

# What kind of Ally am I for LGBTQ Communities?

Exploring Your Own Privilege and Marginalization



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# Learning Objectives

- Engage in self-reflection about biases toward sexual minorities
- Learn the impact of social stigma on sexual identity minorities
- Recognize the ethical imperative to be aware of personal biases

# Why do we need this?

- Most people grew up in a homophobic, heterosexist, transphobic culture/family/community
- Misinformation and stereotypes about LGBTQ+ people
- Cannot continue our multicultural competence development without challenging ourselves
- Increased awareness and knowledge about nuances and complexities of LGBTQ+ identity
- Ever-changing demographics require schools to meet needs of LGBTQ+ communities
- **Your role as mental health professionals & advocates**

# Safety & Comfort in Dialogue

- RESPECT
- SAFETY
- COMFORT ZONES
- LEARNING EDGES
- CONFLICT

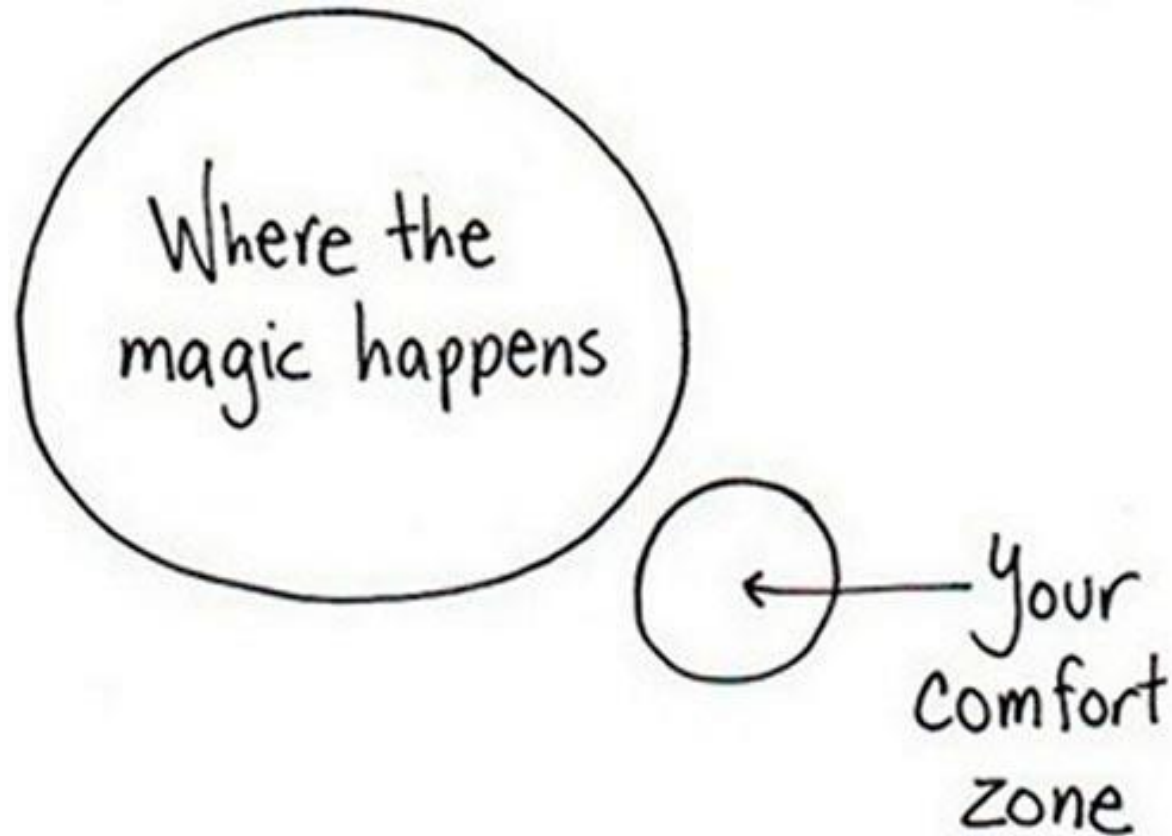


# Safety & Comfort in Dialogue

We always want safety in the group, but we don't always want *comfort*. Discomfort happens at the learning edge of our comfort zones, where we are most likely to gain new understanding from our experiences. Conflict of understanding pushes our comfort zones and is a necessary and beneficial part of the dialogue process. It is our job as participants in this dialogue to turn conflict and discomfort into learning and growth for everyone. One of our first space in this direction involves creating a safe environment where we can push our comfort zones and challenge ourselves to learn and grow.

*Adapted from "What makes dialogue unique" in The Magic of Dialogue by Daniel Yankelovich, pp. 39-40  
And provided by The Program on Intergroup Relations, University of Michigan.*

# Safety vs. Comfort



# What is an Ally?

- A person, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity, who supports and honors sexual diversity, acts accordingly to challenge homophobic, biphobic, and transphobic remarks and behaviors, and explores and understands these forms of bias within themselves.

# PRIVILEGE is...

- A special advantage or right that a person is born into or acquires during their lifetime.
