



Being LGBTQ+: You Deserve to Live as Your True Self!

The best present we can give ourselves, is to live our lives as our authentic, true selves. Coming out and being out can be stressful and rewarding. Nevertheless, there are companies to work for, friends to meet, and a community of people who value you just as you are!

Managing Stressors

There are many inherent stressors in one's environment that one may have to navigate as an LGBTQ+ community member. These can include coming out to others; not knowing if you'll be accepted, rejected, or judged; feeling marginalized or excluded or treated differently by others; or dealing with homophobia or transphobia. It's important to know these stressors are real and they are part of the world we live in.

*Because there are these stressors, we may feel overwhelmed, depressed, anxious, apathetic, or other emotions. You deserve to value you and your wellness. We have a series of mental health recommendations that include **mindfulness** (focusing on the *here and now*), **distress tolerance** (using a coping skill and navigating stress on your own), and **crisis management** (needing others help when the stress feels like more than you can handle on your own). Reach out for our specific plans in each of these domains to cultivate your mental health and wellness.*

Celebrating WHAT'S GOOD!

As an LGBTQ+ community member, there are so many things to be grateful for! You're a part of a community rich in culture, history, community gatherings, and a PRIDE in celebrating you for being YOU! Besides, your sexual orientation and/or gender identity is just one part of what makes you awesome. Check out local community organizations or online networks like LGBT National Online Peer-Support Chat at <https://www.glbthotline.org/peer-chat.html> or scan the QR code to connect with other amazing LGBTQ+ people like you. There's a whole world waiting for you... you just have to go find it and grab it!





Support Loved Ones who are a Part of the Community

Is someone in your life LGBTQ+? Want to know how to support them or how to work through learning what it means to support them? Check out a PFLAG meeting (<https://pflag.org/>), an

organization who hosts group meetings for parents and families of LGBTQ+ youth to connect with and learn from each other. Just remember, to support LGBTQ+ people in your life, its important to validate, affirm, and accept who they are. Check your biases, or any stigmatizing thoughts you may have about the LGBTQ+ community. Do some self- work, to make sure you're in the best place to support your loved ones. Also, if you have questions for your LGBTQ+ loved ones, ask! If your intentions are kind, your loved one will let you know what they are willing to answer.



Answer the following prompts, to validate your stressors, celebrate what's good, and make sure you have a plan for when you need to be resilient.

<p><i>What's Stressful in Life</i></p>	<p><i>What's good in life? What are you grateful for?</i></p>
<p><i>You deserve to get it out! Write it down!</i></p>	<p><i>You are so much more than your stressors. Remind yourself what you have that's good!</i></p>
<p><i>Who can I go to when I need help?</i></p>	<p><i>What are my reasons to live my best life?</i></p>
<p><i>Sometimes, you can't do it all alone. Have a plan and know who's on your side.</i></p>	<p><i>You deserve to be true to yourself, to be hopeful, and to value your wellness. Choose to prioritize yourself, just as you are.</i></p>
<p><i>The Trevor Hotline</i> <i>Call 1-866-488-73-86 Text "start" to 678-678</i></p> <p><i>My Local Police Department</i> <i>911, Nonemergency #: _____</i></p> <p><i>Find Affirming Providers</i></p>  <p><i>https://www.glbtnearme.org/</i></p> <p><i>Find LGBTQ+ Community Groups by Me</i></p>  <p><i>https://www.lgbtcenters.org/LgbtCenters</i></p>	

Please email to let us know if you'd like more information or to process this further. Also contact us to learn about our video series, P.S.: LGBTQ+ Youth Matter that provides insight on how to live life as your true self or learn how to support others in your life in being their true selves with our available resources.

Sarah Kiperman, Ph.D., Assistant Professor
Sarah.kiperman@wayne.edu

Center for Health and Community Impact
Wayne State University