



# GENDER AFFIRMING BIRTH WORK 101

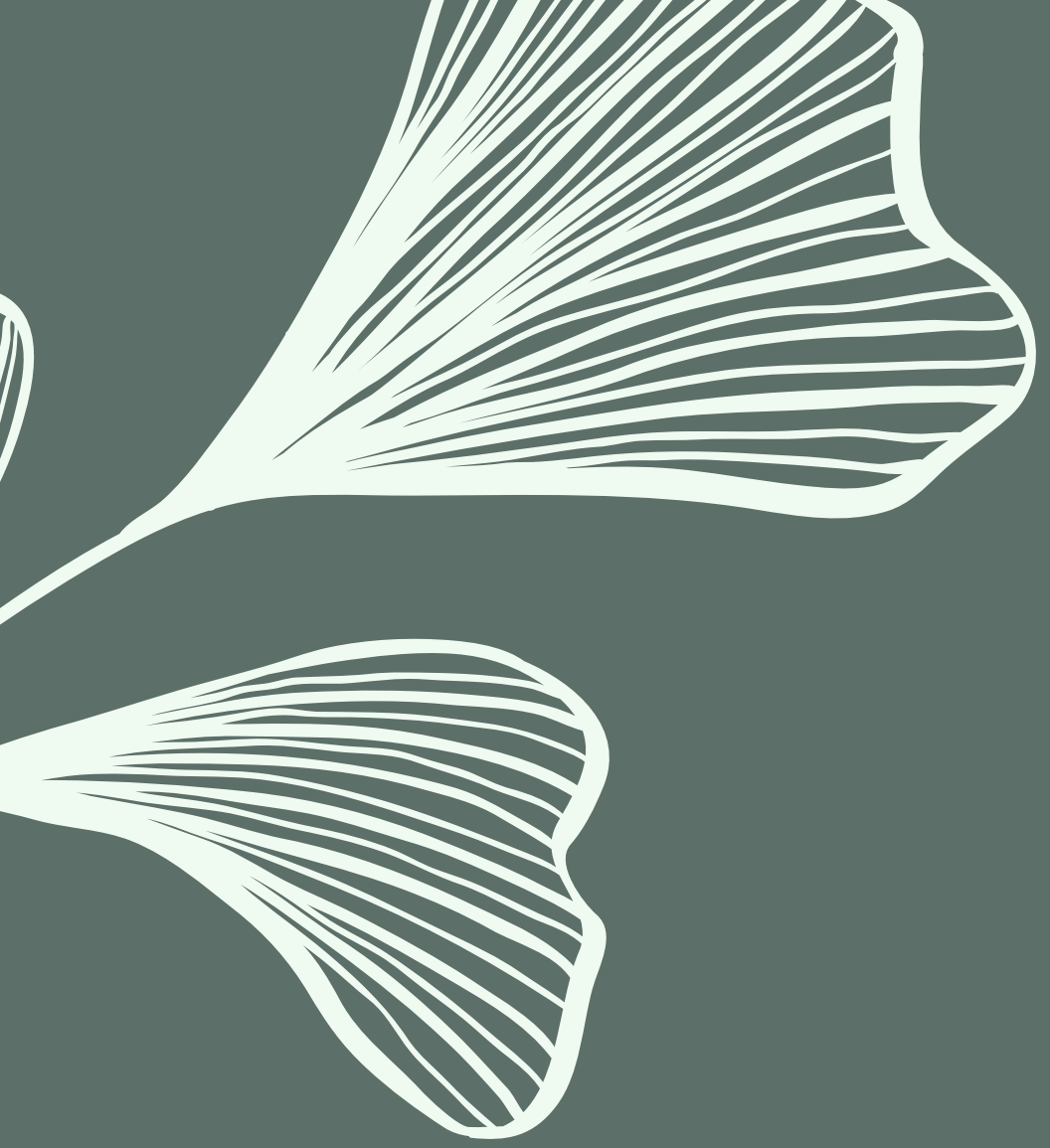
## CHECK INS:

- Tell us your name and pronouns.
- How are you doing?
- What do you want to get out of this workshop?

# Takeaways

## WHAT YOU'LL BRING HOME FROM THIS TRAINING

- Context
- Understanding of basic language to talk about gender and trans identities and experiences
- Gender open perinatal language
- Knowledge of best practices in providing gender affirming perinatal support
- Comfort with using gender open and respectful language



# Context

What do trans people experience in the perinatal period?



