DEEPENING OUR UNDERSTANDING

WORKING WITH LGBTQA COMMUNITIES

PRESENTED BY:
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PARTICIPATION OBJECTIVES

➢ Develop a greater understanding of language used describe the LGBTQA communities

➢ Develop a deeper understanding of the common forms of inter-related oppressions that impact LGBTQA communities

➢ Develop a generalized greater understanding of LGBTQA communities and the barriers often faced when accessing community support

➢ Develop a personal plan for moving forward

"In order to construct self-narratives, we need not only the words with which to

But also an audience able and willing to hear us...

And to understand our words as we intend them."

Susan Brison, The Genealogies of Religion by Talal Asad

STOP!

➢ Language should never be used to demean, exclude or offend.

➢ People should feel free to change the language they use to describe themselves.

➢ And...WE do not EVER get to determine someone else's identity

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LANGUAGE AND TERMINOLOGY

➢ Language is not universal!

➢ Use the language of the person you are talking to:

 ➢ Increases mutual respect

 ➢ Builds bridges and increases trust

➢ Highlights positive aspects of self

➢ Claiming one's identity is claiming one's power

➢ Challenges assumptions and identity-related oppressions

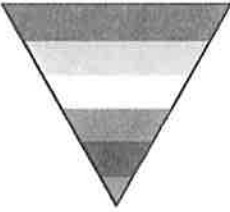## LANGUAGE AND TERMINOLOGY

GENDER ESSENTIALISM	KEEP IN MIND
Common social theory	Sex, gender, and sexual orientation are three SEPARATE components
Assumes "gender" is interchangeable with "sex"	Gender is a fluid social combination of these (regardless of behavior)
Assumes "natural biological link"	Genitals come with no manual

SEX
Body / Biology

GENDER
Culture

SEXUAL ORIENTATION
Attractions / Relationships

Adapted From: University of Minnesota
GLBTA Programs Office materials 2010

LANGUAGE AND TERMINOLOGY:
SEX: BODY / BIOLOGY

- What is **Sex?**
  - Category assigned to each of us at birth based on a variety of physical and biological characteristics

- *Components*
  - Chromosomes
  - Genitals
  - Hormones
  - Reproductive Organs
  - Secondary Sex Characteristics

- *Variations*
  - Female
  - Male
  - **Intersex**

Adapted From: University of Minnesota
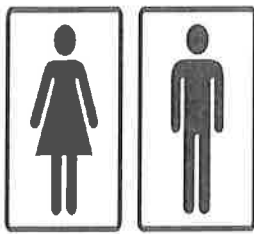GLBTA Programs Office materials 2010

LANGUAGE AND TERMINOLOGY:
GENDER: CULTURE

- What is **Gender?**
  - System of meanings and symbols and the rules, privileges and punishments for their use

- Components
  - **Gender expression**
  - Gender roles
  - **Gender Identity**

Adapted From: University of Minnesota
GLBTA Programs Office materials 2010

LANGUAGE AND TERMINOLOGY:
GENDER: CULTURE-TRANSGENDER

➢ What is Transgender?

An umbrella term for people whose gender identity or gender expression differs from the sex they were assigned at birth and/or whose gender is not validated by the dominant culture

- ➢ Trans people may or may not choose to (or may or may not be ABLE to) alter their bodies with surgery or hormone therapy
- ➢ Transitioning is a complex process that varies for each individual
- ➢ Folks may change name, pronouns, gender markers, clothing, hairstyles, mannerisms, etc.

