Queering the Air

**Sasja:** Welcome to International Day of People with Disability. My name is Sasja Sydek. My pronoun is she. Because I will never be her. I'm one of the co-hosts on Queering the Air.

But today marks a unique broadcast dedicated to celebrating the International Day of People with Disability. And highlighting the achievements and the contributions of individuals with disability in various fields.

Before I start, I would like to acknowledge the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation, traditional owners of the land from which we transmit people powered radio. It always was and always will be Aboriginal land. I also would like to extend my respect to our trans elders, past and present.

'My disability does not define me' is the topic today. While it may present certain challenges and obstacles in our life, it does not dictate who we are as a person. We are defined by our own passions, our achievements and our resilience in the face of adversity. Our disability is just one part of the complex and multi faceted individuals that we are.

We refuse to be limited by preconceived notions or stereotypes and we are committed to living our life to the fullest, embracing our uniqueness and proving that our disability does not determine our worth or potential. We are capable.

**Sasja:** Determined and limitless in our aspirations and we will not allow any obstacle to diminish our spirit or define our identity. In this episode, honouring the International Day of People with Disability, myself and Geri, proud trans women, courageously will be opening up about our personal experience living with disability. For me, this marks my first time openly discussing my disability, a significant milestone that has been long overdue.

The societal attitudes, cultural norms, and the era in which I was raised have all contributed to a reluctance to acknowledge my disability. Geri will provide and in depth account of her life with autism, offering first hand insight that are sure to be enlightening.

So this episode promises a compelling narrative delving into the challenges and triumph of living with disability in a world that often overlooks the diverse experiences and individuals like myself and Geri. So we're going to welcome Geri here. Hello Geri. Hi, how are you?

**Geri:** Yeah, I'm pretty well, yourself?

**Sasja:** Yeah, I'm good thank you. Geri can you let listeners know who you are? What do you do?

**Geri:** Okay. I'm a transgender woman who in, actually next weekend, it will be exact fifth anniversary of having started HRT.

**Sasja:** Woo! Yas!

**Geri:** I'm quite an artistic person. But I also work in the health sector. And I've been a sex worker for four years, which is mainly involved me being a professional dominatrix, generally more of a dom top type.

And we all have our things we're into or we're not into and all that, but that's kind of my what I'm all about.I'm also a neurodiverse person. I was diagnosed with autism back in 2014. I was also actually diagnosed with having borderline personality disorder a couple of years ago too.

I actually think it's really interesting that so many of the transgender and neurodiverse people I've met over the years tend to also have some kind of neurodiversity.

There's a huge overlap of the Venn diagram if you know what I mean. And I know there has been actually quite a few peer reviewed scholarly studies on that topic in recent years, so it's not just a casual observation, so to speak.

**Sasja:** Yeah. Amazing. And you said you work in a hospital?

**Geri:** Yeah, that's been something. I've worked in operating theatres for over 15 years. We all have had our day jobs that we've done to get by. And it's been something I've done a fair bit of, yeah.

**Sasja:** I've seen you around at festivals like Midsumma or some events, but we don't really get to connect until I met you at the LGBTQIA + women health conference recently.

**Geri:** Yeah well I don't know if you remember, I do remember even working at Pleasuredome with you a couple of times.

**Sasja:** Oh, no way! . Really?!

[*Sasja laughing]*

**Geri:** Yeah. You don't remember? You don't remember that?

**Sasja:** I don't remember that. Oh my gosh. So yeah, and then when we were connecting on that at the conference, I just love that you are so articulate. I love your rawness and your honesty and I was like, oh my god, I love you and I really would love you to be on my show.

And then when you actually told me that you're going to the autism conference, because you have autism. So I didn't even know about that, about you. And you shared that with me, even like, you know, we are still considered strangers.

**Geri:** Oh yeah. I mean, it's not something that I want to necessarily hide from anyone. I think it's just like, it's part of who I am. It's like being transgender is a part of being of who I am. Being into BDSM is part of who I am. In fact, it was kind of funny. 'Cause I'm in Tasmania at the moment.