# CONSTANT MISGENDERING & MISUNDERSTANDING



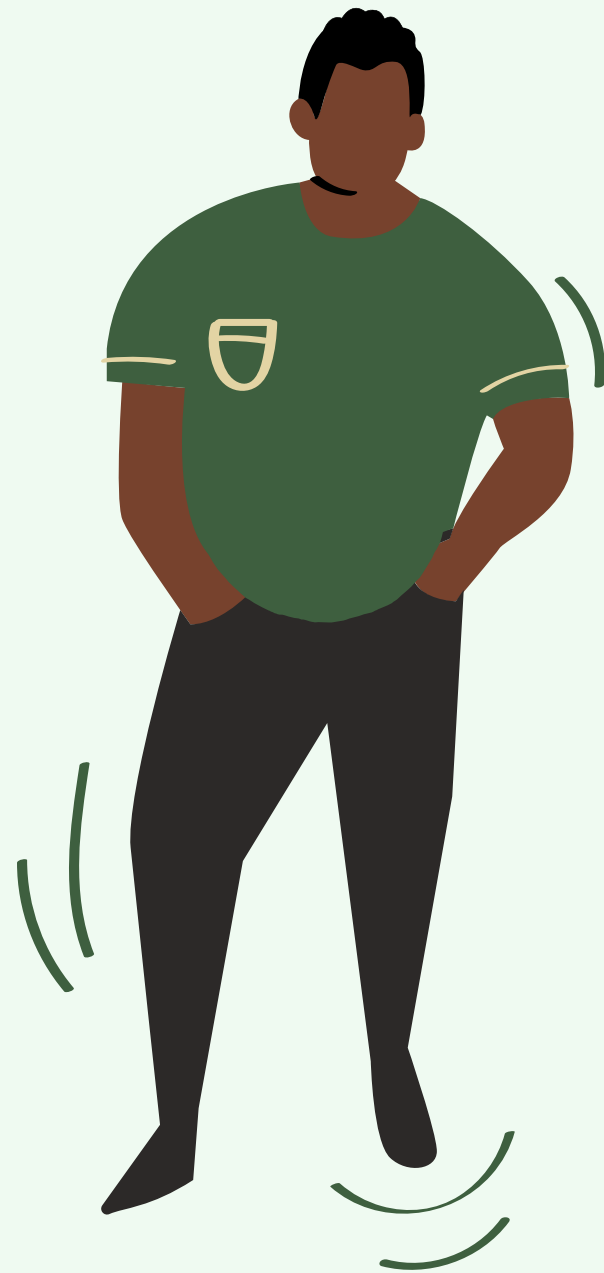
# LACK OF AFFIRMING INFORMATIONAL RESOURCES



- LACK OF AFFIRMING COMMUNITY IN THE PERINATAL PERIOD
- LEGAL & FINANCIAL STRESS FOR FAMILIES WHO HAVE TO USE DONORS OR SURROGATES
- GENDER DYSPHORIA & PAUSES IN TRANSITION RELATED CARE

You don't know what someone needs just by looking at them

JAZ (HE/HIM)



MAYA (THEY/THEM)



E (SHE/THEY)