Other terms for transgender

- ➢ Gender non-conforming (GNC)
- ➢ Gender variant
- ➢ Gender non-normative

Adapted From: University of Minnesota
GLBTA Programs Office materials 2010

LANGUAGE AND TERMINOLOGY:
GENDER: CULTURE-GENDER IDENTITY

➢ What is **Gender Identity?**

- ➢ Internal sense of who you are in terms of gender

- ➢ Again, society traditionally has assigned us one of two categories

  - ➢ Woman or

  - ➢ Man

Adapted From: University of Minnesota
GLBTA Programs Office materials 2010

LANGUAGE AND TERMINOLOGY:
GENDER: CULTURE-PERFORMANCE AND PERCEPTION

➢ Performance and Perception

- ➢ Gender expression, roles and identity intersect in multiple ways to shape all of genders

- ➢ We are ALL performing our gender
  - ➢ The way we control, express and shape ourselves as gendered individuals

- ➢ We are ALL perceived as having a gender by others
  - ➢ Cues, characteristics and signals we give to the world
  - ➢ Perception is out of our control and not always congruent with performance

Adapted From: University of Minnesota
GLBTA Programs Office materials 2010

LANGUAGE AND TERMINOLOGY:
GENDER: CULTURE-GENDER IDENTITIES

- Various gender Identities Include:
  - Androgynous
  - Bi- / Multi-gendered
  - Butch / Femme
  - Cross Dresser
  - Drag Queen / Drag King
  - FTM (female-to-male)
  - Genderqueer
  - Intersex
  - Man / Male
  - MTF (male-to-female)
  - Trans-man / -woman
  - Transexual
  - Two Spirit
  - Woman / Female
  - Not exhaustive list

Adapted From: University of Minnesota
GLBTA Programs Office materials 2010

LANGUAGE AND TERMINOLOGY:
SEXUAL ORIENTATION:
ATTRACTIONS/ RELATIONSHIPS

- What is **Sexual Orientation**?
  - It can be understood as the relationships between your sex (body) / gender and others' sexes (bodies) / genders

- Components
  - Sexual desire
  - Sexual behavior
  - Sexual Identity

Adapted From: University of Minnesota
GLBTA Programs Office materials 2010

LANGUAGE AND TERMINOLOGY:
SEXUAL ORIENTATION: ATTRACTIONS/ RELATIONSHIPS

- Various sexual orientations include:
  - Ambisexual
  - Asexual
  - Bisexual
  - Fluid
  - Gay
  - Heterosexual / Straight
  - Lesbian
  - Multisexual
  - Omnisexual / Pansexual
  - Queer
  - Same-Gender Loving
  - Two Spirit
  - Not exhaustive list

Adapted From: University of Minnesota
GLBTA Programs Office materials 2010

BEGINNING THE DISCUSSIONS ABOUT MARGINALIZATION

Language of Marginalization

LANGUAGE OF MARGINALIZATION

Heterosexism-

System of oppression that reinforces the belief in heterosexual superiority/ validity over LGBTQ orientations

Homophobia/Trans Phobia/Bi Phobia-Negative feelings, attitudes and behaviors against LGBTQ people/ active fear and hatred of "homosexuals"

☐ **Heterosexual Privilege-**

Basic civil rights, social privileges and status automatically awarded to heterosexuals that is automatically denied to LGBTQ communities based solely on sexual or gender orientation

LANGUAGE OF MARGINALIZATION

☐ **Sexism**-Fear of someone who "violates" social sex/gender roles and identities, or judgments about who a person is or what a person is capable of because of their gender (assigned or self-identified)
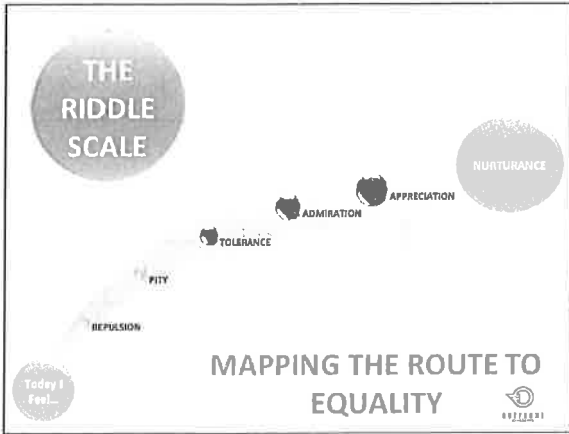
☐ **Racism** – Fear of or bias towards who a person is or what a person is capable of because of their race or ethnicity (assumed or self-identified)

☐ **Erotophobia**-Individual and cultural anxiety about issues relating to human sexuality

☐ **Xenophobia**-Fear of difference or perceived difference

Internalization of Phobic Messages-The process of claiming bias/hate-based social and cultural messages as internal/core truths without seeing the root of those messages as methods to maintain control by those in positions of power and the goal of those messages being to limit or deny access

THE RIDDLE SCALE

NURTURANCE

APPRECIATION

ADMIRATION

TOLERANCE

PITY

REPULSION

Today I Feel...

