

CREATING A SAFE SPACE FOR LGBTQIA++ COMMUNITY 🌈

Imagine that you're a puzzle piece.

You have all the right colours and the perfect design to complete the scene. **Yet, no matter how you turn, how you try to connect and belong to the puzzle of life, the other pieces don't seem to accept you.** They push you away with their sharp and unforgiving edges. And with every rejection, a sliver of your own form chips away.



This is the lived reality of many people belonging to the LGBTQIA++ community. A reality where simply being themselves is met with intolerance and discrimination.

This worksheet is for those who want to be a part of the solution, who want to be an ally. We can't change the past, but we can be the hands that mend the present and create a safe space where each individual feels belonged.



6 Ways To Create A Safe Space For the LGBTQIA++ Community!

1. Listen. Truly, Listen.

Sometimes, the best thing you can do is just be there for someone. When someone from the community opens up about their experiences, be there for them. Put aside distractions and listen. For example, put your phone on silent and make eye contact. Let them know you're present by nodding along or saying things like "uh-huh" or something empathic like "that sounds tough" to make them feel heard. You might be surprised by the power of simply listening with an open mind and a caring heart.



2. Mind Your Language!

Words have power, and creating a safe space means being mindful of how we use them. Here are some tips:

- **Don't Assume:** When meeting someone new, politely ask for their pronouns (e.g., "Hi, I'm Ira, and I use she/her pronouns. What pronouns do you use?"). This sets a respectful tone from the start.
- **Neutral Ground:** Aim for gender-neutral language in everyday conversations. Instead of "Hey guys!" try "Hey everyone!" or "Hey folks!" This simple switch shows you're inclusive of all genders.



Remember, a little effort goes a long way. By being mindful of pronouns and avoiding unnecessary gendered language, you're sending a powerful message about how everyone is welcome and respected, exactly as they are.

LGBTQ Inclusive Language In The Workplace



Ladies and gentlemen, guys and gals

Maternity and paternity leave

Husband, wife, boyfriend, girlfriend

"What are your preferred pronouns?"

Ms., Mr., or Mrs.

Mailman, chairman, policeman

Sexual preference



Colleagues, team, people

Parental leave, parental time off

Partner, spouse

"What pronouns do you use?"

People's first names, non-gender
specific titles like Mx or M

Mail clerk, chairperson, police officer

Sexual orientation

3. Challenge Biases!

We all carry around some unconscious biases learnt from our varied experiences and the social systems we grew up in. For example, when you hear your colleague mention their partner and automatically picture them as husband and wife. But in reality, families come in all shapes and sizes! Instead of assuming a gender for their partner, just ask! A simple "Who did you go with?" or "Tell me more about them!" shows you're open to their unique story. It's a small step, but it helps us all unlearn the "usual" and create a more inclusive space.



And just as it is important to recognise your own biases, it is also important as an ally to call out bias and discrimination when you notice it in others

4. Watch Out For Microaggressions:

Subtle stereotypical comments or questions can be termed as microaggressions and they can have a big impact on a person's sense of self. Maybe you compliment a trans woman by saying, "You look like a real woman!" While it might seem positive, it reinforces the idea that trans women need to validate their femininity. Being mindful of microaggressions is key to creating a truly safe space. We can all learn and do better!



5. Stay In Your Lane!

Everyone deserves to feel comfortable, and not pressured to share their whole life story. Maybe the person isn't ready to talk about their sexuality or gender identity, and that's totally cool! Focus on getting to know them as a person – what are they obsessed with? Where do they dream of traveling? By showing genuine interest in their passions, not just their labels, you build a strong connection and a safe space for everyone to be themselves.



6. Take responsibility:

Part of being an ally and creating a safe space for LGBTQIA+ folk is learning more about their identities and lived experiences. But remember, it is YOUR responsibility to educate yourself. Do not expect people from the community to take the responsibility of teaching you. Use the various tools available to you to explore and learn (e.g. the internet). Being an ally also involves acknowledging your own privilege - the unearned advantages you may have in society by virtue of your identity (e.g. being cisgender and heterosexual) in comparison to those who may have a different identity.



This is just the beginning! The LGBTQIA+ community is rich and diverse, and there's always more to learn. Remember, true allyship is a constant process of learning, unlearning, and growing. By putting in the effort, you can become a powerful force for positive change, creating a world where everyone feels safe, respected, and free to be exactly who they are.

If you, or someone you know is looking to seek professional help, reach out to us at **The Mood Space** <https://www.themoodspace.com/getstarted> and our Care Team will get back to you within 24 hours.

Not looking for professional help just yet? We understand, keep browsing through our Care Space tools and explore our self-help handouts and worksheets to navigate mental health-related challenges in a better manner.

