



Inland Oasis

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LGBTQIA+ Terminology

This glossary aims to provide a more comprehensive understanding of terminology, but it is not exhaustive and the ones listed are not universally applicable. When someone uses a term, you may consider asking about their specific meaning, especially when it relates to their identity. Ultimately, each person should define themselves and the terms that resonate with them personally.

Agender – A term used to describe a person who does not identify with any gender. Agender individuals may feel that they have no gender, or that gender is not a relevant or meaningful aspect of their identity. They may also use terms such as gender-neutral or genderless to describe themselves.

Allosexual – A term used to describe individuals who experience sexual attraction. It is often used to distinguish those who experience sexual attraction from those who do not, such as asexual individuals.

Ally – A (typically straight, cis) person who supports and advocates for the rights, dignity, and equality of LGBTQ+ individuals. Allies actively work to challenge discrimination, promote acceptance, and create inclusive spaces for queer communities. They may educate themselves and others about LGBTQ+ issues, listen to and amplify queer voices, and take action to combat homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, and other forms of prejudice. Being an ally involves ongoing commitment to understanding, empathy, and solidarity with the queer community.

Androgyny/ous – a gender expression or identity that blends or mixes characteristics traditionally associated with both male and female genders. Androgynous individuals may present themselves in a way that doesn't conform to typical gender norms, expressing a balance of masculine and feminine traits or appearing ambiguous in terms of gender presentation.

Aromantic – A term used to describe a person who does not experience romantic attraction or who experiences little to no romantic attraction. Aromantic individuals may still experience other forms of attraction, such as sexual or aesthetic attraction, but they do not feel the desire for romantic relationships or the romantic bond typically sought by others. It is important to note that aromanticism is a spectrum, and individuals may identify in various ways within this spectrum based on their personal experiences and feelings.

Asexual – A sexual orientation characterized by a lack of sexual attraction or a low or absent interest in sexual activity with others. Asexual individuals may still experience other forms of attraction, such as romantic, emotional, or aesthetic attraction, but they do not feel the need or desire for sexual relationships or experiences. Asexuality is a spectrum, and individuals may identify in various ways within this spectrum based on their personal experiences and feelings toward sexuality.

Assigned Gender – Refers to the gender designation (male or female) that is assigned to a person at birth based on physical characteristics such as genitalia. This assignment is typically made by medical professionals and/or parents shortly after birth and is based on the appearance of the infant's external anatomy. Assigned gender is often recorded on legal documents such as birth certificates. It is important to note that assigned gender may not always align with an individual's gender identity, which is their internal sense of their own gender.

AFAB: Assigned Female at Birth

AMAB: Assigned Male at Birth

While AFAB or AMAB can be helpful in discussing various transgender or non-binary experiences, they are not typically identities on their own. Referring to a trans man as "AFAB," for instance, can overlook his identity as a man. It's more respectful to use the pronouns and self-description that a person prefers and uses.

Bisexual – A sexual orientation characterized by the attraction to more than one gender. Bisexual individuals may be attracted to people of their own gender as well as to people of other genders. This attraction can be emotional, romantic, and/or sexual.

Biological sex – Biological sex refers to the classification of individuals as male or female based on physical and physiological attributes such as chromosomes, hormones, reproductive anatomy, and secondary sex characteristics. It is typically assigned at birth based on external genitalia, but can also include other biological markers such as chromosomes (XX for female, XY for male), gonads (ovaries or testes), and levels of sex hormones (estrogen and testosterone).

Biological sex is distinct from gender identity, which is a person's deeply held sense of their own gender, whether male, female, a blend of both, or neither. While biological sex is often categorized as male or female, variations and intersex conditions exist where individuals may have combinations of male and female biological characteristics or characteristics that do not fit typical definitions of male or female.

Cisgender – A term used to describe individuals whose gender identity aligns with the sex they were assigned at birth. For example, someone who was assigned female at birth and identifies as a woman is cisgender. The term "cis" is Latin-derived and means "on the same side as." Cisgender is often used to contrast with transgender, which describes individuals whose gender identity does not align with their assigned sex at birth.

