

What is coming out?

Coming out is the process through which an LGBT person accepts their sexual orientation or gender identity as part of their overall identity. It not only refers to the process of self-acceptance, but also to the act of sharing your identity with other.

Any LGBT person will tell you that Coming Out is not a once-off event. For many of us we find ourselves coming out in different ways throughout our lives. This is because people tend to presume you are straight unless told otherwise.

Having said that Coming Out for the first time - telling yourself and then telling the first person that you are LGBT is what we most often think about when we think of Coming Out.

It can make you feel really anxious - what will people think? Will I have to change completely? Will my friends and family turn away from me?

Don't worry - for most people coming out is a positive experience, in fact many LGBT people look back at their coming out and say it is the best thing they ever did.

If you are thinking of telling people that you are LGBT, please read the information on the Derbyshire Friend website at <http://www.gayderbyshire.org.uk/services-for-you/> or call their confidential switchboard: 01332 349333.