

**SAFE**

**ZONE**

**TRAINING**

**PARTICIPANT**



**PACKET**

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for  
The Mountaineers  
Leadership Conference  
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[www.TheSafeZoneProject.com](http://www.TheSafeZoneProject.com)

# Courageous Conversation Norms

## 1. Speak from Your Experience

We often avoid speaking our experience out of fear of what others may say. It is important that we create a safe space where everyone is free to speak openly without judgement. Speak about your own experience, not that of other people. Remember that respect is the key.

## 2. Experience Discomfort

Be comfortable with being uncomfortable. These conversations are not always going to be easy and that is ok. Discomfort is a normal part of learning things or perspectives that are new to you, of being at your “learning edge”. Allow yourself to stay present within that.

## 3. Expect and Accept Non-Closure

Often these conversations may not feel like there is closure quite yet, or that there is enough time to learn everything we need to learn. It takes time to understand the complexity and find the answers that make us feel satisfied. These conversations are ongoing, we won't solve all of the problems here today.

## 4. Listen for Understanding

Try and understand where another person is coming from as best you can, despite whichever words they use to explain. Be in active listener and stop focusing on your inner monologue. If someone is speaking, focus on them, not your next response.

## 5. Maintain Confidentiality

If someone shares something personal, like their sexual orientation, with you in the course of this workshop, it is not your information to share outside this room without their consent. Also, we are all here to learn, so if someone makes a faux pas, don't go telling those to others- “I can't believe he said \_\_\_\_\_!”

# First Impressions of LGBTQ People

*Answer the following questions to the best of your ability:*

1. When's the first time you can remember learning that some people are lesbian? gay? bisexual? transgender? queer?

2. Where did most of the influence of your initial impressions/understanding of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer people come from? (e.g., family, friends, television, books, news, church)

3. How have your impressions/understanding of LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer/questioning) people changed or evolved throughout your life?



# Core Vocabulary

**ally** /“al-lie”/ - *adj./v.* : a (typically straight and/or cisgender) person who actively engages, supports, unlearns their biases/prejudices to respect members of the LGBTQ community. Allyship can take on many forms. Being an active supporter can, at times, be stigmatizing, though it is not usually recognized, many allies go through a “coming out process” of their own.

**androgyny**: A gender expression that can express but is not limited to masculine and/or feminine identities; a person that rejects traditional/binary gender roles entirely with how they express their gender identity.

**asexual** - *adj.* : experiencing little or no sexual attraction to others and/or a lack of interest in sexual relationships/behavior. Asexuality exists on a continuum from people who experience no sexual attraction or have any desire for sex, to those who experience low levels, or sexual attraction only under specific conditions, and many of these different places on the continuum have their own identity labels (see demisexual). Sometimes abbreviated to “ace.”

**biological sex** - *noun* : a medical term used to refer to the chromosomal, hormonal and anatomical characteristics that are used to classify an individual as female or male or intersex. Often referred to as simply “sex,” “physical sex,” “anatomical sex,” or specifically as “sex assigned at birth.”

**biphobia** - *noun* : a range of negative attitudes (e.g., fear, anger, intolerance, invisibility, resentment, erasure, or discomfort) that one may have or express towards bisexual individuals. Biphobia can come from and be seen within the LGBTQ community as well as straight society. **Biphobic** - *adj.* : a word used to describe an individual who harbors some elements of this range of negative attitudes towards bisexual people.

**bisexual** - *adj.* : **1** a person who is emotionally, physically, and/or sexually attracted to some males/men and females/women. **2** a person who is emotionally, physically, and/or sexually attracted to people of their gender and another gender. This attraction does not have to be equally split or indicate a level of interest that is the same across the genders or sexes an individual may be attracted to.

**cisgender** /“siss-jendur”/ - *adj.* : a person whose sex assigned at birth and gender identity align (e.g., someone who was assigned male at birth and identifies as a man). A simple way to think about it is if a person is not transgender, they are cisgender. The word cisgender can also be shortened to “cis.”

- “Cis” is a latin prefix that means “on the same side [as]” or “on this side [of].”

**coming out** : **1** the process by which one accepts and/or comes to identify one’s own sexuality or gender identity (to “come out” to oneself). **2** The process by which one shares one’s sexuality or gender identity with others (to “come out” to friends, etc.).

**gay** - *adj.* : **1** individuals who are primarily emotionally, physically, and/or sexually attracted to members of the same sex and/or gender. Can be used to refer to men who are attracted to other men,

and can be applied to women as well. **2** An umbrella term used to refer to the queer community as a whole, or as an individual identity label for anyone who does not identify as heterosexual.

