

**Ashley Tibollo 00:01**

Hey, this is Ashley Tibollo, it is July 26 2021. It is 9am. I am back with Janine Brown to continue our previous interview. Janine, is it okay, that this portion of the interview will also be included publicly in the archive?

**Janine Brown 00:25**

Yep.

**Ashley Tibollo 00:28**

Okay, so we didn't get to finish all the questions we had hoped to get through last time. So we will just add this to the previous portion of your interview from July 24. And my first question is, were there, I guess, what was the biggest change for you during the pandemic?

**Janine Brown 00:52**

I think there were a lot of bigger changes. But definitely the biggest one is that I made the decision to move in with my boyfriend at the time.

**Ashley Tibollo 01:03**

Oh, that's very exciting. Did the pandemic sort of have anything to do with that?

**Janine Brown 01:09**

Pretty much everything to do with it. We had started dating in December of 2019. So we were still, you know, a very new relationship when the pandemic started. And we were both going through, you know, a hard time with it. And we couldn't see each other as much. And we figured it was either don't ever see each other with all the lock downs, or, you know, I'll take a chance and move in together. So we decided to try that out. And it worked great. We got along completely fine. And it's still there. So I guess it worked out.

**Ashley Tibollo 01:52**

Well, that's good. And so how do you feel that decision helped helped you during the pandemic?

**Janine Brown 02:03**

I mean, it definitely helped my mental health. It was nice to just have, you know, somebody there who I could talk to who we and we could like, no change ideas, figure out what's going on in the world. And, you know, we can just learn more about each other, it was a good distraction, I think from all of the negative that was happening. Because like I said, we were able to talk to each other about, like our respective views and stuff. But we were also able to bond over our, our shared hobbies and things like that, we were able to spend a lot of time together and get to know each other pretty well. In a short amount of time, because no, we were both not working at a time because everything was shut down. So we were just sort of always together. And I think that helped a lot to just sort of work through all of the negative things, but also to provide like that sort of positive distraction in there of like, we have things to do we have projects we can work on together, then so yeah, it was a it was a very nice, very nice change.

**Ashley Tibollo 03:15**

And how do you think your experience during a pandemic would have been different had you not decided to make that big change?

**Janine Brown 03:27**

That it would have been very hard, I think it would have been hard for me to find enjoyment in the day to day just because I you know, with lock downs, I couldn't really go anywhere. I couldn't really see anybody. So it was very lonely. Like I mentioned in the previous interview, like me, my parents are, you know, I love them, they're my family, but we don't have the same views on certain things. Which would have just made it a very tense situation for I mean, probably everybody but probably mostly me because you know, I'm, I'm the outlier. So I would have just felt very isolated, even being home with more than with more people, it still would have been a very isolating experience. So I definitely think it was the the best move I could have made for like my mental health. Honestly, my physical health too, because we did workouts together, we went on walks. I came up with my own workout routines that I did with my best friend, we challenged each other and it just became such a positive thing to just be in a new environment for me have other things to think about. And it just it honestly just gave me so much perspective on on like the real world I guess because instead of being locked in You know, instead of being locked in one box, I was technically locked in a different box. But it was, it was doing things that were new and interesting. And I was able to, like, expand my horizons a lot.

**Ashley Tibollo 05:12**

I'm glad it worked out so well for you. Um, did anyone like caution you against it?

**Janine Brown 05:19**

I mean, I cautioned me against it. Because I, surprisingly, my parents were not super vocal about it. I don't think that they like approved necessarily, but they they didn't tell me, this is a terrible idea. You shouldn't be doing it. They were fairly supportive in that, you know, they let me go they they said I could always, you know, come back or call them if there was anything that happened.