- Privilege is not available to everyone in society.
- Privileged people may not *intentionally* do anything to discriminate or oppress others, but they are treated “better” as a result of belonging to a specific group.
- An individual may experience intersecting privileges and oppressions which may reflect differential receipt of benefits.
- *We are often unaware of our privilege and it is typically unexamined.*



# Marginalization is...

- Being excluded or confined to a lower social standing due to demographic, identity, social location factors.
- How does marginalization manifest in your everyday life?

Sizism

Ableism

Heterosexism

Racism

Ageism

Sexism



# Intersectionality

- Intersectionality is a concept used to describe the ways in which racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, xenophobia, classism, etc., are interconnected and cannot be examined from one another.



# Psychological Effects of Social Stigma

*WE ARE ALL RAISED IN A HETEROSEXIST SOCIETY*

- Negative sense of self
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Self-doubt/Self-hatred (Internalized homophobia)
- Substance use issues
- Self-injury
- Suicidal thoughts and attempts
- *Minority stress arises not only from negative events but from the totality of the minority person's experience in dominant society.*

# Conceptualizing Sexual Identity

- Components of Sexual Identity:
  - Biological Sex/Gender Assigned at Birth
  - ***Gender Identity & Expression***
  - ***Sexual Orientation***
  - ***Romantic Orientation***
  - Relationship Orientation/Relationship Status

# Conceptualizing Sexual Identity

- From LGBTQ+ to GSRM (Gender, Sexual, Romantic Minorities)
  - Intersections within Sexual Identity
  - Fluidity of sexuality
  - Not as hierarchical
- Self-identification vs. others labelling
- Identity does not always = Expression
- Intersections with other aspects of identity (race, ethnicity, religion, etc.)

- Transgender
- Transgender/Gender non-conforming (TGNC)
- Intersex
- Genderqueer
- Gender fluid
- Gender diverse
- Non-binary
- Bigender
- Agender
- Androgynous
- Two Spirit
- Drag queen/king
- Cross dresser
- AFAB / AMAB
- Trans man
- Trans woman
- Woman/Man
- Cisgender



