

## Sex & Gender 101

### Video Transcript

00:00

*\*\*Music\*\**

00:18

Sexuality and Gender. Let's start off with some basic terms and concepts so we're all starting from the same page.

How about sex versus gender? Sex in the way we're going to talk about it, today, probably isn't what you're thinking. When I'm talking about sex, I'm talking about our parts. What are the physiological structures that make us who we are? Sex is about chromosomes; it's about what you have in your pants. Sex is about the way you're shaped; it's about the internal parts of your body, your hormones. Gender is about the way that you see yourself, the way that you move through the world and experience the world. Gender is also about the ways that the world expects you to behave.

Sexual behavior versus sexual orientation. Now, we talk a lot about sexual orientation but I like to make a distinction between sexual orientation and sexual behavior. Sexual behavior is about who do you desire, whose bodies do you desire. It's also about whose bodies do you choose to share yourself with. Sexual behavior is the 'bow-chica-wow-wow' stuff. Sexual orientation, it's about who you fall in love with. Sexual orientation is about who do you gravitate toward for comfort and care, who do you want to build a home with, who might you choose build a family with, who do you fall in love with?

01:43

Human beings are very black and white thinkers, it's either 'Yes' or its 'No.' It's 'Male' or it's 'Female,' it's 'Chocolate' or 'Vanilla.' That's the way our brains work; we have to have a way to organize things, especially really complex things. In terms of sex, we break the world down between male and female. In terms of gender, we break the world down between masculine and feminine. In terms of sexual orientation, as well as sexual behavior, we break the world down between an opposite sex and gender orientation and a same sex and gender orientation.

We expect that somebody who is declared male at birth based on the parts that we see is going to move through the world in masculine ways and act and behave in ways that are culturally expected of somebody who is male, behave masculine. We also expect that that same person is going to be sexually attracted to, behaviorally, to people of the opposite sex and gender, to women.

02:46

While everything we've talked about so far, I think we can all pretty much say is true, it's only half of the truth. Sexuality and gender is really pretty complicated. We talked about the binary. What we need to talk about now is, what's the stuff between the binary? Between the polar opposites? There's a whole spectrum of the experience and the expectations around sexuality and gender.

Not only is there male and female in terms of our physiological structures, but there are also persons whose physiological structures are not clearly male or female. Persons who are

intersex. It may mean that their genitalia are kind of ambiguous. It may mean that their chromosomes or their hormonal compositions aren't easily identifiable as either male or female.

In terms of gender, we see another broad array of behaviors that fall between the extremes of masculinity and femininity. There are some people in your life, I'm sure, who you know, who are more androgynous, that they're not as feminine as some people or who are not as masculine as others. In terms of their appearance, the way they move through the world, the way they talk, their interests, their activities.

In terms of sexual orientation and sexual behavior, there are people who fall in the middle of the binary who may be bisexual, or pansexual, or queer, or just sexual. But they're attracted to others based on things that may not be strictly related to their sex and gender, or the sex and gender of others.

04:19

So, let's talk through a couple of examples. Someone who is born male in terms of their physiological body and composition, may move through the world, and experience the world, in a way that's very feminine. So their sex and their gender aren't necessarily consistent. Sometimes we refer to someone in this circumstance as being transgender. I like to think of transgender as meaning transcending gender. Transcending, stepping outside of those gender binary boxes that are culturally constructed that we're expected to be in. Persons who are transgender, essentially, the most basic description is that their sex and their gender don't necessarily match up in the way that we've been culturally trained to expect them to.

In terms of sexual orientation and sexual behavior, there may be a female person who is primarily attracted to men, but at the same time, tends to fall in love and have their most significant relationships with women that are also sexual. For this spectrum of sexuality and gender, people can fall all over the board across that spectrum and sometimes where they fall on that spectrum of sex, gender, orientation, and behavior can change over time. Sexuality and gender is extremely complicated and just because we don't always understand the hows the whys or the whats of it; doesn't mean it's not somebody else's reality.

