

NEW YORK CITY TRANS ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

SAJE LIESE

Interviewer: Tyler M.

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Location of Interview: Saje's office in midtown, New York City

Transcribed by Danny Garcia

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Tyler M: Hello, my name is Tyler M, and I'll be having conversation with Saje Liese for the New York City Trans Oral History Project, in collaboration with the New York Public Library's Community Oral History Project. This is an oral history project centered on the experiences of trans identifying people. It is May 17th, 2018, and this is being recorded at Saje's office in midtown. So Saje, why don't you start by telling me a little bit about your gender, and how you would describe it.

Saje Liese: My gender is, I would say trans lady is how I generally describe it. I am a lady. I have a very weird relationship with the term woman. I am trans, which is in relation to gender in some way shape or form. Ah, transgender um, and yeah there's kind of, there is a part of me that might be non-binary, I don't know. But, for the most part trans lady seems to fit will.

Tyler M: And what pronouns do you use?

Liese: She/ her, for now, but generally.

Tyler M: And, when and where were you born?

Liese: I was born in Kingston, Pennsylvania ah, in 1983, um, a rural sort of rural town just outside of Scranton.

Tyler M: How was that like growing up?

Liese: Ah, I grew up on Long Island so, my folks moved when I was five months old um, divorced soon thereafter, remarried soon thereafter. And so I grew up on Long Island with ah four parents. Loving in their own way. Definitely, you know took care of the necessities, and tried their hardest in terms of being able to take care of me. Shelter, food all that stuff was assumed. And it was, for me it was a challenging childhood. I was always very different than what people expected me to be. And people responded to that sometimes fine and sometimes not so fine. And in the end, but not in the end, I also had a lot really good friends, very close friends. And so I would so those people shaped my childhood, and adolescent years more than anyone. Um, whereas my parents were always sort of and my family was always sort of an obstacle. I say that we're often a product of our environment or a reaction to. I was definitely a reaction to Long Island. And I remember being unhappy a lot. I remember being grounded a lot. Ah, my grades in some way shape or form were you know always suffering because I was lazy. I found school to be pointless, or at least the wanting to get grades to be pointless. But smart enough to kind of get through it. And eventually I tried enough to not get grounded anymore. Played a lot of Dungeon and Dragons. Um, went out bike riding and found abandoned houses, and created our own imaginary religion out of things we would see in abandoned houses. And you know made friends. Friends for life. Friends that I have to this day. You know it was contiguous with parents. But that's kind of the way with it right. Yeah that's kind of my childhood, in a nutshell.

Tyler M: Want to talk a little about your friends?

Liese: Sure um, so I say I had three best friends growing up: H, Chris, and Mosner. And they were all. I have known H since I was three, um, Mosner since I was five, and Chris since I was ten. H we met in nursery school at the local Long Island Y. And we've been and we've sort of influenced how the other person developed, and we grew up with each other since we were three. So like, when it comes the core of the person we're exceedingly similar. Um, in are and it's kind of hilarious. And yeah like we grew up doing a lot of sort of things a lot different things together including what eventually became D and D. Ended up living with him my last year of college, ah and yeah and what is now his wife. I am godmother to his child. And, you know I was the best man at his wedding. And so yeah. Ah, and then Mosner we had sort of a contiguous relationship. Ah, we got into many fights in elementary and middle school. In then high school we sort of bonded and with all of them it's sort of remained that way sense. Like it was always that bond that lasted through college, and after we still talk and see each other at least, and not as often as before. But, like it used to be at least once a year. Um, we would see each other, now it's a little bit less. And then Chris came up to me the first day of fifth grade and said hey do you want to play this game called Dungeons and Dragons? And, I said I don't know what that is. He gave me a brief explanation, Can I be a wizard? Yes, I would play your game and we played Dungeons and Dragons every day at lunch all through middle school and every other opportunity we got. Um, that was a very formative part of my growing up. I kind of calmed down at the result that I was. As a kid I was very emotional and it would be very quick to make me very angry, and very quick to get me to see red I guess. I would just blast off, and try to do terrible things to people. I wasn't very effective at it. So it wasn't really that bad. But I tried a few times I bit people. That wasn't good. But, eventually I learned to control it. Um, mostly getting rid of my emotions. Um and ah, and, in part through the influences of friends. H, Chris, and Mosner being the most prominent of that. Ah, Chris and I say that we traded, ah, he got a little bit more um, chaotic and I got a little more lawful. As it was D and D terms. (Long pause)

