

Interview #1: Megan Kirk

Occupation: F&B Manager at Soho House Chicago

Relationship: my colleague/manager for almost 2 years

In a recent conversation with Megan, a young professional navigating the twists and turns of personal and career growth, she shared her journey of self-discovery and development. Reflecting on her experiences, Megan revealed how collaboration in the workplace had honed her interpersonal skills and adaptability.

"I've learned the importance of effective communication and collaboration," Megan shared. "Working with individuals who bring diverse perspectives and skill sets to the table has been invaluable. It's helped me refine my ability to navigate different working styles and uphold personal boundaries."

As Megan delved into her personal growth journey, she highlighted the challenges of balancing self-care with a demanding work schedule. "I've been focusing on establishing healthier habits and nurturing personal connections," she explained. "But finding a rhythm and energy to maintain consistency amidst work pressures has been a struggle."

I found Megan's approach to personal development strategies particularly insightful. She emphasized the significance of effective time management and setting achievable goals. "Blocking out time for specific tasks and prioritizing meaningful activities has been crucial," she remarked. "Reflecting on my progress and celebrating small wins keeps me motivated."

Megan's resilience in the face of setbacks was evident as she discussed bouncing back from challenges. "I try to maintain a positive outlook and see setbacks as opportunities for growth," she noted. "Dwelling on setbacks only wastes time and energy."

One of Megan's biggest support systems is her family, especially her husband, who encourages her to prioritize self-care. "Having a strong support system makes a world of difference," she acknowledged. "Their encouragement and understanding keep me grounded."

As Megan shared her aspirations for the future, her enthusiasm for further education and skill development shone through. "I'm excited about expanding my knowledge in hospitality, leadership, and business finance," she enthused. "Ultimately, I hope to run my own business someday."

Reflecting on Megan's journey, it's evident that personal and professional growth are intertwined. Her dedication to self-improvement and resilience in the face of challenges is

admirable. Megan's story serves as a reminder of the importance of **continuous learning** and **adaptation** in navigating life's twists and turns.

Interview #2: Cheyenne Singer

Occupation: Musician

Relationship: my best friend of 6 years

In a heartfelt exchange with my longtime friend Cheyenne, we delved into the profound topic of personal growth and the journey to becoming our best selves. As the conversation unfolded, it became evident how intertwined our experiences have been over the years.

Cheyenne reminisced, "You've always been a very hard worker since I've known you." She reflected on my evolution, noting, "I think what I've seen from you professionally is like a confidence boost. I've seen you stand up for yourself more and just realize what you're willing to deal with and what you're not willing to deal with."

Upon hearing this, I reflected on moments working in hospitality where I had to stand my ground. In the beginning it wasn't easy. My sentences would stumble, and I would tear up trying to get the right words together. This kind of resilience was gained from facing this version of myself and being okay with stumbling and tearing up. Over time with more practice, standing up for myself became a bigger asset to my character.

Back to the present conversation with Cheyenne, our discussion then shifted to Cheyenne's own journey of self-discovery. She candidly shared, "Every day I think about where I want to be and where I'm not." Reflecting on her growth, Cheyenne revealed, "If I was to show myself five years ago where I am today, five years ago, I'd be very happy."

Amidst our reflections, Cheyenne courageously opened up about facing a challenging toxic relationship, acknowledging, "Being in a toxic relationship wasn't good for my psyche or me." She spoke of the struggle to navigate through heartbreak and self-recovery, emphasizing her determination to move forward. Could it be that heartbreak is the kind of push we need to grow as a human being? I have entertained this thought for a while, and it seems like an inevitable train collision that we all face in today's dating scene. Thus, that would mean everyone should be a better human being after every relationship. However, that is only realistic in an ideal world. Not everyone learns from their mistakes.

One pivotal moment Cheyenne described was the purchase of her electric harp, stating, "When I bought that, I was like, 'Yeah, no, this is everything I did led me up to that.' It just kinda makes sense." This decision marked a turning point in her journey, affirming her commitment to authenticity and creative expression.

Our conversation also touched upon the profound impact of our friendship on each other's personal growth. Cheyenne expressed appreciation, saying, "I feel like we're both just

really good support systems in each other's lives." She emphasized the importance of mutual respect and understanding in fostering growth and emotional resilience.

As our discussion drew to a close, Cheyenne and I reflected on our individual strengths and areas for growth. While acknowledging each other's strengths—her candidness and my rationality—we also recognized the importance of embracing vulnerability and cultivating meaningful connections.

In retrospect, our conversation served as a poignant reminder of the transformative power of introspection and shared experiences. Through mutual support and self-reflection, we continue to navigate the complexities of personal growth, each step forward a testament to resilience and authenticity.