

GLOSSARY

The terms and definitions below are always evolving and changing and often mean different things to different people. They are provided below as a starting point for discussion and understanding. This Glossary has been collectively built and created by the staff members of the LGBTQIA Resource Center since the early 2000s.

These are not universal definitions. This glossary is provided to help give others a more thorough but not entirely comprehensive understanding of the significance of these terms. You may even consider asking someone what they mean when they use a term, especially when they use it to describe their identity. Ultimately it is most important that each individual define themselves for themselves and therefore also define a term for themselves.

“If I didn't define myself for myself, I would be crunched into other people's fantasies for me and eaten alive.” Audre Lorde

This glossary contains terms, such as ableism and disability, that may not be considered directly related to identities of sexuality or gender. These terms are important to acknowledge as part of our mission to challenge all forms of oppression that affect the multiple, intersectional identities held by members of our community.

Ability: The quality of having the means or skill to do something. Ability is not permanent, can fluctuate throughout one's life, and is another aspect of diversity in our communities. Disabilities do not necessarily limit people unless society imposes assumptions that do not account for the variation in people's abilities.

Ableism: The pervasive system of discrimination and exclusion that oppresses people who are differently abled, including differences in mental, cognitive, emotional, and/or physical abilities, through attitudes, actions, or institutional policies.

Ageism: The pervasive system of prejudice and discrimination that marginalizes people based on their age. This can be perpetuated through stereotypes of youthfulness versus life at an older age and through oppressive policies that subordinate and exclude older folks. Ageism can impact different age groups besides older folks, such as children who are stereotyped as being unable to make big decisions.

Allosexism: The pervasive system of discrimination and exclusion that oppresses asexual people built out of the assumption that everyone does and should experience sexual attraction.

Allosexual: A sexual orientation generally characterized by feeling sexual attraction or a desire for partnered sexuality.

Allistic: An adjective used to describe a person who is not autistic and is often used to emphasize the privilege of people who are not on the autism spectrum.

Allyship: The action of working to end oppression through support of, and as an advocate with and for, a group other than one's own.

Androgyne: A person with a gender that is both masculine and feminine or in between masculine and feminine.

Aromantic: A romantic orientation generally characterized by not feeling romantic attraction or a desire for romance. Aromantic people can be satisfied by friendship and other non-romantic relationships. Many aromantic people also identify with a sexual orientation, such as asexual, bisexual, etc.

Asexual: A broad spectrum of sexual orientations generally characterized by feeling varying degrees of sexual attraction or a desire for partnered sexuality. Asexuality is distinct from celibacy, which is the deliberate abstention from sexual activity, despite sexual desire. Some asexual people do have sex and do experience varying levels of sexual attraction. There are many diverse ways of being asexual. A person who does not experience sexual attraction can experience other forms of attraction such as romantic attraction, as physical attraction and emotional attraction are separate aspects of a person's identity. These may or may not correlate with each other - for instance, some people are physically and romantically attracted to women. However, others might be physically attracted to all genders and only emotionally attracted to men.

Autism: A neurological variation encompassing a wide range of presentations and experiences. Common characteristics of autism include repetitive behavior and differences in social interaction, interpersonal relationships, and communication. For some people, their gender identity is significantly tied to their identity as an autistic person.

*For this glossary, we use identity-first language instead of person-first language for describing autistic people because for some people, their disability is an important part of who they are (this practice comes from the Autistic Self Advocacy Network). However, we acknowledge that language and how people describe their identities can vary for each person and change over time.

BDSM: Bondage and Discipline, Dominance and Submission, Sadism and Masochism. BDSM refers to a wide spectrum of activities and forms of interpersonal relationships. While not always overtly sexual in nature, the activities and relationships within a BDSM context are almost always eroticized by the participants in some fashion. Many of these practices fall outside of commonly held social norms regarding sexuality and human relationships.

