



# Bank Street Occasional Paper Series

Occasional  
Paper  
Series

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Manuscript 1533


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## Ten Year Reunion

Owen Dempsey

Jet Lepper

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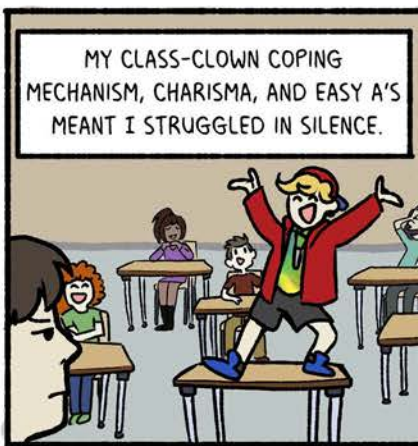
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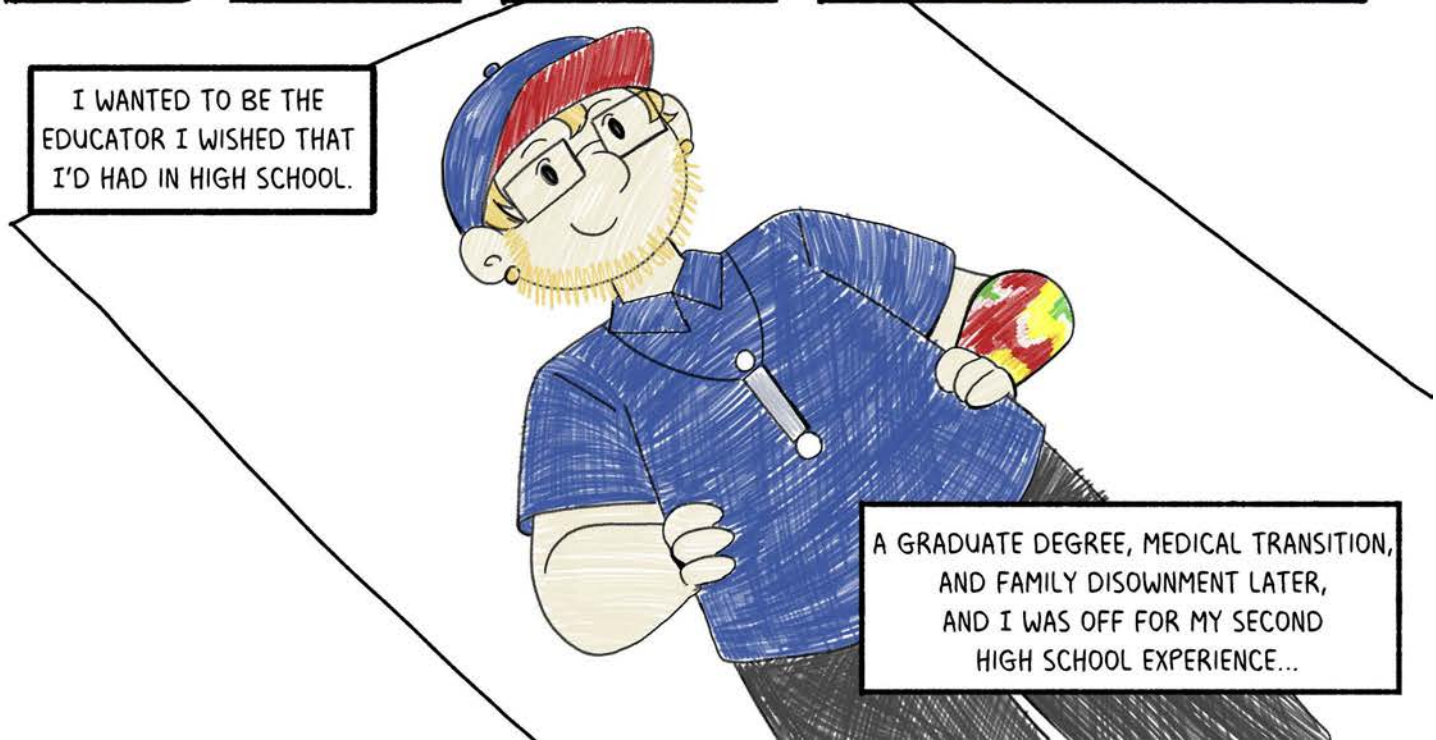
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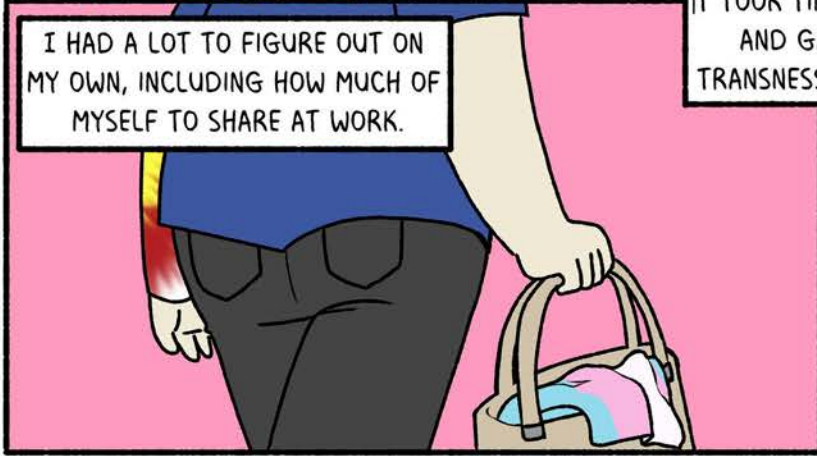
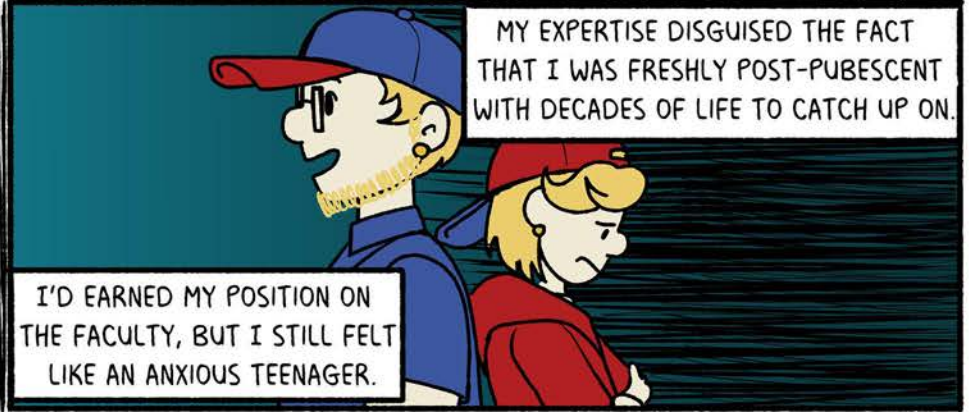
**educate**

