

Glossary of Terms

Ally: A person who does not necessarily identify with a group, but still advocates for that group's rights.

Agender: A person who does not identify themselves as having a particular gender.

Aromantic: In its broadest meaning, this umbrella term encompasses anyone who has a low or absent romantic attraction to others. Sexual relationships may be desired.

Asexual: In its broadest meaning, this umbrella term encompasses anyone who has a low or absent sexual attraction or interest in sexual activity. Intimate romantic/affectional relationships may be desired.

Biphobia: Negative feelings, attitudes, actions, or behaviors towards people who are, or are perceived to be, bisexual or pansexual. It may also be a fear of one's own bisexual or pansexual attractions.

Bisexual: A person who has the potential to be sexually and/or romantically attracted to men and women.

Cisgender: Often abbreviated as "cis", this term means that you are comfortable with the gender identity assigned to you at birth. This is the opposite of transgender.

Cissexism: Seen as subtle form of discrimination, this is the assumption that all people are, or should be, cisgender. This creates a system of advantages bestowed upon those who are cisgender.

Colorblindness: While often well intentioned, this is a failure to acknowledge race based differences and systematic racism which allows oneself to deny the lived experiences of people of color.

Closeted: A term often used for LGBTQ+ people who have not yet had the privilege to disclose their orientation or gender identity. This may be for safety, fear of rejection or other personal reasons.

Crossdresser: A cisgender person who dresses in clothing deemed inappropriate by society for the gender assigned them at birth.

Demisexual: A person who only experiences sexual attraction to people that they have developed an emotional connection with.

Drag King & Drag Queen: A person who cross-dresses as a means of performance or entertainment.

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FTM: An abbreviated term Female-to-Male, this label is often adopted by people of trans experience who was assigned female at birth but know themselves to be male.

Gay: While most often associated with men, in its broadest meaning this is a person who is sexually and/or romantically attracted to people of the same gender.

Gender Binary: A classification system of gender into two distinct opposite forms of masculine and feminine whether by social system or cultural belief.

Gender Dysphoria: The deep discomfort a person who is transgender may experience with how their physical body aligns with their sense of self.

Gender Euphoria: The immense feeling of joy a person who is transgender may experience when their physical body aligns with their sense of self.

Gender Expansive: A person whose gender expression and/or identity broadens or overflows our binary cultural and societal expectations for men and women. Some people prefer this term to “gender non-conforming.”

Gender Expression: The part of a person's identity that is about expressing masculinity or femininity as influenced by society, culture and individual expectations.

Gender Fluid: A person who does not identify themselves as having a fixed gender.

Gender Identity: The part of a person's identity that is about their sense of self as male or female, neither or both.

Heterosexism: The systems of advantages bestowed on people who are heterosexual. It can also be the assumption that all people are, or should be, heterosexual and gender-conforming.

Homophobia: Negative feelings, attitudes, actions, or behaviors against LGBTQ+ people or people perceived to be LGBTQ+. It may also be a fear of one's own same-sex attractions.

Homosexual: An outdated clinical term used to describe someone who is gay or lesbian. This is a dated term. Many prefer the terms: gay or lesbian.

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Intersex: A person whose biological anatomy and/or genes vary from the expected male or female anatomy and/or genetics.

Latinx: This adjective relates to those of Latin American origin or descent and is the non-gendered alternative to "Latino" and "Latina".

Lesbian: A woman who is sexually and/or romantically attracted to other women.

LGBTQ+: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, plus so much more!

MTF: An abbreviated term Male-To-Female, this label is often adopted by people of trans experience who was assigned male at birth but know themselves to be female.

Non-Binary: A person whose gender identity is not as a man or a woman. They may be both, neither, somewhere between, a different gender or no gender at all.

Onmigender: Treating all genders as one, without discriminating or distinguishing between them.

Pansexual: A person who is sexually and/or romantically attracted to people regardless of their gender identity, gender expression or biological sex. This term goes beyond a gender binary.

Polyamory: The practice of or desire for intimate relationships with more than one partner at a time. These relationships depend upon consent and knowledge of all involved.

Queer: A simple label to explain orientations, gender identities and/or gender expressions that do not conform to societal expectations. Some people view this as a term of empowerment and others strongly dislike this term.

Questioning: A person who is unsure about their orientation and/or gender identity.

Romantic Orientation: The part of our identity related to whom we are romantically attracted; also known as affectional orientation.

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QTPOC/QTWOC: This abbreviation stands for Queer & Trans People of Color or Queer & Trans Women of Color and is rooted in the concept of intersectionality - which focuses on the intersections and interactions between various forms and systems of oppression including: Racism, Gender, Classism, Religious Oppression, and more.

Sexual Orientation: The part of our identity related to whom we are sexually attracted. **Transgender:** In its broadest meaning, this umbrella term encompasses anyone whose gender identity does not correspond to the gender they were assigned at birth.

Transfeminine: Transfeminine is a term used to describe transgender people who were assigned male at birth, but identify with femininity to a greater extent than with masculinity.

Transmasculine: Transmasculine is a term used to describe transgender people who were assigned female at birth, but identify with masculinity to a greater extent than with femininity.

Transphobia: Negative feelings, attitudes, actions, or behaviors against transgender people or people perceived to be transgender. It may also be a fear of one's own gender non-conformity.

Transsexual: A person whose gender identity is not congruent with the gender they were assigned at birth. Medical and surgical interventions that bring congruency are typically desired. This is a dated term. Many prefer the terms: transgender or trans.

Two-Spirit: A Native American term for LGBTQ+ individuals with dual or multiple genders. It can mean having both a masculine and a feminine spirit. It has different meanings in different communities. Some Native individuals embrace this terms while others strongly dislike it.

Xenophobia: The dislike or prejudice of people from other countries or who are different. This can add an additional layer of discrimination to folks who are LGBTQ+

Note: This should only be used as a general guide to get a feel for how some folks may self identify and common terms/identities in the LGBTQ+ community. Language is constantly changing. The best way to be an ally is to mirror the language of how someone self identifies to you. We don't have these words to label others or divide folks, but instead to give people the power to label themselves and find the best way to communicate to the world who they are.