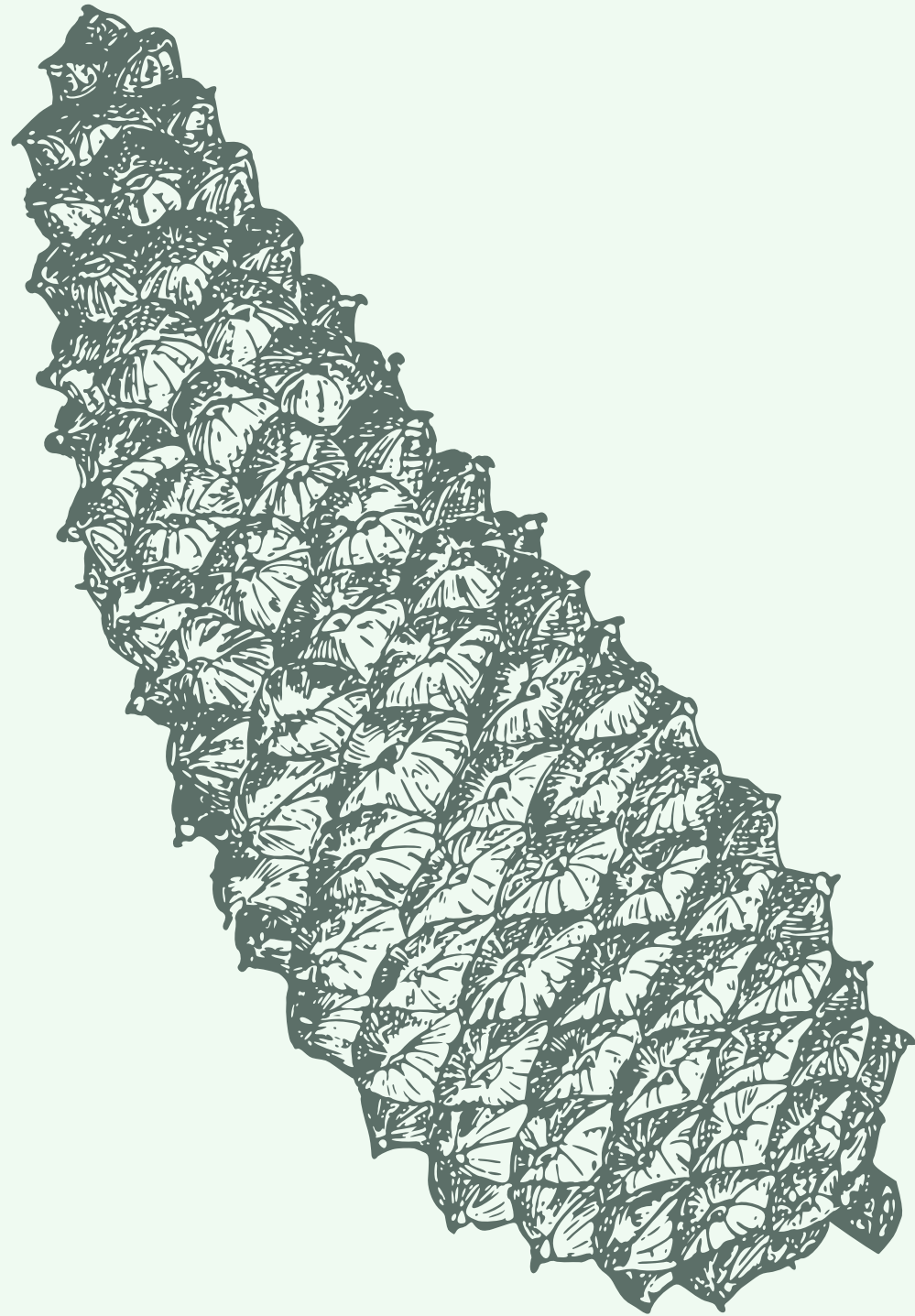
# Terms & Definitions

background basics



A note about language and identity:

Everyone's relationship to identity words is different! These definitions are communicating common usage. People are forever finding new ways to use these and other identity