

LGBTea Podcast Transcription -- TRUTH Podcast Library

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This podcast aired on November 15, 2019

Transcript

(Hanzo) Good morning or good evening, wherever you are. This is the truth for diversity podcasts. For the TRUTH Council. My name is Hanzo. I'm from Minnesota. My pronouns are he and him. I am Native American and Asian. And yeah, I'm from the Midwest. So there's not much there.

(Micah) My name is Micah, I use they/he pronouns I am Filipino, and I am from Michigan. So the Midwest.

(Navi) Hi, my name is Navi I use he/they pronouns. I'm African American, and I'm from Ohio, also from the Midwest.

(Ascher) Hi, my name is Ascher, I will be your time keeper for today, and I am from California, and I'm African American.

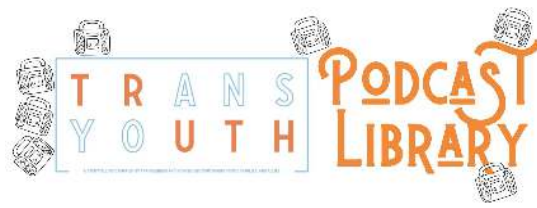
(Hanzo) Alright, so we have everybody in this podcast today. So um a couple of things that I think we would like to talk about is cultural trans identities, interacting with your culture and queer space navigating prominently white spaces, and how to Find healthy spaces for us. Does anybody want to start us off? Yeah, I mean, yeah.

(Ascher) So the first question that we have is what are your thoughts on being a person of color in mostly white queer spaces?

(Micah) Okay, I think as like a young person of color, it's like very intimidating going into predominantly white places, not just because I'm normally the only like visibly like, like, visible person of color, but also because I'm normally much younger than everyone else there. So it's, it feels like anything that I say will be scrutinized by the people who are there.

(Hanzo) Or maybe then it will be amplified because you're the one person saying this certain thing. I totally get that I feel the same way about being in prominently white queer spaces um. That and like you get tokenized A little bit like they're like, yeah, we have like one brown person in our group. You know, we're so diverse or like, they show you off and they're like, yeah, this is like also, or they'd like do this thing where like, they want to, like they pray they put you on a pedestal for just like being a brown person. And it's like really weird, because it's like, No, I'm just another person. I don't need to have this treatment. I'm just doing the same thing as y'all.

(Navi) Yeah, it's like, as the only person of color it's like you speak for all people of color and that's completely untrue. Rather, it's kind of like



(Hanzo) You're, you're totally fine.

(Navi) Can you pause it for a sec? Yeah. So um as one of the only people of color it is easy for them to like, use your voice as speaking for all the people of color of the same race. And which is not true because we all have different experiences, and that's why it's important to have different people of color. In spaces because we all have different backgrounds and beliefs. So, you know.

(Hanzo) It's like different perspectives.

(Navi) Yeah.

(Hanzo) Like Yeah, no, I didn't experience this thing. But you did. Can you tell me about it? And it's like, there's also diversity among like identities not racially, but like, a transfem is going to have different experiences, than a trans masc person. So it's like, we also need to keep in mind of that. And that's, I feel like that's very sparse and a lot of even QTPOC spaces, that there isn't a lot of diversity in gender identities and things like that.

(Navi) We didn't press play.

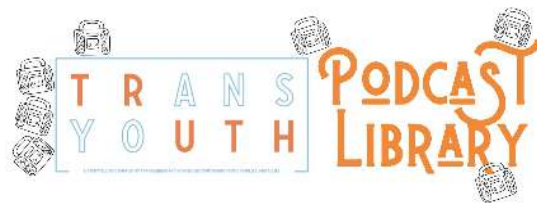
(Hanzo) I did. We're recording right now. You did well, so I kept it. And I decided to bounce off of it. Yeah. Yeah, we're totally fine.

(Micah) Um, do you want to stop now and then restart?

(Hanzo) Okay. All right. Let's go. The next question for the podcast.

