

# Top 5 Trans Ally Principles

**Affirm** the trans people in your life by using their correct name and pronouns. It is important to use their correct name and pronouns whether they are around or not and when referring to them in the past, present, or future. It is a powerful indicator that you believe they are who they say they are. Introducing yourself to other people with your name and pronouns can also send a message and helps remind people that we should never assume we know how someone wants to be identified.

**Apologize but don't dwell** when you make a mistake with names, gender, or pronouns.

Always correct yourself when you make a mistake with someone's name or pronoun. Apologizing briefly in the moment is important, but dwelling on the moment and over-apologizing or making scene of your mistake makes the moment about you instead of it being about that trans person and your apology.

**Engage with that person** about their identity. If someone has shared their identity with you, you can talk with them about it. Identities and experiences aren't to be treated like elephants in the room. Being unwilling to engage with someone around their experience/identity can send a message that their identity isn't something that should be talked about. If you struggle for something to say you can always ask, "Hey, how are you doing?"

**Respect privacy** and steer clear of body-centric questions. A trans person has a right to privacy around their body just like the rest of us do, so steer clear of questions about surgery, body history, genitalia, etc. Another way to think about it, always talk about a trans person as if they are present in the room.

**Volunteer to educate others** about ways they can continue to do the above. We can all help each other when it comes to being a good trans ally. We will mess up sometimes and holding each other accountable, helping each other practice correcting names/pronouns/gender is a powerful and important action. Volunteer to educate others. Put yourself out there as an ally and as a fellow learner and help create more safe, affirming, and inclusive environments around you.

## *Quick Tips*

**Don't ask what someone's "real name" is.** The name they use now is their real name and what is all you need to know. Asking for their old name is an invasion of privacy.

**Don't ask someone how they knew they were transgender.** No one asks you how you knew you were cisgender; you just know. Asking someone how they knew they are trans is similar to asking them to justify their identity.

**Don't out someone as trans in any way.** It is important to always allow someone the ability to discern and decide who to come out to and when. It is never your place to do so. This is a matter of privacy, respect and also personal safety.

**Try to identify when you are using gender as a means of categorization when you could use another term or group identity** (ladies and gentlemen vs. parents/students/friends)

**Explore and get to understand your cisgender privilege.** Take time to consider the ways that you've never thought about it before.

**Some questions are better to Google.** If you're asking out of care for that person, ask away (ex. How are things going in your office now that you've transitioned?) If you're asking for personal curiosity better to Google (ex. What kind of surgeries would a person have if they are transitioning from female to male?)

[www.ventureoutproject.com](http://www.ventureoutproject.com)

For more resources on how to be a trans affirming ally & LGBTQ+ identities check out [www.thesafezoneproject.com](http://www.thesafezoneproject.com)