



TALKING TO PEOPLE

Treat Everyone the Same

Understand that all people are just people.

You do not have to talk to anyone differently based on their skin color, sexual identity, or sexual orientation. Some differently abled people might need you to speak in simpler terms, but make sure you know if they need it before you do it.

Be Open Minded

Get to know people based on their personality. People are mean or nice based on their personalities not their skin color, race, religion, sexual orientation, or gender identity.

Be Kind if You Disagree

Kindness is not dependent upon having the same views. It is easy to get caught up in our own ideas about right and wrong, but try to remember that you probably have lots of friends with differing views.

Don't Express Pity

All people have their problems. Their challenges have shaped who they are and how they see the world, just like everyone. You don't need to treat anyone as though you feel sorry for them; they will probably notice that you are doing it.

Treat everyone with respect because they have dealt with the challenges that life has given them.

Don't Lecture

You're not going to change who they love. Lecturing a gay or lesbian person about why their sexuality is, in your opinion, wrong will not make them suddenly say, "Oh, you know what, you're right. I'll be straight now." This is because they didn't choose to be the way they are. Therefore, you won't get yourself anywhere by trying to force your own ideas on to them, and you might also miss out on the chance to get to know a really cool person.

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Don't Make Jokes

This can be really offensive. You may not mean anything by it, but making jokes about gays and lesbians, race, ethnicity, or religion can be hurtful. Avoid making them, and if someone makes them around you, let them know that you feel uncomfortable with such jokes.

Address Your Biases

Examine any stereotypes you have about people. Even if you whole-heartedly support diversity and inclusion you might still have some biases that you haven't dealt with.

For example, many people tend to assume that a gay man will be dressed in brightly colored clothing, have perfectly styled hair, and speak in a feminine way. Although this may sometimes be the case, it isn't always. Gay men and lesbians come in all shapes and sizes, just like straight people.

Respect Gender Variance

Avoid making assumptions about someone's preference based on gender. If you want to be an ally of the community, or if you simply want to learn more about it, then the first thing to understand is that sexuality and gender aren't necessarily related.

This means understanding and accepting that just because someone is born a woman does not mean that they should necessarily be attracted to men, or that someone born a man should be attracted to a woman.

Be Open if You Don't Understand

It's okay to express this in a respectful way. If you have a good relationship with this person and you want to understand them better, then you might ask the person to speak with you and help you understand.

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