Tyler M: Can you tell me about an early encounter you've had with the trans community?

Liese: Huh, yes, Kay. So, this just came up the other night actually, last night in fact. So three years ago I went to go see the Moon Show. And maybe it was two years ago. One of those amounts of years, [Giggle] I went to go see the Moon Show. And which was a show that was um trans um, promoting queer, trans, people of color, ah marginalized communities in ah and all of the art that we produce. So a friend of mine Sam, was reading poetry at the Moon Show and I wanted to go support her. Um, which is before I knew. I considered myself fluid at the time. And but it was sort of, I felt kind of fake in that identity. So we went out and we ah sorry. Moon Show happened and we went out with a bunch of her friends. And that evening um, you know we were having dinner that night much later dinner at this point. And someone gives, has heels. They wind up on my feet walking along in them and everyone is like why do you know how to walk in heels? And, I'm like well it's a funny story about that I've been walking in heels since I was three years at that point. Just beause, I bought a pair of heels and would walk around with them alone in my whatever, in my house. And I when I go out I've walked in heels a few times. It's kind of fun. I think at that point I'm gender fluid or something, so people didn't start telling me they're coming out stories, their realization stories. What in their head how they realized they were trans, cause

at no point did I equivocate in my own head that gender fluid was trans that was just, I was gender fluid. It's fine, I am figuring this out. And so one person in particular, Ashley ah, who was Sam's girlfriend at the time told her like this sort of I can't even remember the story. But, I can't remember the story. But, I remember being like that's me, that's me. I have those feelings. That is exactly, that is exactly all the things in my head. I'm like oh, and there was like and oh fuck moment. I would like to say that there was a giant crack in my egg. Ah, and and and, that was a very interesting evening. And and as a partner you know as I touched the NYC trans community, or they touched me. But you know it cracked.

Tyler M: When did you first ah feel a sense of identity with New York City?

Liese: Always. So I grew up on Long Island which is not far out from New York. You know I grew up 45 minutes outside the city. And when I was growing up I always said that I'm getting away from the city I'm going to go live in the country and and but, if I were ever to live in the city, I don't think I ever will, but if I ever live in the city it has to be New York. Because, there is no other city that I can live in. [Giggle] Like this is like the city. [Giggle] And so after living about ten years in the country. Ah, I realized that I can't live in the country, this is just driving me nuts. And so I you know I held true to well if I'm going to move to the city, I'm going to move to New York. And so I did. Ah, and, and it's been home ever sense. You know my family is not far. My friends and community are all here. And, it is like I spend like ten years from the area but like in my blood I'm a New Yorker true and blue. I may not have been born here but it's like every time I have an attitude or a thing something comes out of my mouth people are like oh yeah New York. So well yeah fuck you, true. [Giggle]

Tyler M: Can you ah, describe a moment or ah, a memory you have that really reminds you of New York?

Liese: Moment or memory that reminds me of New York.

Tyler M: Or kind of solidifies what New York is to you?

