

This booklet is a guide
for using the cards

Rainbow Talk



Digital Version

40 CARDS FOR LGBTIQ-INCLUSIVE CONVERSATIONS

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St Luke's
Innovative
Resources

Welcome to the Digital Version of

Rainbow Talk



St Luke's Innovative Resources is delighted to bring you the interactive, versatile, digital version of this conversation-building resource, first published as a hard copy card set packaged in a polypropylene box.

You can:

- swipe through the digital cards, one at a time
- swipe through a row of thumbnail images at the bottom of the screen
- bookmark/tag images
- write, scribble or draw on the digital cards—you may want to circle a relevant statement or scribble notes as a card is discussed
- add and drag notes anywhere on the images
- highlight, draw and write in multiple colours
- take a screen shot and access the image in your photo gallery
- send the image to the person you are working with so they have a copy
- print the image and mail it to the person so they have a hard copy
- save the image in your files as a record of your conversation.

How can I use this digital tool remotely with groups or individuals?

If you are running groups or meetings using Skype, Zoom or other similar video conferencing tools, you can use our digital cards and tools in a number of different ways.

A good place to start is to give the group or person some time to get to know the cards:

- The facilitator can share their screen, and scroll through the images so everyone can see.
- Point out the different features of the card set including the types of images, the format of the words (if any), the suits (if relevant) and any other unique features.
- Show them some of the features such as the scribble and text tools.

Deliberate Selection

- As you scroll through the cards, invite the person or group to pick cards that jump out at them for any reason. Perhaps it is the image that catches their attention. Perhaps it is a word or a question, or some other quality of the card. It may be a card they are curious about, or would find most helpful to focus on, or think is very important, or it may be a card that matches something they are thinking about or experiencing at the moment, or even a card that expresses something they have never thought about before.
- As the facilitator, you may wish to choose one or two cards to prompt an activity or discussion.

Random Selection

An alternate way of getting activities started is to select images randomly, for example:

- Ask each person to close their eyes and randomly say, 'Stop!' as the facilitator swipes through the images.
- Or ask each person to choose a number between 1 and X (X being the number of cards in the set). This is the number of their randomly selected card.
- Or use the timer on your phone set to a chosen interval—5 seconds, 10 seconds, etc. Stop on the image that is on screen when the timer dings.

Many videoconferencing tools allow you to put people into groups using 'breakout' rooms. So you may want to invite two or more people to discuss what a particular card means to them, and then come back to the whole group.

Some questions for reflection and conversation

Whether you use a deliberate or random selection method, you can then build the conversation by inviting each person to read or comment on their card, if they wish. Facilitators can then ask individuals or groups questions like:

- What does this card mean to you?
- Have you thought about the topic on the card before?
- On a scale of 1-10 how important is this to you?
- Can you think of a time when this card was particularly relevant? What happened?
- When this is happening, what is the effect?
- When this is not happening, what is the effect?
- Do you know anyone who is really good at this?
- What do they do?
- What is one simple thing you could do today or tomorrow that would make a difference?
- How will you notice the effects? (Some people ask for feedback, and others prefer to notice carefully how it feels inside themselves and what the effect is on others.)

In the booklet written especially for the card set you have chosen, you will find a lot more information. It includes the purpose of this card set, its origins and practice base, things you should take into consideration before using the cards, and many creative ideas for using the cards. Please adapt the suggestions to the digital environment.

**Don't hesitate to call us for support
in using this digital resource.**



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St Luke's Innovative Resources acknowledges the Jaara people of Dja Dja Wurrung country, the traditional custodians of the land upon which our premises are located and where our resources are developed and published. We pay our respects to the elders—past, present and future—for they hold the memories, traditions, cultures and hopes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, and other First Nations peoples. We must remember that underneath this earth, upon which we so firmly stand, this is, was and always will be, the traditional land of First Nations peoples.

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HONOURING THOSE WHO HAVE GONE BEFORE

We wish to acknowledge the many people from LGBTIQ communities and their allies who have made resources such as this possible—the pioneers, mentors, activists, agitators and role models who have stood up for equality and social justice in countless ways. Many have contributed to changes in laws, government policy and community attitudes over long periods of time, sometimes at great personal cost. While some have been highly visible and vocal about the changes they wanted to see, others have worked quietly behind the scenes. All of them have helped make conversations about gender, sexuality and biological sex—like the conversations people will have using these cards—possible.



Everyone Deserves Respect

CONVERSATIONS CAN SUPPORT SOCIAL CHANGE

In schools, trains, shops, streets, work places and online, we share spaces with people whose ideas, beliefs and stories differ from our own. Many of our communities include people from different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds. Our interests, languages, bodies and styles are many and varied too. This rich diversity is reflected in our experiences of gender, sexuality and biological sex as well.

What is the purpose of *Rainbow Talk*?

Rainbow Talk: 40 cards for LGBTIQ-inclusive conversations was developed to encourage safe and respectful conversations with young people and adults about the broad spectrum of human experiences related to biological sex, sexuality and gender.

Everyone's identity includes elements related to their body, gender and sexuality and, as such, these cards are for everyone. They invite us to explore our own attitudes, experiences and understanding of identity, as well as those of others, in ways that are inclusive of everyone.

People who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and gender diverse, intersex and queer/questioning (LGBTIQ) have always been part of any population but their stories and experiences have often remained hidden and untold. By creating safe spaces in our communities for diverse voices to be heard, we have the opportunity to listen to each other and grow in our understanding of what it means to be a person who identifies as LGBTIQ. Hopefully, these conversations will result in increased understanding, empathy and celebration of diversity.

Conversations about gender, sexual identity and biological sex can be uncomfortable for many of us, especially if we are not used to having such conversations, or if previous conversations have been awkward, stilted or judgemental. We may really want to talk about our experiences of identity, and often we are very curious about the experiences of others, but we may not know how to approach these subjects openly and safely.

The *Rainbow Talk* cards can provide a lively and engaging focal point for considering and discussing these topics, in ways that allow each person to be in control of how much they share on a personal level.

Unless we all spend time building our knowledge and understanding of the natural diversity that exists in terms of gender, sexuality and biological sex—including the systemic ways in which exclusion, marginalisation and discrimination happen to people from LGBTIQ communities—we are unlikely to take the next step forward on the journey towards fairness for everyone.

The *Rainbow Talk* cards do not pathologise or ‘other’ the experiences of LGBTIQ people, or assume that conversations about gender, sexual identity and biological sex are the sole responsibility of LGBTIQ communities. Quite the contrary—the cards literally put on the table that these conversations are everyone’s territory and responsibility.

By using *Rainbow Talk* to open up respectful conversations about diversity with young people and adults from all walks of life, you too are helping to build a society that is more inclusive and fair for people who identify as LGBTIQ, and is also more rewarding, open and enriching for everyone—whatever their gender identity, sexuality or biological sex may be.

How did the idea for the cards emerge?

In 2014, St Luke's Innovative Resources (now part of Anglicare Victoria) was approached by Women's Health Loddon Mallee (Bendigo, Australia) to create a set of cards on the subject of gender, which led to the publication later that year of the *Gender Fairness* cards. This resource was specifically designed to address the key determinants of gender-based violence against women.

The *Gender Fairness* cards name fundamentally important issues relating to gender identity including power, advantage, language, privilege, role models, social messages, stereotypes and many other topics that you will see reflected in the *Rainbow Talk* cards. However, we knew that the *Gender Fairness* cards were unlikely to take the conversation into the non-binary space because they focus on the gender-based disadvantages that affect females, mostly in relation to males.

Over the years since then, many conversations with various colleagues and services fuelled the momentum for a resource that would create much wider conversations about gender identity. But what form and style would it have? How directive would it be? Who would it be for and what would be its intended purpose?

It was during an LGBTIQ awareness training held at Anglicare Victoria in 2018 that an idea for a simple set of sentence starters emerged within the content development team at Innovative Resources. The idea was then shaped and the purpose clarified over more than 18 months with input and guidance from many LGBTIQ-inclusive educators and champions. (Please see the acknowledgments on p. 60.)

The initial concept of using simple sentence starters endured throughout the development phase, with many changes along the way in how the sentence starters were phrased and which ones would be included. The most impactful feedback was about how to help create safe, inclusive and respectful conversations for everyone using the cards.

While a facilitator can never guarantee that all comments in a group will be experienced as respectful, there are many things that can be done to make sure respectful behaviours are the foundations of the conversation, and that there are agreements in place about how the group will conduct itself (see p. 31 for more about creating safe spaces for conversations).