MAPPING THE ROUTE TO EQUALITY

Authenticity

Because we want to!

Identity Pride

Coming Out

Outing Response

Identity Congruence

Identity Integrity

UNDERSTANDING BARRIERS TO SERVICES

- Outing
- Fear of homophobic responses
- Heterosexual focused climate
- Fear of reprisal from family and friends
- Having to educate those they reach out to
- Being seen as a traitor to their friends or community

- Belief in societal myths about being LGBT
- "Gay-bashing" is still fairly accepted in our society
- Using the system may be a major life decision
- Less resources/ systemic support
- Fear of not being taken seriously

OVERCOMING THE BARRIERS

HOW WE MOVE FORWARD

OVERCOMING THE BARRIERS

- **DO NOT ASSUME ANYTHING!**

- Assess your own comfort level in working with LGBT community

- Assess the stereotypes and myths that you have believed in the past or currently believe

- Do you have safe workplace climates that support identity without making sexual orientation/gender identity the primary focus?

- Appreciate the risks that LGTB people take when they come out.

- Know that someone who is absolutely comfortable with their trans identification may be fluid in their sex/gender identity

- Check out your bathrooms!

OVERCOMING THE BARRIERS

- Does someone know from their first contact that you are safe and respectful?

- **Do** ask "How do you identify?" when appropriate. *Check out why you need to know this information. Is it for you or to truly provide better consumer services?*

- **Do** pay close attention to pronouns and names. *Always use the name and pronoun that you are given.* Use the client's preferred terminology and pronouns

OVERCOMING THE BARRIERS:
SAFER AND SUPPORTIVE WORKPLACES

- Make certain that the agency is committed to creating a welcoming environment

- Adjust organization statements and other relevant documents to include an affirmative nondiscrimination clause concerning membership, hiring practices, and the communities served.

- Use inclusive language and content in organization structure and meetings.

- Welcome LGBT persons in your organization's brochures.

- Create an environment in which people feel comfortable to come out at work.

- Interrupt homophobic remarks/jokes.

- Put up posters from LGTB organizations, events.

OVERCOMING THE BARRIERS
SAFER AND SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITY OUTREACH

- Celebrate and affirm bisexual, gay, lesbian, and transgender issues and history during the year (possibly including Gay Pride Week in June or National Coming Out Day in October).

- Participate in and/or support efforts to create justice, freedom, and equality for LGTB people in the larger society.

- Establish and maintain contact with local LGTB groups to offer support and promote dialogue and interaction.

- Advertise in the local press and/or other media that reaches the LGTB communities.

- Provide use of building space on an equivalent basis with other organizations when requested by members for programs and meetings for LGTB groups.

- Recognize same-gender couples in directories and other publications as they desire.

- If you place signs for upcoming events, solicit and include ones from LGTB organizations

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CONTACT THE
ANTI-VIOLENCE PROGRAM!

www.outfront.org

(612) 822-0127/(800) 800-0350, option 3

☐ Client services such as:

   ☐ **Crisis /short term counseling**

   ☐ Advocacy

   ☐ Support Groups

☐ **Advocacy with other agencies or systems**

    Buffering between the person who needs assistance and systems professionals

    Explaining the criminal justice system processes

☐ **Community organizing/outreach/education**

OTHER ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT PROGRAMS

- National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs: www.ncavp.org
  - 212-714-1141 (hotline), 212.714.1184 x50
- The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force: www.thetaskforce.org
  - 212.604.9830
- National Center for Lesbian Rights: www.nclrights.org
  - 415.392.6257
- GLBTA Programs Office-University of Minnesota
  - (612) 625-0537
- National Center for Transgender Rights
  - (202) 903-0112