

### **Why is my partner trans\* identified?**

This isn't an easy question to answer. People are very complex and there are likely multiple causes or reasons a person may be trans\* identified. Research suggests several causes, one being that during pregnancy there is a natural point in the baby's development when a sex hormone, either testosterone or estrogen, interacts with the baby's brain. If this hormone does not align with the biological sex of the baby (estrogen for female sex, testosterone for male sex), this can affect certain structures in the brain and cause identity differences (such as trans\* identities) . There are also correlations between a certain gene and trans\* people designated male at birth (DMAB) and another gene with trans\* people designated female at birth (DFAB). For people who are [intersex](#), their identity and body may have originally aligned, but non-consensual medical changes during childhood, physical changes during puberty, or experiences in adulthood may have impacted how they experience their identity, placing them within the gender variant or trans spectrum. The important thing to remember is that your partner's gender identity is not chosen, nor is it caused by you or anyone else. People may identify within any of the countless areas of the gender spectrum, and they may discover that early or late in life, but it's a vital part of who they are.

### **What should I tell other people about my partner's transition?**

The information you share with other people about your partner and their transition will vary. Talk to your partner and find out how they would like you to respond to other's questions.

### **What should I do if other people misgender my partner?**

Hearing someone else misgender your partner, or use the incorrect name, can be very frustrating; you may feel angry or embarrassed or feel unsure about how to act. Ask your partner how they would like you to handle issues surrounding misgendering. Also, talk to your partner about what you could do in different circumstances, such as if they're misgendered in public, among friends and family, or somewhere else.

### **What will transitioning mean for my partner?**

Each person's transition is unique, and so it may mean any number of things. The major components of a transition are social (such as name, pronoun, clothing), legal (including name-change, gender marker, driver's license), and medical (taking hormones, various surgeries). Your partner may decide to transition in some of these ways, all, or none. They may also enter different periods of transition at different times. Talk to your partner about their feelings, if they have considered taking any steps, and how you can support them.

### **What if I don't want my partner to transition?**

It is understandable to feel conflicted about your partner's transition. A trans\* partner may not be what you 'signed up for' in the beginning of your relationship, but it is a very real part of who your partner is now. It's important to maintain open lines of communication about your feelings and that you check in with your own feelings too. Compromise is an important part of every relationship, and just as we should not compromise what feels right for our identity, we can not ask our partner to compromise

theirs. It's okay to realize that being in a relationship with a trans\* person may not fit with your sexuality or identity. Take the time to talk to your partner about your needs and theirs and whether they can be met in your current relationship.

### **What can I say to other people about my partner's identity and transition?**

Talking to other people about your relationship can be complicated. You may feel a desire to "out" yourself as the partner of a trans\* person as a way to claim your own queer or straight identity but in doing so, you may also be outing your partner. Discuss with your partner how open you both wish to be in different places, work to keep communication about such topics open and comfortable, as both of you may find your preferences and comfort level changing over time.

### **What does my partner's trans\* identity say about me and my sexuality?**

When your partner comes out as trans\*, it can impact you in how you think of your identity, your relationship is defined, and/or how others see you. You may also find yourself questioning; *What does this say about my sexual orientation? Am I gay now? Does this make me straight? Is there even a word for me?* Sexuality is complicated and there are lots of identity labels that may reflect your experience. You may find that the best label for you is the one you have had all along or you may wish to change the language you use. It's important to remember that only you can say what identity fits you best. You may find people asking you very personal questions about your identity and even your sex life. It's always okay to tell someone you don't feel comfortable with their questions, or that they are not appropriate.

### **Can we be legally married?**

The ability to marry is based largely on the policies of your state and your partner's legal "gender marker" (the M or F listed on their ID and/or birth certificate). If you are able to marry, there may still be additional legal steps you may want take to protect yourself. The Human Rights Campaign has a [helpful article](#) on trans\* people and marriage that goes into several of these issues.

### **Can we have children?**

If you chose to parent, there are many options open to you. Trans\* people can be (and frequently are) biological or adoptive parents and there are countless happy and healthy families composed of one or more trans\* identified parent.

### **How will my partner's identity affect our child(ren)?**

Children are resilient. A great deal of how they deal with a parent's gender identity will be dictated by how you, as parents, interact with each other. If children see you being supportive and affirming, they will follow your example. Much like in other areas of life, children take cues from the adults around them. You may also find childrens' books that discuss gender differences, like ones by author [S.Bear Bergman](#). These can be easily found through google or amazon.com searches for "Transgender Children's Books."

### **What's going to happen to our life? Is everything going to change?**

It doesn't have to. You can still have the life you want, whether or not that includes marriage, children, or any other aspect of the future that is important to you. While some expectations may change, and some allowances will need to be made, your life with a trans\* identified partner can include any and all dreams you have for the future.

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