**Sasja:** Yes. You got stuck in Tasmania! You were supposed to be in here with me!

**Geri:** That's right. I got to the airport too late and I have to stay in Tassie for the afternoon. I was here mainly doing the business. I was on a business trip doing some sex work and anyway.

One of the clients I had was talking about how open I was about talking about how much I'm into wearing latex and wearing leather. And I showed him, because I went to Mona yesterday. You know, Mona?

**Sasja:** Mona, yes.

**Geri:** Yeah, and I wore my latex and my leather when I went to Mona. And this guy who I, who I saw last night, he was like, "oh, you know that's not normal, right? That's kind of a bit different that you would dress up like that to go to Mona". And I was like, yeah, well... I don't care.

**Sasja:** It's an artsy place! People think outside of the box.

**Geri:** Yeah, I mean, I'll just wear whatever I want, wherever I go. But it's funny when you speak to someone who's from a more mainstream, conservative perspective and they get worried about what people think.

**Geri:** They're like " how could you just dress up like that and go to Mona?" That's just what I do. I think part of being trans, part of being a lot of things is that you can hide away.

It hurts more to hide part of yourself than it does to... it might take some courage to be able to come out and be your true self. But it's a lot more uncomfortable in the long run if you hide it away from the world, you know?

**Sasja:** Here, here. Like someone at our show said the truth will set you free.

**Geri:** Yeah, absolutely. I gotta do me.

**Sasja:** That's it, girl. Yeah, that's it.

**Geri:** We're gotta be free. As long as it's safe and consensual and not hurting anyone else.

**Sasja:** A hundred percent.

**Geri:** And we're all going to do what we're going to do.

**Sasja:** Yeah. So can I dive in a little bit more about when you diagnosed with autism in 2014? Is that when you noticed that you actually have autism or you just want, you are curious to find out more?

**Geri:** When I got diagnosed it came as a surprise to me at that time because I was seeing a psychologist for other reasons. Then he did some tests and whatnot. Then I got diagnosed as having autism.

It was one of the things that was really interesting for me at the time because it was never something that I'd considered previous to that.And then when I started doing my own, you know obviously when I got diagnosed, I started reading.

Reading up on it and trying to understand more and then I'm like, Oh my God, that makes so much sense about why I was the way I was as a child and how it's been difficult for me to interact in the world and how I often feel like- You know, I guess sometimes autistic people can feel a bit like an outcast sometimes.

**Sasja:** Of course.

**Geri:** Well actually there's three types that they often say a lot of us will mask. We call it masking in terms of what a lot of us do, especially, I mean, I wasn't diagnosed as a child, so I just had to kind of find a way to fit in.

And just be like everyone else. Yeah. What I would often do, which is what a lot of autistic people do, is that we learn to be good actors.

**Sasja:** Mmhmm.

**Geri:** We learn to like, "oh, this is what you got. In this situation, you're supposed to do this. Oh, okay. Yeah. And in that situation, you're supposed to do that. In order to get this to happen, I have to do this".

And then you start to, you're even like, you practice what you're doing almost like while you're by yourself in the mirror to try and work out how to fit into the world.

**Sasja:** I can relate to that because I get diagnosed with my disability only recently as well. I mean, I do know that I'm incapable of doing things. But I just feel growing up in Singapore as an Asian kid, there's no such thing as dyslexia or ADHD or OCD.

You get what I mean? And then until you can, I never get diagnosed when I was a kid because there's no awareness on it. Until I came here and then I start to see people posting about dyslexia and then I start to Google about it.

And then I start to learn about what this means and then I said, Oh my God, I think I have the symptoms! Because I always have difficulties of spelling or decode words or grammars. Till today, It's so hard for me to finish a whole book.

I can't read the whole book. Till today. I can read the whole magazine. But not the whole book. So I thought, I'm gonna find out more about my symptoms and then found out that I got dyslexia and then they found out as well, I got ADHD and I also have OCD.

But, you know what, I do not see this as a weakness for myself because a lot of people in the past... because I've been living with this for so long. And like you said, we are just good actors.

