

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

So Ally, how do you feel about polyamory? I'm getting you back for asking me about do I want kids?

Ally ([00:10](#)):

I think I'm open to it. I feel very new, but I also don't feel super sold on monogamy, so that's also something that I've explored-

Babette ([00:20](#)):

Hell, yeah.

Ally ([00:21](#)):

... and come to realize that it's so much harder.

Babette ([00:25](#)):

So much worse.

Ally ([00:26](#)):

So much harder than you think it's going to be.

Babette ([00:28](#)):

Absolutely.

Ally ([00:30](#)):

What about you?

Babette ([00:31](#)):

I said, in this interview that's coming up, sometimes I feel like a 90-year-old man. I literally feel sometimes in the queer community if polyamory isn't necessarily for you, I feel like a hyper conservative. Do you know what I mean?

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

[inaudible 00:00:46] Charleston Polyamory?

Babette ([00:47](#)):

Not actually. I think a poly relationship anarchy ethos, I like to embody that in my life and friendships in terms of my friendships being just as important as my romantic relationships, so some of my friendships being romantic. The reality is that, and I think this is when I start to sound conservative, I feel most folks who are in their twenties are still very much in the learning phase, and I just feel I've been a couple of people's learning phase as they're figuring their things out. So I definitely have some wounds that I'm working on. I'm not gung ho monogamy whatsoever. I'm not monogamous in my current relationship, but I just think most people don't know how much work it takes. It takes so much work. I just feel most people who are calling themselves poly are not necessarily putting in that work, I would say. Maybe

that's a really bold thing to say, but in theory absolutely love it. In practice, there's just a lot of talks from people out there, regardless of your relationship style is the issue, right?

Ally ([01:55](#)):

That's true. That's true. I feel like I have friends that are like you. Where they're like, "I am on dating apps and I'm monogamous and I feel like I'll never meet another monogamous person." It's just like everyone's poly. It's a really cool prompt and it has helped me do a lot of thinking and deprogramming, and all the reading I've done has been really great and very synergized with the type of things I've been doing in therapy, so I feel happy about that, but I don't have a ton of... I've never been in a non-hierarchical poly relationship or something like that.

Babette ([02:38](#)):

Yeah, I love it in theory. It just takes a shit ton of work that is going to be messy and you're going to be figuring things out and takes time.

Ally ([02:49](#)):

Totally.

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

My boo makes fun of me every time I bring them up in this podcast, but when we were getting together, we're not monogamous, but I think the question was, what kind of non-monogamous, like kiss someone sometimes or you want five other girlfriends?

Ally ([03:04](#)):

Yeah, totally.

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

Which one is it? And they're like, "Kiss someone sometimes." I was like, "Okay, cool. Great. That sounds great."

Ally ([03:13](#)):

We're in dates kind of zone, go on dates with people and have that. I feel like that's really awesome.

Babette ([03:20](#)):

You and your boo are in dates territory.

Ally ([03:22](#)):

Yeah. We're open and that ebbs and flows, it's not a constant thing.

Babette ([03:30](#)):

Totally.

Ally ([03:30](#)):

The relationships started that way and that's really important. I've been in relationships before where it's like, "Hey, let's open this." Then it's kind of hard.

Babette ([03:38](#)):

But we haven't been doing that for the past year. Why would we do that?

Ally ([03:42](#)):

Totally jarring. But it's also taught me a lot about, and I feel like we get into this with our guests today, but bandwidth and being really honest about what you have space for and what's fair and what kind of things you're promising, and being able to really voice what you're capable of doing. I feel I can offer it all mentality that's super wishful thinking. I think it kind of-

Babette ([03:42](#)):

Kind of beautiful though.

Ally ([04:12](#)):

I feel like it goes into a ADHD territory, where it's over promising, under delivery. But it's really helped me rein that in and be more straightforward.

Babette ([04:24](#)):

Amazing. I think all of these things, it's just the intention that you're putting into it and the time that you're putting into it. I feel like our guest today is someone that clearly has been doing the work and has spent so much time and thought and seems almost nearly a decade thinking about these things.

Ally ([04:44](#)):

Totally.

Babette ([04:45](#)):

I'm excited for them to get into it.

Ally ([04:47](#)):

Yeah, let's do it.

Speaker 3 ([04:52](#)):

Am I even queer? I think I want to take testosterone. I mean, I'm wearing men's underwear right now. Is that a boy? Is that a girl? Man, woman, cisgender, transgender, we're born into language. Butch, Femme, T girl. Decolonized. Queer, Trans, bipoc. Neurodivergent. Cisgender, hetero, patriarchal, capitalist, girl boss. Queer Femme, lipstick every day. T for T-Fag boy relationship. Butch. Boyish and spritely. The softer, more fake. Oh, but you're so feminine. You're so feminine. Attraction to a hot T boy. I used sexuality to try to understand my gender. What does it look like for non-binary people to transition? I was a boy. If I was looking down at the memory, I was a boy. It's really difficult to look at gender identity head on. Wait, I think I'm trans.

Vico ([05:50](#)):

Honestly a great question, especially when you're on a strike. I feel like I'm on lockdown 2.0. It's just like who am I outside of this profession?

Ally ([05:59](#)):

Yes. I have been talking to so many people about that. They said it feels like a second pandemic. All my writer and actor friends who've been doing that full time.

