

S: Why would somebody invite me to dinner? That's weird! *laughing*

J: But for me, food is great and that's really like centering and calming and like I don't have as much anxiety if there's like also a thing to do with my hands.

S: Yeah, me too.

J: And an excuse to take a breath by putting food into my face for a second. Like it can be really just - I'm sharing all my tricks right now. Like, I don't have anything to say- shove the ramen in my face! Oh now I have something to say. *both laughing* Oh I'm feeling fidgety, let me fidget with my spoon, right?

S: One thing that I want to say too is sometimes there's a really like hard line rule in- like kink educators or sex educators will talk about where they'll say like absolutely no negotiating during sex or in the bedroom or, you know, like it should all be done ahead of time because once you're in the bedroom you might do things that you weren't interested in doing before. You might feel pressured to do stuff because the other person wants to be doing them and you're already naked. And like those are real power dynamics to be aware of. Like I think it's certainly important to notice when you're- like if you're asking somebody like "Do you want to suck my cock?" And your cock is 2 inches from their mouth already. Like that's not really a good setup for figuring out if it's an authentic desire or not, right? So like, be careful with it. I think it's certainly like, you probably don't have to be like a sexual black belt to really be able to do it but like you want to be like at least like a purple belt, you know. Like have a few negotiations under your belt already. Like kind of have some understanding a little bit of how to have those conversations. Jay and I like just had a talk about what the different belt colors are, that's why zi is laughing at me.

J: It's true. I'm like, I think you just lost some of our listeners!

S: Oh, well, ok.

J: No, it's ok.

S: You don't have to be an expert in sex to have these types of conversations in bed but also be aware of the power dynamics. And be aware of something like if you're older than somebody else, if you have more experience than somebody else, if you're more of a public figure than somebody else. Like all these different like sort of power dynamics can come up. But with that said, I really like bedroom negotiation. I really like being in the room with somebody sort of being like do you like having your hair pulled? And then like if they say yes like then like testing out like do you mean like this, or like this a little more? Do you like being controlled when your hair is pulled? Or is it about the pain of pulling the hair? Like, you know, doing pain calibration of like ok, I'm going to hit you, tell me 1 out of 10. Like 1 is I can barely feel it, 10 is like it's almost too much, you know, to sort of understand ok, when I hit with what feels like a 2 it registers as like a 5 for them. Or, you know, it's sort of like I really find that type of active negotiation and like active

continuing like discussion of activities really hot and really sexy. And it's really a thing that I enjoy doing a lot.

[00:55:48]

S: But yeah it just frustrates me, I think, when sex educators like make really hard line rules. Or probably about anything other than like, you know, make sure there's consent. But other hard line rules past that are- can get really complicated for me. And it's just like don't tell people what to do. Like if people enjoy doing that type of negotiation and they can do it in a safe and consensual way, then trust people to do that. Again being aware of the power stuff.

J: I will say that- yeah- and so the power pieces of this are really important and I would also say that there are certain things that are going to **inaudible** potentially before the first time you fuck or play with someone or both, having some things negotiated before you're in the bedroom could be really important. So things like barriers and fluid bonding, no touch zones, touch zones, words for body parts.

S: Yeah, testing.

J: What are your hard boundaries, what are you generally interesting in doing tonight. And then yeah in the moment like go from there. And as far as- even like, you know, pain calibration for example can- if- speaking as a pain slut um, pain calibration can be done it lots of different ways, right? So it can literally be like oh I'm going to hit you, give me a number. It can also be if you're a, you know, someone who is topping impact play or topping other kinds of pain play, starting low and then asking the sub or bottom to beg you to go harder.

S: Mmhmm.

J: I love that! That's really hot! Like to be able to say no, plea- you know, please sir or please ma'am, please mistress, you know, hit me harder. I want to take more pain for you. And being at, you know, it can- that sounded really clinical in the way that I just said it. **both laughing** But it can be really really fun to do.

S: Yeah.

J: And you can do this in lots of different sexy ways too. Like, oh you said you want me to pull your hair and start to kind of gently increase pressure and, you know, it can be

done without it specifically being do you want it like this or this. You can do it within the context of whatever scene you negotiate. So if you've negotiated a dom/sub scene you can do it as a sub or as a dom.

S: Right. The other thing that you've talked about a few times, too, is you can use brattiness as a way to calibrate too. Where it's like you can have the sort of the control in the scene as the dom but also what you're doing is giving the power to the sub still to say like here are the rules, and if you break these rules... Like if you don't keep your knees together, if you don't - whatever - if you slouch, if you don't count the number off of which spanking this was or whatever, then I'm going to hit you harder, I'm going to hit you more or whatever, right? And so you're giving the person sort of they have the power to break those rules when they want to, if they want more pain or if they want a certain type of punishment. And so that can be a way of sort of like power bottoming or sort of like leading from the bottom as well.

J: Mmhmm. I like calling those funishments.

S: *laughing* I like that!

J: I mean there are definitely things that I do not like, except in the context of being punished for breaking a rule. Like it's not something I would ever want to have done within a sexual context except as oh, you're going to be this much of a brat and push me this hard? Well then I'm going to do this. And you know it's coming. And that can be really hot, right? And so, you know, if you've negotiated for, you know, if out of the bedroom you negotiated we're going to have, you know, I want to try fisting, right? You can be negotiating how that's going in the bedroom. And you can also like if someone, if you've negotiated fingering and then someone's like no, I really want you to fuck me with more of your hand, right? That's something that can also be negotiated within the moment. Or, you know, on either side like you're recognizing that a partner is really open and you're like would you like more inside of you?