Liese: Huh. (Long pause) New York is a lot of different worlds. And there is a lot different people. And each person has their own world. Um, the way I like to describe. People often are like New York is so big and massive and how can you do anything, it's crazy and there's so many people doing so many things and it's so fast paced. And I'm like well if you want it to be, yes. The thing about New York is the key thing that is, that always inspires me about New York is that it is many different worlds, and you have to find your, the one world you fit into, or 14 worlds that you fit into. And you find your communities and make your communities here because there's thousands of them, and thousands of different worlds. In San Francisco you have the tech community, that's what, San Francisco has you know, that is what they do. They are tech. New York has a tech community, but, we also have you know almost, a large tech family. We have a marketing family. We have you know Broadway. We have finance. We have a thousand other things that are more important than all of those. But, and and so while I've been here. I've been in 3, 4, 5, 6 different communities, different worlds and they fit me where I have been at the

time. And, and as I have gone through my transition, I have gone through, me as a person has evolved I have kind of drifted from all these communities one and to the other. And, I haven't had to remove my physical location. I haven't had to move jobs. I haven't had to move anything. Just choose which world and community I'm spending time with to do the things that they're doing. Because New York can fit all of it. And, that is wonderous.

Tyler M: So why don't you tell me a bit about the communities that you have been a part of, or are a part of?

Liese: Sure. So when I started, I joined ah, some of the board game group, there's a board game group in the west village called Neak, New York Geek. Um, that is where I met my current partner. And, and there was also a Reddit meet up ah, community I was a part of for a while, um from those I drifted into the burner scene. Um, folks who associate and go to burning nan. You know it's sort of ah, raves and intoxicants of various sorts. [Giggle] And ah, also the queer community. Um, which is becoming, more a part of my life, I think. Um, With with touches to I think ah, the local DSA um, as well. And, I am sure there's others but, those have been sort of the main focuses as where I have been able to spend my focus my time and energy so and so forth.

Tyler M: What does the burner scene signify to you?

Liese: A lot, the burner scene is how I was able to explore gender. Um, the burner scene was able um, so, the burner scene, there's ravey things. Right there's places where people go raves that happen, not in frequently. Where you can go and you get dressed up in a very fabulous way. Whatever that way is up to you. If you look fabulous, people will appreciate it. And, so I got to explore all sorts of different presentations, and make up, and fun things. And, people were like wow that's fabulous. And people appreciated that like they had no idea I was doing that to explore gender. They were like you're pretty, you're amazing, or whatever. And it was great. And you know in those places, you know you'd have a rave and cuddle puddles, various intoxicants, that made everything feel real great. And, it was real nice. But it was a way to try to figure your things out. And it was and I found ah ah a group within that who were safe and who were protective. The kittens of chaos. [Giggle] And who even within that scene were very um, a safe space for me to figure this stuff out, and who were trying to figure this stuff out. Um, in in sort of adjacent to both of the burner communities, the kink community, and the poly community. Which was sort of loosely associated ah, with them. Ah, although they're separate, there's just a lot of overlap of the people who go into that and that was true for me as well. Um, cause I completely forgot about those until right now. [Giggle] Yeah.

Tyler M: So, how about the kink community, how was that influenced you?

Liese: Ah, Kink and burner influenced me in two ways. Kink also allowed me more to be more expressive with gender things, because, I could be all sexy and femme, and walk in heels as often as I wanted while I was there. Both also were pretty prominent in the way it developed in terms of the way my brain in terms of consent. And it sort of both helped detoxify my brain. Um, there was a lot of bullshit that I bought into. Like male socialized bullshit of this just, what is a man,

what is a, ah, what does that mean for me. What do I have to act like in order to be that person. And, both those scenes started to help make me realize that I don't want to be this thing that I thought I should be. Um, it helped me ah, reimagine um, you know that, the things that I feel, and the person that I am don't necessarily have to collide. And so it just took a few years to you know that's still a process right. Like, I'm still a detoxifying my mind. I'm still like oh ew, stuff out! Um, that I bought into for decades. I didn't realize I did. I didn't want to, but I did. And so, consent was a big component of that. You know, I'm learning the nuances of consent. Sort of help me understand. Just, gave me a clear defined terminology and verbiage to things I already knew. I just couldn't out into words. Ah, in addition to putting me you know to wear booty shorts, really important booty shorts.