**gender expression** - *noun* : the external display of one's gender, through a combination of dress, demeanor, social behavior, and other factors, generally made sense of on scales of masculinity and femininity. Also referred to as "gender presentation."

**gender identity** - *noun* : the internal perception of an one's gender, and how they label themselves, based on how much they align or don't align with what they understand their options for gender to be. Common identity labels include man, woman, genderqueer, trans\*, and more. Often confused with biological sex, or sex assigned at birth.

**genderqueer** - *adj.* : **1** a gender identity label often used by people who do not identify with the binary of man/woman; **2** an umbrella term for many gender non-conforming or non-binary identities (e.g., agender, bigender, genderfluid).

**heteronormativity** - *noun* : the assumption, in individuals and/or in institutions, that everyone is heterosexual and that heterosexuality is superior to all other sexualities. Leads to invisibility and stigmatizing of other sexualities: *when learning a woman is married, asking her what her husband's name is*. Heteronormativity also leads us to assume that only masculine men and feminine women are straight.

**homophobia** - *noun* : an umbrella term for a range of negative attitudes (e.g., fear, anger, intolerance, resentment, erasure, or discomfort) that one may have towards members of LGBTQ community. The term can also connote a fear, disgust, or dislike of being perceived as LGBTQ.

**Homophobic** - *adj.* : a word used to describe an individual who harbors some elements of this range of negative attitudes towards gay people.

**homosexual** - *adj. & noun* : a person primarily emotionally, physically, and/or sexually attracted to members of the same sex/gender. This [medical] term is considered stigmatizing (particularly as a noun) due to its history as a category of mental illness, and is discouraged for common use (use gay or lesbian instead).

**intersex** - *adj.* : term for a combination of chromosomes, gonads, hormones, internal sex organs, and genitals that differs from the two expected patterns of male or female. Formerly known as hermaphrodite (or hermaphroditic), but these terms are now outdated and derogatory.

**lesbian** - *noun & adj.* : women who are primarily attracted romantically, erotically, and/or emotionally to other women.

**LGBTQ; GSM; DSG** - *abbreviations* : shorthand or umbrella terms for all folks who have a non-normative (or queer) gender or sexuality, there are many different initialisms people prefer. LGBTQ is Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender and Queer and/or Questioning (sometimes people at a + at the end in an effort to be more inclusive); GSM is Gender and Sexual Minorities; DSG is Diverse Sexualities and Genders. Other options include the initialism GLBT or LGBT and the acronym QUILTBAG (Queer [or



Questioning] Undecided Intersex Lesbian Trans\* Bisexual Asexual [or Allied] and Gay [or Genderqueer]).

**pansexual** - *adj.* : a person who experiences sexual, romantic, physical, and/or spiritual attraction for members of all gender identities/expressions. Often shortened to “pan.”

**passing** - *adj. & verb* : 1 trans\* people being accepted as, or able to “pass for,” a member of their self-identified gender identity (regardless of sex assigned at birth) without being identified as trans\*. 2 An LGB/queer individual who is believed to be or perceived as straight.

**QPOC / QTPOC** - *abbreviation* : initialisms that stand for Queer People of Color and Queer and/or Trans People of Color.

**queer** - *adj.* : used as an umbrella term to describe individuals who don’t identify as straight. Also used to describe people who have a non-normative gender identity, or as a political affiliation. Due to its historical use as a derogatory term, it is not embraced or used by all members of the LGBTQ community. The term “queer” can often be use interchangeably with LGBTQ (e.g., “queer folks” instead of “LGBTQ folks”).

**questioning** - *verb, adj.* : an individual who or time when someone is unsure about or exploring their own sexual orientation or gender identity.

**romantic attraction** - *noun* : a capacity that evokes the want to engage in romantic intimate behavior (e.g., dating, relationships, marriage), experienced in varying degrees (from little-to-none, to intense). Often conflated with sexual attraction, emotional attraction, and/or spiritual attraction.

**sexual attraction** - *noun* : a capacity that evokes the want to engage in physically intimate behavior (e.g., kissing, touching, intercourse), experienced in varying degrees (from little-to-none, to intense). Often conflated with romantic attraction, emotional attraction, and/or spiritual attraction.

**sexual orientation** - *noun* : the type of sexual, romantic, emotional/spiritual attraction one has the capacity to feel for some others, generally labeled based on the gender relationship between the person and the people they are attracted to. Often confused with sexual preference.

