

Quote by: Kate Bornstein



“There’s a simple way to look at gender: Once upon a time, someone drew a line in the sands of culture and proclaimed with great self-importance, ‘On this side, you are a man; on the other side, you are a woman.’ It’s time for the winds of change to blow that line away. Simple.”

(*Gender Outlaw*, 1995. p. 21)



Introduction to Understanding LGBTQ Newcomers

Presented by
Among Friends Project

www.accessalliance.ca/amongfriends

Who we are – Among Friends



Multi-year collaborative initiative between:

- Access Alliance Multicultural Health and Community Services www.accessalliance.ca
- The 519 Community Centre www.the519.org
- CultureLink www.culturelink.net

FREE trainings/workshops for service providers:

- To promote positive and more inclusive spaces for LGBTQ newcomers staff and clients

Volunteer opportunities for LGBTQ newcomers:

- To gain skills, experience and participate in community development process

Funded by The Ontario Trillium Foundation

What's in this presentation?



- **Guidelines**
- **Ice berg activity**
- **Terms and definitions**
- **LGBTQs in other languages**
- **LGBTQ Myths**
- **Barriers for newcomers who are LGBTQ**
- **Status and Entitlements**
- **Measuring positive spaces/services**
- **Roles we play**

Guidelines



- Respect
- Balance participation
- Active listening and sharing
- Confidentiality
- Use 'I' statements
- Be mindful of agenda items
- Ask questions – have fun!

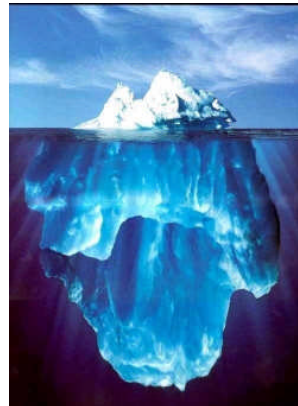
The iceberg



Think about: your preferred pronoun, something visible and something invisible

If our identities were an ice berg, how much of it would be visible? A small amount.

- How do we choose what we will reveal?
- How often do we make assumptions about our clients' identities (gender, sexual orientation, race, lived experience, etc)?
- Lets move towards a space where we don't assume about our clients and each other – Let others self identify who they are



LGBTQ Terms and Definitions



Why do we need to know?

- To acknowledge the diversity within LGBTQ communities
- To know that identities are complex and ever-changing and so are these terms and definitions
- To understand that people need to be able to self-identify as they feel necessary
- To make proper referrals once we have a better understanding of the realities of our clients
- To realize that LGBTQ terms may not be newcomer friendly and that language is not translation

Who I am versus who I like



- **Sex:** refers to some of the physiological, genetic and genital aspects of our body that are generally perceived to determine the functions of the organism as female or male (generally assigned at birth). The dominant perception (reinforced by medical/legal systems) is that one's sex determines one's gender.
- **Gender:** refers to a cluster of characteristics of behavioral, cultural, social and/or personal order that determine the perception of individuals as being female/feminine or male/masculine.
- **Gender identity:** determines the gender you perceive yourself as, regardless of your sex. A person's gender identity doesn't affect or determine sexual orientation and vice versa; by no means shall they be perceived as the same.
- **Sexual orientation:** refers but is not limited to: the emotional attachment, sexual and or physical attraction as well as sexual behaviors in human sexuality and identity.

LGBTQ+



- **Lesbian:** refers to same-sex oriented women.
- **Gay:** a slang word used to describe people whose sexual identity is same-sex oriented, regardless of gender. It tends to be used more often in our society to refer to same-sex oriented men. Grammatically means Happy.
- **Bisexual:** refers to an individual whose sexual orientation is acquainted to both women and men, in equal or unequal intensity.
- **Trans:** a term often used in North America as an umbrella term for transgenders, transsexuals, intersex and gender non conformist people. Not all "gender variant" people will identify with this label.
- **Queer:** an umbrella term commonly used to define lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, two-spirited and other people and institutions on the margins of mainstream culture; however the definition continues to be debated among queer theorists.