Bear Community: a part of the queer community composed of queer men similar in looks and interests, most of them big, hairy, friendly and affectionate. The community aims to provide spaces where one feels wanted, desired, and liked. It nourishes and values an individual's process of making friends and learning self-care and self-love through the unity and support of

the community. Bears, Cubs, Otters, Wolves, Chasers, Admirers and other wildlife comprise what has come to be known as the Brotherhood of Bears and/or the Bear community. See also: Ursula

Bigender: Having two genders, exhibiting cultural characteristics of masculine and feminine roles

Biphobia: See Monosexism.

*As a staff, we've been intentionally moving away from using words like "transphobic," "homophobic," and "biphobic" because they inaccurately describe systems of oppression as irrational fears. Also, for some people, phobias are a very distressing part of their lived experience and co-opting this language can be disrespectful to their experiences and perpetuates ableism.

Bisexual: A person whose primary sexual and affectional orientation is toward people of the same and other genders, or towards people regardless of their gender. Some people may use bisexual and pansexual interchangeably.

BlaQ/BlaQueer: Folks of Black/African descent and/or from the African diaspora who recognize their queerness/LGBTQIA identity as a salient identity attached to their Blackness and vice versa. (T. Porter)

Body Image: how a person feels, acts, and thinks about their body. Attitudes about our own body and bodies in general are shaped by our communities, families, cultures, media, and our own perceptions.

Body Policing: any behavior which (indirectly or directly, intentionally or unintentionally) attempts to correct or control a person's actions regarding their own physical body, frequently with regards to gender expression or size. (ASC Queer Theory)

Butch: A gender expression that fits societal definitions of masculinity. Usually used by queer women and trans people, particularly by lesbians. Some consider "butch" to be its own gender identity.

Cisgender: a gender identity, or performance in a gender role, that society deems to match the person's assigned sex at birth. The prefix cis- means "on this side of" or "not across." A term used to highlight the privilege of people who are not transgender.

Cissexism/Genderism: The pervasive system of discrimination and exclusion founded on the belief that there are, and should be, only two genders and that one's gender or most aspects of it, are inevitably tied to assigned sex. This system oppresses people whose gender and/or gender expression falls outside of cis-normative constructs. Within cissexism, cisgender people are the dominant group and trans/ gender non-conforming people are the oppressed group.

Coming Out: Coming out is the process of voluntarily sharing one's sexual orientation and/or gender identity with others. This process is unique for each individual and there is no right or wrong way to come out. The term “coming out” has also been broadened to include other pieces of potentially stigmatized personal information. Terms also used that correlate with this action are: "Being out" which means not concealing one's sexual orientation or gender identity, and "Outing, " a term used for making public the sexual orientation or gender identity of another who would prefer to keep this information secret.

For support on coming out, please see the [Coming Out Resource Guide](#).

Cross Dresser (CD): A word to describe a person who dresses, at least partially, as a member of a gender other than their assigned sex; carries no implications of sexual orientation. Has replaced “Transvestite.”

Culture: A learned set of values, beliefs, customs, norms, and perceptions shared by a group of people that provide a general design for living and patterns for interpreting life. “Culture is those deep, common, unstated, learned experiences which members of a given culture share, which they communicate without knowing, and which form the backdrop against which all other events are judged.” (E. Hall.)

Cultural Humility: An approach to engagement across differences that acknowledges systems of oppression and embodies the following key practices: (1) a lifelong commitment to self-evaluation and self-critique, (2) a desire to fix power imbalances where none ought to exist, and (3) aspiring to develop partnerships with people and groups who advocate for others on a systemic level. (Melanie Tervalon & Jann Murray-García, 1998)

Demisexual: Demisexuality is a sexual orientation in which someone feels sexual attraction only to people with whom they have an emotional bond. Most demisexuals feel sexual attraction rarely compared to the general population, and some have little to no interest in sexual activity. Demisexuals are considered to be on the asexual spectrum.

Disability/(Dis)ability/Dis/ability: A social construct that identifies any restriction or lack of ability to perform an activity in the manner or within the range considered “typical” for a human being given environments that are constructed for and by the dominant or “typical” person.