words, and are also coming up with new ones all the time!



# Trans

SHORT FOR  
TRANSGENDER

A trans person is someone who's gender is different than the one that they were assigned.

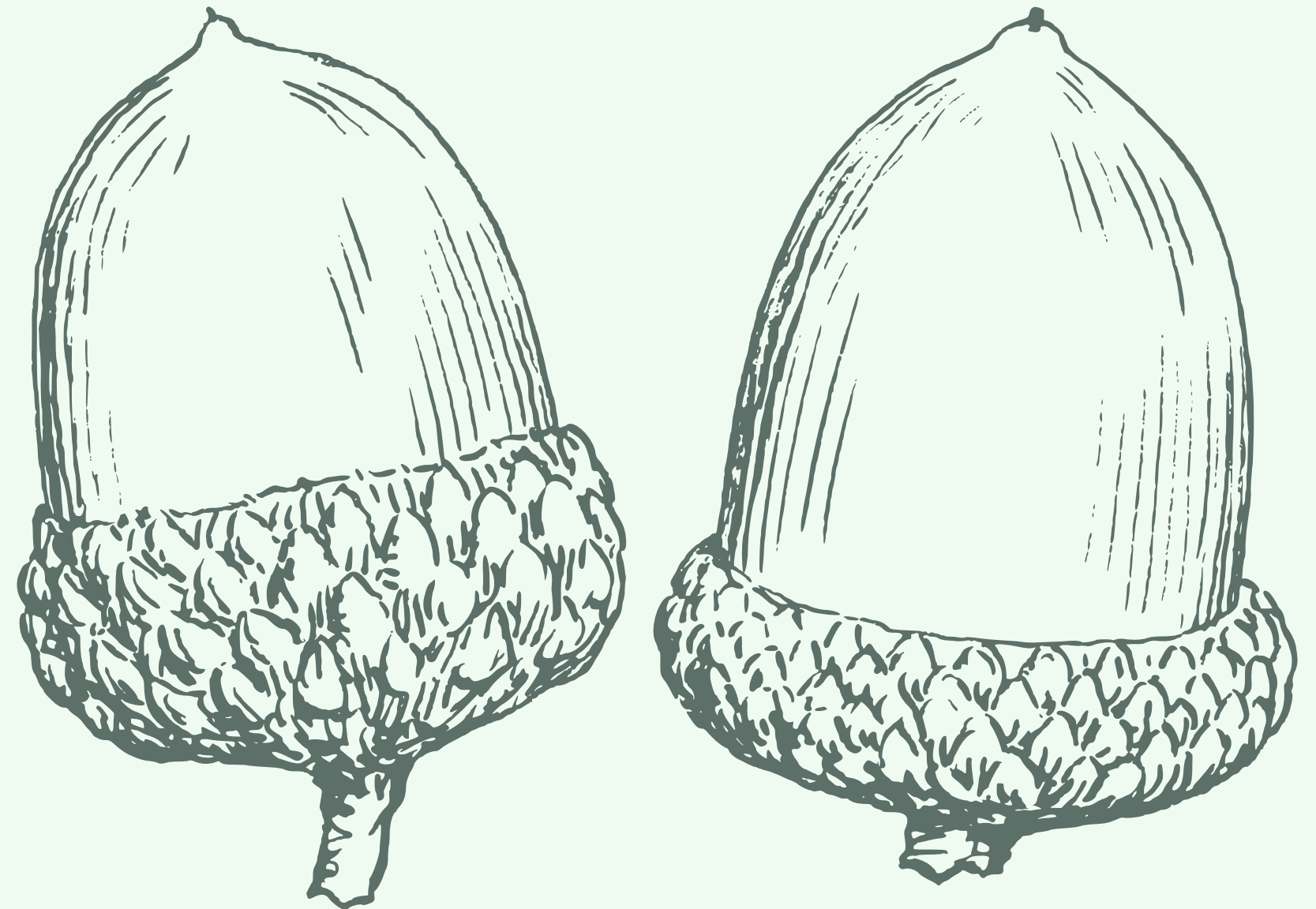
Trans is an umbrella term that encompasses many different identities.

