

Ally ([00:00](#)):

Hey, welcome back to Gender Spiral.

Babette ([00:03](#)):

So today we're doing something a little different. Our producer Ira is going to be introducing our guest today who's a dear friend of the show. So take it away, Ira.

Ally ([00:14](#)):

Yeah.

Babette ([00:14](#)):

No pressure.

Ira ([00:15](#)):

Thanks.

Ally ([00:16](#)):

What do you have to say, Ira?

Ira ([00:19](#)):

I am never on the mic. This is very stressful for me. So our guest for today is Amie, who is a really dear friend of mine. We met actually in a trans support group back in 2020, and it's a long story, but our therapist ended the group and turned out to be this anti-trans advocate detransitioner person, which is maybe a story for another day, but nothing bonds people together like trauma, and now Amie and I are besties.

Ally ([00:46](#)):

Wait, okay, so hold on really quick. What? This actually happened, you had a therapist who then turned out to be a super TERF?

Ira ([00:54](#)):

Yeah, so basically we should probably get into it in a whole other episode, but this person had a gender journey where he detransitioned, which is nothing wrong with that of course, but then was poached by some of these TERF-y websites that are really advocating against trans people's bodily autonomy and right to do what they want with their transition needs. Trust me when I say it is a story for another day.

Ally ([01:18](#)):

Wow.

Ira ([01:20](#)):

It's a long, long story. Anyway, Amie and I, because of that, we met each other when we were both early on in our transition journey, gender journey, and like you were saying with River Butcher on our first

episode, it feels like we're in the same high school class or something. We're on the same gender timeline, if that makes sense.

Ally ([01:44](#)):

Cool.

Ira ([01:44](#)):

So yeah, I just wanted to bring her on the show because I think she has a really unique perspective on realizing she was trans femme in her mid thirties, and that all kind of blossomed from this relationship she had with her best friend who she'll fill you in on later.

([01:58](#)):

As a content warning, in this episode there is talk of suicide and grief between 21 minutes and 45 seconds and 31 minutes, and again between 36 minutes and 35 seconds and 38 minutes and five seconds.

([02:13](#)):

Okay, let's get into the interview.

Speaker X ([02:20](#)):

Am I even queer?

([02:20](#)):

Because I think I want to take testosterone.

([02:23](#)):

I mean, I'm wearing men's underwear right now.

([02:24](#)):

Is that a boy? Is that a girl?

([02:26](#)):

Man, woman, cisgender, transgender, we're born into language.

([02:30](#)):

Butch, femme, T girl.

([02:31](#)):

Decolonized.

([02:32](#)):

Queer, trans, BIPOC.

([02:32](#)):

Neurodivergent.

([02:33](#)):

Cisgender, hetero, patriarchal, capitalist girl boss.

([02:37](#)):

Queer femme, lipstick every day.

[\(02:39\)](#):

T for T, like [inaudible 00:02:41] boy relationship.

[\(02:41\)](#):

Butch and boyish and spritely.

[\(02:44\)](#):

The softer, more fay.

[\(02:46\)](#):

Oh, but you're so feminine, you're so feminine.

[\(02:48\)](#):

Attraction to a hot T boy.

[\(02:50\)](#):

I used sexuality to try to understand my gender.

[\(02:53\)](#):

What does it look like for non-binary people to "transition?"

[\(02:56\)](#):

I was a boy. If I was looking down at the memory, I was a boy.

[\(03:00\)](#):

It's really difficult to look at gender identity head on.

[\(03:05\)](#):

Wait. I think I'm trans.

Amie [\(03:16\)](#):

I'm Amie Morrison and I am a musician and music educator and a performer, and I am a binary trans woman, and I am 40.

Ira [\(03:31\)](#):

We're talking a lot with people about how they would describe their gender in their own words, even if it's regardless of western binary terms like masculine, feminine, whatever, or if it is that, if you identify with that, whatever words you use to describe your gender.

