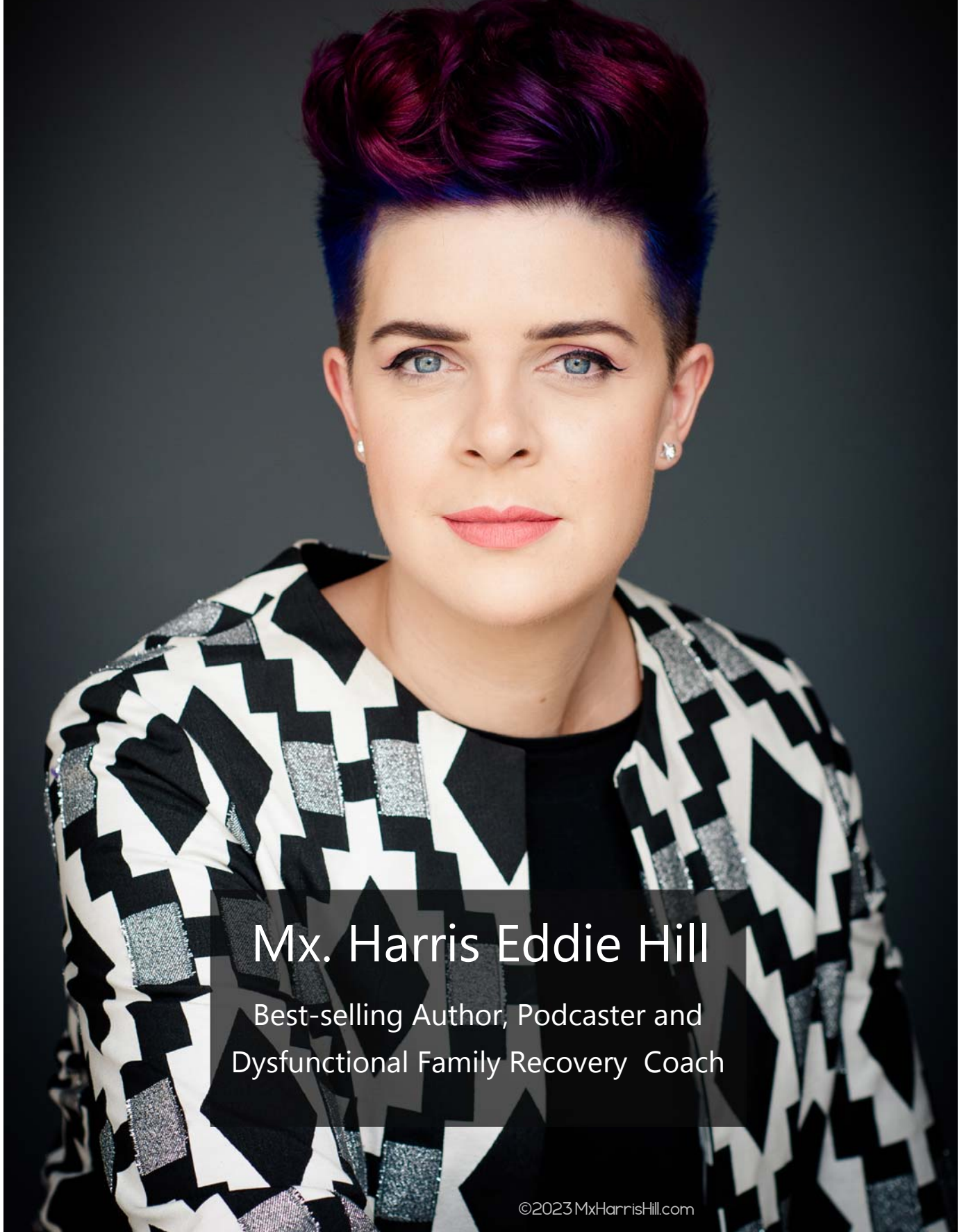


TRANS+ GENDER IDENTITY

A GUIDE FOR BEGINNERS



Mx. Harris Eddie Hill

Best-selling Author, Podcaster and
Dysfunctional Family Recovery Coach

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Remember: there's a free masterclass that accompanies this guide at mxharrishill.com/pdf

INTRODUCTION

Thank you for taking the time to read this booklet.