# Assigned sex

or Sex Assigned At Birth.  
The sex that someone was labeled as at birth based primarily on the appearance of their genitals

# Cisgender

A cisgender person, or cis person, is someone whose gender aligns with the sex that they were assigned at birth





# Nonbinary

## GENDER IDENTITY

A word for the gender of someone whose gender isn't either man or woman, the two options provided by the gender binary.

Other words that people use for genders outside the binary are genderqueer, agender, and some use enby as an abbreviation for nonbinary.

## Trans woman

A woman who was assigned male at birth

## Trans man

A man who was assigned female at birth

## Nonbinary person

A person who was assigned either female or male at birth and whose gender aligns with neither

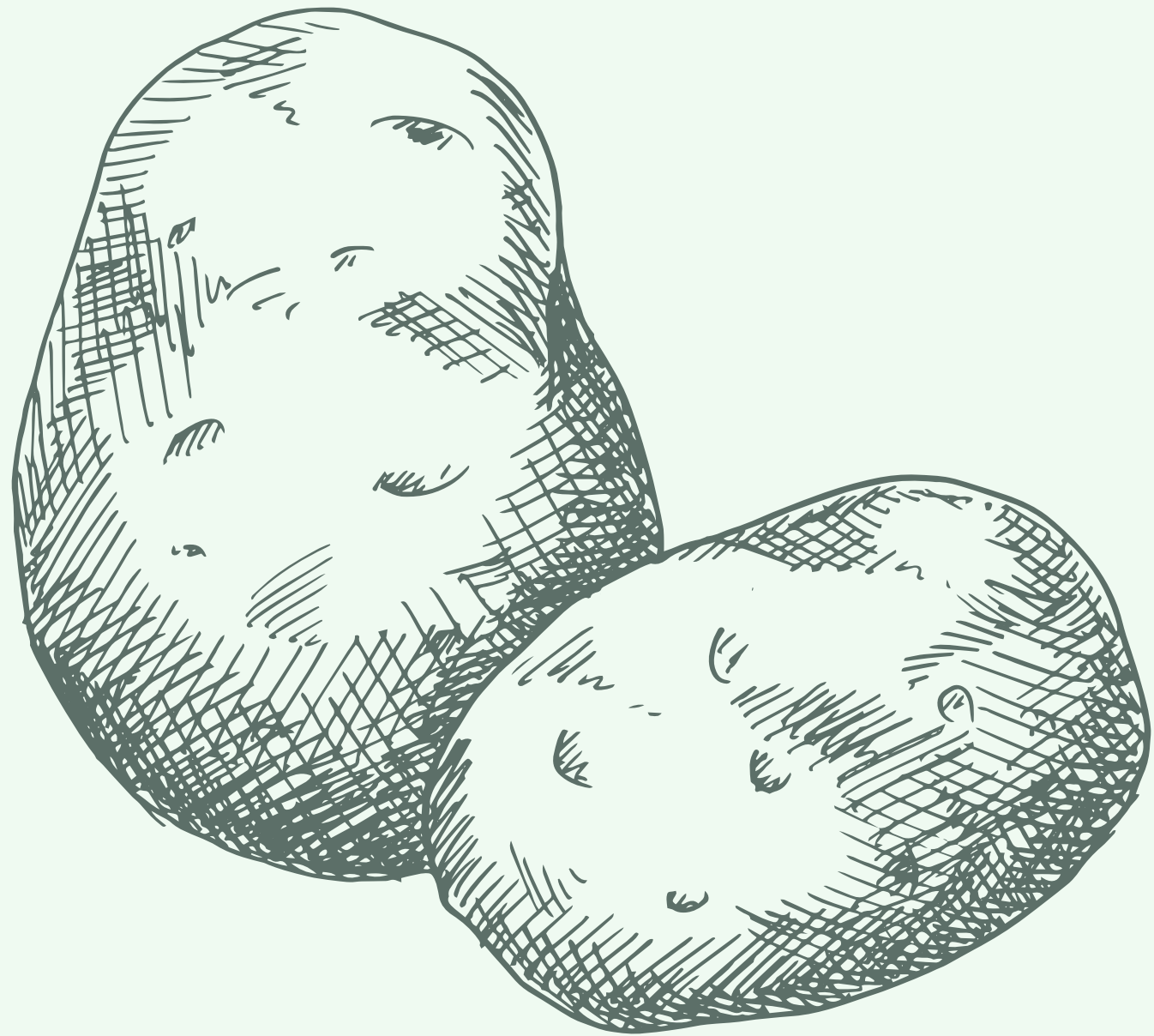




# Misgendering

## TO MISGENDER

To misgender someone is to use incorrectly gendered language to refer to them. This could mean using incorrect pronouns, incorrect gender titles, or other words that incorrectly gender the person being referred to.



# deadname

## A DEADNAME, TO DEADNAME

Some people regard the name that was given to them and which they no longer use, as their dead name. When they are referred to using this name, it's called deadnaming. For many, deadnaming is a form of misgendering.

Not everyone sees their old names this way, but it's best to never use someone's old or dead name.



# Dysphoria

## GENDER DYSPHORIA

A distressed state arising from conflict between a person's true gender and the sex the person was assigned at birth, or the gender that they are being read as by the people around them.

Dysphoria can be brought on by the internal conflict between one's self and their body, but a lot of the time it's heightened or instigated by the experience of misgendering.





# Names & Pronouns

specifics to ask for



**Sometimes your name and  
your legal name are different.**



**"what are your  
pronouns?"**

**"what are your  
preferred pronouns?"**

# Pronouns

They/  
Them/  
Theirs

They/  
She/  
Theirs

He/  
Him/  
His

Zel/  
Zir/  
Zirs

She/  
Her/  
Hers

He/  
She/  
Theirs

Xe/  
Xem/  
Xyr

Infinite  
possibilities

Just my  
name,  
please!



