



Advice For Someone With A Disability Who Wants To Come Out Or Explore Their Sexuality

If you are having sexual thoughts or feelings, do not be ashamed. Do not keep them inside. Find a healthy way to let those feelings out and talk about them. Check out the resource [“What the Words Mean - A Basic List of LGBTQ Words.”](#)

For some it may be hard to “come out” as something different. You may feel alone. For others, it may be really exciting to discover something new and you want to share it with everyone. Take the time to consider who are the people you trust the most. It would be good to talk to them first. Here are some things to consider before you come out:

- Why do you want to tell this person?
- What are some of the good things they might do or say?
- What are some of the bad things they might do or say?
- What can you do to feel better when feeling stressed and anxious? What can we do to feel calmer and more relaxed?



“As someone with a disability it was hard to understand and talk about my sexual feelings. Keeping them inside made me feel bad about myself. I found a group of people with disabilities who are LGBTQ. We meet once a week. I am close with them. It feels good to be open about my sexuality and who I am as a person.”



If you're feeling confused about your sexuality, feel open to talk with someone you trust. There are counselors who help people with disabilities.

There is a lot of support for having a disability when you're in school. This is also a time when young people explore sexual identity. School may be a place to seek out support for feelings of sexuality.

Before you come out, think about how you will do it.

- You decide who to tell
- You decide when to tell. Pick a time when you feel comfortable.
- You decide where to tell. Pick a place that feels comfortable.
- You decide how to tell. Talk to the person or call them or email them or write a note.
- There is no right or wrong way to come out. You decide what works for you.



Think about how a person may react when you tell them you are LGBTQ. Remember you control what you do and say. You do NOT have any control over what other people do or say. It is a brave decision to come out. It may take time for the person to accept and understand what you are saying. Prepare yourself for a good reaction and bad reactions.



“Test the waters.” Before you come out to a person try talking about LGBTQ issues in general and see how they react:

- Talk about someone you both know who is gay
- Ask them how they feel about gay marriage
- Notice how they handle hearing unexpected news
- Listen to see if they tell gay jokes

It was hard to tell anybody because to my knowledge everyone I knew was heterosexual. My family was supportive of my disability but did not broach the subject of sexuality. Consider calling or visiting a LGBTQ community. Use this link to find a LGBTQ community center near you

<https://www.lgbtcenters.org/LGBTCenters>

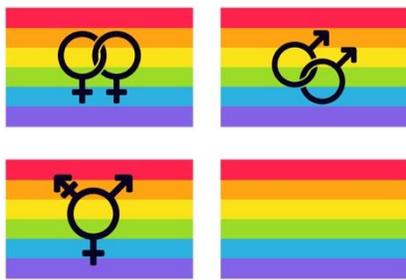
People with disabilities are not always considered "hot" or traditionally attractive. It is good to remember though that everyone has their own view of what beauty is, whether that is inside or out.

For me, coming out to friends and family felt great. Telling my whole story was such a relief. Sometimes just being able to hear myself talk about my feelings can help so much. Keeping



feelings inside and not talking about them can be hard. Finding people, I could feel open and safe talking about my sexuality was so liberating.

Telling my Mom was a huge weight off my shoulders. Telling my girlfriend was difficult, but it felt good when I was finally able to be honest. Feeling like I didn't have to hide anything anymore felt so freeing. My girlfriend's family had guessed that I was gay for a long time. Once I finally came out, lots of previous experience and memories started to make sense, and pieces of my life started to fall in place. I was pleasantly surprised at how supportive people were. Realizing that people cared about me being happy was a great feeling. Having other people accept me as gay



made me feel so much more secure and comfortable with my sexuality. I've been a lot more comfortable in my own skin and around other people. I've been to LGBTQ events and other groups that I feel good to be a part of. It

also sometimes helps me feel more comfortable with my disability. Being open with my sexuality helps me be more comfortable with myself as a person overall and has helped me grow.

Everyone has sexual feelings no matter what your sexual or gender identity. Everyone wants to have fun and express their sexuality. That applies to people with disabilities. Society must stop stigmatizing people with disabilities. People view LGBTQ people as "sexual". People should view disabled people as sexual as well.

Check out [Coming Out As You](#) is a pocket-sized booklet that guides you through the process of deciding who to tell and what to share. It is different for each person. Sometimes a person decides not to tell and that is okay.