Detailed within these few pages are what I hope will give you a good starting place for understanding what it means to be trans+ (transgender, nonbinary, etc.) and why we need to pay attention to trans+ inclusion and celebration in daily life.

I would hazard a guess that, like me, you were brought up in a culture that only talked about gender in terms of biology, and that gender was a very binary and straight-forward thing. Even as a trans, nonbinary person myself, I began life just as unaware and uneducated as most people. It's fair to say I had even made unkind remarks in the past, and I definitely wasn't supporting anyone.

I wish to bridge the gap of understanding that was so lacking in my life, and I hope to make a positive difference for all of us so that we may be closer and have better relationships with each other, whatever environment we're in.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE TRANS+?

We're all usually assigned a gender at birth of boy or girl. To be trans+ simply means that you are one of the many who were assigned the incorrect label at birth. People in the trans+ community aren't just trans men or women, however; the variations and numbers of experiences and identities are numerous. But you don't need to know them all or become an expert on identities. There are a few simple things you need to know and you're on your way!

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

The latest statistics say that 48% of trans+ youth attempt suicide, and that 10% of those people made their attempts within the last year. The stats for the wellbeing of trans+ adults are equally concerning.

The most common issues trans+ people face are a lack of acceptance and a lack of understanding from within relationships, whether that's at home, school, or work. The power to increase the wellbeing and life satisfaction for trans+ people lies with each of us. We need only take a few small learnings and integrate them into our daily lives and interactions, earnestly and with heart.

Trans+ people are everywhere, and we interact with the rest of the world on a daily basis, without others necessarily being aware.

"I ACCEPT PEOPLE AS THEY ARE/I DON'T MIND"

This is a great attitude to start with! This will make it easier to empathise with others' experiences and extend the same consideration as you would with anyone, and do so in a more educated, intentional, and inclusive way.

Enjoy!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mx. Harris Hill". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

SOMEONE'S JUST COME OUT TO YOU ABOUT THEIR GENDER?

THE TOP 5 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW

1 DON'T PANIC!

No one's expecting you to be up-to-date with everything right this second; society is changing and we're all learning. Accepting that you'll make mistakes will help you to relax as much as you can, which will help make apologies more graceful on the occasions you'll need to make them. Taking part in workshops, reading up on trans+ issues, and learning from your mistakes are the best things you can do. This takes time!

2 CENTRE THE PERSON COMING OUT TO YOU

Focus on the needs, feelings, and safety of the trans+ person coming out to you as much as you can, whilst leaving your own needs, feelings, and opinions out of it for now. Asking them the 3 KEY QUESTIONS (page 5) will get you started with supporting the person in a way that is right for them. If you need space to deal with your own reactions and questions, make sure you do that in an informed and supported environment away from the person you're wanting to support. Avoid relying on the person coming out to you to teach you about the trans+ world; they likely have enough on their plate!

3 WHAT NEEDS TO CHANGE?

Consider the rest of your environment; are the other people in your home/school/place of work well positioned to support your trans+ person? If the person in question has given you permission to share their gender with other people, who do you need to speak to? And is more support and learning needed in order to bring everyone onto the same page?

4 WHAT'S GOOD?

The safety of trans+ people is extremely important, and we must be aware of any discrimination or exclusion our person may face. However, it's important to centre any positive and even euphoric reasons someone may have for coming out or embracing their true selves. Being trans+ is a perfectly natural variation within the human species and, given the right support and environment, being trans+ can, and, in my opinion, should be a good thing!

5 THE ROAD AHEAD

Surgery and hormones are not of interest or not accessible to every trans+ person. It's also a private issue that your trans+ person may not wish to discuss at this time, or possibly even with you specifically, for their own reasons. Do not assume that surgery and/or hormones will be relevant to your trans+ person, but know that the conversation may come up later. It can take some people a long time to conceptualise, accept, or encounter a version of physical transition that is right for them, although many people will equally be very sure of what they want and how they feel; it's different for everyone!