# Terms & Definitions

gender affirming birth language



**Make sure to always ask  
someone how they prefer  
to refer to their bodies and  
experiences**

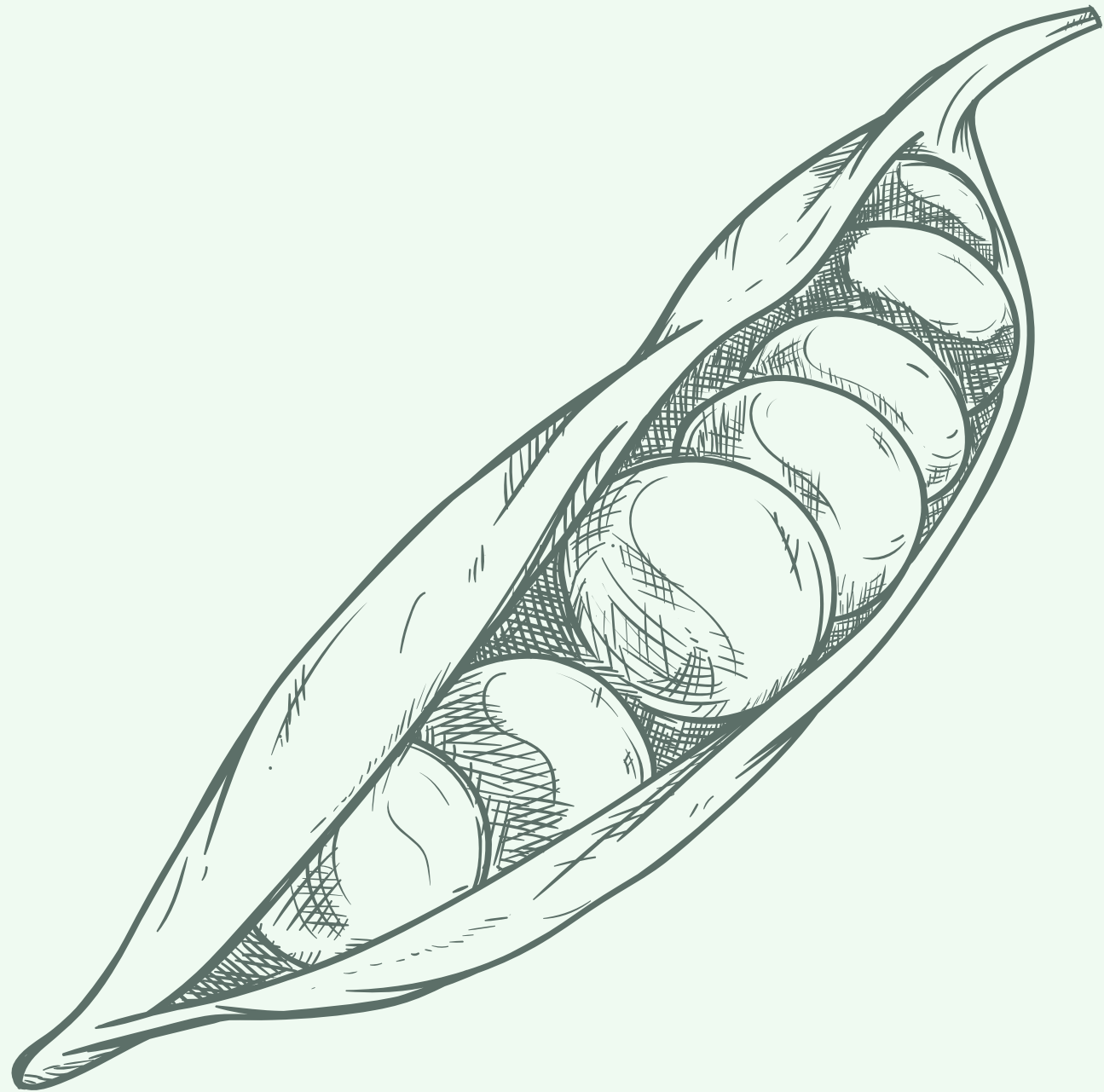
**EVERYBODY IS DIFFERENT**

# Perinatal

The perinatal period refers to the time before, during, and after gestation & birth for the birthing person. In most cases, the term perinatal is a more accurate word to use in place of "maternal" i.e. "perinatal health". Not everyone who gives birth plans to be that child's mother, regardless of their gender.







# Gestation

## PREGNANCY

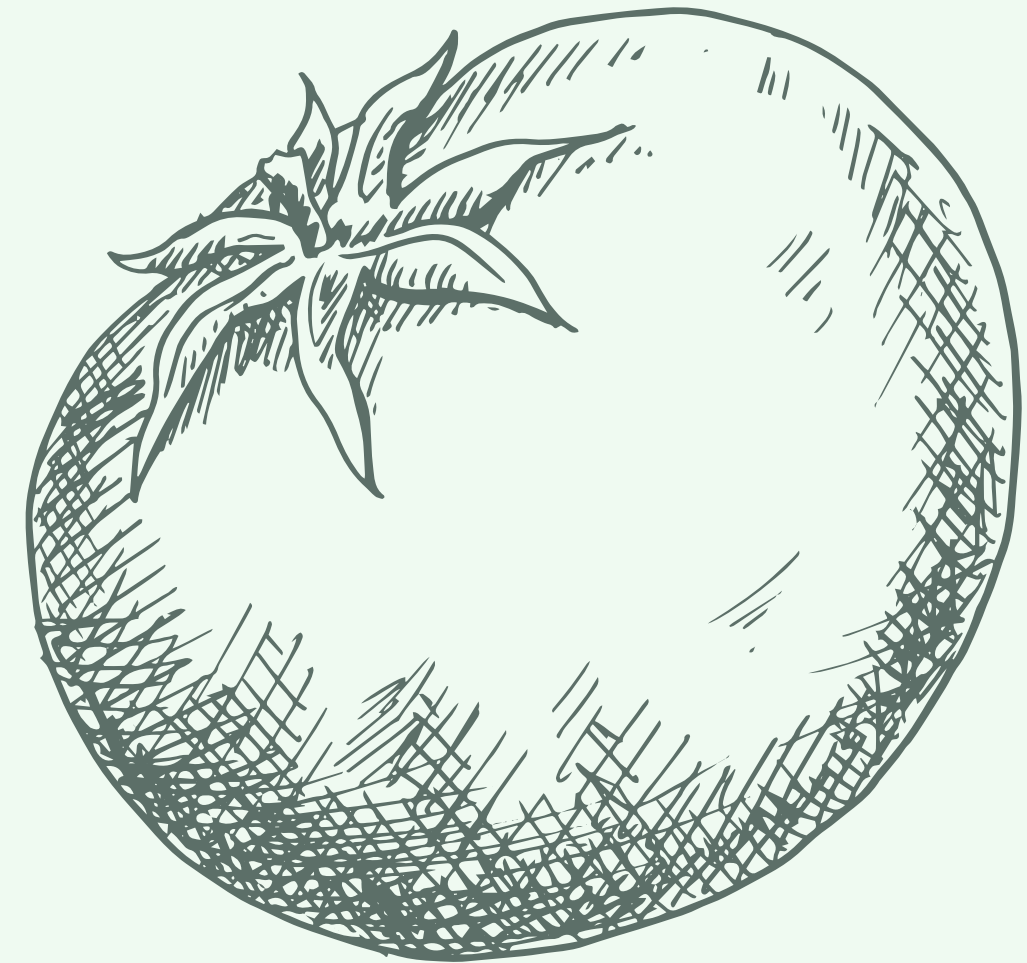
Some people use the words like pregnancy and pregnant to refer to their childbearing experience, others use gestation and gestating. Some even use germination and germinating.

