



Sexual Orientation



Overview

Most of us are drawn to others. Our attractions may be physical. They may be emotional or romantic. To describe the types of attractions we feel, we use the term "sexual orientation."

Deeply ingrained

You can know your sexual orientation at a young age. You can feel it before you've had sexual experiences. It's not something you can control. It's part of who you are.

Types of orientations

Different people have different orientations. Some people are attracted to those of the opposite sex. We say they are "heterosexual." Some people are attracted to those of the same sex. We may say they are "gay" or "lesbian." Some people have feelings for both sexes. We may say they are "bisexual."

Other orientations

For others, orientation is more complex. These people may say they are "pansexual" or "queer." They may say they are "questioning." And, some people don't feel any attraction to others. They may call themselves "asexual."

Conclusion

Sexual orientation is personal. You may not want to label it. Your orientation may even change throughout your life. Only you know what your sexual orientation means for you. For help with issues involving sexual orientation, talk to your healthcare provider. You can also contact a support group. And, you can reach out to a local LGBTQ organization.