[*Gender Reveal* theme music starts]

**Tuck:** Welcome to Gender Reveal, a podcast where we hopefully get a little bit closer to understanding what the hell gender is. I’m your host, and resident gender detective, Tuck Woodstock.

[*Gender Reveal* theme music ends]

**Tuck:** Hey, everyone. I hope you’re all hanging in there. This week has been big Mercury retrograde energy even though we aren’t in retrograde anymore, but we are in the post retrograde shadow so I’m going to blame it on that inside of… my actions. So, two things happened that are relevant to you.

The first is that I had to scrap this week’s interview on Friday, and pull something together new from scratch for you. Luckily, best friend of the show, Zee Griffler was willing to hop on Skype at a moment’s notice for an impromptu advice session. So y’all are getting back-to-back advice episodes, baby. I know that advice episodes are some listeners' favorite format so if that’s you, congratulations. And if not, our interview with Torrey Peters is up next week, the author of *Detransition, Baby* and it will be worth the wait. I… more or less guarantee it.

The second thing that happened is that my phone bricked itself and I spent all of Saturday biking to the apple genius bar and hastily buying a new phone, and getting rained on, which I should have anticipated but didn’t and getting home and realizing I didn’t know any of my passwords and crying about technology. I didn’t cry at the season finale of *WandaVision* but I did cry about two factor [authentication] so that’s where I’m at.

So, because I had essentially twelve hours to put the show together, you’re not getting a “This Week in Gender” segment today either. Honestly, the news is so bad and bleak and infuriating and also so boring in its transphobia that it’s sort of for the best that we don’t dive into it here when we’re just trying to hang in there.

But I do want trans girls and trans women to know that I love you so much and you deserve so much better, and I want everyone else to know that statistically there is a good chance that there is an anti-trans bill in the works in your state or your area right now so please take a few moments to call your legislators and look up others way that you can get involved in this fight for really, really just fundamental trans rights.

A couple more announcements before we get to the advice section. First, we’ve got the shop restocked with our new March merch line up, which includes four new sticker designs. Our most popular one so far says, “No gender, too tired.” Another one says, “Your gender is: beautiful,” and there’s another that has a trans frog on it. So, there’s really a lot of different energies going on there for you to choose from. We also restocked several of our most popular designs, including tank tops, t-shirts and sweatshirts that say things like, “Trans kids are wonderful”, “Support trans media” and “gender is dead.” That’s all available through the end of March at <bit.ly/gendermerch> and as always, all proceeds are split between the artist and a trans organization of the artist’s choice. Again, that is <bit.ly/gendermerch>.

And of course, we don’t take a cut of those merch proceeds, except for a couple cases where they’re donating to our grant fund specifically, and so if you’d like to support the work that we do here on the show, you can join us on Patron.com/gender where one dollar or more gets you access to our weekly newsletter. Okay, no “This Week in Gender” segment so let’s get to the show!

[Interview Intro Theme plays]

**Tuck:** Zee Griffler is the executive director of the open sanctuary project. They’re a filmmaker, an advocate for asexuality visibility and education, and a frequent guest and advice giver on this very podcast.

[bell dings]

**Tuck:** “In my state, there’s an option for an X on drivers’ licenses. I’m transmasculine nonbinary and my mom is really supportive of me. However, she decided to change her gender marker on her license to an X despite being a cis woman because ‘Why should it matter what my gender is?’ I have really, really mixed opinions on this and want more perspective and thoughts. On one hand, there isn’t much reason for gender to be on a drivers’ license anyway so I really don’t care. On the other hand, an X does hold lots of significance for some people. That shouldn’t be downplayed, and having this on a license could potentially lead to some discrimination. I guess my question is what are your thoughts about a cis person using X gender markers?”

Yeah. I love this question because I am also torn on this, and have really gone on a journey in the past couple of years with how I feel about it. A year and a half ago, in the before times, I found out that some cis lesbians that I knew put an X on their drivers’ licenses in solidarity with nonbinary people and I was actually furious because I had recently gotten the X marker and was like, “Wow, this was so significant to me and now cis people are immediately taking it and making it meaningless and blah blah blah blah blah,” but, you know, a year and a half later, I’m actually- gender markers are weird and shouldn’t exist like the question asker said and we should probably fuck with them as much as possible and when I was at the DMV the other day renewing my drivers’ license with the X marker on it, I was reminded that the X doesn’t actually mean nonbinary, at least in Oregon.