05:48

In this model of sexuality and gender, there is one more really, really important piece that I like to talk about last, and that's identity. Identity is about language. Language is extremely powerful. Identity is about the words we choose to label ourselves with and it's also about the words that others choose to label us, often, always, based on the assumptions that they make about us.

Identity is the language of self. The terms that people use fall all over the place. There's bisexual, gay, lesbian, heterosexual, straight. There's queer, questioning, intersex. There's transgender, there's trannyqueer, trannyboi. There's boigirl, butchgirl. There's femme girl. There's lipstick dyke. Lesbian and all kinds of different words that people choose to label themselves. You are the only one that knows the realities of where you fall across the spectrum of sexuality and gender.

06:45

The main reason why we're doing this training today is to inspire you to think of yourself as an other. You are always making assumption about everyone who is around you, and they're always making assumptions about you, as well. Think about, very carefully, the spectrum and

the complexity of sexuality and gender, and know that what you see on the outside of someone, how you interpret someone, may not be the way that they work internally and what is happening in their lives. Unless you create an environment, a safe space, for people to be truly authentic and fully human with you, you might miss out on some really important pieces who are in your life.

07:25

*\*\*music\*\**

*CREDITS*

## SafeZone Self-Reflection Worksheet

This worksheet is intended to be for you to think about your identity. You do not need to share this with anyone. It is simply intended to be a tool for self-reflection.

### IDENTITY-Internal self-language

- How do you describe yourself internally (maybe just in your own heart and head)? How was this different 10 years ago? 5 years ago? Last year? How might it be different in the future

### IDENTITY-External self-language

- How would you describe yourself to difference people in your life? You parent? You doctor? You lover? Your friends?
- What words do you think other use to describe you?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
<b>Male</b>					<b>Biological Sex</b>					<b>Female</b>
Physical 'parts'										
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
<b>Masculine</b>					<b>Gender</b>					<b>Feminine</b>
Way present yourself and how perceived										
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
<b>Opposite Sex/Gender</b>					<b>Orientation</b>					<b>Same Sex/Gender</b>
Love and significant emotional connection										
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
<b>Opposite Sex/Gender</b>					<b>Behavior</b>					<b>Same Sex/Gender</b>
Whose bodies do you desire or wish to share yourself										
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

## TERMS & DEFINITIONS

### Introductory Information About LGBTQIA Communities

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**Affectional Orientation:** The deep-seated direction of one's emotional, intellectual and social affinity. It is on a continuum and not a set of absolute categories. Some aspects of affectional orientation tend to change over time, while other aspects remain relatively consistent.

**Agendered:** Used interchangeably with 'gender-neutral,' this term describes people with neither a female or male gender.

**Androgynous:** Describes a person whose gender encompasses both male and female, thus lying somewhere in between the two. In some people, androgyny is purely devoted to their gender expression, rather than their gender.

**Ally:** Someone who advocates for and supports members of a community other than their own, reaching across differences to achieve mutual goals.

**Asexual:** 1) Having no evident sex or sex organs.  
2) In usage, may refer to a person who is not sexually active, or not sexually attracted to other people.

**Berdache:** [See 'two spirit'] This term is generally rejected and considered offensive because it is a term that was assigned by European settlers to differently gendered Native peoples and comes from the French term *bardache*, meaning male prostitute. A more appropriate term is called "Two-Spirit," or even one of the "third gender." In many Native American cultures some individuals are respected and looked upon as people who are both male and female, making them more complete, more balanced than those who identify as men or women.

**Bias:** Prejudice; an inclination or preference, especially one that interferes with impartial judgment.

**Bigendered:** Refers to a person whose gender identity is a combination of male/man and female/woman.

**Biphobia:** The irrational fear and intolerance of people who are bisexual.

**Birth Sex:** The sex an individual is assigned at birth, determined by normalized categories of genetic and physical characteristics.

**Bisexual:** Also "bi." A person who is attracted to two sexes or two genders, but not necessarily simultaneously or equally. This used to be defined as a person who is attracted to both genders or both sexes, but since there are not only two sexes (see intersex and transsexual)

and there are not only two genders (see transgender), this definition is inaccurate.

