

Ep. 19: Second Adolescence w/ Finn May (they/he)

Tue, 6/28 11:25AM 49:49

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

trans, gender fluid, friends, feel, brothers, remember, adolescence, affirming, masculine, day, gender, pride, hear, folks, finn, dysphoria, experience, wonderful, thinking, non binary

SPEAKERS

Adam James Cohen (he/him), Finn May (they/he)

A Adam James Cohen (he/him) 00:09

Hello and welcome to this week's episode of the Second Adolescence podcast. I am your host Adam James Cohen. On this week's episode, we have Finn May. Finn shares with us about their experience being someone who is genderfluid they share about what their journey has been to getting to this point of understanding and validating their identity. And having this validated back to them, they talk about their own experience moving through transphobia and internalized, limiting constraints around identity and what their journey has been to find the joy and healing they experience. Now, it was such a great conversation, I'm so excited to invite you into it. And as with every episode of second adolescence, I really want to invite you as a listener to listen with open curiosity, knowing that each of our stories are different and unique. You might hear some guests share things that really differ from your experience, whereas you might hear other guests share things that really speak to what you went through, or are currently going through. And I hope that all of this happens, and that together, we can continue growing and expanding our awareness of what life and queerness and healing can be for folks, if after the show you want to connect further, feel free to head on over to secondadolescencepod.com for show notes and more. Or you can follow the show on Instagram at [@secondadolescencepod](https://www.instagram.com/secondadolescencepod). All right. Thanks for being here. Welcome to the conversation. Finn, welcome to Second Adolescence. I'm so excited to have you here and really curious to hear about you and your story. And before going anywhere, I'd like to invite the person on your end to give a little mini introduction to listeners just to provide a little context who the person is behind the voice.

F Finn May (they/he) 01:55

So my name is Finn. It's actually Anthony Finn, but I go by my middle name, I identify as gender fluid leaning towards trans masculine so I use either he they are they he depending on how I'm feeling. Today is more of a day he I'm a quadruplet. I have three sis male brothers. And after

that my parents said no more kids. But being in quadruplets definitely. I think the biggest thing that people are interested about when they want me to tell something about myself, I always go to I'm quadruplet for everything, because it's pretty big thing.

A Adam James Cohen (he/him) 02:27

Yeah. And I guess it is pretty like unique. Not everybody has a quadruplet Yeah, I guess what's your I mean, I'm sure we'll go more into it. But like today, like what's your relationship with being a quadruplet?

F Finn May (they/he) 02:37

It's definitely interesting. I know that I'm an extrovert. And so from childhood, I have always been surrounded by people because it would always be like, we have a very big family. So they're always people coming and going. And then we'd have the four kids and the four kids groups of friends. So birthday parties, as you can imagine, was a huge ordeal. And we all had to agree on like the cake flavor. And how many friends could each of us have? Because it had to be equal or

A Adam James Cohen (he/him) 03:06

challenging to all agree on one thing.

F Finn May (they/he) 03:09

And we're all very different. As you can imagine, or teachers I grew up with often would kind of like poke them on try to collect them all get all four and one class and teach the maze. But I've always been surrounded by people. I was never home alone. There was always somebody else there. So that's definitely very good for me. I can't imagine growing up as an introvert. I'm sure that would be hell.

A Adam James Cohen (he/him) 03:32

Mm hmm. Absolutely. Absolutely. Seems like yeah, your extroverted nature at work to have so much kind of hustle and bustle around? Yeah, definitely. Okay. I'm curious to know more about that part of your experience. But I guess, pulling back, walk me through, why are you feeling energized by wanting to come on to the show and share your story? What about second adolescence, or kind of what the show is about felt like it was something you wanted to contribute to?

F Finn May (they/he) 03:57

So I definitely really identify with the term second adolescence right now. I'm almost four months on T at this point. So I'm getting all the voice cracks and I've got like the facial hair

coming in. And I'm just sitting here thinking like that is all the things I was so jealous of my brothers getting and looking at them and going oh, I want that. Why isn't that me? And now to have it happen. And to watch myself become who I knew I was always meant to be is so amazing, and the relationships that I've kept with my brothers and how that's changed, because I'm technically the oldest by minute I hang on to that minute and I'm proud of it. But they always treated me like the younger sister. It was the three of them and it was me. There's always a lot of I'm the only girl and I'm also the only granddaughter all my cousins are male so there was that like the only nice only granddaughter so there was definitely a lot of divide put in and I was I was more feminine. I played with Barbies play dress up, but I never really felt like a girl. So to be able to see not only myself become Who I always felt like I was meant to be. But to see my relationships with my brothers change, I'm changing from their close little because that's how I was kind of treated but little sister to a brother, and hopefully who they see as an equal.

A Adam James Cohen (he/him) 05:14

Wow. Okay, I'm so glad you're on because I'm so curious to hear about this story and this evolution of your relationship both with your brothers as a sibling as kind of Oh, what a journey. So I guess like wait, pause. So backing up where? Where are you from? Where did your story begin? Where did this all start?

F Finn May (they/he) 05:31

I actually grew up two hours from here. I currently live with my partner. Well, my fiance actually

A Adam James Cohen (he/him) 05:36

Oh, congrats.

F Finn May (they/he) 05:39

Yeah, thank you. So I grew up two hours from here.

A Adam James Cohen (he/him) 05:43

And where's here, by the way?