You will find evidence of this focus on safety throughout *Rainbow Talk*, including the addition of eight green cards that can be used to create the 'ground rules' for a respectful conversation (see p. 50), a card of reminders for facilitators, and a free online video with 12 tips for creating safe conversations (see www.innovativeresources.org).

Who is this resource for?

The cards can be used in a range of settings to have conversations about identity, diversity and inclusion. Some of these settings include:

- Counselling, mentoring and therapy
- Secondary schools to encourage a culture of inclusion, curiosity and celebration of diversity
- Tertiary settings to explore contemporary and historical attitudes to LGBTIQ issues and experiences
- Training and group work
- Human services such as family work, youth work and mental health

- Supervision and professional development for people wanting to offer LGBTIQ-inclusive services in public or private sectors
- Building LGBTIQ-inclusive organisational culture
- Sports clubs, youth clubs and community groups
- Individual reflection and writing.

Why are conversations about gender, sexuality and biological sex needed?

While everyone has an identity related to their body, gender and sexuality, many people from LGBTIQ communities experience marginalisation, discrimination and exclusion based on their intersex status, sexual orientation or gender identity. Discrimination impacts greatly on mental and physical health and wellbeing, as is evidenced by the statistics below.

According to the National LGBTI Health Alliance in Australia, people from LGBTIQ communities are more likely to attempt suicide in their lifetime compared to the general population, specifically:

- LGBTIQ young people aged 16 to 27 are five times more likely to attempt suicide
- Transgender people aged 18 and over are nearly eleven times more likely
- People with an intersex variation aged 16 and over are nearly six times more likely
- LGBTIQ young people who experience abuse and harassment are even more likely to attempt suicide.

Additionally, LGBTIQ people are more likely to experience and be diagnosed with a mental health disorder, specifically:

- Lesbian, gay and bisexual people are twice as likely to have symptoms that meet the criteria for a mental health disorder in the past 12 months
- LGBTIQ people are twice as likely to be diagnosed and treated for mental health disorders.

www.lgbtihealth.org.au/statistics

The Australian Human Rights Commission reports

- Gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people are 3 times more likely to experience depression.

www.humanrights.gov.au/face-facts

While same-sex couples experience similar levels of family violence as heterosexual couples, they are less likely to access support services for a variety of reasons including concerns about services not being respectful of their identity or relevant to their circumstances. Trans and gender diverse people experience higher rates of intimate partner violence and are even less likely to access services (Valentine, V 2015, *Non-binary people's experience in the UK*, Scottish Trans Alliance).

The Australian Institute of International Affairs reports that as of 2019:

- 72 countries criminalise homosexual conduct
- 13 of them have the death penalty
- In England and Wales, homophobic and transphobic hate crimes have more than doubled over five years, with the most recent police data recording 11,600 crimes. That is more than a staggering 30 attacks a day.

- The rate at which trans people were being killed prompted the development of the 'Trans Murder Monitoring' project in 2009. Since then annual reports have been published documenting the verified numbers of hate-based killings of transgender people. The most recent report recorded 369 murders; an increase of 44 compared to the previous year. The majority of these murders occurred in Brazil (167), Mexico (71), the US (28) and Colombia (21).

www.internationalaffairs.org.au/australianoutlook/lgbtiq-rights-around-the-world-marriage-equality-and-the-death-penalty-hide-wider-concerns/

Given these statistics, it is clear that we still have a long way to go in creating societies where people from LGBTIQ communities can be assured of safety and respect ... let alone where diversity is welcomed and celebrated.

What is social inclusion?

When people are subject to exclusion and discrimination based on their identity, their ability to fully participate in society and to live a fulfilling life is significantly impacted. The Australian Social Inclusion Board defines 'social inclusion' as having the resources, opportunities and capabilities to:

- learn (e.g. participate in education and training)
- work (e.g. participate in employment, unpaid or voluntary work including family and carer responsibilities)
- engage (e.g. connect with people, use local services and participate in local, cultural, civic and recreational activities)
- have a voice (influence decisions that affect them).

Australian Social Inclusion Board 2012, *Social inclusion in Australia: how Australia is faring*, 2nd edition, Commonwealth of Australia, p.12.

The impacts of discrimination on social inclusion can range from psychological distress through to exclusion from participation in society generally:

Discrimination can reduce people's participation in a wide range of economic, social and community activities. It can impact on almost all aspects of a person's life as employment, income, local neighbourhood and community networks, social supports, access to services, health, and participation in community building activities can all be affected ... It also impacts negatively on families and family life and local communities, with serious social and economic costs.

Australian Social Inclusion Board 2012, *Social inclusion in Australia: how Australia is faring*, 2nd edition, Commonwealth of Australia, p.56.

The *Rainbow Talk* cards were developed to encourage everyone to build their understanding and knowledge about the impacts of social inclusion and exclusion in relation to gender, sexuality and biological sex. With this knowledge, we are more likely to make changes within our personal relationships, and advocate for changes in schools, workplaces and within our broader communities.

Identity and intersectionality

Biological sex, gender and sexuality are three aspects of a person's identity. However, there are many other elements that make up who we are. These might include our culture, where we live, our family structure, our socio-economic background, where we were born, our beliefs and values, our ethnicity, our politics, our religion, and so on.

Some of these aspects of our identity can be sources of empowerment and inclusion. Others can be sources of disempowerment and exclusion.

For some people, several aspects of their identity or circumstances may combine to result in further marginalisation. For example, if someone has a disability and is also from a culture that is commonly viewed with disrespect, then they may experience marginalisation as a result of both. Or if a person is from a cultural minority and is LGBTIQ, then they may experience overlapping or intersecting forms of exclusion and prejudice.

Intersectionality is a framework for understanding how people are empowered or disempowered as a result of societal attitudes to different aspects of their identity. If we haven't examined our underlying attitudes and assumptions, then we may unwittingly be enacting 'power-over' or exclusionary practices on LGBTIQ colleagues, students, friends or people in our community.

Rainbow Talk can be used for exploring the idea of intersectionality. Conversations about gender, biological sex and sexuality should not be limited to those areas alone. A person's experience of their gender, biological sex or sexuality does not exist within a vacuum—it is integrally linked to other sociocultural domains. By incorporating an intersectional lens into a *Rainbow Talk* conversation, the dialogue is enriched and deepened.

It's the law: discrimination is illegal in many countries

It is important to remember that discrimination is not only an ethical and moral issue, it is also a matter of law. In Australia, there are layers of legal protection at federal, state and local levels.

From 1 August 2013, an amendment was made to the Sex Discrimination Act to make it unlawful to discriminate against a person on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity and intersex status under federal law. Same-sex couples are also protected from discrimination under the definition of 'marital or relationship status'. These protections apply to everyone, including lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, gender diverse and intersex people.

In addition, every state and territory in Australia has an Equal Opportunity Act that requires the creation and delivery of inclusive services for people from LGBTIQ communities, and that makes it illegal for someone to be discriminated against because they have made a complaint.

Also, many organisations, sectors and clubs already have their own policies and standards relating to LGBTIQ inclusivity, and those seeking to meet the accreditation standards for inclusive practice, such as 'Rainbow Tick' accreditation in Victoria, Australia, are required to develop such a policy. (Please note: Innovative Resources offers '*Introduction to LGBTIQ-inclusive Practice*' online training, which aligns with Rainbow Tick accreditation requirements.)

Any discussion or conversation about someone's sexuality, biological sex or gender will inevitably be done within a human rights paradigm. The Australian Human Rights Commission (ARC) summarises this well:

Equality and freedom from discrimination are fundamental human rights that belong to all people, irrespective of sexual orientation, gender identity or because they are intersex. However, lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, gender diverse and intersex (LGBTI) people in Australia can experience discrimination, harassment and hostility in many areas of everyday life. This can include discrimination and bullying in places of work and study, difficulties accessing appropriate health and aged care services and community attitudes that

can lead to harassment and violence. Trans, gender diverse and intersex people can also face barriers getting legal recognition of their sex in official documents and government records.

www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/lgbti/about-sexual-orientation-gender-identity-and-intersex-status-discrimination

Highly respected international organisations such as the United Nations (UN) also offer powerful statements, research and action to combat discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity and sex characteristics around the world. For example, in 2015, twelve UN entities (including UNICEF, UNESCO and WHO) released a joint statement calling for an end to violence and discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people. In this statement they expressed their commitment to helping member states and other countries do more to protect people's human rights and repeal discriminatory laws. (Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights 2018, *The role of the United Nations in combatting discrimination and violence against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people: a programmatic overview.*)

Rainbow Talk can be used to raise awareness about our obligations under the law. It can also be used to explore human rights and our moral and ethical obligation to treat all people with dignity and respect. Teachers, trainers and other educators can build activities using the cards with these outcomes in mind (please see the section on p.48 for suggested activities).

