

Jack is a vibrant nonbinary person who shines with the light of God. They have lived in several communities in Eugene. I admire how they bring people together and make an effort to mesh with everyone in a group, something I've never been able to do.

Jack is the responsible kind of anarchist— someone who shows up, plans events, supports the under-supported, and shares information. I'm proud to call Jack my chosen family member and closest friend in town.

I wish more people would do community in generous, insightful ways. Often I see people using community without regard for those who support them. Jack is caring and curious, refilling cups while keeping good boundaries.

I was happy to ask Jack about disability in community, power, advice for thriving, transness, and their favorite foods to make for groups.

Strawberry:

It's January 10th, 2026, and I'm Strawberry. I'm here with Jack.

Jack:

Yeah, hi!

Strawberry:

We're here to talk about community— maybe disability, maybe anarchy. Who knows?

Jack:

Hopefully all of those things.

Strawberry:

What have your experiences been with community?

Jack:

I've lived in a handful of co-ops and group housing situations. I've worked in workplaces that have a lot of interconnection and community, and I've done some organizing in ways that has felt not just like an organizing project, but there was also a community alongside of it— friendships or a shared lifestyle or shared goals, that were intensive and time consuming— conducive to building community.

I've also witnessed communities, like visited different places and seen their communities from an outside perspective.

Strawberry:

Is it worth it? And what are you in it for?

Jack:

I definitely think it's worth it because community fosters resilience outside of existing power structures, outside of governments, outside of states. It's really hard, and it teaches you about yourself and about other people. But that's necessary and important work.

I've met people who clearly have not experienced community outside of the normal, normative capitalist friendships and partners. There's a normal way to do connecting with people, and I'm so glad that I've chosen a life where I'm not doing that, and where I'm trying to invest in deeper connections and shared lives, shared lifestyles.

My life is more fruitful and enjoyable because of the communities that I'm in, and I'm able to do more for the world in ways that I believe in because of my connections with community. And that's been true in a lot of different ways for all the communities that I've witnessed, and all the different people that participate in them.

When your life is shared in a different way with somebody, it becomes full and rich and open to being pushed in directions

that you can't expect or drive forward and anticipate on your own. That's important and beautiful. That's such a huge part of what it means to have a life and be a person experiencing other people, experiencing this world. So community is important.

Strawberry:

Are you disabled?

Jack:

I'm physically abled. I'm a little neurodivergent.

Strawberry:

What have your experiences been in community pertaining to disability?

Jack:

I recently had a surgery that I'm healing from, and that changed my physical abilities. I needed support from the people around me. I've experienced with my neurodivergence people being supportive in community and helping me read social scripts that I wouldn't otherwise understand.

Strawberry:

What do you notice about power in communities?

Jack:

It flows in all different directions all the time. People accumulate power in all different kinds of ways. I've seen it accumulated by people because they communicate in ways that are shitty and unhelpful.

Or they do bad things. They're not trying to build a healthy community or community that sustains. Or they aren't listening. Or they're perpetuating judgmental beliefs. Those

are unfortunate ways to accumulate power.

I like it when people accumulate power because they're in alignment with their values. They're trustworthy and follow through with the things that they do. They are supportive of other people, or mindful of other people. There are good ways to accumulate power, and there are good ways to have power in community.

As an anarchist it's important to see these things. As anarchists we need to see and understand power webs. I don't think that we should shy away from having power in our communities. But we need to have power in ways that aren't fucked up and exploitative or hurtful.

Unfortunately, I've lived in communities where people do exploitative and hurtful things. But I also know that there are good people out there, trying to do power in different ways, or that have power and don't weaponize it against people. Those are always the people that I'm trying to learn from.

Strawberry:

As your friend, I see in your life that you have allied with a lot of disabled people. I was wondering if you could tell me what you like about disabled people. Or if you have any theories about how that happens for you.

Jack:

When I was growing up, I was taught to move at the pace of a schedule, or the pace of a pre-set system— at the pace of the needs of work. To engage in really dehumanizing acts of ignoring the needs of your body, ignoring the needs of your brain for the sake of accomplishing school, for the sake of accomplishing work— which I think are pretty fucked up paradigms.

So what I've learned from disabled people is to move at the pace of your body's needs, move at the pace of the people around you, move at the pace of your health. I love seeing people modeling that. I'm not trying to not acknowledge what capitalism turns into a really shitty, hard experience sometimes...

But just speaking for myself—Strawberry, you've taught me so much about moving at a pace of what feels good, and creating ways to make things better, less painful, more conducive to people doing things in a way that feels ok, which isn't something that I was ever taught. It's not something that anybody is ever taught with work and with school.

So that's something really important that I see disabled people modeling, that I love and appreciate. Also communities are safer when there's disabled people. My community and my life is made safer by engaging with a variety of people. It's really true that— despite the fact that liberals have ruined this statement— diversity does make us stronger.