## Gender Identity & Expression

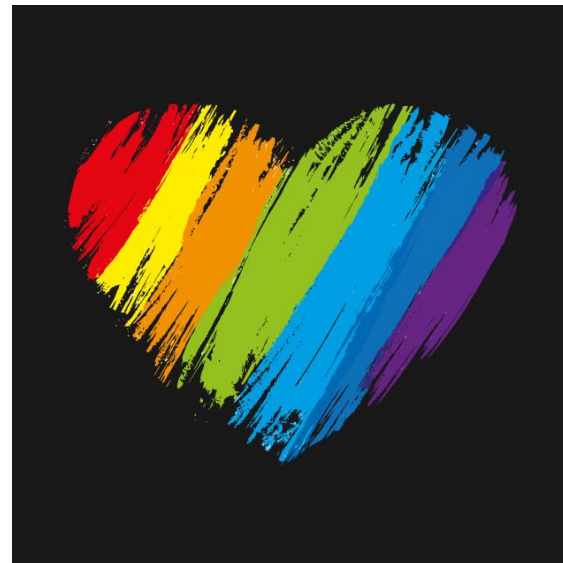
# Sexual Orientation

- Asexual
- Bisexual
- Fluid
- Gay
- Lesbian
- Demisexual
- Omnisexual
- Pansexual
- Queer
- Questioning
- Same Gender Loving
- Heterosexual/Straight



# Romantic Orientation

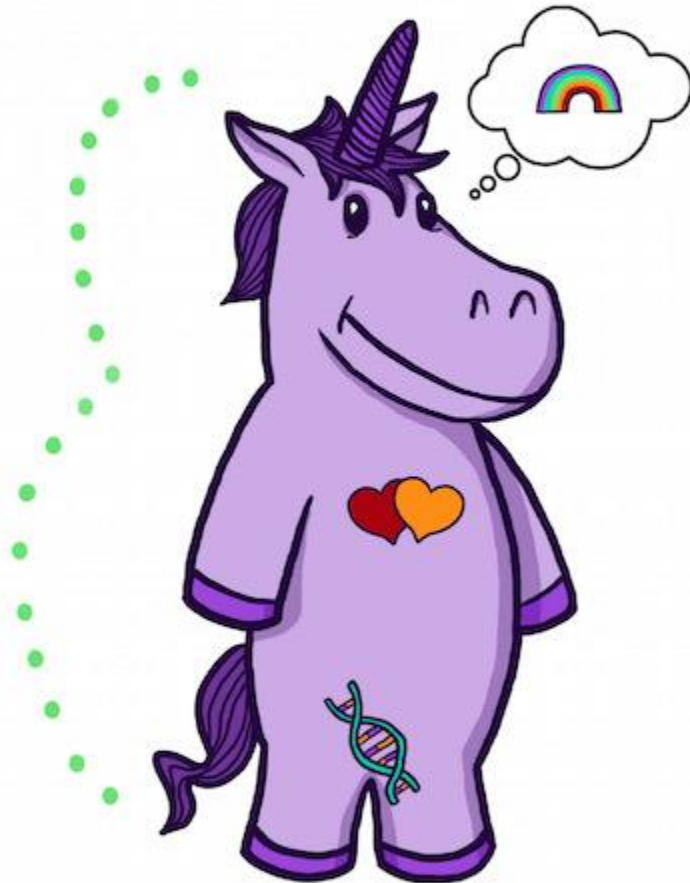
- Aromantic
- Biromatic
- Demiromantic
- Homoromantic
- Panromantic
- Ceteroromantic
- Polyromantic
- Heteroromantic





# The Gender Unicorn




Graphic by:  
**TSER**  
Trans Student Educational Resources



## Gender Identity

-  Female/Woman/Girl
-  Male/Man/Boy
-  Other Gender(s)

## Gender Expression/Presentation

-  Feminine
-  Masculine
-  Other

## Sex Assigned at Birth

-  Female
-  Male
-  Other/Intersex

## Sexually Attracted To

-  Women
-  Men
-  Other Gender(s)