Amie [\(03:46\)](#):

Wow, I feel like I've never really been asked that exactly, but I do feel like a woman. It is a very western binary way to think about it, but I have been living for 40 years in the United States, and that has left me here.

[\(04:04\)](#):

I went through a period of time in the exploration where I was IDing as non-binary and still using he/him pronouns, and then I was IDing as non-binary, but using she/her pronouns, and then as things kind of just settled more and more for me, I felt more and more comfortable here, and that's where I am.

Ira ([04:28](#)):

I'm really curious about your relationship to both the terms femininity and then masculinity. Let's start with femininity. How do you feel about that term? How do you personally relate to it? What does femininity mean to you?

Amie ([04:42](#)):

The term itself is probably really oppressive and terrible, but for me it's been a term of joy and of something that I've gotten to embrace over time in myself, and something that was always lurking in the shadows. And I remember being a kid and being on the soccer team, and it was technically a co-ed team, but it was all boys. And I had long hair, and there was another kid with long hair, and the refs would always mistake us for girls. Now retroactively, I can say correctly identify me as one, but I remember how much it bothered the other kid and how much it didn't bother me.

([05:28](#)):

And that's when I look back, one of the first clues, was this little signal of femininity that I was giving. And this is the nineties too, and it was before long hair became in vogue again. I feel like in the eighties guys had long hair and then in the aughts guys had long hair, but in the early mid-nineties, I guess, I don't know, it was not in vogue among the kids there, and I do remember that really starkly, that feeling.

Ira ([06:00](#)):

Yeah. So what does femininity feel like to you now, as you are embodying it in whatever way it feels good to you?

Amie ([06:07](#)):

It feels like a weird return home, to a place that I never lived. So living in my body, being comfortable with my body even though it isn't what a lot of people would consider feminine. Recontextualizing the things that I already am, I would say through the lens of perceived femininity is where I'm at now.

Ira ([06:38](#)):

The thing that you said about returning home to a place you've never been before, that's so interesting. I feel like we've talked with people and they end up saying things like, "My gender identity now, the biggest part of it is me trying to get back to who I was at my most pure as a child," or something.

Amie ([06:56](#)):

Yeah, I've heard a lot of people say that too, and it doesn't ring that true for me personally. I was not a kid who was very aware of there being something different there. I did have a pretty happy childhood. One of the things that I focused on a lot when I was coming out, because I didn't transition until I was 37, I would say that I had gender stuff going on in a semi-public way starting at maybe 34. And then at 37 I came out publicly. And one of the things that I focused on in my coming out in the writings that I

was doing about it is that I think that one of the reasons it took me a long time was that masculinity wasn't something that was enforced or policed in my household growing up. I think that if it had been, I think I might've come into conflict with myself earlier, and I didn't.

[\(07:57\)](#):

Because my sister and I were really treated quite the same. There wasn't an idea of boys do this and girls do this. I think my parents were probably on some level reacting to the way they were raised. I remember my mom talking about my uncle crying as a kid, and their mom saying, "Boys don't cry," and stuff like that, and that seemed to have really stuck with her. And I cried a lot as a kid, a lot, and she really made me know that was okay.

[\(08:32\)](#):

My dad is also a very soft person who I think gave me... Well, I mean he's masculine and soft, and I think he gave me a really nuanced idea of what a man is that I think the title of man felt for longer than it does for other trans women like it could still include me, because of the non-toxic versions of it that I was lucky enough to be exposed to as a kid.

Ira [\(09:03\)](#):

Totally, that's really interesting. To dive deeper on that, what do you think your relationship is currently with the term masculinity itself?

Amie [\(09:12\)](#):

Yeah, I feel like I have way more answers for that. I felt a little bit tongue tied about femininity because it feels so new to me, and my relationship with it was shrouded in secrecy even from my own conscious mind, but I had so many years of a relationship with masculinity, and I think that where I came into conflict with it was at school much more than at home.