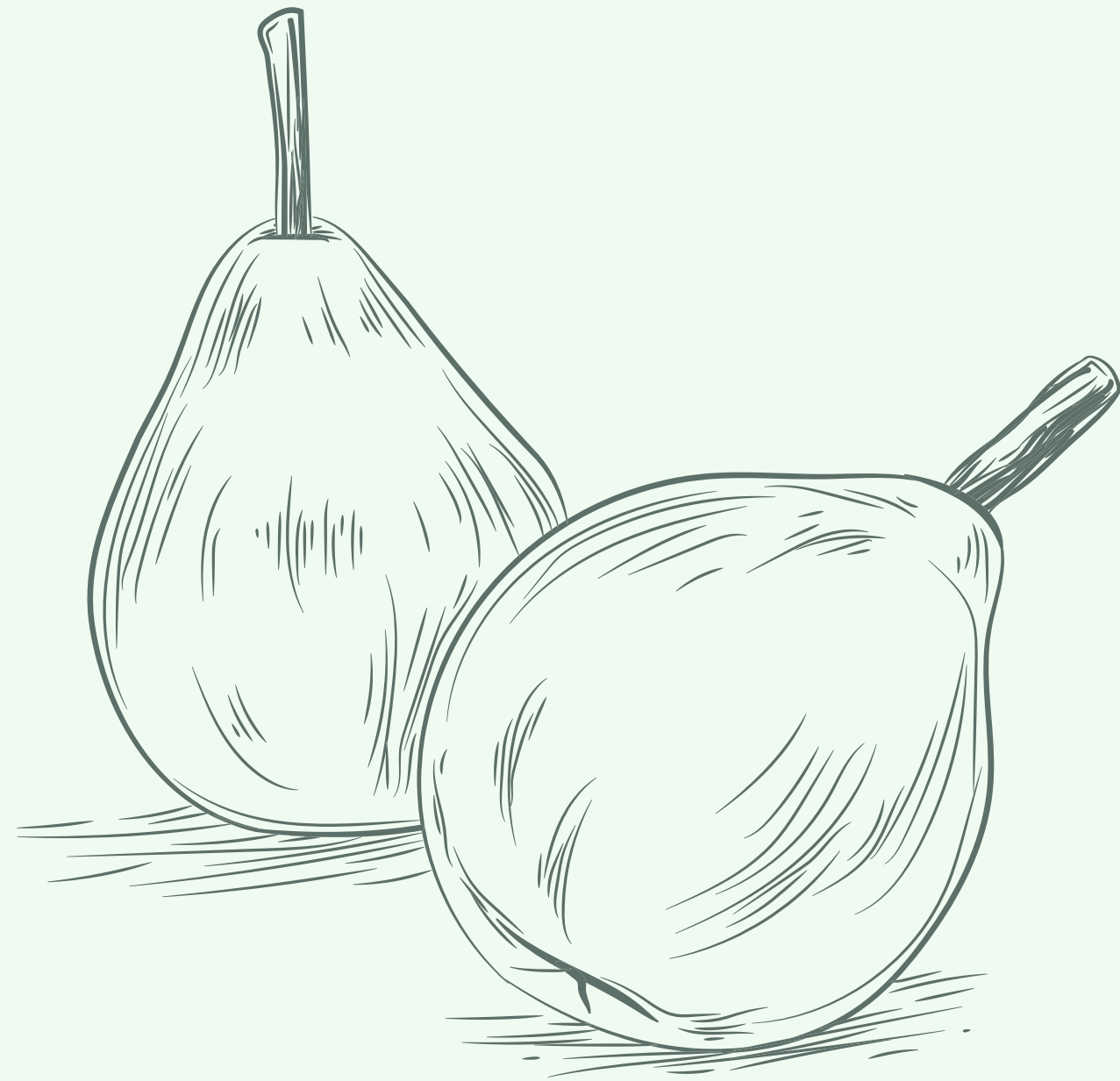
# Birthing person

Other options: Pregnant person, gestating person, gestating parent, birthing parent, pregnant parent