**Janine Brown 05:53**

So, like I said, they were very supportive. It was mostly me cautioning myself, because, you know, it's still a very new relationship. It was, we were four months in when the lockdowns really started cracking down. And, you know, that's is objectively very early to think about moving in with somebody. But I figured, if, because, I mean, our goal was a long term thing. So I figured I might as well figure out now if we're compatible, in in that respect of like, living together and actually sharing a space and a life. So I figured, even though it's early, it'll tell me right away, like, is this something that, that we could pursue that that you know, will grow into something much, much more, or, you know, if we had some really severe incompatibilities in different areas, then I would no early without, you know, spending years, and then moving in, and then, you know, finding out that there's an irreconcilable issue. But like I said, everything, just sort of like, I don't know, he was great, everything worked out great. And we get along, we don't really fight. And if we do have disagreements there, they don't last very long. It was a process of learning to communicate things because I am, how I would call emotionally unintelligent. I'm not good at figuring out why I'm feeling a certain way, because something will happen. And then you know, I'll be sad about it or upset about it. But I won't always know why I feel that way. Or why I feel so much

that way. And it takes me a while to sort of like, do some introspection, deconstruct, like, Okay, I'm feeling sad about whatever issue what about that issue is making me feel sad. And just sort of figuring out how I can, you know, move on from it and grow from it. So that was a lot of what I was doing towards the start of the lockdown when I moved in on was how, how can I emotionally grow and figure out that whole thing, which is still a process, I think I'm thinking I'm better at it, which is good. I don't think I'm good at it yet. But he, he's done a great job of helping me work through it, talking with me about things, and just making it not like not super stressful. We there's I don't feel a pressure. Like I don't feel like I have to, you know, like something happens that I'm upset, I don't feel like I have to figure this out right now. Or he's gonna be mad, or something. He's very understanding about, you know, I'm working on stuff, working on my own things. He's working on his own things. And it's just, you know, a very peaceful thing, even if I don't feel at peace at the time, like even if I'm upset. It's a very much just communication thing. I can just communicate and I don't feel bad doing that. I don't feel rushed. They don't feel pressured. It's just very pleasant.

**Ashley Tibollo 09:19**

Oh, that sounds really wonderful. I'm very happy for you that you found that in the midst of a terrible pandemic. And I know you've mentioned outside of the interview that things have gone so well that you are house hunting. How has that process been during a pandemic?

**Janine Brown 09:45**

Oh, the market is not agreeable right now. Yeah, we we started seriously looking at houses. Not too long ago. I don't remember exactly when but his mom had sent him a text with listing from Zillow on it for us to checkout. And so we looked at it and stuff and we're like, oh, well, the app was open, we ended up Oh, well, what's around there. And we started looking at all the different places. And then we were like, I don't know how it happened exactly. But it turned into like a casual search to like, this is something that we could do. Like, this is something that is possible for us to do. I think that we decided that the market isn't great right now. So we're gonna, we're gonna wait to buy one. But we've looked at many houses together, we figured out what we want, what we don't want. What are things that like are essentials, and what are just wants that we can live without, we even decided that we're going to get when we do when the market comes down a starter home, so that it doesn't have to have everything that we want in it. But it's a it's an upgrade from where we are right now. And it will give us space to do what we'd like for however long, and then we'll eventually buy some land and end up building, whatever forever home that we want. Because then we can, we can decide what it looks like and what we want, where and how the rooms will be set up and the floor layout plan. All of that will be up to us, which is probably the best way to handle like a forever home because I don't think we're going to find like something that is perfect for what we're going for. And we don't want to just sort of be like constantly looking for that one house that will be perfect, because that's not really ideal either. So that's gonna take a long time. Yeah. So we figure we'll, we'll pick one that is good that we like a lot that will provide everything that that we want to do for right now. But then the goal is for both of us eventually to just to build our own and to, you know, get some land and make that happen.

**Ashley Tibollo 12:06**

And you mentioned that you're seeing problems, or Well, there's problems in the market for buyers, what what are you encountering? What's the market looking like?

