



## Being an Ally

‘Ally’ often refers to individuals who do not identify as LGBTQ. However, it’s important to recognize that allyship within the community is important as well. Cisgender people can be allies to their transgender community members. Lesbian & gay individuals can be allies to bisexual people. Being an ally is a full-time label; that means that in order to fully realize your ally potential, it takes commitment and practice. Consider these points as you grow as an ally.

- Recognize that some individuals within the LGBTQ+ community experience different, and sometimes greater forms of interpersonal and systemic discrimination and oppression based on their racial and/or ethnic identity, their religion, their nation of origin, and so on. **Intersectional** allyship is key in supporting **all** LGBTQ+ community members.
- Be open-minded; approach new situations as an opportunity to learn
- Speak up, but not over
- Listen to the experiences of LGBTQ+ individuals
- Be inclusive in your language
- Invite LGBTQ friends to events with your friends and family; these can be excellent learning experiences
- Don't assume a person's sexual orientation and/or gender identity. Someone close to you could be looking for support in their coming out process and avoiding assumptions may give them the space that they need
- Homophobic/Heterosexist/Transphobic comments and jokes are **always** harmful. Let your friends, family and co-workers know that you find them offensive and are not welcomed in your space
- Stereotypes are sweeping generalizations about entire groups of people. Even if a stereotype is “good,” stereotypes are **always** bad
- Confront your own prejudices and biases, even if it is uncomfortable to do so
- Defend your LGBTQ friends and family against discrimination, personal and political
- Support and help organizations that work toward full LGBTQ equality
- Avoid relying on your LGBTQ+ friends and family to explain concepts or specific issues. Take steps to continue your own self-education and engage in informed dialogue
- Consider your privilege as a heterosexual person and/or a cisgender person. When you're able, use it to support your LGBTQ+ friends, family members, and co-workers
- Recognize when LGBTQ voices are particularly important and make sure that they are brought to the table