F Finn May (they/he) 05:46

Jarrettsville. Maryland. I mostly just spent my time in Maryland. Yeah. And but a majority of my family's from New Jersey. So there was a lot of Maryland to New Jersey, both my parents were born and raised in Jersey. Then they found out they're having kids and moved. But it was always just my parents and the four kids. We went through the same elementary, middle and high school it was in its own little kind of unit. And then I went to Hagerstown Community

College, and I'm currently going to Arizona State University. I work at Starbucks. So I get to go there through Starbucks, which they just implemented pronoun pins, so we can put our pronoun pins on our apron, and everyone at my work like sis trans. All we're excited. Like the moment I walked in the door that day, Hey, have you gotten your pronoun pin yet? Like everyone's really hyped up for it?

A Adam James Cohen (he/him) 06:34

So that, but when was when did this just happened?

F Finn May (they/he) 06:37

Yeah, this happened. Around a month ago, they announced in our summer training that we'd all be getting pronoun pins. I actually, I have them on my desk right here. So I have my hem pin. And my date, and my coworkers are so wonderful. They keep an eye on it. They use the right pronouns. So it's really wonderful. Go Starbucks, I had no idea. Oh, yeah, they're awesome. I've never felt so supported that work. Oh, my gosh,

A Adam James Cohen (he/him) 07:01

awesome. Okay, so so a lot of life in Maryland. Okay. And so, you mentioned like, going back into your story growing up, you mentioned on one hand, kind of finding some enjoyment out of traditionally feminine expression or activities, like there was some of that. But then also, there was some kind of dissonance that you were experiencing, as well, like, what do you what do you remember? What was your journey as a little kid with regards to kind of your gender experience, as that kind of grew into adolescence. So I remember,

F Finn May (they/he) 07:29

I always liked the traditionally feminine things, a lot of my friends were girls. But when we would play, we did a lot of pretend I was a huge doctor who could, and they chose me to be the doctor. This was way before the new female doctor, I don't know how much you know about the show. And because I was the doctor, they would call me heat. And I was like, Wait, that sounds really good. I like that. I really feel that and I don't know why it makes me so happy. Or I loved Peter Pan, the entire story of it, the character of him. And I would go, my friends Katie and Shannon and I would go out into the woods behind our house and we would sword fight with sticks and play in the river. And so I feel like I had on the one hand a very stereotypically feminine childhood. And on the other hand, I had kind of that masculine side of it as well. But I didn't know that you could be trans I didn't know that girls could like girls, guys, good luck, guys. I grew up in a very like, sis straight white heteronormative household.

A Adam James Cohen (he/him) 08:26

Okay, you know, was there any messaging around queerness? Or like, What do you remember kind of coming to learn about queerness.

F

Finn May (they/he) 08:32

So I do remember it being very kind of discouraged of like, anything outside the norm isn't. And so I try it. And there was such an emphasis on only girl. So when I did realize that I was trans, I was like, Well, I can't take their only girl from them. So I will be the most girly girl ever exist. I will put, like so much effort into my appearance and which I love doing anyway. But nowadays, it's more of like, a nice button down and some slacks as opposed to a fancy dress. Or I've had my hair cut short for about five years now. When before it had been almost to my waist. I remember when I was 14, we'd gone to California. And I hadn't been shaving because I didn't know why I didn't know as dysphoria at the time. But we were on this kind of rocky area, and I reached my arm up to grab something. And my dad was like, Whoa, you need to shave like we need to find you a razor because that doesn't look okay, that's not feminine. And I remember thinking like, well, that doesn't really make sense. Like that doesn't play into I'm not unhygienic for not shaving. And I remember my dad saying when I came out to him. I didn't yet know I was trans but I knew that I liked girls and guys, and I, I was like, Hey, I think I like girls too. And my dad was like, oh, that's fine, that's fine. But then when I came out as trans, my dad was like, oh, no, no, you're just a butch lesbian. I was like, well, actually.

A

Adam James Cohen (he/him) 09:58

And when did those coming outs how have been, I guess, actually a couple of times on questions you mentioned first, like having more awareness of your transmis. And then kind of as a counter effect, leaning more into like this traditionally feminine presentation. What age was that? And then when did this coming out happen?

F

Finn May (they/he) 10:11

So when I first kind of recognized those feelings of being trans, I was 13. And I had only ever learned that that was wrong. So I was like, okay, just gonna push that away, deal with it a different day, until it just kind of became stronger and stronger. And I remember I do a lot of cosplays a bit at conventions. And I wanted to be a male character. And so my friend was like, well, chest binder, use that. And I didn't know what it was she let me borrow one. And the immediate rush like confidence and euphoria I got from wearing that. Wow. So eventually, I would wear it around the house, my mom would ask, like, Well, why are you wearing that? What's going on? And I'd be like, Oh, I just need to train my chest to bind for conventions, because you have to wear it for a good amount of time. When really it was, I would never want to take this thing off. Or my friends. And I would write stories all the time. And I would always be a male character, but not really understand why I felt more comfortable writing in that kind of gaze. And I know I mentioned like the playing pretend earlier, I was always the male character. And then I remember watching Guardians of the Galaxy, when it came out in theaters with my brothers and thinking, Oh, my God, I want to be Star Lord. I don't want to be any other character that is who like, I want to look like that. I want to sound like that, and not really realizing what that was. And my brother's started to go through puberty. And I remember thinking like, because we had to read about the opposite. And I was like, that seems so much more, right? Why don't I have that and are like, hearing their voices get deeper. And thinking, God, I wish that was me. But it's not. And still not really knowing why. I talked to my therapist, and I was like, Hey, this is how I'm feeling what's going on? Am I okay? Is something wrong with