[00:59:55]

S: Yeah. And also usually what I do is a mixture of what Jay said. So I think leaving all of your negotiating to the bedroom can be difficult. I probably wouldn't do that very much unless it was like a really sudden thing that I wasn't expecting to happen or like there are times. Although as a pretty demi person that doesn't happen. I'm usually like let's talk about sex 5 times before we... *laughing* are ever together. I will usually do a mixture of sort of usually the dinner conversation is a really wide net. And sort of we're

talking about, we're kind of transitioning into activities you can use. But really sort of the visual model that I like to use for this and the thing that I like to tell people about is thinking about it as Venn diagrams. And really the process of sharing your desire with somebody else is about figuring out where your Venn diagrams overlap, right? So if you've never seen a Venn diagram before it's like those different circles that are overlapping and maybe like one of the circles is rope and one of the circles is consensual nonconsent and one of the circles is wax play and one of the circles is, you know, different stuff that you're into. And within that circle there are like lots of different places that are like, you might like having a harness tied on you but you might not like getting suspended by rope. Or you might like having your hands tied together and hanging sort of from the ceiling by your wrists but you might not like doing that by your feet. Or, you know, those sorts of things and so figuring out where your Venn diagrams overlap is really just casting the widest net possible in your conversation about just what do you like? What turns you on? What are you into? Like, what things do you like or what have you done that you enjoyed? Sometimes a conversation that I'll like to have is like tell me about like the 5 hottest sexual experiences that you've had or something and what was hot about them. So you can sort of get an idea for like what gets somebody sort of flowing. Another thing that I'll talk about too in terms of the Venn diagram stuff is like sometimes you might find like a little piece of your Venn diagram that you want to explore more later. So if there's ever like- like there are a time when Jay and I were fucking and zi held down my wrists for the first time. And it was like this little thing that like wasn't really- there wasn't a lot of consensual nonconsent to it, it was more just like sort of being restrained more than anything else. But then I sort of fought back a little bit and zi pushed me back a little bit and it was like Ooh, there's something there. Like I actually really enjoy trying to fight back, trying to get out, trying to whatever. And so then it was like a little thing that we discovered that then we talked more about and set more boundaries about. And then the next time that we fucked it was more intentional about like ok, I'm going to push back, I'm going to try and get my wrists out, I'm going to try and bite your nose like I'm going to do things *laughing* that are going to be really bratty because like I really want to lean into that a little bit more and see if I like it. And then if you do like that, you can then explore more regions of that afterwards. Do you want to do a more explicit fantasy around consensual nonconsent that would not just involve the wrists but it would involve abduction or other stuff. So, like there are ways to do like exploring little pieces as a time. You don't have to do it all at once.

J: I don't - and it's just not possible to do it all at once. Like to figure out every- to like do everything-

S: Have a 72 hour fuck fest?! And just-

J: Oh my god, it'd be even longer than that! Um...I would be very tired.

S: 72 weeks! *laughing*

J: I mean the other thing is I think for, you know, for me one of the things I like to do is kind of particularly when I was first figuring things out and then I just kind of go back to it every once in a while. But this like kind of spreadsheet idea of yes/no/maybes.

S: Oh, you know what I need to do? I need to show that Bex Talks Sex list.

J: Oh yes, please do.

S: I forgot to put that in the notes for the other desire thing but I'm going to make a note really quick to put that in there.

J: If you could put it in both that would be good. Cool. So, but using the spreadsheet from Bex Talks Sex or from another place. Or just kind of yourself figuring out what are the things I absolutely love to do. What are things that I'm interested in exploring. What are things that I'm kind of eh, these don't really do anything for me but they also don't not do anything for me. What are the things that you are a soft no on and those soft nos are kind of things that like I would have to be in a very particular space to be able to do this with someone. Or this is something that I would need to do other work to be able to try in the future but I'm interested to try in the future just maybe not right now. And then there's the hard nos. And I will say that over time fewer and fewer things have stayed in my hard nos. There's not very many things in my hard nos. And more things have moved even from my soft nos to maybes or maybe yeses. Because I've been interested in exploring some other things so, for a long time things like piercing and knife play were in my no, not right nows. And they have definitely moved into I would like to do these things in the near future.

[01:05:09]

S: Oooh, I'd be interested in doing knife play with you. That was- I did that a little while ago, it was really fun.

J: When I say knife play I mean actual cutting.

S: Yeah, ok. We could talk about it. *laughing*

J: So, so those are things that, you know, and those are things that also like require the other person to have had some education or training or experience doing. And so, you know...

S: I was going to say I think an important part specifically about knife play that happened to a friend of mine was you don't just have to think about the consent of the person who's being cut, but also the person who's doing the cutting in the sense that like this person ended up doing a cut that was deeper than they were planning. Not like that caused a lot of harm or like an emergency room visit but it is definitely going to leave a scar. And the person I was talking to was like yeah, I don't know if I ever really wanted to leave a scar on somebody. I think that's like something that I- is a hard no for me now. Like it's- thinking about like my mark being on somebody forever is a really hard thing to think about. And the person who was the sub was like meh, I'm ok with it, I'm great. It was more than we were planning but it was fine, it's not a big deal. And so you have to think about that stuff when you're the sub- uh, the dom and the submissive not just the person who's a sub.