Gender identities



- **Transgender:** someone who feels their gender identity doesn't necessarily match the normative binaries (sex) of female or male. Transgender people may or may not want to undergo sex reassignment treatment.
- **Transsexual:** someone who feels their gender identity doesn't necessarily match the normative binaries (sex) of female or male. The majority of transsexual people will undergo sex reassignment treatment (Hormone replacement therapy, sex reassignment surgery, breast augmentation or removal, amongst other medical procedures), as well as seek for the legal adjustment to their correct identity (name change and sex adjustment).
- **Cisgender:** refers to someone who feels their gender identity matches their sex assigned at birth. The prefix 'cis' in Latin means "on the same side."
- **Two-Spirited:** a term which Aboriginal or Native communities use to describe a person who possesses both the male and female spirit. A two-spirited person might not use the terms gay, lesbian, bi, or trans.

Transitioning



- **Transition:** the process of adjustments that a transsexual (and in some cases a transgender) person goes through to bring their physiological functions and aspect as well as legal and life affairs in line with their gender and/or gender identity. This includes but is not limited to: Adjusting dress preferences, changing their name, undergo sex reassignment therapy, coming out to family and friends, etc...
- **Passing:** Conversationally, this term is used when a trans person is perceived in everyday situations as a member of the gender they identify with.
- **Trans woman (MtF):** a male-to-female trans person. Trans women should be respectfully referred to as women regardless of what stage they are in their transition.
- **Trans man (FtM):** a female-to-male trans person. Trans men should be respectfully referred to as men regardless of what stage they are at in their transition.



- **Intersex:** someone who is born with physiological and/or genetic characteristics that cannot be classified as solely male or female. Intersex people are sometimes referred to as "hermaphrodites" yet this term lacks the accuracy in describing intersex conditions and is perceived as offensive.
- **MSM:** Acronym meaning "Men who have sex with men".
- **WSW:** Acronym meaning "women who have sex with women".
- **Transvestite (cross-dresser):** someone who wears attires of the opposite sex regardless of their gender identity and/or sexual orientation. A transvestite may cross dress for reasons of performance, eroticism, non conformance with established gender roles and expressions of gender variance.
- **Questioning:** refers to someone who may be unsure of or is still exploring their gender, sexual identity or sexual orientation.
- **Coming Out:** the act of disclosing one's sexual orientation or gender identity. Coming out can refer to acknowledging one's own sexual or gender feelings; Often also called "coming out of the closet".

Phobias and isms



- **Heterosexism:** Describes an ideological system and patterns of institutionalized oppression which deny, denigrate and stigmatize any non-heterosexual form of behavior, identity, relationship, or community. “The belief in the inherent superiority of heterosexuality and thereby its rights to dominance” (Canadian Council of Refugees).
- **Transphobia:** fear, rejection or hatred of transsexual/transgender people, as well as cross-gender elements that exist within all people.
- **Biphobia:** fear, hatred and rejection of bisexual individuals based on the perceived binary of being heterosexual or homosexual only.
- **Homophobia:** fear, rejection and persecution of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and queer people. Rooted in a desire to maintain the heterosexual social order, which relies on oppressive gender roles.

What's LGBTQ again?



- LGBTQ terms and definitions may not be understood in the same context by all LGBTQ newcomers.
- We all have similar yet unique ways of understanding and expressing what it means to be part of the LGBTQ communities.