me? And she was like, I think you should go home and look up trends. And look at being transgender, and see how you identify with that. Or if you do, and I was like, okay, so I went home, I was so paranoid that my parents were gonna walk in at any moment in the door, like, I quickly hide my phone, and where can I hide it? But I looked it up. And I was like, yes, yes, I feel this. But I also don't feel like either sometimes. And I think it was some that was that got me, I was like, well, sometimes I feel non binary. And sometimes I feel male. So I can't be trans. There's just something else going on. Because I didn't know about being gender fluid. I didn't know it could switch. So there was a lot of internalized transphobia as well of, I'm not trans enough, because it doesn't stay as just one or the other. I'm just indecisive. And I was reading a comic and the main character was gender fluid and kind of described the experience. And it hit me and I was like, Oh my God, that's me. And someone else. I'm sorry if I'm getting washed.

A

Adam James Cohen (he/him) 12:50

No, I love emotions. Do whatever you need to take care of yourself. Yeah.

F

Finn May (they/he) 12:55

It's been very difficult to cry while on testosterone. So this is definitely a lot. And I used to cry all the time. But I remember realizing like, Okay, someone else is like that, which I know we mentioned, when I was first going to come on to the podcast, I just said trans masculine, because I thought, Okay, well, maybe if I say gender fluid, I might not be taken seriously, I might be skipped over. And the reason that I decided to, is because my fiance and I were out the other day getting groceries, and we saw a pack of fried oreos, and there was a gender fluid pride flag, like someone else is out there who feels the same way I do, and that they're putting it on something like convert that commercially be bought. So if I can get that I yeah, I can do this. And I want other people who feel like me to realize it's okay to change back and forth. You're not indecisive or making things up? You are trans. You know. Sorry, that was a huge change.

A

Adam James Cohen (he/him) 13:47

No, I mean, I so appreciate you sharing kind of your own experience getting to this place of really validating both for yourself, but then also then it's experience of having your identity validated out in the external world. Because yeah, I think that is, unfortunately too common of an experience for folks who don't fit into like, the either of the binary versions of what it means to be trans are really feeling like wait, this doesn't necessarily fit. Or then it was like there was some space created for non binary folks who like that felt like, okay, that's valid, but you kind of had there was maybe some expectation, you had to be one or the other. Like, it's, it's so common for this internalized transphobia to happen for folks. And so, I so appreciate you sharing your story in case any listeners are less familiar, perhaps with the experience being gender fluid, because it's absolutely a very valid and real experience. And I'm so stoked on that comic you found where you got to see that reflected back because I think there's more and more stories being told about people who are gender fluid. And did you say it was Oreos that had the



F

Finn May (they/he) 14:44

Yeah, we have the we have the pack. I took a picture of the gender fluid flag, but it's not just pride flags. They took a bunch of statements from other LGBT people and put them on the Oreo. So like, you're loved, you're valued. You're important. Wow. It's one of the best pride things Unit A while they worked with the organization called PFLAG

A

Adam James Cohen (he/him) 15:03

Parents and Friends of Lesbians and gays. Yeah.

F

Finn May (they/he) 15:07

So that was definitely very cool to see. And I know I talked about this with my fiance, because we watch our house. There's a non binary character, there's a non binary character and Shira, Steven Universe, which, when I was watching Shira for the first time, and this character came up, she looked over at me, and I was like, we're both thinking that that's me. Yeah, I agree. Because they're very dramatic, very into theater. very flamboyant personality, very much a slither in which I am as well. So I remember we just made eye contact. And we're like, we're both thinking that that's me. I know. That's cool. And he's so wonderful about using my pronouns. And I'll ask like, Hey, how are you feeling today? Before he, if we're ordering at McDonald's, he'll be like, and he would like, Oh, hold on, is it they are here today? How are you feeling? Like he'll check up on me? Or he'll go to call me handsome and be like, is it handsome? Or are you feeling more more binary? We can go with stunning. I'm like, I love him so much.

A

Adam James Cohen (he/him) 16:04

Whoa, that and uh, yeah, it's like, it's as simple as that. It's as simple as this kind of like, if you notice yourself using a maybe more gendered word, kind of then just like double checking with the person you're talking to? And be like, Hey, does that fit where we at? All right. Yeah.

F

Finn May (they/he) 16:19

And I was, I was very worried to come out to him at first. Because he knew me when we first started dating as non binary. I was on a site called Taimi which is where we met. It's a LGBT dating app. So you can hear me as non binary. And I was like, okay, but I've been feeling like a trans guy, like he him for the past month. And so I came out to him, and he was wonderful and supportive. And then around a year later, I was like, Oh, wait, it's switching again. What do I do? And there's a lot of back and forth. He's wonderful. He is incredibly supportive of everything in the community. So I was just so worried. And I was like, Okay, I'm just gonna say it. And I told him, and he was like, Yeah, I already kind of figured, and I love you, and I accept you as you are, which is just wonderful. I never thought that I could get that kind of love from someone. The very funny question we have back and forth. This he's like, so how do I identify then, like, am I pan? And what do I do? And I was like, that's, that's up to you. But I do think it's very funny. And his parents, they have taken me in, after I came out, my parents needed a bit of an adjustment period. So I came out, after I had this conversation with my therapist about being trans. I came out to my mom, and I explained how I was feeling. And she didn't really