# Ten Year Reunion

*Owen Dempsey and Jet Lepper*





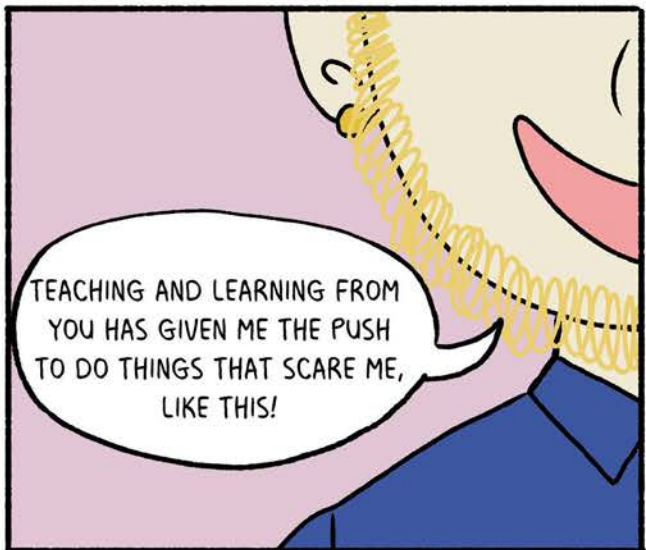


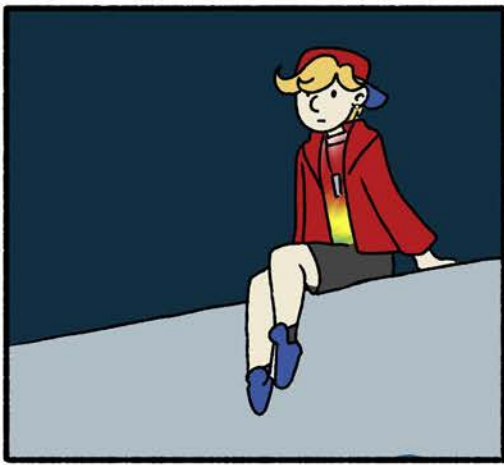
IT TOOK TIME FOR ME TO DIG THROUGH INTERNALIZED SHAME AND GAIN THE COURAGE TO OPENLY SPEAK ABOUT MY TRANSNESS, BUT I OWED IT TO MYSELF, AND MY STUDENTS...



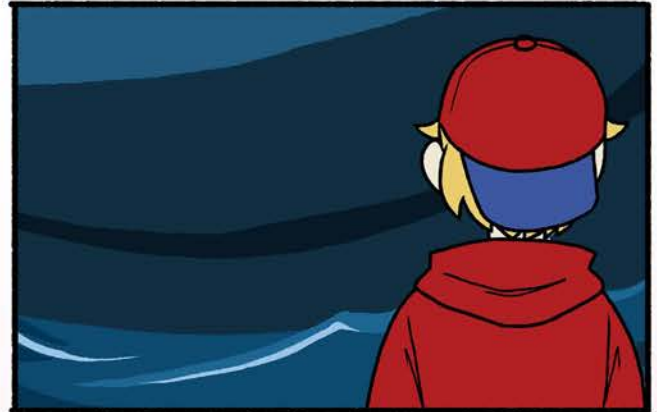
TODAY'S TOPIC:  
What's it like to be  
a Trans teacher?

Awesome!  
vulnerable challenging  
**POWERFUL**





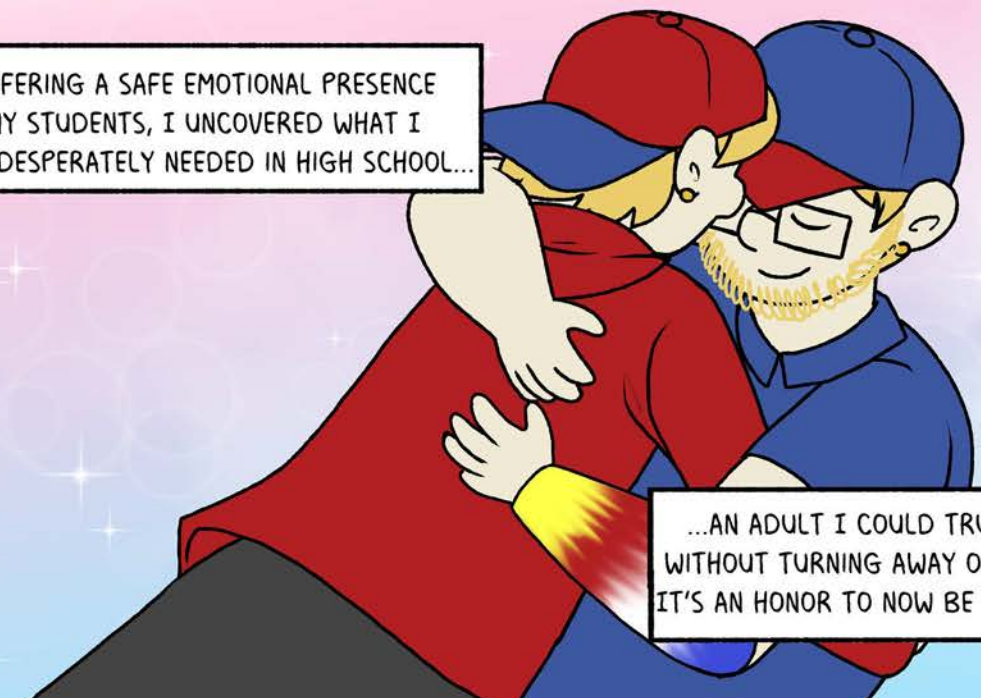
HEY, ARE YOU OK? LIKE, FOR REAL?