J: Yeah and I-

S: Because I think our ideas about consent, especially really pain focused consent, are really bottom focused which is great because you need to make sure that the bottom is wanting to do that. But you also have to make sure that the dom in the scene is interested in doing that level of pain or marking as well.

J: Right. You know, and there's also things for me that have moved from maybe yeses to eh or no, for me. So for example for a while water sports or piss play was kind of in the maybe yes and then, you know, this was quite a long time ago and I did try it with a partner and I was like yeah, no this does nothing for me. So now if I have a partner who's like super super super into it, eh. We can look at it but it just does nothing for me. So I'm really just kind of like there for the other person or persons which, in my service orientation is probably why there's more things in the probably nos than in the hard nos because I really do like being of service to other people that I'm fucking. You know and so, things can move around and it's just kind of fun to see how things move around and like try it out and see if you like it and if you don't, that's ok. And if you do, that's great. There's nothing wrong with exploring that way. Do we want to talk about some other kind of like activity stuff then?

S: Yeah, totally!

J: Cool.

S: So, another activity that I really enjoy doing and this is like probably my favorite thing to do with a new partner. And I just got to do it really recently which is something I really enjoy - is the body scan. So this activity is sort of- and it started with me as sort of like a trans activity of like telling people about here are the body parts that I have, here's the words that I use to describe them, this is my clit, this is my pussy. Only use those words, you know, these are my tits or my nipples are fine, you know, but don't call them boobs or, you know. Like there's different pieces of that for me. And it really started as a really trans specific thing and I think it's great for trans folks and queer folks in general to just be aware of reclaiming your body language and calling your body what you want because it's your fucking body. But I think it's helpful for everybody, right? Of like- are there places that you don't want me to touch you tonight? Are there places that you don't want me to touch you ever? Obviously with the understanding of like if that changes you can say "Hey, don't touch me there." or "I know I said don't touch me here but I really want you to touch here now. Is that ok?" or, you know, like those can change. It doesn't have to be like a hard set rule necessarily but just a way to do that check in. ARE there theypes of touch that you like or don't like? So, do you really like- for me, I can't fucking stand tickling. If you tickle me I will punch you in the face and not in a fun way. *laughing* So, like but for other people tickling is super fun and they really enjoy like the silliness of it. And so it really just depends on what you like and what you don't want. Do you enjoy stroking or scratching or pinching or slapping? Or do you want to pet or have your hair like, you know, fingers run through your hair, have your hair pulled? How do you want to be fucked? Do you want it to be hard? Do you want it be soft? Do you want it to go back and forth? Do you want someone to pin you down? Do you want your arms to be free? Like, all of these things are pieces of our sexuality that I don't think we're ever encouraged to think of really explicitly. And to think of as really separate pieces. You know I think we just say like "Well I'm into rough sex." and then just like...

J: What the hell does that mean?!

S: What is that?

J: What is rough sex?

[01:10:00]

S: And like usually what it means is like a straight hook up where a cis man is just doing what he wants to do, right? And it's like I think for some people when they think of dominance, that's what they think of is just like letting the dom do whatever the dom wants to do. And as a dom that fucking terrifies me. I'm like no, I want to know that what I'm doing is meeting both of our mutual desires. I don't want to spank your ass because I like spanking asses, I want to spank your ass because it's fun for us to do that together, right? And so body scan is a really great way of talking about like what different types of things do you like. Also do you like different tools? Do you like different toys? Do you want to use a riding crop or a paddle or a flogger or different pieces like that? And then also what types of body parts can I touch with my body parts, right? So do you want to have penetrative sex? Do you want me to kiss you? Do you want me to lick you? Do you want me to use my hands? Do you want me to go down on you? Like all of those different things are sort of individual pieces and I really enjoy the body scan as kind of a great activity for the sort of like when you're laying in bed, you're kind of getting started. Maybe even making out a little bit and you're kind of just getting ready it can be a really good sort of ice breaker. And I've found that it sort of opens up the communication channels too so that as you're going on through the sex that you're having, people feel more sort of open and aware to say things like "Oh, actually, you know what? Don't touch me there." or "Don't touch my butt like that." or "Don't touch me that softly. You need to touch me harder." or, you know, that type of stuff.

J: Right. And the body scan can also be done, again, within whatever context you've negotiated. So it can be done in a dungeon when you or your partner in sub space or any other space or multiple doms and multiple subs whatever. Whatever combination there is you can do it still within those contexts. And, again, just kind of change the language. "I'm going to beat your ass, boy. How do you want me to beat your ass?" For example. *both laughing* "How many hard hits can you take with my paddle, boy?"

S: Mmhmm.

J: For example.

S: I'm really glad that you're sharing those because I think for me I'm such a like sex nerd that it's like easier for me- it's easiest for me to sort of like go to the academic place of having these conversations. And I do find that hot, like I enjoy the mashup of like really sort of formal specific conversations about this stuff and like mashed up with like the hot sexiness of like getting into it with somebody. But it's good to hear about different frameworks for like how you can better integrate it into your play or make it part of your roleplay, you know? It could be if you're doing a certain type of role play with

certain characters there might be a way that you fit it into the character that you're doing. Or lots of different ways that you could do this.