understand that she loved me, and she wanted me to be happy. And I was like, Hey, before I get more courage, can we just keep this on the download? Just like, don't tell my brothers. Don't tell Dad. Just you and I, okay. She's like, okay, and I had already come out to a few friends at this point, one of my very close friends who actually now identifies as genderqueer. himself. We've been friends for 18 years. And I came up to them. And I started going by the last half of my dead name as kind of a can they call me another name? Is that possible? To the point where I was working at Cracker Barrel, and I, that's what I had sewn onto the apron, and I was out to a few friends. But once again, the like, don't tell my family, I had a secret Instagram account where all my pictures of like, I would use the masculine Snapchat filters. And I remember I posted a picture with a masculine Snapchat filter on my public. And someone commented, Oh, you look like Scott, which is the name of one of my brothers. And I remember thinking, I don't look like Scott, I look like me. But I can't say that to you. So just put it on my other Instagram. And so I had all these, if I look back through my phone, I have all these instances of like, oh, here, I knew I was trans but didn't want to come out. Or here's when I got my hair cut short for the first time and started getting so much gender euphoria. Like I see little hints or like, one year, I was Captain Hook for Halloween, and I did the fake facial hair makeup. And I got so much euphoria. I was being seen as a guy like people come up to me like, Hey, bro, do you know where? Oh, sorry. And I was like, Oh, if you just hadn't said that. Oh, sorry. Right, right. It's definitely cool to look through all those different pictures and be like, This is my journey and no one. So I told my mom and she agreed to keep it on the download. So there was a moment where and I had I was sitting in the kitchen with my mom and dad. And I made some comment about I hate my chest just off handed. My dad was like, oh, no, don't worry, honey, it'll you know, you're still growing and it'll be okay. And my mom and I just kind of looked at each other. She knew what I meant. And I knew and he didn't know. And I had come out to my brother's of like, Hey, I like girls and guys. How are we feeling about that? Is that okay? And so I remember Scott would ask me questions about who I was dating, like, Okay, what's her name? Like? What's she like? I gotta make sure she's good for you.

A

Adam James Cohen (he/him) 19:56

And what age was this?

F

Finn May (they/he) 19:58

I was around 16 at this point. And my brother, Brian would ask me a lot of questions about being bi. He's like, so what percentage? Are you attracted to guys? And what percentage are you attracted to girls? And I was like, Oh, it doesn't work that way. And so it's been interesting to see how they've changed along the course of, of my various coming out. So, because they still didn't know I was trans, they just knew I was some form of LGBT. Then I got the courage to tell my dad, and he said, You're just a butch lesbian. And he made the argument of I'd rather have that than a trans son. Interesting argument. So a few years later, I was like, Okay, I'm gonna try again. Maybe he's abuse of change. And I told him, like, hey, I want you to call me Finn. I feel like I'm your son. How are you feeling about this? And he said, I feel like my daughter has been shot and killed. And I was like, alright, so not great. Not doing great. And I told my partner, because we had been talking and I was like, I don't know what I can do about this. And so two years later, I was still living there. But I was incredibly uncomfortable because he knew who I was. And he would still misgendered Me and dad named me. So then, when the offer was put up to move in with him, we've been dating for four months. And it was actually

his mom's idea, because he told her about what was going on. I know that she talked about like joining, or no, she didn't join free mom hugs. And she's an incredible ally. And so she asked if I wanted to live with her instead. And because my parents had specifically, I don't remember if it was both of them, or just my dad used the phrase that they needed time to mourn. Okay. So I moved in with him. And I've been here ever since. And my mom and I still talk my brothers and I still talk. My dad and I have gone no contact. I tried to talk to him about it and say, like, Hey, you did these things, and they really upset me. I want you to understand why I need some time away from you. And he took that as complete no contact. But my mom and I still talk, I keep her updated on I told her the day I started tea, or I'll tell her like, Hey, I saw myself in the mirror. And I thought it was Scott at first, but it's me. And I had that weird moment of like, wait a sec, that's not my brother, for my brother, Brian. And I used to always sing together. It was Kevin played the bass, Scott played piano and sang and played guitar. Brian played drums and sang. And I say, so we all we all have that musical thing going on. And so we would always just be singing together all the time. And now that my voice is getting deeper, I'll sing songs like death of a bachelor by Panic at the Disco and be able to hit those low notes. I'm like, wait a second, Brian would hit those notes. And I would tap out. And then when he would get higher, I would hit the notes. And he would tap out. So it's weird that it's now and I can still hit those high notes. But now I hear my voice. And I'm like, that sounds like Brian, but somehow still also me. There's a lot of like, I'm becoming more like them, but also more like myself, which is going to walk because we're not identical. But we all have the same face shape, same eye colors and hair color. Because you can definitely tell like that we are related. We all sound very similar, which I think one of the biggest voice dysphoria things for me, it was just like, I know how I should sound. And I hear them every day. And it's not my voice, or there was a lot of like, that's how broad my shoulders would be that what my face structure would roughly look like. So it definitely made dysphoria pretty tough. Yeah, I grew up very jealous of them. At some points, I would wake up hours earlier in the morning, so I wouldn't have to get ready next to them. Because I was so jealous. So I would like get up at around 6am and do my whole routine and then just hanging out in my room until they got up. Because it they they would all share a sync and then I have my own. And so there was always one of them over there. And I'd be like, Ah, man, I am so mad at you right now. And you don't even know why we still keep in close contact. Two of them are in the military. So it can be a little hard sometimes. But for the most part I'll visit my mom and my brother Scott most often is there and sometimes they'll slip up and use my dead name. But for a majority of the time, he'll call me Finn, which is wonderful. My mom calls me Finn, my aunts, they wrote me birthday cards recently. It's such a little thing. But my aunt used to send us birthday cards. And it was always three blue envelopes and a pink one. And this year, she sent it in a blue envelope, which was like such a tiny thing. But so gender affirming. That was so nice. And I went through. I did a lot of theater in high school and in college. So I remember I always would try to go for the male roles and feel very good about that. Like the first role I was ever in was in high school. I have three lines. And the character was originally a boy named Harry. And they're like, Oh, we can change it to Harriet for you though. And she and I remember thinking I don't really care. If you you don't have to do that, like, I'm fine with it being that and not knowing why am I outfit was a suit. And the moment I stepped out on stage with that suit, I was like, Yes, this is what I feel confident in comfortable. So that kind of theater has been a great way to alleviate gender dysphoria. Yeah, I remember at one point, I was in Pippin at the Maryland theater. And I think it was around 2017. And they were like, hey, our main character got sick, we need someone to step up. And I remember thinking, if I passed, oh, I would love to do that. Oh, sorry, I went off on a tangent.