[\(09:39\)](#):

I wasn't picked on in a serious way or anything, it's just that I think there were things that I didn't realize were weird until I got to school the next day. And I think kids would come over and maybe be surprised that my sister and I had a large amalgamation of toys, including mostly Trolls, ponies and beheaded and head shaved Barbie dolls, all the good stuff. And so I think that that was really my first sense of conflict with self, was getting to school and puberty, there were things that I resisted about puberty.

[\(10:21\)](#):

At the time there was this sense of, oh, I'm a late bloomer, or people were like, "He's a late bloomer. He is resisting growing up, he's having trouble launching." And even into young adulthood, I think that that was an issue for me. I think that looking back I was resisting turning into a man. I think that it worked fine for me to be a boy, because there were many fewer enforced differences the younger you get, or at least hopefully. And as I aged, there was more and more to come into conflict with. It was not that I was resisting adulthood, it was that I was resisting becoming an adult man.

Ira [\(11:09\)](#):

Yeah. So it's not the born this way narrative that so many... I mean, for me too, it was never that for me either. I relate a lot to what you're saying about I was a girl for, what, 19, 20 years of my life, and I identified as that, and then it became apparent that there was a name for this feeling that I was different from other girls, different from all my peers in some way, and that was non-binary.

Amie ([11:37](#)):

Yeah, definitely.

Ira ([11:38](#)):

What does transitioning for you look like, and what has been the best part of that? Difficult parts, choices you've made that have felt good, choices you thought about and then decided not to do, or whatever?

Amie ([11:51](#)):

Yeah, so transitioning for me, I think some of the specific elements of it have to do with being in somewhat stable positions, both in terms of relationship and in terms of work already. So there has not been an opportunity to truly step into a new space where I was not known.

([12:20](#)):

If I could sum up transitioning in one short sentence, it would be I feel unbelievably visible. And it always makes me laugh when trans visibility day comes up, which is extremely important, but I also am just like, well, I feel pretty fucking visible every day. Even related to that, and I'll circle back to those, the fact that I don't pass and that passing is not a reasonable goal for me to have and maintain. Okay, mental health is also something where I feel very visible, and I think I will always be really, really visible.

([13:02](#)):

To talk about all those things, I am in a 16 year relationship with a queer cis woman, and we've been married for 10 years. We had ostensibly what looked like a straight wedding, even though we're both queer. I wore a suit, she wore a dress, and it was great. And I love our wedding and I have great memories of it. And because we lived as a het passing couple for a lot of time, I think that that also led to a lot of our social group being other white straight couples. Not entirely, but that definitely was sort of the world we were in. We met in college, and so I didn't really feel in my transition that I had a super robust queer community to do that in. And I think that we got a lot of, "Are you guys going to break up?"

Ira ([14:07](#)):

Interesting.

Amie ([14:09](#)):

And not from our immediate friends, not from the people who know us really well. I would say from two or three shells beyond our inner orbit, and then from also older adults in our life, I think were very worried about our relationship ending, and that was really not on the table. In fact, I think that when you posed this question initially to me, one of the things you asked I think was, "What has been the best part of transitioning?"

Ira ([14:40](#)):

Yeah, the most rewarding?

Amie ([14:40](#)):

The most rewarding has been the bloom of solidarity in my relationship strengthening in being a woman-woman relationship. And that has been easily the most rewarding part of all of this, and it's been great. It wasn't without its moments of having to rework the privilege dynamics in our relationships, stuff like that. There's always challenges. And being in a relationship for 16 years is not an easy task for anyone, but this has been the best part of our whole relationship.

(15:20):

I feel more optimism and more strength in that now than I ever have, and we've been together since we were really young, so that's been definitely the most rewarding part.

Ira (15:33):

Yeah. That's really sweet. That's making me emotional.

Amie (15:36):

Yeah, me too. Me too. Yeah, she's great, and she's been really watching out for me. And it's just the dynamic really changes, because it changes around who is more vulnerable, who needs to be watched out for and protected the most, and everybody needs to be watched out for by their partner no matter what, but she's really very, very protective, and always thinking about what might happen, and I'm always thinking about what might happen. There's more danger in our life than there was before, but it's good. It feels really good.

