



COMING OUT, DISCLOSURE & PRIVACY

YOUR IDENTITY IS YOURS - DISCLOSURE IS A CHOICE

Coming out can be meaningful, complicated, joyful, risky, or unnecessary. No one is entitled to personal information about your identity.

YOU CHOOSE WHO KNOWS

- You can be out in some parts of life and private in others.
- Privacy is not dishonesty.
- You do not owe disclosure to relatives, coworkers, classmates, neighbors, faith communities, or social media.

CHECK SAFETY FIRST

- Consider housing, finances, employment, school, immigration, healthcare, transportation, family dependence, and risk of violence or coercion.
- If disclosure could threaten safety or basic needs, waiting can be a protective choice.

PLAN THE CONVERSATION

- Choose the person, place, timing, and amount of information you want to share.
- Decide what questions you will answer and what is private.
- Have an exit plan or supportive person available if the response is uncertain.

YOU CONTROL THE NEXT STEP

- You can say: 'I am telling you because I want you to know, not because I am asking permission.'
- You can ask someone not to share the information.
- If someone outs you without consent, responsibility for that breach belongs to them.

CULTURE & SPIRITUALITY

- Identity can coexist with culture, race/ethnicity, family traditions, spirituality, faith, or non-faith.
- Some people find affirming communities within their traditions; others need distance from communities that have caused harm.
- There is no required way to integrate these parts of yourself.

BUILD AFFIRMING CONNECTION

- Choose people and spaces where your identity is treated with dignity.
- For youth, supportive family and school environments are associated with better health and connectedness.
- If rejection happens, seek affirming people and practical safety support.

You do not have to disclose before you are ready. Authenticity includes the right to privacy and safety.

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Sources: CDC, Supporting LGBTQ+ Youth (2024); CDC, Parents' Influence on LGBTQ Teens (2024).