Tyler M: Everyone loves booty shorts.

Liese: Yeah. [Giggle] (Long pause)

Tyler M: So you mentioned that you met your partner at Neak, so why don't you tell me a bit about your partner.

Liese: Ah, so my partner is Desi. Ah, they are amazing and wonderful, and patient, and kind, and ridiculously honest. And ridiculous. [Giggle] I met Desi at Neak three years ago. Ah, we were playing a board game. And, we started going out to lunch because, we were close to each other. Desi asked me out and I was like, well alright step back. Before that I was dating a lady named Nicky, ah, dated Nicky for ten months, than she broke up with me. Um, which broke my heart. Like, like I was a puddled mess after Nicky um, and I really didn't know how to process those emotions. But, it was the first time in my life that I truly cried a lot. So I felt a lot emotions. And, I think it was the first time in my life I allowed myself to feel those emotions. Um, Nicky was also the first person I came out to. I didn't know what I was coming out to her as but Nicky identified as a lesbian. But she was, we hooked up one night, we both found each other attractive so we dated for a little while. And, Nicky, and I think because, she identified as lesbian and she identified strongly with that component of herself. I felt comfortable well I like wearing lady clothes how do you feel about that with sexy times. How do you feel about that. And, she was like fuck yeah. And so it was, and that acceptance, and so we started doing kink things. And, so that both of those being accepting to both of those things. Um, when Desi asked me out, well I like kink things and I don't you would be into that. So I don't really want to lead you on if and that thing. And, Desi was like well like tell me about kink things. (Giggled). And, I was like wow okay, kink things. And Des is like that sounds fascinating, you should show me all of that. Huh, well and then I think I set it up so we went out to a movie. I fraised it on a way that there would be a lot of people, it was only us. We ended up going to Central Park and we kissed. I think I was, and, we it was cute we dated for a few months. I broke up with them, ah, and, she was real pissed. And, so as we were walking and so we were walking back sitting down at the edge of the stoop of my apartment. And, he looks at me says well, I mean breaking up fair enough but can we still have sex? And, I was like yeah, sure sure, I mean yeah maybe maybe. And, two weeks later I was like yeah sure. And, so we hooked up for a while. Eventually that stopped and figured the relationship would be over, I would never see them again and we became best friends. Eventually we started

having sex again. Eventually developed feelings. And, we started dating again. And, we've been dating since December of last year, the year before last, shit of 2016. And through the entirety of that, um, in whatever component I have been in terms of presenting them or what not they have been accepting, of um, and, encouraging and, all of the things. I don't think I would be where I am today ah, without that support. Yeah and in so you know it's amazing and kind of cool.

Tyler M: What's it like being in a relationship with someone who also isn't cis?

Liese: Um, wonderful, ah, when we started dating, we started dating basically around the same time I decided I was trans. Um, maybe a little bit after. They They were there for all of the discussions. You know and they were there able to help me kind of figure out and vice versa, as they were figuring out their own gender, which is gender fluid. Same deal, like I was able to to be like yeah, that feeling I know what that is in a slightly different way. But yes, there are these fundamental things we are able to understand. That all trans people are able to fundamentally understand. Ah, you know when your body feels really wrong, Ah ah when you're being misgendered. Just how wrong it feels. And how frustrating it is to have it. And um or when it's something that is deceptively inane. Ah. (Long pause) Be really important in having that intrinsic empathy. It's, incredible um, in addition to the normal relationship support. It's it's sort of a, I feel like it's a deeper level of understanding but, I have a very poor basis of comparison. Um, (Long pause) But. (Long pause) Yeah. (Long pause) So, we get to compare and contrast what it's like. What is my brain on E versus my brain on T. What is my brain on E versus my brain on T. Like like all these things sort of um, you get to sort of compare notes. You know, I was socialized this way. I was socialized this way. That's because you know you get to really dive into these really weird nuances of thew where your brain was, versus your brain now. Versus the reality of the world, and, the world telling us we're on thing. Both of us individually knew like fuck you, and, and also to each other fuck you, yes please. [Giggle]

Tyler M: Ah, how about we just pause for a little bit.

