

INCLUSION & DIVERSITY 2021 VIRTUAL SERIES **Her Story, His Story, Their Story**

Tuesday 24 February 2021, 1.00 – 2.00 pm GMT

Different Stories, Shared Understanding

Our panellists shared the stories of their own personal journeys, moving from discovering their identities to being proud of who they are. While their stories all differed, from growing up in a small town in central Scotland to growing up in Southern China, there were so many common experiences among the panel too.

We heard about the importance of language, whether that be learning the language we need to talk about ourselves, to listening carefully to the language used by others when discussing diverse identities so that we can work out how much of ourselves to share with them.

We also heard about the growth that can come with moving onto new stages of life - new careers, new places to live, or new friends. All of our panellists spoke about how changing the scenery of their life was key to being able to be more open about their identities.

How have allies played an important role in your story?

Allies can help within our organisations, often in ways which seem minor to them but which mean a lot to us. This is particularly true of senior leaders, who can, by simply turning up to an event or sending an email, set the mood music of a whole organisation and shape its culture so that it is open and inclusive to all.

How do you deal with hate?

At times, our community can come under attack - in the media, online, or elsewhere. When that happens, the best allies are often those who continue to stand with us during the hard times and who are willing to put themselves between us and the attacks. We also often need to turn to each other as well as our allies - to grieve, to feel supported, and sometimes to laugh.

What makes an effective initiative for engaging with the LGBT+ community?

Confidence is key - it is only when this confidence about what it is we want to say and what we want to do as a community and for our community that an initiative can be successful.

Dialogue and understanding are also vital - promoting healthy and respectful conversations is the only way to avoid further damaging polarisation within organisations and within society.

Do you have any practical advice for people who want to know more about these issues?

Ask questions of your LGBT+ colleagues, but only after you have asked permission to ask or once you have developed enough of a personal connection that it feels appropriate.

Educate yourself - there are plenty of resources available online which you can look at yourself if you do not feel comfortable asking a colleague directly

Don't be afraid of not knowing the vocabulary - no one expects you to know it all right away!

What to do if you feel that you have privilege?

Plenty of people feel that they have privilege in society - within and without the LGBT+ community. The key thing is to use the privilege you have - to advocate for those less fortunate than you.

Moderated by:



Malcolm Gregory
Business Manager,
Baker McKenzie
(Moderator)

Our Panel:



Samantha Clark
Director of HR,
Accenture



Emma Dunn
Co-chair, a:gender



Rachel Reese
Founder and CEO,
Global Butterflies



Bowen Wei
Procurement Manager,
AIG Life

#WeAreNotNeutral

Panellists speaking in personal capacity and views expressed not necessarily represent organisations attached to.



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Employer for LGBT+
Inclusion 2020



Stonewall Global
Trans Inclusion
Award 2020

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