3 KEY QUESTIONS

1 WHAT NAME AND PRONOUNS SHOULD I USE FOR YOU?

Not every trans+ person will change their name and/or pronouns. Remember that for those who do change their name and/or pronouns, they may go through several evolutions. It's important to support people through those changes as it can sometimes feel awkward for people to publicly change once, let alone two or more times.



2 HOW PUBLIC OR PRIVATE DO YOU WANT THIS INFORMATION TO BE?



You must treat people's coming out to you with absolute confidence. How and when someone comes out to other individuals, or publicly, should be their choice. It is often the case that coming out to certain people will require support, and in some cases, maybe even planning in the event that it doesn't go well. The person coming out to you may need a long time, years in some cases, to come out, publicly, if at all. The safety and wellbeing of trans+ people must be treated as a priority.

3 WHAT SUPPORT DO YOU HAVE ALREADY AND CAN I OFFER SUPPORT IN ANY WAY?

In an ideal situation, anyone coming out about their gender would have support in all areas of their life, yet this is unfortunately not common enough! The person coming out to you may not want to discuss the intricacies of their lives and it may not be appropriate to do so, but it's important to offer support as some people may face isolation and rejection as a result of their coming out. This in turn can have a (potentially extreme) knock-on effect on their mental health and emotional wellbeing. Just having one person to confide in who will accept and support them can make a big difference.



An easy way to remember the three questions is 'PPS; Pronouns, Private, Support'.

Fun Fact! 'Mx' is a gender neutral honourific legally recognised in many English-speaking countries, including the UK. It's pronounced 'moox' like 'books' in England. In the USA it's pronounced 'mix' or 'mux'.

DO'S AND DON'TS

Do not use the 'born in the wrong body' concept

Some people do feel this way, but it's not the definition of being trans+

Use 'assigned the incorrect gender at birth'

Do not use the phrases 'used to be/was born a man/woman'

In the same way that we understand that someone does not 'become gay' and understand that they probably were always gay, we can understand that someone was probably always the gender they've come out as.

Use 'assigned the incorrect gender at birth'

Disclose that someone is trans+ without their express permission.

Trans+ people often face discrimination because of their identity. Ideally trans+ people will come out in their own time if/when they are ready.

Avoid sharing someone's trans+ status and if necessary ask why someone wants to know.

Share someone's dead-name or old pronouns without their permission

Trans+ people can often have a complicated relationship with their deadname or old pronouns, and for many it's re-traumatizing

As the word suggests, let deadnames and old pronouns remain...dead!

Use any variant of the word trans/ transgender as a noun i.e. 'a transgender', 'discuss transgender'.

Trans/transgender etc. is an adjective such as 'tall' or 'quiet', Additionally it can sound quite objectifying.

'Trans people' or 'transgender person' is the correct and affirming usage.

