

TRANSADVOCATE

Ask Matt: Coming Out About My Trans Partner at Christmas

By mkailey

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Abstract

By Matt Kailey A reader writes: "I'm a non-transgender pansexual woman who has been dating my friend, a male-to-female transgender person, for a few months. "I've known my partner for five years and knew that she was trans for about the same amount of time but never attempted to act on my romantic feelings until [...]"

Article

By Matt Kailey

A reader writes:

"I'm a non-transgender pansexual woman who has been dating my friend, a male-to-female transgender person, for a few months.

"I've known my partner for five years and knew that she was trans for about the same amount of time but never attempted to act on my romantic feelings until recently, due to personal stuff and both of us being with other people. She is still thinking about transitioning and has yet to start hormones but definitely wants to, it's just a matter of cost. We're very happy together.

"I just have one problem. I come from a very strict, repressive Christian family. I'll be heading back home for Christmas this year and want to tell my parents and siblings that I am dating my partner but am terrified. My father is the most problematic, being very opinionated and very closed to anything that doesn't fit into his view of a proper world. He is rabidly anti-gay, opposes marriage equality and abortion rights and has barely been able to understand that I am not straight.

"How should I explain to my family that I am dating a transsexual? How do I get them to accept my partner? They've met him back when we were 'just friends' and didn't like him that much. I am terrified that not only will there be a massive fight over Christmas dinner but that they will threaten to cut me off financially and emotionally and disown me. I'm close to my mother and grandparents. At the same time, I love my partner and don't want to put her through the hell of that. She won't be coming with me, as she has to work."

In certain situations, timing is everything, and based on what you've told me, I don't think that this is the right time to tell them that your partner is transsexual. There's no reason that you can't tell them about your partner. I just don't think this particular piece of information is essential at this particular moment in time.

In addition, it sounds as if you've got people who could possibly be your allies in this situation (your

mother and grandparents, at least), but they might not be so accepting if they see you as messing up their holiday (it would be your dad who's messing it up, but that's not what they'll take away). Plus, you're looking at the possibility of being disowned and cut off financially and emotionally, which I don't think that you or your partner probably need right now.

I just don't see what purpose this piece of information given at this point in time could possibly serve. There's no reason that you can't discuss your partner without discussing her trans status:

"So, Jane, are you dating anyone?"

"Yes, I've been dating a particular person for a few months. She couldn't come with me because she has to work."

"Tell us about her."

"Well, she's attractive, smart, and funny. I've known her for a while, but we only recently started dating. So we'll see how it goes. I'm sure you'll get a chance to meet her soon."

As your partner continues with her medical transition, if that's what she decides to do, it's possible that she won't want to come out to everyone - or anyone. She might decide that she would rather meet your parents after she is living fully as a woman. She might decide that she wants to come out to them herself. She might make a lot of different decisions before she really knows how and if she wants this information presented to your parents and family.

Regardless, I don't think this Christmas is the time to worry about it. If you really feel as if you need to tell them as soon as possible, and your partner is in agreement, then wait until after the holidays and either plan another trip home or write them a letter or an e-mail explaining the situation. But I would discourage the "Christmas coming out."

Readers, what do you think?

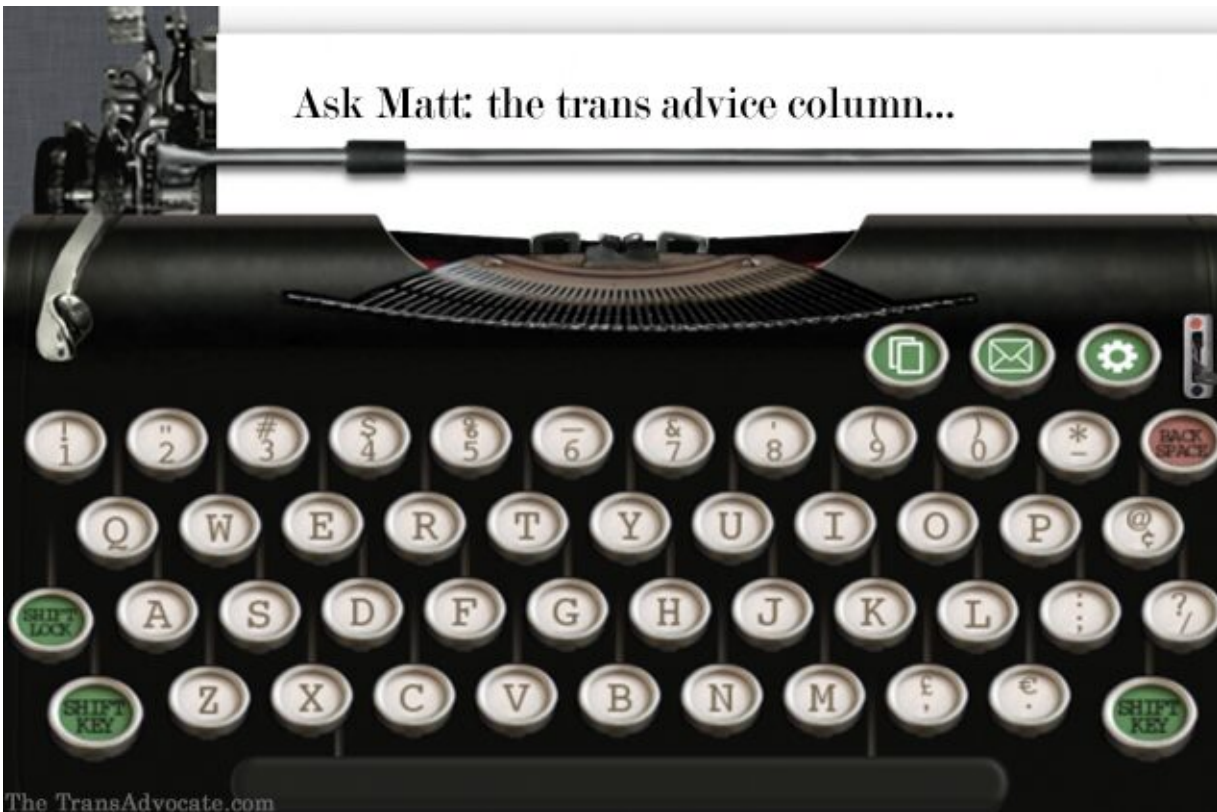


Figure 1. matt

Cross-posted from Tranifesto

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