It actually means unspecified, and anyone can be unspecified, and it sounds like your mom really wanted to be unspecified, so I support her doing that, and if everyone shows unspecified then we effectively wouldn’t have gender markers anymore which would actually be excellent. All I’m saying is yes, it is a difficult question and I can see any opinion on this but I have gone on a journey to decide that even though it makes me feel weird it is ultimately beneficial for everyone to be unspecified.

**Zee:** Yeah. I fully agree with the first point that the questioner asked which was, you know, why should there be any governmental specification of gender on documentation. In Colorado, as well, the X is undefined. It makes a lot of sense to me that anyone that wants to be undefined should have the right to be undefined, and also maybe it’ll reduce discrimination against people with Xs on their licenses. Which is- everyone is just like, “Hey, I am undefined, and you just don’t have to know that information cause it shouldn’t matter.” So yeah.

I think this almost kind of feels similar to me about cis people using they/them pronouns which… it’s fine. People can use whatever pronouns they want and like, if you want an X on your license, I feel like anyone should be allowed to do it because the X doesn’t mean nonbinary.

[bell dings]

**Tuck:** So, the next question is also about gender markers. I promise they’re not all about this, but I thought I’d put these two next to each other.

It says, “I live in Oregon and the process for a name change and getting an X gender marker is pretty clear cut, but I was born in another state to which I rarely return. The process for name change on a birth certificate seems extremely hard. Do I need to get my birth certificate changed? Is it just going to make my life mildly difficult if I don’t? I’ve never had a passport but if I want to get one, should I just do that before I change my name on my Oregon ID?

Since neither my birth certificate or passport can have a nonbinary marker, could it just be that an Oregon ID would make things easier most of the time when I’m not dealing with major government issues or international travel? Is there one resource for determining all this? I keep getting overwhelmed and discouraged clicking through government websites.”

**Zee:** In my experience, as somebody that has and was lucky enough to have an X/undefined on my birth certificate and one on my drivers’ license, I don’t recall a time of being asked to show my birth certificate in a really long time so that has not really functionally made any difference to me. I also have a passport, and my passport has my birth name on it which is different from my name. I went through so many document changes a couple years back and I just haven’t bothered and on top of all that, my picture looks so bad. I think Tuck saw it. [laughs]

My picture on my passport, it does not look like me at all and it didn’t really make a difference. What can I say? My license is different. It has a different gender, and it has a different name and it did not make a difference to me. I suppose there might be really specific times when maybe it’ll make a difference but I also just feel like a lot of times most cis people don’t really pay attention to that stuff, like to gender markers and stuff like that unless they really just wanted to make your life hard anyways and I feel like they wouldn’t care about using the gender marker. They would just make your life harder because they want to.

**Tuck:** Yeah! There is no governing body checking all of your different gender markers against each other on different documents. It almost feels like there would be but there just isn’t. And so I’m in actually almost an identical place to Zee. My birth certificate is updated. My drivers’ license is updated, but my passport has my old name and my old gender marker on it. The only difference is my passport picture is actually extremely hot. It just doesn’t look like me at all. It’s like a hot girl, but yeah. I have a passport and a drivers’ license with two different names, two different gender markers. I’ll probably try to update it, especially if the Biden administration allows us to put Xs on our passports just so I have some consistency.

But on the other hand, maybe at some point it will be useful that I have two different documents with two different names and two different gender markers so that’s something you can ask yourself too. Is it useful to me to have different names and different gender markers on things so I can choose which one I want to use for safety or to match a certain other document or do I want them to be all consistent? And yes, like Zee, I also have not shown my birth certificate to a single person since I got it. It just sits in my file.

**Zee:** I think we, we all get kind of hung up at the beginning of this process. Like, oh no, is like, a lot of this going to really matter and it just turns out functionally being trans in the world, a lot of the times, luckily, it really doesn’t, and sometimes it does and that sucks and we’re working, you know, to obviously not live in that world anymore, but certain things, they’re kind of much more chill than you’d think they’d be.