(16:12):

And then also at work, I've been teaching in several different organizations ages zero through college for a decade. Those were places where, again, just very, very visible. They knew me with a beard and they knew my old name. There are a few people I work with who don't know my old name, and that's fine, and I don't feel particularly protective of people not knowing it, but I just don't feel that sense of clean break, and I'm not going to in my life. I think that's one of the things about transitioning when you're older, is that I already did move to New York, I already did start semi fresh here as a 26 year old man, ostensibly. So I am always going to be living in the world that I already built, so my history will always be a visible part of who I am to people, I think. Yeah.

Ally (17:14):

Everything you're saying, I'm over here laughing so hard.

Amie (17:17):

Oh, good.

Ally (17:19):

Even just the part where you were like, "I already moved to New York." That's exactly how I felt. I'm like, I live in LA and now I'm transitioning and I can't move to LA.

Amie (17:30):

Right, exactly.

Ally (17:32):

But as someone who has transitioned in my thirties, I am very curious about what did your transition feel like, and were there parts... You've touched on a lot of this, so feel free to omit some of it, but where you're like, wow, this is a specifically I'm transitioning in my thirties issue, or positive thing, and also just your transition timeline or what that looked like for you?

Amie ([17:56](#)):

Yeah, absolutely. There's a lot there. I think that one of the things about transitioning in my thirties is that I have real imposter syndrome about it. There's a lot of feeling of... Well, look, I think we all do this, and I don't want to take away from people who transition when they're young. They're also thinking, is this real? Am I just doing this as a gag or as a reaction to something? Or this or that or this. There's so many ways that we gaslight ourselves about this, and so many little cherry picked moments that we can use to build a case against ourselves that we're not really trans and that this isn't real. I realize that everyone does that. I think it's just I have more history to go off.

([18:46](#)):

You know how they say it's easier to run a governor for president than a senator, because a senator has this 40 year voting record to attack. I feel like I have 40 years of being a dumb asshole to pick at, and so my shame Rolodex is heavy and deep, and there are so many moments that I can go to just be like, you're illegitimate. Go into your room and don't let anyone look at you ever again.

([19:20](#)):

I didn't have that much of a built-in queer community because of who I was, and I think just having been essentially identifying as a straight man for so long, I just hadn't built a serious queer community. And I think that one of the ways I've sought that is in nightlife, which I do alone a lot, and I've made friends that are just from there. And honestly, early transition, so much of my early stuff before I was out, before I really was out even to myself, was that a lot of my femme characterization was happening through dancing and through the way even that I was interacting with people and speaking when out at night, and out at the clubs and everything, and so much of it was built there.

([20:17](#)):

And yet even still, even though I'm a regular at many of these places, and I know many, many people, there's always a new gaggle of young, impossibly tall, beautiful trans women that seem like they just emerged out of a chrysalis, and I have to remember, and my friend reminded me, it's possible that they're intimidated by us too. It's possible that we're all just sitting there feeling like the kid at the shitty lunch table. For trans people, all of this second adolescent stuff that we say about it, it's going to play out in terms of the fun parts of that, and it's also going to play out in terms of the pathos of adolescence and of the heightened feelings of inadequacy and worry about fitting in that I think a lot of people dispense with over the course of their early adulthood as they become more confident.

([21:15](#)):

I don't know. I mean, I know everybody is up their own ass and worried about shit, but I do think that we have this extra thing of importing a middle school dynamic onto our own social scenes, because we're all experiencing this newness and this burgeoning aspect of our sexuality. Everything is there and here we are doing it.

Ally ([21:44](#)):

I was wondering if you could get, maybe as much as you feel like sharing, but really granular about your transition and what you reached for first. How did that feel? I don't know. I am so obsessed with the things everyone's tried on and how that allowed them to keep going and reaching for the next thing.

