



San Diego Pride

LGBTQIA+ Terminology 101^[1]

GENERAL

Ally – Someone who confronts heterosexism, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, heterosexual and gender/straight privilege in themselves and others; has concern for the well-being of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and intersex people; and believes that heterosexism, homophobia, biphobia and transphobia are social justice issues.

Discrimination – Prejudice + power. It occurs when members of a more powerful social group behave unjustly or cruelly to members of a less powerful social group.

Implicit Bias – describes when we have attitudes towards people or associate stereotypes with them without our conscious knowledge. Research suggests that people can act on the basis of prejudice and stereotypes without intending to do so.

SEX (PHYSICAL)

Sex Assigned At Birth – The sex identifier placed on a birth certificate, usually based on external genitalia or physical sex chromosomes. May be F (female), M (male), or X (intersex).

Intersex Person – A person whose combination of physiology, chromosomes, hormones, differs from the male/female binary.

GENDER

Gender (Identity) – A person's sense of being masculine, feminine, or other gendered. Social, expressively, culturally, rather than biological.

Nonbinary – Preferred umbrella term for all genders other than female/male or woman/man, used as an adjective (*e.g. Jesse is a nonbinary person*) or as a noun (*e.g. Jesse is nonbinary*). Not all nonbinary people identify as trans and not all trans people identify as nonbinary. *Related terms:* gender nonconforming, agender.

Cisgender – describes someone who feels comfortable with the gender identity and gender expression expectations assigned to them based on their physical sex (aka sex assigned at birth).

Transgender – A person who lives as a member of a gender other than the sex they were assigned at birth.

Gender Expectations & Norms – Culturally constructed ideas, informal rules, and shared social expectations about how women and men should act and/or the roles people should play based on their perceived or actual gender identity.

Gender Expression – The way in which a person expresses their gender identity, typically through appearance, dress, and/or behavior.

Drag – The performance of one or multiple genders theatrically.

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Heteronormativity – The assumption, in individuals or in institutions, that everyone is heterosexual, and that heterosexuality is superior to other sexual orientations.

Asexual – A person who does not experience sexual attraction. A person can also be aromantic, meaning they do not experience romantic attraction.

Bisexual – A person emotionally, physically, and/or sexually attracted to more than one gender. This attraction does not have to be equally split between traditional genders, may include other genders, and there may be a preference for one gender over others. *Related terms:* pansexual, bi+.

Gay – Term used in some cultural settings to represent men who are attracted to men in a romantic or emotional sense. Can also apply to genders other than men.

Lesbian – Term used to describe women that are attracted romantically or emotionally to other women.

Queer – An umbrella term which embraces a matrix of sexual preferences, orientations, and habits of the not-exclusively-heterosexual majority. *Historical context note:* this term has been reclaimed by some in the LGBTQ+ community, and still holds negative connotation and violent context for other folks.

¹ Each of these definitions has been carefully researched and analyzed from theoretical and practical perspectives for cultural sensitivity, common usage, and general appropriateness. Language regularly evolves and may become outdated; this version of this terminology list was updated on 2/9/2021.