My Transgender Journey: Insights from a Health Professional

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Things to cover today

• The Trans Umbrella
• What is Gender?
• Language and the LGBT+ Acronym
• Everyday Privilege
• Transphobia
• The impact on Mental Health
• My Personal Experience as a Healthcare Professional
The Trans Umbrella

Trans Man
Trans Woman
Transsexual
M2F  F2M
Agender
Pangender
Gender non-conforming
Non binary
Intersex
Gender Queer
Drag King
Drag Queen
Transvestite
Two Spirit
Cross Dresser
3rd Gender
Gender Fluid
What is Gender?

‘Gender’ refers to the socially-constructed roles of and relationships between men and women. Gender concerns conceptions of both femininity and masculinity. The difference between ‘gender’ and ‘sex’ is that the latter refers only to biological differences.

‘Gender’ isn’t binary and is often referred to as being on a spectrum. Individuals can demonstrate both masculine and feminine traits.

Everyone has a gender identity that is unique to themselves!
Language

Gender Identity
Gender Expression
Transgender or trans person
Cisgender
Transsexual
Gender Variance
Non-binary
Gender dysphoria
Gender reassignment/realignment
• **Gender Identity**: a person’s deeply felt internal and individual experience of gender, which may or may not correspond to the sex assigned to them at birth

• **Gender Expression**: a person’s external gender-related behaviour and appearance, including clothing

• **Transgender or Trans person**: these are inclusive, umbrella terms which refer to a person whose gender identity is incongruent with the biological sex they were assigned at birth or the binary gender system

• **Cisgender**: a person whose gender identity is the same as the biological sex they were assigned at birth

• **Transsexual**: a legal/medical term for someone who lives (or wishes to live) permanently in a different gender to that assigned to them at birth
• **Gender Variance**: gender expression that does not match societies norms of female and male

• **Non-binary**: a person who does not identify as solely male or female. They may identify as both, neither or something entirely different

• **Gender dysphoria**: a medical term to describe the deep rooted psychological and emotional distress caused by the mismatch between a person’s gender identity and biological sex

• **Gender reassignment/realignment**: the process of transitioning from the gender assigned at birth to their correct gender. This may (or may not) involve medical and surgical procedures
The ever increasing acronym!

L – Lesbian
G – Gay
B – Bisexual
T – Transgender
Q – Queer and/or Questioning
A – Asexual and/or Agender, Allies, Androgynous
I – Intersex
P – Pansexual and/or Pansgender
2S – Two spirit

So we could have LGBTQQAAIAIPP2S or use the now more widely accepted acronym LGBT+
Everyday Cis Privilege
Examples of Cis Privilege

• Use public facilities such as toilets, gym locker rooms and shop changing rooms without stares, fear and anxiety of verbal or physical abuse.

• Having the ability date or form a relationship and not fear that your biological status may be cause for rejection or attack, nor will it cause your partner to question their sexual orientation.

• Not having to remind your family over and over to use proper gender pronouns (e.g., after transitioning).

• Strangers don’t assume they can ask you what your genitals look like and how you have sex.
Transphobia
Transphobia is defined by the Crown Prosecution Service as “the fear of or a dislike directed towards trans people, or a fear of or dislike directed towards their perceived lifestyle, culture or characteristics, whether or not any specific trans person has that lifestyle or characteristic. The dislike does not have to be so severe as hatred. It is enough that people do something or abstain from doing something because they do not like trans people."
• Transphobia and prejudice against trans people are sadly all too common in our society and trans people often meet with discrimination and prejudice when they trying to get on with their lives and perform everyday activities.

• As with all other prejudices, transphobia is based on misconceptions and negative stereotypes about a group of people (in this case the trans community or those who are perceived to be trans) that are used to “justify” discrimination, harassment and even hate crimes.
The following are a few examples of transphobic attitudes:

- The belief/insistence that trans women are not “real women”
- The belief/insistence that trans men are not “real” men
- The belief/insistence that non-binary genders are invalid
- The belief/insistence that transsexual people are gay people in denial and wish to have sex reassignment surgery to attempt to restore ‘heteronormativity’
- The refusal to acknowledge a trans person’s true gender
- Refusal to use the correct name for a trans person
- Repeated and deliberate mis-gendering of trans people
- Exclusion of trans people from activities, services or conversations”

- Unfortunately, for many Trans people, it is their families who are the main perpetrators of Transphobia.
Stonewall LGBT in Britain 2017

Key findings of the Trans Report released January 19th 2018

• Two in five trans people (41 per cent) and three in ten non-binary people (31 per cent) have experienced a hate crime or incident because of their gender identity in the last 12 months.

• More than a quarter of trans people (28 per cent) in a relationship in the last year have faced domestic abuse from a partner.

• One in four trans people (25 per cent) have experienced homelessness at some point in their lives.
More than a third of trans university students (36 per cent) in higher education have experienced negative comments or behaviour from staff in the last year.

Two in five trans people (40 per cent) adjust the way they dress because they fear discrimination or harassment. This number increases significantly to half of non-binary people (52 per cent).

One in eight trans employees (12 per cent) have been physically attacked by colleagues or customers in the last year.
The Impact of Transphobia on the Mental Health of the Trans Community
• 88% of Trans people feel they currently are or have previously suffered from depression
• 48% of Trans people in Britain have attempted suicide at least once in their lives
• Young Trans people feel that Child and Adolescent Mental Health services are unable to provide them with the support and care they need
• Gender dysphoria services generally do NOT provide generic mental health support
My Personal Experience as a Healthcare Professional
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