

SUPPORTING AND AFFIRMING IDENTITIES THROUGH RADICAL INCLUSION

NAMES, PRONOUNS, AND BEYOND

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GOALS FOR TODAY'S TRAINING

- Investigate some of the components which form identity.
- Consider the multiple identities that people possess (intersectionality).
- Reflect on our own names, identities, and privileges.
- Define important terms used in identity formation.
- Explore the various pronouns used to reflect identity.
- Understand the impact that affirmation of names and identities can have.

IDENTITY FORMATION

- What are some common characteristics that inform perceived identities?
 - Ethnicity?
 - Gender?
 - Both are common identifiers in our life because perception often drives assumption.
 - Our perceptions are often influenced by the mainstream culture in which we live. And our assumptions leave us little opportunity to learn.
- It's important to consider a broader range of characteristics which comprise our identities.

IDENTITY FORMATION

- Five Minutes with Me: Complete Singh's Resilience Worksheet and Singh's Privilege and Oppression Matrix.
 - What did you learn about yourself through the exploration of identity and privilege?
 - Were there any realizations that you came to after completing the worksheets?
- As we reflect on the complexities and depth of our own identities, can we also reflect on the ways in which support from institutions and individuals could (and perhaps have) provided affirmation for those identities?
 - Over the next series of slides, we will revisit this question with particular foci.

AFFIRMATION THROUGH LEARNING AND RESPECTING NAMES

- One of the components of self that contributes to intersectional identities is the name we have/use (either the name that was given to us, or the name that we have come into as our own).
- Five Minutes with Me: Take some time to reflect on your own name (both first and last) through this series of questions:
 1. What's the history of your family's name(s)?
 2. What's the story of how/why you were given your name?
 3. What connection do you have to your name?
 4. Have you ever had anyone share any assumptions they had of your name?
 5. Have you ever had anyone share any assumptions they had of you because of your name?
 6. If you've ever had your name mispronounced without any attempt to correct it, how did it make you feel?



AFFIRMATION THROUGH LEARNING AND RESPECTING NAMES

- What realizations did you come to after reflecting on your name?
- What might our students and colleagues feel and experience about and around their names?
- Learning the names of students, and the ways in which they pronounce their names is a demonstration of respect of one's history and ancestors.
- Learning the names of students, and the ways in which they pronounce their names, is an intentional step in developing a relationship.
- It's important that we demonstrate an earnest desire to speak names with the pronunciation and inflection that matches what students know.

AFFIRMATION THROUGH LEARNING AND RESPECTING NAMES

A heavy history



Colonisation gave rise to a language hierarchy in which the language of the coloniser was inscribed as the most prestigious language (Brenzinger 1992).

Naming practices by European colonizers served to inject a sense of shame and legacy of inferiority. Of **the world's estimated 7,500 languages, over half will be extinct by the year 2050** owing to imperialism (Eames 2019).

European colonizers defiled African names to erase African identity. **Names not only aid in the construction of identity**, but also concretize a people's collective memory by recording the circumstances of their experiences. Thus, to obliterate African collective memories and identities, the colonizers assigned new names to the Africans or even left them nameless, as a way of subjugating and committing them to perpetual servitude (Fitzpatrick 2012).

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AFFIRMATION THROUGH LEARNING AND RESPECTING NAMES



AFFIRMATION THROUGH LEARNING AND RESPECTING NAMES

- In what ways can we demonstrate a commitment to respecting names, and respecting people?
 1. Work to recognize and eliminate stereotypes that we may have around names and ensure that we aren't relying on assumptions when reviewing a name.
 2. Ask about proper pronunciation. Listen carefully to what people share regarding how they say their name.
 3. Avoid conversations around assumed origins (nationality/regional). Students may not know or may not feel comfortable sharing.
 4. Always work from the chosen name column on rosters.

AFFIRMATION THROUGH LEARNING AND RESPECTING NAMES

- In what ways can we demonstrate a commitment to respecting names, and respecting people?
 5. Never ask a person to simplify their name, or if they have an “American/anglicized/English name” that they use.
 - Avoid statements like, “I’ll never remember that.”
 6. Apologize for mistakes made, and work toward proper pronunciation. Do not draw attention to the name or the mispronunciation.
 - Don’t avoid saying someone’s name.
 7. Set a standard for students to also use the correct names of classmates and assist them if they need some guidance with pronunciation. Learning students’ names will assist you in being a leader in helping students with correct pronunciation.



LEARNING AND RESPECTING GENDER IDENTITY

- Affirming our students and colleagues through a demonstration of respect of names is important.
- In addition to learning names, affirming other identities is important as well. (Nationality, regionality, for example)
- Students are complex individuals who come with a myriad of histories and identities.
- The next series of slides will revolve around affirming students' gender identity and understanding proper pronoun use.



OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

- Sex defined
 - The presence of genitalia typically based around the dichotomy of male & female. This is not a binary even though it is often referred to as such.
- Gender (gender identity) defined
 - The identification one holds for themselves/one's sense or self-definition of their gender. Sometimes this corresponds with assigned sex, sometimes it does not.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

- Gender Presentation
 - The external presentation of one's self through dress, mannerisms, style, and behavior which presents one's gender identity, or the identity one wants to present.
- Sexual Orientation
 - A person's sexual identity in relation to who they are attracted to sexually (which can differ from romantic/emotional attraction).
- Gender Dysphoria
 - The distress a person feels due to the conflict between their gender identity and their sex (mostly assigned at birth).

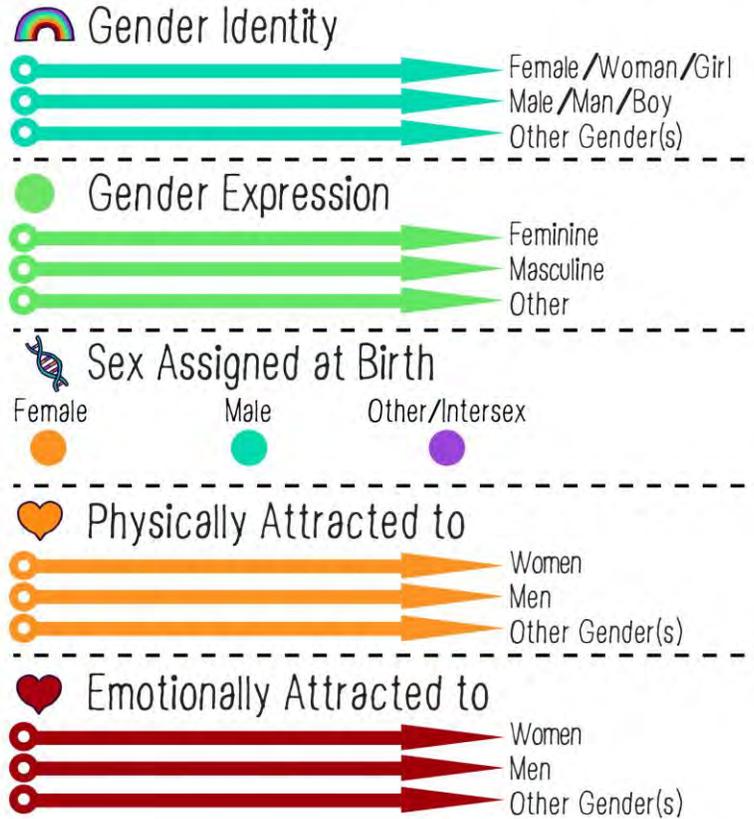
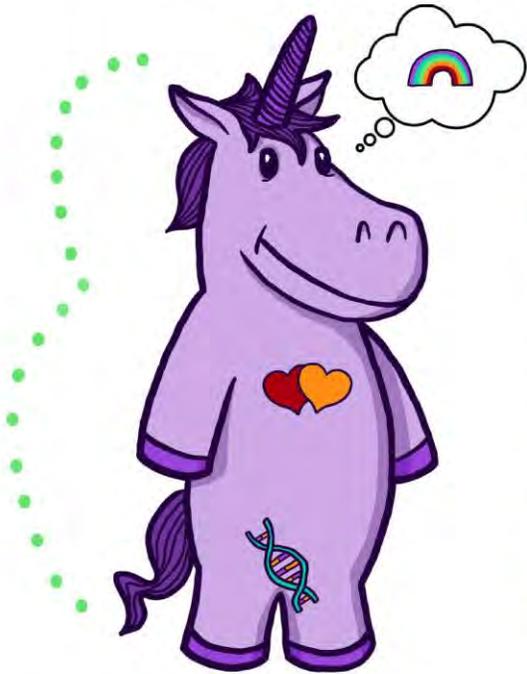


OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

- Cisgender (cis)
 - One whose gender identity is congruent with the assigned sex at birth
- Nonbinary (enby)
 - Often used to describe the spectrum of gender identities that are outside the gender binary.
- Transgender (trans)
 - One whose gender identity is not congruent with their assigned sex.

