

A Guide to LGBTQIA+ Terms and Identities

Supporting LGBTQIA+ identity and mental health begins with understanding the language people use to describe themselves and their experiences.



Sexual Orientation

Who a person is emotionally, romantically, or sexually attracted to.

Gender Identity

A person's internal sense of their gender, which may or may not align with the sex assigned at birth.

Gender Expression

How a person presents their gender through appearance, clothing, hairstyle, voice, and behavior.

What Does LGBTQIA+ Stand For?

L (Lesbian)

Women who are primarily attracted to other women.

G (Gay)

People who are primarily attracted to others of the same gender.

B (Bisexual)

People who are attracted to more than one gender.

T (Transgender)

People whose gender identity differs from the sex assigned at birth.

Q (Queer/ Questioning)

Queer: An umbrella term for diverse sexual orientations and gender identities.

Questioning: Exploring or unsure of one's identity.

I (Intersex)

People born with reproductive or sexual anatomy that doesn't fit typical definitions of male or female.

A (Asexual/ Aromantic)

Asexual: Experiences little or no sexual attraction.

Aromantic: Experiences little or no romantic attraction.

+ (Plus)

Represents additional identities and experiences, including Pansexual, Nonbinary, Genderfluid, and many others.

Why Understanding Matters

Language evolves as our understanding of identity grows. Learning LGBTQIA+ terminology helps create affirming spaces, supports mental well-being, and fosters respect, inclusion, and belonging for all individuals.

Every person's identity is unique—and everyone's experience deserves respect.