



Indiana University of Pennsylvania: LGBTQIA Support Terminology

Abrosexual/romantic – “someone who experiences a fluid and/or changing orientation” (Mardell, 2016, p. 6).

Agender – “Someone who has a gender identity that is not male or female or who does not have a defined gender identity” (Madrone, 2018, p. 233).

Ally – “someone who does not identify as LGBTQIA+, but actively supports the community” (Mardell, 2016, p. 6).

Androgyne – “People who are androgynous ... or gender blenders can merge gender expression in many different ways to represent either a combination of the binary genders or neither. Someone who is androgynous often does not present themselves in appearance as either binary gender” (Madrone, 2018, p. 233).

Aromantic (aro) – an umbrella term for people “who experiences little or no romantic attraction” (Madrone, 2018, p. 234; Mardell, 2016, p. 7).

Asexual (ace) – a spectrum in which a person experiences little or no sexual attraction or desire (Madrone, 2018, p. 234). Those who identify as asexual may or may not partake in sexual activities.

Bigender – “someone who has the experience of two genders” (Madrone, 2018, p. 234).

Bisexual – “a person who is emotionally, romantically, and sexually attracted to people of two or more genders” (Madrone, 2018, p. 234).

Cisgender – someone whose gender identity matches their gender assigned at birth.

Closeted – “a person who is closeted (or ‘in the closet’) does not disclose their orientation or their sexual or gender identity. People may also be partially closeted—only coming out to a select few” (Madrone, 2018, p. 235).

Coming out – “disclosing one’s sexual orientation or gender identity to others” (Madrone, 2018, p. 235).

Demigender – “someone who has/experiences a partial connection to one or more genders” (Mardell, 2016, p. 8).

Demisexual/romantic – “a person who only experiences attraction to people with whom they have formed a strong emotional bond” (Mardell, 2016, p. 8).

Drag – a drag king or queen’s performance of gender “using larger-than-life representations of women and men. Being a drag queen or king is not necessarily a reflection of sexual orientation or gender identity” (Madrone, 2018, p. 235).

Enby – “a slang term meaning ‘a non-binary person’” (Mardell, 2016, p. 8).

FTM – “stands for female-to-male and refers to transgender people who were assigned female identities at birth but whose gender identities are male” (Madrone, 2018, p. 236).

Gay – a term often used to describe men and sometimes women who are emotionally, romantically, and/or sexually attracted those of the same sex (Madrone, 2018, p. 236).

Gender – socially constructed roles and identities centered around notions of masculinity, femininity, and androgyny.

Gender binary – “the rigid way society divides sex and gender into only two categories: 1) male/men and 2) female/women” (Mardell, 2016, p. 7).

Gender dysphoria – “a term for the pain, anxiety, and confusion that can result when there is a disparity between a person’s gender identity and the sex they were assigned at birth” (Madrone, 2018, p. 237).

Gender euphoria – “extreme happiness, or comfortability, experienced because a person’s gender is being affirmed” (Mardell, 2016, p. 9).

Gender expression – “how you express your gender identity. It can include your clothes, hairstyle, body language (how you walk, your posture, your gestures, your mannerisms), and even speech patterns” (Madrone, 2018, p. 237).

Gender identity – the internal sense of gender which is not visible to others. One’s gender identity may not align with one’s assigned sex at birth.

Gender-fluid – “someone whose gender identity is not fixed or static” (Madrone, 2018, p. 237).

Genderqueer – “describes people whose gender identities exist outside of the traditional male/female binary” (Madrone, 2018, p. 238).

Heterosexism – “the idea that heterosexual people are the norm and LGBTQ people are somehow abnormal” (Madrone, 2018, p. 238).

Heterosexual – “people who are emotionally and physically attracted to people of the opposite sex (in the gender binary)” (Madrone, 2018, p. 239).

Homophobia – “when someone feels a negative emotion like fear, anger, or suspicion toward someone else for having a sexual orientation other than straight” (Madrone, 2018, p. 239).

Homosexual – “people who are emotionally and physically attracted to people of the same sex (in the gender binary)” (Madrone, 2018, p. 239).

Intersex – when chromosomes, hormones, or sex organs differ from the two patterns of male or female.

Lesbian – “a woman who is emotionally, romantically, and sexually attracted to other women” (Madrone, 2018, p. 239). Some individuals who are simply feminine or non-binary will sometimes take on this label to describe their attraction to feminine persons.

MTF – “stands for male-to-female and refers to people who were assigned male at birth, but who have a predominantly female gender identity” (Madrone, 2018, p. 240).

Neoprouns – sets of pronouns not “commonly used in a particular language” (Human Rights Campaign, 2022). “Examples of neopronoun sets include: xe/xir/xris, ze/zir/zirs and fae/faer/faers” (Human Rights Campaign, 2022).

Non-binary – someone whose gender identity is not in the gender binary (male and female)

Pangender – “a nonbinary gender identity that encompasses multiple gender identities” (Madrone, 2018, p. 240).

Pansexual or omnisexual – someone who is attracted to all gender identities and expressions. While they have similar definitions, someone who identifies as pansexual may not necessarily identify as omnisexual and vice versa.

Polyamory – “the practice or desire of relationships involving more than two people” (Mardell, 2016, p. 12).

Polysexual – someone who is sexually and/or romantically attracted to multiple but not necessarily all genders. (Mardell, 2016, p. 12).

Queer – “Refers to people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning, and many other identities other than heterosexual. Sometimes used as a slur, the

term has been reclaimed by many LGBTQ people who use it as an expression of pride. Some LGBTQ people prefer to identify as queer, rather than lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender” (Madrone, 2018, p. 241). Furthermore, *queer* can be used as a general sexuality label if someone prefers to have less of a definitive label.

Questioning – “being uncertain of one’s sexual orientation or gender identity and being in a space or mindset of exploration” (Madrone, 2018, p. 241).

Sex – biological and physiological characteristics such as chromosomes, hormones, and genitalia assigned at birth and used as a medical label.

Sexual orientation – “a term used to describe who someone is emotionally, romantically, and sexually attracted to” (Madrone, 2018, p. 242).

Transfeminine – “a term used to describe someone...who has a predominantly feminine gender and/or expresses themselves in a way they describe as feminine” (Mardell, 2016, 14).

Transgender – an umbrella term for people whose gender identity does not match the gender they were assigned at birth.

Transitioning – “a complex, multi-step process of starting to live in way that accurately reflects a person’s gender identity when that identity is different than the sex assigned to them at birth.” This often includes transitioning socially, behaviorally, and physically (Madrone, 2018, 242).

Transmasculine – “a term used to describe someone...who has a predominantly masculine gender and/or expresses themselves in a way they describe as masculine” (Mardell, 2016, p. 14).

Transphobia – “when someone feels a negative emotion like fear, anger, or suspicion towards someone else for being transgender. Transphobia can also take the form of ignorance about trans people” (Madrone, 2018, p. 242).

Trigender – “someone who has/experiences three genders” (Mardell, 2016, p. 14).

Two-Spirit – “A term referring to Native Americans (and used by indigenous people in some other countries) whose spirits were a blend of genders. Today, some Native communities have reclaimed this term as an alternative to labels such as lesbian, gay, or transgender” (Madrone, 2018, p. 243).

References

Human Rights Campaign (2022, May 18). *Understanding neoprouns*.

<https://www.hrc.org/resources/understanding-neopronouns>.

Mardone, K. H. (2018). *LGBTQ* (3rd ed.). Free Spirit Publishing.

Mardell, A. (2016). *The ABC's of LGBT+*. Mango Media Inc.