

# TRANS INCLUSIVITY 101

By Kalliope R. Dalto



**Trans women are women.**

**Trans men are men.**

**Nonbinary people are nonbinary.**

**“Trans”** is inclusive of all ways of experiencing gender that varies from the gender one was assigned at birth

- *Binary*: trans men and trans women
- *Nonbinary*, including: genderfluid, agender, genderqueer, bigender, androgynous - and more!
- *Transmasculine* and *transfeminine*: indicates directionality, alignment with a gendered presentation but not necessarily a gender identity.

- People are assigned a gender at birth based on perceived sex characteristics.
- People who are *assigned female at birth* (**AFAB**) may grow up to realize they are men, or nonbinary.
- People who are *assigned male at birth* (**AMAB**) may grow up to realize they are women, or nonbinary.

- People who never experience incongruity with the gender assigned at birth are *cisgender*, or **cis**.
- **Cis** is an important word because it reframes the way we talk about trans folks as 'other' – rather than 'trans' and 'normal.'
- Simply two different ways of experiencing your body and your gender in the world.

# Nonbinary Genders

- Some people aren't men or women
- There isn't one right way to be nonbinary – some nonbinary people need medical transition, some don't. Some change their names or pronouns, some don't.
- Nonbinary people can have relationships to maleness or femaleness and do not necessarily aspire to androgyny
- *They/them/theirs* is a common pronoun used by nonbinary people, but it is not 'the nonbinary pronoun.' Some nonbinary people use she/her or he/him, and some use *neopronouns* like ze/zer or ze/hir or ey/em/eirs.

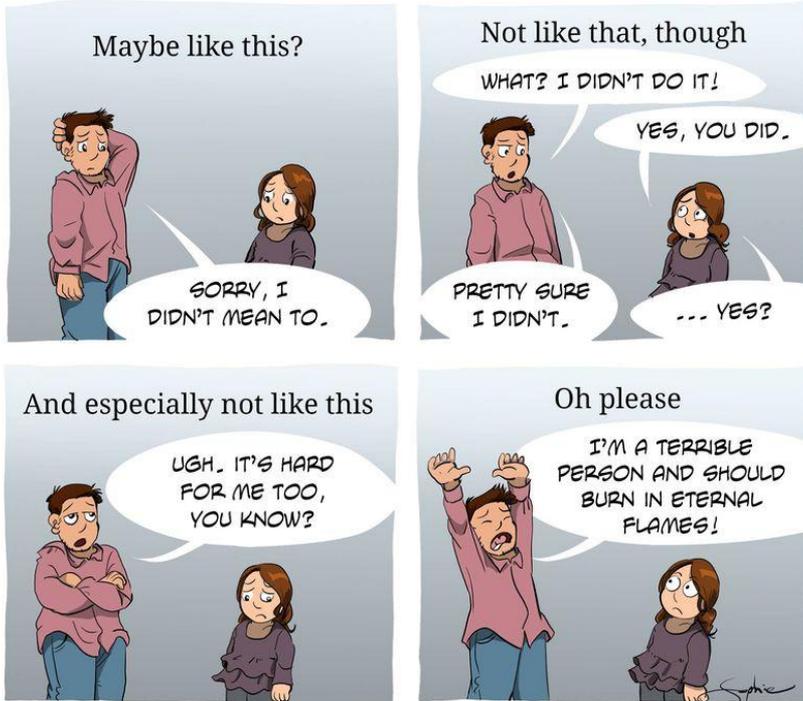
*Any given individual is the authority on their identity.*

- a. Some people fit into multiple categories (i.e., non-binary trans guy, genderfluid femme)
- c. Some people don't use these at all – language is one tool out of many for expressing gender and identity
- d. *You don't have to know the specifics of someone's gender to treat them respectfully!* You don't have to memorize a list of possible genders. *Just listen and be open to alternate forms of address.*

# Pronouns

- The simplest way you can show trans people you see and recognize their personhood is using their pronouns correctly.
- Most common pronouns: She, her, hers, He, him, his, They, them theirs
- Neo pronouns: xe/xer, ze/zem
- *Pronouns do not always align with gender!* For example, some nonbinary people use he/him or she/her pronouns. This doesn't mean they're men or women – they're still nonbinary.
- Pronouns are not *preferred*, they simply *are*. It's more respectful to ask "What are your pronouns?" than to ask "What pronouns do you prefer?"

## How to react when you misgender a trans person



If you make a mistake, don't get defensive or make excuses – apologize, correct, and move on.

A big showy apology will just make the person you're talking to uncomfortable.

# “Transition” Means Something Different to Everyone

- No right or wrong way to express your gender!
- Just as with cis men and women, trans men and women can be masculine or feminine or androgynous, whatever suits them best.
- Since trans people’s gender validity is under constant interrogation, there is a lot of social pressure to present in ways that conform to gender roles in order to be recognized as the correct gender. This is a safety concern!
- Social, legal and medical
- Clothing, hairstyle, makeup, pronouns, prefixes, voice
- Legal – Name and gender marker on legal documents

*There is no one  
blueprint for  
medical transition,  
and it is not  
necessary to be  
trans.*

- Medical transition may include: hormone replacement therapy, top surgery (double mastectomy), bottom surgery (genital reconstruction).
- Medical transition is a spectrum: some people quite literally will die without it, some people don't want or need it.
- It's up to each individual trans person to know what is necessary for them to feel at home in their body.

*Many people can't access medical transition for financial reasons, health reasons, safety reasons or due to medical gatekeeping.*

# *Dysphoria and Euphoria*

- *Dysphoria* is the experience of distress at incongruence between one's *gender* and one's body and/or *presentation* (both physical and social)
- *Gender euphoria* is its inverse and equally important

- Trans men are men. Trans women are women. Nonbinary people are nonbinary.
- **Trans** or **transgender** is an umbrella term, inclusive of all people who feel an incongruence with the gender they were assigned at birth.
- People who never experience incongruity with the gender assigned at birth are *cisgender*, or ***cis***.

- Pronouns are not preferred, they simply are. Using someone's correct pronouns affirms their personhood.
- There is no one 'correct' way to transition, and many many possible ways.
- **Any given individual is the authority on their identity.**

# Further Reading

- *Transgender History*, by Susan Stryker
- *Disclosure*, Netflix, 2020
- Affirmative Care for Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming People: Best Practices for Front-line Health Care Staff (National LGBT Health Education Center, 2016)
- Feminism, Gender Justice, and Trans Inclusion: Barnard College  
<http://bcrw.barnard.edu/feminism-gender-justice-and-trans-inclusion-web-resources/>
- Supporting Trans and Nonbinary Students: Resources for Educators  
<https://www.glsen.org/supporting-trans-and-gnc-students>
- Trans\* Inclusion in the Classroom: Building Inclusive Syllabi:  
<https://learninginnovation.duke.edu/blog/2017/11/trans-inclusion-syllabi/>
- How Doctors Can Provide Better Care for Transgender Patients:  
<https://labblog.uofmhealth.org/rounds/how-doctors-can-provide-better-care-for-transgender-patients>

# Kalliope Rodman Dalto

He/him/his or They/them/theirs

[kallioperodman@gmail.com](mailto:kallioperodman@gmail.com)