

Oct 11, 2017



Dear family and friends,

**Happy National Coming Out Day!** On this day, we courageously tell the world that we are proud to be living openly and authentically. This year, Gender Odyssey is coming out and announcing our own transition! Transition means growth and change—changes you'll see reflected in our conference programming.

I am so excited to share these changes with you!

**Employment Track★** We are proud to be partnering with the Greater Seattle Business Association (GSBA) and other coalition partners to manifest a full employer and employee programming track within our Gender Odyssey Professional conference. This will include a full-day employment fair where employers can connect with potential trans and gender-diverse employees and all the accompanying brilliance our community has to offer!

**Expanded Medical & Surgical Considerations★** Each year, more and more people are crowding into the medical care and surgical sessions. We are responding to this demand by offering a two-day program: Gender Odyssey Body Works. Attendees can register for this program with a stand-alone ticket, or as a provider/professional/student via the Gender Odyssey Professional conference.

**Expanded Youth Programming★** Gender Odyssey Seattle's three days of children, tween, and teen activities are already busting at the seams. So, we're going to add more!! This coming year, look for a track for our older teens and young adults (22 and under) getting ready to launch into the world, plus more robust programs for the tweens and teens.

**Family Programs★** The Gender Odyssey Family conference has been growing and going strong since 2007. This year, we will be deepening our programming beyond the early "coming out" conversations. In addition to those sessions, we'll be adding workshops that reflect the needs and experiences of families who've so valiantly supported their children for much longer, and who are facing new challenges or seeking deeper conversations.

**Los Angeles Conference Expansion★** We launched our first Los Angeles Gender Odyssey conference in June 2017, had great attendance, and received rave reviews. This coming year we will add programming for parents and guardians of trans and gender-diverse children!

#### Is this "coming out" all about growth?

Not entirely. Some of Gender Odyssey's programming will be phased out. Because interest has been shifting from our adult "community" program to that of professional and family, next year our community program will include only the medical/surgical track, employment track, and young adult track. This will be a big adjustment for us, and perhaps for many of you, too. Some of us are feeling some nostalgia, even sadness, as we make this change. This original programming was profoundly instrumental in the lives of so many.

**The Big Picture★** Despite retiring some of our programming, we are enthusiastic about Gender Odyssey's new direction. Our hope, as we make this transition, is to increase our visibility in society, continue to strengthen our communities, and to carve out a path for the next generations. This long-contemplated decision and direction will more closely match the year-round work of our organization, Gender Diversity. We believe this is a path to growth, and a deepening of our core foundation.

I'm thrilled to be stepping into this new year with you all—my Gender Odyssey family and friends. I'm so proud of what we have done together over the last 17 years—and I'm ecstatic to see what the next 17 will bring.

With deepest gratitude to all who've made—and continue to make—Gender Odyssey the life-changing, world-changing event that it is!

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