Amie ([22:04](#)):

Yeah, absolutely. Prepare for this to get more serious than anybody thought it might, because it is impossible for me to really tell the story of my transition without talking about this next thing that I will say, and that I am at this point able to describe with all the detachedness of just talking about something that sucks, like a root canal.

([22:25](#)):

But anyway, so my best friend, we made friends as teenage boys, theoretically, 13 and 15. I was 15. And it was this really dynamic, fast friendship, and we ended up starting a band and making music together for 20 years. Then in 2017, we went on a sort of Euro trip kind of thing with four different cities in about two, two and a half weeks, that included Berlin. So that's a city that challenges everybody's concept of queerness and gender and everything. And we were talking, and she, well, that's spoiling it, but she was wearing this sort of feminine shirt, and we were in Prague at this point. We were getting what I now call the bad eyes just from some big looking dudes just looking at her. Somebody who at this point was presenting as a man, but in this feminine shirt. And I was just like, I think we might have to dress it down a little bit here because we're getting some weird looks in this city, which incidentally, apologies to the good people of Prague, it turned out that that was a couple of Australian tourists who were looking at us.

([23:50](#)):

I said, "I think that we might have to tone down our gendery, hipstery looking Brooklyn type apparel here, especially you. You have these shirts that you've been wearing, and I really like them, but," dah, dah, dah. And she got just way more upset than I really thought that she would. And I was like, "Hey, what's going on?" And I remember that what she said was, "Like anyone, like any guy, I would much rather people see me as a woman and call me she." And I was like, go back, what do you mean like any guy? You feel that way.

([24:32](#)):

And basically over the next hour we unraveled her gender, and that was this starting point for her. And it definitely stirred up something for me, but I think I wasn't even ready to go there yet, and I was also just very focused on her because she was somebody I was already worried about, and she struggled with a lot of mental health stuff, and so I think I made her transition my priority at that time. In terms of our dynamic, in terms of what we were doing, when we came home, she got into therapy at the gay center and started working towards transitioning. We would go out dancing a lot, and it was before she was ready to come out. She was out to me and to my partner, and to some other folks, but not out publicly. So we would go out and I would also femme up my appearance, I think under the guise of, "Yeah, we're just having fun for her to be supportive."

([25:40](#)):

But we found ourselves doing our nails together and getting ready together and all this stuff, and it was after two decades of this really close friendship, that was us having the teen girl friendship that we had always needed and wanted. That I think was part of why our friendship was so intense from an early age, is that this was right there. This was right there the whole time, and it's what pulled us towards

each other. And I came out to her as non-binary, so we were both on this gender journey together, and unfortunately then in what would be the most shattering thing that's ever happened in my life, she killed herself.

[\(26:26\)](#):

And then that was what my life was about for a while, and that definitely stalled me out, I would say, in my transition, because it made me feel the feelings more. It made me feel more dysphoric. It made me feel more yearning to bring the woman out of me. And there was this sense of defiance and wanting to do it for her. At the time, I felt that that had to be really investigated, because I was in such deep trauma and grief and struggling with PTSD from it, and there was a lot going on there that made me not feel ready to do anything more. I was deep in grief. My partner was deep in grief. I mean, they were so close. It was very difficult for us, and we had a lot to navigate just about managing our grief together, and about how much space my grief was taking up, and there was so much to process there, and then I went back to Berlin and to Prague and other places alone to walk in those steps again.

[\(27:42\)](#):

I think that, which was about six months after she died, was the beginning of my healing. I didn't do any sightseeing this time. I was out all night every night partying with queer people in a way that was really healthy and healing for me, and I played with presentation more than ever, and brought a lot of that back and arrived back kind of ready to start really going in on that. I started wearing nail polish to work and more ambiguous clothing to work, and then pandemic hit, and in the summer of 2020 more and more was happening. With everything with June 2020 and just being out in the streets every day, I just think that the rawness of everything that was happening finally blew the doors open for me, and I also took a big break from drinking, which had gotten tough at that time too, and I think that that's a big story for a lot of trans people too. I think that my drinking break really cleared my head and allowed me to be like, okay, it's time to do this.