It's important and helpful to be watching out for the physical needs and access needs of my friends. And learn how to support those in ways that feels good to them, and ways that are within my means, because that also teaches me.

Strawberry:

Yeah, I remember how when I was getting to be close to you, I thought you must be disabled in some way I couldn't see yet, because you were the only abled person who treated me with that particular respect for my access needs.

But Jack— I notice that you seem extraordinarily successful in community in the sense of respected, bringing people together, getting your needs met I hope, living inexpensively or less expensively, being able to ally with different kinds of people, creating amazing events, and helping people learn things all the time.

When I think of community and who's doing community well, I think of you. And I think of my spouse.

But I was wondering if you could give any insight— how do you do it so well? And maybe advice to others who are starting out in community intentionally. What can we do to be happier in community?

Jack:

That's really kind of you to say. Thank you.

I try hard not to turn people into a problem. That doesn't feel good to me. And that's something I see other people doing that I don't think is conducive to people getting well and engaging with each other well.

There are people that I live with and have lived with that are really hard for me to communicate with. But I try to learn how to communicate best with them, and not turn it into something about them that is a problem. There's no way that anybody communicates that's truly a problem unless they are doing some of the things I talked about earlier like trying to hoard power, trying to manipulate in a way that hurts other people.

Because there's so much I don't know about how other people work, I just try to trust that other people know themselves as best as possible. I try to sit with people that I'm with and be like, "Okay, what does this person need in this moment? Are they looking for quiet interaction in the kitchen where we're both doing our separate things, but we're not talking? Are they looking for kind small talk? Are they looking for a deep conversation? Is this an opportunity where I can spout about my beliefs?"

In one community that I was in, someone impressed upon me assessing the space that you're coming into before you engage with it, before you try to change it— before you push your agenda. Which is something that is both a good initial thing

to do, and is also a good consistent practice to see what what people are doing, see how people are engaging, see what people might need or what might be most successful, and try to meet people with what you can provide.

I also think that some of the things that you name, Strawberry, are purely due to the fact that I have a job that makes me enough money that I can provide for people financially when they are in need. I have a lot of energy, and my physical abilities– I can do chores all the time.

I don't personally experience a lot of barriers to being in community, and even when I do, the idea of being with other people is important enough to me to work around those, which is not true for other people. But I think it's important that we do what we can, so I try to do what I can and do the things that are within my control in order to maintain connection with the people around me. Wellness, well-being, a clean fucking house, food. You know.

Strawberry:

Yes, thank you Jack. You're amazing at that. I wanted to say about disabled people, something that I like is our creativity because when we can't take the regular path, then we got to get creative about our paths, and I enjoy that. I love being creative with you.

Jack:

I love being creative with you too. You inspire me to be more creative, and I appreciate that. I also love the creativity of disabled people. I love that people, by virtue of being, are modeling different ways to do the world, and I wish it wasn't so hard.

Strawberry:

So is there any other topic you'd like to speak of pertaining

to these things, Jack? What about transness in community?

Jack:

Transness in community? It's just important. It's important that transness in all of its ways is nourished.

Sometimes internalized transphobia shows up for me when I see someone doing transness in a new way. And I wish I didn't feel that way. I love all the different ways that people are experiencing divergence. That marketable and palatable version of being trans is not the goal. Assimilation is not and never has been the goal. At least for me— for some people it is, but whatever those people are doing, that's a world I want to build.

I think that divergent transness is the most important kind of transness, and divergent ability! Doing things in a different way is the most important... The dominant affects, the Overton windows— we can burn that shit. The binaries.

Strawberry:

Yes.

Jack:

The limited access— we can burn that shit.

Strawberry:

If you could go back in time and give your baby-community-person self an advice item, do you know what the advice might be? Or what's one thing you could say to someone who is needing some advisement?

Jack:

Your feelings and the things that you're experiencing are just as worthwhile of a slice of the pie as anybody else's, and they are only one slice of the pie. But they need to be there

too. You can learn from them. But you don't need to minimize them or erase them for the sake of participating in community. You get to show up— you get to show up too.

Strawberry:

Fuck yeah. Ok, one last thing, Jack. What is your favorite dish to make for community?

Jack:

Well, okay— dish to make? Or dish to eat?

Strawberry:

How about both?

Jack:

Well, dish to eat... The first thing that comes to mind is your pesto pasta, and all the different ways you make it. When you do it with a gluten-free dairy-free moment with the rice noodles. When you do it with the glutinous noodles from the food bank. I think about that! You've for meals made five different bowls all of pesto pasta, all with different specifications, which is just so brilliant.

That's my favorite way to eat in community. Thank you for modeling that. I mean that is a form of access intimacy that's just so beautiful. Not everybody does that. Some people would do two bowls and say, "Well, you can have leftover rice." Thank you for making beautiful food for everyone.