**Cisgender:** refers to people whose sex and gender are congruent by predominant cultural standards: women who have female bodies, men who have male bodies. This term was created to challenge, as many transgender people have argued, the privileging of such people in the term "gender" relative to the term "transgender."

**Cissexual:** people who are not transsexual and who have only ever experienced their subconscious and physical sexes as being aligned.

**Coming out:** To recognize one's sexual orientation, gender identity, or sex identity, and to be open about it with oneself and with others.

**Discrimination:** The act of showing partiality or prejudice; a prejudicial act.

**Domestic Partner:** One who lives with their beloved and/or is at least emotionally and financially connected in a supportive manner with another. Another word for spouse, lover, significant other, etc.

**Dominant culture:** The cultural values, beliefs, and practices that are assumed to be the most common, normal and influential within a given society.

**Drag:** The act of dressing in gendered clothing as part of a performance. Drag Queens perform in highly feminine attire. Drag Kings perform in highly masculine attire. Drag may be performed as a political comment on gender, as parody, or simply as entertainment. Drag performance does not indicate sexuality, gender identity, or sex identity.

**Family:** Colloquial term used to identify other LGBTQIQI community members. For example, an LGBTQIQI person saying, "that person is family" often means that the person they are referring to is LGBTQIQI as well.

**Family of choice (chosen family):** Persons or group of people an individual sees as significant in his or her life. It may include none, all, or some members of his or her family of origin. In addition, it may include individuals such as significant others, domestic partners, friends, and coworkers.

**FTM:** Female to Male.

**Gay:** Men attracted to men. Colloquially used as an umbrella term to include all LGBTQIQI people.

**Gender:** 1) A socially constructed system of classification that ascribes qualities of masculinity and femininity to people. Gender characteristics can change

over time and are different between cultures. Words that refer to gender include: man, woman, transgender, masculine, feminine, and gender queer. 2) One's sense of self as masculine or feminine regardless of external genitalia. Gender is often conflated with sex. This is inaccurate because sex refers to bodies and gender refers to personality characteristics.

**Genderism:** Holding people to traditional expectations based on gender, or punishing or excluding those who don't conform to traditional gender expectations.

**Gender Conformity:** When your gender identity and sex "match" (i.e. fit social norms). For example, a male who is masculine and identifies as a man.

**Gender Cues:** What human beings use to attempt to tell the gender/sex of another person. Examples include hairstyle, gait, vocal inflection, body shape, facial hair, etc. Cues vary by culture.

**Gender Identity:** The gender that a person sees oneself as. This can include refusing to label oneself with a gender. Gender identity is also often conflated with sexual orientation, but this is inaccurate. Gender identity does not cause sexual orientation. For example, a masculine woman is not necessarily a lesbian.

**Gender Expression:** An expression of one's own gender identity. This can include, but is not limited to personality traits, behaviors, appearance, mannerisms, interests, hobbies, values, etc.

**Gender Identity Disorder:** The term used for a condition defined in the DSM4 by the American Psychiatric Association, controversially ascribed to trans people.

**Gender-neutral:** Nondiscriminatory language to describe relationships—e.g. "spouse" and "partner" are gender-neutral alternatives to the gender-specific words "husband," "wife," "boyfriend" and "girlfriend."

**Gender Queer** (or Genderqueer): A person who redefines or plays with gender, or who refuses gender altogether. A label for people who bend/break the rules of gender and blur the boundaries.

**Gender Role:** 1) Socially defined expectations regarding behavior, mannerisms, dress, etc. as related to socially assigned gender.  
2) How "masculine" or "feminine" an individual acts. Societies commonly have norms regarding how males and females should behave, expecting people to have personality characteristics and/or act a certain way based on their biological sex.

**Gender-variant / Gender non-conforming:** Displaying gender traits that are not normatively associated with their biological sex. "Feminine" behavior

or appearance in a male is gender-variant as is "masculine" behavior or appearance a female. Gender-variant behavior is culturally specific.

