

OUT & EQUAL
2017 WORKPLACE SUMMIT

Get SASSy!

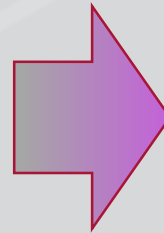
Tapping the Power of Visible Allies at Work


October 12, 2017



Introductions

- **Ryan Everson** – Northwestern Mutual
- **Laura Martin** – Northwestern Mutual





**Why are we here
today?**

Icebreaker Activity

- **Twist and shout!** (*...or speak in normal tones* 😊)

Turn to your neighbor and share: something boring or something *intriguing*.

- **Creating a Safe Space**

In groups of three or four, discuss this question:

- In a few words, what does “safe space” mean to you?



Living Under Systems of Oppression



Who we are... and how we're perceived



Descriptors

- Texan
- Word nerd
- Logical-minded perfectionist
- Not into sports
- Insatiably curious
- Christian
- Husband
- Father
- Friend
- Heterosexual

Ryan



Descriptors

- Midwesterner
- Mother
- Daughter
- Friend
- Spiritual
- Nature-lover
- Eternal optimist
- Driven
- Social justice junkie
- Bisexual

Laura

Who we are... and how we're perceived



Descriptors

- Texan
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- Christian
- Husband
- Father
- Friend

Ryan



Descriptors

- Bisexual
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• **Bisexual
Laura**

According to a study by the HRC 81% of **non-LGBT** people report they feel LGBT people “should not have to hide” who they are at work.