**Geri:** I think that everyone's... I mean you have got certain strengths and certain weaknesses. And just because there's certain things that you struggle with.

I mean, I'm sure there's certain things that you really excel with and that you're really amazing with. It seems to me that you're an amazing people person, you're really good at bringing people together and connecting communities.

**Sasja:** Of course I'm good at other things, yeah. When it comes, especially in school, I've never been the best academic student, but I'm very good at creativity. Always been very, very good at creativity.

I always get A+, but when it come to academic. Yeah. I'm shit as. Shit as. So that's why when I got diagnosed with this I didn't talk about it because I just feel like I don't need to talk about it first.

I just don't want, you know, as a culture thing. I don't wanna feel like it's part of my weakness. People see that as my part of my weakness. And then secondly, I was like, I've been living with this for so long and I learned that I love challenges.

When someone give me a challenge and I always execute it. Even though I have all this disability, but I still get it done. So I just don't feel like I need to tell people that I have all these disabilities.

But today is the first day I actually sharing to people. To listeners. I don't know how many listeners are listening, but today's the first time I actually open up about my disability today.

**Geri:** Well done.

**Sasja:** There's no shame on it.

**Geri:** And I think as I was saying to you in an earlier conversation we had, I don't consider, I mean autism is considered to be a spectrum. So there's lots of people who have... I mean everyone who's autistic, it doesn't manifest itself in exactly the same way for everyone who has it and I think it's similar.

It's similar to, you know how there's a lot of people in society who say " oh you're a transgender person so you must be this that A B and C". But within the entire overall community of transgender people there's so many different individuals within that group. We're all trans but we're all unique.

**Geri:** We all have our unique personalities and personas. And it's similar with ADHD people or autistic people or anyone really. I think it's really important to understand that that autism is a spectrum in terms of, there can be certain people in society who have that diagnosis, who are I guess what's considered "low functioning", which I don't think is terminology that a lot of medical professionals like to use these days.

But it's like they can't necessarily look after themselves without having carers and that kind of thing. But then there's also people who are extremely "high functioning", often in executive roles, often doing really advanced things.

**Sasja:** Yeah, and this is the reason why the topic is 'my disability does not define me', because most of us are capable on doing a lot of things that normal people without disability can do.

**Geri:** Yeah. Yeah, for sure.

**Sasja:** Yeah. So you know when we come back I'm going to play a song by Putri Ariyani. And when we come back, we're going to dive in more on this topic.

**Sasja:** That was Putri Ariyani. Putri Ariyani is a 17 year old singer songwriter from Indonesia who came all the way to America to perform on the American Got Talent stage. Born prematurely, Putri was diagnosed with retinopathy infancy rendering her blind, but her dream is for people to see her vocal talent and songwriting abilities rather than her blindness.

She is inspired by international artists, including Stevie Wonder and Andrea Bocelli, which I'm going to play later and live by the motto " we are able, we are capable, we are equal". As her disability doesn't hold her back from living her dream.

In 2014, Putri won Indonesia Got Talent at just eight years old. And in 2022, Putri was invited to sing at Indonesia's national anthem for the opening Asian Para Games. Hi, Geri, are you still there?

**Geri:** Of course.

**Sasja:** Yes. So you know, that is very inspiring.

**Geri:** I haven't, I haven't made it back to Victoria yet. No, I'm still here in Hobart.

*[Both laughing]*

**Sasja:** So you know this topic that we [are] delving [into] is 'my disability does not define me'. This is proven. Like Putri Aryani, a very young musician who does she doesn't see her blindness as a disability. She see that as a challenge for her that she wanted to do more.

**Geri:** Yeah, for sure. Yeah. I'm trying to think of this ...well, there's a music artist called Owl City. The actor, Daryl Hannah. One of the guys from the Blues Brothers. I'm just trying to think of famous autistic people who have officially been diagnosed.

Because there's lots of celebrities who have been considered to be autistic. But then there's only a select few, you know, there's the ones that have the official diagnosis and not the official diagnosis.

Not that that matters. It's just when you're trying to talk about it in a professional setting, you don't want to just assume things about people. So there's some very successful people.

