

Ep. 36: Second Adolescence w/ Rebecca Minor (she/her)

Tue, Feb 21, 2023 11:16AM 41:11

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

people, queer, queerness, parents, trans, feel, spaces, clients, absolutely, folks, gender, adolescence, conversation, healing, kid, navigating, rebecca, thinking, community, younger

SPEAKERS

Adam James Cohen (he/him), Rebecca Minor (she/her)

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

Hello, hello and welcome to this week's episode of the Second Adolescence podcast. I'm your host Adam James Cohen. On this week's episode, we have Rebecca Minor. Rebecca is a gender specialist who in her clinical work and advocacy work is absolutely furthering the conversation and support surrounding the experience of trans and gender nonconforming youth. In this episode, we talk about her work as a gender specialist, and also dive into her own experience of discovering and navigating the identities she holds, and how this in turn supports the work that she does in the world. It was just such a great conversation for me both as a therapist, but also as a queer person, I so loved getting to talk with Rebecca, and I'm so grateful she wants to invite all you into the conversation too. And as with each 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 guest share things that really differ from your experience, whereas other guests might share things that really speak to what you went through or are currently going through. And I really 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 secondadolescentspod.com For shownotes and more, or you can follow the show on Instagram at [secondadolescencepod](https://www.instagram.com/secondadolescencepod). All right. Welcome to the conversation. Thank you so much for being here. Well, all right, let's get started. Welcome to Second Adolescence!

R Rebecca Minor (she/her) 01:47

Thank you so much. I'm so excited.

A Adam James Cohen (he/him) 01:50

Yay. I'm so excited. Before we pressed record, I was letting you know that I'm a big fan of your work. And this feels really exciting from a human to human level, but also therapists or

therapists level and so I'm pumped you're here but for folks who may not know who you are, I'm wondering if you could kind of help land us before we go anywhere in just a little mini introduction to give a little context who the person is behind the voice.

R Rebecca Minor (she/her) 02:12

Sure. So my name is Rebecca minor. I use she/her pronouns. I identify as a neuro queer Femme and I am a therapist in private practice where I work as a gender specialist, which I define by working primarily with queer and trans youth and their journey of becoming and as a guide to their parents in affirming it.

A Adam James Cohen (he/him) 02:33

Yes, yes, yes to all of it. Okay, I want to dive in to that. I guess first, can I ask a question about you and identities you hold?

R Rebecca Minor (she/her) 02:40

Absolutely.

A Adam James Cohen (he/him) 02:40

You say neuro queer femme. Could you kind of share with listeners what that means for you?

R Rebecca Minor (she/her) 02:44

Sure. So it's fairly new language for me. When I came across it, I was like, Oh, this finally feels like it clicks in a way that language hadn't quite previously. So I learned from the work of Nick Walker, who came up with the term of neuro queer, really, there's this kind of inextricable link between our neurodiversity and queerness, or for some people trans Ness. And for so many years, I was like, why do these things that don't seem to bother me, right? Like I'm really comfortable with fluidity. And I'm feel boxed in by things like binaries. And yet that felt unusual. And so I was like, what's up with these things? They haven't been like societally brainwashed in the way that so many people seem to be aligned with these concepts. And it wasn't until I started to understand more about my brain, and neurodiversity that I was like, oh, maybe that's part of it. And so it's also just a faster way to say that I'm queer, and neurodivergent. So, in some ways, it's just shorthand. And then the FEM really speaks more to moving away from concepts along the binary. I don't identify as trans. But the language of cisgender started to feel like it was still upholding the concept of being trans versus cisgender is its own binary. And if the idea is that we're moving away from binaries as a whole, then the language of them felt like a better place to land and also aligns with an incredible lineage of people who are women, but also trans fam. And so many non binary folks and people who I felt like that's a category I want to land in more than our kind of societal understandings of the binary of being a woman.



A

Adam James Cohen (he/him) 04:38

I love that. I love that. Thank you for letting us all in. Wow. Okay. Well, I'm so excited. You're here. I have so many questions I want to ask, just hearing you talk. I'm just like, what about this without this with this? Okay. I guess first let's land in Chris about your work. Like, how did you get started in this work? What drew you to want to do this work and work with the populations you're working with?

