

Partners in Change

One Couple's Experience of Transition Within a Marriage

Before We Start...

Field Is Required: What was your assigned sex at birth? Please select response: *Female Male Intersex*

Field Is Required: What is your gender identity? (Please select the identity that most closely aligns with your sense of self. For data analysis purposes we ask that you select only one option.) Please select response: *Female, Male, Transgender, Non-Binary, Genderqueer, Two-spirit, Prefer not to answer*

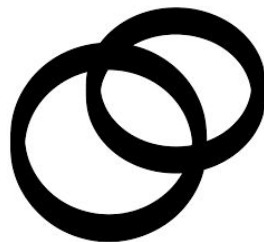
Field Is Required: Is your gender identity different from the sex you were assigned at birth? Please select response: *Yes, No*

Our Story



2009

2012



2013

2016



Excitement

What can be exciting about transition?

Fears

What can be scary about transition?

Challenges - Chelsea

- Youtube
- Trying to find community
- Not feeling in-step with Will
- lack of story
- So....You're straight now?

Challenges - Will

- A lot of attention
- Questions
- People asking for time
- Assumption of maleness



Reframing Our Stories

“New person”

How grief is framed

Framing as “betrayal” or forgiveness

Everything that was supportive was made for newly dating couples

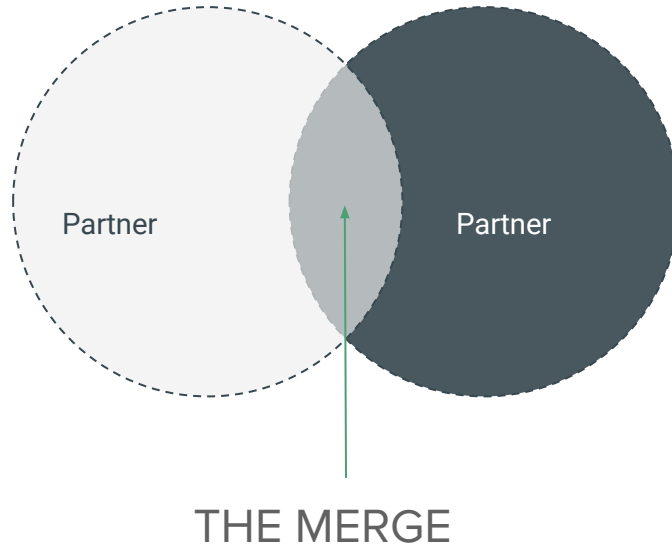
Most of these things were issues of people having fear that gets away from them

Frame of a straight/hetero couple vs queer/gender fluid couple

Marriage Myths

- People are static
- Change is controllable
- Reality will always be shared
- Vulnerability is always a choice
- I must stay who I am for the sake of my partner

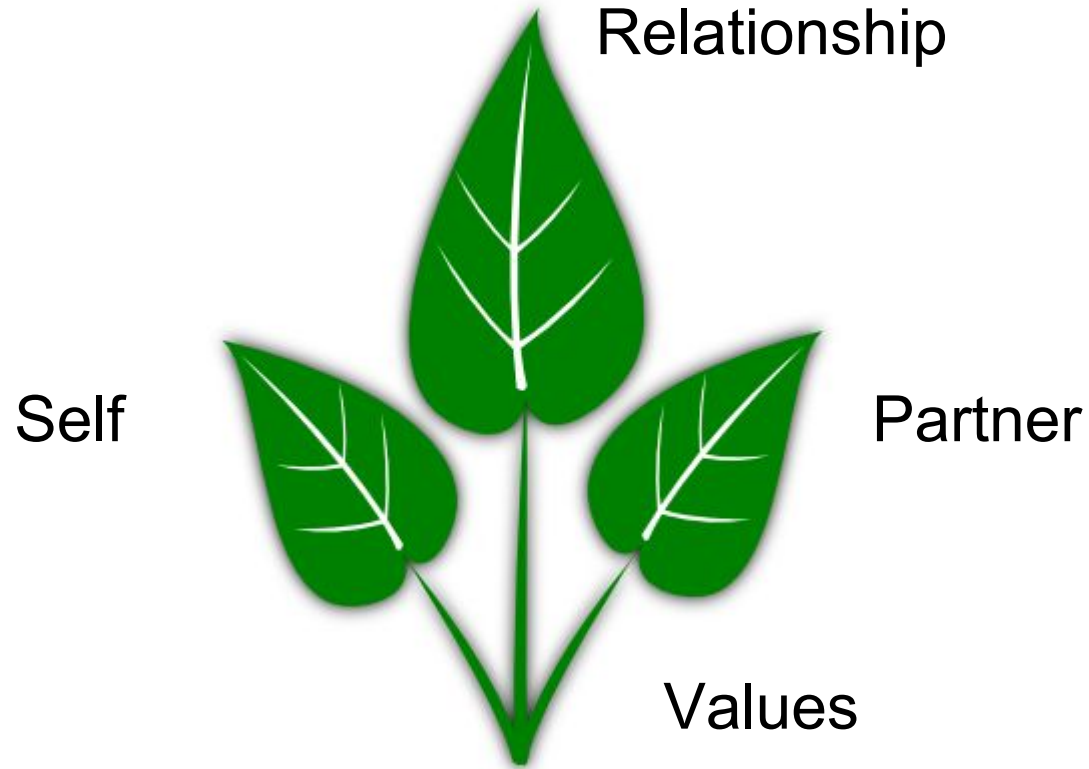
Classic Relationship Model



Creating a New Model



Creating a New Model



Our Tools and Resources

- Therapy
- Support circles
- Get aways
- Time
- Patience
- History together
- Separate interests
- Separate spaces

Our Tools and Resources

- Supporting Individual Identities
- Centering Shared Values
 - Kindness
 - Compassion
 - Growth
 - Trust

Questions?

Thank You!

XOXO,

Chelsea Varnum and Will Varnum