A

Adam James Cohen (he/him) 25:34

I just like want to hear you talk all day about your story. And like, as you're talking a couple of things I'm just experiencing on my end, I mean, first, I'm feeling really appreciative of you sharing so much of your story, because I know I'm kind of being reminded of messages I've received from listeners who have similar story to you, or messages from parents who are listening to try to better understand their kid when maybe they have their own blocks that they're in this process of trying to learn. And I'm just thinking about what an offering you even sharing everything you've shared so far is for those folks. And so I'm just having a lot of appreciation in this moment. And then also yet I can really hear how in your story, it's like so much like hindsight 20. Looking back, you can see all those moments growing up of those moments of gender euphoria, and of feeling affirmed, but not maybe having either the language or not having. Yeah, just not having as much of that awareness when you when you pick that a younger age and then seeing that progress. And it strikes me You've done a lot of reflection on your journey. What does that look like for you like kind of looking back at little you all the way up until now? What have you done there?

F

Finn May (they/he) 26:38

So I recently said something to my therapist of, if the little version of me could see me now, she was blown away. I was determined to stay in the closet until I die. And that I was like, okay, you know, maybe being trans can be secret, like the secret Instagram account, and I'll do it in my free time. But I won't take hormones, I won't get surgery, I'll pass and be this role that, well, that's what it was like a role. It's like theater, I was pretending to be this person. And I'm still I know my mom. And I've had the conversation of like, she was worried she would lose her kid. And I know my parents made a lot of comments of I don't know who you are now. And they would, they would kind of have this mentality of you are a different person, like a stranger. But because my mom and I have kept such strong contact, she messaged me recently and said, I can see you're still the same person. Like you're still my kid, you're still artistic and into theater and reading. And that was so wonderful, because I've been waiting to hear those words for so long. So she's I've been keeping her updated on testosterone, how I'm doing. I know, I missed a shot about a month ago. And she texted me she was like, Well, are you still gonna be able to get it? Like, are you still okay? Can you get your medicine? And I was like, not only are you accepting, you're using my pronouns, but you're making sure that I get my testosterone. That's amazing. Yes, that's been really great.

A

Adam James Cohen (he/him) 28:04

And even that languaging medicine is interesting. It's like really just communicates care and tending to and kind of and so if there's something really affirming in that languaging, too,

F

Finn May (they/he) 28:14

definitely, yeah, I've tried to definitely stress to them that this is kind of an ultimate form of self care. I love myself to the point where I want to be in the body I was meant to be in I want to make my body feel like home, which I know. I've talked to a lot about with my fiance of like, right now it feels like I'm kind of in someone else's body. I'm borrowing someone else's. And he's definitely helped me with a lot of dysphoria. Like, I was crying the other day, because I was like, I What if I never look the way I want to look? What if my chest is never flat enough, my

voice is never deep enough. And he was like, Hey, I love your voice just the way it is. And I love it as it keeps changing. And he likes to point out different things. So be like, hey, you've got a facial hair right there. Hey, your shoulders are looking really broad today. Just little things like that throughout the day, which is just so amazing. Or walk up to me and be like, hey there, Mr. Handsome, how's it going? So just like make sure to use that gendered language, or like I was saying before, make sure to change it up and use those pronouns. With my family. I primarily just say trans man, he him because I know it's easier for them to kind of digest at this point. You know, if I began to throw in like, well, now it's he and now today and so because I do feel very comfortable in the trans mask label. And then there'll be other days where I'm like, Oh, wow, yes, completely 100% non binary, no gender to be found, which has been very interesting. And I still do love makeup. So like I have a whole I have a whole vanity that my fiance set up for me. So I know. I've had the conversation before of well, you can't be a guy you wear makeup. And that just means you regret transitioning in you. Like I know I have a tick tock account and inevitably with social media comes some negative responses. So I'll get the like, Well, no, you're actually not trans because you wear makeup, or you're not trans because your gender changes. You just don't know which one you are. Or I've gotten like, hey, you need to pick one type thing, you know. But then I've also gotten the wonderful comments like, my friends Chloe, who is a poet, and a writer tagged me and said, Happy Pride Month, I'm tagging some of my favorite queer poets. And then my name was there. And I was like, Oh, I'm one of your favorite queer poets. That's great. Wow. Definitely. I've had so many affirming friends. I know I have Chloe is dating someone named Aiden. He's, I was like, I'm not sure. I always have a lot of apprehension when I first meet people of what do I tell you? A like, is it safe to tell you on trend? Or like, how are you reading me? Are you reading me? masculine or feminine? What is what is safe to go with? Like, if if you misgendered me, do I correct you? Am I safe to correct you? Because I unfortunately, live in a very, it's not very accepting of an area, we do have pride. We have like, my Starbucks is incredibly accepting, but there are a few who aren't. So it's always kind of a what do I do? But I have had moments where someone will ask me like, hey, so are you a boy or a girl? And I'll be like, I'm just gonna take a chance here. I'm just gonna explain how I feel who I am. And it's worked out wonderfully. And I've made a lot of new friends, some good bonds from doing that. So sometimes you just have to take the leap with that. What are you doing? Hi. my fiance's here. How are you?