Deadname/Deadnaming: A deadname refers to the name that a transgender or non-binary person no longer uses, typically the name assigned to them at birth. Deadnaming occurs when someone uses this former name, whether intentionally or not. It is widely recognized as offensive and hurtful to the individual, as it disregards their affirmed identity.

Demiromantic – A term used to describe a person who experiences romantic attraction only after developing a deep emotional or platonic connection with someone. Demiromantic individuals may not feel romantic attraction based solely on physical appearance or initial encounters, but rather require a strong emotional bond or friendship before experiencing romantic feelings.

Demisexual – A sexual orientation where individuals experience sexual attraction only after forming a strong emotional or romantic connection with someone. Demisexual individuals typically do not experience primary sexual attraction based solely on physical appearance or initial encounters. Instead, they require a deep emotional bond or connection with someone before feeling sexual desire or attraction.

Gay – A sexual and affectional orientation characterized by attraction to people of the same gender. It's important to avoid using "homosexuals," as this term is considered outdated and offensive by many lesbian and gay individuals. Instead, respectfully ask individuals how they identify before labeling their sexual orientations.

Gender binary – The classification of gender into two distinct and opposite categories: male and female. This classification assumes that every person fits exclusively into one of these two categories based on their biological sex assigned at birth. The gender binary often implies strict expectations regarding gender roles, behaviors, and identities that align with each category. It excludes and disregards the diversity of gender identities that exist beyond the traditional male and female dichotomy, such as non-binary, genderqueer, agender, and other identities.

Gender expression – The outward manifestation of a person's gender identity, usually through behavior, clothing, hairstyle, voice, or body characteristics. It encompasses the ways in which individuals communicate their gender identity to others and how they present themselves in relation to societal expectations of masculinity, femininity, and other gender norms. Gender expression is highly personal and may vary greatly among individuals, regardless of their assigned sex at birth or gender identity. It plays a significant role in how individuals interact with and are perceived by society.

Gender dysphoria: The psychological distress or discomfort experienced by some individuals whose gender identity differs from the sex they were assigned at birth. It involves a deep sense of unease or dissatisfaction with one's assigned gender role and can manifest in various ways, such as emotional distress, anxiety, depression, or dissatisfaction with one's body or physical characteristics. Gender

dysphoria is recognized in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5) and is a crucial aspect considered in the process of transgender healthcare and support.

Gender Euphoria: The positive emotions, satisfaction, and joy that individuals may experience when their gender identity is affirmed and validated. Unlike gender dysphoria, which involves distress or discomfort due to a mismatch between one's gender identity and assigned sex, gender euphoria describes the profound sense of happiness, comfort, and alignment that comes from being recognized and treated as one's true gender. It can occur through social interactions, affirming experiences, or transitioning processes that affirm a person's gender identity. Gender euphoria is an important aspect of transgender and non-binary experiences, highlighting the emotional rewards of living authentically.

Genderfluid – Describes a gender identity that is not fixed or static, but rather fluid and may change over time. Individuals who identify as genderfluid may experience different gender identities at different times, or their gender identity may fluctuate between male, female, a combination of both, or neither. This identity acknowledges that gender can be a dynamic and evolving aspect of a person's self-concept, varying based on factors such as mood, situation, or personal exploration.

Gender Neutral: Refers to language, spaces, or identities that are not specifically associated with any gender. It can apply to various aspects of society, including gender-neutral language that does not use binary male or female terms and pronouns, such as “they/them”; gender-neutral restrooms and facilities that are accessible and inclusive to anyone of any gender identity or expression.

Gender Queer – A term some people use to describe their gender identity that is outside the traditional binary of male and female. Those using this term may feel that they are a mix of both genders, neither gender, or fall somewhere along the gender spectrum. Genderqueer is an umbrella term that can encompass a variety of non-normative gender expressions and identities, including but not limited to non-binary, agender, bigender, and

genderfluid. This identity challenges conventional ideas about gender and embraces a more fluid and inclusive understanding of gender diversity.

Gender Non-Conforming – A term used to describe individuals whose gender expression differs from societal expectations associated with their assigned gender at birth. This can include differences in behavior, clothing, hairstyles, interests, and other aspects of presentation. Gender non-conforming individuals may or may not identify with a specific gender identity, such as non-binary or genderqueer. The term emphasizes the diversity of gender expressions and challenges rigid gender norms, highlighting that there are many ways to express and experience gender.