Discrimination: Inequitable actions carried out by members of a dominant group or its representatives against members of a marginalized or minoritized group.

Drag King: A person (often a woman) who appears as a man. Generally in reference to an act or performance. This has no implications regarding gender identity.

Drag Queen: A person (often a man) who appears as a woman. Generally in reference to an act or performance. This has no implications regarding gender identity.

Ethnicity: A social construct that divides people into smaller social groups based on characteristics such as shared sense of group membership, values, behavioral patterns, language, political and economic interests, history and ancestral geographical base.

Femme: Historically used in the lesbian community, it is being increasingly used by other LGBTQIA people to describe gender expressions that reclaim and disrupt traditional constructs of femininity.

Gay: A sexual and affectional orientation toward people of the same gender.

Gender: A social construct used to classify a person as a man, woman, or some other identity. Fundamentally different from the sex one is assigned at birth.

Gender Expansive: An umbrella term used for individuals who broaden their own culture's commonly held definitions of gender, including expectations for its expression, identities, roles, and/or other perceived gender norms. Gender expansive individuals include those who identify as transgender, as well as anyone else whose gender in some way is seen to be broadening the surrounding society's notion of gender.

Gender Expression: How one expresses oneself, in terms of dress and/or behaviors. Society, and people that make up society characterize these expressions as "masculine," "feminine," or "androgynous." Individuals may embody their gender in a multitude of ways and have terms beyond these to name their gender expression(s).

Gender Fluid/Genderfluid: A person whose gender identification and presentation shifts, whether within or outside of societal, gender-based expectations. Being fluid in motion between two or more genders.

Gender Identity: A sense of one's self as trans, genderqueer, woman, man, or some other identity, which may or may not correspond with the sex and gender one is assigned at birth.

Genderism/Cissexism: Is the belief that there are, and should be, only two genders & that one's gender or most aspects of it, are inevitably tied to assigned sex. In a genderist/cissexist construct, cisgender people are the dominant/agent group and trans/ gender non-conforming people are the oppressed/target group.

Gender Outlaw: A person who refuses to be defined by conventional definitions of male and female. ("Gender Outlaw" by Kate Bornstein)

Gender Non conforming (GNC): Adjective for people who do not subscribe to societal expectations of typical gender expressions or roles. The term is more commonly used to refer to gender expression (how one behaves, acts, and presents themselves to others) as opposed to gender identity (one's internal sense of self).

Gender Queer: A person whose gender identity and/or gender expression falls outside of the dominant societal norm for their assigned sex, is beyond genders, or is some combination of them.

Gender Unicorn: A commonly used model to explain various aspects of one's identity, including assigned sex at birth, gender identity, gender expression, physical attraction, and romantic attraction. The Gender Unicorn illustrates how, with the exception of assigned sex at birth, these different aspects of identity exist on spectrums. The Gender Unicorn is available at transstudent.org/gender

*The popular Genderbread Person was plagiarized from the Gender Unicorn. Both models are not comprehensive representations of identities since these are complex topics.

Gender Variant: A person who varies from the expected characteristics of the assigned gender.

Heteronormativity: Attitudes and behaviors that incorrectly assume gender is binary, ignoring genders besides women and men, and that people should and will align with conventional expectations of society for gender identity, gender expression, and sexual and romantic attraction. For example, someone assigned female at birth is expected to 1) have a body that is considered "female" by the dominant culture, 2) identify as a girl or woman, 3) act feminine and fulfill the roles associated with girls and/or women, and 4) be romantically and sexually attracted to men.

Heterosexism: The assumption that all people are or should be heterosexual. Heterosexism excludes the needs, concerns, and life experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual and queer people while it gives advantages to heterosexual people. It is often a subtle form of oppression, which reinforces realities of silence and erasure.

Heterosexuality: A sexual orientation in which a person feels physically and emotionally attracted to people of a gender other than their own.

Homophobia: See Heterosexism above.

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Homosexual/Homosexuality: An outdated term to describe a sexual orientation in which a person feels physically and emotionally attracted to people of the same gender. Historically, it was a term used to pathologize gay and lesbian people.