**straight** - *adj.* : a person primarily emotionally, physically, and/or sexually attracted to some people who are not their same sex/gender. A more colloquial term for the word heterosexual.

**two-spirit** - *noun* : is an umbrella term traditionally within Native American communities to recognize individuals who possess qualities or fulfill roles of both genders.

**third gender** - *noun* : for a person who does not identify with either man or woman, but identifies with another gender. This gender category is used by societies that recognise three or more genders, both contemporary and historic, and is also a conceptual term meaning different things to different people who use it, as a way to move beyond the gender binary.



**trans\*/transgender** - *adj.* : **1** An umbrella term covering a range of identities that transgress socially defined gender norms. **2** A person who lives as a member of a gender other than that assigned at birth based on anatomical sex.

**transphobia** - *noun* : the fear of, discrimination against, or hatred of trans\* people, the trans\* community, or gender ambiguity. Transphobia can be seen within the queer community, as well as in general society. **Transphobic** - *adj.* : a word used to describe an individual who harbors some elements of this range of negative attitudes, thoughts, intents, towards trans\* people.



## LGBTQ-INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE DOs and DON'Ts

AVOID SAYING... SAY INSTEAD...

WHY?

EXAMPLE

AVOID SAYING...	SAY INSTEAD...	WHY?	EXAMPLE
"Hermaphrodite"	"Intersex"	Hermaphrodite is a stigmatizing, inaccurate word with a negative medical history.	"What are the best practices for the medical care of intersex infants?"
"Homosexual"	"Gay"	"Homosexual" often connotes a medical diagnosis, or a discomfort with gay/lesbian people.	"We want to do a better job of being inclusive of our gay employees."
"Born female" or "Born male"	"Assigned female/male at birth"	"Assigned" language accurately depicts the situation of what happens at birth	"Max was assigned female at birth, then he transitioned in high school."
"Female-bodied" or "Male-bodied"		"-bodied" language is often interpreted as as pressure to medically transition, or invalidation of one's gender identity	
"A gay" or "a transgender"	"A gay/transgender person"	Gay and transgender are adjectives that describe a person/group	"We had a transgender athlete in our league this year. "
"Transgender people and normal people"	"Transgender people and cisgender people"	Saying "normal" implies "abnormal," which is a stigmatizing way to refer to a person.	"This group is open to both transgender and cisgender people."
"Both genders" or "Opposite sexes"	"All genders"	"Both" implies there are only two; "Opposite" reinforces antagonism amongst genders	"Video games aren't just a boy thing -- kids of all genders play them."
"Ladies and gentlemen"	"Everyone," "Folks," "Honored guests," etc	Moving away from binary language is more inclusive of people of all genders	"Good morning everyone, next stop Picadilly Station."
"Mailman," "fireman," "policeman," etc.	"Mail clerk," "Firefighter," "Police officer," etc.	People of all genders do these jobs	"I actually saw a firefighter rescue a cat from a tree."
"It" when referring to someone (e.g., when pronouns are unknown)	"They"	"It" is for referring to things, not people.	"You know, I am not sure how they identify."