R

Rebecca Minor (she/her) 05:00

Great question. So everyone always asks that, because it's so nice, right? So I think often there's an assumption that either it's because of my own personal identities or those close to me. And what's interesting actually is I have many people close to me who were not out at the time that I went into this field, but have since come out. So it was not inspired because my sibling or my best friend, but that has since become true, which is really special. So it all started with a single course that I took in college, it was a freshman seminar called queer and pleasant danger. And you know, it came in the mail, because that was how we still received things then, and you had to rank order what your interests were. And when I saw that one, I was like, what I don't think that's a word you're supposed to use. And so I circled it, I put stars next to it and was like, Oh, I hope I get it. And I did. And it really opened up so much for me, and was really the first time I was exposed to trans narratives. We read Hello, cruel world by Kate Bornstein. And seeing her story, I was suddenly struck by this idea that ultimately, however I do it, I want to help people live their truth, and whatever that looks like. And from there, I was majoring in theater and psychology. So as often as I could melded the two together and took queer theory courses and performed and did my own mash up of things because it wasn't a major or something to study at the time, then, of course, there were like women's studies, but not in the same way. There are now opportunities for queer studies and trans studies. So I kind of made it work. Then after college, I started working in the field, I got a job in eating disorders, which was what I thought I wanted to do, and again, was confronted with the reality of when people aren't able to be themselves. That's when we see things come up, whether it's an eating disorder or other symptoms, I had the opportunity to work with some trans folks who once being out, so many of their symptoms subsided. And it just affirmed for me again, that like when we invite people to step into the fullness of who they are so many things that are challenging subside. And so I went to graduate school, and was like, this is the population I want to work with. And none of my professors had any expertise in the field. And we're like, Oh, that's really niche? I don't know. I don't know. So I did independent studies. And anytime there was a paper, I tried to make it about that. So I just kind of made it work. And starting out, I worked in group settings and community mental health centers, and I just became the person wherever I worked, where it was like, Oh, if somebody's queer, or you know, LGBTQ, I send them to Rebecca. And as soon as I was independently licensed, I started my practice, and have been specializing ever since it's been five years now.

A

Adam James Cohen (he/him) 08:01

Wow. So okay yeah, what's that like in this moment, just to look back at the journey that got you here?

R

Rebecca Minor (she/her) 08:07

REBECCA MINOR (she/her) 08:07

It's wild. I mean, the story feels long. Now, as I was talking, I was like, this is probably a longer answer than you wanted. But I'm really proud. And I'm so glad that at no point along the way, did I listen to the people who told me it wasn't going to work, or that it wouldn't matter, or it was too niche. I keep this picture of Laverne Cox on the wall behind me from Time magazine when it came out in 2015. And the title of it was the transgender tipping point. And that's when I started my practice. But I knew that we weren't at the tipping point yet. And I think we are a bit more so now, I don't know if we are yet. But it's certainly dramatically shifted over the last five, seven years, we'll see.

A Adam James Cohen (he/him) 08:51

Yeah, the work you're doing and what you're offering that publicly through your Instagram. And I don't know, if you identify as an activist, I don't know if you identify as an advocate, but there's just so much of that. And also just educator, I just think you just got to share that I've sent your work to colleagues who are working with families with queer youth. I've sent them to parents of clients that I work with, like it's been such a tool and resource so

R Rebecca Minor (she/her) 09:15

Oh, that means so much to me. Thank you.

A Adam James Cohen (he/him) 09:18

So just wanted to send just a moment of thank you for your work thus far. It's incredible. Incredible. Thank you. Yeah.

R Rebecca Minor (she/her) 09:24

And the parents need it.

A Adam James Cohen (he/him) 09:25

Absolutely. And yeah, there's so much expansion of awareness and knowledge that's happened recently, but there is still so much limitations. We have quite a long way to go. And yeah, kind of on that I think about, you know, within this greater context of second adolescence work that I do here and kind of talk a lot about, I think of my work with queer youth as really kind of partly fueled by this effort to really limit the potential need for more and more queer people to need a second adolescence to really speaking to allow that fullness that people are often not given the space to really let be their present. I guess I'm wondering, does that resonate in your work with young people and kind of seeing?

