

# One Transition, Two Perspectives – A fireside chat with Joanne and Marie

## Introduction

Welcome to our fireside chat with Joanne, a transgender woman, and her wife, Marie, a cisgender woman. Together, they will be sharing their inspiring journey as a couple, offering powerful insights on how organisations can support transgender employees, their partners, and families. Today's conversation will delve into their personal and professional experiences, aiming to be informative, inspiring, and empowering.

## Opening Question

1. Joanne and Marie, thank you for joining us today. Can you start by sharing your personal stories and the motivation behind creating the "One Transition, Two Perspectives" talk? How do you hope this conversation will benefit organisations and individuals alike?

## Personal and Professional Experiences

2. How has your personal transition journey affected your professional life and relationships with colleagues? What lessons can organisations learn from your experience to better support their employees?
3. Can you discuss the unique challenges both of you faced in the workplace during and after the transition, and how this has shaped your perspectives on inclusion and diversity in a professional setting?
4. How can businesses create a more inclusive and supportive environment for transgender employees, as well as for those who may be in the process of transitioning?
5. How have your different experiences during your transition influenced your approach to teamwork, leadership, and communication within your professional roles? What insights can businesses gain from your experiences?

## Navigating Challenges and Building Support

6. How did your close colleagues initially react to Joanne's transition? Were there any particular challenges they faced, and how did they overcome them to better support Joanne?
7. What were some of the unique challenges that support staff faced when coming to terms with Joanne's transition? How did they adapt, and what can businesses learn from their experiences to better support transgender employees?

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8. How have your colleagues supported both Joanne and Marie during this time of transition? Are there any specific instances of allyship that made a significant impact on your experiences?
9. Can you share any instances where your colleagues or supervisors demonstrated allyship, and how this positively impacted your work experience? How can businesses encourage such allyship among their employees?

### **Family and Relationship Dynamics**

10. Can you share with us some of the challenges and joys you both experienced as a couple during the transition process? How did you support each other, and what advice would you give to other couples going through a similar journey?
11. Joanne, how did your experience of coming out as transgender and transitioning affect your relationship with Marie? Marie, how did you navigate this new chapter in your life together?
12. How have you both found ways to strengthen your bond as a couple during and after the transition? What key learnings would you like to share with other couples who might be facing a similar situation?

### **Addressing Negativity and Fostering Empathy**

13. We understand that not every experience has been positive. Could you both share some of the more difficult moments or challenges you've faced, both personally and professionally, during your journey?
14. How have you both coped with instances of discrimination, prejudice, or lack of understanding in the workplace? What advice would you give to others facing similar challenges?
15. Given the negative experiences you've faced, what do you think organisations can do to address and prevent such occurrences in the workplace?

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16. Can you discuss any situations where colleagues, customers, or support staff did not respond supportively or empathetically to your experiences? How did you handle these situations, and what can be learned from them?
  
17. As you've faced adversity and negativity, how have you both drawn strength from one another? What advice would you offer to transgender individuals and their partners in overcoming the obstacles they might encounter?

### **Building a More Inclusive Future**

18. In reflecting on your experiences, what do you believe are the key takeaways for organisations when it comes to fostering a truly inclusive and diverse work environment that embraces transgender employees and their unique perspectives?
  
19. How can businesses create a culture that encourages open dialogue and understanding of the challenges faced by not only transgender individuals but also their partners, colleagues, and support staff?
  
20. As you look to the future, what changes or advancements do you hope to see in the way organisations support transgender employees and their families? How can individuals continue to contribute to building a more empathetic and inclusive society?

### **Closing Question**

21. In conclusion, what message would you like to leave with our audience today about fostering empathy, understanding, and inclusion in the workplace and society at large?

Outro: Thank you, Joanne and Marie, for sharing your heartfelt experiences and valuable insights with us today. We're grateful for your openness and the opportunity to learn from your inspiring journey. Let us all take these lessons to heart and work together to build a more inclusive, empathetic, and supportive world for everyone.