[\(28:58\)](#):

Then in the summer I came out essentially to just family and a couple of other people, and then by October I was out publicly. So much of it, the timeline has been about the public element of it. No matter what stuff I do, laser, eventual boob job, all of the above, no matter what those are, no matter what milestones those feel like, I think that for me, the biggest ones will always be about who knows and who's taken me in.

[\(29:35\)](#):

When I can feel it click with people that I'm different, because I think that that really takes time. Then the longer people have known you, and a lot of my friends have known me for decades, the longer people have known you, the longer that it takes for that to click with them. I also feel like I had commanded a lot of focus because of Dave dying, and that's not a dead name, she didn't make it far enough to have a new name. So much of the fallout of that, I feel like I was very centered among the people who know me, and then it's like, oh my God, another thing, there's a self-consciousness about that, but here I am doing another thing.

[\(30:23\)](#):

This is something that I'm sure people will identify with. I think that the things that have made people have that click moment are when something shitty happens to me and they see it. If they see me get harassed, or if they see me in the immediate aftermath of something happening, if I tell them about a

friend who was brutally assaulted, people won't necessarily make that flip until they get a dose of the harshness that is just an inextricable part of this.

Ally ([31:04](#)):

Yeah, because I use they/them pronouns, I feel like a lot of people are like, "Oh, sorry." [inaudible 00:31:13] the apologetic and the knee jerk reaction, and it happening over and over again, and I don't think enough cis people have thought about it's about you sitting down with yourself and seeing this person in the new way that they are telling you they exist in. And it's work on your part. It's not a they is plural, and I'm telling you it's singular. I want you to see me in a whole new way. So I could totally see how the idea of threat is enough to wake someone up and be like, wow, you're putting it on the line. I would like to see you that way. But I would love for that to just be more common practice. I mean, professors I feel like are really getting a crash course in that. Educators. It's a lot of kids I feel like transitioning and changing pronouns, and I hear it from a lot of teachers, being like, "It's just so hard," and it's a whole new category that you are able to open up in your mind if you let it.

Amie ([32:14](#)):

Yeah, I work with middle schoolers too, so I tutor kids for their B'not B'nai mitzvahs. B'nai is the plural. It's not perfect because in Hebrew, plural is masculine. It's one of those languages where if you have a thousand women, they get the feminine plural, but if you put one man in it, then it gets the masculine plural, and B'nai is the masculine plural, so it's not a perfect... Some people use B-Mitzvah, a neutral word that is not related, and anyway, because of my identity, I think that the organizations that I work in have definitely recommended me to kids who are unpacking some gender stuff, and that's been really rewarding to see and to help them navigate that. When they are, because of the religion that they happen to be born into, thrust into doing a very public performance, including singing in front of hundreds of people at age 13, which is just such a nightmare when you think about it.

([33:26](#)):

They really do great, and I love working with those kids, even though I personally don't have much of a personal relationship with religion, I don't consider myself religious, but it's a skillset that I have and it's an opportunity for me to work with middle schoolers, and I will take that opportunity. I think middle schoolers are great because now I am one, as we talked about earlier. I think I know better what they're going through than I did five years ago. So I enjoy working with them, and it's wild for me with all the laws that are happening in all these states to think this is exactly the situation that people are trying to outlaw. I am exactly the thing that they're worried about. Is a kid who has the opportunity to meet a trans adult who can help them be comfortable with themselves and have somebody to talk to about it, that's exactly what they're trying to prevent, and it's really heavy recently.

([34:26](#)):

In the past couple months, it's just ramped up so much as we're recording here on May 4th, 2023. It's just the last few months between Florida and Kentucky and Missouri and Tennessee, there has been so much, and between the fact that I play music for babies and their caretakers in little music circles as another gig, that is another scenario. That's like, could a bigot differentiate that from Drag Story Hour? Because they see me as a man in a dress, so it's no different to them.

