Commonly Asked Questions
About People who are Bisexual

**Does bisexuality really exist? Aren’t people really either heterosexual or homosexual?**

Bisexuality is the potential to feel emotionally and/or sexually attracted to others without regard to biological sex. The Kinsey studies of human sexuality found that most people have an integration of homosexual and heterosexual feelings, although one orientation may dominate. Sexual orientation exists on a continuum; people may identify themselves as completely homosexual, completely heterosexual or somewhere in between.

**What’s the difference between bisexual and pansexual?**

This may depend on who you ask. Essentially, both terms are meant to describe a person who experiences attraction to others without regard to sex or gender. The difference between the two is that “bisexual” implies that there are only two sexes, while “pansexual” being "all" describes being open to people who fall at all points or even outside of the gender continuum.

**Is bisexuality just a phase?**

Some people may go through a transitional period of identifying as bisexual as part of their process of coming out as lesbian or gay. But for many others, bisexuality is a stable, long-term orientation. In fact, for some people homosexuality or heterosexuality can be considered transitional phases in the process of identifying as bisexual.

**Do some bisexuals identify as heterosexual, lesbian, or gay?**

There is a difference between what people do (sexual behavior) and what people call themselves (sexual identity). Many people who exhibit bisexual behavior by engaging in relationships with people of both sexes continue to identify themselves as either homosexual or heterosexual. Some may do so because of fear of discrimination and social stigmatization that comes from identifying as lesbian or gay. Others may do so to avoid negative reactions by members of the lesbian and gay community who might perceive them as denying their homosexuality. Others may feel that the label “bisexual” is inadequate to describe their experience. Also, other people may identify as bisexual while engaging only in same-sex relationships or only in opposite-sex relationships; their identification as bisexual may be an acknowledgement of their potential to be attracted to members of both sexes, even if they never act on that potential.

**Are bisexuals confused about their sexuality?**

It is natural for many people who are bisexual, just as for people who are lesbian or gay, to through a period of confusion during the coming out process as they recognize and accept their sexual orientation. For people who are bisexual, this confusion can be additionally complicated by believing the societal myth that people can only be heterosexual or homosexual. Also, people who are bisexual may appear to be “changing” their sexual orientation when they realize that a homosexual or heterosexual identity is inadequate for describing all of their feelings, and begin to identify as bisexual.
**Are bisexuals equally attracted to both sexes?**

Most people who are bisexual tend to have a stronger attraction toward one sex or the other, while recognizing their attraction to two sexes. Some people who are bisexual do feel equally attracted to two sexes, or may experience attraction independent of biological sex.

**Does bisexuality mean you are attracted to everyone?**

Just because people who are bisexual have the potential to be attracted to people of two sexes does not mean that they are attracted to everyone they meet, no more than heterosexuals are attracted to every person of the opposite sex or lesbians and gay men are attracted to every person of the same sex.

**Do bisexuals have to have partners of two sexes to be satisfied?**

Being bisexual means that a person has the potential to be romantically or sexually involved with people of two sexes, not that a person requires involvement with people of two sexes at the same time to feel fulfilled. While some people who are bisexual may have concurrent relationships with women and men, others may relate to different sexes sequentially, periodically, or in certain circumstances.

**Are bisexuals promiscuous?**

People who are bisexual have a range of sexual behaviors, just as do heterosexuals and people who are lesbian or gay. Some may have multiple partners, some may date but only be involved with one person at a time, others may be in long-term committed relationships.

**Can bisexuals be monogamous?**

Bisexuality is a sexual orientation, which is distinct from sexual behavior. Being bisexual is independent of choosing to live monogamously or non-monogamously. People who are bisexual are as capable of anyone of making a long-term monogamous commitment to a partner they love.

**Do bisexuals spread AIDS?**

AIDS occurs in people of all sexual orientations. Anyone who has unprotected sex, regardless of their sexual orientation, can contract or spread AIDS or other sexually transmitted diseases. People who are bisexual are no more likely to spread sexual diseases than anyone else. It is what a person does (sexual behavior), not who they are (sexual identity) that puts a person at risk for contracting AIDS.

**Why are some lesbians and gay men prejudiced against bisexuals?**

There are many myths about bisexuals which portray them as promiscuous, confused about their sexuality, or in denial about their homosexuality. Because of these myths, many people who are lesbian or gay feel that becoming involved with someone who is bisexual is risky. They may assume that a bisexual partner will not be satisfied with only one partner. They may fear that a bisexual partner will not want to experience the prejudice and discrimination common to people in same-sex relationships, and so will "go back," preferring to be in an opposite-sex relationship.

**Are bisexuals discriminated against?**

Society in general lumps bisexuals into a single category with lesbians and gay men. Because of this, people who are bisexual may encounter the same kinds of harassment and discrimination as people who are lesbian or gay. They may lose their jobs, be rejected by their families, lose their parental rights, or be discharged from the military.