Liese: Ah yeah. And yeah and now I just want a queer communist utopia and that would be glorious. Um. Yeah, so yeah.

Tyler M: So can you tell me a bit about the work that you do in the DSA and the Queer Caucus in particular?

Liese: I work, I don't do that much honestly. I do, you kind of choose your level of involvement. But, I have helped with some sort of organizing type stuff in the Queer Caucus in it's foundation. And sort of um, and, then within the grievance community. Which is a building a grievance process for the DSA. Um, the people who take issue with certain people. A process by which those grievances can be readjust, and, ideally people can get on a little better. People can do shitty things. Some people just do less shitty things, and need someone to talk to a need to be removed ah, because they make it not a safe place. And, there's a lot of opinions surrounding how that works. And so a lot of people in power and a lot of and are used to being in power and people who are used to having, whatever system is in work for them. Are always very, don't like

grievance processes because they can't be as well protected when they fuck up. Um, it's funny when you look at a grievance process. Is this going to help me or am I afraid of being targeted by it. And, if you're afraid of being targeted by it than perhaps you should do some thinking. Um, rather than ah, feeling better with it being implied.

Tyler M: And what's that like being one of the arbiters of?

Liese: Ah, so not like, right now we're designing the process. We haven't actually implemented it yet. And, it's just at this point more conceptual. I'll let you know when it happens. Yeah. (Long pause)

Tyler M: So, what is it like being involved in activist work with your partner, or alongside your partner?

Liese: Umm, it's nice because we can support each other. And, a lot a lot of team sort of stuff. Especially when me and my partner tend to balance each other out. Um, they were really organized. They were really ah, um, sort of matter of fact, straight forward, and keeping in touch with people. I tend to be more gregarious, more put going, more louder. You know ah. I tend to be able to talk to people easier. And so I'll talk to people easier and I'll keep that connection between the two of us. Um, it also means it's a little bit less stress for each other. Because, we can rely on each other because we can utilize each other, and that happens. Um, (Pause) except when we disagree. Which isn't often, but you know.

Tyler M: Can you tell me a little bit about your friends and family post coming out?

Liese: Complicated. I got really lucky in that both my friends and my family. They have at least said they're supportive. Like, they might not know how to support me or how that might mean. It's in theory supportive to whatever it is that I'm doing with myself and my gender. Um, my three best friends all were like yeah, H was like sure okay go nuts I don't care. You'll be a godmother now deal with it, I have decided this for you. I was like thanks. Um, hell he even offered like to come down and help take care of me after surgery. Like, I have no idea how to respond to that. Um. One of my best friends voted for Trump. And, was like I don't how to respond, he he he didn't like know how to respond to it. I was like listen you're you, whatever, so and so I've got nothing but support. My parents were confused, um, my mom and stepdad were mostly supportive. Um, they have had moments when they've been weird taken moments to adjust. But are otherwise fine. My father is the same taking him a while to adjust, but otherwise he's fine. Um, my stepmother has responded poorly. In only as much as ah, she there is an etiquette in trans culture that when someone fucks up your name or your pronouns, you correct them. Doesn't matter who, what, where, why. That is a thing that is done. And she took issue with it at some point, toward the beginning. And and the way that it happened she wasn't terribly happy with it. And so it's put a strain on things. Like, it sort of escalated and put a strain on things. Because, being able to communicate with her has been very hard because in trying to communicate with her the first time. There was a notion put forth to me that I should be thankful I am not getting kicked out. I should be thankful she's accepting of. Where in my mind that is the