A

Adam James Cohen (he/him) 31:33

Hi, fiance? Hi.

F

Finn May (they/he) 31:41

Oh. Yeah, he's the one who set up the trans flag for me. He's a little introverted.

A

Adam James Cohen (he/him) 31:43

Oh, that's okay. I'm glad I got to see like a little bit of him. Because like, as you've been talking, I'm just thinking, What a great friggin party.

F

Finn May (they/he) 31:52

He is. Do you want to come over here and say hi, he wants to see my wonderful partner. There he is.

A Adam James Cohen (he/him) 31:59

Hi. Nice to meet you. Oh, yeah, you probably can't hear me.

F Finn May (they/he) 32:08

Okay, I love you. He's an introvert. He's a little shy.

A Adam James Cohen (he/him) 32:12

So I get it, I get it.

F Finn May (they/he) 32:15

We're so different like night and day. I've been described as a human golden retriever. My boss mentioned something about the other day about me being very extroverted, and she loves seeing how much I love to talk to people. And then he'll has the opposite, he'll come up to you, if he feels comfortable talking to you. Otherwise, they'll probably be away somewhere having introvert time. So I like to refer to myself as the golden retriever boyfriend. And like our sense of style is very different. We have different interests, we also have some similar interests, but I just love the like night and day relationship that we have, I think is very funny. And another thing I've noticed helps with gender euphoria is looking at the characters that he had crushes on, and then seeing how I measure up. So one of his crushes was Kurt from Glee. And I once was like, I'm, I'm sorry, I'm so feminine. And I, you know, I'm so flamboyant. And that I basically am like that. And like I'm sorry, I spontaneously burst into song and he pulled, he pulled me aside, he was like, Honey, I had a crush on Kurt from Glee. You're basically Kurt from Glee. And I was like, that's great. So to see that, and because I have a lot of internalized transphobia of my dad would often make fun of flamboyant gay men, or I hear a lot of like, teasing or putting down of they would use the term like he she it. And I'd hear a lot of different things like that, which I definitely have the vivid moments of like sitting at the dinner table, and just silence of like, what do I say? Do I see anything? Is this how they're gonna react when I come out? Is it safe to come out? Should I ever come out? And like having this breakdown at dinner, and then on the outside being like, everything is fine, and it's great, nothing's wrong. But there's definitely a lot of like, I would sit there and listen to what they'd say about the community and then think well, what are they going to say about me if that's how they feel about this? So there I definitely have a lot of my own transphobia built up of the like, Am I too feminine? More? Am I too loud and flamboyant showed I toned it down a little bit. So he's definitely helps remind me that like no, you're you're fine as you are in fact, I had a crush on that type of person. So

A Adam James Cohen (he/him) 34:23

yeah, right. I mean, that really speaks to like the power of how having kind of close

relationships in our lives be so affirming and be so validating should be a place where we can kind of let out kind of our own questions about our identity or use it as a place to further explore our identities as a place to further affirm our identity. Like just having it be this safe container within which to just as kind of let our true selves be and like in the process like credit clear away all of the shit that was thrown on top of us growing up in this like anti trans, anti queer all of the world. I really hear so much healing has happened in this relationship. And yeah, anything else to say in your own experience of, I mean, it's like a continuous journey healing but like, what is supported your own healing from this internalized transphobia from this internalized anti queerness, all of that, what does that look like?

F

Finn May (they/he) 35:18

So definitely trying to embrace those parts of myself that aren't the kind of stereotypical like checking off boxes of fitting with that identity, remembering that it's okay to wear makeup, and feel masculine that day and identify with him guys can wear makeup, and it's completely fine. In fact, some people pull it off better than I've ever seen it done. And sometimes, like looking at the men and makeup tag on like Instagram, things like that, because I've always had difficulty loving my body, and going through my first period, you just made that so much worse. So now getting to go through the process of my second puberty, and really getting to love myself through it. As I'm going through all these physical changes, I'm getting the body that I always dreamed of having, and I'm learning to really love it. And which is also can be difficult because I was diagnosed as spondylosis. So I used to be able to I was in a ton of musicals, or I would, you know, walk the neighborhood or get up and just do things has been very difficult to still love my body when I can't do those things, or like when I need to sit down while I do the dishes. So I've had the queer experience of loving my body now. juxtaposition with the okay, but my body can't do all the things that it used to be able to do. So I definitely the internet has been a very safe space for me both through the earlier parts of my transition when I was closeted, and finding comfort in other people who felt like I did, as well as being out of the closet. Because I know it was it was such a big relief to merge my private Instagram with my public Instagram, and like move all the pictures over and be like, hey, these used to be secret, but they don't have to be a secret anymore. And I can just be who I am definitely being out because I waited to come out until they felt safer. And I had my backup plan set of staying with my friends in case anything went wrong. I had like a bag ready to go. Luckily, I didn't mean those things. But um, so I waited until I felt safe. And then coming out was like just a breath of fresh air that I didn't realize I'd been holding for such a long time. And suddenly, I was just free to be myself. And I didn't have to hide anything anymore. Or pretend that I was happy. The way I was, has just been such a wonderful, amazing experience. And I haven't even been to my first pride. I call it the pride curse. Whenever I have an event to go to for pride. Something always happens via like car trouble, or just something always happens. So we'll see what happens this year.