**Janine Brown 12:19**

Oh, it is extremely expensive, when compared to previous years. We know that like houses really like if you want even like two bathrooms. But houses are at least like 161 70, even if it's like a smaller house. So the the value of the houses are sort of like at a peak right now I feel. And when we looked at like previous years of like, what have they sold for, and even some of our relatives who have bought houses a couple years ago, and what those same houses are worth today. It's kind of staggering, because I mean, his brother bought a house a couple years ago for I don't remember the exact number, but for however many dollars and when we looked at it a couple weeks ago on like what it would be worth in this market, it was pretty much like double the price, like if he wanted Oh, that is insane. So I really feel like it's just not a good time like that was really the nail in the coffin like this is not a good time to buy. Because once we do buy it and then the market comes down, then all of a sudden, we're out a lot of money that we didn't have to be out. So yeah, we decided we're going to wait until it comes down and prices have started coming down a little bit more recently, which is good. We expect that they'll keep doing that. And I mean, that's the hope it's a market. So it can really go anywhere at wants to but following trends is probably going to go down and we'll be more comfortable. We won't have land that depreciates in a couple months after we buy it, which is what we're hoping for. We don't want to get a house and then six months later, it's not even worth what we paid for it anymore.

**Ashley Tibollo 14:15**

Well, it sounds like a good decision that I hope it comes down for you pretty soon. So going back to sort of your experience moving in with someone new house new surroundings. Did you face sort of any challenges?

**Janine Brown 14:38**

Um, so by challenges do you do you mean like, like things that are like obstacles to that or like, just like if it was hard in certain areas?

**Ashley Tibollo 14:51**

Yeah, I was like, I assume there was some sort of adjustment period. So like, I guess what, what were things that you found difficult, or...

**Janine Brown 15:07**

So I don't know if it is particularly difficult, but he does have a cat named Wendy, who was amazing. And I learned very quickly that when Wendy wants food, she is prone to screaming. Oh, yeah, like not like a normal like how cat's meow like, it doesn't sound like that it sounds like, like screaming Oh my. So she, at least when I was teaching remotely because I did that all, you know, from from his apartment, it was really just me contending with Wendy in the corner, screaming at me to give her food to give her lunch. And a lot of times I had to, like I would sometimes like pause the class and just to feed her and then come back and be like, sorry, guys, my my cat is, uh, she's hungry. So if you don't want to hear her yelling anymore, I had to I had to go handle that really quick. But she's great. She she's a bundle of joy, and anger and other personalities. She's just when I first started, like staying there, she was a little bit hesitant. But it really didn't take long for her to open up until like, lay on my lap and let me pet her. And I even got to the point where, and she never let us do it before but like kissing

her on the head. Like she never used to let that happen. But she started being a lot more accepting of, of touch and stuff. So it's been it's been a good journey for her to I think this pandemic because we were there a lot. So she was able to, you know, rely on us and open up a little bit more. Because she came a long way from when she you know, like before the pandemic?

**Ashley Tibollo 17:06**

Is she having any difficulties now that you guys are both sort of returning to school and work?

**Janine Brown 17:15**

it's hard to say, because she's a cat and they don't really like emote super well. I mean, other than like, it's hard to tell like what she's thinking. I know, she does enjoy the snuggles, and the pets. So I would say that she's probably probably missing some of that when we're not there to do that all the time. But it's like I said, it's hard to tell because she's, she's pretty independent. She still does her own thing. She's still, you know, just sleeps wherever she feels like sleeping. And I don't know what else she does in a day, because that seems to sum it up. So, yeah, I wouldn't say that it's particularly easy for her because again, I can't really tell. I just know that she appreciates when we spend time with her. And when we, you know, give her attention. And she'll you know, she'll do a lot to make sure we give her that attention. So I do think that maybe it's something that she's missing a little bit more now that that we're not home all the time. But she seems to be she used to be okay, she seems to be happy anyway.

**Ashley Tibollo 18:33**

And were there any pets that you sort of left behind with your parents when you moved out?

**Janine Brown 18:40**

Yeah, we had a yellow lab named buddy. And he's he's pretty great. He's less loud. He doesn't really like bark. But he still likes food probably the same amount as Wendy does.