(Ascher) How does being a queer trans person of color change Your perspective, on how you feel about navigating the queer spaces that are predominately white?

(Hanzo) Um, I kind of realized that like, I was in a lot of white queer spaces for the majority of my life. So like, when I finally found other native people and other like just people of color in general to be around like me, it was really empowering. And I really didn't know how to navigate it. I didn't know how to feel about it at first because it was like, wow, the vibe here is just way different. Like, I don't feel pressured, or I don't feel like something's going to go down all the time. Like in the sense of like, someone's going to put a micro aggression against me. So it was really nice. It was empowering. I didn't know how to navigate it. And another thing was, like, I was completely new to it. And it's a learning experience even now. I'm always learning about how to, you know, kind of like Get to know these people and trying to expand my knowledge of like, you know, the community and everything like that, because I feel like even though I'm a queer trans person of color, I feel like I don't know a whole lot about everything because I've



been put in these like prominently white spaces. And I would like to know more and I would like to know more people in get into networking.

(Micah) I think the best thing that I did for myself when I was in those predominantly white queer spaces, was I didn't put as much of my like, as my like thoughts and opinions in as I would if I was in, like a more diverse group. So there's like this trans group that meets around where I live and as I was the only person of color the whole time and like the first meeting, I like talked so much about like the experiences I had, but then I could tell that everyone else was like scrutinizing it or like, trying to downplay the-

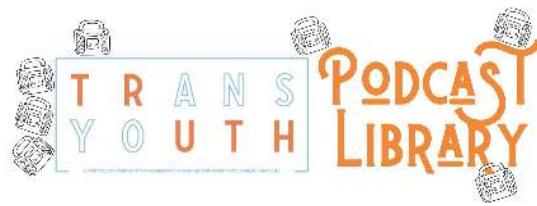
(dog barking)

(Hanzo) bruh

(Hanzo) You were saying something about how you didn't hold yourself back from your thoughts and your opinions because you were in a more you were in a space that you felt like you were safe to share these things were?

(Micah) Yeah, I feel I yeah, when I was first, going into queer spaces as queer spaces in general, I didn't realize how different it was to be a person of color around white queer people. And so you know, you kind of get hurt the first few times you talk about, like experiences you've been through, because the people who are listening you expects to receive what you're saying, when in actuality they, they can't really and therefore they think that you're making stuff up or it's not as serious as it seems. And so, like when I was in when I was like in those white spaces, I didn't give as much of myself as I wanted to. But then when I started going into like more diverse places with people who could like relate to my experiences that I'm like, Oh, so I can talk about what I've been through without feeling guilty about being victimized or feeling like I'm making myself a victim.

(Navi) my perspective of being of queer trans person of color, and mostly white spaces, it really just like opened my eyes as to like, how few people of color feel like they're allowed to be in these spaces or feel comfortable being in these spaces. I seldom see other black people in my area, go into the same community, places that I go to, and people of color in general and it's very like disheartening to see that people don't feel comfortable being themselves, especially because it's an all white area. And it's not welcoming. You know, I know it's easy for people to be like, well, we're, we're open for people coming but they're just not coming. And if they're not coming there's a problem. There's an issue there. People don't just not show up for no reason. So it really just opened my eyes as to like how the systems were playing out and like, it really made me think about how to be more inclusive and welcoming other spaces as well, so that I'm not doing the same thing that these other spaces are doing, so that everyone feels included, and like feels that they can come into spaces that I created, and can like move around freely to do whatever they want.



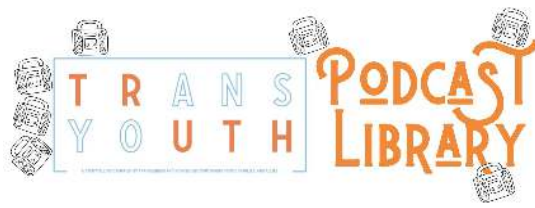
(Ascher) How do you healthily How do you healthily navigate the issues you have within white people of color, white, white queer spaces? And what do you do to heal from being in an only white space?

