

Alexander Muniz is the person I chose for my first interview, being my boyfriend and a like-minded individual when it comes to the subject. We're both very attached to physical objects, and enjoy collecting things. I thought he'd be perfect for an interview since I know he has a deep relationship with collecting and the things he collects.

"I'm sitting here with two plushies on my desk, I'm looking at them, they're looking at me."

I started off with a simple question, just going over the types of things he collects, plushies, clothes, music. He enjoys collecting those things but his "true" collection is plushies.

"Plushies are cute, and I like cute things. It's a very easy way for me to share the things I like with other people."

I asked when he first started collecting things in general, to which he answered 6 years ago. When he first acquired his own money he started collecting. Though the amount of time you've spent collecting doesn't play a huge significance.

I asked what he would say is his most valuable position, and it was a stuffed dog he got for his first birthday.

"It's a comfort object. And that's the easiest way to explain it. The world can be crashing down, and I still have my stuffed dog."

When asked about if he would ever part with it for whatever he wanted, he answered "Never." I asked if there were other things he would refuse to part with, to which he responded his collection of plushies specifically, because it's the culmination of years of work. He wouldn't do it because it's "His" collection and the emotional attachment he's built up through building it up.

I asked why exactly he collects things, wondering if it's just for the sake of building a collection or if there's some underlying reason.

"When I like something, like a piece of media, I *really* like it, like most of the time. If I like something then I'll buy a plushie of it. There are cute soft things in the world and I want them. It's a sort of way to start a conversation. To me it's the same as somebody wearing the shirt of a band you like so you ask them about it."

When asked about if it's more important for an object to have significance on arrival or through the years he answered "It depends since I like bringing plushies with me to places. I take pictures with them and it creates associations in memories like 'Oh I enjoyed this with this.' Specific ones don't exactly matter besides landmarks such as 'This is the first one I got from this franchise' or 'This is a rare one that I finally got.' The value more so comes from the collection as a whole, rather than the individual value of the plushies. It's more than just that too since it's not just obtaining the plushie, but the memories that you make moving forward. I don't collect them just to have them on a shelf. I love taking them with me, taking pictures, sharing them with

people, and talking with people about that. Because at the end it's a means of connection for me."

I asked if the perceived value of an item mattered to which he answered, "It does but it's not the primary factor. Something isn't important because I spent \$400 on it." I also asked if the method of acquisition matters, such as if it's a gift or just a purchase. He didn't really find it of much importance, since the main value of a gift is the sentiment rather than whatever is being gifted.

When asked about his favorite things he said "My Wriggle plushie (specific character from a game series.) It took such a long time for me to find one that it felt like my work paid off. And moreover, I just think she's adorable. I spent so long chasing after it hoping it would appear before me."

I asked if there was anything else he wanted to add, to which he said, "You should be okay with liking things that other people might not for any reason. Don't let someone tell you what you can or can't enjoy. If you like something you should pursue it. I like my plushies and nothing will ever change that."

