

My loved one says they are asexual. What does that mean?

Asexuality is a sexual orientation describing people who do not experience sexual attraction. Most individuals find there are certain people they are not sexually attracted to. For asexuals, this includes everyone!

What causes asexuality?

As with all sexual orientations, what causes asexuality is still unknown. Recent academic studies reveal no major biological or psychological difference between asexual and non-asexual people. We hope that as the study of human sexuality grows that the study of asexuality also grows.

Can asexual people fall in love?

Yes. Asexual people have the same range of emotional needs as everyone else and vary widely in how they fulfill or express their needs. Some asexuals are happiest on their own or with a group of close friends while others have a desire to date and seek long-term partners.

Isn't this just a phase?

Asexuality is no more a phase than any other form of sexual expression. Sexuality is fluid and can change over a lifetime for some, but that is not universally true. Youth who identify as asexual should be treated with the same respect as youth who come out as lesbian, gay, or bisexual.

Quick Facts

Asexuality Is Not:

- Celibacy
- Androgyny or lack of gender
- Sexual repression or aversion
- Sexual dysfunction
- Loss of libido due to circumstance or age
- Fear of intimacy
- The inability to find a partner
- The inability to fall in love

Asexual People May:

- Want friendship and understanding just like everyone else.
- Fall in love.
- Experience arousal and orgasm.
- Be of any gender, age, or background.

Learn More

Asexuality Visibility and Education Network (AVEN)

www.asexuality.org

Asexual Explorations

asexystuff.blogspot.com

Asexual Awareness Week

www.asexualawarenessweek.com

Statistics cited and quotes used are from the asexual community census. Public data on the census is available here:
<http://www.tinyurl.com/AsexyCensusResults>

What Does “Asexual” Mean?



A Brief Guide to Asexuality for Parents and Family



Produced and published
by Asexual Awareness Week
Community Partner Series – SOFFA
Last updated July 2012
www.asexualawarenessweek.com

Asexual.

Someone who does not experience sexual attraction.

Does my loved one need to see a doctor or therapist?

If your loved one is happy, there is no need to seek any medical attention. Asexuality is not a disease to be cured and there is nothing medically wrong with someone not experiencing sexual attraction. While it may seem intuitive to check your loved one's hormones or encourage them to seek therapy to find the "problem" so that it can be "fixed," this implies that asexuality makes someone broken. Being treated like a sick or diseased person is a major problem faced by asexuals.

Can someone be gay and asexual?

Many asexuals can be emotionally and/or romantically attracted to other people and may additionally identify as bisexual, gay, lesbian, or straight. There are also aromantics who do not experience romantic attraction and form close platonic relationships. Asexuals may identify as any gender; 20% of the community identifies as transgender or questioning their gender identity.

Does this mean my loved one will never have sex?

Not necessarily. Sexual orientations, like asexuality, describe who someone is attracted to. Behavior does not always mirror that, and while many asexuals remain virgins, others choose to explore sex. Make sure your loved one knows that they are supported no matter how they express their sexuality.

Why does awareness about asexuality matter?

Sexuality is such an important aspect of our culture that people who don't relate to the sexual norm can feel inadequate or isolated. Asexual people may believe or be told that they are "broken" or need to be "fixed" by their family, friends, or doctors. By raising awareness about asexuality we hope to let people know that they are not alone and that exploring sexuality on your own terms is nothing to be ashamed of. We want asexual people to know there are others out there just like them. Creating positive space for asexual people to explore sexuality enables them to be open and honest without fear of alienation and misunderstanding.

How can I be supportive?

The best thing to do is to be supportive of your loved one. Avoid phrasing like, "Don't worry, you'll want to someday," and "It's just a phase, it'll pass." These comments treat asexuality as a negative thing, and asexuals consider it a positive part of their lives. Use phrases like, "I love you just the way you are," and ask questions like "What does that mean to you?" to better understand. Be patient and listen to your loved one.

"I don't feel like I belong because my (a)sexuality makes me invisible and erased."

—Write-in response from the Asexual Community Census

Support Services

Few resources exist that are asexual specific. Asexual meetups can be accessed online and often provide a safe space for asexuals. Many LGBT resources are starting to have asexuality resources too.

The Trevor Project has specific training to help asexual youth in crisis. The Trevor Project has assistance available 24 hours a day, seven days a week at 1-866-488-7386. They also offer other services, such as a safe space social network and message board system.