However, please keep in mind that while many countries have legal protections in place similar to those in Australia, others have laws that criminalise gender and sexual diversity. Facilitators should be aware of the laws governing a country in which they intend to use the cards.

Rainbow Talk is built on the premise that respectful, inclusive conversations can play a role in bringing about positive social change. Such conversations can help us all become more aware of ways in which people are marginalised, labelled or discriminated against based on their biological sex, gender or sexual identity.

Everyone will bring a different level of knowledge and awareness to the cards. For those who have already participated in conversation and reflection about identity, these cards can provide even more opportunities to explore their understandings, listen to the perspectives of others, and reflect on how they would like things to change.

We hope conversations using *Rainbow Talk* will create connections between people and highlight our many similarities as we explore our diverse experiences of identity together. After all, we humans have far more commonalities than differences—and as is written on every card:

Everyone Deserves Respect

THE POWER OF LANGUAGE

Language is important. The way we describe ourselves goes right to the heart of what we believe about who we are. If other people describe us using words or language that match our perception of who we are, we are more likely to feel valued and understood. If people describe us in terms that don't match our perception of ourselves, we are more likely to feel excluded and misrepresented.

Inclusive language builds trust and respect

Language is a fundamental tool in building trust and respect, so it is valuable to spend time increasing our awareness of language that is appropriate and inclusive of everyone, including people from LGBTIQ communities. It's important to consider things like:

- the pronouns a person uses to describe themselves
- their preferred name
- the language they use to describe themselves and their experiences
- the meaning, nuances and impact of certain words.

Language is an important theme throughout the *Rainbow Talk* cards. A number of the cards encourage participants to explore their knowledge of language in relation to biological sex, sexuality and gender identity. For example, cards with the sentence starters 'Some words I don't really know the meaning of are ...' and 'Everyone's body is different, therefore ...' include a list of words that people may or may not know. Participants can use these cards as a gentle prompt to increase their vocabulary or to share their knowledge with others, if they choose. (There are suggestions for activities relating to language on page 54.)

As the cards evolved, we consulted with a focus group who emphasised the importance of not using sentence starters that may 'out' people as this would create an unsafe space for some participants. This meant re-phrasing some of the sentence starters from 'I' statements to more generalised expressions such as 'People may not...' or 'Labelling people can...' In this way people can make observations about a topic without being prompted to reveal personal information.

As a narrative, non-prescriptive tool, *Rainbow Talk* does not tell people what to think. The value comes from listening and being listened to. Respect is the key. By using sentence starters, participants are supported to explore their own values, beliefs and understandings, encouraging them to learn and change in ways that are relevant and useful to them.

In the rest of this section on language, some of the key terms used in the cards are defined. Please note that only a few of the key terms are covered here. You can find more extensive lists of terms and definitions online at any number of reputable websites. See the back of the booklet for a list of a few sites you might like to visit.

What does 'LGBTIQ' mean?

LGBTIQ stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer/questioning. This acronym has changed over time and you will encounter different versions of it in different settings. The main reason for this is that the LGBTIQ community is diverse and has a wide range of views about what acronym is the most respectful, inclusive and accurate. Variations on the acronym are all valid, and different communities and individuals will have different preferences.

International, national and regional variations in language related to the experience of being LGBTIQ are not uncommon. As a result of exclusion, marginalisation and discrimination, it is only recently that the experiences and stories of LGBTIQ people are being heard. The resulting silence has left gaps in our language and regional versions of terminology. It is only relatively recently that there have been attempts to create a shared language. Some people in LGBTIQ communities prefer to keep these regional variations as they believe they more accurately reflect the diversity of experiences. Others are advocating for a shared language.

In *Rainbow Talk*, we have elected to use ‘LGBTIQ’ in line with the current form used by many leading rainbow organisations and by the Victorian Government—the state of Australia where St Luke’s Innovative Resources, the publisher of *Rainbow Talk*, is located.

Some people, however, find any version of the acronym problematic as it groups very different people with very different experiences together. The only similarity is that they are other than ‘cisgender’ (see p.23). For this reason, some people see the acronym as an example of ‘heteronormativity’(see p.24), implying there are cisgender, heterosexual people on the one hand, and everyone else on the other—with the acronym LGBTIQ lumping ‘everyone else’ into a single category. Some feel that this does not respect diversity.

As the National LGBTI Health Alliance notes:

‘LGBTI’ is often viewed as a single category which can be spoken about in broad generalisations, however it is vital to understand that within ‘LGBTI’ there are several distinct, but sometimes overlapping, demographics each with their own distinct histories, experiences and health needs.

www.lgbtihealth.org.au/statistics

Being a person with an intersex variation, for example, is very different to being a gay or transgender person. Additionally, just as people who identify as being 'female' may have had hugely diverse experiences, so too does every person with an intersex variation, every transgender person, every gender diverse, lesbian, gay, trans or bisexual person. No two people are the same.

It is also incorrect to assume that every LGBTIQ person shares similar experiences or values. LGBTIQ people come from diverse backgrounds and hold the full spectrum of roles and beliefs. As such, it is tokenism to assume that one LGBTIQ person can, or should, speak for all LGBTIQ people.

While many people embrace the acronym LGBTIQ with pride and empowerment, it is important to remember that a person's identity is rich and complex, and can never be reduced to, or fully expressed by, any label or letter.

What do the terms 'gender', 'sexuality' and 'biological sex' mean?

Throughout the *Rainbow Talk* cards, you will see the terms 'gender' or 'gender identity', 'sexuality' or 'sexual identity' and 'biological sex' being used. Here are some simple definitions of these terms.

Biological sex: refers to the sex you were assigned at birth. This will usually be male or female but a percentage of the population are born with sex characteristics that are both male and female. This is called an 'intersex variation'. Intersex variations can result from natural variations in physical characteristics, chromosomes or hormones.

Gender: is about identity and how you feel inside. If the sex you were assigned at birth aligns with the gender you feel yourself to be—for example, you were assigned ‘female’ at birth and you feel yourself to be female—then you may be described as ‘cisgender’. If the gender you were assigned at birth doesn’t align with the gender you feel yourself to be—for example, you were assigned ‘female’ at birth but feel yourself to be male or agender—then you might describe yourself as transgender or gender diverse.

Sexuality: refers to who you are attracted to. For example, lesbians are women who are same-sex attracted. People who are bisexual are attracted to people of more than one gender. People who are attracted to people of another gender are heterosexual.

Often people confuse sexuality and gender. Sexuality is related to who you are attracted to and gender identity is how you choose define to yourself in relation to your gender; they are two distinct things.

It is important to remember that our biological sex, sexuality and gender identity all sit on a continuum. Just as everyone is born with a unique genetic makeup, appearance and personality, everyone also has a unique body, and unique experience of sexuality and gender identity.

What is ‘binary language’?

Binary language is an outcome of binary thinking where we simplify things into two distinct opposites or alternatives. We might also call it ‘black and white’ or ‘either/or’ thinking. In binary thinking, there aren’t any ‘grey’ areas. Binary thinking erases diversity. Concepts of sex, sexuality and gender, are better understood as a continuums rather than absolutes.

We can find lots of instances of binary language all around us. Having ‘male’ and ‘female’ only toilets, for example, or when we ask someone who has just had a baby, ‘Is it a boy or a girl?’ The forms we routinely complete as part of daily life often assume we identify as either male or female by asking us to identify as either ‘Mr’ or ‘Mrs/Miss/Ms’. The work of organisations and services to become more inclusive includes redrafting forms to eliminate binary terms contained within them.

One word that is often used to describe the impact of binary thinking and language is ‘heteronormativity’. Heteronormativity is the systemic privileging of social models of binary sex, binary gender and binary sexuality that normalise cisgender, heterosexual people as the ideal.

Some of the privileges that heterosexual, cisgender people can take for granted, LGBTIQ people cannot. If you are part of a dominant culture (i.e. you are cisgender and heterosexual), you may not see this privilege unless you take the time to reflect and have conversations with those who are different from you.