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

Yeah, lockdown 2.0 for sure. Yeah, it's interesting, just coming back down and having a sounding board of brainstorm, who am I? What can I share with the world?

Ally ([06:20](#)):

How does this one feel different than Covid for you? Are you dealing with the same themes or do you feel like a similar person?

Vico ([06:28](#)):

I'm very different from when lockdown happened. I feel now I'm in a place where I'm a lot more honest with myself and therefore more honest with everybody around me. I feel during lockdown, I didn't realize how much I was performing constantly and I was constantly on the on switch. I never realized that I was, literally, the on switch was like stuck there. I did not even know there was an off switch. I was so burned out and had no clue whatsoever that when I started to actually click the off switch and actually let myself rest and actually acknowledge all the good and low frequency vibrations that I was not processing, and to actually process them and actually feel in my body, in my spirit, in my mind, in every cell of my being, my humanity. I always joke about I died seven times during lockdown and I have come back. There's always a new death and I feel like there's a death imminent soon and I'm going to come back from another one. Always like, "There's a version of me that's about to die and I see it."

Babette ([07:35](#)):

It's about time to die soon.

Vico ([07:37](#)):

Yeah, there's a death coming up I feel. If it's coming, it's coming. I am currently writing a one person show and it's really put me into doing a lot of shadow work and a lot of acknowledging parts of myself that I am ashamed of and things that I still hold guilt towards, or resentment towards myself. And I am forgiving myself as I write and I am accessing parts of myself that I very much was like, that was fine, and then just keep glossing over. And now I'm just, actually let's look into this. Where does it lie in my body? What does it feel like? Let's process this now that I have capacity for it, really have capacity to hold myself authentically and honestly.

([08:21](#)):

This lockdown 2.0, I'm honestly really welcoming it because it feels like I can finally really go back into looking within without having a thousand other deadlines or a thousand other projects looming. Because unfortunately, once the world started to open up again, a lot of my mindfulness routines

started to wither away. Because I was like, "Okay, I got to wake up again and I got to answer these emails, then I got to film that audition, and then I got to travel there." Then I was like, "Wait, where do I fit in all this?" Now I'm having this second opportunity to be like, "Okay, so when things come up again and when things get busy again, how do I stay grounded? How do I continue to cultivate and foster our relationship with self in a way that is not going to be unsustainable?"

Babette ([09:12](#)):

Totally.

Ally ([09:13](#)):

That's really cool. It sounds like-

Babette ([09:13](#)):

It's so tough.

Ally ([09:15](#)):

It sounds like you've really shed a bunch of skins almost when you're talking about these deaths.

Vico ([09:20](#)):

Mm-hmm.

Ally ([09:21](#)):

What have been some of those dead selves? What did they look like?

Babette ([09:26](#)):

And did any of those reflection rebirths involve gender at all?

Vico ([09:33](#)):

I feel in a way, yes. I feel like I am so loose with who I am, and the more I deconstruct, the more I'm just, everything is so made up and literally I can be anything and express however and really just have fun with the gender fuckery. So in a way, yes. I feel like during covid lockdown, I was with myself the whole time. I live alone, so I was just not needing to go outside and express any kind of way. I was just playing around and I was like, "I wonder what it's like to put on some lipstick and have a mustache on. I wonder what it's like to..." I was doing a lot of just playing around with my expression at home. Then I was like, "There's no need for me to keep this here, I can do this outside too."

([10:23](#)):

So now I'm a bit more playful in general with everything that I do. I'm not adhered to anything. It's all made up, so I just get to have fun with it. I feel like old versions of myself were so... That's something that I still am currently working on, but I'm aware of it now. It's this sense of needing to be perfect. Needing to have this perfect, okay, I did this and I did that and it's all good. And I'm like, "I'm human. I make mistakes." I was so scared of making mistakes. I was so scared of hurting people, which is not saying that I'm hurting everybody now. I am not like, "I'm ready to hurt people." But if I were to hurt somebody, I don't shy away and run away from that. I actually take that as an opportunity to lean in and

be like, "I'm sorry that this happened." And look at myself and be, how can I deepen my connection with this person and repair rather than just be defensive and run away.

[\(11:24\)](#):

Now really, I'm not afraid of conflict. I feel in the past I was so caught up and everything needs to be perfect, that if there was something that was any kind of criticism, it'd be like, "What? No, not me. I can't. No. What? I do everything right." It's like, oh, hold up. There's so much rigidity and there's no space for growth there. Now I'm just, I'm a human being. I am in this world to learn, to experience, to be, and I am so much more caring because of that. And because I am so much more compassionate with myself, I am much more compassionate with everybody else. And if someone also hurts me, I'm not like, "How dare you?" I'm just like, "Hi, where did that come from?" This hurt me and I can voice that and I'm not coming of, "How dare you?"

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

No, it doesn't make me a terrible person. It doesn't make that other person a terrible person, is that we carry a bunch of other stuff from our past and then something came up and it's like, was it a trigger? Was it something that I did or I said that triggered you and then that created a reaction or where did that come from? And coming from a space of curiosity rather than just pushing away and being like, "No, what is that? No, get away." It's more leaning in and being like, "What happened there? Let's talk about it." Then have a collaboration and get to a really juicy, beautiful medium.

Ally [\(12:45\)](#):

Totally not afraid to have an honest interaction with another human. I feel like I had a similar thing with Covid where a lot of my interactions have been really surfacey and really afraid of the gritty humanness. Yeah, that's really cool work. That's really awesome.

