

Sky, 64, Palm Springs, CA, 2016

I identify as a polyamorous gay trans man, primarily with a bear bent. A gay man that happens to be very different from many other gay men, but definitely polyamorous. My partner and I have been together a little more than twenty-five years, and that was the core beginning of our relationship.

My way here was as part of the women's community. I failed miserably as a lesbian. I had sex with too many men. So it just wasn't right. I moved to San Francisco in 1986 and became very involved in the women's SM community. I am one of the founders of International Ms. Leather. I had to hide being a trans man for a while because I thought they would take my "card" away. Well, I finally committed and said, "This is not right." So that's when I began to transition and never looked back.

I also identify as a dad. My son just turned eleven last week. He's actually my grandson; my daughter passed away six years ago from cancer. When she passed, he realized very quickly that he didn't have a mom and he didn't have a dad, so we let him figure out how that felt to him and what he wanted to do about it. And he decided he wanted dads. I think he's pretty clear that we're grandpas, but it doesn't suit him. We let him choose names for us as well, so I'm Papa and my partner is Daddy Bear. And he always introduces us as his dads.

I've long thought that there's no better school than the world. So we, the little guy and I, will hit the road full-time soon in our RV. We have lots and lots of plans. I've had the good fortune of being able to travel anywhere I want to – and I travel a fair amount – and not get any sorts of flack. People assume I'm either a Vietnam vet, a biker, or someone totally crazy you better not fuck with. Either of those three things tends to work for me until I open my mouth and a purse falls out.

I live in abundance of many things: experiences, family, friends, serendipity. Living in abundance is what keeps us healthy and happy. You can't be shackled by the minutiae of stress and expect to have a full life, and to be fearful feeds into that minutiae. Life really begins when you step out of fear. I'm gonna go where I'm gonna go. I'm gonna go see what I'm gonna see. He and I are going to have adventures without living in fear!