(Hanzo) I healthily navigate these communities by not being in them honestly, like Honest to God. I'm like not really in them a whole lot. I'm not present like my parents. I'm a foster kid or a foster youth quote, unquote, and they're both by white cis people. And they're like Leland, why don't you are hanzo Why don't you hang out at like, this bar that it's like a bar by, like, people under the age of drinking are allowed to like, not drink, obviously, but to hang out. And they're always like, why don't you go there. And I'm like, because it's just people I feel like I wouldn't get along with that's what I just tell them. But in actuality, it's like, there are these people that are going to, they come around, and they gentrified these areas that I used to live in and there it's like their gentrfying the community, even though the hard fact is that the majority of the queer community is people of color. Like, we built the ground for this place. And they come around and then like, they claim it all again. And it's like, you're not you don't even really like take up much of the pop like the population. So why are you here? Why are you doing this? And I don't tell them that because I don't want to start an argument. But I just kind of like, avoid these communities because it's like, I don't want to be I don't want to hold myself back. So I can, you know, be safe or you know, for my safety, but I also don't want to sacrifice myself either, you know, just to make these people happy when I could just wait it out and find a community that I feel safe in and a community that I know is a bit more accepting of who I am and can relate to my stories and my experiences in all honesty, and but a good process that is also healing because doing this as like, given me a lot of isolation a lot of time alone, but the way that I heal from that is that I connect with people online, I guess because I always think of communities as a as a physical aspect, like it's people in a room.

(Hanzo) Yeah.

(Random person) Morning or

(Hanzo) so we took a small break, I was finishing up speaking on how I healthily navigate white queer spaces or vastly white queer space. And how i heal from that. And I touched on how being in these spaces and mostly avoiding them has given me like a lot of isolation and it's not healthy to be isolated like that. But I think my way of healing right now is I'm slowly emerging myself back into the native two spirit community. Again, it's obviously going to be hard because there's not a whole lot of us around. But, um, it's a progress and I'm hoping to like maybe, I don't know, I want to say I'm hoping to maybe even start my own community, in my state for other two spirits, you know, maybe like borrow a space from like a program or something like that, and just get a bunch of us together. And it's going to be like a GSA club, like, you know, on the rise. Yeah.



(Micah) And going back to what I was saying earlier, but you don't Yeah, or what you were saying earlier, it's not good to isolate yourself, but sometimes that's what you have to do. When you're when the only communities are, like predominantly white, and like you either like avoid them or you don't give as much of yourself away. And I, again, something that you brought up earlier made me think like a lot of the predominantly white queer spaces are really there to profit off of queer identities, which is why like being in those spaces is like sometimes very, it feels fake, or it feels just like you're not actually welcome there like they don't actually want.

(Hanzo) Yeah, like, you know, capitalism. We love her.

(Micah) Yeah.

(Navi) yeah, um, what I do mostly is just like you said, don't go. Or what I try to do is like, figure out a way to like, invite more people color into the space, because if you disrupt what they're doing, like, one they're gonna be shook but also they can't really do anything about it. This is a quote unquote community space. So like. The more people of color you bring in the more you can stop the tomfoolery

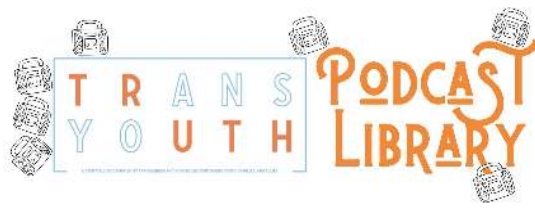
(hanzo) decolonize it like if you're a lonely brown person their damn bring your friends.

(Navi) tell your Friend to bring a friend to bring a friend.

