

What an Ally Does and Doesn't Do

What an Ally Does

- Communicates her or his willingness to actively support the efforts to struggle for social justice
- Takes initiative and responsibility for his or her own education about various forms of social injustice
- Confronts oppressive language, behaviors, and institutional practices in the interest of establishing a socially-just environment

What an Ally Doesn't Do

- Set the agenda for others to follow in their struggle for social justice
- Attempt to provide support for others until learning what support is desired

How Homophobia Hurts Us All By Warren Blumenfeld

You don't have to be or know someone who is a gay man, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender person to be negatively affected by homophobia. In reality, though homophobia actively oppresses gay men, lesbians, bisexuals, and transgender people, it also hurts heterosexuals. In the larger perspective, everyone loses.

Homophobia can inhibit the ability of heterosexuals to form close, intimate relationships with members of their own sex for fear of being perceived as gay, lesbian, or bisexual.

Homophobia restricts communication with a significant percentage of the population.

Homophobia locks people into rigid gender-based roles that inhibit creativity and self-expression.

Homophobia is often used to stigmatize heterosexuals who visibly support gay men, lesbians, bisexuals, and transgender people or those who do not conform to rigid sex roles.

Homophobic conditioning compromises the integrity of heterosexuals by pressuring them to treat others badly, actions that are contrary to their basic humanity.

Homophobia results in the invisibility of gay, lesbian, and bisexual lives in school-based sex education discussions, keeping vital information from students.

Homophobia may be one cause of premature sexual involvement, which increases the chances of teen pregnancy and the spread of sexually transmitted diseases. Young people, of all sexual identities, are often pressured to become heterosexually active to prove to themselves and others that they are "normal."

Homophobia prevents some gay men, lesbians, and bisexuals from developing an authentic self-identity and adds to the pressure to marry, which in turn places undue stress and often trauma on themselves as well as their heterosexual spouses and their children.

Homophobia (along with racism, sexism, classism, ageism, and all oppression) discourages a unified and effective governmental and societal response to AIDS, which has far-reaching implications.

Homophobia prevents heterosexuals from accepting the benefits and contributions offered by the gay, lesbian, transgender, and bisexual communities: theoretical insights, social visions and options, and contributions to the arts and culture, religion, family life, and other sectors of society.

Credits

From the UCLA LGBT Campus Resource Center (www.lgbt.ucla.edu/)