J: Yeah, just basically it's be creative and try things out. And be ok with the fact that sometimes it's just going to result in hysterical laughter on both parts. Or you start laughing at yourself because you're like oh my god, what the fuck is coming out of my mouth right now? And that's fine! Or if you're partner starts giggling because it's just like oh my god! It's a lot! Right? Like that can be really adorable! And sex and kink, even within very serious scenes do not have to be sustained serious all the damn time. This can be really fun! And there doe- you know- I think- you know, it's being- going to like dungeon spaces and seeing like all of these like cis guy doms who like have no expression and are like totally silent when they're- I'm just like that is so fucking boring to me!

S: Yeah.

J: Like I want you to interact with me. I want you to touch me. I want you to tease me. And I mean, some people are not into teasing or shame or humiliation. You know, I want those things. I want interactions. I want you to make noise. I want you to talk dirty to me. You know, or in a non kinky sex play also like I don't want silence or grunting unless like grunting is the sound that you normally make. Because if it is that can be really hot too! But I like - I want you to talk, I want you tell me what's good, I want you to moan and to scream and to do all of those things that come to you. And that sometimes means laughing.

S: Yeah. Sex is just silly sometimes.

J: Because bodies make weird noises!

S: Mmhmm, yeah.

J: Bodies make such weird noises! *laughing*

S: I think- I think one of the best things that I ever did in my sex life was learning how to laugh at myself a little bit and learning how to be a little silly and still stay in that place of dominance. Because true dominance really comes from a deeper inner sense of self that is more than putting on a face of perfection or of really specific, you know, like control type stuff. It's like that might be a part of it for you and you might really want a construct of like I need someone in this scene to be a really big like to be a hard ass

and to not- there might be times where you do really want that. But for me I found that I've had way better sex in my life when I've been able to laugh and be silly and sort of like move in and out of different types of activities and not really feel like if I laugh at the wrong time or say the wrong thing then I'm just going to like ruin it and this person's automatically going to leave me.

[01:15:35]

S: Like, that's not the type of sex I want to be having.

J: Yeah and for, you know, there is also this kind of like intentional suspension of disbelief in certain role playing and in most kink that like what is probably coming out of your mouth is utterly ridiculous, but in that moment it is fucking hot as hell. And so we're just going to suspend the fact that the rest of world exists and just focus on what we're doing. And it can be really great! And so basically I think what we're trying to say here is talk beforehand, negotiate beforehand, negotiate during, talk during, talk afterwards. Check in afterwards.

S: Do we sound like a broken record yet?

J: I really think we do but that's ok. I've been told that we don't. And it can be amazing!

S: Yeah. Talk about sex and stuff. That's why we have a podcast.

J: It's true.

S: Do you have anything else that you want to say about the activity part or...?

J: I mean, I always have more things that I want to say but I also want to invite other people into the conversation. So again, ask us questions, send us- record questions and send them to us, type them out and send them to us. If you do send us a question make sure that you like, if you want us to use your name or refer to you, tell us what your name and pronouns are because that is really helpful.

S: Yeah or we'll just say it's anonymous if you want us to.

J: Yeah. And we'll say anonymous and probably just use "they". *laughing* But yeah, just, you know, ask more about this. We love talking about how to talk about sex.

S: Cool.

guitar interlude

S: So, before we get to questions I wanted to do a quick little shout out to all of our Patreon subscribers.

J: Yes!

S: So, yay! It's a new month and that means that we had another month of people supporting us on Patreon which is really awesome! I'm so grateful that folks have kept joining us on there, that people are supporting the work that we're doing. The reality is like this is my full time job. Doing sex education, doing the podcast, going around the country and presenting at conferences and going to colleges and- this is the only work that I'm doing. I mean I do other- like I do graphic design projects and video editing stuff. I do some other stuff too but if you're interested in supporting both me and Jay to be able to travel more, to do more workshops in places, you know, let your school know that we're out there and that if they're able to pay for travel or they're able to pay for our time like, we'd love to come do workshops there. I'm going to SFASU in Texas next week in Nacogdoches to do a week worth of sexuality workshops with their gay/straight alliance group - or their spectrum group. But their basically- their LGBTQ group on campus. I'm doing like training with their staff, I'm going into classrooms while I'm there. So you could do like a whole week of stuff if you want to bring us in for a longer time. So, if you know about places that are looking for that type of speaker, if you're- if you have a conference and you want keynote speakers or you want people to run workshops at the conference, Jay and I are really really experienced public speakers that have a lot of experience putting together workshops. So, we really want to make this something that's sustainable for us. And one way that you can do that at any amount, you can give \$1 a month, you can give 5 or 10 or 25 or 100, whatever works for you. Whatever is affordable for you. It all makes a massive difference for us and Patreon is the way to do that. And it's really crowdfunding is such a powerful way especially for marginalized people to be able to get our word out, to be able to support ourselves doing this work. And it's something that's really cool I think. So you can go to patreon.com/queersexed and you'll find our Patreon page there. And a bonus on there is if we get to \$1,000/month which we're pretty close. I think we're at like \$750 something like that. If we get to \$1,000/month I'm going to start a new podcast. So, I'm going to start a media watch podcast is what I've decided I'm going to start next. We're going to do once a month we'll watch a movie or a few episodes of a tv show or something. They might be queer focused like we might do San Junipero, the episode of

Black Mirror that's really queer focused. Or we might do something like Unicorn Land which we talked about. Which is like watching the 6 episode series that's on Vimeo that's called Unicorn Land. Or we might do like Her Story, the trans dating piece from Jen Richards and Laura Zak.

