

# Educational resources about trans and gender-diverse issues

As Friends engage in the work of upholding human rights and pursuing the full inclusion of all people in our communities, we are aware of growing opposition to the rights of trans and gender-diverse individuals.

We are committed to grounding our actions in our spiritual practices, in the conviction that there is that of God in every person, and in our Quaker testimonies. (By trans and gender-diverse we mean transgender, nonbinary, a-gender, and gender-queer Friends, recognizing that each person holds their own identity and that no umbrella term can capture us all.)

This concern reaches beyond the social-justice work of Canadian Friends Service Committee and runs deeper than we may wish to admit within our own Meetings. We honour the trans and gender-diverse Friends who, over more than a year of gathering and discerning together, have shared their experiences and trusted us with their testimonies. In light of how vulnerable trans and gender-diverse people remain in today's world, this journey of listening, learning, and building safety and belonging will continue for years to come.

We offer this resource and the accompanying minute and queries as a 'calling in' of our own beloved community – an invitation to reflect on our beliefs, practices, and assumptions about gender identity and expression. The materials gathered below are offered as a starting place for that reflection. Overall, they invite us to ask:

How can we follow the leadings of the Spirit, both individually and in our Meetings, to recognize, affirm, and meaningfully include trans and gender-diverse Friends as full members of our beloved community, answering that of God in every person?

These resources are an invitation to challenge and inspire Friends individually and corporately as a faith body. The work need not be perfect; what matters is that we are truly trying, and that we pause to ask whether there are voices we are not yet hearing.

## For spiritual reflection

**Britain Yearly Meeting Minute 31 (2021) and the QCCIR theology paper** (statement and discussion document)

A short Quaker corporate statement affirming trans and gender-diverse Friends, framed around the question 'what does love require of us?', now accompanied by a paper exploring the theology beneath it. An ideal anchor text for worship-sharing.

**QuakerSpeak: What's the difference between a welcoming and an inclusive space?** (short video, ~5 min)

Friends—including a trans Friend—distinguish a meeting that says it welcomes LGBTQ+ people from one that changes its practices so people can truly flourish. A gentle discussion-starter.

**QuakerSpeak interviews with trans Friends** (Video series)

Short first-person films featuring trans Quakers (Willa Taber, Anthony Kirk, and Chloe Schwenke) sharing the spiritual dimension of their gender journeys. Grounds the conversation in lived Quaker testimony.

**Self-ish: a transgender awakening by Chloe Schwenke** (Memoir (book))

A longer-form spiritual memoir by a Quaker trans woman, expanding on the story she shares in the QuakerSpeak series. Well suited to an individual, devotional read.

**Friends for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer concerns (FLGBTQC)** (faith community and ongoing resource)

A North American Quaker faith community that affirms that of God in all people and gathers twice yearly for

worship and learning. A living resource a Meeting can connect with, not only read.

## For understanding biology

**Spectrum of sex: the science of male, female, and intersex** by Hida Viloria and Maria Nieto (Book)

Co-written by an intersex activist and a biologist, this accessible, illustrated guide introduces seven variations of human sex. The most thorough single introduction to the science.

**Here's why human sex is not binary in Scientific American** (popular-science article)

A short, citable piece arguing that gamete type alone does not capture the complexity of human sex biology. For a peer-reviewed option, the open-access perspective article *Is sex still binary?* (on PubMed Central) covers similar ground in academic form.

**Ologies with Alie Ward: neuroendocrinology (sex and gender) with Dr. Daniel Pfau** (podcast)

A warm, funny science interview in which a neuroscientist and endocrinology researcher explains how hormones shape us, the variation in gender expression, and why a strict binary is harmful. A 2024 "mega-encore" folds in newer research. Note: Ologies can include some adult language—Ward's shorter "Smologies" edits are classroom-safe and better for playing aloud in mixed-age settings.

**The way we think about biological sex is wrong** by Emily Quinn (Video, ~14 min)

An intersex activist uses humor and personal storytelling to walk through the seven areas of biological sex and show how each varies. Its short length makes it a strong way to open a study session. (TED flags it as containing mature content.)

## For understanding the impacts of being an "ally"

**Trans allyship workbook: building skills to support trans people in our lives** by Davey Shlasko (book)

A practical, illustrated workbook with activities, built around four practices—awareness, analysis, action, and accountability—and including guidance for community

and religious leaders. The standout choice for hands-on group work.

**Dear cisgender people: a guide to allyship and empathy** by Kenny Ethan Jones (book)

A researched, personal account that gives readers tools to step forward as allies, set against sobering statistics on the harms trans and gender-diverse people face. Useful for the sociological-impact angle specifically.

**Nobody panic: how to be a better trans ally** (podcast)

A friendly, low-pressure conversation for people who want to help but worry about getting it wrong, covering inclusive language and gender expression. The "worried you'll get it wrong" spirit echoes our reminder that the work need not be perfect, only truly trying.

**Effective allyship: a transgender woman's take on intersectionality** by Ashlee Marie Preston (video, ~15 minutes)

A heartfelt talk from a trans activist on intersectionality, allyship, and the urgency of compassion—a framing that maps naturally onto Quaker listening and practice.

## A note on using the above resources

Links and editions change over time, so it is worth using a search engine for these titles to find the most up-to-date access points. It's also worth previewing anything you plan to play aloud in Meeting, as a few of these touch on mature themes/language. Several items (the Yearly Meeting minute, the *QuakerSpeak* videos, the open-access articles) are freely available, which helps with accessibility across Meetings. Friends are encouraged to begin wherever feels faithful, and to be patient with themselves, their Meeting, and one another along the way.



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