The *Rainbow Talk* cards invite participants to explore binary thinking and heteronormative assumptions. Cards like, ‘People identify with different genders including...’ and, ‘People identify with different sexualities...’ both list a range of different words people might use to describe their gender or sexuality. The cards invite people to consider the idea that all forms of sexuality, gender identity and intersex variation are natural, and should be valued equally, in the broad spectrum of human experience.

How can the cards help build inclusive language?

Language can empower and build connection, just as it can undermine and divide. This is why it is important to reflect on the language we use, and sometimes challenge it. For example, the term ‘coming out’ has long been used to describe the experience of an LGBTIQ person affirming their gender identity, sexuality or biological sex to others. This term is very loaded and contains many assumptions. It assumes that the person has been hiding and therefore can imply a level of shame. It can assume that the audience holds the power to judge or embrace, approve or disapprove. It implies that ‘coming out’ is a one-time event, rather than a longer, gradual process, or something they might choose to do in one context but not in another (for example, with family but not at work).

Another term that could replace ‘coming out’ is ‘inviting in’. ‘Inviting in’ places the power back in the hands of the person—they choose who they invite in and when. It also implies a sense of care with selecting who is invited into a person’s circle of trust. For some people, it is a more hopeful and celebratory term.

Any living language is diverse, rich and always changing as the people who speak it shift and change. When an area is rapidly evolving (such as information technology) the pace of change in language mirrors this rapid development. This is the case also with LGBTIQ-related vocabulary as new terms are coined, and meanings of existing words change.

Many people say they feel uncertain about what language to use. They are afraid of making a mistake and inadvertently offending someone. This can hold people back from being actively inclusive as they fear that they may ‘do it wrong’. But don’t be afraid to be a learner. As Matt Parsons from Rainbow Health Victoria says, ‘I would much rather a person genuinely tried to be inclusive than not try at all because they were afraid of making a mistake.’

Here are some simple ways of using more inclusive language:

- Use non-binary phrases like ‘Welcome everyone’ rather than ‘Welcome ladies and gentlemen’, and non-binary words like ‘firefighters’ rather than ‘firemen’
- Don’t make assumptions about someone’s identity (for example, that they are heterosexual or cisgender) via the language you use
- Take the time to check in with people about the pronouns they use
- Use the names people ask you to
- Don’t ask about or use previous names
- Don’t use transphobic language or jokes
- Use terms that don’t make sweeping assumptions, for example, ‘Some men have facial hair’ and ‘Some women menstruate’ rather than ‘Men have facial hair’ and ‘Women menstruate’.

The *Rainbow Talk* cards can be used as a tool to increase our vocabulary. Many of the cards invite participants to consider the meaning of words and what constitutes respectful and inclusive language in relation to biological sex, sexuality and gender identity (see p.53 for some suggested activities relating to language).

What matters most is that we approach every conversation from a place of respect, we are open to learning and willing to do things differently. It is important to remember that we have far more in common than what sets us apart. Most of us care deeply about our family and friends; most of us want to feel fulfilled and authentic; most of us want to be respected, safe and acknowledged. Holding this awareness of our commonalities upper most in our minds helps us to empathise and relate respectfully. And it is encouraging to know that no matter how knowledgeable we may be, we can all become more skilful as we reflect, listen, practise and discover new information and understandings.

THE STRUCTURE AND CONTENT OF RAINBOW TALK

Rainbow Talk includes:

- 40 cards, each with a sentence starter
- 8 of these cards are called the ‘OPENERS’—use these first to help the group establish guidelines for a respectful conversation
- a ‘Reminders for Facilitators’ card
- this booklet of background information and suggested uses.

About sentence starters

Each card features a simple sentence starter as a prompt for reflection and conversation. Sentence starters are a gentle way of inviting participants to explore, reflect and ponder their own experiences in a non-threatening way. Sentence starters such as these are not prescriptive; they do not tell anyone how to finish the sentence, they do not tell people what to think. They are designed to encourage learning and conversations about diversity with youth and adults, in a way that is inclusive and respectful of everyone’s experience—whatever their gender identity, sexuality or biological sex. Through such conversations we can help build a society that is fairer, and more open and rewarding for everyone.

Some of the sentence starters deal directly with the topics of sexuality, biological sex or gender identity, while others are more open and general. This allows participants to enter the conversation at a place that is comfortable for them. Cards like, ‘Other people’s assumptions and expectations can...’ and, ‘One person who inspires me with their identity is...’ are open enough for any participant to respond to in a meaningful way, regardless of their familiarity or comfort with the conversation.

Topics covered in the cards

Rainbow Talk covers a number of different topic areas including stereotypes, assumptions, language, identity, ally-ship, celebration, marginalisation, discrimination, diversity, social inclusion, social messages, respect, privilege, human rights and the law. The cards also invite us to reflect on how our attitudes and beliefs have been shaped, how they may have changed over time, and what our wishes are for the future are.

You might notice some crossover or similarity between some of the topics or sentence starters. This is quite deliberate. Some cards will resonate for some people, other may not. By having a selection of different cards, people can enter the conversation from different angles and in different ways. For example, ‘I can’t assume anything about a person’s body or identity because...’ and ‘Everyone’s body is different, therefore...’ both relate to the body but they cover slightly different aspects. They can be used to help create a more nuanced and subtle conversation about the body, especially in relation to biological sex.

This overlap is also the reason there is only one suit—the OPENERS—and not a series of different suits. The sentence starters do not always neatly fit into one topic and not another.

The purpose of each card also varies across the set. For example, some cards, like ‘Pronouns matter because...’ are in part, educational. Below the sentence starter on this card, there is a list of different pronouns and a definition of the word ‘pronoun’.

Several other cards include additional words in brackets in the background. These ‘wallpaper words’ support people to explore vocabulary around gender identity, sexuality and biological sex.

Some cards, like ‘My sense of identity shifted when...’ are about personal reflection. Other cards, like ‘Society and culture can reinforce prejudice by...’ are about societal attitudes and the law. Still others invite people to reflect on concepts such as privilege and social advantage.

About the design

On the back of every card, you will also find a fingerprint, shot through with rainbow colours. This design gives a nod to the rainbow flag, the symbol of pride used by LGBTIQ communities. The fingerprint communicates that everyone's identity is unique to them and should be celebrated.

The sentence starters are overlaid on backgrounds crafted from original photographs taken by the designer, Tim Lane. Avoiding stereotyped colours or images, these photographs were shot in diverse and interesting places—a close-up of a plant growing in the botanical gardens in Geelong (Victoria, Australia), an old basketball stadium wall in Launceston (Tasmania,





Australia), a vintage drum set, a crowd scene taken from the stage at a gig at a rodeo (Rokewood, Victoria), scenes from the Himalayas, walls in India and Africa, scenes from Hong Kong, a double rainbow created by light seen through smoke from a tyre fire in suburban Melbourne (the designer is also a firefighter).

The safety tag on each card

Each of the cards includes the tag, 'Everyone deserves respect'. The purpose of this is to create a safety reminder on each card. The tag appears in different places on each of the cards. Hopefully, this unpredictability of placement will help the safety tag to retain its visibility.

CREATING SAFE SPACES FOR CONVERSATIONS

As many facilitators know, simple tools can be surprisingly powerful. This is something to take into careful consideration when using *Rainbow Talk*, since this resource is designed to encourage reflection and conversation about our experiences, attitudes and understanding of gender, sexuality and biological sex. These topics go to the heart of our identity, our relationships and the values, beliefs and stories that shape our communities.

Vulnerabilities and raw emotions can surface for anyone using the cards, including the facilitator. Memories and concerns can unexpectedly arise, sometimes evoking painful and even overwhelming feelings. Conversations about our sense of self and social attitudes can feel confronting, even when facilitated skilfully and respectfully. This is especially so if participants have experienced discrimination, fear, abuse or disapproval relating to their identity. There are likely to be participants of diverse cultural heritage, gender, sexuality or biological sex in any group, and facilitators cannot possibly know the full extent or effect of participants' lived experience—even if they think they know the person or group well.

While the facilitator cannot guarantee that all comments in a group conversation will be respectful, their thoughtful preparation can go a long way towards creating the conditions where respect is more likely. This is why it is crucial that the facilitator considers ways to uphold people's inclusion, dignity and safety before using *Rainbow Talk* with an individual or group. Please consider factors such as:

- ***Your reaction to the cards:*** Try using the cards yourself first. What did you notice? What worked? What was challenging? What memories or feelings arose?

