

# DO ASK, DO TELL?

## Coming In, Out, & Around as LGBTQ Muslims



# WHAT IS COMING OUT?

Coming out is the process of sharing our LGBTQ identity with friends and family. Our desires for loving relationships can sometimes alienate us from our families or our religious communities. For this reason, coming out is a deeply personal journey that can feel hard or confusing. Don't worry – you are not alone!

There are a lot of different factors that can contribute to deciding whether to come out or not. Living in Canada, you may even feel pressure to come out. Remember, coming out is a personal decision, and you are not deserving of any less love or support if you decide to not publicly share your LGBTQ identity.

# THINGS TO CONSIDER

If you're thinking of coming out to a friend or family member, here are a few things to ask yourself.

## SAFETY

Will your safety be compromised if you come out? Fear of isolation, rejection, or violence often leads people to hide their identities. Make sure your safety is prioritized and map out a safety plan with a trusted person – just in case. For example, if coming out to your parents, consider asking a supportive sibling or aunt to be by your side.

## SUPPORT

Do you have access to spiritual, emotional, mental or financial support? Building support systems in preparation for coming out can feel daunting, but it's necessary! Start small – for example, does your school have a Gay Straight Alliance or an LGBTQ resource centre? Is there an LGBTQ-specific bursary or scholarship you can apply for during a financial emergency? Do you have a supportive friend or partner who you can depend on in difficult moments?

# THINGS TO CONSIDER, CONTINUED

## EXPECTATIONS

What do you hope will be different about your own mental health and the quality of your relationships if you have the opportunity to come out to someone? How do you anticipate people responding differently to the important information you want to share with them? Are there ways to measure if you might be overestimating negative or positive responses from these people in your life?

# ISLAM, GENDER & SEXUALITIES

Many LGBTQ Muslims and their families turn to theological texts and teachings to examine where their experiences and identities are celebrated.

Often, the Story of Prophet Lut is used as religious justification to condemn LGBTQ Muslims. Thankfully, lots of prominent Muslim theologians and Imams have disproved the Story of Lut being about homosexuality.

A closer reading of the verses reveals that the Story of Prophet Lut is about a community of people being inhospitable and participating in the sexual abuse and rape of strangers.

LGBTQ Muslims, like everyone else, seek intimacy and consensual, loving relationships. They should be able to do so without their deen questioned, and offered the love and support of their family and friends.

# REMEMBER

1. You don't have to come out: disclosure is optional.
2. It's important to prioritize your own safety and comfort. Don't worry about making others comfortable.
3. You define what queer, trans, and Muslim mean for you.



# FURTHER READING

**A Muslim Non-Heteronormative Reading of the Story of Lot:  
Liberation Theology for LGBTIQ Muslims?**

by Franz Volker Greifenhagen

**I Am Muslim & I Might Not Be Straight**

by Advocates for Youth

**I Am Muslim & My Gender Doesn't Fit Me**

by Advocates for Youth

**Islamic Law and Muslim Same-Sex Unions**

by Junaid Jahangir

**Islamic Texts: A Source for Acceptance of Queer Individuals into  
Mainstream Muslim Society**

by Muhsin Hendricks

**Living out Islam: Voices of gay, lesbian, and transgender muslims**

by Scott Siraj Al-Haqq Kugle

**Just Me and Allah**

by Samra Habib

**YouTube series, Inclusive Islam: Is LGBTQI Halal?**

by Imam Ludovic-Mohamed

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