Internalized oppression: The fear and self-hate of one or more of a person's own identities that occurs for many individuals who have learned negative ideas about their identities throughout

childhood. One form of internalized oppression is the acceptance of the myths and stereotypes applied to the oppressed group.

Intersectionality: A term coined by law professor Kimberlé Crenshaw in the 1980s to describe the way that multiple systems of oppression interact in the lives of those with multiple marginalized identities. Intersectionality looks at the relationships between multiple marginalized identities and allows us to analyze social problems more fully, shape more effective interventions, and promote more inclusive advocacy amongst communities.

Intersex: An umbrella term to describe a wide range of natural body variations that do not fit neatly into conventional definitions of male or female. Intersex variations may include, but are not limited to, variations in chromosome compositions, hormone concentrations, and external and internal characteristics. Many visibly intersex people are mutilated in infancy and early childhood by doctors to make the individual's sex characteristics conform to society's idea of what normal bodies should look like. Intersex people are relatively common, although society's denial of their existence has allowed very little room for intersex issues to be discussed publicly. Hermaphrodite is an outdated and inaccurate term that has been used to describe intersex people in the past.

Kink: (Kinky, Kinkiness) Most commonly referred to as unconventional sexual practices, from which people derive varying forms of pleasure and consensually play-out various forms of desires, fantasies, and scenes.

Latinx: pronounced "La-TEEN-ex", is a non-gender specific way of referring to people of Latin American descent. The term Latinx, unlike terms such as Latino/a and Latin@, does not assume a gender binary and includes non binary folks.

Leather community: A community which encompasses those who enjoy sexual activities involving leather, including leather uniforms or cowboy outfits, and is related to similar fetish-based communities such as sado-masochism, bondage and domination, and rubber. Although the leather community is often associated with the queer community, it is not a "gay-only" community.

Lesbian: Usually, a woman whose primary sexual and affectional orientation is toward people of the same gender. However, some nonbinary people also identify as lesbians, often because they have some connection to womanhood and are primarily attracted to women. (See nonbinary below)

LGBT: Abbreviation for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender. An umbrella term that is often used to refer to the community as a whole. Our center uses LGBTQIA to intentionally include and raise awareness of Queer, Intersex and Asexual communities as well as myriad other communities under our umbrella.

LGBTQIA Allyship: The practice of confronting heterosexism, sexism, genderism, allosexism, and monosexism in oneself and others out of self-interest and a concern for the well being of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex and asexual people. Is founded on the

understanding that dismantling heterosexism, monosexism, trans oppression/trans misogyny/cissexism and allosexism is a social justice issue.

Masculine of Center (MOC): A term coined by B. Cole of the Brown Boi Project to describe folks, including lesbian/queer womyn and trans folks, who lean towards the masculine side of the gender spectrum. These can include a wide range of identities such as butch, stud, aggressive/AG, dom, macha, tomboi, trans-masculine, etc.

Microaggressions: Brief and subtle behaviors, whether intentional or not, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages of commonly oppressed identities. These actions cause harm through the invalidation of the target person's identity and may reinforce stereotypes. Examples of microaggressions include a person who is not white being told they speak "good English" or someone saying something is "gay" to mean they think something is bad.

Misgendering: Attributing a gender to someone that is incorrect/does not align with their gender identity. Can occur when using pronouns, gendered language (i.e. "Hello ladies!" "Hey guys"), or assigning genders to people without knowing how they identify (i.e. "Well, since we're all women in this room, we understand...").

MLM: an abbreviation for men who love men, which includes gay men as well as men who are attracted to men and people of other genders.

Monogamy: Having only one intimate partner at any one time; also known as serial monogamy, since "true" monogamy refers to the practice of having only one partner for life (such as in some animal species).

Monosexism: The belief in and systematic privileging of monosexuality as superior, and the systematic oppression of non-monosexuality.

Monosexual: People who have romantic, sexual, or affectional desire for one gender only. Heterosexuality and homosexuality are the most well-known forms of monosexuality.

