- Dropped significantly in last years
  - Stonewall study (Britain) – over 60 avg age 37
    - In 30s – avg age 21
    - 18-24 – avg age 17
    - 2010 - 16
Trans Individuals

- 1% transsexual
- Trans numbers (umbrella) considerably higher
- Internet difference

Empathy is seeing with the eyes of another, listening with the ears of another, and feeling with the heart of another.
Coming out As Trans

- Being Open With Self – gender binary
  - Scared, confused, guilty, empowered, exhilarated, relieved, uncertain
  - All ages of life

- Deciding to Tell Others – breaking point
  - Wants authenticity
  - Self-esteem
  - Reduce stress of hiding
  - Helping dispel myths
  - Making it easier for others
Coming Out as Trans (cont)

› Risks
   • Confusion
   • Hostility
   • Relationships permanently altered
   • Harassment, discrimination, violence
   • Losses – home, job, family
Official Standards of Care - Transsexual

- Psychological supervision for a year before sex reassignment
- Hormone replacement for at least a year
- Successfully living in the authentic gender role for a year
- Changing name and identity documents
- Obtaining two supporting letters from psychological providers
Cass Models of Identity Development for Lesbians & Gay Men

- Identity Confusion
- Identity Comparison
- Identity Tolerance
- Identity Acceptance
- Identity Pride
- Identity Synthesis
Perhaps amazed to think of oneself as lesbian/gay
- Confused/turmoil
- Denial/repression/self-rejection
  - Men – may separate physical acts from identity (“drunk”, “just experimenting”)
  - Womyn may avoid physical and have deep friendships.
- May avoid information re: lgbtq
Identity Confusion – What we can do

- Open up an environment for client self non-judgment
- Educate – sexual behavior is on continuum
- Normalize same-gender attraction and other-gender attraction
- Deal with feelings of depression & confusion if present.
Identity Comparison

- Accepts possibility of being lesbian/gay
- May grieve perceived losses
- May accept as temporary place ("I’m in love with THIS womyn"; “I’m bi and so I can make other choices”)
- May compartmentalize sexuality and still present as hetero
Identity Comparison: What we can do

- Allowing/encouraging grieving of losses
- Offer resources about sexual/affectional identity
- Know about identity continuum
- Be clear that not “choice” but matter of “being”
- Not a “lifestyle” but a “life”
Understanding that ‘not the only one’
Broader support base for sharing
Seek out LGBTQ Culture
  › Positive experience – affirming
  › Negative experience – devalues culture/self
Identity Tolerance: What we can do

- Investigate feelings of shame perpetuated by hetero-normative culture
- Internalized homophobia
- Help with connection to LGBTQ community
- Resources
Identity Acceptance

- Positive connotation to identity
- Attempt to bring congruence between private and public self
- Coming out to more folks
- More comfortable being seen with “out” LGBTQ individuals
- May have more negative responses from dominant culture because “out”
- Strong preference for gay vs. Hetero interactions
Identity Acceptance – What we can do

- Continue work with residual or deep shame
- Help in processing the who/where re: coming out
- Resources!
"To be gay is to be overwhelmed with the attitudes of other people and in order to free ourselves from that we have to put those aside and develop our own sense of what is right."

Harry Britt
San Francisco Community Leader
Identity Pride

- “I’ve got to let people know who I am!”
- Us-Them
- Perhaps more negative responses from dominant culture
  > “don’t flaunt it”
- Immersed in lgbtq culture - avoid hetero social contact
Identity Pride – what we can do

- Support for processing anger
- If hetero professional – DO NOT personalize – not about ME
- Skills for responding to dominant culture and criticism
- Dealing with position with family (if out)
Identity Synthesis

- Sexual/affectional orientation integrated into broad “self” – a part – not the whole
- Able to identity hetero allies
- May open to larger community
- “Both/and” approach to life
Identity Synthesis – what we can do

- Understand and affirm the selective affirmation of allies
- Stay with personal processes that may be on-going
  - Grief/loss, anger, shame
- Share with them the CELEBRATION
“and when we speak we are afraid our words will not be heard nor welcomed but when we are silent we are still afraid So it is better to speak”
Audre Lorde
Heterosexual/affectional identity – seen as “norm”

Quotes from hetero individuals
- I have never really thought about it
- I have one, I guess - I just didn’t notice
- I never gave consideration to my sexual identity – it came naturally
- I just automatically became a lover of the opposite sex
- My sexual identity developed long before I can remember – I’ve always been heterosexual
Thank YOU!

Questions?
Comments?