Vico [\(12:45\)](#):

Very, very much.

Babette [\(13:05\)](#):

I always like to say, lead with curiosity, not judgment. That's my favorite little phrase, because it's so easy to do that.

Ally [\(13:12\)](#):

Totally.

Babette [\(13:13\)](#):

Allie and Ira both know that I just had a really big friend break up, one of my closest friends. That was really hard. I think what's tough is the other person has to also be down to do that work, to do it, and that's hard. That's really tough.

Vico [\(13:30\)](#):

And good on you for recognizing that and honoring what your needs are in that space, because very much sometimes you have the capacity to invest in that and sometimes honestly no. You can have so much love for that person and still be, I also can love you from afar.

Babette ([13:49](#)):

Thank you. This is not group therapy.

Vico ([13:52](#)):

Listen, I'm here for it. Love therapy.

Babette ([13:58](#)):

Just to back up a little bit, could you please introduce yourself however you'd like?

Vico ([14:03](#)):

Oh my gosh, we jumped in.

Babette ([14:04](#)):

Got right into it. But however you feel comfortable.

Vico ([14:08](#)):

Amazing. What's up? I'm Vico Ortiz. My pronouns are they, them, theirs? [foreign language 00:14:15] I am a Puerto Rican non-binary, gender-fluid queer-do. Dragon lover. Nerd.

Babette ([14:24](#)):

Oh, amazing.

Vico ([14:24](#)):

I love dragons. I don't know what it is about them.

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

That's so freaking sick. Are you into D&D? I don't know much about the world, but Ally does.

Vico ([14:37](#)):

Played a D&D lot when I was in high school. I did a recent campaign two years ago, but with the world being what the world is and how insane my schedule has been looking like, it's hard for me to be consistent with campaigns, so I haven't been able to get on one for a while. But I love me, my dungeons, wink-wink and dragons.

Babette ([15:01](#)):

Dungeons and also dragons.

Ally ([15:02](#)):

And also dragons.

Vico ([15:02](#)):

Also also dragons.

Ally ([15:03](#)):  
And also drag.

Vico ([15:06](#)):  
Hey, absolutely. Also drag. I'm actually doing a drag show this weekend that's called Dungeons and Drag Kings. I am going to be-

Ally ([15:16](#)):  
No way.

Babette ([15:16](#)):  
Oh my God.

Ally ([15:19](#)):  
... an elf that gets possessed by a magical object and then becomes really confident in their dancing skills and decides to tie somebody and to give them a little lap dance, and then-

Babette ([15:30](#)):  
That's so fun.

Vico ([15:32](#)):  
A little BDSM, A little fun, magical realism. I will arrive into the set on a unicorn, so it's just adding all the things.

Ally ([15:33](#)):  
So sick.

Babette ([15:33](#)):  
That's amazing.

Ally ([15:44](#)):  
Wait, so you do drag? You do drag king stuff?

Vico ([15:46](#)):  
I do drag. I'm a drag king. This is the first show I've done live in over a year. I used to do them pretty often, and then my life best changed so much that now I'm just, when can I do drag? Let me do drag. But thankfully this weekend I can do it and I'm very excited, because it's with my drag king fam, my Them Fatale Drag King. I love them and adore them. That's my home. So very stoked.

Ally ([16:13](#)):  
Wow.



Babette ([16:14](#)):

How long have you been doing drag? How'd you first get into it?

Vico ([16:16](#)):

I got into drag because of Them Fatale. It was their first show, I think five years ago. They were doing a fundraiser for the AIDS Lifecycle Foundation. My friend Jaffy texted me and was like, "Yo, you ever done drag king?" And I was like, "What is that a thing?" I know about drag queens, but I had no idea that kings were a thing. But I'm a performer and I was like, "Yeah." Then panicky started Googling, what the hell, what does one do? Couldn't really find a whole lot on drag kings. But I was looking at queens and I was like, I get the gist of it. It's like you impersonate a big person, celebrity, whatever, and then you lip sync and do a little dance. Very basic, this is five years ago. My sets now have become performance art at this point.

Ally ([17:10](#)):

Clearly.

Vico ([17:10](#)):

It's like a little play. I'm like, "I arrive in a unicorn and then I find a magical object and I get possessed and then lab dance, ropes, and..." There's a set that I do where I am a janitor and my mop comes to life, and we start dueting and I fall in love with my mop. I know. Then after having a little diddy with the mop, I get distracted by my spray bottle and then I cheat on my mop with a spray bottle and then I... It's a whole thing and then it's very telenovela, because I use a lot of Spanish clips, both from music and telenovela shows. And the mop hits me in the face and is like, "Estúpida. Estúpida." It's just very dramatic. And hits the spray bottle and then I somehow repair and then we have a three-way of some sort and I spray-

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

Oh my God.

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

I lay down the mop and spray it with the bottle and spray myself with the bottle. It's a whole... Very weird. Anyway, that's how things are now for me. But in that time, five years ago, I was like, I don't know what I'm doing, so I'm just going to impersonate Ricky Martin. I wasn't packing, I wasn't binding. I drew a horrible mustache beard. I attempted to do a Pomp, is that how you... The hair.

Ally ([18:28](#)):

A Pomp or something?

Babette ([18:29](#)):

Pompadour.