MSM: an abbreviation for men who have sex with men; they may or may not identify as gay.

Multisexual: An umbrella term to describe attraction to more than one gender. It can include sexual attractions like bisexual, polysexual, omnisexual, and others. The aforementioned terms are used by some interchangeably and for others the subtle differences among them are important.

Neurodiversity: Neurodiversity refers to the natural and important variations in how human minds think. These differences can include autism, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, dyspraxia, dyslexia, dyscalculia, Tourette Syndrome, and others. Like other variable human traits like race, gender, sexuality, or culture, there is no right or wrong form of diversity. The social dynamics that exert power over other forms of diversity also impact neurodivergent people. Neurodiversity is not something to be cured or corrected to fit some social norm - rather, we should celebrate different forms of communication and self-expression and promote support

systems to allow neurodivergent people to thrive. (Neurocosmopolitanism, The National Symposium on Neurodiversity)

Neurodivergent: “Neurodivergent, sometimes abbreviated as ND, means having a brain that functions in ways that diverge significantly from the dominant societal standards of “normal.” A person whose neurocognitive functioning diverges from dominant societal norms in multiple ways – for instance, a person who is Autistic, has dyslexia, and has epilepsy – can be described as multiply neurodivergent. The terms neurodivergent and neurodivergence were coined by Kassiane Asasumasu, a multiply neurodivergent neurodiversity activist.”
(Neurocosmopolitanism)

Neurotypical: “Neurotypical, often abbreviated as NT, means having a style of neurocognitive functioning that falls within the dominant societal standards of “normal.” Neurotypical can be used as either an adjective (“He’s neurotypical”) or a noun (“He’s a neurotypical”).”
(Neurocosmopolitanism)

Neutrois: A non-binary gender identity that falls under the genderqueer or transgender umbrellas. There is no one definition of Neutrois, since each person that self-identifies as such experiences their gender differently. The most common ones are: Neutral-gender, Null-gender, Neither male nor female, Genderless and/or Agender. (Neutrois.com)

Non binary/Nonbinary/Non-binary: A gender identity and experience that embraces a full universe of expressions and ways of being that resonate for an individual, moving beyond the male/female gender binary. It may be an active resistance to binary gender expectations and/or an intentional creation of new unbounded ideas of self within the world. For some people who identify as non binary there may be overlap with other concepts and identities like gender expansive and gender non-conforming.

Omnigender: Possessing all genders. The term is used specifically to refute the concept of only two genders.

Oppression: exists when one social group, whether knowingly or unconsciously, exploits another social group for its own benefit.

Individual Level: a person’s beliefs or behaviors that consciously or subconsciously work to perpetuate actions and attitudes of oppression (See internalized oppression)

Institutional Level: Institutions such as family, government, industry, education, and religion have policies and procedures that can promote systems of oppression.

Societal/Cultural Level: community norms that perpetuate implicit and explicit values that bind institutions and individuals; social norms on what is valued, accepted, or desirable give the individual and institutional levels the justification for systemic oppression.

Orientation: Orientation is one’s attraction or non-attraction to other people. An individual’s orientation can be fluid and people use a variety of labels to describe their orientation. Some, but

not all, types of attraction or orientation include: romantic, sexual, sensual, aesthetic, intellectual and platonic.

Pansexual, Omnisexual: Terms used to describe people who have romantic, sexual or affectional desire for people of all genders and sexes. Has some overlap with bisexuality and polysexuality (not to be confused with polyamory).

Phobia: In mental and emotional wellness, a phobia is a marked and persistent fear that is excessive in proportion to the actual threat or danger the situation presents. Historically, this term has been used inaccurately to refer to systems of oppression (i.e. homophobia has been used to refer to heterosexism.) As a staff, we've been intentionally moving away from using words like "transphobic," "homophobic," and "biphobic" because they inaccurately describe systems of oppression as irrational fears, and, for some people, phobias are a very distressing part of their lived experience and co-opting this language is disrespectful to their experiences and perpetuates ableism.