You run off a few there with blindness like Stevie Wonder and a few of those ones you talked about. And then, you know, apparently Beethoven was deaf. He had to cut the legs off the piano so he could make his masterpieces. There's probably a whole...

**Sasja:** A whole bunch of successful people with disability who have a lot of talents.

**Geri:** Absolutely.

**Sasja:** And just like us, we have our own talent too, girl.

**Geri:** Oh yeah. I can do lots of things.

**Sasja:** Yes! I've been following you, especially with your BDSM side with this. What do you call yourself again with the BDSM? Obsidian?

**Geri:** The goddess Obsidian, yeah.

**Sasja:** Can we tell a little bit about that?

**Geri:** Yeah. I've been doing it professionally for about three years now. And before that I guess I was involved in a lifestyle setting. So lifestyle meaning just, you know, not getting paid to do stuff, but just doing it for fun.

For at least over 10 years before that. I found being trans has definitely caused me, I think we all get you know, fetishised to a certain extent. And I guess because of that fetishisation, I would say that easily more than half of my clients that I've ever had, the main thing they want me to do is to top them.

When I've seen a lot of cisgendered female dominatrixes, they'll often do a lot of other things. Like impact play and medical play, electro play, a lot of these different sort of things. Which I do a bit of. I do a bit of those sort of things too.

Yeah. But I definitely find that a lot of my clientele, they tend to... they might want a couple of other things. They might want to do a bit of bondage. But the main thing that they're really after is to be topped.

**Sasja:** And with your condition, with autism, do you feel like a bit challenging when people request all these fantasies with you?

**Geri:** No, it's cool. I mean I'm obviously very into it. I think one of the things that has probably been a challenge with having autism has sometimes been just communicating with people.

I think all of us sex workers, we've probably had a fair share of challenges in terms of... I'll put it this way. I always start off that I try to be nice to everyone and especially when people call me or text me.

Or even when I first see them for a session. I'm always polite. And then you know, you get certain, a lot of situations where people will be rude and they will try to be dishonest and try and manipulate you and do these sort of things.

**Geri:** I haven't always necessarily dealt with that appropriately. Because when some of those things happen, it kind of upsets me. Autistic people are known for usually having what's called autistic meltdowns from time to time.

**Sasja:** It's almost like ADHD as well, yeah.

**Geri:** A lot of autistic people will be, we'll be easy going. But then once we get overwhelmed by a certain situation, we can often like lose our shit, so to speak.

**Sasja:** Yeah. So, you know with me, I have ADHD and also I have OCD. It just doesn't rhyme at all. Because ADHD, like you said, we can actually lose our shit when things doesn't goes as planned.

But with me, with the OCD, I can actually try to making things works because of the condition. And I don't see OCD as a disability, but according to the SSA, OCD qualifies as a disability if a symptom or complication make it impossible for you to work.

But I guess I don't see that as a disability because I am capable of working. I like things be done neatly. Everything has to be in schedule. You get what I mean? Like today, if I don't have plan B, I will start to panic. Thank God for someone caught me yesterday and asked me about what's going to happen today.

**Sasja:** And I told Michaela, I said maybe this person might not get on the plane. I might have to have plan B and I was right. So that's why I was so calm. I messaged you and said, if we can have a conversation on the phone and you said, fine. So if I don't actually have plan B, I will panic like crazy.

**Geri:** Me too. Like even when I woke up this morning, all I had in my mind was, cause I thought I knew I was going to, well I assumed I was going to land at Tullamarine airport at about 1:30PM and then I was like, I've got to get from Tullamarine to Collingwood in an hour and a half.

**Geri:** And I thought, am I going to just get a taxi or should I try and get the sky bus? And I was thinking about all these things about what I was going to do.

**Sasja:** Sky bus would be better because it there's no traffic for sky bus.

**Geri:** Yeah but anyway, I was thinking a lot about when I was on my way to the airport, I was thinking about what I was going to do when I got to Melbourne, but I wasn't thinking about what was going to happen at home, right?