Vico ([18:30](#)):

Pompadour, yeah. Pompadour.

Babette ([18:30](#)):

Is that how you say it?

Vico ([18:31](#)):

Yeah. I attempted to do one of those and I opened the performance. I am a performer, so I did have a little choreography, so I wasn't completely just swinging karaoke style, but I also rehearse my karaoke songs because I'm that person. I opened the performance that show, and after the show something happened internally here that I am... I wasn't able to pinpoint just yet what was going on, but I was like, "this is unlocked. This has touched a button somewhere and I don't know yet what it is, but something's going on here and I need to do this again."

([19:07](#)):

Six months later, Them Fatale did their second show and it was eighties themed. Then this time I impersonated Freddie Mercury. Then that one I sat down and watched a bunch of videos of Freddie. I was like mimicking his physical behavior, the mannerisms, everything. I really went deep with choreo and physicality and mouth and the whole nine yards. After that show I was like, okay, I'm noticing something here where I'm really drawn to men that are very comfortable with their femininity and there's something here. Because at that time, I was very much afraid of leaning into my feminine side and drag was what helped me unlock the power of my femininity within a masculine persona.

([20:01](#)):

It was really fascinating to start, "Whoa, what is going on here? This is really cool." Actually, I think it was when I started doing drag that I began to be more open about being non-binary and being gender-fluid. Because I was like, there's something here that it's massaging, scratching my brain in a way that feels really good, and just also my soul. It felt like... I was like, "Wow, this feels very free." Then those were the two where I was impersonating some other people. But then after that I began to create my own character and get really wacky with stuff, and then I started to connect more with my culture as well.

([20:34](#)):

I was looking for songs that were nostalgic to me, that I understood. Because I'm a theater kid, even though I was choosing songs in Spanish and scenes from telenovela's that were in Spanish, I was always putting a show that you can visually understand, even if you don't understand the words that I'm saying. I'm using props, I'm using wacky clownish, a little sprinkle of [inaudible 00:20:57], and a little sprinkle of slapstick. Really wacky stuff while allowing my femininity and my masculinity to just dance and reframe also what they mean to me. I feel in a way what makes me vulnerable is my masculine side and what makes me strong is my feminine side. It could be anything you want it to be. Literally everything is all made up. But we oftentimes gravitate to it being reversed. So I was just, what happens if I start reframing these things and playing with this puzzle piece. Just not really adhering to, this is the way and it stays this way forever.

([21:29](#)):

It's like, "This feels good for today. I wonder if I switch it around a little bit tomorrow. Then what if halfway through the day I want to tweak it again and see where this lands." Even my mom noticed, she saw one on my drag performances and she was like, "You seem a lot more..." She was looking at me because looking at her, I was showing her the video and she was looking at me and looking at me in the video and she was like, "Because when you are not in drag, you seem a lot more closed off. Not necessarily closed off, but just you seem so much more free in your drag performances, you seem like all

of your energy is actually out there." Then when I started to notice that, I was like, what if I start bleeding that into my day-to-day? What if I start allowing myself to just exist in this way anywhere I go? It's been really, really, really cool. Yeah, I guess that's my drag story, gender spiral.

Ally ([22:22](#)):

That's so sick.

Babette ([22:23](#)):

Right. Exactly.

Ally ([22:25](#)):

Yeah, that's really cool. I also, there's something there about not being able to access femininity until you are accessing a feminine masculinity or something. It's a very particular... I remember when I was little, I found there was the first Queer Eye, the first Fab Four made a book and it was a self-help book for men. It was in four chapters, the show. As you know, it's food, cleaning, manicuring, clothes.

Babette ([22:55](#)):

Wow.

Vico ([22:55](#)):

That's amazing.

Ally ([22:56](#)):

I bought this out of Ross while my mom was taking fucking three hours to shop. I was just sitting there being like, "Can we go?"

Vico ([23:04](#)):

Wow, that's a lot of time in Ross.

Ally ([23:04](#)):

I cherished... So much fucking time in Ross. You have no idea how much time I have spent in a Ross. But this book, I was just, this is a masculinity that I am plugged into. A guy with really nice face creams or something. I'm just like, "That's me."

Vico ([23:26](#)):

Yes, yes, yes, yes.

Babette ([23:27](#)):

I love that.

Vico ([23:29](#)):

I know. When we start just being like, we should have access for all of these things. We should care for ourselves in all of these ways. I've had so many talks with my parents and my brother, and I'm so proud of everyone in my family, because honestly, it's a two-way street. We've oftentimes, now that we've deconstructed quite a bit together as a family, I oftentimes sit down with them and I'm just like, "Hey, I just want to recognize you all. I know that I bombard a lot of stuff to you guys all the time, and thank you for wanting to hold space for me. Because I can see them wanting to hold space for me and therefore I want to hold space for them. And because I relate to so many of their own thought processes, I can also sit down and be like, "I know where you're coming from, because I also thought the same. But let me give this a little piece of information that helped me start to unravel that."

[\(24:22\)](#):

Similarly to care and the emotional maturity and all that jazz, or emotional maturity, no, but emotional availability or vulnerability. I remember that one of the things my mom was just... Because women have more of this and then men have more of that, and I'm just, but that's how we've been socialized. If we're all given the same opportunity to access our emotions or access whatever it is, then we all have these capacities. We all are capable of all these things. It's just that we see all these patterns because that's what we grew up with. Start noticing things that you see around your day-to-day that you're like, "Oh, I wonder what it would be like if I have the opportunity to do."