Polyamory: Denotes consensually being in/open to multiple loving relationships at the same time. Some polyamorists (polyamorous people) consider "polyam" to be a relationship orientation. Sometimes used as an umbrella term for all forms of ethical, consensual, and loving non-monogamy.

Polygender, Pangender: Exhibiting characteristics of multiple genders, deliberately refuting the concept of only two genders.

Polysexual: People who have romantic, sexual, or affectional desire for more than one gender. Not to be confused with polyamory (above). Has some overlap with bisexuality and pansexuality.

Privilege: a set of unearned benefits given to people who fit into a specific social group. The concept has roots in WEB DuBois' work on "psychological wage" and white people's feelings of superiority over Black people. Peggy McIntosh wrote about privilege as a white woman and developed an inventory of unearned privileges that she experienced in daily life because of her whiteness.

Pronouns: Linguistic tools used to refer to someone in the third person. Examples are they/them/theirs, ze/hir/hirs, she/her/hers, he/him/his. In English and some other languages, pronouns have been tied to gender and are a common site of misgendering (attributing a gender to someone that is incorrect.)

Queer: One definition of queer is abnormal or strange. Historically, queer has been used as an epithet/slur against people whose gender, gender expression and/or sexuality do not conform to dominant expectations. Some people have reclaimed the word queer and self identify in opposition to assimilation (adapted from "Queering the Field"). For some, this reclamation is a celebration of not fitting into social norms. Not all people who identify as LGBTQIA use "queer" to describe themselves. The term is often considered hateful when used by those who do not identify as LGBTQIA.

Questioning: The process of exploring one's own gender identity, gender expression, and/or sexual orientation. Some people may also use this term to name their identity within the LGBTQIA community.

Race: A social construct that divides people into distinct groups based on characteristics such as physical appearance, ancestral heritage, cultural affiliation, cultural history, ethnic classification, based on the social, economic, and political context of a society at a given period of time. (Racial Equity Resource Guide)

Racism: The systematic subordination of people from marginalized racial groups based on their physical appearance, ethnic or ancestral history, or cultural affiliation. Racism is considered a deeply pervasive, systemic issue perpetuated by members of the privileged racial group holding dominant social power over others. Discrimination, prejudice, or xenophobia may be more accurate terms for describing individual acts of oppression. While these individual acts likely stem from systemic racism, at the individual level the power dynamics that enable racism are not at play in the same way.

Religion: A personal or institutionalized system of beliefs and practices concerning the cause, nature, and purpose of the universe, often grounded in belief in and reverence for some supernatural power or powers; often involves devotional and ritual observances and contains a moral code governing the conduct of human affairs.

Romantic Orientation: Romantic Orientation is attraction or non-attraction to other people characterized by the expression or non-expression of love. Romantic orientation can be fluid and people use a variety of labels to describe their romantic orientation. See also Orientation.

Same Gender Loving: a term used by some African American people who love, date, have attraction to people of the same gender.

Sex: a medically constructed categorization. Sex is often assigned based on the appearance of the genitalia, either in ultrasound or at birth.

Sexism: The cultural, institutional, and individual set of beliefs and practices that privilege men, subordinate women, and devalue ways of being that are associated with women.

Sexuality: The components of a person that include their biological sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, sexual practices, etc.

Sexual Orientation: Sexual Orientation is an enduring emotional, romantic, sexual or affectional attraction or non-attraction to other people. Sexual orientation can be fluid and people use a variety of labels to describe their sexual orientation. See also Orientation.

Sizeism: The pervasive system of discrimination and exclusion that oppresses people who have bodies that society has labeled as "overweight," as well as people of short stature. Historically speaking, fat people's bodies have been labeled as unhealthy, undesirable, and lazy; this fails to

complicate narratives around health and healthy living. This form of oppression has been referred to as fatphobia.

Social Identities: Social identity groups are based on the physical, social, and mental characteristics of individuals. They are sometimes obvious and clear, sometimes not obvious and unclear, often self-claimed and frequently ascribed by others.