[bell dings]

**Zee:** “I just heard your latest advice episode, and there was one about somebody who didn't want to be put on the spot by going around and sharing pronouns at their workplace. I used to work at my school's LGBTQ Center, and the rule for that space is to refer to everyone as they/them unless they say otherwise, and I was wondering if you thought this would be a better alternative since it still normalizes not assuming someone's gender? I totally understood your stance that if it came to asking pronouns versus guessing gender, that we need to do the former, but I wonder if this would be a safer choice for people who can't come out but hate misgendering themselves so directly.”

I think if you create a really safe platform, like maybe if there’s some kind of private check in to this center that says would you like to indicate your pronouns, and it’s an optional thing, it’s really great and I think if the staff also maybe has pronoun badges, just to normalize this in the space because again this is the LGBTQ center and not some random other center at your school, I think that’s also great, and I do think if someone gives *absolutely* no specification as to the pronouns that they would like to use then sure, using they/them pronouns is fine, but the moment someone indicates some kind of preference you can’t use they/them pronouns for them anymore if they don’t use they/them pronouns because then, you’re misgendering them as opposed to, you know, the former, you said they/them pronouns to refer to an unspecified gender versus somebody’s gender identity.

**Tuck:** Yeah, it’s just so tricky because it really is evolving and so it seems like they/them is a neutral option, but unfortunately, it has become yet another gender, and so it has become less of a tool for avoiding gendering someone but it’s still sort of is that, and I just don’t know how to even talk about it anymore. I’m so confused, every time I start trying to say something, which is why I keep coming back to what if we all just said the pronouns, but people are like no absolutely not and I’m like ok. I guess I’ll- ok! I respect you! [laughs]

**Zee:** Yeah, but like, if someone doesn’t want to specify the pronouns, right now, the best thing we have in the English language is they/them pronouns.

**Tuck:** Yeah. No, I agree.

**Zee:** And that’s just how it is until we a) either decide to mass-adopt neopronouns which isn’t going to happen anytime soon or b) there is no B.

[bell dings]

**Tuck:** So, these next two questions, I’m going to read them at the same time because I think we can answer them sort of in the same answer.

So, the first question says, “If a woman who identifies as cis and straight dates a trans man, would you still say she’s straight? Would you call their relationship queer? (This question does not apply to me specifically, as I’m bisexual, so I promise I’m not ‘asking for a friend.’ Haha. Just genuinely curious because I’ve been thinking a lot lately about what it even means to be straight in the first place) Mohera (she/her)”

I have no idea what it means to be straight.

Ok, second question- “I have been questioning a while now. I thought I was cishet, but some experiences and things pointed out to me by friends made me start thinking. If I am AFAB, and come to the conclusion that I am, say, a nonbinary woman, but still am exclusively attracted to men- would that not make me queer? Am I kidding myself in thinking I am nonbinary? This isn't the ultimate conclusion I have come to, but it is one of my big mental blocks/fears. Jackie (they/them)”

And so, for the am I kidding myself in thinking I am nonbinary, I think we should set that aside cause we have a similar question in a couple questions, but we can focus on these two questions of, “Would this make me queer? Would this make me straight?” Zee, what do you think?

**Zee:** I think you had a really good answer in an earlier advice question in an earlier episode about what it even means for a relationship to be queer anymore, which I think folks should go back and listen to that because that’s interesting. But looking specifically at these questions and just looking at these little things, to the first person, the trans man in that relationship may decide he would like to refer to himself as queer or not. The relationship is a straight relationship because he is a man and that’s how that works. In the second question, if you are nonbinary, if you’d like to call yourself queer, you can call yourself queer. The relationship would also be a queer relationship because you are not a woman and when you’re nonbinary, basically all your relationships are queer, if want them to be because, you know, everyone’s kind of gay if you’re nonbinary.

