

Acceptance without exception

Pride@Page

LGBT+ PROFILE



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I came out when I was 18 years old to my family, and it still is one of the hardest things I've ever done. After years of hiding a massive aspect of your life, your biggest secret becomes reality. It is no longer safe within the cohorts of your own acceptance and it's no longer ideas inside your head, it becomes who you are, there is no going back once you've externalised it, an adjective you will never lose: tall, brunette, athletic, gay.

I was lucky enough to be accepted by my friends and family, but this is not the leading response; many parents still need time to accept their children won't lead heteronormative lives. However, tolerance and acceptance are different things, when you come out you learn to be happy with tolerance. I have experienced more objectification of gay women than hate, this even more so represents a lack of respect and belief in non-binary sexuality. Yet, I can't expect centuries of societal oppression to be non-existent today, and with each generation we explore greater understandings of sexuality, with new social / legal breakthroughs happening every year. I do believe we will at some stage have full acceptance.

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Coming out at work can be a very similar feeling, we spend more time in the workplace than we do in our own home, feeling accepted is crucial for our levels of comfort and motivation in the office. When I was interviewing for my job at Page it was the first career interview I had ever had, I didn't mention anything about my sexuality throughout the process. I suppose I thought it wasn't relevant, and I still feel a lot of vulnerability when I tell people for the first time. When I started at Page and I realised we had support groups such as Pride@Page it brought me a great deal of comfort, knowing that on a global level there is acceptance and support if I needed it. With the business being so supportive and having an inclusive working culture, telling my colleagues became a far less worrying task. Everyone recognises the importance of individual acceptance.

That is the essence of pride month, and the reason we still need support groups like this in the workplace, they portray to a lot of people the overwhelming acceptance that is present today, and they highlight the support from people and institutions in what can be a very isolating experience. They also make it abundantly clear that we don't have a seat at the table for intolerance, and it's lovely to know that every time I go to work.