R Rebecca Minor (she/her) 10:04

I just get chills when you said that. Because truly, that is the goal. What if we did it in real time?

I just got chills when you said that. Because truly, that is the goal. What if we did it in real time: Right? Like, what if a 13 year old could be who they are at 13 and not have to kind of redo that process at 25, or 47, or 72, or whatever. And that's where I see the gender affirming work, especially as being lifesaving.

A Adam James Cohen (he/him) 10:26

100%. And yeah, and I'm curious if you could share both kind of your work currently, and also historically working with queerness- queerness in the form of gender diversity, sexual romantic diversity, what do you see people coming in with? Are they coming in seeking support with that particular part of their identity? Is it something else? You know, oftentimes, people come in with one thing and evolves to really show everything?

R Rebecca Minor (she/her) 10:47

That presenting concern.. Yeah, totally. I mean, in the, in the past, prior to starting my practice, I would say that a lot of times people came in with other concerns. And then through the space that we built together and the trust that was ultimately there, they were able to come to those realizations and start to work through some of that, and really being given the opportunity to explore so many people aren't exposed to the possibilities of queerness, that educating people about what is possible, opened up so many doors. Now, in my practice, people come to me specifically for that, because they know that's what they need. And they know that's what I do. So initially, all calls were from parents saying something like, my kid has rapid onset gender dysphoria, and we found your name online, and we need your help. And I don't want to take us on too long of a tangent, but rapid onset gender dysphoria is not a thing. And I can't get started, because I'll talk the entire hour about it. But I do have a blog about it.

A Adam James Cohen (he/him) 11:51

Yeah, I'll link to that. .

R Rebecca Minor (she/her) 11:54

But really, so often, it was specific to that of like, you know, our kid is expressing some thoughts about this, or, you know, I love the messages that are like, my kid thinks they're a pan's pan. What is it? Pansexual? And I'm like, yep, yep, that's it. Right? Got it, right. But even there, there's still an unfolding and getting comfortable with some of these pieces, right. So some of my clients I've been working with for four or five years now maybe came in initially, because they felt very clear in wanting to transition in a very binary way. And over the course of our work, and through some medical transition, they then started to feel the availability or the possibility of something more neutral or queering. Those ideas even have like, you can be a trans man and wear mascara. And then the other work there is of course, navigating helping parents through that process when they're like, He wants us to call him a he him, but he comes downstairs and heals, like, and both of these things can be true. Yeah. So I say that a lot.



A**Adam James Cohen (he/him) 13:04**

Yes, a lot. I feel so much connection with the challenge of working with the resistance of parents, and ultimately coming down to like this drive to protect their kid and what they think is the right form of protection. But often it's from this very skewed perception is very limited perception. And goodness, it's a tricky dance to walk as a clinician D. So I just I'm really appreciating the work you're doing.

R**Rebecca Minor (she/her) 13:30**

Oh, thank you. Yeah, and I mean, really, the parent work has become much more of a focus for me in the last couple of years, because I was finding I can help kid after kid after kid. But there's only so far we can go if the home environment isn't entirely supportive, or if parents aren't getting some of the nuance of these things, or, you know, what they see as protection is getting in the way of their child being who they are. And so that's when I started offering parent coaching. Because I tell the story, sometimes I had a social work professor who would talk about a story that's told about this man in a village who was down by the river, and they kept finding all these babies in the river. And he was like, why are we fishing out all these infants from a river? Like, Shouldn't someone go upstream to figure out why this is happening? And so I see my work with parents as that act of going upstream. And that if I can help them get out of their own way, because when we get into the work, they love their kid, they want to do the right thing, and they don't know how and the shame that comes from being a parent who doesn't feel like you have answers shuts people down. And so if we can get past that, right, like I know, I'm jumping around but I had a conversation this past week, I did my first multigenerational parent coaching. So I met with parents and grandparents at the same time, and I did a little exercise with them as called the gender identity challenge where I asked people to define their gender And then explain how they know they are that gender without using any anatomical language or gendered terminology. And so I gave this prompt, right and the grandfather after some discussion he was like, so what I'm noticing is really everyone gets to define this for themselves is like, Yes, grandpa like, Yes, this is it. And like, you know, this is a man of a certain age, who if you took a glance at him, you might not think, Oh, that's a man who is going to be super supportive. But he was right there for it. And he just needed a little guidance, right, and just that separation of the ideas of sex and gender, those things so often get conflated. But with just one session, his mindset about this had changed. And so that's where I'm like, This is magic. This is where I'm supposed to be. And really what I can offer to these kids beyond working with them individually, if you have extended family who support you, then we're really onto something. And if he then goes and has a conversation with a guy he plays golf with or something, then like, we're already making waves.

