

Top 5 Qualities of Belonging

- 1. Being valued:** The most common definition of belonging involves being valued and appreciated. Also respected as a person, including having their opinions and contributions be respected and valued, feeling that they matter, and being recognized and seen.
- 2. Being included:** Being included, whether in social events, or in meetings and decision making is the next most common quality. Being included in decision making, especially when the decisions are important and/or affect them directly. Not being excluded.
- 3. Being part of a team:** Feeling like a team, working together towards a common goal, and having strong relationships. This includes being comfortable with peers, having friends or friendly relationships, and feeling cared about as an individual.
- 4. Being heard:** Being heard or listened to. Having their personal ideas/perspective requested to make sure their voice is heard and, being able to speak my mind without fear of backlash. This contributes to their sense of belonging.
- 5. Being accepted for who they are:** Being their authentic self and being accepted and understood as a person. Specifically, an absence of microaggressions or the need to hide part of their identity. Able to be authentic and be true to my personal values.

Taken together, these factors paint a clear picture of what belonging looks like - you are valued, your opinions are sought out, you're included in important decisions, you don't have to hide aspects of who you are, and you have people to collaborate with who care about you as a human being.