

## **LGBT TERMS TO KNOW**<sup>9</sup>

- **Asexual:** Asexual people (or aces) feel little or no sexual attraction. Most aces want close emotional relationships, but they are not drawn to sex as a way to express that closeness.
- **Bisexual (Bi):** An umbrella term that describes people who are physically, emotionally and romantically attracted to men and women, or more than one gender.
- **Bottom:** when two men have sex, the partner who is receiving penetration from the other is considered the bottom.
- **Cisgender:** A person whose gender identity and expression “match” the sex they were assigned at birth.
- **Closeted/in the closet:** the act of hiding one’s sexuality or gender identity from others. It can refer to the time when one isn’t ready to admit their sexuality and/or gender identity to themselves or to others.
- **Gay:** Describes men who are physically, emotionally and romantically attracted to other men.
- **Gender Identity:** One person’s innate, deeply-known psychological identification as a man, woman or another gender.
- **Gender Fluid:** denoting or relating to a person who does not identify themselves as having a fixed gender
- **Gender non-conforming (GNC):** a word people use to describe their own non- standard gender identity, or by those who do not conform to traditional gender norms.
- **Genderqueer:** A gender identity or expression that is not only man or woman (can be both or neither).
- **HIV:** HIV stands for human immunodeficiency virus, which is the virus that causes HIV infection. The abbreviation “HIV” can refer to the virus or to HIV infection. HIV attacks and destroys the infection-fighting cells of the immune system. The loss of these cells makes it difficult for the body to fight infections and certain cancers.
- **Lesbian:** A woman who is physically, emotionally and romantically attracted to other women.
- **LGBTQ:** a term referring to the greater queer community. Stands for ‘lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer’
- **Living openly/out:** the act of LGBTQ people being out and open about their sexual orientation or gender identity in their personal and public lives.
- **Non-Binary/Gender Non-Binary:** A gender identity or expression that falls outside of being male/female or a man/woman.
- **Pansexual:** Describes people who are physically, emotionally and romantically attracted to others regardless of gender identity or biological sex.
- **POS** (sometimes Poz): an abbreviation for HIV positive

---

<sup>9</sup> Definitions from

[https://assets2.hrc.org/files/assets/resources/resource\\_guide\\_april\\_2014.pdf?\\_ga=2.220262555.2051475502.1546811310-967866161.1528431935](https://assets2.hrc.org/files/assets/resources/resource_guide_april_2014.pdf?_ga=2.220262555.2051475502.1546811310-967866161.1528431935) and <https://www.thetrevorproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/ComingOutAsYou.pdf>

- **Queer:** a term referring to anyone who is not straight and/or cisgender. Originally, considered a derogatory term/insult, it has been adopted by many LGBT people (especially young people) to describe themselves.
- **STI (sometimes called STD):** A sexually transmitted infection is an infection passed from one person to another person through sexual contact. An infection is when a bacterium, virus, or parasite enters and grows in or on your body. STIs are also called sexually transmitted diseases, or STDs. Some STIs can be cured and some STIs cannot be cured.
- **Straight/Heterosexual:** Describes individuals who are physically, emotionally and romantically attracted to individuals of the opposite gender.
- **Top:** when two men have sex, the partner who is penetrating the other is considered the top.
- **Transgender:** A term that describes people whose gender identity does not match the sex they were assigned at birth. There are many identities that fall under transgender. However, not all genderqueer, non-binary and non-conforming people identify as transgender.
- **Vers:** refers to a man who, when having sex with another man, will both 'top' and 'bottom' (vers is an abbreviation for versatile)

### Quotes on the being LGBTQ+ <sup>10</sup>

"I suffered for years because I was scared to be out. My spirit suffered, my mental health suffered and my relationships suffered. And I'm standing here today, with all of you, on the other side of all that pain. I am young, yes, but what I have learned is that love, the beauty of it, the joy of it and yes, even the pain of it, is the most incredible gift to give and to receive as a human being. And we deserve to experience love fully, equally, without shame and without compromise."

Ellen Page, actress



"I think people are born bisexual, and it's just that our parents and society kind of veer us off into this feeling of 'Oh, I can't.' They say it's taboo. It's ingrained in our heads that it's bad, when it's not bad at all. It's a very beautiful thing."

Billie Joel Armstrong, singer



"I will not have my life narrowed down. I will not bow down to somebody else's whim or to someone else's ignorance."

Alice Walker, writer & activist



"I decided to suppress my attractions toward men. I decided to only focus on women. Since I am also attracted to girls, I guess I figured I'd just get everything I need emotionally and sexually from girlfriends. I hoped I would never explore my same sex attractions, ever. I also tried to become more "masculine" by enrolling myself in martial arts training, as well as going to the gym. I thought that such activities would make me 'more of a man.'"

Damian Emba, Bi artist, activist, translator & writer

"I believe that telling our stories, first to ourselves and then to one another and the world, is a revolutionary act. It is an act that can be met with hostility, exclusion, and violence. It can also lead to love, understanding, transcendence, and community. I hope that my being real with you will help empower you to step into who you are and encourage you to share yourself with those around you."

Janet Mock, writer, director, & transgender activist



"My friends still look at me the same and my partner loves me unconditionally and supports me wholeheartedly. He isn't ashamed of my status, and neither am I. I've learned that I am not my status, but the man I make myself into every day. I am not just HIV-positive... I am me."

Israel, individual living with HIV

<sup>10</sup> Quotes from <https://bisexual.org/this-bi-life-growing-up-in-mexico/> and <https://www.avert.org/living-with-hiv/stories>  
Resource Guide prepared by LGBT Books to Prisoners & Alec Schaefer