My favorite dish to make for community? I like to make vegan shepherd's pies because they're pretty adaptable. You can add mushrooms or take out mushrooms— you can use lentils or not lentils. I haven't found anybody yet that doesn't eat potatoes but if I do...

Strawberry:

[raises hand]

Jack:

Oh, you know somebody?

Strawberry:

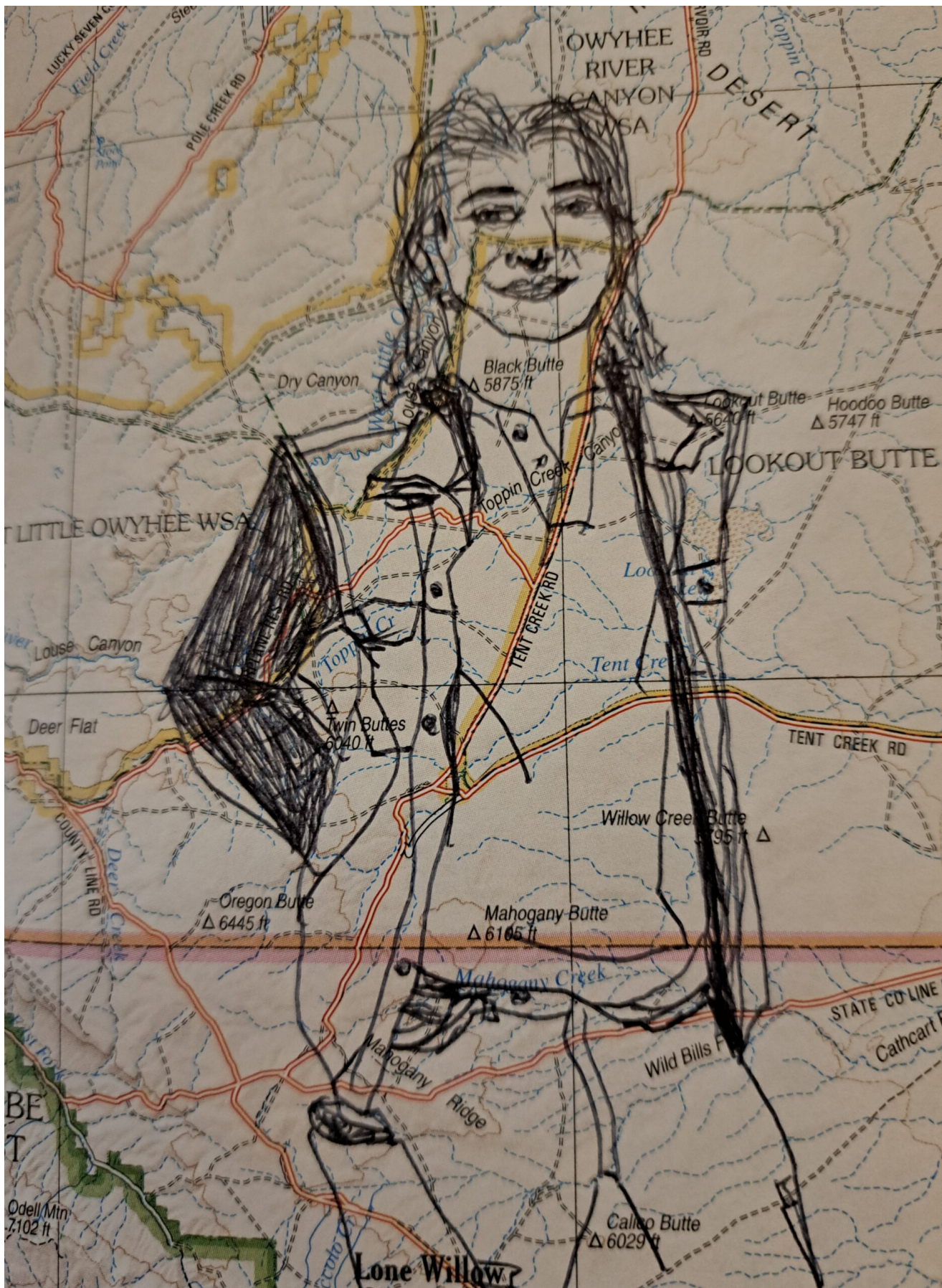
The anti-nightshade people.

Jack:

Oh shit! Well, I'm sure there's a vegan shepherd's pie that can be done... You can do it with squash! I've done it with squash! Boom! Yeah, vegan shepherd's pie is one of my favorites. Or soup. You know I love a soup.

Strawberry:

Ok, thank you, Jack. I love you. I appreciate you.



I love you too. I appreciate you too.

Strawberry Pancake Fae Nopales (ki they he berry) is a queer

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