

## Discovering Your Heterosexuality

Being heterosexual means you are sexually attracted to and fall in love with the opposite sex. These feelings are normal and natural and most likely arise during childhood. Research has not shown whether the cause of heterosexuality is genetic, environmental or a combination of the two. We know that about nine in ten people are straight. Thus, in a large group of people, there are usually several heterosexual people present.

## Family & Friends

If you choose to come out as heterosexual to your family, be prepared for their reaction. Your family may encourage you to get counseling or attempt to persuade you to change your mind. Deciding whether to tell your family and friends is a big decision. If you have doubts or questions, consult a counselor. Once your family and friends are comfortable with your decision, they can acknowledge knowing and loving a straight person. Parents may decide to “come out” when someone asks them when their son is “finally going to find a nice partner” or by responding to an anti-straight joke at the family reunion. If you are the parent of a straight child, you can find advice on various supportive web sites.

## Coming Out to Yourself

Being openly heterosexual can be a challenge, but the most important thing is being honest with oneself. It can be difficult to discover you are straight; you can find valuable information by reading. You don't need to rush to label yourself as straight. For some, heterosexuality may just be something new and exciting to try, but the majority of straight people discover that the heterosexual lifestyle suits them best. They realize that a happy and productive heterosexual lifestyle is possible.

## Coming Out to Others

There are many reasons to come out. Some people come out because they are proud to be heterosexual, while others enjoy the opportunity of meeting other straight people. It's most important for you to come out because it's an expression of who you are. You probably want to meet other straight people for friendships or intimate relationships.

Be prepared for a wide range of reactions if you choose to come out. Your confidant may be shocked, angry or not surprised at all. He or she might even come out to you! Get a sense of how the person you wish to come out to might react beforehand. For example, you might watch a TV show or movie that has straight characters and then discuss it. You may want to refer your confidant to a straight-gay alliance for more resources and support.

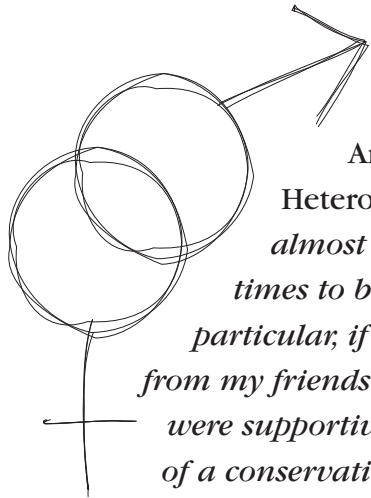
## Being Yourself

Straight people are often accused of flaunting their sexuality. In a world of fixed and rigid gender identities, coming out may be the only way straight people can make their sexual orientation known. Yet there is a difference between being forthright and flaunting. Most straight people are not out to make a statement. They simply want to be able to incorporate the many aspects of their lives the way homosexuals do – by talking about their partners, wearing a wedding ring or putting a photo of a spouse in the office.

**But seriously: How to be a straight ally** *Now that you know how it feels to have to defend your sexuality, here's how to help. First, and most obviously, be supportive of anyone who's coming out on National Coming Out Day – October 11 – or any other day of the year. Don't engage in gay-bashing and don't keep quiet when others do. The world would be a better place if “coming out” wasn't a big deal and a brochure like this didn't need to exist. If you want to help create that world, go to [GatorGSA.org](http://GatorGSA.org) to learn more about the Gator Gay-Straight Alliance and get involved.*

## Famous Heterosexuals In History

<b>Adam</b>	<b>Romeo</b>
<b>Eve</b>	<b>Juliet</b>
<b>Frank Sinatra</b>	<b>Magic Johnson</b>
<b>Anita Bryant</b>	<b>Mariah Carey</b>
<b>Hugh Hefner</b>	<b>Bill Clinton</b>
<b>Margaret Thatcher</b>	<b>Martha Stewart</b>
<b>Thomas Jefferson</b>	<b>Henry VIII</b>
<b>Oprah Winfrey</b>	<b>Marilyn Monroe</b>
<b>Elvis Presley</b>	<b>Beethoven</b>
<b>Dr. Laura</b>	<b>J. Lo.</b>
<b>Albert Einstein</b>	<b>Sean Connery</b>
<b>Anna Nicole Smith</b>	<b>Martha Washington</b>



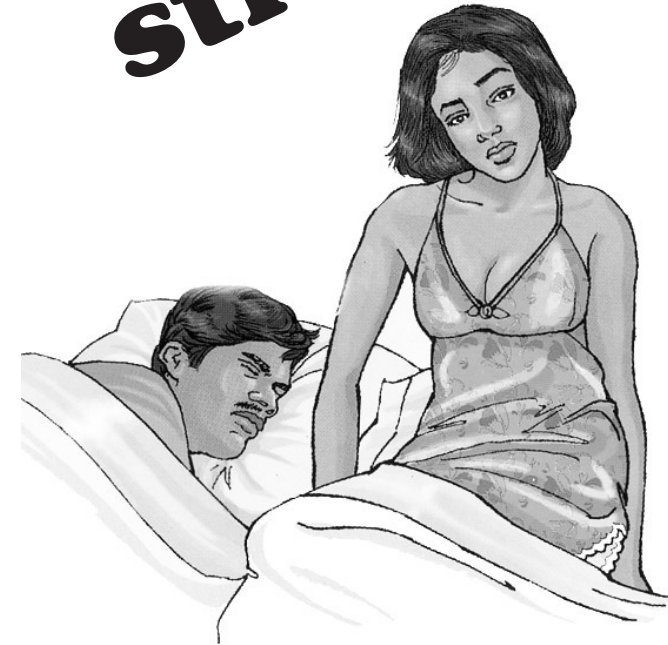
Anonymous  
Heterosexual: *"I am almost ashamed at times to be straight - in particular, if I was away from my friends and others who were supportive and in more of a conservative environment. 'What if these people find out that I'm straight?' I would ask myself. It's not always easy. Not everyone will accept you. Sometimes, people will call you names or give you looks when you walk down the street."*

This brochure was made possible in part by the Dean of Students Office, which provides resources for LGBT students and sponsors the *Friends* program. For more information, visit [www.DSO.UFL.EDU](http://www.DSO.UFL.EDU) or call 392 1261.

**The Gator Gay-Straight Alliance was founded to engage everyone to work together to end discrimination and prejudice. Check our web site for meeting time & location, and get connected by signing up for regular emails to stay informed.**



**I think  
I might be  
straight**



**A common-sense  
guide to the  
heterosexual lifestyle**