



PRONOUNS:

What are they?

Pronouns are simply any set of words that used instead of a noun or a noun phrase. Personal pronouns are the most common ones which refer to the person speaking or writing or being spoken to or the third person.

What are common personal pronouns?

- Female – She/her/her/herself
- Male – He/him/himself/his
- Queer/Questioning/Non-binary – They, their, them. Less common: co, ey, hir, hirs, sie and zie.

Why use them?

Using a person's right pronouns shows that you respect them and who they are. It also means that you are being inclusive by referring to them the right way. It also helps foster an environment of acceptance and understanding whether at a dinner party, in the community or in the workplace because you are validating that person's pronouns recognising who they are. The simply act of using the right pronouns shows that you are focusing on them as a person and treating them as such whilst not focusing on how one identifies nor making an issue of it.

From my own personal experiences it is demeaning when someone refers to you in the wrong pronoun or way such as been called sir when going to a restaurant with a friend. How would you feel being called sir all because you have a masculine voice and didn't look feminine enough for that person even though you were clearly dressed as a woman and identify as such?

Having this happen to me I know how to then correct the waiter is uncomfortable and creates tension which is totally avoidable if the waiter had instead just asked your name and what your pronouns are.

If we all use the right pronouns treating each other with respect and dignity then we can build a more embracing society where using the right pronouns are the norm rather than the exception.