

Romantic Orientation Terms

Romantic orientation (also occasionally called **affectional orientation**) refers to an individual's pattern of romantic attraction based on a person's gender. A person may be aromantic or romantic, or somewhere in between.

Aromantic: a person who experiences little or no romantic attraction to others and are often satisfied with friendships and other non-romantic relationships.

Bioromantic: A person who is romantically attracted to two sexes or genders.

Gray-romantic (grey-romantic): a person with a romantic orientation that is somewhere between aromantic and romantic.

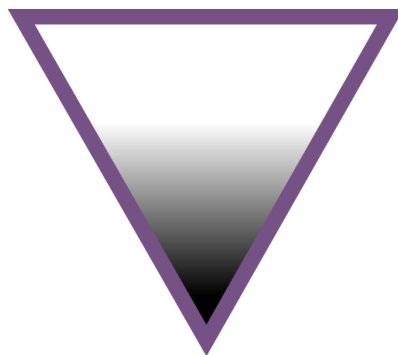
Demiromantic: a type of grey-romantic who only experiences romantic attraction after developing an emotional connection beforehand.

Heteroromantic: A person who is romantically attracted to a member of the opposite sex or gender

Homoromantic: A person who is romantically attracted to a member of the same sex or gender.

Lithromantic: a person who experiences romantic love but does not want their feelings to be reciprocated

Panromantic: A person who is romantically attracted to others but is not limited by the other's sex or gender.



Information for this pamphlet was gathered

from the

Asexual Visibility & Education Network (AVEN)

www.asexuality.org



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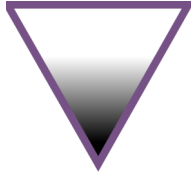


Asexuality:
An overview
of definition
and terms



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What is Asexuality?

Someone who is asexual does not experience sexual attraction. Unlike celibacy, which people choose, asexuality is an intrinsic part of who someone is. Asexuality does not make a person's life any worse or any better, asexuals just face a different set of challenges than most sexual people. There is considerable diversity among the asexual community; each asexual person experiences things like relationships, attraction, and arousal somewhat differently.

Relationships

Asexual people have the same emotional needs as anyone else, and like in the sexual community can vary widely in how to fulfill those needs. Some asexual people are happier on their own, others are happiest with a group of close friends. Other asexual people have a desire to form more intimate romantic relationships, and will date and seek long-term partnerships. Figuring out how to flirt, to be intimate, or to be monogamous in nonsexual relationships can be challenging, but free of sexual expectations and can form relationships in ways that are grounded in individual needs and desires.

Attraction

Many asexual people experience attraction, but

feel no need to act out that attraction sexually. Instead we feel a desire to get to know someone, to get close to them in whatever way works best for us. Asexual people who experience attraction will often be attracted to a particular gender, and will identify as lesbian, gay, bi, or straight.

Arousal

For some sexual arousal is a fairly regular occurrence, though it is not associated with a desire to find a sexual partner or partners. Some will occasionally masturbate, but feel no desire for partnered sexuality. Other asexual people experience little or no arousal. Asexual people generally do not see a lack of sexual arousal as a problem to be corrected, instead focusing their energy on enjoying other types of arousal and pleasure.

Note: People do not need sexual arousal to be healthy, but in a minority of cases a lack of arousal can be the symptom of a more serious medical condition. If you do not experience sexual arousal or if you suddenly lose interest in sex you should probably check with a doctor just to be safe.

Identity

Asexuality is like any other identity- at its core, it's just a word that people use to help figure themselves out. If at any point someone finds the word asexual useful to describe themselves, they are encouraged to use it for as long as it makes sense to do so. Most people who identify as asexual have been asexual for their entire lives. Just as people will rarely and unexpectedly go from being straight to gay, asexual people will rarely and unexpectedly become sexual or vice versa. Another small minority will think of themselves

as asexual for a brief period of time while exploring and questioning their own sexuality.

There is no litmus test to determine if someone is asexual.

Terms within Asexuality

Gray-A: Asexuality and sexuality are not black and white; some people identify in the gray area between them. People who identify as gray-A can include, but are not limited to those who:

- do not normally experience sexual attraction, but do experience it sometimes
- experience sexual attraction, but a low sex drive
- experience sexual attraction and drive, but not strongly enough to want to act on them
- people who can enjoy and desire sex, but only under very limited and specific circumstances

Other terms that have been used for the gray area include "hyposexual", "demisexual", "semisexual", "low sexual intensity", "asexual-ish" and "sexual-ish".

Some of these terms refer to specific parts of the gray area rather than the entire gray area.

Demisexual: a person who does not experience sexual attraction unless they form a strong emotional connection with someone. It's more commonly seen in but by no means confined to romantic relationships. The term demisexual comes from the orientation being "halfway between" sexual and asexual.

