

# GENDER:

The Gender-Friendly Primer on

# YOUR

What to Know, What to Say, and

# GUIDE 2ND EDITION

What to Do in the New Gender Culture

## Gender-Neutral Pronoun Practice

### A Starting Place Discussion Guide

*Gender: Your Guide* (GYG) is a book that welcomes everyone, regardless of their familiarity or personal relationship with gender diversity, into the project of making spaces where gender is less rigid: a source of more joy and less harm. This discussion guide offers a starting place to begin practicing gender-neutral pronouns with others, no matter where you are.

**For the facilitator! Before you host the discussion...** read Chapters 1-5 so that you are ready when questions arise. I suggest doing the Chapter 4 exercises on your own or with a friend so you know what to expect.

#### Suggested advanced reading for everyone:

- Chapter 3: Learning About the Transgender Spectrum
- Chapter 4: A Gender-Neutral Pronoun Primer

**Begin your discussion by...** asking everyone to share something that was new to them in chapters 3 and 4.

#### Suggested group readings (together, aloud) and activities:

- Read the sidebars on pages 109 and 127, as well as the 'But Grammar! Argument' section in Chapter 9 (pages 214-217, no sidebar). Taking the lead yourself, encourage participants to share their own challenges with singular they usage and reflect on whether they can connect with what they just read.
- There's safety in numbers! Read aloud each pronunciation in the bottom table on page 112 in unison, without reproaching any awkward giggles. Read together, one person per sentence, the Xe/Xem Example (page 114) then pair up, cover up the table and complete the Try Adding Singular They Pronouns example. Feel free to set up a friendly competition, if that suits your group.
- All together or in groups, chat about Evan and the scenario using singular they/them pronouns. There are some questions on page 117 to help you get started. Practice making Better Mistakes (page 124) and Gentle Corrections (page 125) for each other when mistakes happen (they will!).
- Read the 'Avoiding Pronouns' section (pages 129-131), including the box containing the pronoun-free example. Using the questions on page 131, have pair or small group conversations about Evan's predicament without using gender pronouns of any kind.
- Break into pairs and have each pair select a person they both have in common. Set the timer and hold two-minute conversations about that person, with either a neo-pronoun package or singular they. Repeat either with different pairs, or in the same pairs with different people being spoken about.

#### Next steps:

- Practice makes perfect! Schedule a 'they hour' where you all say only they/them pronouns for everyone, or make a point of doing this at your next meeting or hangout.
- Encourage everyone to make follow-up dates with each other to practice, using some of the strategies outlined in Chapter 5: Strategies for Using Peoples' Pronouns Correctly.