

## Where can I find more information?

For more information on LGBT issues; questions regarding OHIO SafeZone, SpeakOUT!, and campus organizations; or to check-out a book, magazine, or video from our Resource Library; visit the LGBT Center.



The OHIO SafeZone project is a voluntary, educational effort to support LGBT & Questioning students, faculty, and staff at Ohio University by attending a two hour workshop and by displaying a SafeZone card. If you are an LGBT supporter, it is time to act!

## SpeakOUT!

### Speaker's Bureau & Education Project

SpeakOUT! is a dynamic speaker's bureau and education project that has been assisting class instructors, student organizations, and resident assistants with their speaker/education needs for years. Formats include a panel presentation, Coming Out 101, or tailor-made presentations.

### Resource Library

Our Resource Library is a collection of books, magazines, and videos on a variety of topics including LGBT history, legislation, biographies, fiction, and religion in relation to LGBT concerns, as well as coming out resources. Check it out today!

## Campus Resources

If you, or a friend, are struggling with issues surrounding one's sexuality, stop by the LGBT Center and schedule a meeting with Mickey Hart. This will allow for the opportunity to discuss issues you are facing in terms of questioning your sexual orientation or coming out as a bisexual, or transgender person. You are not alone! You do not have to face this alone! Come share and learn in this safe and confidential space. Check the LGBT Center's website for more resources at [www.ohio.edu/lgbt](http://www.ohio.edu/lgbt).

### Hudson Health Center: Counseling and Psychological Services

A great service that is sometimes overlooked is the Counseling and Psychological Services on the third floor of Hudson Health Center. Their services are free to students, and they have a great staff of counselors who are queer-friendly. Appointments can be made on the third floor during office hours. Phone: 740.593.1616. Website: <http://www.ohiou.edu/counseling/>



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# RIDING THE EMOTIONAL ROLLERCOASTER

## Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Center

354 Baker Center  
Ohio University  
Athens, OH 45701

740.593.0239  
[www.ohio.edu/lgbt](http://www.ohio.edu/lgbt)

**Some people feel that the process of coming out as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender (LGBT) is like boarding an emotional roller coaster. One minute you feel excited, and the next minute you are sad and anxious. It might help to know that experiencing a wide range of emotions during the coming out process is a completely normal experience.**

Almost all people experience some level of fear and anxiety during their initial coming out process. People who are just recognizing that they may be LGBT often fear rejection the most. They worry that coming out will cause their friends and family to reject them. Sadly, many times their fears about rejection seem to be justified when friends and family members have difficulty adjusting to their loved one's identity as LGBT. If you are experiencing rejection like this, remember that families and friends often have to go through their own "coming out" process before they remember that they love you for who you are.

Another common emotional experience is worrying that you will not "fit in" with the LGBT community once you come out. People often wonder how they will meet others and how to interact with people. On the other hand, you may feel a great sense of relief when you finally meet a person who is LGBT or when you first go to an LGBT gathering. You may feel like you have finally discovered others who are like you and maybe even feel a sense of coming home, of belonging to a community.

Many people feel elation at points in the coming out process. You may be excited about meeting new LGBT friends and having new experiences, such as going to meetings and parties. And of course, dating and falling in love is almost always an exciting and elating experience. Sometimes the process of coming out can seem like your entire life is opening up with new possibilities!

## **Now boarding: The Emotional Roller Coaster**

For many people, some degree of depression may come on the heels of the elation and excitement of coming out. It is very common to feel some degree of sadness. Part of this may be grief about the negative reactions of some of those closest to you. Sadness may also come because of fears that you will not be able to fulfill some lifelong dreams, such as getting married and having children. People with strong religious beliefs sometimes have difficulty dealing with what their religion says about homosexuality. Finally, many people feel lonely and isolated when they first come out, especially if they have not yet made a solid connection with a supportive community of other LGBT individuals.

There are many ways to cope with the emotional roller coaster often associated with the coming out process. Things may get easier as you integrate your LGBT identity with the rest of your personality. Going to social and political gatherings of other LGBT people is a good way for you to get acquainted with your new community. This is also a good way to meet new friends, maybe even someone you want to date! You may consider joining one of the organizations on campus; at these groups, you will meet others who are having similar experiences and who have created coping strategies that you will find helpful.

Another way to cope with the emotional roller coaster is to identify people who will be supportive of your process. Look in the obvious places first—among your friends, family, faculty advisor, classmates, RAs, and others on your residence hall floor, on your street, or in your Greek house. You might also look for faculty and staff who post a SafeZone card in their office space; this card indicates that the person is willing to talk to you about LGBT issues. If you are a spiritual person, consider talking with a religious professional who is an ally to the LGBT community; United Campus Ministry (18 N. College St.) or Hillel (21 Mill St) may be best for that.

## **Ohio University LGBT & Ally Campus Organizations**

**ActOUT** is an LGBT political action orientated organization.

**ALLY** is a group striving for the equal treatment of all minority groups, specifically focusing on the issues of LGBT individuals.

**Bi the Way** is a bisexual student support and social group.

**Empowering Women of Ohio (EWO)** is an organization that bridges the gap between LGBT issues and Women's Rights concerns.

**Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Commission of Student Senate**

**Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Commission of Graduate Student Senate**

**Open Doors: Ohio University's LGBTIQQA Student Union.** Is the long-time OU (Early 1970's) umbrella LGBT organization that provides social activities, support and educational events.

**OUTgrads & Non-Trads** is a social network for all LGBT grad students and non-traditional aged undergrads.

**OUT@Work** is a social group for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender employees of Ohio University.

**SHADES** is for people of color who are at various stages of understanding the coming out process, questioning or accepting their sexuality and/or understanding the LGBT community.

**Unify** is a group of diverse students committed to helping increase diversity and understanding at Ohio University.

For more information about these groups or for meeting times, visit [www.ohio.edu/lgbt](http://www.ohio.edu/lgbt) and click on LGBT Organizations.