A**Adam James Cohen (he/him) 16:10**

Oh, my God, that's so powerful. Thank you for sharing that. I mean, what, what an incredibly useful intervention and what a cool example of how change in perspective is possible. I know a lot of the listeners of the show are actually parents of older queer people, older, gender diverse people, too. And I'm just curious, because I just want to find a way to ask them what that was like for them to kind of even hear you share about your work with parents, because I've gotten messages from folks who are recognizing they're later in this work and wishing they would have done things sooner. And so it's just, it's just so special to hear that you're able to catch these parents of these young people now,

R

Rebecca Minor (she/her) 16:44

I think opens up for them too, right? Yeah, like, that's the thing that's also so cool about this work. And regardless of how old someone is, when they're coming out, like everyone around them also has an invitation to explore. Maybe gender doesn't have to be like this, or maybe queerness doesn't have to be like this. And I've seen this in my own family to have just like, Hmm, I hadn't really thought about that. What if we had conversations as families and people about compulsory heterosexuality, right, that's not even a term most people are ever exposed to, like, I just kind of went about my life and got married and had kids and I'm now sitting with this realization that like, maybe I'm more queer than I thought and noticing that through your kids is such a special opportunity, I think, for everybody to grow.

A

Adam James Cohen (he/him) 17:31

Okay, so then in terms of like, thinking about the healing work of the people you've worked with, I'm thinking both about young people, and also maybe older people you've worked with to like looking at the systems they're in like these family systems and helping change happen. They're like, what else have you found be a part of healing, whether that's healing from anti queerness? Whether that's healing from anti transmis? Like, what else have you noticed has been components for folks, I'm thinking a lot about, you know, the listeners of this show are primarily kind of people over ages 18, who are in the midst of their own healing work, too, and, and wondering, yeah, if there's any nuggets to kind of offer of what has worked for some of your clients, that might be something that these folks are navigating to?

R

Rebecca Minor (she/her) 18:07

Absolutely, yeah. And I end up talking so much about youth, because I'm so passionate about them. And it's the majority of who I work with. But I've also had adult clients and still do, who are navigating these things as well. And I would say the number one thing is community. That like not feeling alone and isolated with these experiences is the most healing thing you can do. And whether that's in a formal or informal setting, that's great, right? So I do offer group therapy, and I get to see and witness in real time how that is so supportive for folks, but also just like, casually getting together with people and participating in some kind of volunteer opportunity. Like, it doesn't have to be like, I'm going to this formal thing or something that's organized by a clinician, but there are so many different ways to connect and get involved. And I think, especially with the internet, there's an opportunity to connect with folks that you may never otherwise have had access to, especially for people who live in more rural spaces, or maybe aren't out in their community. And you know, that's another big challenge. I work with some adults who are not out especially as trans because their parents are because they're married, they don't want to lose their job. They have fears and concerns about shaking up their entire life. And the thing that's been most healing for them has been to still find some spaces, whether it's online or in person where they can be themselves and be witnessed in the fullness of who they are. Because I think also being seen is so important. And when you spend so much of your life hidden just that opportunity to be in queer space and in queer community is so so healing and it can be hard when you don't feel like you necessarily belong there. You know, I think I see that for folks of like What if I'm not clear enough? Or what if I'm not transmitting

anything enough, and that really prevents people from putting themselves out there and engaging when in fact, doing so I think is the antidote to feeling not enough because it's the isolation that leads people to think that.