(Hanzo) Yeah, exactly. And then you have like QTPOC space and that's how they're made honestly. us like taking shit over but like, obviously not like that or export. Weird. We can swear, I think anyways, Decolonize these spaces because I feel like we deserve it at the very least.

(Navi) Yeah. And when you're not trying to deal with all that. What I seen people do and like help them is just creating your own space like some of you alluded to. So in Columbus, there's like a trans only people of color, only space. And that was really cool to be in, in a lot more accepting, but I know it takes a lot resources to build a space. So that means either like, figuring out like you said, donating spaces, like even getting people chip just together without like extra funds, you can definitely make your own space for like, free or find community partners to like, donate and get something set up.

(Hanzo) I know this isn't like a part of any of our questions, but we have ample time for this podcast. I think a big reason why a lot of us don't have QT, QTPOC spaces. I feel like it's because we don't have the financial support or the financial like we don't have the opportunity to make these spaces because A) most of us like live in poverty are like really close to it because like this system was built to benefit white people, let's just be honest. So it's like the reason why all these white people get these nice cool spaces like, you know, whole building to themselves is because they have the financial support to do so. And then we Don't get that. But I feel like as a community, if we got together and like, I don't know, we could possibly make up something like



that for ourselves, we already have plenty of communities spread out wherever. And I think, personally, for me, I wanted I had this dream about making a two spirit community, but it's like, where would I get the financial support from that? Like, where do I get the space, you know, the food to bring, you know, campaigning, and then it's like, and then it's like, that's the gatekeeper part. That's the part that keeps us from making space for ourselves because we don't get the resources for it. And that sucks. It really does.

(Micah) yeah, and I feel like it's one thing to like get a grant or have your grant be accepted. If you're predominantly like white group or the leader of it is like this path in your company like that. Then to be you know, gender non conforming people of color. Who kind of want to have their own space for once? Like not many people think that's think that's not that's a necessary thing that needs to exist even though it definitely helps.

(Ascher) How is being a QTPOC hard in your experience and how do you love yourself regardless?

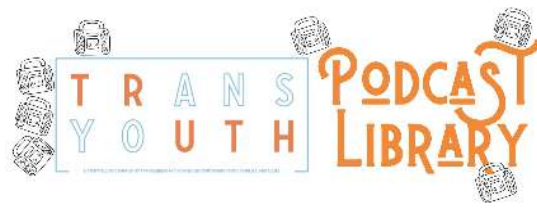
(Micah) it's tiring.

(Hanzo) It honestly is like constantly policing yourself. Like it's like you're getting worried other people are going to clock you, but you clock yourself constantly like to avoid it. And it's like, it's one thing to have, like white cis het, people not understand. And then it's another thing to have, like, white trans people to be like, Oh, well, you have like, they don't understand this, like, kind of like extra layer of oppression that you deal with because, you know, they're white, but they're trans but their whiteness is seen as a positive trait that negates from them being trans, you know, so it's like, well, at least they're white. In societies eyes and then for us, it's like, well, you're not white, nor are you cis, and you're probably gay to or queer. And then that all piles on to each other and it sucks. It's like a storm of like, just messiness that sucks. And so we always, like constantly police ourselves, or we're trying to change how society sees us. So we can be who we really want to be. And it's exhausting for just one person to do that internally. And it's even harder to do externally to try to change the perspective of other people. Oh, no, you go Go ahead.

(Micah) Because I feel like being a person of color, it's harder to pass and it's harder to be accepted into spaces. And it's harder to gather resources, when really all you want is just to feel comfortable, in like by yourself and also comfortable or find spaces where you feel like you can be yourself. So it's either like constant isolation or constant like criticism from Your Community like whatever community.

(Hanzo) yeah.

(Navl) yeah I feel like not only like you said with like outward white people judging you or like other people judging you it's also a lot of judgements from within your community for for most people so like being black there's a lot of pressure to be like being put on you to like, you need to



look this way you need to do this or you're not woman enough you're not man enough etc. So I feel like there's a lot of pressure from all points of like the side for being queer and a person of color and being trans. From like, cis norms society and from like, within your own community sometimes.