[\(25:05\)](#):

Then she came back to me and she was like, "I noticed that at the gym, my gym coach only gives women 10 reps and to the guys he gives them 15 reps." And she was like, "I'll never get to 15 because he never gives me 15, but I can get to 15 if he were to be..." I was like, "See, it's not because you're weaker than them, it's just you've never been given the opportunity to amp up your reps. If you do 15 and you start doing 15, you're going to do 15, because you're building your body for that." So little things that I'm just, these are things that can be done-

Ally [\(25:38\)](#):

Same with men where it's, "Oh, you're not very good at explaining your feelings," but no one's pushing you to the 15 reps of explaining how you feel.

Vico [\(25:47\)](#):

Correct.

Ally [\(25:47\)](#):

Your guys are taking you out to get a beer and you're just kind like, "Yeah, this sucks." No, no, come on, come on. We can get there. We can get there.

Vico [\(25:58\)](#):

Absolutely. No, literally, even with myself, I remember when I first came out in my sexuality, that was the first coming out, and I'm just like, every day is a new coming out. What's going to happen today? I have no idea.

Babette [\(26:12\)](#):

When was that? How old were you when you first came out?

Vico ([26:15](#)):

My very first coming out was, I want to say I was 21, 22. Then now that I'm analyzing my past with polyamory, I'm also realizing that there were some things also in that coming out that were tied to shame around feelings for multiple people. But I didn't realize that at the time. I was also just like, "oh, I'm having feelings for a girl. Why would I be having feelings for a girl?" Because I was double shaming myself on, "Everyone can be a homosexual, but not me."

Ally ([26:45](#)):

Yeah.

Babette ([26:46](#)):

Right.

Vico ([26:47](#)):

Listen, I grew up really conservatively. If you would've met me at 18, you would've seen a very different Vico. Talking about deaths, I have that 18-year-old... I will be saying this in the one person show, but at 18 my goal was to find another pure cis-heterosexual male to which we could deflower each other on our marriage day.

Babette ([27:13](#)):

Right, of course.

Vico ([27:14](#)):

At age 22, at 23 I want to start having my first kid. Listen, this is intense. Can you imagine, I'm 32 almost, and I'm just, "Oh my gosh." Imagine me already divorced with a child, right? My gosh. Anyway, so I was me at 18. I grew up very much purity culture, which is not great. I've had to deconstruct a lot of that and have felt my good solid amount of shame around it. I'm a big slut now. But definitely, I remember the first time I had intimacy with more than two people and I was like, "Oh my God, I'm a slut." And my roommates were just, "Calm down." My roommates were just like, "You're not a slut." And I was like, "I've been with three people. My body's my temple." Which it is, but-

Ally ([28:02](#)):

But in a different way, in a slutty way.

Vico ([28:05](#)):

In a different way, in a slutty way. Worship me. Too good. How did we get here? Oh, my first coming out was 21. I broke up with the boyfriend that I was with, who I, LOL, lowered my standards because he was not pure. But I feel like I cannot find a pure gentleman in Los Angeles, but it's fine. I shall remain pure. Can you imagine? So intense.

Ally ([28:27](#)):

Yeah. I can. We would've been the same at 18. I was super Christian. I went to Christian college.

Vico ([28:34](#)):

Oh my goodness. Wow, look at us. Look at us now. Oh my God, wow. So at 21, I came out. Then when I came out for the first time, I remember starting to adopt toxic masculinity traits. I was like, "This is what men are, and I must be this." And I was like, "This feels yucky and I hate this, but this is what men should be." And I'm like, "Gross." So I started tapping into that and I was like, "I don't like that. This is kind of nasty. What the fuck."

Ally ([29:05](#)):

What kind of trait was it?

Vico ([29:07](#)):

But I don't feel... I was leaning into the whole, I pay the bills and I open... It was the chivalry of I must be the one that caress for you and provides for you and the family. And I was weirdly... It's the nice guy toxic, if that makes any sense.

Babette ([29:31](#)):

Totally.

Ally ([29:32](#)):

Yeah. Christianity to nice guy toxic lesbian.

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

I was going to say, it seems very still stuck in some of those roles.

Vico ([29:41](#)):

100000%. 100.

Babette ([29:43](#)):

There's a lot of people like that, though. The people who are like, we still have rolls.

Vico ([29:48](#)):

Yeah, exactly. Exactly.

Babette ([29:50](#)):

Some of these rolls.

Vico ([29:51](#)):

100000%. It very much went from one deconstruction to falling into another box, but a flashy sparkly version, but still boxy. It was a fruity one, but it was still another box. Then I was like, "This doesn't feel great. I don't love this." Because I remember very much my first two career relationships I was very gung-ho, and still following a cis-hetero-mono-normativity on those relationships. I very much was, we're gay, but we're going to follow the rules.

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

Right, exactly.

Vico ([30:25](#)):

I was gung-ho on fitting in. Then after that last big relationship that I realized I need to figure some shit out. So I went from that super structure, must follow the rules, to ending that relationship, and talking about spirals, went on a really fun, chaotic spiral of performance. I was totally fine, completely trying to find outside stimulation, and that's when I was actually a slut. I really went from that... I was just, anything, if you bat the eyes at me... I put myself in some really interesting situations where I now am forgiving myself from, I didn't really want to do that, but I still was like, fuck it, whatever. You only live once. Now I'm just, it's okay. You did that. You were struggling. You didn't know.

