

Are you facing the reality that you may be gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgendered, and feel confused, scared and overwhelmed?

Do you feel hurt or rejected because those you care about are not able to accept that you are gay?

Are you gay, lesbian, transgendered or bisexual, and find yourself struggling in relationships?

You don't have to feel alone and lost as you face these questions and struggles in your life.

Counselling can help you:

- **Come to Terms with the Challenges of Being Gay**
- **Solve Relationship Problems**
- **Heal Trauma and Abuse**
- **Overcome Depression and Anxiety**

While Being Gay in a Straight World can be very challenging, counselling can provide a great opportunity to help you listen to your heart and discover your deepest, truest self so that you can live your life in a way that makes you feel happy and complete.

As a lesbian counsellor who has lived and worked with the gay and lesbian population for more than 10 years, I understand from my own experience the challenges involved in Being Gay in a Straight World.



If you are gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered or questioning and are looking for a counsellor who understands, I may be the counsellor for you.

Call me for a free and confidential 15 minute phone consultation. Together we can decide the best course of action for you.



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Being Gay in a Straight World

9 Tips to Help You Stay Strong

Being Gay in a Straight World

1 You are the expert on YOU.

No one else knows how you feel or what you need better than YOU. Be wary of people who tell you what you should do or how you should feel. **Learn to trust yourself.**

2 Your journey is unique.

There is no right way to be gay, and no right way to come out. **You can decide when it feels right and safe to be "out"**, who you want to talk to about being gay / queer, and when it does not feel safe to say anything.

3 Find places of support.

Being gay / queer in a straight world can feel very scary, lonely or isolating. It is important that you **find safe places to talk with others** who understand you and support you. If you don't have someone you can talk to, a counsellor who understands issues that gays and lesbians face can provide a safe and supportive environment in which to explore your struggles.

4 Other people's reactions are not your responsibility.

You may face judgmental or negative reactions from people around you who do not understand you. Remember that you are not responsible for the reactions of others, and that **your own safety and well-being need to be your priority.** If fear, obligation, or guilt are keeping you stuck in negative relationships, a counsellor can help you break free so you can build supportive, healthy relationships.

5 You may need to grieve old expectations and assumptions.

While you may feel a huge sense of relief as you come to terms with your sexual orientation, you may also face a sense of loss and grief. You may struggle to find a sense of community or to find places where you belong. **Give yourself time to honour the losses and let the grief touch your soul.** As you take time to grieve, new awareness, new possibilities and new hope can emerge.

6 Be gentle with yourself.

Learn to be understanding and compassionate with yourself so that you can get the encouragement and support you need. If this is a problem area for you, a counsellor can help you work on respecting yourself and your journey.

7 It is a gift to be different.

Sometimes not fitting in feels like a huge burden to bear and a source of pain. However, over time we discover that it is a gift to celebrate our differences, and that the world needs diversity. **Learn to celebrate all of your uniqueness and "differentness."** Find people who love you because you are you!

8 There will be ups and downs; focus on keeping a "bigger picture" perspective.

Sometimes when we are having a very difficult or challenging time, it feels like that is all there is. Find things that remind you of the hope and joy that can be yours when you get through this time. **Find the resources you need to support your courage and strength and to offer hope.**

9 The journey is worth it!

As you become more comfortable with who you are and more free to know yourself and express yourself, you can live a more authentic and fulfilling life. **You can feel good about yourself** and come to feel that the journey was truly worth it!

If you would like further information or if you are looking for counselling, contact:

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