# Birth partner & support person

The support person who supports the gestating person through their birth experience, regardless of whether they're a romantic partner, friend, or family member





# Chestfeeding & Bodyfeeding

Chest is an easy and non-gendered alternative to breast, which makes chestfeeding a simple and clear alternative to breastfeeding. Bodyfeeding is another non-gendered alternative that can additionally feel more inclusive of different methods of feeding babies human milk! Ultimately, it's great to rotate many terms to demonstrate that people have options, and that whatever words they use are valid.

# Genitals

The word genitals is already gender neutral! Whoever you're talking to is going to know what kind of genitals they have.

# Birth opening

Birth opening can be used as a gender neutral alternative to vagina



# A note about anatomical terminology:

Reproductive anatomy is a complex system, and using anatomical terminology to refer to internal organs (like the uterus, ovaries, etc.) is ok for most people. It can be helpful to give people a heads up that you're about to discuss specific reproductive organs, and it's always great to ask whether someone has particular words they like to use to talk about any part of their bodies.



# Habits & Behaviors

affirming gender in your work

# Paperwork

## NAME & PRONOUNS

Ask first for one's name and pronouns. if you must also ask for someone's legal name, specify what the information will be used for

## GENDER NEUTRAL TERMS

Use gender neutral terminology like birthing person and birth partner

## "SEX" & "GENDER"

Ask yourself what information you truly need, and ask for that information specifically





# INFORMATION CONTINUITY

Make sure a person's correct name, pronouns, and other language preferences are carried over from visit to visit and from team-member to team-member



# AFFIRMING RESOURCES

MAKE SURE YOU HAVE TRANS  
AFFIRMING RESOURCES TO  
RECOMMEND

- childbirth education
- perinatal support pros
- midwives
- books
- videos
- etc.

# Supporting a client when they are misgendered by someone else

ASK EARLY HOW A CLIENT WANTS YOU TO SUPPORT THEM WHEN THEY'RE BEING MISGENDERED.

◦

NOT EVERYONE IS SAFE OR COMFORTABLE BEING OUT AS TRANS IN ALL PARTS OF THEIR LIFE.

◦

RECORD AND REFER BACK TO THEIR NEEDS AND PREFERENCES .



# What to do when you mess up



## CORRECT YOURSELF

If you catch yourself mis-gendering someone, or if someone corrects you, immediately correct your mistake.

## APOLOGIZE

Apologize quickly if you catch yourself. If they have to correct you, thank them for reminding you.

## MOVE ON

Keep it moving. Don't dwell on profuse apologies or beat yourself up.

- Don't ask people to expect or pre-forgive your mistakes
- Don't explain your mistake



### **DON'T ASK UNNECESSARY QUESTIONS**

Before asking a question about someone's body or gender experience, first ask yourself if you need to know the answer in order to adequately care for this person?



### **DON'T SHARE UNNECESSARY INFORMATION**

Before sharing a story or piece of information about your own experience with trans and queer people, first ask yourself who is benefitting from your sharing?

# Welcome all families

TRANS FAMILIES

MULTIPLE PARTNERS

CHOSEN FAMILY



GENDER-AFFIRMING BIRTH WORK

ART BY ETHAN X. PARKER  
[www.ethanxparker.com](http://www.ethanxparker.com)

# Questions to ask yourself

AM I ABLE TO PROVIDE  
ADEQUATE SUPPORT FOR  
THIS PERSON?



WHO ARE THE TRANS OR QUEER  
BIRTH WORKERS IN MY AREA?



IS THERE ANYTHING I NEED TO  
DO TO PREPARE TO CARE FOR  
THIS PERSON?





# Practicing affirming language

getting comfortable



# practice at home

## #1

Practice introducing yourself to someone using your name and pronouns, and asking them for their name and pronouns.

## #2

Temporarily change the pronouns that you use for a pet. This can be especially helpful if you're still getting comfortable using they/them or other nontraditional pronouns, or using multiple pronouns interchangeably.



# practice at home

## #3

Just go through, and say all of the suggestions for gender open terminology out loud. Say them in conversation, when you're talking about what you learned at this training, or just to yourself in private. Each time you use a new word you become more comfortable saying it.

## #4

Practice asking open-ended questions about what words people use to describe themselves. and their experiences Ask your friends, ask your clients, and even ask yourself!





Thank you!