**Hate crime:** Hate crime legislation often defines a hate crime as a crime motivated by the actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, ethnicity, gender, disability, or sexual orientation of any person.

**Heteronormativity:** The assumption, in individuals or in institutions, that everyone is heterosexual, and that heterosexuality is superior to homosexuality and bisexuality.

**Heterosexuality:** Sexual, emotional, and/or romantic attraction to a sex other than your own. Commonly thought of as "attraction to the opposite sex" but since there are not only two sexes (see intersex and transsexual), this definition is inaccurate.

**Heterosexism:** Assuming every person to be heterosexual therefore marginalizing persons who do not identify as heterosexual. It involves belief that heterosexuality is superior to any different form of sexuality and all other sexual orientations.

**Heterosexual Privilege:** Benefits derived automatically by being (or being perceived as) heterosexual that are denied to homosexuals, bisexuals, and queers.

**Hir:** Sex/gender inclusive pronoun that can be used instead of his/her.

**Homophobia:** The irrational fear and intolerance of people who are homosexual or of homosexual feelings within one's self. This assumes that heterosexuality is superior.

**Homosexuality:** Sexual, emotional, and/or romantic attraction to the same sex.

**Institutional Oppression:** Arrangement of a society used to benefit one group at the expense of another through the use of language, media education, religion, economics, etc.

**Internalized Oppression:** The process by which an oppressed person comes to believe, accept, or live out the inaccurate stereotypes and misinformation about their group.

**Intersex:** Intersexuality is a set of medical conditions that feature congenital anomaly of the reproductive and sexual system. That is, intersex people are born with "sex chromosomes," external genitalia, or internal reproductive systems that are not considered "standard" for either male or female. The existence of intersexuals shows that there are not just two sexes and that our

ways of thinking about sex (trying to force everyone to fit into either the male box or the female box) is socially constructed.

**In the closet:** Keeping one's sexual orientation and/or gender or sex identity a secret, or choosing not to disclose this information to others.

**Invisible minority:** A group whose minority status is not always immediately visible, such as some disabled people and LGBTQQI people. This lack of visibility may make organizing for rights difficult.

**Lambda:** The Gay Activist Alliance originally chose the lambda, the Greek letter "L", as a symbol in 1970. Organizers chose the letter "L" to signify liberation. The word has become a way of expressing the concept "lesbian and gay male" in a minimum of syllables and has been adopted by such organizations as Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund.

**Legal Sex:** The sex assigned on an individual's legal documentation.

**Lesbian:** A woman attracted to women.

**LGBTQQIA:** Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer, Questioning, Intersex, and Ally.

**Marginalized:** Excluded, ignored, or relegated to the outer edge of a group/society/community.

**Men who have sex with men (MSM):** Men who engage in same-sex behavior, but who may not necessarily self-identify as gay.

**MTF:** Male to Female.

**Nonmonosexual (NM):** students that self-identify as bisexual, pansexual, fluid, queer and any other nonmonosexual identity

**On E:** When a MTF takes the hormone estrogen.

**On T:** When a FTM takes the hormone testosterone.

**Out or Out of the closet:** Refers to varying degrees of being open about one's sexual orientation and/or sex identity or gender identity.

**Pansexual:** A person who is fluid in sexual orientation and/or gender or sex identity.

**Polyamory:** Polyamory is the practice of having multiple open, honest relationships.

**Queer:** 1) An umbrella term to refer to all LGBTQQI people

2) A political statement, as well as a sexual orientation, which advocates breaking binary thinking and seeing both sexual orientation and gender identity as potentially fluid.

3) A simple label to explain a complex set of sexual behaviors and desires. For example, a person who is attracted to multiple genders may identify as queer. Many older LGBT people feel the word has been hatefully used against them for too long and are reluctant to embrace it.

**Rainbow Flag:** The Rainbow Freedom Flag was designed in 1978 by Gilbert Baker to designate the great diversity of the LGBTQQI community. It has been recognized by the International Flag Makers Association as the official flag of the LGBTQQI civil rights movement.