A

Adam James Cohen (he/him) 37:57

But yeah, is it is it on your radar? Are you going to be able to attend a practice?

F

Finn May (they/he) 38:01

I have actually a pride event I'm going to go to one of my friends from high school is directing a show that two of my friends from college are the main characters of it's called Rockv for pride

show. Oh, though. So looking forward to going there. Yes, I did try to go to some prides. I remember I had, I told my parents I was going to a friend's house and I wasn't wearing any pride stuff. And then I had a bag that had a pride themed outfit. Because I didn't have anything overtly like the trans flag, I just had little things I picked here and there to put together to make different flags. I remember. So I had my change of clothes. And I was planning on switching them out when I got to pride and then going back to her house once it was over and changing back into my normal clothes and going home. And I would take pictures, but I would just keep them on my phone. And it wasn't going to like post them anywhere. I had to work, unfortunately. But the fact that now I get to just go to pride and post about it. And it's definitely been such a wonderful feeling being out after all this time. And while I do sometimes feel some pressure of like, well, if you were born Sis, you would already be at this point, and you would have facial hair and you would have all these different things. And so it definitely takes a lot of patience to be like okay, yes, but I am where I am now. And it's better than where I was. And I'm getting there and I'm making progress has definitely been very affirming.

A

Adam James Cohen (he/him) 39:26

Yeah, and I appreciate you naming that particularly because that can be a really challenging piece for folks is feeling kind of this either regret in terms of their timeline or frustration to not be where they're wanting to be and deep distress because of it. And it's can be challenging for folks to find that same patients that you have been able to find if they're those listening who are who are struggling with that, like what what advice would you give them just based off of your experience again, you don't have to speak for all people, but just from my experience. Yeah.

F

Finn May (they/he) 40:00

So I definitely had a lot of like, I missed out on all these experiences. But now I'm too old for it. Because I'm 24. And it's not socially acceptable to do this. To do that, I would say, you never got to have that teenager hood, that experience. There's no shame in having it now, like I know there's a lot of trender is I think the term that's going around where if you're a trans person with dyed hair, you're not really trans. But I'd always wanted to have dyed hair. And my family weren't very okay with that. And so I just didn't do it. It wasn't a you can't dye your hair, but it was more so a,

👤

40:32

I don't want to disappoint you by dyeing it. So now I have so much back and forth of like, do I dye it? Do I not dye it? Well, people might call me this or I might not be taken seriously enough. Just go for it.

👤

40:46

Just do what you want to do. If you want to dye your hair, dye your hair if you want to. If you identify as masculine and have long hair, rock that long hair, or if you identify as feminine and want shorthair go for it. Same thing with like, trans men, don't be afraid to be feminine trans

women, don't be afraid to be masculine. Or if you fit comfortably in those categories, then there's nothing wrong with being in those categories either. Like don't, life is too short to limit yourself in terms of clothing, or really just experiences anything Life's too short to, to hide who you are. Because I know there's often so many times that I regret like not having an authentic prom, or like, it was such a small thing. But having my name in written as my dead name in high school. I forget what they're called. It's been so long, like yearbook yearbooks. And then also like the show programs, seeing it go from my dead name to Finn has been so wonderfully affirming. So I go by fan, which I know I mentioned, but it's actually my middle name. And first name is Anthony, I kept the first and last letter of my dead name as kind of a tribute to who I was because I don't hate who I was, it was still me. And I'm still very much love who I was and that person. It's just kind of not me. And so I wanted to still pay tribute to who I was and keep those first two. And I remember thinking I think I was around fifth grade. I was sitting in class and I just thought the thought of what my name be if I were a boy. And I sat there in the margins, and I figured it out. And I was like Anthony Yes. And then I had the moment of what if that's not normal? Okay, got it. Right, everybody else's names and blend mine. And so it's not just me. So like Brian became Briana Scott became Sarah. And I was like, okay, yes, I've disguised it. I've hit it. We're fun. No, it's definitely a weird kind of double life. Like, I used to relate a lot to the shows where the character main character and have a double life like Kim Possible at day is this at night is this. And like trying to keep those two worlds separate? I know that's often described as a common experience that some people have that I really felt that if like these two different worlds that I had to keep separate, right? So it's been so wonderful to be able to merge those. Yeah, I'm just I'm so happy that I am where I am now. Like, I know, I mentioned before looking back, I would not have believed at all like if someone said, like, you're going to be engaged, someone who daily affirms your gender, you're going and like their parents are going to accept you and support you and your mom is going to use the right pronouns and name and you're gonna have short hair. And you're going to finally feel okay, I would have been blown away, I would have been like, yeah, no, okay, that's taking whatever drugs you're taking, and be on your way. So. So it's definitely been really wonderful. Well,

A

Adam James Cohen (he/him) 43:29

I'm feeling I feel so happy for you. But I feel so I feel so happy, so inspired. And so like invigorated by your story, and just so appreciative of you, inviting all of us into it. Because I so believe in the power of sharing our stories as a way to help others heal and help ourselves heal, too. And so I just am so I'm just so grateful that you said yes.