**Sasja:** Yeah. I had that feeling because you know connecting flights, usually domestic flights, they always do this. They always cancel or either delayed. And for your case, they said you missed the flight. Like I just don't get it. Look, you get, you get to spend a few more hours in the beautiful Hobart. Like you said, you're in Salamanca market at the moment.

**Geri:** Yeah. I'm in Salamanca at the moment and also I think today while I'm here today, I feel more relaxed. Because in the last, I got here on Friday morning the main thing I was thinking about on Friday and Saturday night was like, I'm here to make money.

And I'm going to do some bookings and that sort of thing. Now I'm like, no, I don't need to do any book. I'm just gonna pass the time and do some things. And there's less anxiety because even when I went to Marjory yesterday, I decided I'm not going to be here only to work.

I wanted to do something fun as well. But I was thinking there was some people who wanted to see me in the afternoon and I was thinking I really need to get back and be able to be ready and to do this and that.

**Geri:** Sometimes when you have that on your mind that you're thinking, I've got to work later. I better not drink too much or I need to be able to go home and do this, that. It's not completely relaxed.

But it's cool. And I think that's like, even when you talk about your OCD, I think sometimes, a lot of autistic people not just me, we're very much into structure and categorisation. Once we get the structure we're all set. But I don't tend to do very well with, I like a bit of spontaneity.

**Sasja:** Definitely! Like today, I like to be more structured. At least I know what I'm doing and how I can go to plan B if I don't have that structure. If I don't have that plan, I'll start to panic and everything's going to go pear shaped.

**Geri:** Oh, having a routine is a big thing too.

**Sasja:** Yeah, routine as well. With my ADHD as well, then I always start to get aggression. I'm a very hyperactive person in person, but that's my ADHD anyway. But I don't see that as disability for me. You know, I'm just a very active person all the time.

**Sasja:** But the downside is when I start to experience those depression and learning disability, that's where I feel like, oh my god, that's my ADHD kicking in.

**Geri:** Yeah. I think this week in particular for me, I mean, it happens all the time, but yeah. I mean, I had some really great things happen this week. And then some things that were like, not so great.

**Geri:** I had a really great client and then I had someone who was wanting to cross my boundaries and wanting to, you know, we have them from time to time. Someone I basically had to say I don't want this to get out of hand. Like, please get the fuck out, kind of thing.

And I won't go into that. I'm fine now. Sometimes you have to just reflect on it and just say, you know what, there's always going to be ups and downs. There's always going to be some good and some bad people.

I think that's a big thing with being trans, with being neurodiverse, is that there's a lot of people who just really don't understand us.

**Sasja:** Exactly. Being trans, there's already a challenge there already for us. And on top of that, we have individually, have disabilities on top of that as well. There's challenges times two. And how we navigate that. This is why the topic today is 'our disability does not define us' because you know what, I think as a trans woman, we are survivors. We always survive. Any obstacles thrown to us, we still survive.

**Geri:** And I want to say something really important, is that I am who I am and I just go with that. For example that particular guy I was talking about last night. He was like, oh, you know, you have really nice legs, but you have no tits and maybe you should get a boob job. He was saying you should get a boob job. And I said, yeah, well, I want to get a boob job, but I haven't got one yet.

And then he's saying, oh, I can see some gray hairs. And I said, well, you know, yeah. And I wasn't judging him! Like he was. You know, that kind of thing. And I was saying, you know what, if you don't fucking like me, then go and see another sex worker. Fuck off.

I think that often happens. There's a lot of decent guys out there, but there's a lot of guys who would be very judgmental, you know?

**Sasja:** Of course.

**Geri:** You look at them and you're like, you're not exactly that attractive yourself. And you're telling me about my body and how my body should be. But then I think that it comes back to, for me, in order to feel comfortable with who I am and to love myself, I don't need to compare myself with others. I'm beautiful the way I am. You're beautiful the way you are Sasja. Every one of us has our individual...

**Sasja:** This is why we are unique, we are individual.

**Geri:** Yeah. And that's part of loving ourselves. I think loving and appreciating other people is just, it's to try and not be so judgmental.