LGBTQs in other languages



Please note these terms are for information purposes only. Some of the terms are slang/ derogatory and are not appropriate to be used in service provision

Lesbian

- TORTILLERA – lesbian in Spanish
- FUFA – refers to lesbian in Portuguese
- REZU – refers to lesbian in Japanese
- MITHLIYA – refers to lesbian in Arabic

Gay

- BAKLA – refers to gay man in Tagalog (Philippines)
- BULLA – slang term for gay man in Caribbean
- MARICAS – refers to gay man in Spanish
- BICHA – refers to gay man in Portuguese
- MITHLY – refers to gay man in Arabic

Bisexual

- GILLETE – refers to bisexual in Portuguese

LGBTQs in other languages



Trans

- HIJRA – refers to trans/intersex person in Urdu/Hindi (South Asia)
- TRAVESTI – refers to trans people in Portuguese
- KATHOEY – refers to trans-women in Thailand
- FAKA FAFINI – refers to trans or 'alternate' gender roles in Polynesian
- BINABAE – refers to trans or 'alternate' gender roles in Tagalog
- VESTIDO – refers to trans or 'alternate' gender roles in Spanish
- MKE SI MUME- refers to trans or 'alternate' gender roles in Swahili

Queer

- TONGZHI – refers to sexual minorities in Greater China
- DOSEIAISHA – Refers to same-sex loving person in Japanese
- AHRAR EL JINS – Refers to queer in Arabic
- IZDIWAJI EL JINS – Refers to intersex in Arabic

Next time you promote and provide LGBTQ services to newcomers – think about what someone's understanding may be of the LGBTQ acronym and its definitions

LGBTQ Myths



I don't know any lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans or queer clients.

- You may not know any LGBTQ clients who are “out” to you, but you likely do know some. Trans people who pass often don't disclose their previous identity. What would make you think you can tell if a client is LGBTQ or not?

You can “spot” a lesbian, a gay man or a trans-identified person.

- For the most part, you can only “spot” LGBTQ people if they want to be identified, or if they fit your stereotype of what LGBTQ people look like. Don't let the stereotype fool you. There are feminine, masculine and androgynous men who are straight, bi, trans and gay. There are also feminine, masculine and androgynous women who are straight, bi, trans and lesbian.

LGBTQ Myths



Being lesbian, gay, bisexual or trans is abnormal and unnatural.

- The Canadian Psychological And Psychiatric Associations consider the human desire for same-sex relationships to be healthy and normal. The American Psychological Association states that, “It is no more abnormal or sick to be homosexual than to be left-handed.” You may also find religious and cultural views that dictate that being LGBTQ is unnatural or abnormal – however within the context of your work, LGBTQ clients need and deserve 100% of your professional respect, support and assistance.

I don't know how to help LGBTQ clients.

- Up until now you have probably helped and worked with many LGBTQ clients. The only difference after someone discloses to you is NOW you know. Service providers who are knowledgeable about their clients needs and situations can do a much better job in providing services and making appropriate referrals. It is not appropriate to ask a client if they are LGBTQ even if you have a strong feeling they might be. The best way to know is to foster an environment where they feel safe and comfortable enough to share with you.

What other myths can you think of? Where do these myths come from? How can you challenge them?

Global Myth: No LGBTQs around the world?



- illegality of male to male relationships:
78/242 countries
- illegality of female to female relationships:
43/242 countries
- death penalty: 7/242 countries

-2010 - ILGA (International Lesbian Gay Bisexual Trans and Intersex Association - www.ilga.org)

Imagined binary of us (safe) versus them (unsafe)?
Oppression is not limited to geographical boundaries

A Refugee's Refuge



Video by Natalia Eileene Petite (Canada 2009)



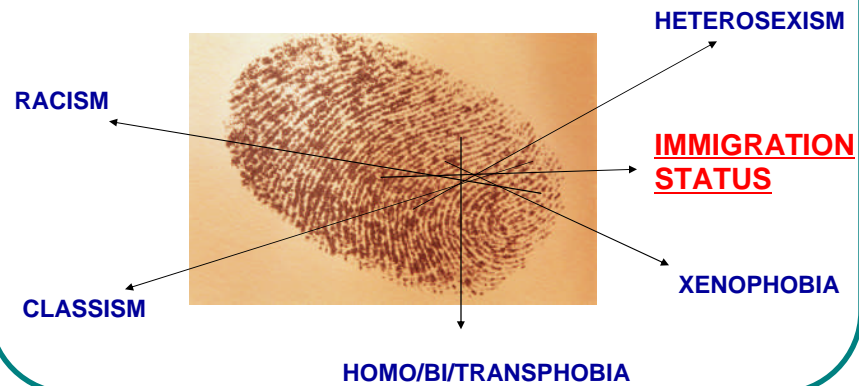
A refugee struggles with gender identity discrimination in
the country where she thought she would be safe.