**Sex Identity:** The sex that a person sees themselves as. This can include refusing to label oneself with a sex.

**Sexual minority:** 1) Refers to members of sexual orientations or who engage in sexual activities that are not part of the mainstream.

2) Refers to members of sex groups that do not fall into the majority categories of male or female, such as intersexuals and transsexuals.

**Sex:** Refers to a person based on their anatomy (external genitalia, chromosomes, and internal reproductive system). Sex terms are male, female, transsexual, and intersex. Sex is biological, although social views and experiences of sex are cultural.

**Sexual Orientation:** The deep-seated direction of one's sexual and/or erotic attractions. It is on a continuum and not a set of absolute categories. Sometimes referred to as affectional orientation or sexuality. Sexual orientation tends to change over time through a multistage developmental process.

**SRS:** Acronym for Sexual Reassignment Surgery, the surgery done by transsexuals to make their bodies and their sex identity match.

**Stereotype:** An exaggerated oversimplified belief about an entire group of people without regard for individual differences.

**Straight:** Person who is attracted to a gender other than their own. Commonly thought of as "attraction to the opposite gender," but since there are not only two genders (see transgender), this definition is inaccurate.

**Transgender: 1)** An umbrella term for transsexuals, cross-dressers (transvestites), transgenderists, gender queers, and people who identify as neither female nor male and/or as neither a man or as a woman. Transgender is not a sexual orientation; transgender people may have any sexual orientation. It is important to acknowledge that while some people may fit under

this definition of transgender, they may not identify as such.

**2)** Transgender (sometimes shortened to trans or TG) people are those whose psychological self ("gender identity") differs from the social expectations for the physical sex they were born with. To understand this, one must understand the difference between biological sex, which is one's body (genitals, chromosomes, etc.), and social gender, which refers to levels of masculinity and femininity. Often, society conflates sex and gender, viewing them as the same thing. But, gender and sex are not the same thing. For example, a female with a masculine gender identity or who identifies as a man.

**Transgenderist:** A person who lives either full time, or most of the time, in a gender role different than the role associated with their biological or chromosomal sex (a gender non-conformist).

**Transition:** A complicated, multi-step process that can take years as transsexuals align their anatomy with their sex identity; this process may or may not ultimately include sex reassignment surgery (SRS).

**Transphobia:** Fear or hatred of transgender people; transphobia is manifested in a number of ways, including violence, harassment and discrimination.

**Transsexual:** Transsexual refers to a person who experiences a mismatch of the sex they were born as and the sex they identify as. A transsexual sometimes undergoes medical treatment to change his/her physical sex to match his/her sex identity through hormone treatments and/or surgically. Not all transsexuals can have or desire surgery.

**Transvestite/Cross Dresser:** Individuals who regularly or occasionally wear the clothing socially assigned to a gender not their own, but are usually comfortable with their anatomy and do not wish to change it (i.e. they are not transsexuals). Cross-dresser is the preferred term for men who enjoy or prefer women's clothing and social roles. Contrary to popular belief, the overwhelming majority of male cross-dressers identify as straight and often are married. Very few women call themselves cross-dressers.

**Triangle:** A symbol of remembrance. Gay men in the Nazi concentration camps were forced to wear the pink triangle as a designation of being homosexual. Women who did not conform to social roles, often believed to be lesbians, had to wear the black triangle. The triangles are worn today as symbols of freedom, reminding us to never forget.

**Two Spirit:** This term refers to Native American/First Nation persons whose bodies simultaneously house both a masculine and feminine spirit. Two spirit people typically had distinct gender and social roles in their

tribes. This term is more appropriate than *berdache* which is considered outdated and offensive.

