

Qualities of Allies

Allies:

- Work to develop an understanding of sexual orientation, heterosexism, and the challenges facing gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people.
- Have a good understanding of sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression; and are comfortable with their own.
- Is committed to the personal growth (even when that involves discomfort) .
- Expect to make some mistakes but does not use it as an excuse for non-action.
- Know that in empowered ally relationships, the persons in the non-oppressed role initiate the change toward personal, institutional, and societal justice and equality.
- Are aware of the coming-out process and realize that it is not a one-time event. The coming-out process is unique to gay, lesbian and bisexual, and transgender people and brings challenges that are not often readily understood.
- Understand that gay, lesbian and bisexual people receive the same message about homosexuality and bisexuality as everyone else. Thus gay, lesbian and bisexual, and transgender people deal with internalized homophobia and heterosexism. It is important to recognize the risks of coming out and to challenge the internal oppression.
- Remember that gay, lesbian and bisexual people are a diverse group. Each community within the larger gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender community has unique needs, challenges, and goals.
- Know at least basic information about AIDS/HIV in order to address myths and misinformation and to be supportive of those affected by this disease whether in themselves or in partners and friends. While AIDS/HIV is a health issue for all, those who live with the most fear and have lost the most members of their community are gay, lesbian and bisexual, and transgender persons.
- Believe that it is in their self-interest to be an ally.
- Promote a sense of community with LGBT people and teaches others about the importance of outreach.
- Have a good sense of humor!