A Adam James Cohen (he/him) 20:15

And yeah, and I appreciate you naming the variety of shapes community can take and how it can be something formal, informal, it can be big, small, it can be a singular relationship. It can be a collective of relationships, it can be engaging in online spaces, or in person spaces, even like listening to conversations like this. Well, absolutely just receiving like they're still connected to this collective experience.

R Rebecca Minor (she/her) 20:38

We're in community right now. Absolutely.

A Adam James Cohen (he/him) 20:40

Absolutely. It's the antidote to shame, like so much of like healing from anti queerness and anti transness is dealing with the shame that then gets kind of instilled in us because of growing up in this world that socializes us to believe this absolutely. And finding community with other folks were like you said, you you're able to be seen, let the parts of yourself that maybe otherwise felt they couldn't be seen. Let that be like, held and supported and validated by folks like just that, in itself is like, that's years of therapy right there in that.

R Rebecca Minor (she/her) 21:10

Yeah, save yourself some money! But I'm just blown away sometimes, like I made a post when it was bisexuality Awareness Week, that was just like you can be by and in a monogamous relationship, or you can be by and fill in the blank, right? It was just a handful of different phrases. And I got more messages in response to that post than anything. I've done a long time, almost exclusively from moms who were like, I am realizing this about myself, but I'm married to a sis man, I'm a mom. And I don't know if moms can be queer. And I feel really stuck in this place. It got me thinking about like, where is community for people who aren't visibly out, because of course, like we have pride parades, we have all kinds of wonderful, extravagant and very visible events. But there also needs to be community for people who are having these shared experiences, but feel alone with them. I'm still kind of chewing on what to do for that group in particular, because it's so sad to think that then it's just a wrap. I'm just going to tuck that part of me away. Yeah, but no, right. And also, I had one conversation with one woman, just over DMS. And she was like, I realized I couldn't keep telling my kids, you can be whoever you want to be and love whoever you want to love, and not be taking that advice myself. So yeah, there's some reckoning there. How can we raise the next generation if we also aren't being honest with ourselves about who we are.

A Adam James Cohen (he/him) 22:45

Adam James Cohen (he/him) 22:15

My heart is breaking for these folks who feel so trapped and limited within the roles they're playing kind of where they're at in their life and feeling like as you're speaking to, it's that there is a difference between those of us who feel more access to an ability to engage in these places of community that are more visible, more overt, but when we don't feel safe enough to do that, or we question our belongingness there, that is just a different level of isolation. And gosh, yeah, okay, now my wheels are turning like what that'll be now. We'll have to follow up on that. Very curious there.

R

Rebecca Minor (she/her) 23:17

I have an idea for a retreat...!

A

Adam James Cohen (he/him) 23:20

Absolutely. Oh, gosh,

R

Rebecca Minor (she/her) 23:24

Well, and it just got me thinking because I was like, there are so many ways in which before I recognized my queerness I got away with things like having sleepovers without any parental supervision were some things happened. And you know, looking back, I'm like, Well, that's pretty clear. But it would never have been okay, if it hadn't been what was perceived as just two friends. And you know, there's a lot of privilege there, of course, and I still hold a lot of that as I am more visibly queer now than I ever have been in life. I am married to a sis man. And for many years that precluded me from feeling like it was okay for me to be in some of those spaces and to be publicly out. Even when I started my Instagram account, I was like, Can I put that I'm queer, like, are people going to come for me? And I still would like, even in this moment, as I'm saying these things out loud. I'm like, Well, I guess here we are. And we'll see what happens. Like there could be some fallout, as if both of these things can't be true, right? I know. And I will tell anyone, yes, you can be queer and be in a relationship with whomever. But I did have a lot of experiences in queer spaces earlier in life where people had a lot of disparaging things to say, you know, born of some real unfortunate things that have been caused by sis men, you know, it's it's a tricky spot to be in when people are navigating that dance of the roles that we play or the situations that we're in and some of that was probably born out of not realizing that it was possible to have this expansive understanding of identity.

A

Adam James Cohen (he/him) 25:07

Yes. Your face lights up when you say the word "possible." I can like see, I don't know what that means. But I'm just noticing or you mentioned that word possible and fullness a few different times on our conversation, and I just see you light up. I'm curious, what do you know about that?