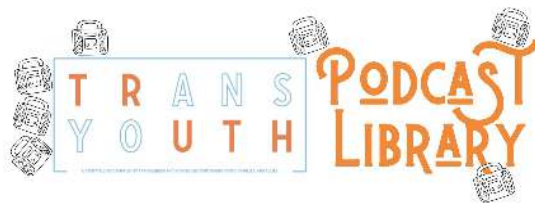
(Hanzo) So yeah, definitely, like native community. A big reason why I haven't interacted with it much since I came out was because a, it's a very small so like, I know, mostly everybody and then they're like, hey, this person's gonna clock me because they remember me from three years ago, or it's like, wow, we used to have a big thing with being two Spirit, like everybody knew about it. And then during colonization, most of us got killed off our history died. And then it's like, all right now everybody's bigoted, or most of them are bigoted because, you know, like, because, you know, that's what that's what the colonization did it put these like beliefs on everybody that if you're not cishet and white, you're garbage, it's awful It's awful. And so like a lot of this like this Native community that I'm in has a lot of internalized, just bigotry and it's like, I can't exist in that space because I have the risk of, you know, being called, like, microaggressions or physical aggressions or anything like that. And a good way to heal from that or how I love myself, despite that is I understand that like, I don't know, I try to be as understanding as possible, but not give everybody a free pass. to just like you know, to oppress me, I guess is a way you could say it, but I heal myself. And I love myself by understanding that this world isn't going to always be perfect, but there's perhaps a chance that it's going to be on its way to like being better for us being better for queer trans people of color. And I try to intertwine or you know, yeah intertwine my culture and my gender together, you know, maybe maybe through art writing however I can mostly content making because as of right now, that's all the capacity that I have right now is content making and I understand that I'm okay with it. And I can't change my entire community on my own. And I just kind of have to accept that I would need help from other people. Well, how do you love yourself and all that?

(Micah) I think back to your thing about how like the world can't be perfect like there are so few existing spaces for people of color who are like for queer people of color, especially like where I'm from little town Michigan. It's like, I can't make or gather resources for a space for queer people of color, just because there's maybe two other like out queer people of color who would be interested in doing like activist work like in my like, where I live. So it's kind of like, I can't find like accepted some love within like people who relate to me. So I just have to find that within myself and like create my own like space in the world. I can't just expect it to pop up for me.

(Hanzo) I love that. You did talk earlier.

(Hanzo) Ahem we're touching on how do you love yourself regardless of being in these spaces that honestly could be traumatizing. That's not how the question was phrased. What

(Navi) is this still recording?



(Hanzo) Yeah it's still recording.

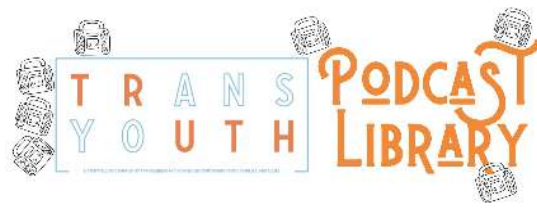
(Navi) The scandal. So I just love myself by being me, regardless of what's happening around me. To be honest, I know I go through like a lot of trials and tribulations, outwardly, not passing at all. Um, also just like being a person of color. But regardless, I just do what I think will make me happy and do what I feel is right. So if one day, I don't want to wear a binder and run around and still use he/him pronouns, that's exactly what I'm going to do. Um, I'm not going to get the best response from a lot of people, but like, that's how I'm feeling right now. So I just like, do what I think is best for me. I'm not worried about other people. So that's how I love myself.

(Hanzo) That's very powerful. Because I'm going to be honest, I've been told I pass but some days I'm just like, Man, I'm gonna take off this binder and just run out there with like everything free. I don't care, but I never do it. I want to but Like, I never do it and I wish I could. So I'm glad that you get to do that for yourself.