bare minimum. You know well I am truly thankful for all the people in my life that are accepting. Um, if anyone wasn't they would be cut out of my life completely from now into eternity. Like, in coming out that was my mind. Here are my minimums. Here is my bare minimum and if you don't like it get out. I have had to do that a few times. But not enough, but not where it's a thing. But, in coming out. I was privileged enough to be in a position enough where I could. I wasn't financially dependent on anyone. Ah, wasn't emotionally, I had my support networks that were outside of my family in particular, and my friends, the one's I had I knew would be really supportive. They were all like New York City liberal folk. Yeah, and so, so I knew going in with my family that whatever my minimum requirement was, there was a chance that I would lose those people in my life forever maybe for some time. Um, whatever that might be and, I had to be okay with that. And I was and um, and so and my stepmother has put a strain on that. Not so much that I'm going to cut her out at any point, but, she just doesn't seem to understand acceptable methods of communication. And, certain things you don't say, you don't. I'll be thankful for people, but, not for doing the bare minimum. I'll be thankful for people because, they'll be supportive and wonderful.

Tyler M: And, how has coming out been in your office?

Liese: Great. I work for a small IT consulting company in mid-town. Um owned by a dude, ah um, basically is an absolute ruler of the company, or would be if he was not so chill. [Giggle] And, basically like, like there was no official way to do it. We didn't have HR and, so I kind of knew that people and through the people in the company that I knew and were friendly with and friends with I was able to talk to the owner. And or or have trusted, trusted colleagues to speak to the owner on my behalf. In order, like I was able to gage the situation and and gage feedback for how it would be received first. And I was lucky enough to have a position in the company where I am very valued. Like I'm an engineer. I do really good work. I make the company lots of money, for my skillset and my services. And, I've been doing in this company for a bunch of years now. So people like me, and are really okay with having that um, job security, sort of job security. That's a bad way to put it. A job um. I'm good at what I do period. Like, in New York in particular if you're good at what you do people don't seem to give a shit. Um, which is unfortunate with a lot of assholes. But, for me it worked to my advantage, because, I'm not an asshole. So it worked out. And um the owner was like I support you 110%. You know we went out to lunch, drinks. I support you a 110%. I don't know, I don't know any trans people. There is going to be some mistakes. I hope you're going to be patient with that. I was like yeah sure ask your questions. And, I got questions that were asked. Some of them were inappropriate. And most of them weren't. The ones that were inappropriate. First that's an inappropriate question. Don't don't generally ask that. But, here's here's the deal. And, and it worked out. I was given control of my own narrative in coming out. Um, they we we have an announced HR company as a whole. So they consulted that outsourced HR company to sort of be able to develop policies and procedures around it. And then I sent an email. I sent an email out to company. In that email had an FAQ in there. It was like life changes in blah blah blah. And And lots of links to resources that other people can look at. And, it took a little while for people to adjust. Most of the people in my company do not know any other trans people. Everybody was accepting. Um, the people I was worried about totally accepting. And it was good, it was surprising. It was, the first week was just, I put so much stress

on myself that I get depressed. Just cause I was so I put so much worry and anxiety, I got really sad about it. But, I was real nervous in terms of clothing. Ah, I wore a wig for a little while. Because, I had no idea what to do. Wigs are dumb wigs are stupid. Um, that's not true. For me they're stupid. For other people they're great. But and yeah and so and then apparently that letter is now in a show. Like somebody, I get interviewed by someone doing interviews for women in tech and they used my coming out letter part of their their show. Which it was really adorable and wonderful. And then I met the actress who was playing me in the show. Cause they have this sort of they have all these people reading from all these things. And it's a trans actor and and like they were just like sort of. Because, they listened to my interview and then they get to meet me they get like freaked out! And, yeah that's what happened. Ah, and and, that was kind of wealthy as well. And, in the end now knowing like I've gone to client sites. I have gotten mis-gendered at client sites. And, when I first came out it was hard to correct people. And now I'm rather ruthless about it. But nobody needs correcting anymore. So, that's real nice. I think like people screw up once in a blue moon. And if they screw up they always realize, so whatever. Work is now work again. It's, I'm overworked, I get paid decently enough, I'm lucky enough to be in that position. They still like me apparently and ah yeah. Work hmm. (Long pause)

Tyler M: So what has your experience been with access to medical transition?