R

Rebecca Minor (she/her) 25:20

That's really interesting to have reflected back. So thank you. This is such a therapist to therapist conversation. But I'll totally go there with you. Which is that I think, and I do say that word possibility a lot, because that's what I see so much of the work as being about, it's about what's possible. I was not aware of what was possible for a long time growing up, there were a lot of attitudes about being bi. And so I was like, that doesn't sound good. Like, I don't want to be, am I allowed to say sweaty? But yeah, absolutely. Okay. At the time being sweaty was not good. Right? This was like, 2003, whatever. And so it was like, Bye, girls just do that for attention. They just aren't doing it. For guys. It's just because they want all the options, or it's people who are actually gay and just not willing to come out yet. And none of those felt like it fit for me because I was like, Yeah, I am attracted to some guys. But I also totally have a crush on this girl on my dance class. And I don't know what to do with that information. So I'm just gonna keep dating guys and keep being a really good ally. And it was okay, right? Like it worked. But it took years of kind of unraveling to realize that all of these things could exist in one body and one person and that that could be okay.

A

Adam James Cohen (he/him) 26:49

I'm curious if you would share a bit more about and thanks for letting us into that part of your own personal journey. Sure. I'm wondering to know more about what's been supportive in that unraveling for you personally, I'm hearing about the unraveling, you're helping clients navigate through anything else to name about what's been supportive in your own journey?

R

Rebecca Minor (she/her) 27:06

Well, I think what's interesting is the client work is part of it big time. Big time. Like I hear myself saying things to clients that I'm like, wow, younger me really needed to hear that. And she is in the room is there there is parts work happening all the time. So there's this like, kind of CO occurring healing, but I think the unraveling was also witnessing other people navigating some of these same challenges or boldly being out about who they were. So I think there's the witnessing, I think some of it is an aging process of not giving a shit as much what people think about you. And some of it, I think was, the more I studied these concepts, the more I was like, I cannot ignore this, I am reading and reading and reading and reading about these things. Like it's something I'm just studying, and not like it's personal, right? Which is so I mean, it's a classic joke about therapists of like, whatever it is that you end up specializing in is often usually something that you maybe need some work around. So it was partly that it was kind of a combination of things. And certainly community right of that realizing that like I really felt at home and the most myself, and the most authentic version of me when I was in queer community. And so I came to this tipping point where I was like, Can I keep not sharing this? Is that, okay? It wasn't like I was not out because they were there were people are like, my friends knew my spouse knew, I swear, I had told my mom but had to do that again. Or maybe for the first time, I'm not sure it really, it was like, if I'm gonna be a public face around some of these concepts and being like, live your truth, live your truth, I also have to be living my truth. And so when I redid my branding a couple years ago, and built out my new website, I was like, Well, I'm just gonna stick it on there, and people will find out. So that's how my inlaws found out

A

Adam James Cohen (he/him) 29:08

Interesting! Oh, my gosh, what was that like?

R

Rebecca Minor (she/her) 29:15

It was actually really sweet. They both sent me lovely little messages, you know, and that's the thing again, there's a lot of privilege here, right? Like, I knew who my family was made up of, and I knew they were liberal, and we live in Massachusetts, and they were probably going to be cool with it. But I did worry like, are they going to think that we're going to get divorced or that I'm not going to be happy in our marriage anymore? Will they have a protective response about their son that gets twisted into some kind of anti queerness and that didn't happen at all. They were lovely about it. And my father in law cracks me up. He gets me the most like this candle Love is love and it's rainbow. It's Really sweet. He gets me like the gayest gifts all the time. And like, sometimes he's like you get it like you see it? And I'm like, Yeah, I got it like there's a rainbow. Yeah, yep. But we love him, right. And like, even before that he was involved at the Unitarian Church handing out pride flags. And now I think he feels even more invigorated about it. But it went well, on the whole, nothing terrible happened, despite all my fears, and then they had legitimate fears around the clinical work of what parents would think. And it does come up sometimes not really as much about my identity. But when parents come to me for parent coaching, they'll talk about the clinician that their kid is seeing and whether or not that person is entirely unbiased, or perhaps leaving their child in that direction, or guiding them in that way. And that's what I was afraid of. I was like, parents are gonna think I'm like indoctrinating their kid. And I think I got away with not really being out for a while there. You know, my clients know, I'm married. And so everyone was just like lala la will kind of collude to avoid this. But now it is like everywhere and cats out of the bag.

