



Exercise 1

For the next 24 hours ask people their preferred pronouns wherever you go. Also, when engaged in a conversation tell that you would like to be addressed by your affirmed name and preferred pronoun.

Vocabulary

asexual:

- Another term used within the asexual community is “ace,” meaning someone who is asexual. Or “aro” for someone who is aromantic.
- Asexuality is different from celibacy in that it is a sexual orientation whereas celibacy is an abstaining from a certain action.
- Not all asexual people are aromantic.

biological sex:

- Often seen as a binary, but there are many combinations of chromosomes, hormones, and primary/secondary sex characteristics that one might embody, so it’s often more accurate and helpful to view this as a spectrum.
- Is commonly conflated with gender.

biphobia:

- Example of bi-invisibility and bi-erasure would be the assumption that any man in a relationship with a woman is straight or anyone dating someone of the same gender means they are gay. In neither case do we assume anyone could be bisexual.
- Important to recognize that many of our “stereotypes” of bisexual people - they’re overly sexual, greedy, it’s just a phase - have harmful and stigmatizing effects (and that it is not only straight people but also many queer individuals harbor these beliefs too).

bisexual:

- Can simply be shortened to “bi.”
- Many people who recognize the limitations of a binary understanding of gender may still use the word bisexual as their sexual orientation label (even if their attractions aren’t limited to “men and women”) instead of pansexual. This is often because more people are familiar with the term “bisexual,” whereas for a lot of people “pansexual” is new or unknown.



cisgender:

- “Cis” is a latin prefix that means “on the same side [as]” or “on this side [of].”

coming out:

- A popular misconception is this happens once. Coming out is, however, a continuous, lifelong process. Everyday, all the time, one has to evaluate and reevaluate who they are comfortable coming out to, if it is safe, and what the consequences might be.

gay:

- “Gay” is a word that’s had many different meanings throughout time. In the 12th century is meant “happy,” in the 17th century it was more commonly used to mean “immoral” (describing a loose and pleasure-seeking person), and by the 19th it meant a female prostitute (and a “gay man” was a guy who had sex with female prostitutes a lot). It wasn’t until the 20th century that it started to mean what it means today. Interesting, right?

genderqueer:

- The “queer” aspect of “genderqueer” is the reclaimed, affirmative, empowering usage of “queer.” This is not a slur or derogatory term.
- As an umbrella term, “genderqueer” shows up in a lot of different ways, many of which have their own label. For example, genderqueer might be combined aspects of man and woman and other identities (bigender, pangender); not having a gender or identifying with a gender (genderless, agender); moving between genders (genderfluid); third gender or other-gendered

homophobia:

- The term can be extended to bisexual and transgender people as well; however, the terms biphobia and transphobia are used to emphasize the specific biases against individuals of bisexual and transgender communities.
- May be experienced inwardly by someone who identifies as queer (internalized homophobia).

homosexual:

- Until 1973 “Homosexuality” was classified as a mental disorder in the DSM Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. This is



just one of the reasons that there are such heavy negative and clinical connotations with this term.

- There are different connotations to the word homosexual than there are to gay/lesbian individuals for both straight and queer people. There was a study done prior to the repeal of Don't Ask, Don't Tell about peoples' feelings towards open queer service members. When asked, "How do you feel about open gay and lesbian service members," there was about 65% support (at the time)." When the question was changed to, "How do you feel about open homosexual service members," the same demographic of people being asked support drops ~20%.

intersex:

- Often seen as a problematic condition when babies or young children are identified as intersex, it was for a long term considered an "emergency" and something that doctors moved to "fix" right away in a newborn child. There has been increasing advocacy and awareness brought to this issue and many individuals advocate that intersex individuals should be allowed to remain intersex past infancy and to not treat the condition as an issue or medical emergency.

lesbian:

- The term lesbian is derived from the name of the Greek island of Lesbos and as such is sometimes considered a Eurocentric category that does not necessarily represent the identities of Black women and other non-European ethnic groups.
- While many women use the term lesbian, many women also will describe themselves as gay, this is a personal choice. Many prefer the term gay because it is most often used as an adjective.

LGBTQ; GSM; DSG:

- There is no "correct" initialism or acronym — what is preferred varies by person, region, and often evolves over time.
- The efforts to represent more and more identities led to some folks describe the ever-lengthening initialism as "Alphabet Soup," which was part of the impetus for GSM and DSG.

passing:

- Passing is a controversial term because it often is focusing on the person who is observing or interacting with the individual who is "passing" and



puts the power/authority in observer rather than giving agency to the individual.

- Some people are looking to “pass” or perhaps more accurately be accepted for the identity that they feel most aligns with who they are. However, “passing” is not always a positive experience.
- Some individuals experience feeling of being invisible to or a loss of their own community when they are perceived to be part of the dominant group.
- The term “passing” comes from conversations about race (a person of color “passing” as white)

queer:

- If a person tells you they are not comfortable with you referring to them as queer, don't. Always respect individual's preferences when it comes to identity labels, particularly ones with troubled histories like this.
- People often wonder, “Is queer an ingroup term? Can straight people use it?” Our recommendation is that folks of any identity can use the word queer as long as they are comfortable explaining to others what it means, and why they use it. Because some people feel uncomfortable with the word, it is best to be comfortable explaining your usage.

transgender:

- Trans with an asterisk (“trans*”) is often used in written forms (not spoken) to indicate that you are referring to the larger group nature of the term, and specifically including non-binary identities, as well as transgender men (transmen) and transgender women (transwomen).
- Trans people can be straight, gay, bisexual, queer, or any other sexual orientation. Remember: this is a gender label, not a sexuality label.
- Because sexuality labels (e.g., gay, straight, bi) are generally based on the relationship between the person's gender and the genders they are attracted to, trans* sexuality can be defined in a couple of ways. Some people may choose to identify as straight, gay, bi, lesbian, or pansexual (or other labels — using their gender identity as the basis). Some people describe their sexuality using other-focused terms like gynosexual, androsexual, or skoliosexual (see full list for definitions for these terms.)