**Tuck:** Yeah. There’s that famous- “War is over if you want it” that got turned into that tank top I had for a while that says, “Gender is over if you want it” and I just feel like this relationship is queer if you want it. You know! I know cis women who are in relationships with trans men and they call that straight and I know cis women who are in relationships with trans men and they call that queer. And they could be very similar relationships but they’re using different language so you know, if you’re a nonbinary woman, but you’re exclusively attracted to men, do you want it to be queer? Do you feel like queerness resonates with you in any way? You really have whatever, whatever you want. [laughs] So, I don’t call relationships queer or not queer. I actually wait for people to tell me what they think of their relationship as because it’s actually not my place to be the arbiter of who’s in a queer relationship.

**Zee:** Yeah. I totally agree, and I think queerness as a label is something that you really have to decide whether it’s valuable to you or not. Do you feel like you resonate with it at all, either to relate to yourself as a queer person or your relationship as queer? That’s kind of up to you if that’s a framework or a concept you really resonate with in the first place. So, yeah. I’m just echoing what you said Tuck, that it really depends on how people would like to frame it.

[bell dings]

**Zee:** “If my parents are not supportive of trans people, what are good ways to talk about my nonbinary friends? Obviously, I don't want to misgender them. Juno, they/them”

**Tuck:** Can you use their names? If you use they/them pronouns for them, will your parents notice and latch onto it and throw a fit or do you think they’ll not notice because a lot of parents, if you mostly use names and throw a they in there, they won’t notice. They might misgender your friends, and either you feel comfortable correcting them or you don’t and I understand if you don’t feel comfortable correcting them, especially if you’re dependent on your parents. I think you can talk about them the way that they should be talked about. Maybe there’s a reason you can’t and I’m missing it, but I think from what I know, you can just talk about them. What do you think, Zee?

**Zee:** You know, we’re making an assumption when Juno, the question asker, says my nonbinary friends that these friends use they/them pronouns. I guess it’s possible that maybe they use neopronouns and this questioner’s parents really don’t like those, I guess, but I guess I would just go back to your first piece of advice which is you can always just use their name, and just don’t misgender your friends, like there’s ways around it, and I would also echo that most people don’t notice when you use they/them pronouns in a conversation unless they like really hate the singular they and they are super like “his or her, his or her” and there are people like that. I mean, they’re kind of annoying, but I think there’s still ways you can talk about your friends, even if it’s a bit more circumlocutious that does not involve explicitly misgendering them.

**Tuck:** Yeah. I just feel like I need relationship dynamic info on this one because for most cases, you know, I would say just talk about them, and if your parents ask are they a boy or a girl, you can be like, “No.” [laughs] But if for some reason you think that that would put you in danger or someone else in danger, then do literally whatever you need to do to not be in danger.

[bell dings]

**Tuck:** “I am a queer 21-year-old AFAB and I started thinking about how I feel about gender a couple months ago in quarantine, I think because I just didn't have to perform gender as much. I think I'm nonbinary and I guess more specifically agender because I don't feel like I have any innate connection to being labeled as a girl or a boy or really anything in or out of the binary. But sometimes I think I'm faking it because I've never really questioned my gender and didn't feel necessarily uncomfortable or wrong being labeled as a girl before and I've always like traditionally feminine things and don't feel wrong with my body.

But now after realizing I couldn't tell you what it feels like to 'feel like' a girl or boy I feel weird and uncomfortable being called one. I do feel a connection to women as a culture or experience but I don't know if I really am one. (Is that why some people refer to themselves as nonbinary women?)

Something you said once in a podcast about cis women not having to think so hard about their gender and just knowing they're cis really stuck with me, but I still feel like I'm faking it sometimes. Is this normal? If I am nonbinary, how can I just learn to accept myself? I feel like I still feel weird calling myself that. (Lotus, she/they)”

**Zee:** Yeeeah. There’s a couple different little questions and nuggets in here. It certainly sounds like if you resonated with the label agender, it would make sense to use it, and it sounds a lot like my kind of early experience with the label of agender and “Oh, you know, is this just a construct or is there more to this?” Just kind of challenging those questions, but I will say that I feel a lot differently about my gender than I did early on just thinking about it more and more and unpacking more experiences.

As far as just learning to accept yourself, I think a lot of it just has to do with just reframing how you think about yourself and talk about yourself, maybe even to yourself because regardless of your identity, having this prescriptive label of womanhood being put upon you your entire life, that’s a lot of neural pathways to recarve so, you know, it just takes time to reframe yourself to yourself. That doesn’t mean that you’re faking anything. It just means that you are really thinking about yourself in a new way, and thinking about yourself in a new way takes time.

