

Basic LGBTQIA Terms

**1ST
100
WAYS**

Sexual Orientation

A person's emotional, spiritual, romantic, and/or sexual attraction to others

Asexual— describes a person who is not sexually attracted to others or does not desire sexual activity. A person might be gray-asexual, meaning there might be a person with whom they would engage in some sexual interaction, but rarely or reserved for specific activities. Similarly, a person might be Aromantic, meaning they might have sex, but prefer not to have romantic relationships.

Bisexual (Bi)— describes a person who is attracted to the same gender as well as another gender.

Gay— a man who is predominately or exclusively attracted to men. Sometimes used as an umbrella term to include all LGBTIQ people.

Heterosexual— describes a man who is attracted to a woman or a woman attracted to a man.

Lesbian— a woman who is predominately or exclusively attracted to women.

Pansexual— describes a person who is attracted to all genders and/or sexes. As a word, bisexual only recognizes two genders. Pansexual is a more inclusive term.

Sex

Intersex—refers to people whose sex, on a genetic, hormonal, or anatomic level, are neither male nor female. Their sex

chromosomes may not be xx or xy, or they may be born with ambiguous genitalia (hermaphrodite is an outdated term) or variations in internal reproductive organs. Surgery performed in infancy, without consent, leaves some individuals feeling incomplete or altered. Intersex people may or may not identify as transgender or genderqueer.

Gender Identity

Describes the gender with which a person identifies, not to be confused with sex which relates to a person's biological sex through their anatomy (ex: testicles, penis, ovaries, vagina, etc.), chromosomes, and/or hormones. E.g., someone assigned female at birth (sex) may identify as a man (gender identity).

Agender—a person who has no internal sense of gender identity. Another term is genderless.

Cisgender—a person who identify with the gender they were assigned at birth.

Genderqueer—a term describing a person whose gender is not binary (one of the two commonly

Man—the social and/or legal status of a person who identifies with the male sex.

Woman—the social and/or legal status of a person who identifies with the female sex.

Transgender—a broad term used to describe a range of individuals whose gender identity and expression, to varying degrees, does not correspond to their biological sex or

the sex they were assigned at birth. Can be shortened to trans or trans* (the star tends to be most broadly inclusive.) Transition can include: coming out to one's family, friends, and/or co-workers; changing one's name and/or sex on legal documents; hormone therapy; and possibly (though not always) some form of surgery.

Transgender Man (trans man, Female to Male, FtM, FtM, F2M)—a transgender person assigned female at birth who identifies as a man. He may have transitioned or be in the process of transitioning hormonally and/or surgically to male OR may never go through surgery or hormonal reassignment.

Transgender Woman (trans woman, Male to Female, MtoF, MtF, M2F)—a transgender person assigned male at birth who identifies as a woman. She may have transitioned or be in the process of transitioning hormonally and/or surgically to female OR may never go through surgery or hormonal reassignment.

Experiences

Coming Out—Coming out is a complex, difficult, and life-long process of telling others about one's sexuality and/or gender identity. Coming out and disclosing gender identity is a different experience from coming out about sexual orientation.

Transition—The complex process of leaving behind one's assigned birth sex/gender.

Prejudice

Biphobia—the fear or disgust of love and/or sexual attraction between members of all genders. This can be perpetrated by gay and lesbian people, as well as heterosexuals. It can include thinking bisexuality is a phase, that it isn't real, that a person must decide on one gender to love, that a gay or lesbian

who has sex with a bisexual person is taking a risk, erasing or making bisexual people invisible within the community by assuming they are either straight or gay/lesbian, etc.

Transphobia—the fear or disgust of people who transgress social expectations of gender conformity. This can come from cisgender people who are straight as well as those who are LGBTQI. It can include thinking that trans people are deceitful if they do not disclose their transition history, creating or supporting restrictions on people's ability to medically, socially, or legally transition, policing people's choice in use of public accommodations like bathrooms and locker rooms, believing that a person is no longer truly gay if he has sex with a trans man, lesbian if she has sex with a trans woman, or straight if they have sex with any trans people, using incorrect names and pronouns, asking what a person's "real" name is, or dehumanizing trans people with words like tranny, she-male, it, he-she.

Homophobia—the fear or disgust of same-sex love and/or sexual attraction. The fear, prejudice, and/or hatred of those not heterosexual. Homophobia can be internal (personal belief that homosexuality is wrong or repulsive) or external (supporting societal and institutional heterosexism like the prohibition of same-sex marriage).

Heterosexism—the belief that male and female sexuality and male/female relationships are the only natural or moral mode of sexual behavior. It is also the assumption, intentional or unintentional, that every person is heterosexual. This might include asking a lesbian what her boyfriend's name is, thinking all women survivors were assaulted by men, etc.

Cissexism—belief that cisgender people are more normal or natural, or the assumption that every person is cisgender. Binarism is the belief or assumption that male and female are the only sexes, and that there are only two genders (man and woman.)