



**SUPPORT** - Thank them for sharing their identities and ask how you can help them in navigating their identity. Follow through.

## WHAT NOT TO DO WHEN SOMEONE IS "INVITING YOU IN"



**UNDERMINE** - Do not say things such as "I already knew." Inviting in is an impactful step in identity, treat it as such.



**DOUBT** - Believe what you are being told, regardless of preconceived ideas.



**INVADE** - Do not push, do not pry. Do not ask invasive questions regardless of curiosity.



**OVERPOWER** - Do not speak over the person talking. Allowing to open up at their own pace will help validate their identity.



**REJECT** - Do not think their identity is a phase. Do not cut off support. Do not stop caring for the person with the same love.



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# COMING OUT VS. INVITING IN



## REFRAMING THE NARRATIVE

# WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

“Coming out” refers to the process of LGBTQ+ individuals letting one’s sexuality or gender identity be known both privately and publicly.

The narrative of “inviting in” challenges the concept of “coming out.” “Inviting in” gives LGBTQ+ individuals the power and choice to choose who they want to share their sexuality or gender identity with. This narrative removes the overwhelming connotations of “coming out” and supports the idea that sexuality and gender identity are yours to share if and when you’d like to.



## WHY IS "INVITING IN" IMPORTANT?

While “coming out” can be empowering for some, it can be overwhelming for others. Some believe that “coming out” perpetuates a harmful power dynamic that pressures LGBTQ+ individuals to “confess” their identities to the public, which is not something cisgender-heterosexuals are also expected to do. The pressure of “coming out” creates negative feelings that if LGBTQ+ identities are not publicly shared, that LGBTQ+ individuals are being dishonest to themselves and society.

The concept of “coming out” is portrayed to be a one-time event, which is not true. LGBTQ+ individuals face the pressure of “coming out” whenever they meet new people or are in new places. The pressure can be overwhelming when expected to “come out” in environments that do not value nor respect LGBTQ+ identities, experiences, or safety.

**"COMING OUT IS NOT A 'RITES TO PASSAGE.' LGBTQ+ INDIVIDUALS ARE VALID WHETHER THEY SHARE THEIR IDENTITIES OR NOT."**



## HOW TO SUPPORT SOMEONE WHO IS "INVITING YOU IN"



**LISTEN** - Let the person speak and do not interrupt them. This is their moment, not yours.



**RESPECT** - Do not pressure them to speak, allow them to share what they are comfortable sharing.



**AFFIRM** - Validate them by saying that their identity and feelings are valid. Do not challenge nor question what they are sharing with you.



**ASK** - If you are unclear as to what a term means, ask appropriate questions for clarification. Do not ask invading questions.