**Tuck:** Yes, I agree with what you’re saying. I do think that is why people refer to themselves as nonbinary women. I know for me, like Zee, I went on quite a journey with my gender and I think about it a lot differently now than I did when I was first coming out and so when I was first coming out, I did think of myself as a nonbinary woman because I still had really strong connections to womanhood. You know, I existed mostly around cis women. Womanhood was the only thing I really had a touchstone for and then, I almost think of it as inching further and further, I don't know, down the balance beam or off the springboard or whatever.

But, you know, just taking one tentative step at a time away from womanhood and so it’s possible that as time goes on, you will start to have different feelings about your gender, start to have different feelings about your body. It’s also possible that you will never have different feelings, and you will always be like, “I don’t really know my gender is a shrug,” and regardless of that, you can still be nonbinary and have all of those feelings.

Most trans people at the beginning, feel like they’re faking it sometimes so that is very, very normal and that feel also may linger with you for a long time or it may go away immediately but yes, of course it’s going to feel weird at first and you know if it feels too weird you don’t have to do it. You don’t have to think of yourself as nonbinary if it feels too weird but I want to give you space to think of yourself as whatever feels right or good to you and if that changes over time that doesn’t mean that you were wrong before, it just means you were taking another step on your weird balance beam of gender.

**Zee:** Yeah, and I think there’s one more thing I wanted to add which is figuring out your gender doesn’t have to mean that you were suffering in your previous expectation of what your gender was. It can just be net-better over time. It doesn’t just have to be like, “Oh no, I really hated all this about me and now this makes more sense.” It can just be like, “Oh, this fits better. That’s nice,” you know.

**Tuck:** Yeah. Yes, and something else I was thinking about with learning to accept yourself which I’ve said before is like really surrounding yourself with image and thoughts from other nonbinary and trans people because that is what made me feel more confident in my trans identity is by stepping away from hanging out with exclusively cis women and hanging out with a bunch of trans people and the more trans people I hung out with the more confident I felt about being trans and the more I was able to really explore my own gender outside of womanhood or outside of a lack of womanhood, and so, yeah, just, you know, trans people. They’re fun.

**Zee:** Just got to vibe with it.

[bell dings]

**Zee:** “Do you have any thoughts on how to avoid gendering students in the classroom, especially elementary schools? I'm in a teaching program right now and observing in the classroom, and it appears common to separate the kids based on gender, such as ‘Okay boys & girls!’ or ‘I'll have the girls come up first, then I'll call the boys.’ In my school, gender identity isn't really discussed with the children, but I don't like that this is priming the kids to structure themselves this way. I have ideas about how to avoid this as a teacher, but how do I bring up the importance of this to my future administrators and colleagues when the concept doesn't seem to be front of mind for anyone?”

**Tuck:** So, the way that I like to approach this kind of thing, which may or may not work for the dynamic in your space, is to emphasize that shifting away from a ridged binary gender construct in the classroom is not just something that you should do to win extra points as an ally for trans people. It’s just factually more accurate about what the world is. Demonstrably, there are loads of gender expansive and gender creative kids either don’t identify as strictly boys or girls, or who are still figuring out their genders and so creating this false, ridged binary is actually actively unhelpful in that development for them and there are all sorts of different resources for educators, and lots of examples of cool gender creative kids so I would point to those resources to make the point that it’s not just something you’re thinking about in a vacuum.

It’s actually something that is just demonstrably true. There are a lot of kids that don’t fit that rubric so we actually do need to think of other ways of talking about gender in the classroom if we are going to talk about it at all.

**Zee:** Yeah, I agree with all of that, especially those teachers, you’re going to have gender expansive and trans kids in your class regardless if you think you do, regardless if you think, “Oh, I can’t tell.” You might not be able to tell and you might be making a hostile environment for those kids and setting them up for a lot of pain in their lives and you can just avoid it. You know, obviously, the gender roles kind of harm everyone anyways regardless of if they identify as trans or gender expansive or not and, you know, I don’t necessarily think all the teachers in the world who are saying boys and girls are doing so because they’re trying to enforce a rigid binary.