The Gender Unicorn

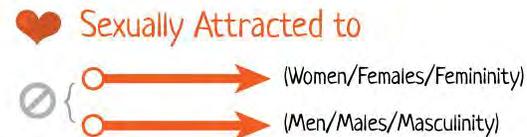
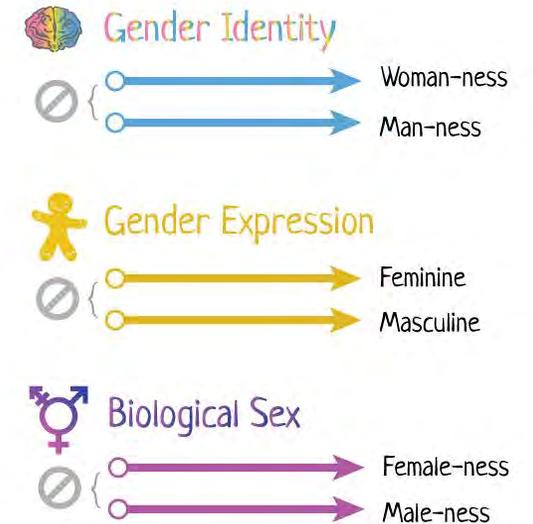
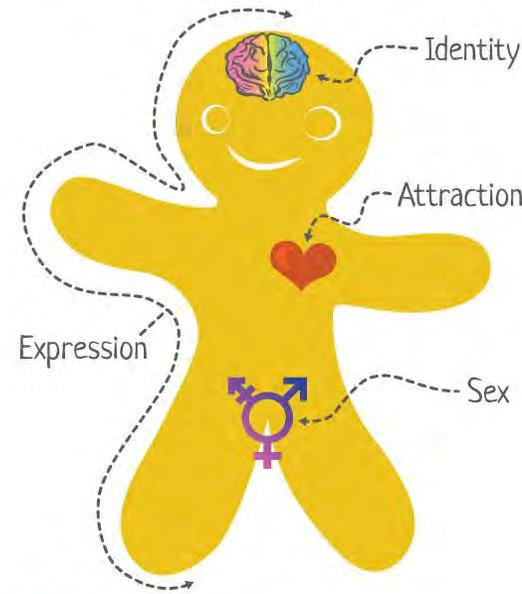
Graphic by:
TSER
Trans Student Educational Resources



To learn more, go to:
www.transstudent.org/gender

Design by Landyn Pan and Anna Moore

The Genderbread Person v3.3 its pronounced METROsexual



WHAT ARE PRONOUNS?

- Gender pronouns specifically refer to a person's gender identity. It reflects what people expect to be referred to by, and thus affirmed in their identity.
- There are a variety of pronouns that people identify as.
 - She/Her
 - He/Him
 - She/He/They
 - They/Them
 - Just my name
 - And others...

Gender Pronouns

Please note that these are not the only pronouns. There are an infinite number of pronouns as new ones emerge in our language. Always ask someone for their pronouns.

Subjective	Objective	Possessive	Reflexive	Example
She	Her	Hers	Herself	She is speaking. I listened to her. The backpack is hers.
He	Him	His	Himself	He is speaking. I listened to him. The backpack is his.
They	Them	Theirs	Themselves	They are speaking. I listened to them. The backpack is theirs.
Ze	Hir/Zir	Hirs/Zirs	Hirself/ Zirself	Ze is speaking. I listened to hir. The backpack is zirs.



WHY ARE WE CONCERNED WITH PRONOUNS?

- Engaging in affirming and inclusive language is a demonstration of respect.
 - Not honoring a person's name and pronouns can make them feel invalidated, alienated, dismissed, marginalized, and of course, disrespected.
 - Those who are marginalized because others refuse to accept and respect their name and pronouns have higher rates of suicide.
 - Students may actively experience gender dysphoria when misgendered, or dead named.
 - Gender dysphoria negatively impacts mental & physical health.

WHY ARE WE CONCERNED WITH PRONOUNS?

- What do folks say about the importance of proper name and pronoun use (part 1)?



WHY ARE WE CONCERNED WITH PRONOUNS?

- What do folks say about the importance of proper name and pronoun use (part 2)?



RESPECT THROUGH AFFIRMATION

- What can be done to support and demonstrate respect for the gender identity of students and colleagues?
 - Ask people what their pronouns are (avoid using the term preferred).
 - Ask people their name (if you don't know).
 - Work to make sure you use the name people tell you to use.
 - If you make a mistake, apologize and correct your language.
 - Be cognizant of your own language in interacting with others. Try to avoid making assumptions about others, their activities, and their identities.
 - Reflect on how you move through the world, and the ways in which your gender identity impacts you.

QUESTIONS?



RESOURCES FOR CURRENT ISSUES

- The following resources provide support for some issues discussed in today's training.
 - [The impact of mispronunciation, Vox article](#)
 - [Harvard's approach to supporting proper pronoun use](#)
 - [Relationships with students matter in their success](#)
 - [Creating a positive classroom environment](#)
 - [Using proper names may reduce suicide risk for trans youth](#)
 - [Sex is not binary](#)
 - [Anpu Sivakumaran's How to Respect My Ethnic Name Resource Guide](#)

Singh, Anneliese. (2018). *The Queer and Transgender Resilience Workbook; Skills for Navigating Sexual Orientation & Gender Expression*. Oakland, CA: New Harbinger Publications.