- ***Your knowledge of the cards:*** Get to know each card. Are you familiar with the vocabulary used? Are there any cards you may want to leave out? Do you understand the purpose of each card in relation to gender, biological sex or sexuality? Have you considered a range of possible responses to each sentence starter?
- ***The law of the land:*** Many countries have laws that make discrimination unlawful. However, some countries criminalise gender and sexual diversity. Facilitators should be aware of the laws governing discrimination and diversity in the relevant country before using the cards.
- ***Advance notification and permission:*** Should notification be given, or permission sought, in advance of the conversation? For some people, it may be disrespectful or unsafe to find themselves participating in a conversation about identity and diversity without prior notice. Also, if participants are young people under 18 (such as in a school), is parental consent or notification required?
- ***Your knowledge of participants:*** Are the cards mentally, emotionally, developmentally and culturally appropriate? Are literacy and language levels appropriate? Keep in mind that people experiencing discrimination may be feeling exposed, confused or unsafe. They may be experiencing grief as they navigate the attitudes of friends and family. How might the conversation impact them?
- ***Participants' safety:*** Are there any pre-existing tensions or attitudes that may affect people's safety during or after the conversation? How will people's confidentiality, privacy and dignity be upheld? How will people be supported if the cards elicit strong emotions or judgements? How will you ensure that no-one is 'outed' or exposed during the conversation? Consider making emergency and specialist services numbers available to all participants before-hand, so no one is singled out.

- ***Establishing group rules or guidelines:*** Have you considered co-creating ‘group rules’ with participants before the conversation begins? These provide agreed standards of behaviour that the facilitator or anyone in the group can invoke at any time during the conversation to support respect and safety.
- ***Using the OPENERS first:*** A key way to help create safety is to start with the eight green cards from the OPENERS suit. These cards can be used to help establish the ground rules for the conversation (please see page 50).
- ***Flags of feeling unsafe during the session:*** Another way to support safety is to ask participants how they will indicate they feel unsafe during the session. Facilitators can arrange to have a support person available for participants during breaks or at the end (this could be the facilitator or another appropriate person).
- ***Opting out:*** Have you made it clear that people are welcome to ‘pass’, if they wish to? How will they indicate that? No one should be pressured to ‘share’ or participate if they don’t want to.
- ***Planning the activities:*** After beginning with the OPENERS, what other activities will you introduce? This booklet contains background information drawn from direct practice wisdom, plus suggestions for using the cards. It will help facilitators plan activities and highlight things to keep in mind, especially taking care that the activities do not ‘out’, expose or exclude anyone. (Please see page 48 for lots of suggestions for activities).
- ***Timing and pacing:*** Is it the right time and place for these activities? Is there enough time for the activities to take place without rushing? Will you plan a mix of active and more reflective activities to take into account different learning styles?

- **Being inclusive:** How will you ensure that everyone gets a turn to speak and that quiet voices in the group can be heard?
- **Plan B:** Sometimes an activity with the cards simply doesn't work—and this may not become obvious until you are right in the middle of it. Be prepared to adjust it or abandon it altogether and go to Plan B. A card set simply may not be the best option at the time.
- **Follow up and feedback:** Is any follow up needed after the session? You will not necessarily know if someone in the group has had a strong reaction, either during or after the conversation. For this reason, please consider letting participants know at the beginning that you will check in with everyone after the session. This prevents a person being singled out. Also, consider seeking participants' feedback about what worked when using the cards and what could be done differently. This will help you in designing future sessions.

You are warmly encouraged to view the free video 'Reminders for Creating Safe Spaces for Conversations' on our website. This video contains expanded material for facilitators on creating respectful conversations, especially in groups: www.innovativeresources.org

If you believe a person is unsafe, get support for them immediately. If you are unsure about the best service, ring a local LGBTIQ service, police station or 000 (in Australia). See Emergency and Support Services at the end of this booklet for additional services.

THUMBNAILS AND IDEAS FOR USING EACH CARD

In this section you will find thumbnail images of all 40 cards in the set, with information about the purpose of each card. This information will naturally suggest many activities and questions for facilitators to use with each card.



The 'Reminders for Facilitators' card

Rainbow Talk contains a 'Reminders for facilitators' card. This card lists some suggestions for establishing safe and respectful conversations. In addition, on page 31 of this booklet there is an expanded section called 'Creating Safe Spaces for Conversations'. We encourage facilitators to read this section first. The card can then act as a quick and easy reminder for the facilitator of some of these points.

Openers

The eight OPENERS cards

The eight green cards from *Rainbow Talk*, or 'OPENERS' as they are called, are designed to be used first. They can be used to help the group establish its respectful ground rules for the conversation to follow (see page 50).



I can welcome different ideas by...

Sometimes difference or the unfamiliar may frighten us. We can easily jump to conclusions or judgements out of fear or habit. This card encourages us to stay open when we encounter ideas that we find unfamiliar or different. The card can also invite us to notice the signs that we may be shutting down and encourages us to apply skills for staying open. These may include reminding ourselves to breathe, relax, listen, appreciate, learn, refrain from interrupting, judging or jumping to conclusions.



I feel safe to talk about personal things when...

This card invites us to reflect on what helps us feel free to speak openly. By reflecting on our personal experiences of feeling safe we can be aware of what we can do to help others feel safe in the conversation we are about to have. This card heightens our awareness that people may be feeling vulnerable and allows the group to identify what they can do to put others at ease.



I would like to know more about...

This card honours curiosity. It allows people to put on the table what they would really like to know, without someone being personally confronted during the conversation. It invites us to consider how we can get answers in a respectful way, and helps dissolve embarrassment about what we may not know.



It's only ok to ask people about their body or identity if...

This card is about consent. Bodies are private. We don't have a right to satisfy our curiosity by asking someone about their body unless they have given permission. Sometimes people may ask an LGBTIQ person something personal that they would not ask a cisgender person. We can ask ourselves: 'Would I be comfortable asking anyone this question?' This card allows for reflection on what constitutes consent. It is important to remember that even if consent is given, it can be withdrawn at any time.



Some things everyone has in common are...

We are all human. We have many more commonalities than we have differences. It is powerful and protective to draw people's attention to what we have in common. Remembering similarities fosters empathy, understanding, compassion and connection. It helps dissolve 'othering' and judgement.



We can listen to less dominant voices by...

In any group there will be people who are more vocal and confident sharing their insights and experiences, and people who are more comfortable listening. Some people in the group are likely to have experienced discrimination and marginalisation. They may have been repeatedly silenced. By finishing this sentence starter, the group can explore ways to ensure everyone feels comfortable participating and sharing their ideas, if they wish to do so. The right to pass should always be respected.



We can show respect for each other by...

Feeling respected is a fundamental component of feeling safe. This card alone is sufficient to identify ground rules for a respectful conversation as it covers confidentiality, listening, not labelling or criticising, having equal opportunities to participate, and opting out, if desired. This card encourages the group to explicitly name how they will conduct the conversation. Once agreement is reached, everyone in the group is empowered to invoke these guidelines if they feel they are not being upheld at any time during the conversation.



Words are powerful, therefore...

This card reminds people to consider the impact of their words on others. Facilitators can invite people to reflect silently on a time when someone's words left them feeling misunderstood or excluded. Then they can reflect on a time when someone's words encouraged and included them. This reflection can help the group to identify how they can use words in an inclusive and respectful way in the conversation, and the kinds of words, such as labels and stereotypes, they will refrain from using.

The thirty-two remaining cards:



People identify with different genders including...

This card challenges binary thinking about gender—the belief that people are either male or female and no other genders exist. It includes a number of different words people might use to describe their gender. Facilitators can ask people to identify a word they don't know the meaning of or haven't heard before. What could they do to find out the meaning? Could they practise using the word in a sentence?



People identify with different sexualities including...

Like the card above, this card challenges binary thinking about sexuality—the belief that people are either heterosexual or homosexual. It can be paired with the card above to explore binary thinking more broadly. How do you know which terms are ok to use and which ones could be offensive? What are some respectful ways to find out if you don't know?



People may not identify with the gender they were assigned at birth because...

This card invites a conversation about the difference between biological sex and gender identity. When a baby is born, what assumptions do we make about their gender? How do we, as a society, impose those assumptions (pink and blue clothes, men and women's toilets)? What impact could that have on someone who doesn't identify with the gender they were assigned at birth? What might they experience when affirming their true identity?