It’s just kind of autopilot language so it can helpful just to point out, “Oh, you know, I use the phrase scholars or learners or class, rather than saying boys and girls because, you know, I like to create a more inclusive environment,” so just kind of showing how you can be that change to those people instead of just saying don’t do this. You can just be like, “Well instead, why don’t we do this”, and talk about, “How about kids with hats today come up first.” You know, just using some other category instead of this silly category called boys and girls.

**Tuck:** Yeah, I love that. I love giving examples of different things you can do, and yeah, pointing out this is a thing that going to come up. We’re going to have kids like this and so let’s create a plan proactively about how to handle it instead of all of a sudden, you’re in the middle of class and you’re trying to undo the gender binary to accommodate your kid while also teaching everyone how to read.

**Zee:** Yeah. It’s just a lot easier to set up a policy early instead of like “Oh, gosh, we need to change everything right now for this one person” and you’re probably going to flub it.

[bell dings]

**Tuck:** “I am an AFAB nonbinary person who mostly presents ‘feminine’. I'm only out to a small group of friends. I've been dating a really great guy for almost 4 months and I want to come out to him as nonbinary. I don't know how to bring it up. He knows I'm bi and is very accepting of it, and he's accepting of trans people but I don't think he even knows what nonbinary is. He likes to refer to me as girl/my girl/etc. and I'm afraid this will alter his perception of me negatively. Any advice is much appreciated.”

**Zee:** I think you can start by, you know, not even bringing gender into it, you are allowed to express preference for how somebody refers to you and how it makes you feel so if it makes you uncomfortable to be called “my girl” in any context, you can just be like, “Hey, this actually doesn’t feel great for me as a person,” just outside of gender stuff at all. But you can always start by bringing up nonbinary or trans people in conversation and just seeing how this person reacts to that and just be like, “Are they saying weird things about it? Are they kind of neutral, kind of supportive?”

I think that can be a good way to see how someone might react to it. The other side of this coin is that, you know, if you come out to him and he doesn’t love it, ultimately, you don’t have a lot of control over how someone will react to you coming out and how they might want to relate to you moving forward as much as that sucks.

**Tuck:** Yes, so my question here is- Is your concern that you don’t know how to bring it up or is your concern that this will alter his perception of you, right? Cause if we’re just talking about how to bring it up, I think that the options that Zee delineated are the same options that I would actually identify. One is, you know, waiting until he calls you “my girl” and saying “Hey, I’d actually appreciate if you don’t call me girl” and if he’s like, “Why”, just being like “Oh, I’m actually not a girl. Haha. Fun fact.”

But, if you want to do it by testing the waters a little bit more and you think he doesn’t even know what nonbinary is, maybe you can introduce him to rad nonbinary people via you know TV characters, Instagram, sharing this podcast. Maybe not share this exact episode, although that would be a power move if you did that, and then later being like by the way, that’s me. I think there’s a lot of ways that you could bring this up.

But if your question is how do I bring this up when I’m scared that it’ll alter his perception of me, I just think that it’s important to remember, as we say often, that you deserve someone who is really enthusiastic about and celebratory of you, and so it’s scary but, you know, 4 months is not 40 years, and, you know, there’s plenty of time for you to rebuild relationships with this person.

There’s also time for you to find other people that will celebrate you the way that you deserve to be celebrated so I think it will go fine and you’ll have a good time and you’ll go on for many more months and beyond, but if not, there are so many people out there that will be very excited to date a nonbinary person, specifically you so it’ll be okay wither way, I promise.

**Zee:** I recall something that I recently saw on Instagram from nonbinary person, Jeffrey Marsh, that said, and this is paraphrasing, “If everyone falls in love with a version of you that isn’t you, who’s really benefiting?” What are you gaining from that? And that really resonated with me.

