

Tips for When Someone Comes Out To You

1. Be patient. Allow them to tell you at their own pace. Let them determine what is needed.
2. Commit yourself as an ally. Let them know you are accepting.
3. Don't push. A person who is coming out may have a hard time talking about it. Don't force them to disclose anything.
4. Keep their confidence and respect their privacy.
5. Acknowledge the risk they took by coming out to you. Compliment their courage. Don't minimize the importance of what they did by saying, "It doesn't matter to me."
6. Instead say, "Thank you for trusting me."
7. Or say, "It doesn't change how I feel about you," or admit that it might change things in positive way.
8. Don't over-react
9. If you're comfortable with it, offer a hug or some show of support.
10. Ask, "Is there anything I can do for you?"
11. Don't ask: Are you hot for me? What made you do this? Who did this to you? Is it just a phase? Aren't you worried about AIDS? Were you molested? Does this mean you want to be a man (said to a woman)? Does this mean you want to be a woman (said to a man)?

* Adapted from UCLA LGBT Resource Center Out on Campus