I can't assume anything about a person's body or identity because...

We often assume that people are male or female, cisgender and heterosexual. We make assumptions about sex characteristics without taking into account that each person has a unique body. We can often make assumptions about what we think is 'normal' and 'natural'. Think of some ways we make assumptions. What could we do differently? What are some possible consequences of making these kinds of assumptions?



Pronouns matter because...

The words we use to define ourselves are significant. If someone describes us using words that don't match our perception of ourselves, we are likely to feel misrepresented or misunderstood. Often, we make assumptions about the pronouns people use—she/he, him/her, hers/his. This is a type of binary thinking. Instead of assuming, it is more respectful and inclusive to ask people what pronouns they use. This card invites us to learn about other pronouns that people may wish to use.



Some words I don't really know the meaning of are...

This card contains several words related to gender, sexuality and biological sex. It creates a safe space for people to talk about their knowledge gaps. Make sure you let participants know that it's ok not to know the meaning of some words—this is an opportunity to learn. Encourage participants to think about how they can be proactive about extending their vocabulary and their skills in using inclusive language.



Some differences between gender, sexuality and biological sex are...

People can be confused about the meaning of these words. This card invites people to explore what these terms mean in a safe way. As a facilitator, it is useful to have an understanding of the definitions before the conversation, but also to allow yourself to be a learner along with everyone else. Most importantly of all, have suggestions for the group about how you can all gain more clarity about the meaning of these words.



Early messages I received about gender, biological sex and sexuality include...

Our attitudes and beliefs are often formed early in life. Sometimes, we have never taken the time to think about where our attitudes and beliefs come from. What did your parents or caregivers believe? What did you learn at school? How are your attitudes and beliefs different or the same as the ones you were taught as a child?



My beliefs about gender, biological sex or sexuality were strongly influenced by...

Did your religion, culture or spiritual system influence your beliefs? Or the community you grew up in? Did particular role models shape your beliefs about gender, biological sex or sexuality? What role did the media play in shaping your beliefs? Did a pivotal experience strongly influence your beliefs?



One way my attitude to gender, biological sex or sexuality has changed is...

It is not unusual for people to change their attitudes as they grow older. What or who has influenced these changes? Are there attitudes you've held onto that you would like to change? This card also enables people to consider the ways their attitudes may not have changed over time.



Everyone's body is different, therefore...

No two bodies are the same and physical variations are a normal part of being human. Some people are tall. Some are hairy. Some have intersex variations. How do we make sure that everyone feels respected and valued regardless of their physical characteristics? What are some of the ways we exclude people based on physical characteristics?



A person's identity is made up of many things including...

Our identity can be influenced by many things including our race, age, gender, socio-economic background, geographical location, ethnicity, sexuality, family, religion, health, plus many more. What does this mean in relation to sexuality, gender and biological sex? Does it mean that everyone's identity is complex, nuanced and unique? What does this mean in relation to stereotypes about gender and sexuality?



One person who inspires me with how they express their identity is...

Often the people who inspire us are courageous, bold, wise, and unapologetic. They are also often unique in the way they express themselves and their values. Are there any LGBTIQ people, past or present, who inspire you with the way they express their identity? What is it about them that you find inspiring?



My sense of identity shifted when...

This sentence starter asks participants to consider factors that help create change. It also encourages us to think about the shifts we can experience at different points in our life, especially at times of transition such as leaving home or beginning or ending a relationship or job. Who or what helped you with this shift? Was it slow or fast? What else would have been helpful? Does our identity really change? If so, how?



Some ways people can be advantaged by their identity include...

This sentence starter encourages participants to think about privilege. This can either be personal or societal privilege. How has my identity helped me? How do other people's identity's privilege them? Are there particular aspects of my identity that have given me advantages in certain circumstances? Is that fair? What might this mean for other people?



Some ways people can be disadvantaged by their identity include...

This card can easily be paired with the previous card. Notice the sand backgrounds on both cards. How does society exclude or marginalise certain groups of people? What are some of the ways we covertly disadvantage people with certain identities? What are some of the ways we could challenge these types of disadvantage?



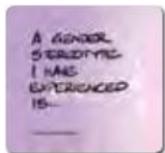
Society and culture can reinforce prejudice by...

What images do we see in the media about LGBTIQ people? Have these images changed over time? What messages have you been given about your sexuality, gender identity or biological sex from your culture? Do you agree or disagree with these messages? How might some of these messages embed prejudice? How could we challenge these messages?



Other people's assumptions & expectations can...

People often feel pressured to conform to other's people's ideas about who they should be and how they should behave. Family, friends, social groups can all have expectations about who we are. These can be empowering but they can also be limiting and oppressive. Think of some of the expectations people have of you. What expectations do you have of others? How are these empowering or disempowering?



A gender stereotype I have experienced is...

Gender stereotypes are everywhere. Think of a time people assumed you could, or couldn't, do something based on your gender. How did you feel? How did you respond? Would you respond differently now? How are gender stereotypes reinforced in society, for example, with colours, toys, career options, financial remuneration, binary thinking? How are gender stereotypes related to family violence?



Some stereotypes about sexuality include...

People often confuse sexuality and gender. Sexuality is related to who you are attracted to and gender identity is how you define your gender; they are two distinct things. Stereotypes and myths about sexuality abound. For example, 'men and women are only attracted to each other' and 'our expression of sexuality never changes' and 'everyone experiences sexual attraction'. How can stereotypes about sexuality affect people's health or sense of safety?



Some stereotypes about biological sex include...

This card invites people to examine some of the attitudes and myths about our bodies. Sex characteristics are not simply male or female. They are many and varied—in fact, there are over 30 intersex variations. How can inaccurate assumptions about a person's sex at birth (and at other times) affect that person? What are some common knowledge gaps about intersex variation? Why is this topic sometimes so uncomfortable for people?



Labelling people can...

Words are powerful. They can open up a conversation or shut it down. They can wound or encourage someone. How do labels sometimes reduce people? Do labels ever help? What labels are you aware of in relation to diversity? Notice the shadow behind the sentence starter on this card—how might this relate to labels? What can you do if you notice yourself or others labelling someone?



It is unlawful to...

In Australia, as in many other countries, there are laws protecting everyone's rights, regardless of biological sex, sexuality or gender. Discrimination is illegal. It's the law; it's not a choice. Are you aware of relevant legislation in your country? How can you help ensure that organisations, businesses, schools and communities meet their legal responsibilities regarding equality and human rights?



We can challenge disadvantage and discrimination by...

Who inspires you with how they challenge (or have challenged) unfairness? What do they do and what strengths do they draw on? Have you ever challenged unfairness? How can people work together to help create equality and social inclusion? What ways could you do this in your organisation, community or school?



Some things people might experience when disclosing their gender, biological sex or sexuality include...

We can never assume to know what the experience of 'affirming identity' is like for anyone else, but we can make the effort to consider their feelings. Many people from LGBTIQ communities say affirming identity is not a one-off experience—it is a constant assessment of safety. This is one important reason why people may choose to affirm their identity in one setting (for example, with friends), but may choose not to in another (for example, at work). It is their choice and no one else has the right to disclose someone's identity without the person's permission. Some people prefer the term 'inviting in' to 'coming out'. Why do you think that may be?



I can support someone who is changing how they express their identity by...

How can I be an ally to someone who is changing how they express their identity? What is supportive and what is not? Will this vary from person to person? How might the person indicate that they would like my support? Should I wait for an invitation? Ally-ship is not only about cisgender people supporting people LGBTIQ communities. It is also about support across and within those communities.



I can be an ally to people of diverse identity by...

As with the card above, this card opens up conversations about how to be an ally to people with diverse identities relating to gender, sexuality or biological sex. What might ally-ship look like between friends, siblings or work colleagues? What can ally-ship look like at a community or government level? What does ally-ship look like in public spaces, reception areas, in human services, and in documents such as forms?



Thinking about attitudes to gender, biological sex or sexuality, I wish...

In keeping with strengths-based, solution-focussed practice, this card encourages us to think about our hopes for the future. Where are we heading? What is it that we want to see? What are we working towards? What are the milestones along the way? How will we know when we have reached the destination? This focus does not deny or minimise the inequities that are present, but it helps us gather momentum and resilience to create the kind of society we want.



When it comes to diversity, I hope the next generation...

