



**STORYTELLING FOR COMMUNITY:**  
**Finding Strength and Connection**  
**through Authenticity and**  
**Intersectionality**  
*with Chella Man*

**DIVERSITY  
EQUITY  
INCLUSION  
BELONGING**

# About the Series

Increasingly, Out & Equal's member companies recognize that, while necessary, standard DEI efforts fall short in addressing the most vital component of retention and growth: feeling like you belong. Developing an organizational culture of belonging is hard – especially right now. COVID realities, Gen Z and Y redefining the workplace, and increased racially charged bias and violence all are driving the urgency and importance of establishing cultures of belonging now. *Practitioners for Change* brings critical conversations about racial equity and mental health and wellness to the forefront of DEI praxis.

Powered by [Capital One](#), the series is designed to help sustain practitioners both as professionals, and as people by weaving together critical conversations about racial equity, mental health, and well-being.

[Visit our website to learn more about the series and to access other sessions.](#)

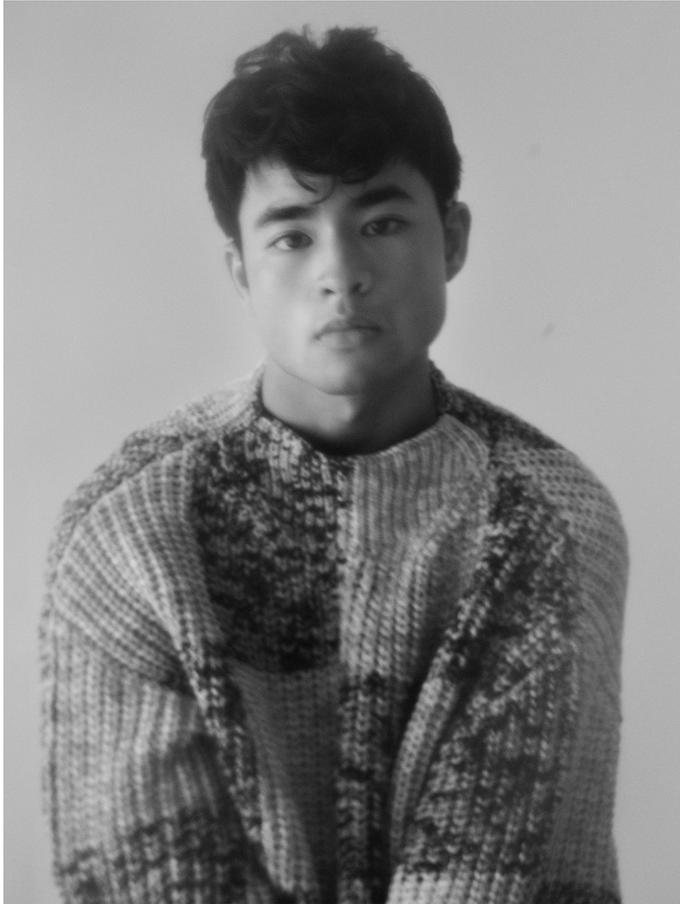


# About the Session

Chella Man is a storyteller. He is also a Deaf, trans, Jewish, and Chinese person making waves with his openness and authenticity through his art, writing, performance, and more.

In conversation with Out & Equal's Learning & Development Manager Rebecca York, Chella Man will deep-dive into the importance and fluidity of labels, the pressure to prioritize identities in a "single-issue" world, what parents can do to support their LGBTQ+ children, and more.

# Chella Man



**Chella Man (he/him)** is a New York-based artist, director, and author of the book [Continuum](#).

His book highlights how to heal from systemic oppression and the revelations he has come to growing up.

Chella Man's work features the continuums of disability, race, gender, and sexuality. His identity includes being Deaf, trans, Jewish, and Chinese as well as determined, curious, and hopeful.

Chella Man has also worked as a columnist for Condé Naste's first queer publication *Them*, launched a radically inclusive clothing line in collaboration with Opening Ceremony, signed as the first Deaf and trans-masculine model with IMG Models, and was cast as a superhero within Warner Brother's DC Universe, *Titan's*.

He hopes to continue pushing the boundaries of what it means to be accessible, inclusive, and equal in this world.

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# Key Terms: d/Deaf

It is best practice to use d/Deaf when referring to non-hearing people generally. Always use someone's preferred terms if you know them.

## capital "D" Deaf

- identify themselves as culturally Deaf and part of the Deaf community
- sign language tends to be their first language, but not always
- they have fully immersed themselves in the Deaf culture
- takes great pride in their Deaf identity

## deaf with small "d"

- they are not, chooses not or does not associate themselves as part of the Deaf community
- they may have also had little to no exposure to the Deaf community, perhaps due to their upbringings

Source: Ahmed Khalifa, What's the Difference Between Deaf with Capital 'D' & deaf with Small 'd'?, *Hear Me Out* (2018).



All of who I am lies on a continuum. My identity cannot be encompassed by a single term.

I am continuously learning. I definitely do not have it all figured out. I doubt I ever will, and I am learning to be okay with that.

Source: Chella Man, *Continuum*, Pocket Change Collective (2021).

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# Discussion Questions

- 1. How can we better commit to lifelong learning and how do we get comfortable with the process of learning?**
- 2. How can we make spaces more accessible even while acknowledging we can not achieve universal accessibility?**
- 3. Have you ever felt like you were not represented in a space?**
- 4. What does it truly mean to be our own representation?**
- 5. How can we allow ourselves to take up more space when we do not see feel seen?**



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WORKPLACE ADVOCATES

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