**Ze:** Gender/sex inclusive pronoun that can be used instead of he/she.

**Zir:** Gender/sex inclusive pronoun that can be used instead of his/her.

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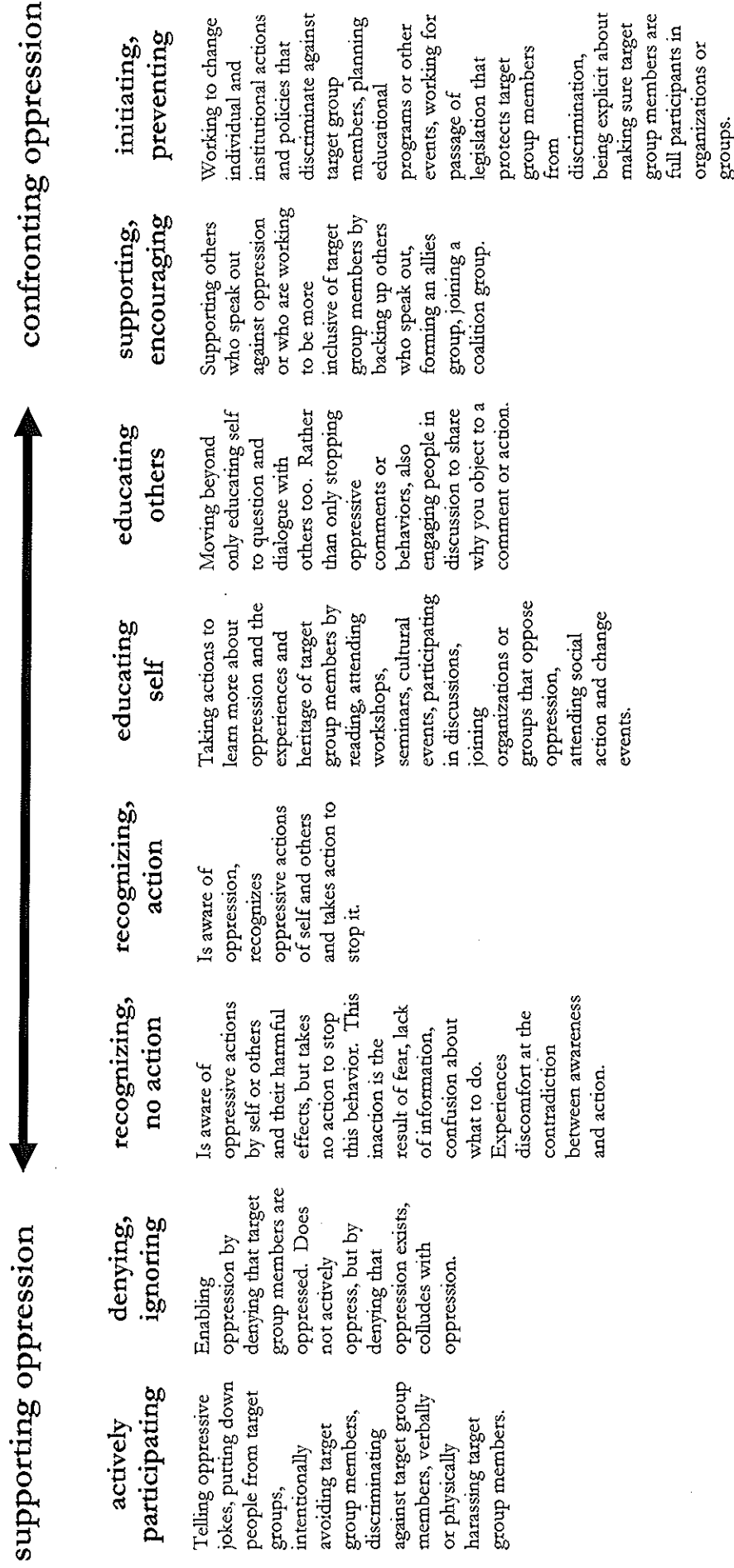