Ally ([35:01](#)):

Yeah, yeah, totally. They see drag as trans light or something. That's where all the hysterics come in. You said this earlier about feeling like you're taking up so much space, or it's another thing with you, and I do think part of the trans experience is feeling like too much constantly. You're just like, I don't want to be too much. I feel like a lot of my friends who start, maybe they go by she/her, and they're like, "Well, now it's she/they," and they're just incrementally getting up the gusto to ask for they/them because they're like, "I just don't want to be too much. It's a hassle." Blah, blah, blah. And yeah, we're kind of an expansive group. We're really pushing people in that way.

[\(35:47\)](#):

You mentioned how you stopped drinking. Are there ways that you, habits or rituals or something like that, where you find peace or you find ease for yourself, because it can feel very never ending?

Amie [\(36:03\)](#):

Yeah, that's a great question. I mean, part of it is that I do drink again, but I took a break to renegotiate my relationship with alcohol, and I now have different rules for myself around it that I've been able to stick to that wouldn't work for everybody. But for me, drinking was a moderation problem, not an addiction problem. And so for many folks that wouldn't work, and their journeys are different from mine. But my ritual of peace is dancing alone. At the club, but alone. Finding a space to dance by myself in the darkest part of the dance floor. Sometimes I cry. And I'm dancing with my friend, so it's that too.

Ally [\(36:48\)](#):

That's really sweet.

Amie [\(36:50\)](#):

Yeah.

Ira [\(36:51\)](#):

Thank you for talking about that. I didn't expect you to. I'm glad you did.

Amie [\(36:54\)](#):

I wasn't sure if I would, but it's just she's part of me, and I can't-

Ira [\(37:01\)](#):

She's part of all this.

Amie [\(37:02\)](#):

Yeah, exactly. As grief abates, people use the analogy of the grief is always the same size, but the thing around it grows to accommodate it. That has been said in more eloquent ways by people other than me, but as that process happens, it's like the grief and my connection with her become more and more relegated to just a couple of spaces, which is really good.

[\(37:32\)](#):

It's like the tendrils went into every aspect of my life for a long time, I was completely dysfunctional, and it was sabotaging everything in my life for a long time, and now she lives in my transition and she lives in

my art making, because that's what we did. All of the music I made pretty much for 20 years I made with her, and now I just make music that's about her, and I feel like I will always do that because that's where I carry her.

Ira ([38:05](#)):

So I'm so glad Amie was able to be on the show. We've talked about all of this stuff, just her and I, like we said, at 2:00 AM at the club, but she has such a unique story, and I just really love the way she talked about this experience of not having the born this way narrative that so many trans people talk about.

([38:24](#)):

She's a binary trans woman, and I feel like a lot of non-binary folks I know have this experience, but it's this not regretting experiencing childhood the way we did, or not always having known that we were trans. Or for me, it wasn't like from the time I was five years old, I knew I was born in the wrong body, or something like that. It wasn't that narrative for me, or for Amie, for a lot of folks, and I feel like sometimes trans folks feel like we have to use that born this way narrative to get people to respect and understand us, but that is usually not the way it goes.

Ally ([39:02](#)):

It feels very informed by interacting with medicine, the entire medical industrial complex that's like, "So have you always felt like this?" And our response is being like, "Actually, I'll do you one better. I was born this way." Since the dawn time I have been trans.

Ira ([39:23](#)):

Totally. Yeah. No, you feel like you have to prove yourself. Trying to get top surgery especially, there are a lot of clinics that you have to... I am a non-binary person, I do not identify as a man, but I have to go in there acting like I am female to male transitioning in order for them to respect my transition needs and whatever.

Babette ([39:44](#)):

Yeah, and it feels very associated with polarity, binary, and it's like, if that's your experience, that's completely fine, obviously. Very valid. But it seems like it kind of misses that gray area where it's like, I didn't hate being a girl, I didn't hate girlhood, and so I think that is actually the experience of a lot of trans people. I feel like also in my household in particular, there was a lot of leniency in girlhood. It wasn't so rigid. I didn't hate it. I wasn't mad at it.