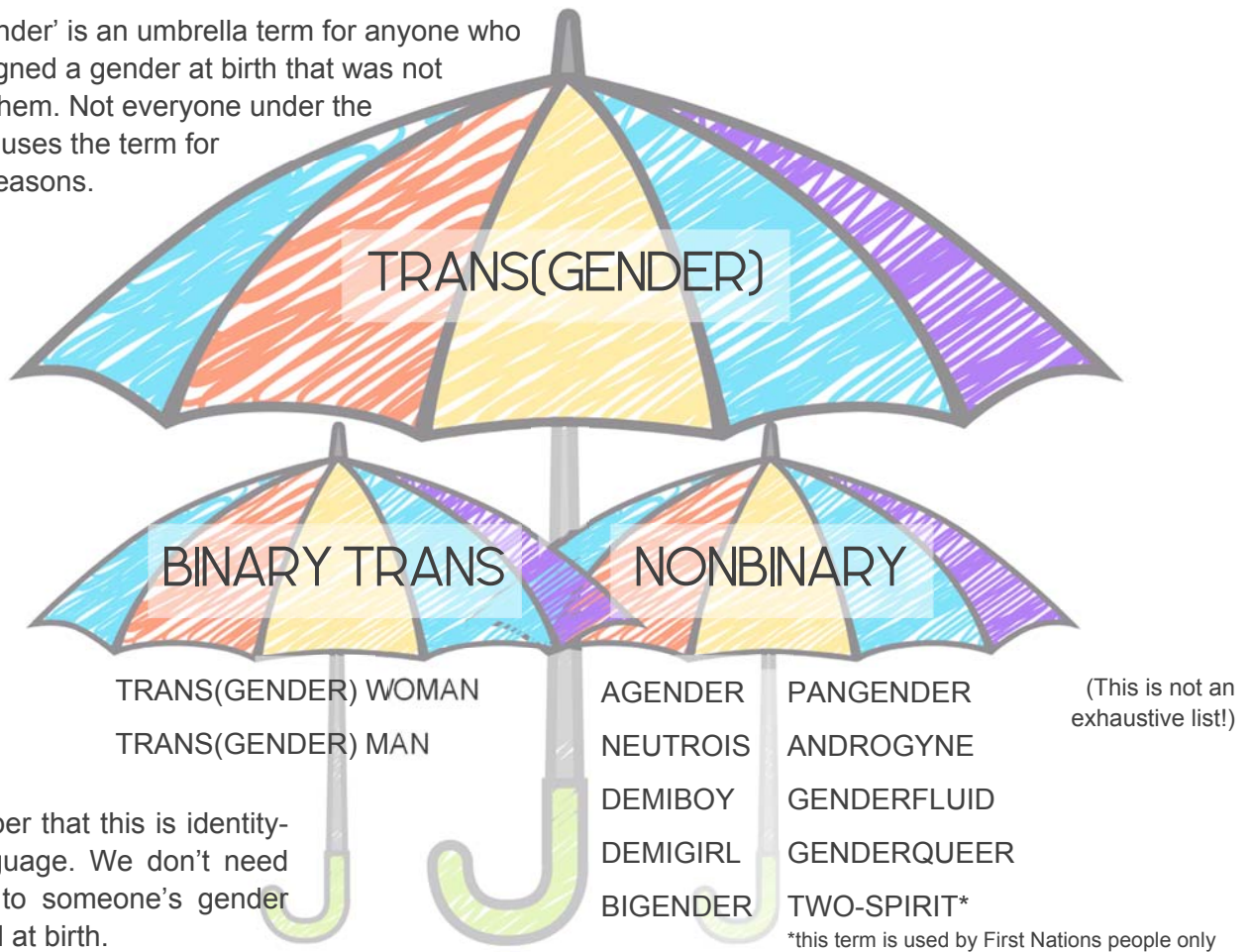
Use the incorrect name or pronouns except when protecting someone's privacy.

Trans+ people can suffer psychological damage as a result of both intentional and unintentional misgendering.

Always use someone's chosen name and correct pronouns unless otherwise agreed

THE TRANSGENDER UMBRELLA

'Transgender' is an umbrella term for anyone who was assigned a gender at birth that was not right for them. Not everyone under the umbrella uses the term for various reasons.



Remember that this is identity-first language. We don't need to refer to someone's gender assigned at birth.

PRONOUNS

One of the most affirming things you can do for trans+ people is to use the correct pronouns. Asking someone 'what are your pronouns?' or by introducing yourself with your own, or including your pronouns in your email or bio also normalises sharing pronouns and signals to people that you are supportive.

Traditional Pronouns	she	her	hers	herself
	he	him	his	himself
	they	them	theirs	themselves
	**it	its	its	itself
Neopronouns	xe	xem	xyrs	xemself
	ze	hir	hirs	hirself
	ey	em	eirs	emself
	fae	faer	faers	faerself

Practice (left to right);

'____ called me yesterday about that holiday. I hadn't heard from ____ for weeks. That place of ____ sounds amazing! And all that peace and quiet by _____. Lovely!'

**we should never use 'it' as a descriptor for trans+ people, except in the case where someone uses 'it' as their pronouns.

Glossary

Transgender

A person who was labelled the incorrect gender at birth. This word potentially encompasses a lot of different gender identities, although some people under the umbrella term of 'trans(gender)' choose not to use it for themselves for various reasons.