Ally ([31:23](#)):

The feeling of YOLO to life is long is a really harsh come down.

Babette ([31:29](#)):

Well, it's so hard. Because when I was younger, I was like... Oh my God, I feel like there's a really thin line between me sounding like a 90-year-old man right now. No, because sometimes when I was younger, my fucking whoever is my feminism type of thing. Now, not in a Christian conservative way, but I'm like, "My energy, my flower." No, I'm kidding. It goes for me, my flower is sacred, just to my time and my energy is actually really sacred. But it feels so hard to make critiques on quote-unquote hypersexuality because it feels like such a slippery slope, but I think only you can look back and be like, "That wasn't the best for me."

Ally ([32:15](#)):

Totally.

Vico ([32:15](#)):

Exactly.

Babette ([32:15](#)):

"That wasn't the best for me." And you can't say that about anybody else, because then it [inaudible 00:32:18]-

Ally ([32:18](#)):

Yeah, then it's like a judgment call. I think it's also just whatever you have energy for. If you add a bunch of energy for that, do it. Maybe it wasn't all great, but now protect that energy because 90 years old and bread used to be 5 cents.

Babette ([32:31](#)):

I know, I'm 90 years old. Very much that. That's deeply relatable.

Vico ([32:38](#)):

No, I feel you 100%. Same thing for me now. It's interesting because I also had a phone call with my mom. My mom and I, she's the real one.

Babette ([32:48](#)):

That's amazing.

Vico ([32:49](#)):

We had a really beautiful phone call, because one of my most recent coming outs has been polyamory. I remember when I first told my parents about this, I was like, "Just so you know, might see one partner and you might see another one, and that doesn't mean that I am no longer seeing that one person that you saw first, so you might see quite a big group maybe one day. Not just from coming from me, but my other people will be seeing other people." So I'm just like, "You might see quite a bit of a tribe coming one day."

([33:21](#)):

But in the very beginning, both my parents were kind of just like, "Hmm, interesting. What is this?" Originally, they thought that I was just fucking around and not really being intentional and just quote-unquote looking for permission to be slutty. I'm just, actually I'm now in two really beautiful long-term relationships. I had a convo with my mom the other day, and my mom was like, "I know that you've mentioned a lot about polyamory and you've told me about it, but I decided to look it up myself online, and I googled, what does it mean? And it's really structured and you know how I love structures." And I was like, "Yes, mom." Google [inaudible 00:34:00] is big helper. Communication on point. We are in this. We're building a tribe. We want to do this. It was really cute to have that. But no, she was like, "I thought you were just around." I'm like, "Listen, I was, and I could do that again."

Babette ([34:15](#)):

Totally.

Vico ([34:16](#)):

Totally fine.

Babette ([34:17](#)):

But that's not what you're doing.

Vico ([34:18](#)):

No, and similarly it [inaudible 00:34:19]-

Ally ([34:19](#)):

It's actually way more work.

Vico ([34:22](#)):

It is.

Ally ([34:22](#)):



Absolutely.

Vico ([34:23](#)):

It is. But I mean, similarly, it's really helped me really be honest with what my capacity looks like and really be intentional with my time. Not just with the people that I am romantically and physically involved with, because a lot of my friendships are romantic. A lot of my friendships felt really platonic, romantic. I have a friend of mine who we call it our erotic, platonic friendship. We've never slept together. We've never kissed, we haven't done anything, but every time we're together, it's always just like, "Hey, daddy," and we're just really close to each other.

([34:56](#)):

We just breathe around each other and hug in very sensual ways. But it's about it. But if people see us from afar, it's like, "Are these two about to get it on?" But we never got it on-

Ally ([35:11](#)):

[inaudible 00:35:11] What the fuck.

Vico ([35:10](#)):

Yeah, are they're about to just go down. And we don't, but it just stays there in this really juicy, platonic eroticism, and it's just beautiful and amazing, and I'm obsessed with it. So what you said, Babette, literally it's a lot of that being intentional and knowing your capacity and honoring your time. So very, very much that.

Ally ([35:33](#)):

Did you do reading or what helped inform your view of polyamory or what you've come to love and practice?

Vico ([35:42](#)):

I have read one book. I've listened to many a TikToks and I follow several content creators. I also had a one-on-one meeting with one of the content creators as well before I started to go venture into it.

Ally ([35:59](#)):

Wow.

Vico ([35:59](#)):

As most people who are polyamorous, but I'll speak for myself, my entrance to polyamory was really messy. That former relationship that I had, after that ended, I began a fun little spiral of chaos. It ended because we had opened the relationship after being monogamous for three plus years, and I did not have capacity to be held accountable, hold myself accountable, repair after mistakes. I was just not in a space to really be honest. I was so scared of hurting the other person's feelings. Then we didn't really have clear agreements, so I would do stuff and then she will get upset, and then I'll be like, "Ah." Then I would not say anything. It was just not great.

Ally ([35:59](#)):

Totally.

Vico ([36:48](#)):

No repair was done. A lot of mistakes were made. Also, the first red flag was, I was the one that wanted to open it, and she opened the relationship because she didn't want to lose me, which that should never be.