**Ashley Tibollo 18:55**

So did how did he handle you moving out? Was he sort of unfazed by it? Or do you think you was a bit affected?

**Janine Brown 19:05**

So again, it's hard to tell because I can't ask him. I like to believe he didn't just, you know, be like, okay, she's gone. Whatever. I'd like to believe we had a little bit of a stronger bond on that. I still see him because we didn't, it's not like I moved super far away. Right. Um, and he still knows who I am and stuff and will, like will play and I'll pat him and, you know, give him attention to it helps that he also has, you know, like my brother and my mom and my dad. It's not like, it's not like half of the group left,

**Ashley Tibollo 19:40**

right.

**Janine Brown 19:41**

It's really just just me, so I think he's okay. He seems okay. He seems happy seems healthy. He's an anxious dog. So there was always that, that layer to the where he does get anxious very easily, but He's telling us that he seems to be doing okay.

**Ashley Tibollo 20:03**

At the beginning of the pandemic, when you were still living at home? Did buddy enjoy having I know your mom is an essential worker? But did she enjoy having the rest of you? Or he did he enjoy having the rest of you around more?

**Janine Brown 20:24**

I think so. He He's a people that he doesn't interact with other animals all that much. Like other dogs, and then he just sort of like ignores any other animal. But he, he does really gravitate towards people. And if there's, if there's a person, he wants to be right next to them, or be under their feet, or always be in the same room. So like, if I would like move from the living room to the kitchen, he'd be there too. If I move back, he would follow me, you just wherever you go, he just sort of follows. So I think that I think he does miss a little bit maybe of the personal connections now that you know, because my mom's an essential worker, so she was never home that much. But my dad went back to work and my brother went to school. So I think he does miss a little bit of that, you know, having somebody there to just, you know, exist there with him. But like I said, I think I think he's okay, because he he had most of his life, pre pandemic, to where he was used to us being gone all day. Yeah, so he got more attention during the pandemic, which, which is really good. But I don't think that it's too much of a shock, because like, my dad didn't really have a whole lot of like quarantine time, like his work is also considered essential. So he went back pretty quickly. So I don't think that he got super used to Oh, somebody is always here to pet me or play with me. I think that it happened for like a couple of weeks. But then you know, things went back to a more normal.

**Ashley Tibollo 22:12**

So here's the essential question, you switched from dog ownership to cat ownership. So are you a dog person, or the cat person?

**Janine Brown 22:23**

I love both. I will say now that cats are definitely less maintenance. They're, they're more independent. And I would love to someday have like, I love Golden Retrievers are my favorite. That's the kind of dog I had growing up as a kid. I love them. I think they're great. However, for right now for the space that we have, and for the time that we have, because we're really not home all that much. We really couldn't have anything other than a cat who can you know, they just sort of do their own thing. So I think I am, I think I'm more of a cat person. But again, that sort of fits with my circumstances right now. So like, that's the best fit for me. But I can't I can't say that I wouldn't have a dog again. Because I definitely, I could definitely have a dog.

**Ashley Tibollo 23:25**

What a diplomatic answer.

**Janine Brown 23:28**

Oh, they're so great, though. I don't know, how do you how do people just choose one? When I can have both

**Ashley Tibollo 23:34**

True, Very true. That's usually my answers to animals sample. Um, so Was there anything else that you wanted to include in the archives and interview that we didn't have a chance to speak about?

**Janine Brown 23:55**

I mean, that covers pretty much the like, the the main events that happen, you know, I got, you know, I graduated, got new jobs, switched to remote learning moved in with my boyfriend. Looking for houses like that's, I can't really think of anything that's bigger than that.

**Ashley Tibollo 24:18**

Yeah, those are pretty big events.

**Janine Brown 24:20**

It's been a crazy year and a half.

**Ashley Tibollo 24:22**

Yeah. Well, thank you again for your contribution to the archive. and have a wonderful day.

**Janine Brown 24:31**

You too.

**Ashley Tibollo 24:32**

Thanks.