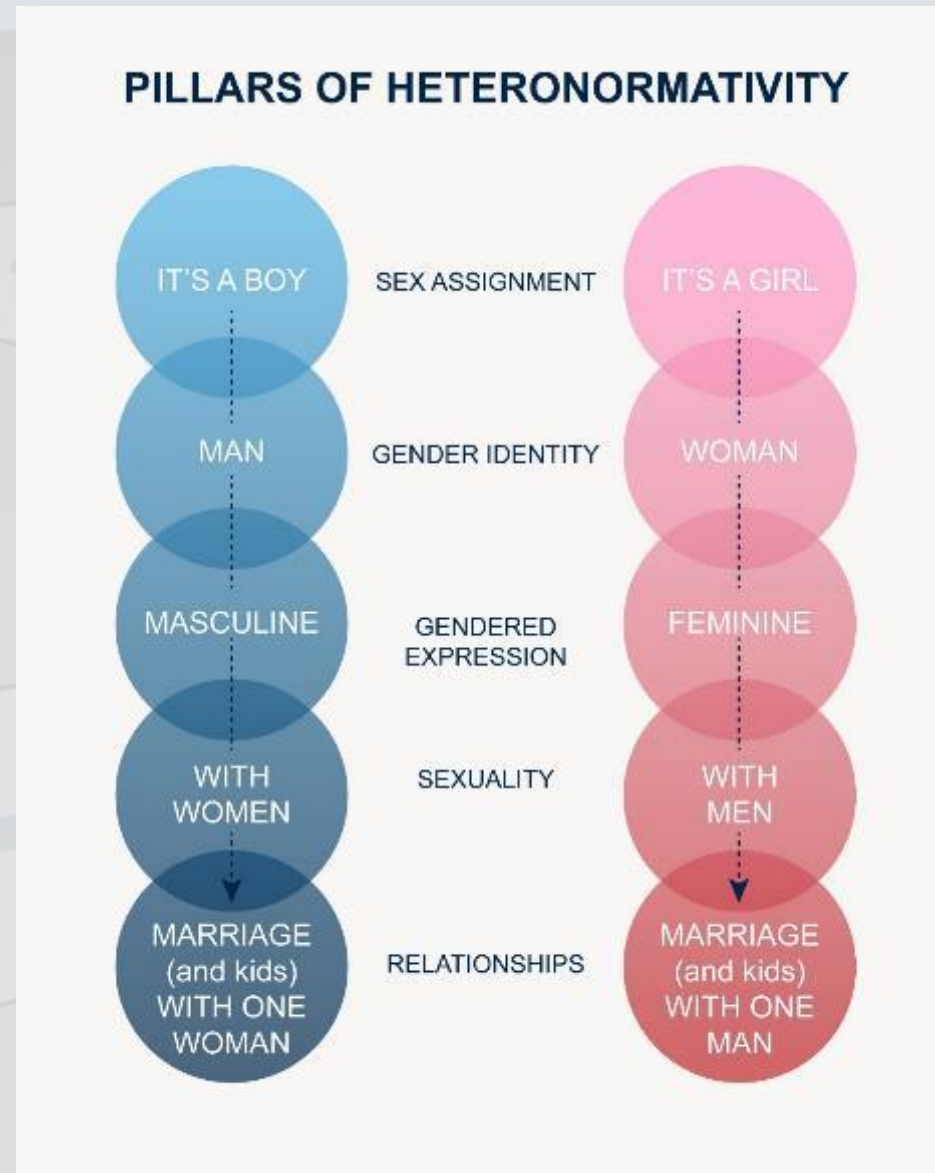
HOWEVER

Less than half would feel comfortable hearing a LGBT coworker talk about their social lives or dating.

Over 70% feel that “it is unprofessional” to talk about your sexual orientation or gender identity in the workplace.



Living Under Systems of Oppression



Living Under Systems of Oppression

- **Activity**: Costs of the Closet statistics

Look at your pen box. If you have a blue sticker on the top, flip it over and read the sticker on the underside.

- 35% felt compelled to lie about their personal lives
- 30% felt unhappy or depressed at work
- 30% felt distracted from work
- 27% avoided certain people at work
- 22% of LGBT*+ people seek other employment for feeling unwelcome
- 9% of LGBT*+ people leave the workplace due to feeling unwelcomed



 **Living Under
Systems of Oppression**



**Finding Our Way
Through the Dark**



Climbing the Scale of Appreciation

What It Looks Like

Would advocate for access and rights for LGBTQ people, and celebrate their contributions to us all

Would support access and rights to LGBTQ people, and embrace them for who they are

Would allow access and rights to LGBTQ people, but would not support them

Would limit rights and access to LGBTQ people

Would deny rights and access to LGBTQ people

Appreciation

Acceptance

Tolerance

Avoidance

Rejection

What It Feels Like

LGBTQ people thrive, living healthy, satisfying lives in safe, supportive communities

LGBTQ people grow, explore, and feel hopeful, bringing more to their social and work lives

LGBTQ people become resigned and fail to thrive, bringing less to their social and work lives

LGBTQ people feel hopeless, struggle to connect, and work to survive

LGBTQ people despair, struggle to survive, and at times fight





**Coming Out,
and Stepping Up**



**Finding Our Way
Through the Dark**



**Living Under
Systems of Oppression**

Why are visible allies needed?



Why are vi



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Together We're Stronger



Coming Out, and Stepping Up



Finding Our Way Through the Dark



Living Under Systems of Oppression

What does “visible” look like?



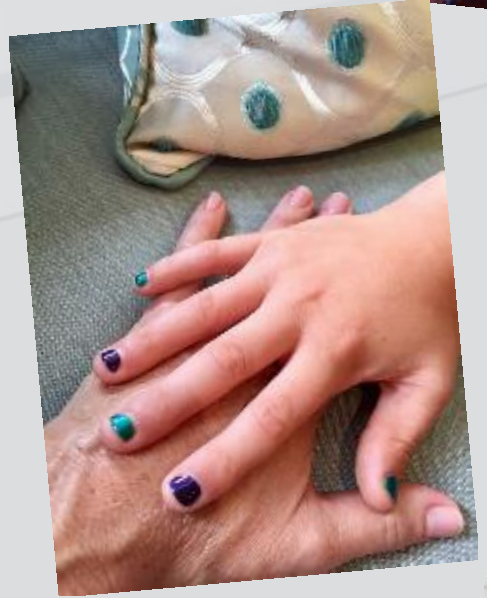
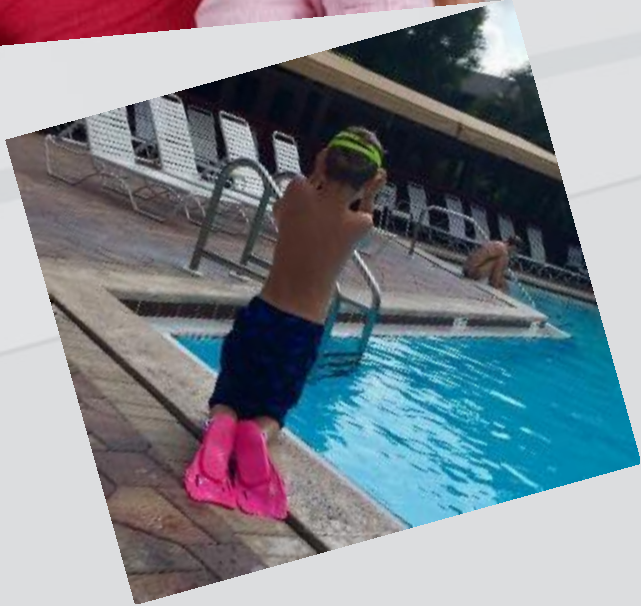
an ally... crime...
compliance