Liese: Lucky. I have good insurance. My company has an HR company that has negotiated benefits on behalf of 200,000 people. So the benefits here are actually really good. I have several plans to choose from. And, they cover, I haven't had an issue. And, now I have made an appointment at Colin Lord, a local, one of NYC's premier LGBTQ, by premier I mean one of the only LGBTQ clinics in New York City. Um, in so they focus on LGBTQ folk. And, so I got an appointment. And, six weeks later they were like blood work. And two weeks later they were like here are some hormones. You sure you want to do this, alright. And, like, it's been frustrating in so much that if an appointment gets cancelled, I can't make another one for another 6 weeks because they're all overbooked. They're all way overbooked. But it's also um, so I'm even lucky because my doctor quit a month before I started. And, so I got transferred to the midtown clinic. So instead of the Bronx clinic. Um, jealous I know. And now so my doctor's office is now 10 to 15 blocks away from my office, holy crap. And then, so the surgical center I'm going to in Mount Sinai is another is also 10 blocks from my office right in midtown. So, like I'm really lucky that the resources that I need to find my medical care, are within a 15 minute walk from my office. Um, (Long pause) and most and it is covered by my insurance. There's hoops to jump through, but, like, my my my monthly estrogen gets covered by my insurance, my PCP, my bloodwork. So, like, I got. In terms of trans things, I hit the jackpot. Yeah, because, it's been pretty decent. Um, the worse that I got is, an appointment, I missed an appointment and they couldn't reschedule until 6 weeks and then they cancelled the appointment, and didn't tell me until I walked in. And then, I couldn't reschedule the appointment until another 7 weeks. But, I'm also lucky, so that, that I'm pretty hardy. I have a pretty hard constitution. And, so my body has responded pretty well to hormones. You know so I don't have any issues. So, privilege and luck. (Long pause)

Tyler M: What aspects or spaces of the New York City trans community that you really like, or surround yourself with?

Liese: People. I have surrounded myself with people, trans people to be particular, queer people less so. I have found within the last year. My primary association has gone from the burner scene to, to queer folk. Mostly queer burners. Or people associated with a foot in each world. Um, there's like the LGBTQ center in Manhattan and that one seems real fancy. But I haven't. There's not a whole lot to do there in terms of trans folk. Um, there is a trans support group ran by friend Robin. Um, who I met at a festival at a burner festival last year. Um, that has been really helpful. Um, the good stuff girls. And, um, that has been a big part of of helping me deal with the world. And just finding more, it's funny the longer I've been out the longer I exist in the world as a trans lady. The more queer people who enter my life and stay there. And at some point you need to prioritize the people that are in your life. No, that's not true, like it's not about priority it's about it happens right. And so yeah. And so now the most of the spaces I go to are queer spaces. And, that's not always true but, I find myself more attractive to them more. (Long pause)

Tyler M: If there's one thing you would like the world to know. One thing you would like to say?

Liese: (Long pause) There is no one right way. Everyone has so many different ways to live in this world, and whatever works for you, might work for other people, might not. But, understanding that what does work for you, may not work for other people. And, accepting that as an okay thing, our our world is structured in such a way that there is a right way, and a wrong way. And, our world is designed to support the right way, you know. This world was designed to support for a long time one man and one woman in a marriage, um and now it is designed to support on person and one person in a marriage. But who says that's the right way, you know what, it's hard to find happiness. Like, and, we're all trying to chase happiness for ourselves, and the people we care about and if people find that happiness as long that it does not impede the happiness of others, let them. In perhaps, in something that you're doing is impeding the happiness of others. It's okay to change. It's okay to admit when you're wrong. God knows I've been wrong more often than not. We'll get there somehow.

Tyler M: Thank you so much Saje.

Liese: Thank you.