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Introducing: The Metaphor of Gender

My new channel, The Metaphor of Gender, was created for gender-questioning adolescents, but will your child be willing to watch it?

Introducing The Metaphor of Gender (T-MOG)

I've worked with gender-questioning and ROGD kids since 2016 and I've come to understand them well. And I've devoted a large portion of my time to helping parents understand *their own* gender-questioning children. Through my writing, parent membership group, presentations, consultations, youtube channel, Gender: A Wider Lens Podcast, and my book, When Kids Say They're Trans, I've helped parents who want to understand what this gender thing means, improve their relationships with their kids, encourage critical thinking, and avoid medicalization when possible.

Throughout this time, I've logged thousands of hours working with gender-questioning adolescents in my individual therapy practice. And I've learned so much from my time with them. Of course, that work has greatly informed my parent coaching, but I felt there was more I could do. I wanted to bring this rich material out of the therapy meetings and into the public so others could benefit. So after many years of therapeutic techniques, psychological concepts, and nuanced gender discussions behind closed doors, I've created a vehicle to share these ideas with young people who are hungry for intelligent, deep, and meaningful conversations: The Metaphor of Gender

This YouTube channel is for curious young people who prefer deep thinking over dogma, where we explore identity, meaning, and how to live life well.

So right now you might be thinking, *"this all sounds amazing, but I don't think my kid would be open to watching it. They'll google you, see your public profile, and immediately reject anything you have to say"*

Well, luckily, I'm well aware of this optics problem and I've addressed it in my 5-part introduction series. There are going to be some viewers that I just can't reach at this point, but in my experience, trans-identified adolescents are curious and intelligent young people who want deep and rich discussions of the topics they care most about.

So, with all that in mind, I created this guide to help parents get The Metaphor of Gender onto their kid's radar.

Let's Talk Strategy: Consider your current dynamic

When it comes to gender-questioning adolescents, *how* you introduce something can matter even more than *what* you're introducing.

Below are a few thoughtful (and field-tested) ways you might get this content in front of your child, depending on your current relationship and their level of openness.

If you're *already* engaged in a productive (even if a little tense) exchange of articles, videos, and conversations, then you can be much more open and direct in sharing T-MOG videos. When I say "productive" here, I mean that your child *actively engages* with the material, shares his or her thoughts with you, and is able to bounce back quickly if some tension arises.

However, if you're not quite there yet, things might feel much more precarious. Perhaps when you have tried sharing information with your child, they've become enraged, shut you out completely for more than a week, and the relationship struggled to bounce back. This tells us there might be other areas to troubleshoot (your connection, unhelpful influences, internet, therapists etc). If that's your situation, tread *very* carefully here. It might actually be helpful to use some of the suggestions below that can repair the relationship first and indicate that you're trying to understand your child better. Those strategies are also a little more passive. Let's get into the details...

Some specific ideas

Accidentally overhear the videos (for kids who still live at home)

Instead of saying, "*I want you to watch this,*" try letting them *overhear* it. Put one of the videos on when your kid is around or within earshot. Play it on your laptop while you're making dinner, gardening, doing laundry, etc.

With the most passive strategy, there are no assignments. There is no pressure. ****

Just set it and forget it. Don't ask them to listen or say, "hey, did you hear that!?!"

Just trust that the seed has been planted.

What if your child asks what you're watching? Keep it light.

"This is a therapist who works with gender-questioning teens and their families. I like how she thinks about things—kinda balanced and thoughtful about gender and identity."

Want to bring it up directly? If so, remain casual and curious.

"This therapist offers some surprising ideas about gender. It's not really for me—it's made for young people who are thinking about identity stuff—but I found it really thoughtful. Totally up to you, but I think you might actually like it."

Sending a video (for kids who no longer live at home)

If you're on good terms with your child who is off at college or living elsewhere, send a short message.

A personal and specific message: For example, if there was a previous conversation when your child was trying to explain something to you and you got into an argument or conflict about it, and one of my TMOG videos touches upon that issue, that gives you a perfect opportunity to share it.

"This video reminded me of something you said a while ago. Remember when we were talking and you said something like "_____." I don't think I really understood what you meant at the time, but after listening to this therapist, I think it makes more sense now. No pressure to watch—it just made me think of you."

A general message, mentioned in passing:

"There's a new YouTube channel I've been watching that's helping me understand some of this identity stuff better. It's not political or preachy—just interesting."

Notice the tone here: curious, tentative. Don't be overly certain if the gender topic causes a lot of tension for your family. A light tone creates space for them to follow the thread *if* and *when* they're ready.

If your relationship is highly strained:

- Don't lead with any gender content or material. Focus on repairing trust, being consistent, and finding other ways to connect.
- Once things soften, you might say:

"There's this channel I came across that's different from the other things I've found out there. It's thoughtful and respectful. I liked it, and I think you might too—but no pressure at all."

Remember, if it feels like a tool you're using to prove a point or snap them out of something, they'll sense it—and it won't land the way you hope it might.

✓ Why The Metaphor of Gender might land when other content hasn't:

- I'm not inflammatory or alarmist in my approach
- I treat identity as real and meaningful—without taking it too literally.
- I give trans-identified kids the benefit of the doubt but ask them to go deeper
- I don't mock, belittle, or preach to the viewers
- I speak to the viewer's aspirational qualities: open-mindedness, flexibility, curiosity
- I give young people something they rarely get in other gender content: permission to think for themselves
- My goal isn't to change anyone's mind in a single video. It teaches the viewer that there are deeper questions to ask and more honest ways to relate to one's personal identity.

A few things to avoid when sharing it:

- Certainty: *“This explains you perfectly.”*
- Urgency: *“You need to watch this right away—it will change everything.”*
- Rubbing salt in the wound by sending it right after an argument
- Preaching or giving a long rambling speech before or after sharing it.

If you want to say something, be neutral and tentative:

- *“You might not be into this. But I thought it was kind of interesting.”*
- *“It’s not anti-anything. It’s just different.”*
- *“She talks about gender in a way I haven’t heard before: it’s thoughtful, not preachy.”*

Final thought:

This is a marathon, and not a sprint! So try to have modest expectations and take it one step at a time.

Remember, you likely won’t win your child over by sharing the perfect video.

Putting thoughtful ideas in front of them is just one prong in a much bigger multi-prong strategy to bond with them, encourage critical thinking, help them with confidence, mitigate unhelpful influences, and to get them more engaged in other parts of life.