## Romantically/Emotionally Attracted To

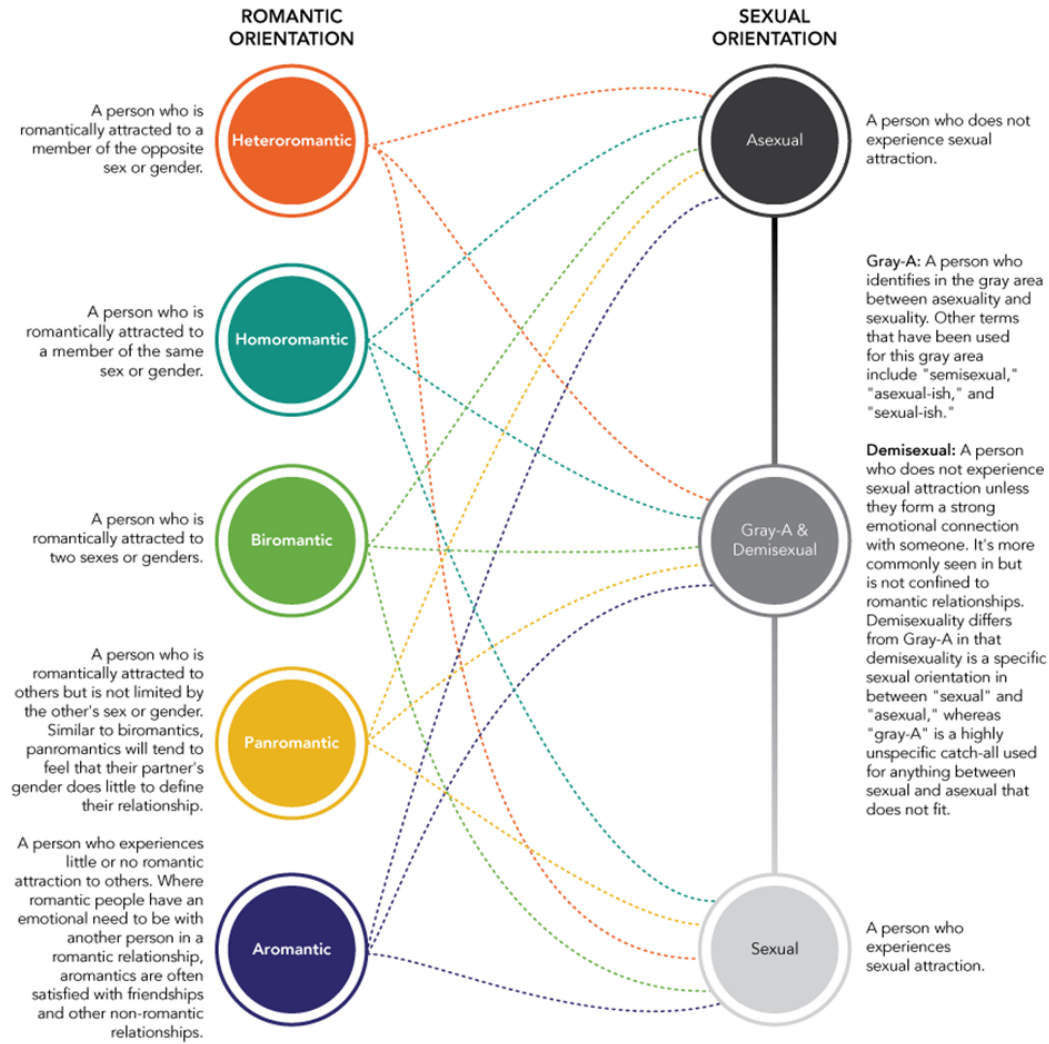
-  Women
-  Men
-  Other Gender(s)

To learn more go to:  
[www.transstudent.org/gender](http://www.transstudent.org/gender)

Design by Landyn Pan

# The Asexual Spectrum

Many asexuals identify with two orientations: a romantic and a sexual one. According to the Asexual Visibility and Education Network (AVEN), an asexual's romantic orientation determines "which gender(s), if any, they are inclined to form romantic relationships with." There are also individuals in the asexual community who identify in the gray area between asexuality and sexuality.\*



\*Note that this infographic is a limited and not definitive model of the asexual spectrum. Not all asexuals will identify or agree with the definitions in this graphic.

Source: AVENwiki ([asexuality.org/wiki/](http://asexuality.org/wiki/))

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