



WHAT IS PANSEXUALITY?

RAINBOW DEFINITIONS

As many new sexual identities are coming into popular use, it's important to stay up to date on rainbow words and their definitions. Pansexuality is becoming more and more people's self identifier of choice - so what exactly does it mean?

PANSEXUALITY

is the romantic, emotional, and/or sexual attraction to people regardless of their gender. Some pansexual people refer to themselves as gender-blind, asserting that gender and sex are not determining factors in their romantic or sexual attraction to others. To use a now famous metaphor from a scene in the TV show Schitt's Creek, pansexual people are attracted to the 'wine and not the label': the person is what's important, not their gender. People of any gender identity can and do identify as pansexual.

BISEXUALITY VS. PANSEXUALITY?

Some people use the terms bisexual and pansexual interchangeably, but there are distinctions between the two.

Bisexuality refers to someone who is sexually or romantically attracted to both men and women. A more modern definition many bisexuals prefer is 'the attraction to people like me and people different to me'.

Pansexuality is often considered more explicitly inclusive - of intersex, nonbinary, transgender or otherwise binary-non-conforming gender identities. This is not to say the bisexuality definitions are at all exclusionary! But as the world becomes more aware that there are more than two genders, pansexuality is consequently growing in popularity.



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RELATED TERMS TO BE AWARE OF

Omnisexual: is used to describe those "attracted to people of all genders across the gender spectrum". While pansexuality is generally understood to be an attraction regardless of gender, omnisexuality can be considered the capacity to be attracted to all.

Polysexual: polysexuality specifically implies that there are some genders to which the person is not attracted. Poly means many, but not all. For example, a polysexual person might be attracted to all genders, but not men.

PANSEXUALITY MYTHS

Attracted to everyone? While a pansexual person may be attracted to people of different genders, this does not mean that they are automatically attracted to ALL people of those genders, just as a heterosexual woman is not necessarily attracted to ALL men.

Promiscuous? Some people assume that attraction to others regardless of gender implies that pansexual people act on their attraction more frequently than others. However, just like straight or gay people, any given pansexual person will have their own preference for the amount of sexual activity they want. Their sexuality does not define their sexual appetite or activity.

Kitchenware? The idea that pansexuality means an attraction to literal pans is a silly internet joke, and nothing more. The 'pan' in pansexuality of course comes from the Greek meaning 'all'.

So, while pansexuality is not often currently included in the standard LGBTTQIA+ acronym, it may well be commonly included in the near future as the term gains popularity.

Stay educated and active, everyone!