A

Adam James Cohen (he/him) 31:20

Yeah and how is that? I was curious. Like, I'm glad you're sharing everything you've shared so far, because I was curious, like how it is for you. I always talk about this with other kind of queer clinicians like holding our identities, while also kind of doing the work with clients who maybe mirror some of those identities and then having to deal with parents all of that, like curious, how is it to navigate self disclosure? If and when that happens, having as you're speaking to now, being more public, in your work, having this be a known part of your experience, as clients come in? Like, how has that been? I can imagine there's been positives, and maybe some challenges with that.

R

Rebecca Minor (she/her) 31:53

Yeah, and I'm very pleased to report that there have been very few challenges, which I try to remind myself of, and anytime I talk to someone who's in that space of not knowing if they should come out or not, I always reiterate that I wish someone had told me to come out sooner and that it would be okay. And that like clinically, I wouldn't lose all my clients or like, the parents wouldn't trust me anymore. Because that has not been the case. If anything, my clients, I think are way more comfortable with me. And the truth of the matter is they all knew they clocked me Well, before I was put it on the internet, and like my hair has just gotten shorter and shorter, and Geyer looking over the time, you know, so they're aware, especially working with teenagers, they don't hold things back, usually. So they'll just ask me, like, they'll

straight up be like, Wait, I'm confused. Are you married to a man. And so you know, I am thoughtful about when self disclosure is appropriate and purposeful use of self versus, you know, I'm never going to take up someone's session making it about me and my identities, but these things are present in the room. And part of being really in connection with my clients is showing up authentically as myself, it's important for the work, especially when the work is me like inviting people to do the same. So overall, it's been really good. And there haven't been too many hiccups, you know, my little sense, or whatever goes off when I have conversations with parents where they're like, well, that therapist is non binary. So I don't know that, you know, that makes me pause a bit and thinking about what language I use to describe myself and how that lands for parents.

A

Adam James Cohen (he/him) 33:33

And you mentioned younger you and kind of parts work. And that's so a part of how I conceptualize the work of queer healing and my own story. And I'm curious like, even in this moment, thinking about like, where you're at in terms of career and kind of the work you're doing in the world and also where you're at in terms of like creating this fullness and possibility of your own self a kind of in your own journey. They're thinking then back to whatever younger us come to mind. I'm curious like what do you think about younger Rebecca? And then you think about the Rebecca now like, what what comes up?

R

Rebecca Minor (she/her) 34:03

What immediately came up when you asked me that was like middle school, Rebecca in the bathroom, looking in the mirror being like, I don't want to go back to class. I don't want to be here. I'm very anxious, and how little awareness I had at that time that it was possible to be where I am now, in every sense, right? Not not just queerness but like, professionally, personally like my mental health, like all of those aspects. And also, this is so funny. This is a really specific memory. But do you remember the Scholastic book fairs? Did you ever have those? Absolutely, absolutely. Okay, great. We're having a throwback moment. So I distinctly remember and I actually made a real about this when I got the biography. I'm blanking on her real name now, but she played Topanga on Boy Meets World. I remember I got her biography through scholastic and it came with a full sized poster and I was playing jumped, and all the other girls in my class were like freaking out about the Backstreet Boys or in sync posters that they'd gotten and I never got the appeal. Now I'm like, Oh, honey, that's why cuz you're a little baby clear and didn't realize that, that I was like, well, one of them's okay. But the rest are really not doing it for me. And that like the whole want to be her or be with her thing had not clicked yet that I was like, oh, Topanga is just cool. But when all the other girls had crushes on not Cory the other one

A

Adam James Cohen (he/him) 35:33

was it Shawn?

R

Rebecca Minor (she/her) 35:33

know Yeah Right With the hair

know. Yeah, right. With the fan,

A Adam James Cohen (he/him) 35:36

right? Yeah, yeah, listeners can correct us. But yeah, go with Shawn.