[01:20:02]

S: I have lots of ideas for media stuff that I want to do. And those are great conversations and they also just don't really fit in Queer Sex Ed so if you're interested in making that show happen, you can go to the Patreon, if we get over \$1,000/month we're going to add that new show and it's going to be really cool so. Maybe what we'll do is do a pilot version of that and put in in the Queer Sex Ed feed in a month or two so that folks can know kind of what that show's going to be like. But a cool part about that show too is we'll let you know about what we're going to watch ahead of time so you can sort of join the conversation, you can watch the movie along with us and then talk about it and listen to the show afterwards. If anyone's ever listened to like How Did This Get Made or Film Sack or other types of sort of media podcasts, I really like those types of shows so it would be sort of like a little bit based on that format but really more specifically about LGBT issues, queer stuff. A lot of those shows are hosted by white men and they don't really get into issues of race and gender and sexuality and other issues that I want to talk about. And so that's something that I'm really interested in making happen. But just in general if you want to support this show, Patreon is the best way to do it. If you also are unable to afford Patreon, I know that that's something that some people can't do right now and that's totally ok. There's also a pinned post on the top of the Facebook page that's got a lot of ways that you can support the show for free. I've read out a lot of those on a show a while ago but you can go read that post. But it's just stuff like reviewing us on iTunes, sharing the show with people that you know, sharing the articles that I've written on Medium, liking things that show up on the Facebook page, liking the episodes when they get posted on the Facebook page. All that kind of stuff makes a really big difference for us too. So, if you can't pay us with financial support you can give your labor and your time and your energy and your social capital to also help spread the show. So.

J: Right. And right now, if we could do a very specific ask. If everyone listening to the show or even if one out of every ten of you listening to the show would just go to iTunes and give us 5 stars and say something that the show has helped you think more about or something that you've enjoyed. That is going to make us much more available for a lot more people. And we really want to get this into other people's earbuds.

S: Yeah! Awesome! That's a great ask. I love that.

guitar interlude

S: Ok, so. Time to talk about our question.

J: Yes.

S: Do you want to read it this week since I've- I was reading it the last few weeks?

J: I can do that.

S: Ok, cool.

J: So we have an anonymous question this week. I'm just going to read exactly what they said.

"I always have questions about navigating being involved in various scenes - kink, poly etc. And also navigating public persona clashes. Specifically I'm a therapist who works with kids and people could get upset about that."

J: So it sounds like the question here is how do you navigate when you are part of kind of explicitly sexual communities like kink community, being polyamorous and in some cases being LGBTQ or trans can end up being sexualized in some people's minds. And then how do you kind of navigate - ugh the dog is fucking barking again. I'll be right back! Of course he stops now!

S: Of course, ok.

J: Jackass! Barking and there's nothing out there!

S: So, how do you navigate that stuff and then you were going to say something else.

J: Yes. So how do you navigate that stuff along with something that ends up being held up in some ways as kind of the exact opposite of what sexuality is, right? Which is work with children. And so people, you know, and I will say that I most of my career has been as a youth worker. Particularly working with marginalised young people. Usually, although sometimes younger, usually ages like 11 to 17 for under 18 and then like 18 to 25. And so I've done a lot of work with youth. Navigating how am I going to stay

involved in kink and polyamory and how public about that can I be when I am then working with young people. It's something that I've thought a lot about.

S: Totally. Yeah, me too. I ran a youth program for 2 years and did other youth work sort of before that like volunteering and stuff. Earlier on in that I wasn't out as polyamorous and I didn't really know that I was polyamorous but later on in that process I did start coming out as more publicly polyamorous. And at first I was really nervous about sharing that with the kids that were in my group but it actually ended up being something that was really important for me to share because it turns out a lot of kids in the group were actually struggling with their own questions about polyamory. And some of them were already dating multiple people, you know, they were 13, 14, 15 years old and maybe had 2 or 3 people that they were dating or something.

[01:25:07]

S: And so I ended up sort of becoming an outlet for a lot of different young people in the area to have these conversations about how do you talk about boundaries, how do you have ethical communication with people. And the other thing too is like, I would show up to events at the non-profit that I was working for with 2 partner or 3 partners or sort of normalizing holding hands with multiple people. Or just sort of showing up in a loving space with a few different people. And that was really empowering, I think, for young folks to see. And so part of it depends on where you're at, right? I also want to be honest about - there are very real fears and costs for people, right? You can get your children taken away from you if you're outed as kinky or poly in certain places. You can have your licensure taken away from you if you're outed as a dom or, you know, other types of stuff. So, it's not to like trivialize that and say everyone should have to come out but I also think sometimes in some spaces we feel like it's not possible for us to come out but what it really means is that we're just like really afraid to come out which is ok. But if we do, sometimes it might be received better than you think it will.