As above, this card invites conversation about our hopes for the future. It reminds us that change happens, and it asks us to think about the conditions that help create change from one generation to the next. What changes do you see in attitudes to diversity since your parents' or grandparents' generation? How might laws have changed? What changes have taken place within international organisations such as the United Nations regarding statements about diversity within one generation? What changes do you hope the generation following yours will help bring about?



Schools and workplaces can show respect for diversity by...

While symbols of inclusion such as the rainbow flag are welcome and even ground-breaking, what else can work places, schools and communities do? How can we show respect for diversity beyond tokenism? What are some of the most fun and effective ways you have noticed diversity being embraced or celebrated? What could respect for diversity look like throughout the life cycle, for example, at birth and in aged care?



Diversity enriches our community by...

Think of a time when you experienced views that were different from your own. Can you remember when you first encountered a different food, language or cultural belief? How did you react? How do your reactions change as something new becomes familiar? Why do people sometimes react to difference with fear? Who benefits from diversity? How are you enriched by diversity? How does diversity enrich everyone?



We can celebrate diversity by...

Why is celebration important? What effect does celebration have? What is made visible through celebration? What does diversity mean to you? What happens when we don't take time to celebrate achievements, successes, qualities, values, strengths? Name some ways your work place, school, organisation, community or family celebrates diversity. Are there any other ways you would like to see diversity celebrated?

MORE IDEAS FOR USING THE CARDS

The previous section outlined the purpose of every card and included several questions that facilitators can ask to build a conversation around that card. This section of the booklet contains lots more ideas for using the cards. These ideas are not 'instructions'; they are possible activities you may wish to consider. We hope they will spark your own creative ideas for using the cards.

Please adapt these ideas to your style as a practitioner or facilitator, and more importantly, to the needs of the person or people who will be using the cards. Some of the activities presented in this section may not be appropriate for particular people, circumstances or settings. Always be guided by your own discernment and practice experience, and that of respected and experienced colleagues. With a small tweak from you (or a complete re-vamp) an activity may work so much better than implementing it exactly as presented in this booklet. Draw on your own learning about using cards and resources as you try out different activities.

In addition, it is part of 'reflective practice' and the ongoing professional and personal development of any practitioner to respectfully consider feedback given by participants during or after the activities. It is important to listen to how the activity was for them.

And finally, please make sure you have read the section on p.31 about creating safe spaces for having conversations before you use the cards with others. You are also warmly encouraged to view the free video called 'Reminders for Creating Safe Spaces for Conversations' on our website (www.innovativeresources.org). This video contains expanded material on things to consider when facilitating conversations, particularly in groups, and especially when the topic is potentially challenging.

When should I introduce the cards?

A resource introduced at the right time can be catalytic. It can support people to describe their situation very quickly. It can open up fresh insights and ways forward in a relatively short space of time.

It is always important to listen to the person as they share their story or give their point of view. If introducing a card set might interrupt that flow, then it is best not to introduce it at that point. Always be guided by the person sitting in front of you and your own sense of what is happening for them in the moment.

The more you experiment with using the cards, perhaps in simple, small ways to begin with, the more confident you will become about how various activities are likely to work, and the more tuned in you will become about the right time and place to introduce a tool.

As mentioned earlier, it is respectful to seek the person's or group's permission before introducing this resource. It is important to make it genuinely possible for them to decline from the start, or to stop using the cards at any point.

It is often advisable to establish a connection and get to know the person's situation a little first before introducing a card set in a one-on-one situation. Moments when the conversation seems to be stuck or stalled can be great opportunities to introduce a card set.

If you think you would like to have a conversation with someone using the cards, you might prepare a couple of potential activities you could introduce, if the right opportunity arises. Trust your own judgement about whether to try them or not.

If you do decide to introduce the cards into the conversation, let participants know that it is ok not to have a response to a particular card. Simply invite the person to choose another card, if they wish.

Supporting safety by beginning with the OPENERS

The eight OPENERS cards are designed to encourage the group to identify guidelines for being respectful and inclusive during the conversation such as:

- listening well
- maintaining privacy
- celebrating difference
- being open to learning
- taking care with our words
- reflecting on what helps us feel safe
- building empathy by remembering what we have in common.

Each of the OPENERS cards features a green background texture. In addition, the suit name is written on the top right-hand corner. You can't miss them!

When the whole group participates in developing guidelines together, and actively agrees to uphold them, there is collective commitment to a set of parameters that will help keep the conversation on course.

You could record these group guidelines on a whiteboard, sheet of paper, sticky notes or even on a phone. It is also valuable to talk about how the group will agree to implement the guidelines if someone in the group feels that the conversation has become unsafe or gone astray. How will someone indicate this and what will the group then agree to do?

There are several ways you can initiate a conversation about the group's guidelines using the OPENERS cards:

- Lay the 8 OPENERS face down in the centre of the group. Invite participants to randomly select a card and complete the sentence.
- Lay the cards down face up and invite people to look them over. Invite people to choose a card they feel is crucial for the group's guidelines. Why?
- Ask participants to select one of the cards and share a story about an experience they've had related to the topic on the card. How does it relate to group safety?
- Always ask the question: What does this mean for our group guidelines today? By asking this question, you will ensure that the conversation remains focussed on creating a shared set of ground rules.

Now that you have begun with the OPENERS, there is an endless variety of activities you can build around the rest of the cards. All of these will fall into two broad methods: 'Deliberate Selection' or 'Random Choice'.

Deliberate selection

This method involves spreading the cards out on a table or other flat surface and inviting an individual or group to look them over and make a selection based on a question or other prompt. Some activities may involve picking more than one card—or even a series of cards.

The cards can also be displayed on a wall, window or noticeboard. Spreading the cards out on the floor is another possibility. People can get a bird's eye view of the cards, walk around them or follow a line or meandering path of cards. If you are inviting people to pick up a card from the floor, take care that everyone involved can bend down comfortably.

Activities that involve movement such as walking or shuffling cards can open up different pathways to learning, particularly for those who favour a kinesthetic learning style.

Random choice

Activities using random choice bring a quality of serendipity into the room. It is amazing how meaningful and poignant random selections can be for people. Time and again people see synchronicity and significance in ‘their’ cards. Random choice activities can also open up unexpected learning and fresh insight because people interact with cards they may not have chosen deliberately.

Here are some random choice ideas:

- Shuffle and deal one or more cards to each participant. Ask for a volunteer to shuffle and deal. Or participants can take turns to shuffle and deal.
- It is useful to give people the option to put a card back into the deck and choose another randomly, if they wish. This helps to keep people safe because it allows the person to reject a card they may not want to speak about at this time.
- Place all the cards in a bag or container and invite participants to pick a card from the ‘lucky dip’.
- Place a card randomly on each person’s seat before they enter the room.
- Form pairs. Each participant randomly selects a card for the other.
- Spread the cards out face down—that is, sentence starter down. People then randomly pick a card.

Once people have a card, the prompt for the discussion is simply to complete the sentence starter.

Using a spread of all the cards

You may wish to spread all the cards out on a table and invite participants to look them over. Then you can build the conversation with activities and questions such as the following:

- Pick a card that catches your attention or stands out for any reason.
- What drew your attention to this card?
- What does this card mean to you?
- Pick a card that represents something you have wondered about before.
- Pick a card that represents something you have never thought about before.
- Pick a card that has a word on it you may be unfamiliar with.
- Pick a card with a sentence starter you find easy to complete.
- Pick a card with a sentence starter you find challenging to complete.
- Pick a card you would have answered differently a few years ago. What brought about this change in your view?
- Pick a card with a topic you would like people to discuss more widely. Why?
- Pick a card with a topic you would like to know more about.
- Pick a card you think many people would struggle to answer.

Using the cards to develop inclusive vocabulary

There are 6 cards in *Rainbow Talk* that include ‘wallpaper words’ (that is, secondary words in brackets on the cards). This is a list of words that people may or may not be familiar with. Invite participants to pick out these 6 cards. Then you could ask participants a series of questions based on these words, such as:

- Are there any words you have never heard before?
- Are there any you have heard but are not clear about the meaning of?
- Which words would you like to know more about?

- If you randomly picked one of these cards, are there other words you could imagine being on this card?
- Which words do you think have changed in meaning?
- Why do you think words change in meaning?
- Are there any words you would avoid using? Why?
- If there is a word you have never used, can you experiment with writing or saying a sentence with this word in it?
- Do some of these words have different connotations for different people? For example, the word 'queer' may be embraced by some young people but have negative connotations for older people from LGBTIQ communities.