**Sasja:** We are losing you. Are you still there? I think we lost you a little bit there. Okay, that's okay. I'm gonna play a song by Andre Bocelli and then we come back we'll be speaking to Geri again.

That was Andrea Bocelli. He's one of the most versatile vocalists of 21st century and is widely recognised for his award winning contribution to classical tenor records and songwriting. Andrea Bocelli was born partially blind and would later be diagnosed with congenital glaucoma. This prevented him from playing the piano until he was six years old.

However by the age of 12, had become a musical maestro and was proficient on piano, saxophone, trumpet, guitar, flute, flute, trombone, and drums. However, he became completely blind after suffering an injury at a football game. And despite the loss of his sight, Andre enrolled in law school and became to focus his musical talent on singing.

**Sasja:** After finishing law school, Andre launched a career as a singer and songwriter, receiving numerous music awards and selling over 75 million records. And a beach on Italy's Adriatic coast is named after Andrea Bocelli in honour of the Italian singer skill as a musician. So this is part of another inspiring person with disability and can do everything. Don't you agree, Geri?

**Geri:** Oh, yeah. Andrea Bocelli is incredible. Very incredible. I've actually done quite a bit of singing myself, actually.

**Sasja:** Oh, no way! Oh yes, you do! I saw you were playing piano.

**Geri:** Yeah. My mom's actually a music teacher and in particular, a piano teacher. So I always had piano around growing up. Piano has been a big part of my life. But also singing has been a very big part of my life. I would say throughout my twenties and early thirties particularly all I wanted to do was music. And to try and have a professional career doing that.

**Sasja:** Yes. The world is yours. If you have passion for it, you can do it. That's how I see it.

**Geri:** Yeah. I did try really hard to do that for a long period of time. I didn't get to the level that I wanted to get to in that sort of time frame. And then I started doing some other things. And I think sometimes it's like, well, maybe that's not what the universe had in mind for me.

**Sasja:** Maybe not yet. Not yet. Probably.

**Geri:** Yeah, maybe not yet. But I'm also finding that I'm really talented in other areas. And maybe there's a lot of other gifts I have to give to the world other than just my creative gifts.

 Actually one of the things that I've become interested in through sex work and through BDSM type and kink activities, is that I've become really interested in relationships and sexuality.

I get really into it. In trying to understand those things on an intellectual capacity, on an intellectual level. I think that's probably a bit of an autistic thing for me in terms of, I'm trying to understand what makes people tick and what makes people do what they do and like what they like. I've become really interested in that on a level of relationships and sexuality.

**Sasja:** Yeah, of course. You know, I'm speaking about my disability with dyslexia. Well, I got two books published this year! So a person who have difficulty with spelling, with grammar, with reading.

And when I was approached by an editor, Bobuq Sayed, I think late last year, he said, I want you to be part of the book. An anthology of transgender voices. Transgender and gender diverse voices of Australia book. And I was like, I went blank.

I was like, oh my God, how I'm going to do this. I've never write anything about myself. Like how I'm going to create a story with 2000 words. So yeah, I never done before. I always wanted to have a book, but you know, never at the last minute like this. With my disability, it does pressured me.

So I start to look through my contacts, who can I actually ask for help with this? So I did get in touch with Katie Cameron who used to work for Switchboard and also an editor for Red magazine. You know Red magazine for sex work?

**Geri:** Oh yeah.

**Sasja:** So she helped me out. And then from that onwards, I start to edit it myself as well at the same time.And that's where I learned, I can actually do this my own as well.

But with the help of, of course, the team as well. Then when the second book came down, we have the trans history since 1910, when Noah Reisman got in touch with me and said, can you approve this? I said, I think I have a better version of this.

So I rewrite the whole thing and I get approved by Noah Reisman. So with my disability, like I said, doesn't define me because I challenged myself and I got it done.

**Geri:** Yeah. I think that's amazing. When you were talking about that just then, and I was mentioning how I have this interest in relationships and sexuality and what makes people do the things they do.