Ally ([36:59](#)):

Totally. Very classic.

Vico ([37:00](#)):

The reason-

Babette ([37:01](#)):

What's that joke that's, which one of you is poly and which one of you is not happy about it?

Vico ([37:01](#)):

Yeah.

Babette ([37:04](#)):

It's such a trope.

Vico ([37:09](#)):

Very, very much. I remember in one of the discussions that we had, she was like, "You're cheating on me." I remember at the time, I was really defensive and I was like, "Well, you said yes to this. You are agreed upon this." Then looking back, I was able to apologize a few years later, and I take accountability for my actions.

Ally ([37:25](#)):

Yeah, because there is cheating in polyamory. That's another myth that people think about.

Vico ([37:25](#)):

There is 100%.

Ally ([37:25](#)):

Yeah, totally.

Vico ([37:31](#)):

100%. Also, she wasn't enthusiastically consenting to the polyamory thing, so therefore-

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

It wasn't collaborative.

Vico ([37:37](#)):

... everything that I was doing was not collaborative. Correct. I was very much just breaking agreements left and right, crossing boundaries, and just, I need to cut this before it gets worse.

([37:49](#)):

After that chaos spiral, after that relationship, and then the lockdown happened, that was like, "Ooh, you no longer have outside stimulation to avoid your feelings. You have to look inside. You need to see what's going on here." I had realized that I had built this really thick wall around myself that I even closed myself off. I was outside of my own. I had no access to me. So I was like, I need to break down this wall, see who I am, and then start coming out into the world and connect honestly with people. And it took a while.

([38:24](#)):

I've definitely started therapy and a lot of journaling, a lot of meditating, a lot of being mindful about myself and caring for myself. I went from codependency to hyper interdependency and now finding the sweet spot of interdependence. Which I can feel now when I want to be hyper independent, and I'm like, "Okay, wait, where can I lean in?" Or when I'm starting to feel I'm being very codependent and I'm like, "Hold up. What are my boundaries? What's going on here?" I am now in that little dance of that sweet spot of interdependence. When I read my first book, Polysecure-

Ally ([38:59](#)):

Oh, yeah. Classic.

Vico ([39:01](#)):

I was like, "I am ready. I'm so prepared." I knew already my attachment style was avoidant. I was like, "Got it. But I'm working on it." I finished the book and I was like, "I feel secure. I know that I'm avoidant, but I'm ready." Then actually when you get into relationships and that shit starts to come up, you're like, "Oh my God. Oh God. Fuck."

Babette ([39:26](#)):

There's another tweet that's like, "It's so easy to think you're quote-unquote healed when you're in complete isolation." The past two years, I was completely single, versus when you're actually with someone and they're actually coming up against all of your triggers. I literally... My most recent relationship is making me realize... I was like, "I'm a clear communicator. I'm direct, I am so..." Whatever. And my most recent relationship has made me realize I just communicate in vibes. [inaudible 00:39:54] And that's okay.

Vico ([39:57](#)):

Absolutely.

Babette ([39:58](#)):

But it's just so funny, theory versus practice. I feel along those lines, I'm pro-poly. I just feel like poly people should get a driver's license or a certification to show that you've done the work.

Vico ([40:11](#)):

Yeah. Oh my gosh. So real.

Babette ([40:12](#)):

Because I am scared of poly people who have not done that work. That is what I think of nightmare. So I just feel like you should take a quick course-

Ally ([40:18](#)):

Just a quick course.

Babette ([40:19](#)):

Quick certification. You get a license like, "This person has done it." You do a refresh every five to 10 years. I just think that's what the people are talking about.

Ally ([40:19](#)):

Absolutely.

Vico ([40:31](#)):

I'm there with you. As someone who has been a non-practice... I was like, "I'm poly," but I was like, whatever. I'm not really. I was like, "I'm Polly, but I'm emotionally unavailable and I just want to bang right now." I was clear about that. I got to say, I was really clear when I was in my, I call it my transactional period. I was very clear about, this is purely a transaction. If you want to have emotions from me, I do not have them. I'm so sorry. If you think you can save me from that, un-saveable.

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

You cannot.

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

You cannot.

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

Un-saveable at this time.

Vico ([41:04](#)):

Un-saveable at this time. Do not be fooled by the charm. No emotions here whatsoever. Now I'm just emotional, not all the time, but I get down and dirty. If I feel the vulnerability, I'm like, it's coming up. Or if my ego tries to protect my vulnerability, I can call it out and be like, "Hey, in this moment I can feel like I want to deflect from the vulnerability that I was feeling, and I actually wanted to share." I'm now in a very... Lockdown me versus me now, whole different human.

Babette ([41:39](#)):

Yeah, it's a journey for sure.

Vico ([41:41](#)):

But yeah. Definitely having a little license would be nice. I got lucky with the people that I'm dating. There's a part of me that I'm, I don't ever have the same capacity in terms of time with a new person, but let me hold a little bit, because I just feel really beautifully comfortable and at ease with my two dynamics. So this feels good.

Babette ([42:01](#)):

That's amazing.

Vico ([42:02](#)):

The part of me is like, "This feels good. I have time for somebody else." And I'm like, "Let's calm that down. Let's just enjoy this nice cruise control moment of excitement and collaboration. It doesn't mean that it's dull, but it feels good. It feels safe." Let's enjoy this.

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

Totally. Not confusing safe is boring.