F

Finn May (they/he) 43:56

I've been interviewed before, like in the school paper, or like the newspaper for our area. But it's always been about being a quadruplet. And like, my brothers would get their article and I get my own article about what it was like to be the only girl so to have this interview where I'm not the only girl I'm just me is wonderful, are like I know, we had an interview done for our graduation. And our school colors were blue and white. And so my brothers all wore the dark blue and I were white. And I remember like thinking it's such a small thing. But that's the last divide I need right now is once again, the whole emphasis on the only girl to the point where it was down to a color. Like I know I mentioned the envelopes earlier for like the birthday cards and but yeah, it's really been awesome to and I know I mentioned before, like the fact that I'm able to keep this relationship with my brothers and it has changed but it still my brothers and

we still have that if not now, you know, the sisterhood and brotherhood, just the Brotherhood. The fact that we still have that like My brother offered to play video games with me the other day, some things never change. She offered to play video games with me then and he does now. Or like, Brian, and I will still joke around. And Kevin and I will keep each other updated on what's going on. So like, some things still haven't changed, which is just wonderful. And we still have those experiences together of like, hey, remember when this teacher did this, or when we went out to the woods that one day we still have those experiences, it doesn't matter that I was a girl, then there were there were definitely some moments where there was such a strong divide and others where it was like, No, we're just siblings. Yeah. Right. I still have trouble with not saying you too. When someone says Happy Birthday. That's my go to someone else say happy birthday. I'll be like, Oh, you too. And then like, Oh, wait.

A Adam James Cohen (he/him) 45:46

That's funny. Wow. Hmm.

F Finn May (they/he) 45:48

I need to remind myself that that's not what people usually say.

A Adam James Cohen (he/him) 45:52

Right? Oh, my goodness. Often, I know, I gotta let you go in just a little bit. But just curious. Before we do Shift to winding down. Was there anything that wanted to be a part of this conversation that hasn't been able to be shared yet? Or?

F Finn May (they/he) 46:05

I don't think there is. I know, I haven't looked over my notes at all that I said that I made. Yeah, but I think I covered everything.

A Adam James Cohen (he/him) 46:16

Sounded like a lie. Yeah. Yeah. It was a lot. Well, then then just to kind of shift us into closing, I guess, what was that like spending the last hour or so? sharing your story? How was that for you?

F Finn May (they/he) 46:27

Honestly, it's almost like a huge weight off my chest, which is, you know, funny, trans haha. But really, though, it kind of feels almost like the same as therapy does, of being able to tell somebody, like, start to finish this is my story. And everything that has happened to me has been wonderful. And I know, You've been incredibly validating of my identity, because I was very worried about coming on and saying, Hey, I'm trans masked gender fluid, and being so

worried about how that would be perceived and taken has been absolutely wonderful. I know, I screenshotted the message you sent of my identity, and it's definitely something I'm gonna hold on to that was great. Thank you. Thank you so much for doing that. I know, I ran over to my fiancée. I was like, look, look, look, I can still be on the podcast. And so that was really wonderful.

A Adam James Cohen (he/him) 47:14

Oh, yeah, absolutely. Absolutely. And yeah, for listeners, Finn was yeah, as you mentioned before, wasn't sure how if I would fit into the category of those folks who have been dis affirming to you and the identity of being gender fluid, because that just has happened so much in your life? And absolutely, nope. It is a very valid and real and necessary identity. And you sharing your story is, again, I imagine there will be a good amount of listeners who are well versed in folks who are gender fluid. I imagine there'll also be folks who it's still kind of a growing edge for them to really understand what that experience is like, particularly for parents of queer folks who listen to this show. So again, I'm just I'm just so grateful you came on to share your story.

F Finn May (they/he) 48:02

Thank you so much for having me. It's been wonderful. Totally.

A Adam James Cohen (he/him) 48:07

And then if folks who are listening want to connect with you further want to get in touch. Is there any way folks can do that?

F Finn May (they/he) 48:13

Definitely. So I have Instagram, Tik Tok. Let me see if I can pull up I almost gave the name to the private account, which is still out there. Okay, so it's finnwin98.

A Adam James Cohen (he/him) 48:33

Great. Well, I'll be sure to link to that and bite folks that connect further. Awesome.

F Finn May (they/he) 48:37

Thank you so much,

A Adam James Cohen (he/him) 48:38

Thank you. This was great. I'm excited to yeah, stay in touch as we go on from here.

F

Finn May (they/he) 48:43

We're sure thank you so much.

A

Adam James Cohen (he/him) 48:52

Hey, thanks for joining us for today's conversation. Feel free to head on over to secondadolescencepod.com for show notes and more. And you can connect further by following the show on Instagram @secondadolescencepod. If you're interested in being a future guest on the show and you want to come on and share about your own second adolescence visit secondadolescencepod.com/beaguest and you can submit your interest there. Alright, that's it for me for now. Whether it's morning, afternoon, night, wherever we're finding you and your day, go on out there and keep doing things that would make younger you absolutely thrilled. That is what it's all about. Alright, take good care.