J: Yeah, I think that's really important that definitely fear can get in the way of kind of thinking through this. And, you know, for our question answer who's specifically a therapist I'm sure that you have had a lot of conversations about what appropriate self disclosure is and what ethical self disclosure is. Or at least I hope that those are conversations that you have had and that you also had some, you know, education or training around. Having worked with lots of folks who were training as social workers or therapists I know that that does not often happen unfortunately, you know, and-

S: Do you want to say what you mean really quick about - oh, you were probably just going to jump right into it, weren't you?

J: I was going to, yeah. *laughing*

S: Sorry, I'm sorry.

J: So, appropriate or ethical self disclosure is basically kind of figuring out the level of information that you give about yourself personally when you are in a professional setting. And particularly with someone who is a client. And so I have had um...I've actually had a few situations that have come up, particularly when I was working at the LGBT youth group that I worked at for 7 years. The young people are always amazing and they're like- they're going to save the world!

S: True that!

J: So, in the beginning of doing the work and kind of figuring it out I was not out as polyamorous at all. And then I had to kind of sit with myself and go "Ok, so why am I not out?" So, admittedly I was in a large city, a fairly progressive city, and I knew that my coworkers and my supervisor had my back. So I knew that this was not going to come down on me if I started talking about it. The reality is though, there's nothing inherently sexual or inappropriate about disclosing polyamory. The relationships are not necessarily sexual and I'm not overly giving information, right? So, people would, you know, when we would do like positionality conversations - which is kind of describing your groupness. So, your identities, your groupness, what groups do you belong to- I would say that I was polyamorous. And I started, you know, there were questions about that and what that meant. And then, though, I really made this choice to normalize it with these LGBTQ+ youth who were trying to figure all this crap out and really didn't have anyone in their lives that was happily and positively polyamorous. And so I wanted to be able to kind of do that. So, we'll say that with one young person I did disclose some about my kink involvement because this person was about to go into a very dangerous situation, had no one in their life to talk to about this, and was not hearing from anyone else who was not kinky why this was a bad idea. And so they needed to know that I had insider knowledge in community and that I was not saying "You're bad because you're doing this but like I'm in this too. What you're describing is all sorts of red flags for me."

S: Yeah, mmhmm.

J: And they heard it and in this situation it was this young person at the time was- had just gotten out of in-patient treatment after having gone in for attempting suicide after being really horribly abused by a dom and then was about to go and move out of state to be with another dom.

S: Yeah, that's a very dangerous situation.

J: And I was like "Fuck no! This is not happening!" Right? But in general, you know, I'm not- in all parts of my professional life I'm not out as kinky. And I was not at that time either it was just kind of with the specific people who kind of needed to know.

[01:29:56]

S: Right, those were selective specific disclosures for that one youth to accomplish something specific.

J: Very selective!

S: So, one thing that this makes me think of is like if you do chose to disclose pieces of yourself, why are you doing it? Right?

J: Exactly.

S: Are you doing it for yourself? Are you doing it so that they think you're cool or they like know a lot about you. Or like they like - is it for you? Or is it for them, right? Like why are you disclosing and sort of what's happening. And the other thing is if you want to just keep those parts completely separate there's nothing wrong with that either.

J: It's fine! No. You know and-

S: Especially if you're a therapist or a child advocate or, you know, somebody who has a more formal job where there is more risk about, you know, if you're like a sex assault advocate that's working with like childhood survivors of sexual assault like there's almost no place where there would be like a reasonable disclosure for that kind of stuff, you know? If your kid - if a kid you work with ends up seeing you at like kink supers and you're holding hands with 2 people like- what, I guess, you know, whatever like that happens sometimes. But like there'd be no reason to like actively disclose in those types of jobs so part of it depends on what you're doing also.

J: Right. And, you know, we're also trying to avoid dual relationships, right? Where you have multiple kinds of relationship where you have a personal relationship and a professional relationship with a client, that's not a healthy thing to be doing. You know, but in thinking about kind of beyond that navigating like, when you think about kind of is this concern coming from, you know, I'm worried that I'm going to run into the parents of one of my clients at a dungeon? Or I'm going to worry that pictures of me at a play party or someone else is going to talk about me would come out. And then I would lose clients or, you know, my credibility or my livelihood would be attacked. So, you know, is that the concern? And so if it that is the concern then there's ways that you can navigate around that. Making sure that, you know, if you are playing with people that you're doing so with people that you really trust and that there's not necessarily photographic or video evidence there of. Wearing things that disguise your identity if you are in a public space is also something you can do. Masks or hoods, like those are great.

S: Or if you want to do like- camming or you want to *inaudible* your porn.

J: Yeah!

S: Or you want to put some pictures up on a sub Reddit where you put nudes or, you know, just whatever. Like, if you want to do that stuff there are safe ways to do that that hides your identity. If it's from the neck down or whatever else. You know, for me like one of the things that I was interested in doing was camming but I was also working at a youth program and so I was just like, even though when you're camming you can block certain states or certain IP address. You can have a *inaudible* alert to get around it and it just like the risk was too high that somebody would end up seeing me and recognizing who I was. And so I just decided that like that wasn't the right choice for me at the time. You know and so you may have to just decide like yeah, even though I want to make porn or even though I'm interested in taking these pictures and putting them on this website or in this Facebook group or, you know, in this whatever maybe now isn't the right now. Maybe I need to jump to a different career, you know. Part of the reason that I'm doing the work that I'm doing now is it also gives me more freedom to do stuff like post really revealing pictures on my Facebook page or on my Instagram or whatever, you know? Because I'm a lot less worried about parents and youth and what people are going to think about me. And also there are, you know, there's just like- it's a lot less complicated of a relationship than it used to be. And so, if you really have an authentic desire for like yeah, I do want to edit porn or I do want to cam or I do want to do whatever - it might mean taking steps out of those other roles that you have. And it might be in 6 months or a year or 5 years or, you know, maybe never. But, some of the it

may mean changing the situation that you're in if you really are serious about doing certain pieces of that as well.