[Bell dings]

**Zee:** “I have always hated my name. I probably have more dysphoria around my name than I do around my body. Recently, I changed my name on twitter to something I thought was better, but when I saw the words ‘(name) retweeted this,’ I felt horrible. Before, I’ve asked people how to find a name they like, but what does liking your name even feel like? Sincerely, Name Pending”

**Tuck:** I’m such a bad person to ask this because I could not handle naming myself anything other than a joke that made me laugh every time I saw it, and so I named myself a joke that made me laugh every time I saw it. Something that I like to talk about a lot when people are talking about naming themselves is that it’s actually okay to keep the bar pretty low. You have a benchmark and it’s the name that you’re already using that your parents or someone else gave you, and so really, you’re just looking for a name that feels less bad than whatever name someone else gave you.

It doesn’t have to be the one perfect name because there isn’t actually one perfect name for you out there, the same way that there’s not actually one perfect person for you out there, and actually, the same way that there’s not one perfect gender for you out there necessarily so really, the bar is just, “Does this spark more joy than the name I’m currently using?”

I also want to say that you do have to give it some time because it will literally always feel weird to change your name. Even if it’s a name that you end up loving, it is going to feel weird at first when people call you that because you’re like, Wait, what the hell? That’s not my name,” even if you just told them to call you that. I shouldn’t say always but, in my experience, in the experience of other people, there’s going to be a time where it feels weird so maybe sit with it for, like, a few days or a week, and then if it still feels terrible then just throw it in the trash and try a different name and hopefully eventually, you’ll find one that feels better than the name you’re using right now. Zee?

**Zee:** Yeah, I mean, I don’t know. I kind of argue that picking a name that makes you laugh every time is kind of great. Obviously, that’s not going to be everyone’s approach, but-

**Tuck:** Right.

[Both laugh]

**Tuck:** It is a truly deranged way to pick a name, just to be clear.

**Zee:** It is a choice. It’s somewhat on brand and I love it. As you said, Tuck, even neutral is better than bad so if you don’t actively say, “Oh, I really don’t love that every time someone says it” that’s a step in the right direction and you can just stop there, and just be like “Okay, well, I don’t actively hate my name which is great.” You know, it would be better if you hear a name and you feel like it was spoken in wind for you and like that is your true name but I don’t know if that exists, just like Tuck said, and so I think it really does just come down to, you know, you say that you experience a lot of dysphoria around your name, you know, if you give a new name time, do you still experience that when that happens? And if you do, then that might not be the name and you can try something else, and you can keep trying other things because there’s no limit on how many times you can change your name.

**Tuck:** Yeah. We’ve said this on the show before but I know *many* trans people who have changed their name twice. I mean, technically, I’ve changed my name two or three times, and so, you can absolutely try out a few things and I just hope that the people in your life will give you the grace to try out as many names as you want because that’s what you deserve. You deserve to get to try things on until you find one that feels good for you and then if it feels bad later, just change it again and keep everyone on their toes. Keep them guessing. Why not?

**Zee:** Yeah. I mean, I think that’s fun. You know, just the general keep being revealed until morale improves.

[Both laugh]

**Tuck:** Exactly.

[*Gender Reveal* theme music starts]

**Tuck:** That’s going to do it for this week’s show. If you had a good time or learned something or think someone else might learn something, please share this episode with folks in your community. You can submit your gender and relationship questions via our anonymous google form which is linked in the show notes of this episode and on our website and at the top of our linktree. Also on our website, you can find transcripts of the show, our new FAQ page, and starter packs for new listeners. By the way, that website is [genderpodcast.com](http://genderpodcast.com/). We’re also on twitter and Instagram @gendereveal and you can support the work we do here at patreon.com/gender- all those links in the show notes. Browse our limited run stickers and other merch at <bit.ly/gendermerch> and remember that everything disappears out of the shop at the end of month so you’ve got like 3 weeks to grab whatever you want.

This episode was produced by Zee Griffler and edited by me, Tuck Woodstock.

Special thanks to Babette Thomas for their time and help on another version of this week’s episode. Babette is a gem and I am so excited to work with them more in the future.

Special thanks also to everyone who sent in questions for the show. We couldn’t do it without you, and if you didn’t hear your question today, maybe you’ll hear it in a future episode.

Our logo is by the talented Ira M. Leigh. Our theme song is by the legendary Breakmaster Cylinder.

We'll be back next week with more feelings about gender.

[*Gender Reveal* theme music ends]