



## Working Towards Allyship and Solidarity with Trans People

To support trans people, it is important that we work in allyship and solidarity, that we seek to address and dismantle the structural and systemic factors that perpetuate poverty, homelessness, poor mental health and the high prevalence of suicidality in trans communities.

While learning and changing our practices on an individual level is an important and integral step, we can also work with trans communities towards a better tomorrow. Working in allyship and solidarity isn't about a title - we don't get to just wake up one day and call ourselves an ally - it's a process and a commitment. Through allyship - the verb, the action, rather than the noun, we push ourselves to support trans people and tackle transphobia on an ongoing basis.

Working in allyship and solidarity means using the power and privilege afforded to us to support the rights, inclusion, safety, health and liberation of trans people. Allyship is about supporting individual trans people in our lives, but also supporting trans communities in our region, and advocating for trans people to address transphobia and improve well-being on local, provincial, national and international levels.

### *Allyship has to be Grounded in Trans Communities*

We don't get to call ourselves allies because we attended one workshop. That's a starting point, but allyship has to be an ongoing commitment. First and foremost, when working in allyship, we should ground our efforts in the needs and expertise of trans communities. It's not about us saying "I have all the solutions, trans people should listen to me". Rather, it's asking ourselves "how can I support trans activism in my area? How can I uplift advocacy coming from local trans people and organizations?"

By grounding our allyship in a commitment to trans leadership, we ensure that our work is aligned with the organizing efforts of local trans people, and addressing issues that matter most to them.

## *Allyship has to Extend to our Workplaces and Families*

We can't only work in allyship when it's easy or convenient. Working in allyship obligates us to advance trans inclusion in our own workplaces, communities and families. By advocating for our workplaces to improve their trans inclusion policies or bring in training, we are helping ensure trans communities have more positive experiences in those spaces. By working to educate our families and non-trans peers, we are taking the burden off of trans people to have to do that work themselves, to have to educate others, which is often an exhausting practice routinely demanded of trans people

## *Allyship Should be Grounded in Material Realities and Dismantling Systemic Barriers*

Trans and gender diverse communities face persistent structural barriers perpetuated by different levels of government, alongside social, cultural, economic and political institutions. Working in allyship with trans communities should extend to working alongside trans and 2SLGBTQ+ organizations to advance public policy solutions and legislative change for trans communities. Uplifting calls to action and justice, such as calls to end conversion therapy, improve access to transition-related healthcare, for more funding for 2SLGBTQ+ and trans community organizations, and other key issues, you can help trans communities dismantle structural transphobia.

## *Allyship Isn't About the Spotlight*

Trans and gender diverse people are always the best experts in their own identities, experiences and needs. Our communities are also the best experts on viable solutions to improve our lives and dismantle transphobia. When working in allyship and solidarity, it is important to be mindful of who we center. Allyship isn't about rewards for ourselves - though we can recognize that dismantling transphobia ultimately benefits us all.

Allyship is about using our power and privilege to support other communities impacted by oppression. Working in allyship means centering trans people, rather than taking center stage ourselves. We should always strive to uplift the voices of trans people over and above our own.