J: Yeah. And, you know, if it's not really kind of stepping into this much more public kind of sexual careers or activities, you know, then I would just also ask like where is some of this concern coming from? Is it because you're in a conservative area and this could be a serious threat? Is it because you have some internalized shame around kink or polyamory that you need to also work through? Because this isn't about like telling your clients, right, who you are, what you're doing, you're describing it in general. It could be like, you know, you have a couple of partners and your co workers know about that. Or you're out in public with your- with your partner or partners. That's fine. And there's nothing inherently, again, sexual or sexualized about polyamory. And, I mean I think also people just kind of- and I'm not saying that this is what our question asker is doing - but people also just kind of blow up. "Oh my god! Then I have to talk to my kids about sex!" You should already be talking to your kids about sex. In fact, if you're like oh my god, I have to do that it's probably has been a time for you to do that for a while because they exist. And you need to start normalizing bodies and normalizing what bodies do and normalizing consent and talking about their bodies as belonging to them with them. And I don't mean- and I'm talking about where babies come from and things like that. To be really honest with kids about this so we can destigmatize some of this.

[01:35:27]

J: And another thing kind of from a systems perspective is that we all just need to get better about doing work in a way that destigmatizes sexuality. And that could- that means LGBTQ identities, that means kink, that means polyamory, that means just cis het sex.

S: Mmhmm and especially because we have like really weird double standards about this, right? Like, you know, like there are times where like if you're in a straight, cisgender couple and you say like "Oh, yeah, Darren and I got married last year and now we're trying for a baby." You just told me a lot about the type of sex that you're having.

J: A lot!

S: And what you're goal in that sex is and that like your partners penis is inside of you and they're ejaculating and that it's happening multiple times.

J: There's no barriers!

S: And there's no barriers involved. Like you just told me a lot about the type of sex you're having, which is fine, I don't mind knowing that but like why is it ok to talk about that? Why is ok to show up to a work party and kiss your wife if you're a straight man and it's all of a sudden like more sexual when it's two women that are kissing each other. Or two men. You know or two trans folks like there's sort of this thing I think that we do where we automatically like sexualize queerness and transness and kinkiness and polyamory in these ways that are really not healthy, I think. That like don't really lead to meaningful integration of these identities. And like Jay said, you can be in 12 relationships at the same time and be asexual and have never kissed your partners before. So, like there's no correlation between the types of relationships that you're having and those things automatically being sexual or sexualized. And, you know, things like well, we can't tell these young kids about LGB identities because then they're never going to understand. And we can't talk to, you know, third graders about sex or whatever. And it's like well, you don't have to talk to them about sex. You just talk to them about how like lots of different people love each other in different ways and we want to support all those types of love or whatever. You know the other thing too is-

J: Also...

S: Huh?

J: Also, though if I can say about third graders, a lot of them have already seen porn and we need to be talking about it with them.

S: Yeah, well yeah.

J: Because that is like terrifying for kids and really can be very very confusing.

S: Especially with older siblings or older friends it's easy to get access to stuff.

J: Yeah. But I mean you can get access to mo- but the avert- like, most kids have seen porn.

S: Most kids have a phone at this point. Yeah, it's true.

J: Right. Most kids have seen porn by the age of 10 or 11.

S: Yeah. Wow, I was a late bloomer on that.

J: Well, you're also- you're older than 10 or 11 year olds now. *laughing*

S: Well, I...yeah.

J: It's been in the last few years like the age has been dropping and dropping and dropping. Like when I was a kid-

S: That's just like technology access.

J: Exactly.

S: You know, like when you were older or well, when older people were younger, right? It was like stealing a Playboy or having an older cousin go get it for you or like that type of stuff.

J: Watching scrambled MTV Real Sex episodes.

S: I did that!

J: That's what I did!

S: Yup, uh huh! Watching the HBO channel and like catching a boob for 3 seconds and masturbating as quick as you can! Being like - I think that was a boob...uhhh!

J: It's all scrambled and green, yeah. But with, you know, kind of back to our more specifically with our question and our asker it really is about kind of where your fear is coming from and how realistic are they? Same questions that you probably actually ask with your clients, right? Where is this coming from? How realistic is it? And then what are the things that you need to do to make sure that you're protecting yourself so that you can still do what you need to do. And also thinking about maybe being a little more out about things and just kind of helping to normalize it depending on the context that you're in. But still, having conversations - if you have co workers, if you have a supervisor about where you are and what you- how you're feeling can be really helpful to make sure that they have your back. Or otherwise finding other kind of networks of support in a profession where they have your back. Because you're not going to be doing anything inappropriate by being with your partners or by going to an adults only space where you are engaging in consensual activities. Or doing that in your own

space. Like there's nothing wrong with any of those things, it's how people then interpret that or they then project that onto the person because they must be depraved if they're doing these things. So how- what kind of support do you need to be able to be as open as you want to be?