Intersex – An adjective used to describe a person with one or more innate sex characteristics, including genitals, internal reproductive organs, and chromosomes, that fall outside of traditional conceptions of male or female bodies. Do not confuse having an intersex trait with being transgender. Intersex people are assigned a sex at birth — either male or female — and that decision by medical providers and parents may not match the gender identity of the child.

Lesbian – A woman or feminine identifying person who experiences emotional, romantic, and/or sexual attraction toward people of the same gender. Lesbian is both a sexual orientation and an identity, encompassing the spectrum of experiences and relationships of women who love women. It is important to use this term respectfully and recognize it as a valid and important part of the LGBTQ+ community.

Microaggression: Subtle, often unintentional actions or comments that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative attitudes towards marginalized groups. These actions or comments may be based on a person's race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or other aspects of their identity.

Examples of microaggressions include:

1. Making assumptions about someone's abilities or intelligence based on their race or ethnicity (example: saying to a person of color “You're so articulate for someone from your background.”).

2. Using language that reinforces stereotypes about a particular gender or sexual orientation (example: using the term "gay" to mean something is bad).
3. Asking invasive questions about someone's personal identity or background (example: asking a trans person what surgeries they've had).
4. Ignoring or dismissing the experiences and perspectives of marginalized individuals (example: telling someone who has experienced discrimination "I'm sure it's not that bad. You're just being sensitive.").

While microaggressions may not always be overtly discriminatory, they can contribute to a hostile or unwelcoming environment for marginalized individuals.

Non-binary – A term used to describe gender identities that do not fit within the traditional binary understanding of male and female. Non-binary individuals may identify as a blend of both genders, neither gender, or as a different gender altogether. This identity acknowledges a spectrum of gender possibilities beyond just "male" or "female." Non-binary is an inclusive term that can encompass other identities such as genderqueer, genderfluid, agender, bigender, and more. Non-binary people may express their gender in diverse ways and may use a variety of pronouns, including they/them.

Out – A person who openly identifies as gay, lesbian, bisexual, queer, and/or transgender in their personal, public, and/or professional lives. This term is preferred by many over "openly gay."

Coming Out – The process of accepting and identifying one's own sexuality or gender identity, often involving being open about it with others. This lifelong journey of self-acceptance typically begins with an individual understanding their own sexual orientation, followed by the choice to disclose it to others, though having sexual experiences or telling others is not required. It is entirely valid to be out only to oneself.

Outing: The act of publicly disclosing another person's sexual orientation or gender identity without their consent, often based on

rumor or speculation. This is widely regarded as inappropriate within the LGBTQIA+ community and can be potentially dangerous .

Pansexual – A sexual orientation characterized by the potential for emotional, romantic, or sexual attraction to individuals regardless of their gender identity or sex. Pansexual individuals are attracted to people based on qualities that are not necessarily related to gender. This inclusive orientation recognizes and embraces the diversity of gender identities, including male, female, non-binary, genderqueer, and others. Pansexuality emphasizes the idea that attraction is about the person rather than their gender.

Passing: Refers to being perceived and recognized as their affirmed gender identity in everyday interactions and social situations. This typically means that others see them as the gender they identify with, aligning with their internal sense of self rather than their assigned sex at birth. Passing can involve various aspects such as appearance, mannerisms, voice, and behavior that contribute to being gendered correctly by others. It can be an important aspect of affirming one's gender identity and may affect a person's safety, comfort, and acceptance in different environments.

However, it's important to note that not all transgender individuals prioritize or seek to pass, and passing does not invalidate the gender identity of those who do not or cannot pass consistently.

Pronouns - Words used to refer to people in place of their names, often reflecting their gender identity.

Common pronouns include:

- He/Him/His: Typically used for someone who identifies as male.
- She/Her/Hers: Typically used for someone who identifies as female.
- They/Them/Theirs: Used for individuals who identify as non-binary, genderqueer, or when the gender of the person is unknown or unspecified. They/them can be used as singular pronouns.
- Other Pronouns: Some individuals may use pronouns such as ze/hir/hirs, xe/xem/xyrs, or others, reflecting their unique gender identities.