Taken from Toronto's Inside Out LGBT Film Festival – Queer Digital Youth Project 2009.

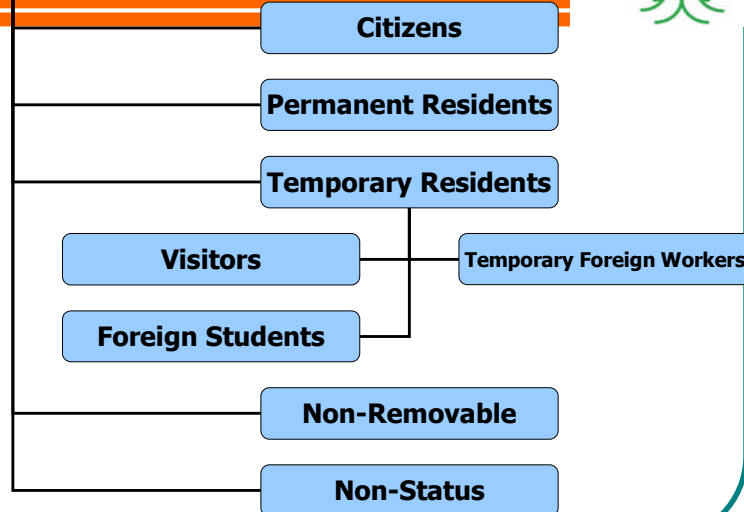
Some barriers newcomers face



Intersecting identities and oppressions



Kinds of Status in Canada



Entitlements According to Status



Who can legally work as a matter of right?

- Citizens
- Permanent Residents

everyone else has to apply for a Work Permit to be able to work legally

Who can apply for a Work Permit within Canada?

- Refugee Claimants
- Live-in Caregivers
- Person who has been accepted to stay in Canada under Humanitarian and Compassionate grounds but not yet landed
- *everyone else must leave & apply for a work permit outside of Canada*

Please note: Some information may need to be updated

Entitlements According to Status



Who can go to school in Canada as a matter of right?

- Citizens
- Permanent Residents

everyone else will need a Student Permit to be able to study legally

Who can apply for a Study Permit within Canada?

- Refugee Claimants
- Live-in Caregivers (change of employers)
- Person who has been accepted to stay in Canada under Humanitarian and Compassionate grounds but not yet landed
- *everyone else must leave and apply for a study permit outside of Canada*

Please note: Some information may need to be updated

Entitlements According to Status



Who has access to free health care?

- Citizens and Permanent Residents – OHIP
- Live-in Caregivers - temporary OHIP
- Refugee Claimants – IFH

- *everyone else will have to pay for healthcare although might be able to access free services at a community health centre*

Who can access OW (Ontario Works) and ODSP (Ontario Disability Support Program)?

- Citizens
- Permanent Residents
- Refugee Claimants

Please note: Some information may need to be updated

How do you measure positive spaces? (physical / personnel / organizational)



A positive space/service exists when an LGBTQ identified client/staff feels welcomed, respected and positively acknowledged for being part of the LGBTQ communities

A positive space/service is formed when heterosexism is eliminated and diversity is highlighted and celebrated



Roles we play



Think about what **YOUR** role is in creating and maintaining a positive and inclusive service/space!

- Is your current service/space positive?
- What are challenges and/or what have been successes?
- What was done and/or what needs to be done?



We hope this has been helpful for you!



To learn more about Among Friends, go to
www.accessalliance.ca/amongfriends