Cisgender

Cisgender is the counterpart of transgender. If you *were* labelled with the correct gender at birth, you are cisgender. This can be shortened to 'cis'. You can say one is a 'cis(gender) man or woman'.

Nonbinary

Any gender identity that doesn't fit, neatly or at all, into the traditional binary of 'man' or 'woman'. This is another umbrella term widely used to describe anyone whose gender is not man or woman, although there are some people whose gender sits somewhat within man/woman, albeit not completely. These people may describe themselves as 'nonbinary men/women'.

Agender

Complete lack of gender. Many agender people experience dysphoria or discomfort just for people applying gender to them, even neutral gender. Agender people technically fall under both the nonbinary and trans umbrella, although some do not feel that either 'nonbinary' or 'trans' are the right label for them.

Dysphoria

There are different types of dysphoria in relation to gender. The two kinds we speak most about are physical and social dysphoria. Dysphoria is the extremely uncomfortable and potentially traumatising experience of things not aligning with our gender or gender expression. This is more than just an emotional response, it is also a neurological one.

- Social dysphoria is the negative experience of our gender being reflected back to us by others incorrectly i.e. being addressed as or seen as another gender
- Physical dysphoria is the discordance between the neurological map in our brain and our physical body i.e. our brain has a map for certain characteristics that are not present.

Dysphoria is a common occurrence within the trans+ community, but it is not something everyone experiences. One does not have to experience dysphoria in order to be valid as a trans+ person.

Euphoria

Euphoria, on the other hand, is a far better indicator of someone being trans+. Euphoria in regards to gender is a feeling of being completely at home within one's gender i.e. being addressed correctly, hearing your voice at the right pitch, having an affirming haircut. Gender euphoria can be evoked by the smallest of things and it's individual to each person.

Transition(ing)

Not every trans+ person transitions, and if they do, it looks different for everyone. Some people socially transition, which includes things like changing your name, pronouns, and how you present yourself.

Some trans+ people medically/surgically transition which includes things like hormone replacement therapy (HRT), top surgery (chest), bottom surgery (genitals), and sometimes facial surgery. For trans+ teens wanting to avoid any puberty that would compound their dysphoria, they can take puberty blockers for a few years whilst under the supervision of a gender clinic or doctor until the right course of action is realised.

It's important to understand that many trans+ people do few if any of these things, whereas for some people it's important to address all of these things and more. This is currently the only proven way to treat physical dysphoria.

Trans+

An inclusive term used to refer to all non-cis people. For anyone whose identity does not fit their assigned gender.

Misgendering

This is when someone is gendered incorrectly, (intentionally or not). Except when someone has opted to stay closeted for safety or other reasons, it is essential to gender people correctly at all times. Apologies should be quick and calm, correcting ourselves immediately and continuing.

Deadname

The name someone used to go by before coming out. Avoid using it or referring to it as much as possible. Not everyone changes their name, even if their birth name is traditionally masculine or feminine.

There are many other genders not covered here. You do not need to know them all, but you can read further if you wish. Getting people's names and pronouns correct and not misgendering them is the priority.



Mx. Harris Eddie Hill
Dysfunctional Family Recovery Coach

harris@mxharrishill.com
www.mxharrishill.com

Based in Hertfordshire, UK

To date, Harris has taught and coached over 30,000 people in their mission to educate the general population about gender identity. Harris now supports people to flourish by helping them to recover from dysfunctional and unaccepting families and parents.

Are you looking for personal support?

Do you need help in recovering from the affects of a dysfunctional or unaccepting family?

Do you feel like you're not able to live your life to the fullest because of your family history?

You can get in touch with me and I'll take you through your recovery journey; just as I did! Don't let your past rob you of your future.

Thank you for reading this booklet.

I hope your understanding of trans+ identities is somewhat expanded. However, if you have any questions, please feel free to get in contact via the website or have a look for more free resources, including my 18+ podcast, which you can listen to free on all major platforms. Simply search 'The Transection Podcast'.

If you would like some more in-depth assistance, please contact me or book a call and we can discuss your current challenge in more detail. You can also ask me about other available resources.

To everyone's success!

Mx. Harris Hill

Remember PPS! Pronouns, Private, Support!