NOBODY'S EVER ASKED ME THAT BEFORE.

I KNOW. I'VE GOT YOU NOW.

BY OFFERING A SAFE EMOTIONAL PRESENCE TO MY STUDENTS, I UNCOVERED WHAT I HAD SO DESPERATELY NEEDED IN HIGH SCHOOL...



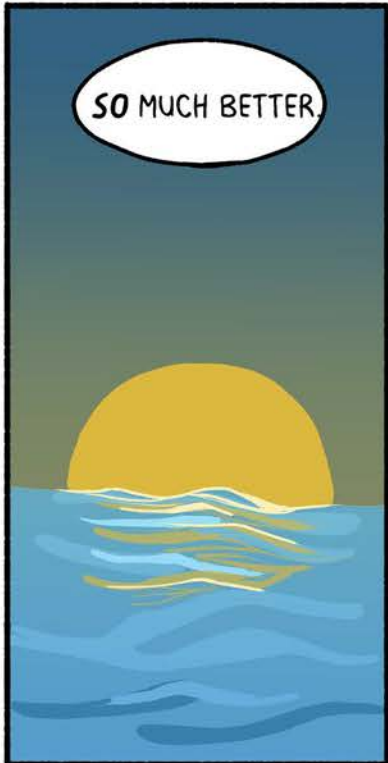
...AN ADULT I COULD TRUST TO SEE MY REALITY WITHOUT TURNING AWAY OR TRYING TO CHANGE ME. IT'S AN HONOR TO NOW BE THAT PERSON FOR OTHERS.



DOES IT REALLY GET BETTER?



ONE DAY, WHEN YOU'RE READY, YOU'LL MAKE IT BETTER.



SO MUCH BETTER.



TRANSFORMING MY PAIN INTO LIBERATION FOR TEENS LIKE ME HAS BEEN IMMENSELY HEALING.



I'VE SHOWN UP EVERY DAY FOR MY STUDENTS AND MY INNER CHILD.



IT'S TIME FOR ME TO FULLY SHOW UP FOR MY ADULT SELF, WHICH MEANS LEAVING THE CLASSROOM...FOR NOW.



THERE'S STILL A LOT OF BEAUTY ON THE HORIZON.



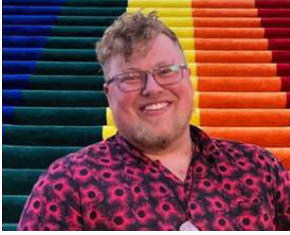
SO WHAT'S NEXT FOR US?



NOT SURE YET! ISN'T THAT BEAUTIFUL?



## ABOUT THE AUTHORS



**Owen Dempsey** (he/him) is a special educator based in the San Francisco Bay Area. He obtained his Master of Arts in Teaching from Mount Holyoke College and has a decade of multidisciplinary teaching experience in public and independent middle and high schools, post-secondary institutions, and through one-on-one coaching and consulting. Owen is passionate about creating space for neurodivergent and disabled students and LGBTQ+ youth to learn, explore, and thrive.



**Jet Lepper** (he/they) is a queer comic artist from the San Francisco Bay Area who specializes in educational content for children. He also works in special education as a paraprofessional while working towards becoming a teacher.