What does "visible" look like?



What does "visible" look like?



Activity: Traits of Acting in Ally-ship

With your neighbor(s), come up with a few traits that you think demonstrate acting in visible ally-ship. We'll pick a few volunteers to share their answers.

Our List: Traits that characterize visible allies *(find more info in your packets)*

1. Actually **BE** visible!
2. Passionately search for understanding
3. Dispassionate introspection
4. Understand both sides... but pick one
5. Burning passion, tempered with humility
6. Cultivate broken-heartedness
7. Tact and nuance in interactions
8. Refuse to be offended
9. Dogged pursuit of inclusion
10. Faith that being visible matters
11. Acknowledge your privilege
12. Strive to act in allocentrism
13. Willingness to be held accountable
14. Seek out "guilt" by association
15. Sacrifice privilege to raise visibility

What does it mean to me?

What I learned as I raised my visibility

Deciding to act in visible ally-ship is immensely rewarding...

- Making a difference, even if you never see it
- Building bonds of love with others
- Growing and becoming a better person
- Subverting systems of oppression

... but visibility is a double-edged sword.

- Discrimination by exclusion
- Inaction for fear of blundering
- Relinquishing your privilege can hurt
- Risk of hypocrisy



 **Where We Go Now**

 **Together We're Stronger**

 **Coming Out, and Stepping Up**

 **Finding Our Way Through the Dark**

 **Living Under Systems of Oppression**

“Real solidarity requires sacrifice... There’s no way to balance out the historical unbalanced system of reward (if that’s an ideal you value) without those who always get more either deciding to, or being forced to, give up some of it.”

- Mia McKenzie, in her *Black Girl Dangerous* blog
(<http://www.blackgirldangerous.com/2017/02/adele-beyonce-solidarity/>)



So let's make
a plan!

Earn Through Doing



**Get Smarter, and
Sharpen Your Beliefs**



Visualize Where You Want to Be



Determine Where You Are



Activity: Make A Plan

What you can take back to your organization

What you can take back to your personal life

What privileges you will give up

How you can help move the needle on LGBTQ+ workplace equality

*Make a commitment to do something to
show your visible ally-ship
within the next seven days*

Handouts & References

Additional References:

- BiResource.net
- HRC.org
- PFLAG.org
- StraightForEquality.org
- GLAAD.org

In your packet:

- SASS stickers
- Heart stickers
- Traits of visible allies
- Appreciation scale
- Bisexual Bingo
- Coming out as a Supporter
- Health Disparities Among Bisexual People
- How to act when witnessing discrimination



Questions?

How to connect with us:

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[Linkedin.com/in/EversonRyan](https://www.linkedin.com/in/EversonRyan)



*Never forget... never ever forget... people's lives hang in the balance, and you have the chance to stand and fight for them. Be visible. Be approachable. Take something actionable back with you. Punch down the small fear-voice in your gut and run towards scary things. And above all,
Support, Advocate, Speak out, and Stand up.*