(Ascher) hewwo.

(Ascher) How does it feel to find a community or people like yourself? What kind of connection do you make to those folks? Why is it important to have trans people of color in LGBT spaces?

(Hanzo) Okay, so, um, I think my best answer to that question would honestly be well, we're here we exist. I don't see why we shouldn't be in the community because like, we're here too we should have representation like, white people say the same thing all the time. They're like, yeah, you know, they make their presence known is what I'm saying. And I feel like we deserve the right to do the same thing. And we built this community. Just gonna say it, especially transfemmes of color. We built this community and I feel like it's really important to let that fact be known and support them and to support trans people of color. Um, I think finding other Native like an Asian trans people of color. So, so finding other Native and Asian trans people it was really empowering for me because it was like wow, the other what other people like me exist oh my god, that's so crazy. And it's like, kinda like relating to like, this is like really stupid, but it's like, oh my god, we can relate to like the same, like we have the same humor. We can relate to each other culturally, like, oh, wow, we both been powwows and things like this, or how our culture interacts with us being trans or you know, queer. It's honestly my favorite thing, like realizing that, you know, you're not alone because it feels super isolating when like you're in these white spaces, because you're like, "well, I'm the only person of color here, I guess, you know, I'll just be that way for a really long time." And then you discover that there's this whole other world with other people just like you, and you don't feel so alone. And you, it kind of gives me the capacity to love others. And then I realized, like, I had this realization that I can also love myself and being in these spaces also give me the opportunity to do things that I wouldn't do at home, or things that I wouldn't do in like non queer spaces.



(Micah) Yeah, I totally get that. Like, I didn't really, I didn't really find myself in a space where I felt comfortable talking about my experiences as like a queer person of color and queer Asian person. Until like, I was part of this queer Asian caucus and I realized how like, freeing it was to be able to talk to people about like, Colonialism and like assimilation, and like what it's like to be like a brown Asian and it was it was just very...it was just something that I didn't realize I really needed. And so I think it's so necessary to have those spaces for like, people of color and like trans youth of color, because it really gives them...It helps them give them like language on how to communicate their identities and communicate their experiences. But it's, it's also just give us more perspective on like, what we deserve as, like just people of this society.

(Navi) Yeah, um, I think it's very important to find people that are similar to you in one way or another. It really allows you the ability to speak about what you need to speak about and like, know that it's not falling on unreceptive ears. Also, I feel Like people of color, trans people of color spaces. Because like I said earlier, we're all different, even if we do share the same racial identity, or same gender expression or gender identity, to hear other people's stories, so we can also all be educated, and learn and empathize with other people. I think that being in these spaces is just extremely educational, and also just like heartwarming, because you feel like we're with family, you know, and some of the white spaces just don't feel like that you feel like an outsider while and trans people of color spaces you feel like you're connected with other people that are similar to you.

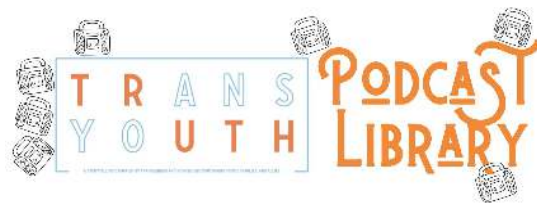
(Hanzo) Yeah, I totally get like a to like, you know, the part about empathy is I feel like in a lot of white spaces, there's a lack of empathy for people of color, like they simply just refuse or they don't understand what we've gone through collectively or individually. And so they can't empathize to it and then they can't take it seriously. or support us and among our community of queer trans people of color, we have, you know, we have an extent, like we acknowledge each other and we can empathize with each other, which is really healing for us collectively, because it's like, we don't get that and oppressive society, but we can at least give that to each other and support each other if, you know, white folk won't support us.

(Micah) Yeah, and I think just those spaces in general is like, so necessary for like, you know, your mental health and their survival of the community. like not to get all dark, but it really is, like, very important to make sure that you have these spaces for people of color, especially within an oppressive society where everywhere else feels like inaccessible.