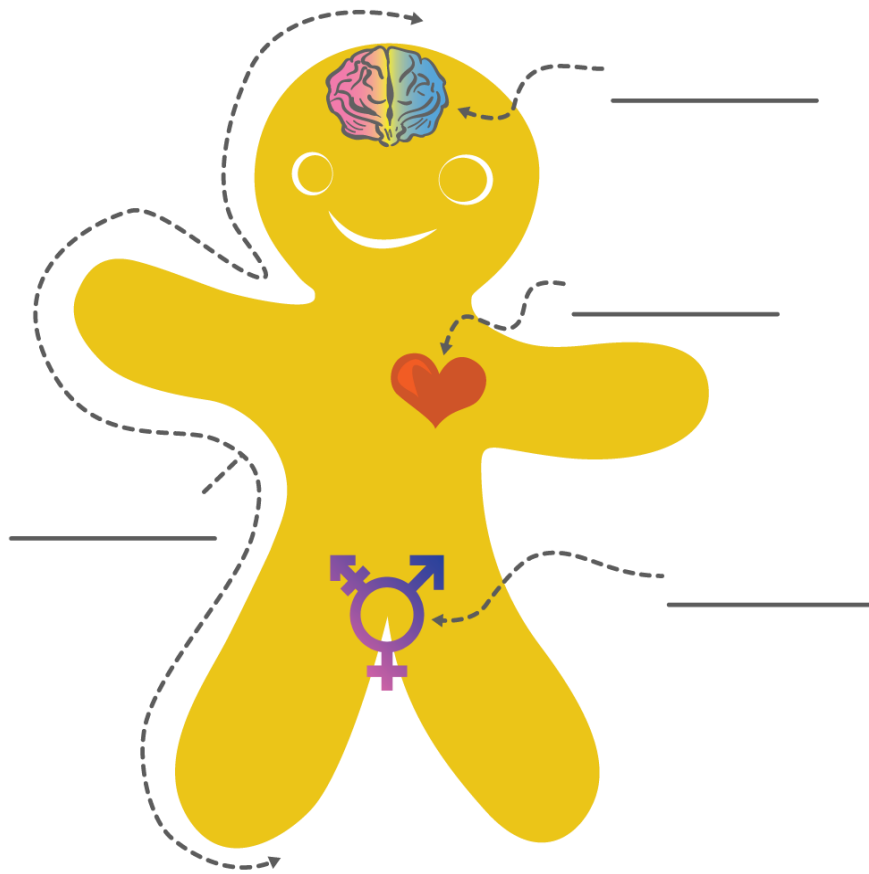
# LGBTQ is an acronym

meant to encompass a whole bunch of diverse **sexualities** and **genders**. Folks often refer to the Q (standing for “queer”\*) as an **umbrella term**, under which live a whole bunch of identities. This is helpful because **lesbian, gay,** and **bisexual** aren’t the only marginalized sexualities, and **transgender\*** isn’t the only gender identity. In fact, there are many more of both!



\* The “Q” sometimes stands for “questioning” and “transgender” is often thought of as an umbrella term itself (sometimes abbreviated “trans”; or “trans\*” in writing). Lots of asterisks, lots of exceptions, because hey – we’re talking about **lots** of different folks with different lived experiences to be inclusive of.

# The Genderbread Person v4



⊘ means a lack of what's on the right side

 Gender Identity

⊘ → \_\_\_\_\_  
 ⊘ → \_\_\_\_\_

 Gender Expression

⊘ → \_\_\_\_\_  
 ⊘ → \_\_\_\_\_

 Anatomical Sex

⊘ → \_\_\_\_\_  
 ⊘ → \_\_\_\_\_

 Sexually Attracted to...

⊘ → \_\_\_\_\_  
 ⊘ → \_\_\_\_\_

 Romantically Attracted to...

⊘ → \_\_\_\_\_  
 ⊘ → \_\_\_\_\_



# "COMING OUT" ... "of the closet." is the process by which someone...

1. Accepts and identifies with their gender identity and/or sexual orientation; and
2. Shares their identity willingly with others.

**Sometimes** We talk about coming out as if it were a one time thing. But for most folks coming out is a **series of decisions** – sometimes daily – that LGBTQ people navigate in every new setting they enter. (Most people aren't like Ellen, where they come out once and then the whole world knows.)

People may be "out" ⇨ in some spaces, and "in" ⇨ in others.

⇨/⇨ to Family   ⇨/⇨ to Friends   ⇨/⇨ to Classmates/Coworkers   ⇨/⇨ to Religious Community

A decision to come out to a person or group is one of safety, comfort, trust, & readiness.

It's dangerous, unhealthy, and unhelpful to force someone to come out, or to "out" someone else (i.e., disclosing someone's gender identity or sexual orientation to others without the person's consent), **regardless of your intentions** (sometimes people think they're being helpful, or acting on the person's behalf to conquer their fears), **but...**

## IF SOMEONE COMES OUT TO YOU...

### DON'T:

1. Say "I always knew," or downplay the significance of their sharing with you.
2. Go tell everyone, bragging about your "new trans friend."
3. Forget that they are still the person you knew, befriended, or loved before.
4. Ask probing questions, or cross personal barriers you wouldn't have crossed earlier.
5. Assume you know why they came out to you.

### DO:

1. Know this is a sign of huge trust! (Yay!)
2. Check-in on how confidential this is (Do other people know? Is this a secret?)
3. Remember that their gender/sexuality is just one dimension (of many) of who they are.
4. Show interest and curiosity about this part of them that they are sharing with you.
5. Ask them how you can best support them.

