



Lisa Watson & Peter Shanky

gay and gay-friendly businesses). It was the first time I had gone to a business meeting that I enjoyed.

Tracy Fenske: We just have a lot of close family and friends. It's just the right thing to do. It's kind of weird to be interviewed for something that's just part of our lives.

Mark Fenske: I always joke that we've been married for eleven years, have no kids, love to travel and enjoy good wine. Who do you think our friends are?

Lisa and Peter (in unison): That sounds really familiar.

Mark: I'm convinced we're the gay couple from Modern Family. It's your task to figure out who is who.

Tracy: He would be the one who went to clown college.

On mistaken identity, alternative sexuality, lesbros and more.

Lisa: Peter has a twin brother who is gay. We had more than a few people that couldn't figure out the relationship because they would see Dustin out with his partner and Peter out with me and didn't know they were two different men. What was eye opening to me was that there were so many people in the gay community that wanted to figure us out or label our sexuality. What if there were three of us all together? So what?

Tracy: I've had straight girlfriends tell me I need to watch Mark because he is on the down low and having affairs at networking events. But all of our gay friends love me more than him so I'm fine. And these are people that have known us for years.

Chris: Oh and I'm a lesbro. Let's not forget that.

Tracy: [Mark's] a lesbro too.

Chris: Oh yeah, but not to my level.

Mark: You've got a few years on me. When I'm your age...

Tracy: ...you'll have groupies.

Chris: You will. I've got groupies.

Mark: Trying not to picture that.

On the first gay person that they met.

Peter Shanky: As I have a close family member that's gay I've been involved as long as I can remember. As a business owner it's grown.

Lisa: I was in drama club in high school but it was also Catholic school so none of them came out until much later.

Mark: I've had a good friend since kindergarten. It may be cliché but I had GI Joes and he had Barbie dolls. Didn't make him any less my friend.

Tracy: I grew up in a town of 300 where we all knew each other and had last names that ended in "ski." So I didn't meet anyone until we moved to the "big city" of 30,000. I had out friends in high school. I was about 200 lbs at the time so they were bullied because they were gay and I was bullied because of that. We bonded over it.

Chris: I've got a few years on you but I did know some in high school, although to be called queer was the worst thing imaginable then. When I became a merchant seaman in the Navy, that's when I ran into real gay people. Everything was cool and I was only about 18. When I got back to New York we had that Christopher Street thing. It was a turning point.

Monica Reed: My best friend in Jr. High was gay. He passed away from AIDS when he was 35. And I've worked with kids my whole career so I see the bullying and put downs that go on.

On the most important issues facing the gay community.

Chris: Safety. The issue that bothers me the most is what is happening to young people, the suicides, the risks. Children are our responsibility. I don't care if they are not my biological kids.

As a human being on this planet we have a responsibility to keep our children safe. All our children.