Respecting and using a person's correct pronouns is an important aspect of affirming their identity and showing respect. If unsure of someone's pronouns, it is appropriate to ask them respectfully.

Queer: An umbrella term used to describe sexual orientations and gender identities that are not heterosexual or cisgender (not exclusively male or female). It is often used as an inclusive and affirming term within the LGBTQIA+ community to encompass a wide range of identities that fall outside traditional norms of gender and sexuality.

Historically used as a slur, the term "queer" has been reclaimed by many LGBTQIA+ individuals and activists as a positive, inclusive, and empowering identity. It can refer to sexual orientations such as gay, lesbian, bisexual, pansexual, asexual, and others, as well as gender identities such as non-binary, genderqueer, and genderfluid.

"Queer" emphasizes diversity, fluidity, and resistance to rigid categorizations of sexuality and gender, promoting inclusivity and acceptance of all identities within the LGBTQ+ spectrum.

Questioning: A period of exploration and self-discovery regarding one's sexual orientation, gender identity, or both. Individuals who are questioning may be uncertain or in the process of understanding their attractions, feelings, or sense of self in relation to their gender or sexuality. It is a natural and important phase for many people as they seek to understand and define their identity and may involve introspection, research, seeking information, and exploring different possibilities. Questioning can be a fluid and evolving process as individuals explore and come to terms with their authentic selves.

Stealth – A term used primarily within the transgender community to describe a transgender person who chooses not to disclose their transgender status in their everyday life. When someone is living stealth, they are typically perceived by others as cisgender (i.e., their gender identity matches the sex they were assigned at birth). This decision can be made for a variety of personal reasons, including safety, privacy, and the desire to be recognized and treated as their identified gender without the social implications of being known as transgender.

Straight – A term used to describe individuals who are emotionally, romantically, and/or sexually attracted to people of the opposite gender. For example, a straight man is attracted to women, and a straight woman is attracted to men. This orientation is also referred to as heterosexual.

Transgender – An umbrella term that encompasses a range of gender identities and experiences of individuals whose gender identity differs from the sex they were assigned at birth. This includes, but is not limited to, transgender men (those assigned female at birth but who identify and live as men), transgender women (those assigned male at birth but who identify and live as women), and non-binary or genderqueer individuals who do not exclusively identify as male or female. The term "trans" is often used as a shorthand and reflects a broad spectrum of gender diversity.

FtM / F2M; MtF / M2F – abbreviations for female-to-male transgender person and male-to-female transgender person. There are many people that do not like this terminology, as it implies adherence to a gender binary.

Trans Man/Trans Masculine – A term used to describe an individual who was assigned female at birth but identifies and lives as a man. Trans men may or may not undergo medical or social transition to affirm their gender identity. They may use a variety of terms to describe themselves, including trans man, transgender man, or simply man. It's important to respect and use the terms and pronouns that individuals use to describe themselves.

Trans Woman/Trans Feminine – A term used to describe an individual who was assigned male at birth but identifies and lives as a woman. Trans women may or may not undergo medical or social transition to affirm their gender identity. They may use a variety of terms to describe themselves, including trans woman, transgender woman, or simply woman. It's important to respect and use the terms and pronouns that individuals use to describe themselves.

Transition – The process through which individuals change or affirm their gender identity to align more closely with their internal sense of self. This process can be social, legal, and/or medical, and it varies greatly depending

on the individual's needs and desires. This is a deeply personal and individualized journey, and not all transgender or non-binary individuals undergo medical interventions as part of their transition. The goal of transition is to alleviate gender dysphoria (distress caused by incongruence between gender identity and assigned sex at birth) and to live authentically in one's affirmed gender.

Two-Spirit – An adjective used by some Indigenous and First Nations people as an umbrella term to describe people who are not straight and/or cisgender. Many Indigenous communities have specific words in their language to describe these experiences, but some do not. This term should not be used to describe people who are not Indigenous. Only use it for an Indigenous person if they use it to describe themselves.

Additional Information

www.pgdc.org.au/education

www.glaad.org/reference/terms

www.lgbtqia.ucdavis.edu/educated/glossary

www.identiversity.org/terms