

ANCESTORS

Exercises

YOUR QUEER FAMILY TREE: TRACING YOUR TRANCESTORY

You are invited to expand your notions of family, creating a queer family tree that claims and connects you to your transcestors. Family trees are a way of honouring our lineage, connecting us to those that have gone before, to the history of trans liberation and to those we can draw strength and inspiration from.

These questions are prompts to get you thinking about who your transcestors are and how they contribute to your queer family tree.

Who are the trans, queer and gender non-conforming people in history that you draw on as a source of strength today?

What is it about them and how they lived that inspires you?

What elements of their life, ethics, or ways of doing things, do you try and interweave into yours? How did they clear the pathway for you and your gender?

We can think about people as having stories that connect us, rather than being from the same social categories as us. There are many 'debates' over if we can claim people as being trans and/or queer when they lived in different social, historical and cultural contexts, and so had different language practices, social categories and labelling possibilities.

No matter if there are arguments about if someone was trans or queer or not you can still have them in your queer family trees or at your important celebrations.

ALTERNATIVE PARENTS

Alternative Parents: If you were the love child of three people who would they be? What have you inherited in terms of character, spirit or skill from each of them? What are you yet to inherit, what is still to come?

Alternative family party: Imagine a party to celebrate an important moment in your life (it could be a birthday, important moment in transition, celebration of an achievement at work or school, etc.) who, out of everyone living or dead would you like to come? Describe each person and why you would like them there? what do they offer you as inspiration? How do you imagine they would like to celebrate with you?

You might like to write down or draw a family tree or some other image that represents these connections.

EXTRA QUESTIONS TO PONDER

As well as looking back, it's important to look forward and see how we are contributing to trans lives yet to happen.

How can you be a good ancestor for the next generation?

By living your life, what are you nurturing for the next generation?

How will your joy make space for the joys of trans people in the future?

How does thinking of your self as a good ancestor help you to make decisions about what's best for you now?

When you imagine yourself as a trans elder what would you like the next generation to be saying about how you lived your life?