



## **Revolution ~ Support for individuals, their partners and families**

Revolution Counselling is just that - a revolution in offering specialist counselling support for people who discover that a spouse or family member is gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered or queer (a process frequently referred to as 'coming out') or for LGBT couples in a difficult relationship. It is never easy or understandable to find out or to be told that one's partner/loved one or family member is (LGBT). Initial feelings may be of shock, confusion, anger, betrayal, sadness, grief, numbness, to name a few. Not all people will have such strong reactions, it is an individual thing. The importance here is that you acknowledge and respect your feelings, because after all that is what you feel - there is no right or wrong. Your partner/loved one or family member may be feeling the same - remember, just because they have told you how they really feel inside, it doesn't mean they don't still love and cherish you.

### **Why now?**

When a loved one 'comes out' whilst in (often a heterosexual) relationship, or decides that being 'out' isn't something they want anymore, it can have a devastating effect on the partner/loved one who may have shared a significant amount of time, space, emotion, love, children, life, etc., with them. There is never really a right or wrong time for anyone to make such important and often life-changing decisions. Often, coming out is almost an 'end process' of a lifetime's worth of self doubt, self questioning, confusion, repulsion, fear, to name a few, for an individual who may have been questioning their sexuality for a significant period of time. Be assured that your loved one has not made this decision lightly, nor to hurt you - even though it may have done just that.

### **What did I do wrong?**

You didn't do anything wrong- it is essential that you identify that you are not at fault, or to blame. Your loved one's decision to be honest with themselves and to live their lives without having to lie any longer about who they truly are has taken courage and strength, not to mention long periods of 'soul searching' and self questioning. It is never about what you may or may not have done wrong, this is *their* journey. Sexuality is not something that is 'chosen' - just as one cannot choose their own eye or natural hair or skin colour. Sexuality just is, and as you learn more through your journey, you will see that sexual diversity has been around for many thousands of years, in all cultures and is fluid and changeable.

### **Wasn't I good enough?**

It is very important to acknowledge that whilst it is normal for you to be questioning everything, it is also essential that you are able to refrain from judging yourself. When your partner/loved one made their decision it may have been because their life wasn't making them happy anymore, that it wasn't giving them what they needed. You may have noticed that things had not been going well for some time. This may be an opportunity to talk with your partner/loved one openly and honestly.

### **Being LGBT is disgusting!**

Initially your feelings towards your LGBT partner/loved one may be harsh and punitive. You may not feel like understanding, no doubt you will have many questions that may need answering. However, do keep in mind that whilst you are angry and hurting, your partner/loved one is too. They may feel equally helpless in

trying to balance their own needs with trying to offer to support. It is sometimes helpful to think of the courage and trust it has taken your partner/loved one to trust you enough to tell you the truth. Think perhaps of the reason why it might have taken them this long to tell you in the first place.

### **My life is ruined!**

It may very well feel as if this is the end of the world as you have known it. However, the pain you are feeling will eventually subside - it is not going to be an easy journey for either of you. The most important thing is that you both allow space to talk through your feelings with each other, consider professional support where you can both have time and space to talk.

### **How will I face my family?**

Your family may react strongly in the first instance; after all they are looking out for you and will be angry and sad for you. However, ultimately, it is about how you feel, and what kind of relationship you have / had with your partner/loved one. It might help to tell the family together and put aside some time for them to take it all in and ask questions. At the end of the day, your families love you no matter what, and once the dust settles and the feelings of shock subside, things will become manageable again.

### **What will I tell our children?**

Depending on the age/s of your children, it might be prudent to discuss what, how and when to tell them together. Be aware that sometimes pain and the need for revenge may make you use the children to get back at your partner/loved one - this is neither conducive nor prudent; it is unfair to all parties concerned, especially the children. If you and your partner/loved one are able to tell the children together and answer questions honestly and openly, you will find that they will be able to deal with the whole issue quickly and get on with everyday things much faster. Children are incredibly resilient and flexible and often shock everyone with their eagerness and excitement at having a 'different' parent / family.

### **I want to talk with someone about this**

No problem - you have the choice of individual or couple counselling where you can explore your feelings in greater depth and find understanding and clarity.

Remember, you are NOT alone in this, and more importantly, things WILL get better - it just takes a little time. If you would like to talk, then get in touch to book an appointment to explore your feelings further.

*Whatever the case, there is always someone you CAN talk to please get in touch for counselling support that will offer you time and space to explore your needs.*