R Rebecca Minor (she/her) 35:40

He was cute. He was cute. Yeah, I was a Topanga fan. And just these moments, right. And like I mentioned earlier with the girl in my dance class, I distinctly remember finding out that she had a girlfriend. I had a boyfriend at the time, but I was pissed. I was like, how could she have a girlfriend? This is not fair. Like this is not okay. But like, Why? Why was that not right. And now I'm like, oh, that's what jealousy looks. And the idea that she was like out at, I don't know, we were like, 16 or something. I thought she was so cool. And she was incredibly talented. And so I was legitimately watching her for that reason, as well, just these moments where I look back, and I'm like, oh, yeah, I see my younger self trying to figure some of these things out, maybe times where I had more than just friend feelings for a friend and didn't realize it. And that the fights we got into felt so much more charged, because I didn't realize why I cared as much as I cared,

A Adam James Cohen (he/him) 36:39

oh, I can hear the tenderness you hold when you go back and look at your younger self at these different moments. And that's such a helpful way of being to look back. And yeah, whether it's, as you're speaking to seeing the hindsight, 2020, seeing kind of when the queerness was there before the awareness was there, and being able to like, give this kind of tender love to your younger self of oh, here's why. Here's what that was. And it's a really sweet way of being in relationship with a younger selves. It can also, you know, with that can bring up grief and kind of some harder feelings to perhaps Absolutely, yeah.

R Rebecca Minor (she/her) 37:09

And there, you know, there has been some of that. And that's, you know, it's all part of the work. But also, it is really special to feel like I am living in a way that my younger self would be really happy to see and kind of amazed by right. And so when I do if's work and go back and connect with these parts and catch them up of like, Yeah, I'm 33. And like, these things are working. It's possible, there's that word again. And that's really special to be able to do that. And then every day, I get to do that with young people, right in our sessions, and some of my older clients to being there with them. Like, yeah, I also totally missed the boat on some of these things. It's all part of it.

A Adam James Cohen (he/him) 37:53

I want to just hang out with you all day. I want to just keep having all these conversations. But I want to be respectful of time. But I guess before we wind down, I know there's so many places we could keep going and continue to go. But was there anything else that wanted to be

included in this conversation today?

R Rebecca Minor (she/her) 38:10

I think for folks who are listening, I want to extend the invitation to explore and that no matter how old you are, and no matter the circumstances you're in, or the roles that you play, there is still possibility you can find your community and you can find your people and that at no point along the journey of me becoming more honest with myself about who I am. Did I regret that. And I am deeply grateful to be in a place where I feel like I know myself with so much more clarity and the ease that comes with that. So I hope people can find a way even teeny tiny ways. Even if they're in private moments in between or listening to this podcast to feel like they can start to step more into the fullness of who they are.

A Adam James Cohen (he/him) 38:59

exclamation point, exclamation point, exclamation point! Thank you for that. Again, I just want to just express my gratitude and appreciation not only for coming on, this is so special to get to have this conversation. But for the work you're doing. Again, you've been such a tool in my own work, both professionally and also personally, I keep taking things from what you're offering, and I'm just so pumped that you are at the place you're at and you're letting everyone in. And it's just thank you basically

R Rebecca Minor (she/her) 39:28

thank you for making the space for me to talk about some of these things to you know, I'm learning to be more open and vulnerable in these opportunities are a great way to do that. Awesome. Yeah.

A Adam James Cohen (he/him) 39:39

Thank you so much. Oh my gosh, of course, of course. And then if folks want to connect further and and follow what you're doing and learn more like what's the best place to connect with them or for them to connect with you?

R Rebecca Minor (she/her) 39:48

Great question. So my website's really easy to remember it's genderspecialist.com and my Instagram is probably the platform I'm on the most and my handle is @gender.specialist.

A Adam James Cohen (he/him) 40:00

Awesome. We'll link to all of that. Great, Rebecca, thank you.

R

Rebecca Minor (she/her) 40:03

Thank you so much. Absolutely

A

Adam James Cohen (he/him) 40:14

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 at [@secondadolescencepod](https://www.instagram.com/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.