

What to Do After Misgendering Occurs

Misgendering is when someone is referred to with incorrectly-gendered language, a common transgression against transgender, nonbinary, and gender diverse individuals. It is best to make a correction in the moment to ensure that the incorrect pronouns and other gendered language for the person in question do not begin to spread. (It can take months or years to clean up one pronoun spill.)

Keys to success:

1. **Outing is harmful.** Check in privately to find out whether your gender diverse friends, coworkers, family members, and community members want you to make corrections if you hear someone misgender them.
2. **Make the correction immediately** if you know someone wants corrections to be made, before the person who is misgendered has to say something. Some people will be too embarrassed, uncomfortable, or exhausted to stand up for themselves in this way.
3. **Don't make a big deal out of it.** Keep corrections short and don't take a lot of time with elaborate apologies. Just say "sorry" or "thanks" and move on.
4. **Repeat the sentence with the correction before continuing with the conversation.** This politely demonstrates the intention to do better next time, plus gives you practice speaking correctly.

Best Correction Methods with Examples:

Self-Correction Method (Best Method of All)

Person 1: "I'm visiting Min tomorrow. She's going - I mean, he's going to want to discuss those topics. So that means that I..."

Mid-Sentence Interjection Method

Person 1: "I'm visiting Min tomorrow. She's going to want -"

Person 2, interjecting mid-sentence: "He."

Person 1: "Oh right, thanks! He's going to want to discuss those topics. So..."

Mid-Pause Interruption Method

Person 1: "I'm visiting Min tomorrow. She's going to want to discuss those topics. -"

Person 2, interrupting during Person 1's pause: "Min uses he/him."

Person 1: "Oh right, thanks! He's going to want to discuss those topics tomorrow, so that means..."