Vico ([42:21](#)):

Yeah. Not at all.

Babette ([42:23](#)):

[inaudible 00:42:23].

Vico ([42:22](#)):

Oh my gosh. Yeah.

Babette ([42:28](#)):

Holy shit. That was amazing. I feel like we covered all of Vico's past selves, years and years and generations of selves. I feel like it was particularly amazing to hear about how drag... It's like, no shit, but how drag became a way for them to explore their gender. I feel like that's probably true for a lot of folks, but specifically this thing that seems to come up literally every other episode, which is feminine masculinity.

Ally ([43:01](#)):

Yes.

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

I feel like you also love to talk and think about this.

Ally ([43:04](#)):

Yeah, totally. The kind of soft masculinity, or who are we all drawn to? Oh, it's Freddie Mercury. It's such great info. I feel like drag is such an awesome prompt, even for people who aren't quote-unquote performers. It's just, who would you dress up as? What would you add? What's this heightened version of yourself? And I think that's so awesome.

Babette ([43:28](#)):

Totally.

Ally ([43:29](#)):

The D&D show that I do, we did a season with RuPaul Drag Queens and Bob.

Babette ([43:35](#)):

Really?

Ally ([43:35](#)):

Yes. It's amazing. And my friend Brennan who hosts it, he was talking to the Queens before in the prep session and was like, "What would make you guys most comfortable? I'm just a dude who wears a flannel shirt. Do you want me to dress up? Should I be in drag? What would make you most comfortable?" And then Bob, the drag queen, obviously, Angel on Earth was like, "Well, you just have to find out what's your drag? This is our drag high femme is our drag. What's yours? Is it fantasy? Is it a hyper-masculinity? What is that for you?" He ended up looking like an elf. I don't know. It was really fun to see what he ended up in, and I want to see all of my friends explore what is their drag? What's their heightened self.

Babette ([44:22](#)):

Oh my God. My immediate thought, which was so dark, is like, I'm in drag every day.

Ally ([44:29](#)):

What isn't my drag?

Babette ([44:30](#)):

Exactly.

Ally ([44:30](#)):

Who am I?

Babette ([44:40](#)):

Who am I? Yeah. I think because I dress kind of femme every day, you might expect my drag to be something more masculine, but I think it's honestly what I wear when I go out maybe or something. That's kind of my something else, somebody else, type thing.

Ally ([44:53](#)):

Yeah. Wait, when do you tap into that for yourself? Is it like going out, getting dressed up, or is it like...

Babette ([45:00](#)):

I think getting dressed up and going out. I never just wear a dress [inaudible 00:45:05]. I'll usually wear a dress and a vest, and then some sneakers. I feel like I can't just wear a dress that you just get at a store, I

feel like I have to do something to it and fuck with it a little bit. So to Beyonce, I wore this long mess dress and then this crazy shirt over it and some beaten up Black Air Force Ones, which is a crazy choice. I don't know why that's what I decided to wear to Beyonce. I don't know. That's so interesting. I feel like for someone that hosts a gender podcast, I am not at all enlightened. I am just as repressed. I'm just as repressed as anybody else out there.

Ally ([45:43](#)):

Exactly. That makes us the perfect host. We're just so feverishly hungry and curious. We're like, "What are you up to?"

Babette ([45:52](#)):

Exactly. No, literally, people are telling me things and I'm like, "Please, please tell me-"

Ally ([45:53](#)):

How did you do it?

Babette ([46:01](#)):

Tell me... Exactly. Tell me how to be, tell me who to be. But anyways, that got deep really fast. That's crazy.

([46:12](#)):

Gender Spiral is an original podcast from Ideation. This episode was mixed by Matt Noble, and Music is composed by Chanell Crichlow, with Art by Joey Hahn, and Graphics by Honey Hodges. This show is executive produced by Ireland Meacham, myself, Babette Thomas, my co-host, Ally Beardsley, and Sandy Smallens with additional story editing from me.

Ally ([46:34](#)):

Thank you so much to our guest, Vico Ortiz. Their Instagram is linked in the show notes. If you like the show, please head over to [patreon.com/genderspiralpodcast](https://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 ([46:53](#)):

You can also check us out at [genderspiralpod.com](https://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 podcast to stay tuned. We're releasing a brand new episode every single week this summer.

Ally ([47:15](#)):

Tune in next week to Gender Spiral.

Babette ([47:17](#)):

Where you never have to spiral alone.

([47:25](#)):

Okay slay.

Ally ([47:27](#)):

We love.

Babette ([47:28](#)):

Slay the day away. Vacsty sings too. It's so funny. Wait, Vacsty. Fuck it up. Fuck it up. Fuck it up. Yeah. What? Yeah. Yeah. Yep. Yep. What? What? What? Yeah.

Ally ([47:51](#)):

I'm screaming.

Babette ([47:52](#)):

When I realized he could do that I was like, "You're my son." The reason I said, fuck it up to him, he just started backing. I was like, "Yes, that's my baby." Fuck it up. Fuck it up.

Ally ([48:08](#)):

Oh my God. Oh my God.

Babette ([48:11](#)):

That's how I knew he was a fag, is what [inaudible 00:48:13].

Ally ([48:12](#)):

Yeah, exactly. Oh my God, the queer duo.

Babette ([48:15](#)):

Like your little son.

Speaker 3 ([48:15](#)):

Audiation.