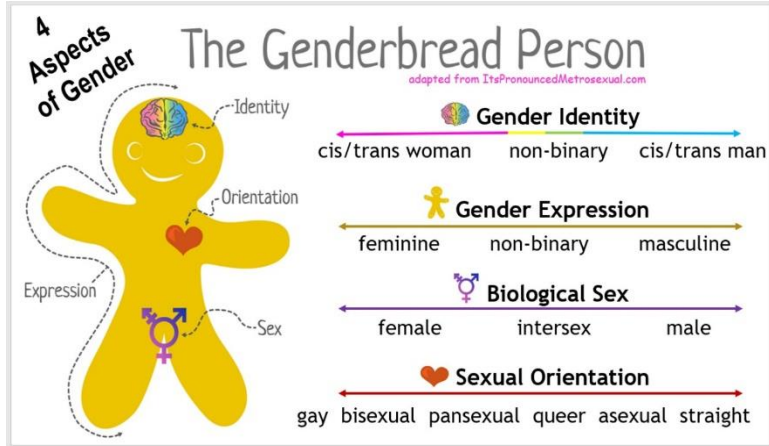


WORDS TO KNOW



Gender Identity - Who you know yourself to be on the inside... male, female, both or neither.

Cisgender – Describes people whose gender identities match their sex assigned at birth.

Transgender – Describes people whose gender identities do NOT match their sex assigned at birth.

Non-Binary – Describes people whose gender identities may be neither male nor female, or a combination of both. There is a wide array of non-binary gender identities, including agender, genderqueer, gender fluid, bigender, etc.

Gender Expression – How a person expresses or presents their gender through their clothes, hair style, accessories, vocal register, mannerisms, etc.

Gender Nonconforming—Describes people whose gender expression or behaviors differ from cultural expectations regarding gender. Cisgender people can be gender nonconforming.

Biological Sex – Physical traits related to a person’s reproductive organs, chromosome patterns and hormone levels. A person’s biological sex can be male, female or intersex.

Intersex—Describes a person whose sex traits (internal and external reproductive organs, chromosome patterns, hormone levels) are different from the typical male/female binary.

Sexual Orientation—Who a person is attracted to romantically and/or physically. Transgender and non-binary people have various sexual orientations just like cisgender people; one’s gender identity is distinct from their sexual orientation.

Gender-neutral Pronouns—Many non-binary, gender nonconforming or intersex people use they/them/theirs as their individual personal pronouns. Some people do not use any pronouns; they simply use their names. Others use neo pronouns or a combination of pronouns.

Mx (pronounced *m-x*, *miks*, or *muks*)—A gender-neutral title used in place of Mr. or Ms.

Learn more on our website’s [Resources](#) page.

INTERACTING RESPECTFULLY

with Transgender and Non-binary People

- Understand that transitioning is the process of aligning one’s external self and public life with one’s internal knowing of their gender identity. There are three aspects to transitioning: social, legal and medical. Do not make assumptions about what aspects of transitioning a person may or may not pursue. Each person’s journey is unique.
- Diffuse inappropriate jokes or comments by saying something like, “Speaking of trans (or non-binary) people... I recently learned that...” OR “...did you see that documentary/article about...?” and share something you know to be true about gender diverse people.
- Share your pronouns everywhere: when you introduce yourself, beside your name in Zoom, in email signatures and your LinkedIn profile. Sharing your pronouns helps you to remember that gender is complex, and it shows solidarity with those who do not have “pronoun privilege” (i.e. the privilege of always being addressed by the correct pronoun).
- Regarding personal and religious beliefs, remember that you don’t have to agree with someone in order to show them respect
- Never out someone
- The words *transgender* and *non-binary* are adjectives. They are used to describe someone. Never use the words as nouns (ex. “Do you know any non-binaries?” or “We learned about transgender today.”) or as adjectives (ex. “My friend is transgendered.”)
- Do not use the word *transgenderism*. Transgender people are not a philosophy, nor are they a movement. They are “transgender people” or “the transgender community.”

Words/Phrases to Avoid

- Sex Change / “The Surgery”
- Born a man
- Born a woman
- Transgendered/s, transsexual, transgenderism, she-male, he-she, tranny, it
- Hermaphrodite
- Transvestite

Words/Phrases to Use Instead

- Gender affirming surgeries
- Use a person’s actual identity
- Use a person’s actual identity
- Transgender, trans, trans person

- Intersex person
- Cross-dresser

AVOID THESE MICROAGGRESSIONS

Against Transgender and Non-binary People

- Asking for “preferred” pronouns (just ask their pronouns)
- Referring to gender diverse people’s lived experiences as a *lifestyle, choice or preference*
- Asking about one’s anatomy, surgeries or sexual activity
- Asking questions without first doing your own research (Note: educating everyone is tiring)
- Applying insensitive humor to sensitive subjects
- Saying nothing to someone who knows a co-worker’s name when they deadname or misgender your co-worker (especially if the co-worker is not present)
- Offering “helpful suggestions” regarding a person’s gender expression (ex.: *“Have you ever thought about wearing your hair a different way?”*)
- Making assumptions about one’s transition goals (example: not all trans people want all available gender affirmation surgeries)
- Making assumptions about one’s story/narrative (example: not all trans people feel they were “born in the wrong body”)
- Stereotyping someone’s cultural interests (example: not all gender diverse people enjoy drag)
- Assuming someone’s sexual orientation from their gender identity or expression
- The following comments are microaggressions:
 - *“You look so pretty/handsome... I would have never guessed you were trans”*
 - *“I didn’t know you were trans! You look just like a real man/woman!”*
 - *“I’ll always think of you as (deadname).”* (A deadname is a person’s pre-transition name).
 - *“What’s your real name?” or “What was your name before?”*

Comments that are microaggressions specifically related to non-binary people

- *“So when are you going to fully transition?”*
- *“Being non-binary isn’t a real thing; you’re just trying to get attention.”*
- *“But ‘they’ is plural so it can’t be your individual, personal pronoun!”*
- *“Your gender expression is so confusing; how do you expect me to use your correct pronouns?”*