A classroom or group activity to build language skills

Once again, pick out the 6 cards with lists of 'wallpaper words'. Teachers or facilitators can then ask students or participants to complete a variety of activities:

- Pick a word and research the origins of it.
- Find various dictionary definitions of this word.
- Are there any synonyms for this word?
- Go to various glossaries from LGBTIQ organisations and discuss these definitions.
- Do some organisations define words or terms differently? Why do you think this is?
- Why is language relating to gender, sexuality and biological sex so fluid?
- How does language undergo change?
- Where else in our society does language rapidly change (for example, in the IT/digital space where new understandings and knowledge are emerging all the time)?

Putting cards into pairs or sets

There are a number of cards in *Rainbow Talk* that could be paired or grouped together. Some of these are obvious, like ‘Some ways people can be advantaged by their identity include...’ and ‘Some ways people can be disadvantaged by their identity include’. Some are less obvious. Pairing cards together can encourage people to expand their thinking about a topic. Some questions you might ask include the following:

- Choose two cards that you think have opposite meanings.
- Choose two cards you believe complement each other. How are they the same? How are they different? How does it deepen the conversation to think about them together?
- Select a range of cards you believe cover the same topic, for example, stereotypes.
- Select all the cards that relate to biological sex.
- Select all the cards that relate to gender.
- Select all the cards that relate to sexuality.
- Select all the cards that include the word ‘I’ in the sentence starter.
- Select all the cards that include the word ‘we’ in the sentence.

Building a culture of inclusivity in the workplace

Many organisations, educational institutions and businesses are looking for ways to create positive and inclusive workplaces for LGBTIQ colleagues, students and clients. Research shows that people from LGBTIQ communities often don’t access services as they believe that they won’t be safe or respected. For this to change, the culture within organisations needs to shift.

In a number of countries, demonstrating that your workplace is inclusive of LGBTIQ people is becoming a requirement of funding. Because the *Rainbow Talk* cards encourage conversations about reflective practice and inclusivity, they are an ideal tool for supporting changes to workplace culture.

This culture shift is something that should be experienced both by people accessing our services (clients, students, other services) and within our organisation (by staff, volunteers and other personnel). It enables 'parallel practice'—the concept that how we practise with those outside our organisation ought to be mirrored in organisational practises and processes. We could argue that unless parallel practice exists, a genuinely inclusive culture cannot.

The following suggestions outline ways that parallel practice can be supported using the cards in supervision, in team or staff meetings, or as a self-care activity.

In supervision

Staff supervision provides organisations with the opportunity to develop and embed respectful practice. Within the context of LGBTIQ-inclusive practice, supervision is a key way for an organisation, institution or business to gauge current levels of understanding about what constitutes a respectful conversation about identity.

Rainbow Talk can be a tool to support these conversations. For example, the supervisor and supervisee can select cards randomly or deliberately from the set and respond to the sentence starters. They can deepen the conversation by considering questions such as the following:

- What does the way you finished the sentence starters reveal about your identity, beliefs and attitudes?
- How might this influence your interaction with clients?
- What might a client say about how you enact your identity?
- Do any privileges or advantages come with your identity?
- Do any disadvantages or challenges come with your identity?
- What is one thing you could change within your practice to increase inclusivity for LGBTIQ clients or students?
- What's one thing you think a client might suggest you change in your practice?

- In what ways are your services respectful and inclusive of everyone's identity?
- How might they be exclusive or disrespectful of some people?
- How might you conduct an audit of your services with a lens of diversity and inclusivity?
- Where might you begin (for example, with intake forms and reception areas)?
- How might you consult with a diverse range of people to co-create inclusive services?
- Pick cards that represent your knowledge gaps when it comes to LGBTIQ communities.
- Supervisor and supervisee could each select 2 or more cards per session and discuss how they could put a greater awareness of these topics into practice with clients.

In team or staff meetings

A staff or team in an organisation, government department, business or school can use the cards to jointly consider questions such as: 'If we were doing inclusion really well, what would we notice?' and, 'If LGBTIQ colleagues, students or clients felt respected and celebrated in our workplace or school, what would be happening?' Here are some other activities and questions that could be explored:

- Invite staff to choose a card that reflects what they think the team does well in terms of inclusion. What would they like to do more of?
- Which card represents something they hadn't thought about?
- Choose a 'card of the week' to display in the office or a part of the school frequented by both staff and students, as a reminder and prompt for people to think about diversity and inclusion.
- Use the OPENERS cards to start a conversation about how to create safety in the classroom or service for LGBTIQ young people or adults.
- Think of an event coming up. Choose cards that prompt the team to place an LGBTIQ-inclusive lens across the event. Are invitations or posters inclusive? Are

registration forms inclusive and appropriate for everyone? Do name tags include space for the pronouns people use? Do the activities planned celebrate diversity? Is the language inclusive?

- Use the cards in professional development days for reflection and discussion.
- Select cards to guide the development or review of diversity policies and procedures.

Your team could choose cards they will focus on for a period of time—such as a week or a month—to review intake processes and consider how welcoming the service, organisation or school is to LGBTIQ people. You may wish to consider:

- Are there welcoming posters or symbols such as the rainbow flag on the walls?
- Are people greeted by staff who respect the pronouns and names people use?
- How do staff answer the phone?
- Are forms and other communication tools inclusive?
- Do they ask for information in a way that disadvantages, discriminates, assumes binary thinking or reinforces stereotypes?
- Is the information being requested really necessary?
- What are more inclusive ways of asking for necessary information?

Finally, whether you are using the cards in counselling, human services, clubs or schools, sometimes it is not necessary to plan any formal activities at all. Just leaving the cards on a table in the staff kitchen or in a reception area, or pinned up on a noticeboard can be enough to generate spontaneous reflection or conversation. (Try displaying one or more cards per day.) In this way, these colourful cards can play a role in gently communicating and promoting a culture of inclusion and learning.

ABOUT THE CREATORS

The development team

Sue King-Smith is the elearning manager at Innovative Resources with a background in managing social work services, writing, teaching, community development and course creation (including co-creating the online course, 'Introduction to LGBTIQ-Inclusive Practice' with Rainbow Health Victoria).

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Tim Lane has been one of our regular designers since late last century. His work includes *Reflexions*, *Choosing Strengths*, *Talking Up Our Strengths*, *Bereaved Mother's Heart* and *POSTcards*. Tim balances this work with sports product design and his role as a professional firefighter.

The publisher: www.innovativeresources.org

St Luke's Innovative Resources is part of Anglicare Victoria, a community services organisation providing child, youth and family services. We publish card sets, stickers, books, and digital and tactile materials to enrich conversations about feelings, strengths, relationships, values and goals. Our resources are for all people regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, religion, culture, ability or age. They are used by counsellors, educators, social workers, mentors, managers and parents. We also offer 'strengths approach' training and 'tools' workshops, both online and in-person.

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Everyone Deserves Respect

EMERGENCY & SUPPORT SERVICES (IN AUSTRALIA)

Organisation	Service Provided	Contact Details
QLIFE	Provides anonymous, LGBTIQ peer support and referral for people in Australia wanting to talk about a range of issues including sexuality, identity, gender, bodies, feelings or relationships.	www.qlife.org.au Phone: 1800 184 527 (3 pm – 12 am AEST). Available every day. Online chat (3 pm – 12 am AEST). Available every day.
HEADSPACE	Provides free online and telephone support and counselling to young people aged 12–25, and their families and friends.	www.headspace.org.au Visit a headspace Centre throughout Australia. Phone: 1800 650 890 (9am – 1am AEST) Available every day. Chat online or email (9am – 1am AEST). Available every day.
LIFELINE	Provides all Australians experiencing a personal crisis with access to online, phone and face-to-face crisis support and suicide prevention services.	www.lifeline.org.au Phone: 13 11 14 Available 24/7
KIDS HELPLINE	Provides free, private and confidential phone and online counselling service for young people aged 5 to 25.	www.kidshelpline.com.au Phone: 1800 55 1800 Available 24/7
BEYOND BLUE	Works to address issues associated with depression, anxiety disorders and related mental disorders, and to reduce associated stigma.	www.beyondblue.org.au Phone: 1300 22 4636 Available 24/7. Chat online (3pm to midnight). Available every day. Email response within 24 hours. Online forums/chat groups available.



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