

Terminology



Questions

Sex (assigned at birth)

Based on genitals: male, female, intersex

Gender norms

A set of time and location-dependent social rules and expectations for individuals based on their sex.

Gender

A person's sense of how well their experience of gender aligns with current gender norms.



Terminology continued



Questions



Nontrans/Cisgender

Someone whose gender identity aligns with their sex.

Trans/Transgender

An umbrella term applied to those whose gender identity does not align with the sex assigned at birth.



Questions

A little more vocab

- **Nonbinary** – a gender that is not man or woman.
- **Heteronormativity** – the assumption that heterosexuality is superior to other sexual orientations and relationship structures (e.g., monogamy, marriage for life).
- **Cisnormativity** – the assumption that being nontrans is superior and something is wrong with trans people.

Last two definitions



Questions

Gender expression

Physical manifestation of gender:
e.g., appearance and behavior.

Transition

The process of altering one's body
and/or gender expression to match
their gender identity.



What is an ally?



Questions

An ally is someone who engages in **ongoing acts of resistance and support** that **center the needs and voices** of a targeted individual or group.

ALLYSHIP
is a **VERB**

**Self-advocacy
is allyship!**

How allies to trans people can function as ecosystem engineers

Fostering environments within which trans and nonbinary people can **thrive**, not just survive.

Examples:

- Establishing gender-inclusive policies at work
- Correcting someone when they misgender a trans person
- Spreading awareness about trans issues through casual conversation
- Informed voting/contacting legislators/politics
- Volunteering for organizations that bolster and protect trans people
- Financially supporting trans advocacy organizations



Example of how anti-trans attitudes harm EVERYONE

- Anti-trans attitudes are not an indication that something is wrong with trans people. They are a reflection of bias.
- Anti-trans bias is rooted in patriarchy and supremacist ideology

Assumptions (imagine how these hurt non-trans people, too)

1. There is a correct way to “do” a gender.
2. Everyone must assimilate to the correct way.



Questions

Trans visibility via non-trans people

Examples:

- A parent of a trans child talks openly and without shame about their child being trans
- Correcting someone when they misgender a trans person
- Sharing social media posts by trans people



How to cultivate allyship



Questions

1. Know yourself

- Understand your values, motivation, *limits* and *limitations*
- Understand the power and impact of your identities/privileges on yourself and others
- Identify your gifts, talents, skills, abilities, and assets
- Identify where you have control and influence and focus on that

2. Learn

- Become familiar with common microaggressions and bystander intervention techniques
- Become versed in the issues facing trans people
- Learn about trans lives past and present
- Develop media literacy and consume media strategically

How to cultivate allyship



Questions

3. Grow and seek feedback

- Decolonize your mind – critically question everything
- Develop skills to help you communicate (especially listening and naming emotions/behaviors)
- Learn about your biases and how to mitigate them

4. Engage in consistent self-care

- Thriving is an act of resistance. Discover what makes you thrive.
- Look for glimmers daily

Bias can thwart allyship, causing unintended harm



Questions

- Allyship centers the needs and wellbeing of the vulnerable group/person, not social norms established by the dominant culture
- Everyone has biases, even allies
- Everyone deserves grace and a lot of it

Two common examples of how ally bias can cause harm



Questions

Common examples:

1. Surgeons who tell trans patients seeking top surgery they are fat and need to lose weight to get “better” results.
 - Biased assumption: being fat is unattractive
2. Someone refusing to use gender-affirming language such as neopronouns or singular they/them providing the justification that it’s too difficult or “improper” grammar.
 - Biased assumptions: there is only one “correct” grammar; language and grammar are static

This is why the label “ally” is not self-designated – it’s granted by the targeted individual/group (can use “aspiring ally”)