I think growing up, particularly when I was a child and when I was a teenager, I didn't find it very easy to make friends. I could hang out with a whole bunch of people, but I was a bit, in the playground, a bit more nomadic.

I'd hang out with some different groups. I never had my strong friendship circle. Because I was definitely always one of the weird kids. I was always very different.

And I think relating to other people and forming friendships or relationships isn't something that came easily or naturally for me.

Like now that you're talking about your dyslexia and writing the book, it made me think maybe that's why I'm really into trying to... because I had to work so hard to develop relationships and friendships.

To try and understand how human interaction and those kind of dynamics work. Maybe that's why I'm so into it.

**Sasja:** Yeah. So actually just made me realise, things that I said, I've never talked about this because I do not see that as a weakness for me with my disability, which I've been living with it for so many years and I still get things done. Because I have people around me always using this as an excuse to escape responsibilities as well.

**Sasja:** Example, turning up to work. And then they say, Oh, I can't come up to work because I have ADHD or something. Maybe they're going through something, but I just do not wanna be that person. This is just my personal opinion. I do not wanna be that person making excuses so I can get away from my responsibilities.

**Geri:** Yeah, I agree. I empathise with you on that. Yeah, because I've definitely been someone, anything I've ever done, I've always wanted to be like. I want to be respected. I want people to be happy with the job I'm doing. I want to be performing on a high level.

I don't just, I don't just do something to like, Oh yeah, this might be. I mean, sometimes, you know, you try different things out or whatever, but like, you know, even when I got into into sex work, for example, I'm like, I didn't want to just like do sex work to like, you know, make a video. I was like, no, I want to be like really good at this. I want to be, and a lot of it is I guess my desire to make other people happy.

**Sasja:** Definitely.

**Geri:** Yeah, but also there's that side of wanting to make other people happy, but also you want to be, you know, that self love thing that-

**Sasja:** You want to feel like the achievement that something that you can actually get things done.

**Geri:** Yeah! You know, just be like, "Oh yeah, I'm kind of good and I'm okay" like, you want to be like, "yeah, I'm really fucking good".

**Sasja:** Yeah. That's it. I love, I love that. This is why I thought you will be the best person for me to talk to today because the topic is my disability. Disability does not define me.

And you're the perfect person because when I spoke to you at the conference, you inspired me to be honest, because so how articulate you are and the things that you said. I was like, Oh my God, how come I didn't think of that. So yeah, I love everything about you. That's why I was like, I want to get to know you better.

**Geri:** Aw, thank you, Sassy. I love you too.

**Sasja:** All right. Thank you, sis. I hope you get on the plane at 9pm and get back home soon. Yeah. And then I'll looking forward to catch up soon.

**Geri:** Yeah, absolutely. I've really enjoyed being in the show and yeah, love to. I'm sure I'll see you soon.

**Sasja:** Yes, take care. And thank you. Have a great flight home.

**Geri:** All right. Thanks so much.

**Sasja:** All right. Thank you. Bye. Bye. So that was Geri. Amazing, amazing trans woman, a very proud trans woman as well. Like I said, I've met Geri a few times, but I only get to connect personally at the conference, the LGBT woman health conference just recently.

And I thought Geri's amazing person. And when I saw Geri's Facebook, I just added her on the Facebook and very inspiring person. Like she said, she always likes to challenge herself and she wants to do the best that she can. And I'm the same, you know, I do not like to do things halfway.

And I like things if I want to do it, I do it fully and I want to do it. Really, really good and which I've probably have done in my life because like I said, I like to challenge myself.

**Sasja:** Before I leave you, I just want to say your disability should not be the sole factor that shapes your identity. Rather, it is just one aspect of who you are as a person.

You are defined by your talents, your dream, your passions, and the way you choose to impact the world around you. Embracing your individuality and recognising your strengths behind and beyond any limitations is key to shaping a confident, empowered self image.

Your disability is part of you. It's part of me, but it does not encompass the entirely of your being. So I'm going to leave you with Stevie Wonder's, “Isn't She Lovely?”, and Queering the Air will be back next Sunday, 3 to 4pm.