

A recent US study found that 30% of youth suicides were linked to problems related to one's sexuality.

Young people are facing a lack of information and understanding from others. Many are confused about their sexualities.

"I'm attracted to women, but I can't be a lesbian because I'm still attracted to men... what am I?" is a typical question.

It's thus very important that unprejudiced information be available on all the options.

This pamphlet is a step in that direction.

**Q: So what exactly is a bisexual?**

A: A bisexual is someone who is sexually and emotionally attracted to people of all genders.

**Q: So they're equally interested in men and women and trans/intersex people?**

A: Not necessarily. Some are, some aren't. Some say they're attracted to men and women in different ways, others say gender just isn't relevant to who they're interested in.

**Q: Doesn't being interested in all genders mean they're less interested in any one specific gender?**

A: Most bisexuals will probably say that when they're interested in someone, they're interested in them 100%. Just like you and I.

**Q: Aren't people really either heterosexual or homosexual?**

A: No. It's well recognized in medical and psychological circles that bisexuality is a very

real and genuine sexuality. But anyway, there are plenty of bisexuals around who can tell you that.

**Q: Isn't it just a phase?**

A: No more than being heterosexual or homosexual is.

**Q: But isn't it a transition to being lesbian or gay?**

A: Maybe for some people. Some lesbians or gay men "come out" as bisexual first, but most bisexuals remain bisexual for the rest of their lives.

**Q: But surely they're just confused, they haven't made up their minds yet?**

A: Don't make the mistake of assuming there are only 2 options to choose from. Bisexuality is an option in it's own right. A lack of information about bisexuality is probably the cause of most confusion a bisexual might feel.

**Q: Didn't Freud think we're all bisexual?**

A: Not quite - Freud thought we were all born bisexual, and may develop a preference later in life. No one is really quite sure about this, but most people have had at least some feeling for both genders at some stage in their lives.

**Q: Suppose I have - does that mean I'm bisexual too?**

A: Strictly speaking, maybe. But what you call yourself is up to you. Some may feel the attraction they feel for one gender isn't enough to call themselves bisexual. Some people have other reasons for not identifying as bisexual, as well.

**Q: Like what?**

A: Some people may want to feel "normal" and think of themselves as heterosexual. Others for political or social reasons may wish to identify with the lesbian & gay communities.

**Q: Doesn't the term "lesbian & gay" include "bisexual" as well?**

A: That's a hot issue for some people. Some people think so, but there are plenty (bisexual and otherwise) who disagree. Lesbians fought for the right to be explicitly named, because they felt invisible. That battle is still going on for bisexuals.

**Q: So why aren't the bisexuals more visible?**

A: Well, no-one walks around with "bisexual" stamped on their foreheads. It's very easy to miss them. If you see 2 people of the same gender kissing, you don't think to ask if they might be bisexual. And they might be.

Similarly, if you see a man and a woman kissing, either (or both!) of them might be bisexual, too.

Also, there's a real lack of information about bisexuality in our libraries and the media. And there are very few organizations that specifically address bisexual issues. Some bisexual people have felt as if no one knows they even exist.

**Q: Haven't they received a lot of publicity for spreading HIV?**

A: Bisexuals have been targeted as scapegoats by people who think of HIV as being a "gay disease". Bisexuals are thought to be a "bridge" group between the heterosexual and homosexual communities.

Let's get things straight (forgive the pun). One thing spreads HIV: taking someone else's bodily fluids (like blood or semen) into your body. The HIV virus neither knows nor cares what your sexuality is. Safe sex will go a long way towards helping stop the spread of HIV, and everyone - bisexual, straight, or whatever - needs to pay attention to that.

**Q: OK, I've heard what you've said so far. Where's the Bisexual Movement?**

A: You're holding part of it in your hands. Historically speaking, Bisexuals have been part of the Lesbian & Gay Movement right from the beginning. And they're still there now, too. They're fighting the same sorts of issues: discrimination based on who they love.

The Bisexual Movement is still young, but give it time.

The October 1992 edition of the *International Directory of Bisexual Groups* was 52 pages.

The 2001 edition of its current incarnation, *The Bisexual Resource Guide* is 296 pages, and spans 49 countries.

For a copy of the most recent edition, updated every other year, send US\$13.95 to the Bisexual Resource Center (BRC). See the address below.

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# Bisexuality: Some Questions Answered

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