Ira ([40:17](#)):

Totally. Yeah. I feel like you have talked about this a lot on the podcast before, and especially in the episode with Maya, you both talked about still identifying with Black girlhood and things like that where it's not so binary. The born this way narrative doesn't exactly fit.

Babette ([40:32](#)):

Being not one thing does not mean that you are at the polar opposite of that thing.

Ally ([40:39](#)):

I really like that about the gender expression that we're getting at with a lot of our guests, where it's not a negation, it's actually just wanting an expansion. You're just like, I identify this way, it's not totally fitting, there is more to me. I'm trying to ooze out and have more possibilities, and that doesn't mean the first however many years of your life were a lie.

Ira ([41:07](#)):

Right, exactly. Exactly.

Babette ([41:09](#)):

Totally. Something I'm now thinking about is that it must be so interesting to have a friend that you've done therapy with, and I feel like that would be good, really good for some of my friendships. You know what I mean? It's just like, oh, this is happening with them right now. That's the thing that they're always talking about every week. Just the intimacy. That's kind of interesting. So that seems kind of special and nice.

Ally ([41:33](#)):

My friends who do 12 Step I feel like have that together, because it's like, oh yeah, you have this weekly or biweekly or however many times weekly time that you all get together and you hear each other share and go in deep. I'm like, wow, yeah, of course. Your friendship is so airtight. Well, Ira, thank you so much for hopping in the driver's seat. You did such a good job.

Ira ([42:06](#)):

[inaudible 00:42:04]. Well, thanks for letting me. It was fun.

Ally ([42:09](#)):

Yeah. And I think we have to hear that story about your therapist who-

Babette ([42:16](#)):

Absolutely.

Ally ([42:16](#)):

Went rogue on the internet.

Ira ([42:18](#)):

For sure. Yeah. I'm happy to tell the full story maybe on a different episode.

Ally ([42:25](#)):

Okay, great. Great. Yeah. Well, we'll look forward to that.

Babette ([42:29](#)):

Also, I feel like we've been dancing around the neurodivergent bush for every episode. So last week we were talking about neurodivergence with Devin. Today, these topics of mental health came up. We should just have a conversation about mental health.

Ally ([42:46](#)):

Yeah. And therapy, finding therapy, finding good therapy as a trans person.

Babette ([42:50](#)):

Finding therapy, finding good therapists. What that all means.

Ira ([42:55](#)):

Producing a podcast as three ADHD people.

Ally ([42:56](#)):

Yeah, for sure. We should talk about that.

Babette ([43:02](#)):

Gender Spiral is an original podcast from Audeation. This episode was mixed by Matt Noble, and music is composed by Chanell Crichlow, with art by Joey Han and graphics by Honey Hodges. This show is executive produced by [inaudible 00:43:16], myself, Babette Thomas, my co-host, Ally Beardsley, and Sandy Smallens, with additional story editing from me.

Ira ([43:25](#)):

Thank you so much to our guest, Amie Morrison. You'll find a link to her Instagram in the show notes, as well as a link to her Spotify, where you will find her album, Grief Barbie, which you're listening to right now.

Ally ([43:38](#)):

If you liked the show, please head over to patreon.com/genderspiralpodcast to support us for \$2 a month, or subscribe to a higher tier for bonus content, special monthly postcards, and even free tote bags.

Babette ([43:51](#)):

You can also check us out at genderspiralpod.com, where you'll find a link to leave us a voicemail, to ask us questions, tell us who you want to hear from, and what you want to hear about on the show. And follow us on Instagram. It's [@genderspiral](#). Subscribe wherever you get your podcasts to stay tuned. We're releasing a brand new episode every single week this summer.

Ally ([44:13](#)):

Tune in next week to Gender Spiral.

Babette ([44:14](#)):

Where you never have to spiral alone.

Speaker X ([44:16](#)):

Audiation.

