

Dos and Don'ts: Ableism and Cis_Hetero_Sexism

Don'ts	Dos
Don't assume someone's gender identity and/or sexual orientation.	Do use inclusive /gender-neutral language and keep an open mind until someone may correct you / confide in you.
Don't use offensive / outdated words or offensive / mocking actions, no matter if it's about someone's gender identity, sexual orientation or someone's disability, chronic illness and / or neurodivergence.	Do ask the person if you are unsure about certain terms or what they are comfortable being addressed with. You can also research outdated / offensive words or possible offensive / mocking actions and what to use / do instead.
Don't share confidential information about someone's gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, chronic illness, or neurodivergence with anyone else.	Do wait until the person that confided in you tells other people or make sure you have their full consent to share the information with someone else.
Don't ask intrusive questions about someone's gender identity, sexual orientation or someone's disability, chronic illness and/or neurodivergence (i.e. "What is your real name?") or add unnecessary commentary (i.e. "One of my best friend's cousins is autistic, too!") or belittle their experiences / feelings (i.e. "You're being too sensitive.").	Do listen to what the person is telling you and always keep an open mind and try to accept them the way they are. If something is unclear or unknown to you (i.e. not knowing what demisexuality means), respectfully ask the person to explain it to you or research it on your own.
Don't assume you know how a chronically ill / disabled / neurodivergent person feels or offer advice unless you're sure you've shared their experience.	Do listen to exactly what the person is telling you and believe when they say they are in pain / feel uncomfortable etc.
Don't assume that chronically ill / disabled / neurodivergent people need your help.	Ask whether any accommodations are needed and provide them within your own limits and without making a big deal out of it.
Don't ignore if someone is being discriminatory or ignorant (accidentally or purposefully) towards someone, whether towards them in person or behind their back.	Do always speak up when someone is being discriminatory and / or ignorant and support the person affected. Ask them if they want further support and offer to go with them to one of the NMS contact people (see last page). Beware of your own bias, too, and realise that sometimes something that might not hurt / affect you, hurts / affects someone else and to always apologise if you went too far or call someone out if they go too far.