

HOW TO BE A GOOD ALLY

START BY LISTENING



Coming to terms with a new sexual or gender identity can be a challenging and overwhelming experience and sometimes people just need to talk it out. Providing someone with a shoulder to lean on in a non-judgemental, confidential, safe space is a great way to be a good ally.

Assure them that you will respect their privacy and listen without jumping to conclusions. Just because someone is talking about their identity doesn't mean they've settled on a label or need you to take action. If they need your advice, they will ask.

EDUCATE YOURSELF

Expecting your LGBTQIA+ colleagues to do all the emotional labour it takes to teach you about their identity or sexuality is not being a good ally. Taking some time to educate yourself, reading up on the popular discussion around the subject, and learning as much as you can about the LGBTQIA+ is a great way to be a good ally.

By doing this you also develop your ability to educate others about the LGBTQIA+ community, reducing the impact on individuals to explain themselves over and over. Remember to check in with your friend about where they're at on their journey and what they feel comfortable other people knowing before disclosing this information to others.



STAY OPEN MINDED



No two LGBTQIA+ people are the same or have the same experiences. Remember to keep an open mind when it comes to gender identity and sexuality. Don't be surprised if you come across the expected. Don't be afraid to ask questions.

For example, not all non-binary people use they/them pronouns. This doesn't mean their gender identity is any less valid. Keeping an open mind, listening, and being open to learning are great ways to be a good ally.

STAND UP AND BE PROUD

Just because you're supportive of the LGBTQIA+ community doesn't mean everyone is and being a good ally is a full-time role. Standing up to people that say or do discriminatory things, even when someone LGBTQIA+ isn't present, is a crucial step toward eradicating prejudice. This means calling out discriminatory jokes, speaking out against discriminatory policy or practice, correcting pronouns, and educating others.

This takes the strain off your friend, family member, or colleague from constantly having to fight their own fight. An easy and effective method is putting your pronouns in your email signature, on your name tag, or on your online profile, even if you are cisgender.



HAND OVER THE MIC



While it is important to stand up for the LGBTQIA+ community, to educate yourself, and others, it's important to consider your privilege and to take a step back when necessary.

Remember to amplify the voices of the LGBTQIA+ community and allow them to speak for themselves. Listen deeply and take actions based on their advice and wherever possible provide them with the means of expressing their needs and wants.