[01:40:03]

S: Right. For me, around polyamory like the limit that I set with like me and my partners is like if a straight monogamous married couple can do it in public, we can. You know? And so, you know, if people can hold hands at the movie and not be like crossing people's boundaries in public like, so can we, right? So if we're in a group of 3 or 4 and we go to a movie and we're cuddling on a movie or we kiss each other or we're talking about how much we love each other or, you know, we can go to a work party together as a group or whatever else. Like, basically if a straight cis married couple could do it, we could do it. And that was sort of the boundary that we set for ourselves. Where it's like we're not going to force our sexuality onto other people, we're not going to like be in public, you know, doing things that are explicitly sexual or that are going to like non-consensually involve people in the play that we're doing. But we're also not going to choo- like, we also made, at least me and the partners that I have now, have made an explicit choice of like we're also not going to hide this though. We're not going to shy away from it, you know. Some of my favorite moments when I was visiting Jay were like times where like I was holding Jay's hand and Jay's nesting partner was holding zir other hand and it was like this really great loving group that we had together. And like that's really powerful for me and I don't want to have to give that up just because it might make people feel a little weird or uncomfortable or they don't really know how to handle it.

J: Yeah and the other thing to just kind of get prepared for is it's always possible to be outed if anything is happening in any kind of semi public situation. And so if you were to get outed, what is your plan? Who's got your back? What are you going to say? How are you going to talk about it? How are you going to approach it? And for the most part it, you know, being outed does not have- often does not result in horribleness, right? It can. But that's the minority of situations. And it also in a lot of ways people-

S: It might make people a little awkward sometimes.

J: Oh totally!

S: People might have questions sometimes, you know, stuff might come up.

J: Which is irritating. You know, and, you know, also just to know like how you respond will absolutely inform how people then respond to you.

S: Totally.

J: So, if they're like "I heard this horrible thing about you." And you're like "Yeah, you know, I- I'm polyamorous, this is what this means, I have blah blah blah partners." or "I only have one partner right now but I'm open for others. And that is how I live my life."

S: Own it!

J: Own it and like don't go "Oh my god!" because if you go "Oh my god!" and start talking about it like it's this horrible shameful awful thing, they will feed that on that.

S: People pick up on that. Mmhmm.

J: You know and the same thing with kink. "Oh my god, I saw these pictures of you!" My first question is like, how did you find these pictures of me? Or "My friend told me that they saw you going into *that* place." You can go "Yeah, it's a space for people who are of age to engage in consensual activities. So that is a space that I went into. That is where, you know, my life involved in BDSM or involved in a dungeon lives in that dungeon and it stays in that dungeon and the rest of my life is not about that." So, it's not perfect and it's not probably the best answer ever but that is kind of what we've got this evening. I shouldn't say this evening, that's kind of what we got today. And if you- if we didn't answer the part that you were really wanting us to answer or discuss that more, please send us a follow up. We'd be really happy to talk about it more in the future.

S: Yeah! Great!

J: I had one more correction.

S: Oh, ok, sure.

J: I was listening back to- I don't remember which episode it was. It was either 9 or 10 and I was talking about hook suspension. And I said through muscle- through skin and muscle.

S: Oh, it's just skin.

J: And I meant to say through skin, *not* muscle.

S: Ooooh!

J: So, hook suspension is done through skin. Not muscle. Because you don't want to tear somebody apart. *laughing*

S: Yeah that would cause- yeah, that could cause permanent damage.

J: Owww! So just a quick correction that I was just like "Oh shit. I said a wrong thing."

S: That's ok! And I think that's just a good reminder too that like the culture of this show is like we're just saying stuff off the cuff. Like we write down some notes when we think about things ahead of time and we both are obviously people who've done a lot of sex education work. And so some of this just comes really naturally to us but we're just going to say stuff so like if Jay and I say something that isn't right or that you don't think is true. Or that like in your experience like "Hey, as a black woman I actually think that what you said was pretty problematic." or whatever like, we want you to send us feedback on that type of stuff. If you're willing to do that labor and I understand that it's hard labor to ask to do. But if you're interested, we're open to those. We will- if people send corrections we'll probably do them earlier in the show than this. Maybe just at the front of the show we can have a little corrections corner or something if something comes up.

[01:44:55]

J: Corrections corner! *laughing*

S: Corrections corner! But like, yeah if you- if we missed something or if we made an assumption based on race or class or gender or sexuality or other pieces of this like we are working on getting more diverse voices on the show of folks of color who are in other groups than I am. Or people who have different experiences even as indigenous people or, you know, folks who are other trans and queer identities. Like, we are working on getting other voices on the show too. But we want your feedback on stuff if we missed something too. So feel free to send us corrections or do other stuff for that as well.

J: Yeah. And please again send us questions. We really love recorded questions because then we get to hear your amazing voices also and we'd love to include them on the show. But typed is also great! And if there are particular terms that you'd like to- us to include in word slash concept of the week, send 'em to us! We'd love to talk about 'em.

S: Yeah. We did a show! And now I'm going to go on my cuddle date!

J: We did a show! Yeah, you go on your cuddle date and have fun and we will talk about more kinky stuff later this month.

S: Ok. I love you a lot!

J: I love you too, have fun!

S: Yay!

J: We did the thing!

[01:48:51]

guitar outro