# How to Support an LGBTQ Person

- **Don't assume.** This person may be struggling with something totally related to their sexuality, gender identity, or expression.
- **It's OK to say, "I don't know".** You don't have to have all the answers or information. You don't even have to understand what they are going through. You just need to let the person know you care.
- **ASK! "How can I be helpful to you?"** Most people just want a listening ear and to know that someone cares about them.
- **Acknowledge feelings.** Use reflective statements to name the feelings you see! "You seem really scared", or "You are relieved that your mom reacted so well"
- **Listen, listen, and listen** - without judgment. Take the opportunity to learn about this person's experience. Don't make assumptions. This person may be having a hard time for reasons that don't related to their sexuality or gender identity!
- **Do not 'out' the person!** Do not reveal anything about the person's identity unless he or she has specifically given you the go-ahead. *Exception: If you have any concerns about a student may be a threat to themselves or others, you should notify your supervisor and/or the Counseling Center.* If you are uncertain, you can call the Counseling Center and consult and then decide about sharing the identity of the person.
- **Learn about resources .**
  - LGBT Resource Center: 302 Student Services Building, (517) 353-9520, [lgbtrc@msu.edu](mailto:lgbtrc@msu.edu)  
There are a number of community based resources (both MSU and greater Lansing) located from the LGBT Resource Center web-site: <http://lgbtrc.msu.edu/index.htm>.
  - Counseling Center 207 Student Services Building, (517) 355-8270 [counseling.msu.edu](http://counseling.msu.edu) .  
Walk-in appointments. Check website for hours. (students only)
  - Employee Assistance Program. Olin Health Center. (517) 355-4506 [eap@hc.msu.edu](mailto:eap@hc.msu.edu).  
(faculty, staff and graduate student employees)

Notes:

# Action Continuum



## Being an Effective SafeZone

### Be Visible

1. Support LGBTQ groups through attending events, promoting the group, encouraging involvement.
2. Wear your support – such as "I AM AN ALLY" buttons.
3. Post your Neighborhood SafeZone sticker proudly.
4. Read and display LGBTQ positive books, magazines
5. Use images and art work in your SafeZone that represents LBGTQ people and issues
6. Tell people you are supportive of LBGTQ people. Call yourself an ally!
7. Speak personally and privately to the LBGTQA people in your life and tell them that you support them.
8. Wear queer positive t-shirts and buttons. Put Supportive sticker on your car.
9. Fly a pride flag!

### How to Be an Ally

1. Remember that LBGTQ people have many identities and all are equally important (race, religion, class, ethnicity, ability, nation status)
  2. Tell people what your preferred pronouns are and ask others what pronouns they prefer.
  3. Learn about legislative and policy issues that impact LBGTQ people and participate in the legislative and electoral process based on your opinions
  4. Confront homophobic/heterosexist language.
  5. Learn how homophobia, genderism, racism, classism, and all other oppressions are connected
  6. Acknowledge that you do not know or understand everything. You don't.
  7. Speak as an ally. Do not speak for an identity that is not your own.
  8. Seek to recognize systemic patterns of oppression in discussions and action.
  9. Acknowledge the same-sex and gender partners as they choose to be acknowledged
  10. Join LBGTQA groups – there are 13+ on campus!
  11. Educate others.
  12. Acknowledge LGBTQ positive holidays: National Coming Out Day, Pride Week, Trans Day of Remembrance, etc. Know what is going on in the news.
1. Uses appropriate language. Ask people what their preferred identity terms are. Use them.
  2. Asks permission before asking questions.
  3. Appreciate the risk people who are LBGTQ take in coming out.
  4. Takes risks.
  5. Educate yourself on LBGTQ cultures, homophobia, and heterosexism.
  6. Do not 'out' others.
  7. Understand that identities and language are fluid and may change over time.
  8. Forgive yourself if you make a mistake.
  9. Have a sense of humor.

# SafeZone Action Plan

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Name:

Local Mailing Address:

*We will mail this form back to you!*

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**1. Where are you creating your SafeZone? (Note: You can have multiple SafeZones)**

**2. How can you assure you and your services are inclusive of the sexuality and gender spectrums? For example: How will you use language, imagery, existing programs, services, policies, and practices?**

**3. How will the MSU community know you/your space is a SafeZone?**

**4. In what ways can you support and affirm the LGBT community and allies?**

**5. What is one concrete step you can take to implement your SafeZone within the next two days?**