(Navi) I agree.

(Hanzo) I concur as well.

(Ascher) So how did the podcast feel like how do you feel about the solutions? We came up with dealing with white people?



(Hanzo) Dealing with white people. I think that sums up with like a lot of my feelings, but I'm verbalizing how I isolate myself because I don't feel welcomed in these spaces. I didn't really realize that like, to a full extent. Like I kind of came to the conclusion internally that Yeah, I do that. I don't, you know, I don't go to these spaces pretty often. But I didn't think that was such a big problem until like, I came here. I went on this podcast, and then I verbalized it. And I'll realize, yeah, that's a problem. And I feel like a lot of us shouldn't have to do that. Because like, we deserve the right of community, because community provides so much for everybody, you know, either collectively or individually.

(Micah) Yeah, it was extremely well, recording was chaotic, but the process of it was also extremely like cathartic to be able to like verbalize what I haven't actually been able to say even to myself,

(Hanzo) umm recording was chaotic but, let's not touch on that.

(Navi) Um, I personally always find joy in listening to other people's stories. I think storytelling is extremely important why I joined TRUTH council. Shout out TRUTH. So it's always nice getting in the space and listening to other people. And it was really nice to getting this be and have my voice be heard.

(Hanzo) Yeah, shout out to TRUTH council over there. My first burger joint truth you get to go to California. It's great.

(Navi) And even if you don't worry, join truth. Feel free to support us on social media at ourtranstruth.org as well as on the social media platforms. Yeah, Twitter, Facebook and Instagram.

(Hanzo) You get to see us if we if you ever go on Instagram to we're cute

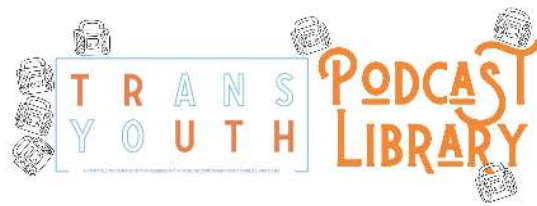
(Micah) Listen to me the other part of the podcast which focuses on navigating

(Hanzo) it's, it's, it's part two,

(Micah) part two,

(Hanzo) or the other part of this podcast. It's kind of like, it's kind of like a collaboration except we don't work with them. They just like do their own thing. We do our own thing, and then it gets combined or something like that

(Navi) their podcast is going to be on being queer trans people of color, within your racial identity. So it's going to be talking about some of the issues you have being a queer trans person of color, within racial identity, so it's gonna be pretty cool.



(Hanzo) Yeah, so like we talked about, I believe, we talked about external or Yeah, external oppression. And, you know, bigotry and maybe I believe that they're speaking on internal bigotry and oppression and kind of like internalized maybe internalized racism. And transmisogyny. So I would definitely give that a listen because I feel like if you really want to fully if you want to get a full scope of like this problem, you got to listen to everything. But that's just my opinion.

(Inaudible)

(Hanzo) Do we

(Hanzo) Alright, so that was our podcast. I forgot what I named it but my name was Hanzo or it is Hanzo I'm from Minnesota, you know, past tense, my name is in hanzo anymore. But you know, that's his trans experience. And it was nice talking to you all.

(Micah) My name is still Micah. And it's real fun time.

(Navi) Navi he/they pronouns it's been real. I live in Seattle now. So feel free to

(Hanzo) come stop Navi for us. Yeah.

(Navi) if you think I'm cute im available

(laughter)

(Micah) If you thought Navi's voice was cute

(Ascher) My name is still Ascher and I've been your time keeper for the time for the time being

(Hanzo) Timekeeper for the time being nice.

(Micah) Yeehaw

(Everyone) All right bye y'all BYEEEEEEEEEE

Thank you for listening to “LGBTea” in the TRUTH Podcast Library.

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