# Creating Inclusive Spaces

*Best practices for making the Mountaineers more inclusive of LGBTQ people.*

**In Courses:**

**On Trips:**

**Anywhere else in our club:**



# Resources

*There are many organizations, news, and blog communities for you to continue to learn about gender and sexuality. These are just a few!*

## Websites About Gender, Sexuality, & Social Justice

- Asexual Visibility and Education Network – [www.asexuality.org](http://www.asexuality.org) – "The world's largest online asexual community as well as a large archive of resources on asexuality."
- Bitch Magazine – [www.bitchmagazine.org](http://www.bitchmagazine.org) – "Provide and encourage an engaged, thoughtful feminist response to mainstream media and popular culture."
- Bisexual.org – [www.bisexual.org](http://www.bisexual.org) – "A voice to the bisexual community, share accurate information, answer questions, and provide resources for further learning."
- Everyday Feminism – [www.everydayfeminism.com](http://www.everydayfeminism.com) – "Learn how to heal from and stand up to everyday violence, discrimination, and marginalization," with plenty of articles about class, gender, LGBTQIA issues, and race.
- Get Real – [www.getrealeducation.org](http://www.getrealeducation.org) – "Comprehensive Sex Education That Works."
- It's Pronounced Metrosexual – [www.itpronouncedmetrosexual.com](http://www.itpronouncedmetrosexual.com) – an online resource educating on issues of identity, sexuality, gender, privilege, and oppression, but in a fun, approachable way (by Safe Zone Project co-creator, Sam Killermann).
- Salacious – [www.salaciousmagazine.com](http://www.salaciousmagazine.com) – "A Queer Feminist Sex Magazine"
- Soul Force - <http://soulforce.org/> - Family that travels and does speaking events, have a ton of materials on their site, and do an "equality ride" (super cool), all from a Christian perspective
- TransWhat? – [www.transwhat.org](http://www.transwhat.org) – "A Guide Towards [Trans] Allyship"
- We Are The Youth – [www.wearetheyouth.org](http://www.wearetheyouth.org) – "Sharing stories of LGBTQ youth in the United States."
- WikiQueer – [www.wikiqueer.org](http://www.wikiqueer.org) – "The free encyclopedia and resource for the queer communities that you can edit."

## Organizations Doing Good

*Consider these orgs and projects to have the SZP-check-mark-of-approval. We strongly encourage you give them your support – whether that's in time, donations, or just spreading awareness.*

- GLAAD – [www.glaad.org](http://www.glaad.org) – Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation. "GLAAD works with print, broadcast and online news sources to bring people powerful stories from the LGBT community that build support for equality."
- GLSEN – [www.glsen.org](http://www.glsen.org) – Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network. "Every day GLSEN works to ensure that LGBT students are able to learn and grow in a school environment free from bullying and harassment."
- Family Acceptance Project – [www.familyproject.sfsu.edu](http://www.familyproject.sfsu.edu) – "Research, intervention, education and policy initiative that works to prevent health and mental health risks for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) children and youth, including suicide, homelessness and HIV - in the context of their families."



- It Gets Better Project – [www.itgetsbetter.org](http://www.itgetsbetter.org) – "The It Gets Better Project's mission is to communicate to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender youth around the world that it gets better, and to create and inspire the changes needed to make it better for them."
- National Gay and Lesbian Task Force – <http://www.thetaskforce.org/> – "The mission of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force is to build the power of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community from the ground up." They also run Creating Change the "largest annual gathering of LGBTQ activists, organizers, and leaders within the LGBT movement" in the US.
- The "Not All Like That" (NALT) Project - <http://notalllikethat.org> - videos of (awesome) Christians (mostly families) explaining how they fully support LGBTQ people and that being Christian shouldn't mean being anti-gay.
- The Religious InSTITUTE - <http://www.religiousinstitute.org/> - Religious InSTITUTE is a multifaith organization dedicated to advocating for sexual health, education, and justice in faith communities and society.
- The Transcending Gender Project: <http://www.transcendinggender.org>
- PFLAG – [www.pflag.org](http://www.pflag.org) – "Parents, Families, Friends, and Allies United with LGBT People to Move Equality Forward."
- Transgender Law Center – [www.transgenderlawcenter.org](http://www.transgenderlawcenter.org) – "Transgender Law Center works to change law, policy, and attitudes so that all people can live safely, authentically, and free from discrimination regardless of their gender identity or expression."
- The Trevor Project – [www.thetrevorproject.org](http://www.thetrevorproject.org) – "Crisis intervention and suicide prevention for LGBTQ youth."

## Want even more Resources?

Head to [www.thesafezoneproject.com/resources](http://www.thesafezoneproject.com/resources) to find more!

