



# Igniting the Spark of Hope:

RESILIENCE, RECOVERY, RENEWAL

## Gender in Motion: A Conversation about Trans Experiences

Hello! Thank you so much for your interest in the Gender in Motion: A Conversation about Trans Experiences Panel. We have put together this document to give you a basis for our conversation and we hope that you will utilize it to further your work. This is not an all-encompassing guide, but a great place to start!

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### **Important to note:**

Gender Identity, Gender Expression, and Sexual Orientation are not the same. Please refer to the definitions below to assist in understanding the differences.

- **Gender Identity** – An individual’s innate, internal conception of being male, female, both, neither, or any combination thereof, which may or may not correspond to the person’s external anatomy or assigned sex at birth (LGBT Health Education Center, 2019). Transgender people have a gender identity that is different than the one assigned to them at birth.
- **Gender Expression** – The external manifestation of a person’s gender identity, which may or may not conform to gender stereotypes and may be expressed through clothing, appearance, behavior, and/or prosthetics. Jaime’s gender expression was traditionally feminine; they liked to wear dresses, high heels, and make-up.
- **Sexual Orientation** – A person’s physical, romantic, emotional, and/or spiritual attraction towards another person. Sexual orientation is unique to each individual as their expressions and preferences are subjective by nature.

### **Important Terms for this Presentation:**

- **Transgender** – An umbrella term describing individuals whose gender identity differs from the one assigned to them at birth. The transgender population is comprised of diverse people, and is found in numerous nations throughout the world. Since gender identity and sexual orientation are separate concepts, transgender people can be heterosexual, gay, lesbian, bisexual, pansexual, asexual, sexually fluid, or various other orientations.
- **Cisgender** – An individual whose gender identity matches their birth assignment. Chad is cisgender—he identifies as male and was assigned male at birth.
- **Intersex** – An umbrella term for a wide spectrum of natural variations in sex characteristics involving chromosomal, hormonal, endocrinological, and/or anatomical configurations that do not appear to fit the standard definitions of female and male (Serano, 2018). Shawn has XXY chromosomes, a relatively common intersex variation.
- **Non-binary** – An umbrella term used to describe someone whose gender identity falls outside of the traditional western binary; a gender identity that cannot be classified as exclusively male or female. Payton is non-binary—their gender identity fluctuates between male and female, and sometimes they feel they don’t have a gender identity at all.
- **Assigned Gender** – Refers to the legally denoted gender assigned to newborn children based on external primary sex characteristics. In modern-day western culture, a person’s assigned sex is typically conflated with their gender identity, which consequently defines a person’s gender role and

its associated expectations. Assigned gender is based on the appearance of a person's genitals, and is not related to—or a reflection of—one's gender identity, or internal sense of gender.

- **Cissexism** – The idea that cisgender people are more natural, valid, and “normal” than their transgender counterparts, resulting in social norms, laws, and individual behaviors that reinforce the gender binary and consequently marginalize, oppress, and/or erase the existence of transgender people (see: cisnormativity). Cissexism is based on the presumption that one's assigned sex and gender are inherently aligned with their gender identity.
- **Cisnormativity** – Adherence to the conventions of the gender binary, which may include conforming to traditional gender roles, gender presentations, and expectations based on one's birth assignment. Cisnormativity originates from the presumption that cisgender identities, gender expressions, and lived experiences are more natural, valid, and normal than those of transgender individuals.
- **Intersectionality** – A theoretical framework for understanding the relationship between a person's social and political identities and the unique privileges and/or disadvantages they might face within a given society. Intersectional theory acknowledges the interconnected nature of various systems of oppression, creating context-specific incidents of discrimination. For example, a Black woman might experience oppression from white male co-workers due to the combination of being both Black and female.
- **Queer** – A gender identity or sexual orientation that deviates from cisgender, heterosexual identities, norms, or practices (Wilson, 2014). In some contexts, “queer” may be used as a pejorative term; on the other hand, some LGBTQ+ people have reclaimed the title as an empowering description of their gender identity and/or sexual orientation.

\*\*These definitions are sourced from the Trans Lifeline Glossary of Terms & Definitions\*\*

### **Gender Experience Panel Resources:**

A Guide to Being an Ally to Transgender and Nonbinary Youth

<https://www.thetrevorproject.org/resources/trevor-support-center/a-guide-to-being-an-ally-to-transgender-and-nonbinary-youth/>

\*\* Trans Lifeline Glossary of Terms & Definitions\*\*

<https://translifeline.org/resource/glossary-of-terms-definitions/>

Guide to Gender Identity Terms

[https://www.npr.org/2021/06/02/996319297/gender-identity-pronouns-expression-guide-lgbtq?utm\\_medium=social&utm\\_campaign=npr&utm\\_term=nprnews&utm\\_source=facebook.com](https://www.npr.org/2021/06/02/996319297/gender-identity-pronouns-expression-guide-lgbtq?utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=npr&utm_term=nprnews&utm_source=facebook.com)



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