Socialization: The process by which societal norms influence a number of aspects that frame how members of a community live - including how they might think, behave, and hold certain values. Socialization can reinforce assumptions or expectations that give power to systems of oppression.

Social Justice: A goal and a process in which the distribution of resources is equitable and all members are physically and psychologically safe and secure. Begins with an acknowledgement that oppression and inequity exist and must be actively dismantled on all levels. (Adams, Bell, & Griffin.)

Socioeconomic Class: Social group membership based on a combination of factors including income, education level, occupation, and social status in the community, such as contacts within the community, group associations, and the community's perception of the family or individual.

SOGIE: An acronym that stands for Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression. Is used by some in a similar way to the umbrella acronym: LGBTQIA.

Spectrum: a range or sliding scale. Aspects of one's identity like sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression exist on a spectrum. For example, with sexual orientation, the attraction to men, women, or someone of another gender all exist on separate spectrums. Someone might feel a little attracted to men, very much attracted to women, and moderate attraction to people outside this binary. Please also see the Gender Unicorn to learn more about these aspects of identity.

*The phrase “on the spectrum” is more commonly used to refer to identifying on the autism spectrum rather than sexuality or gender. (AutisticAdvocacy.org)

Spirituality: Having to do with deep feelings and convictions, including a person's sense of peace, purpose, connection to others, and understanding of the meaning and value of life; may or may not be associated with a particular set of beliefs or practices.

Stereotype: A generalization applied to every person in a cultural group; a fixed conception of a group without allowing for individuality. When we believe our stereotypes, we tend to ignore characteristics that don't conform to our stereotype, rationalize what we see to fit our stereotype, see those who do not conform as “exceptions,” and find ways to create the expected characteristics.

Trans: The term trans acts as a more inclusive term than transgender for gender non-conforming and non-binary folks.

Trans man: A person may choose to identify this way to capture their gender identity as well as their lived experience as a transgender person.

Transphobia: See Cissexsim above.

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Trans woman: A person may choose to identify this way to capture their gender identity as well as their lived experience as a transgender person.

Transgender: An adjective used most often as an umbrella term and frequently abbreviated to "trans." Identifying as transgender, or trans, means that one's internal knowledge of gender is different from conventional or cultural expectations based on the sex that person was assigned at birth. While transgender may refer to a woman who was assigned male at birth or a man who was assigned female at birth, transgender is an umbrella term that can also describe someone who identifies as a gender other than woman or man, such as non binary, genderqueer, genderfluid, no gender or multiple genders, or some other gender identity.

Transition: Transitioning is the process of taking steps to live as one's true gender identity. Transitioning is different for each individual and may or may not involve medical interventions like taking hormones or having surgery. Some people may not choose to transition in certain ways for a variety of reasons. The extent of someone's transition does not make that person's gender identity any less or more valid.

Transitioning may include socially transitioning, such as going by certain pronouns or going by the Lived Name that affirms one's gender identity. Transitioning may involve making changes to one's physical appearance, such as wearing certain clothing, wearing one's hair in a different style or length, or more complex changes such as medically transitioning through hormones or surgery. Transitioning can also involve changing legal documents to match one's authentic sense of self.

Two Spirit: An umbrella term encompassing sexuality and gender in Indigenous Native American communities. Two Spirit people often serve integral and important roles in their communities, such as leaders and healers. It may refer to an embodiment of masculinity and femininity but this is not the only significance of the term. There are a variety of definitions and feelings about the term two spirit – and this term does not resonate for everyone. Two Spirit is a cultural term reserved for those who identify as Indigenous Native American. Although the term itself became more commonly used around 1990, two spirit people have existed for centuries.

Undocumented: People are who are born outside of the country to which they immigrated, who do not have documentation that grants legal rights related to residency and/or citizenship.

Ursula: Some lesbians, particularly butch dykes, also participate in Bear culture referring to themselves with the distinct label Ursula.

Womxn: some womxn spell the word with an “x” as a form of empowerment to move away from the “men” in the “traditional” spelling of women.