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## Bisexuality

When it comes to bisexuality, confusions of varying degrees open doors and finds it hard to understand the concept. Let's make it simple, some people are sexually and romantically attracted to the same gender completely, and we call them homosexuals. On the other hand, there are a majority of people who are sexually and romantically attracted only to the opposite gender, and we call them heterosexuals. To add on, there are a significant others who doesn't neatly fit into either of these categories, because they experience sexual and emotional attractions and feelings for people of different genders at some point during their lives. For lack of a profound term, they are called bisexuals.

Talking about bisexuality, it is often useful to distinguish between sexual behavior, attraction, and identity. Someone who has had sexual experience with or even just attractions to people of more than one gender can be described as bisexual, but may not identify that way. Likewise, one can identify as bisexual regardless of their sexual experience. Furthermore, identities are flexible and can change over time with different contexts, i.e., economical, personal, community, or political. <sup>[1]</sup>

Dr. Fritz Klein, who founded the world's first bisexual organization in 1974 called "Bisexual Forum". As he felt the Kinsey scale was limited although it was exemplary. So he created the Klein Sexual Orientation Grid. Kinsey's scale focused only on sexual attractions and behavior. Klein on the other hand, expanded Kinsey's scale and brought a seven-factors scale to measure sexual orientation.

- Sexual attraction,
- Sexual behavior,
- Sexual fantasies,
- Emotional preference,
- Social preference,
- Lifestyle, and
- Self determination

A complication has evolved over time due to people being increasingly gender fluid, shifting from their birth gender to a different one. Many transgender people are transitioning from male to female or from female to male, or identify as "genderqueer" because they do not comfortably fit into either the male or female gender.

J. R. Little is a psychologist whose extensive research identified at least 13 types of bisexuality, as defined by the seven factors on the Klein Grid.

1. *Alternating Bisexuals*: may have a relationship with a male, but when that ceases chooses a female for subsequent relationship. And many go back to males in future.

2. *Circumstantial Bisexuals*: These individuals are primarily heterosexuals. When there is an absence of partners from opposite gender, only then they prefer same sex partners. Eg: jails, gender segregated schools, etc.
3. *Concurrent relationship bisexuals*: Primary relationship with one gender only, but keep relationships with other gender at the same time.
4. *Conditional bisexuals*: either straight or gay/lesbian, but will switch to a relationship with another gender for a specific purpose, such as young straight males who become gay prostitutes to make money or lesbians who get married to men in order to gain acceptance from family members or to have children.
5. *Emotional bisexuals*: have deeply intimate emotional relationships with both men and women, but engage in a sexual relationship with only one.
6. *Integrated bisexuals*: have more than one primary relationship at the same time, each with a male and female.
7. *Exploratory bisexuals*: either straight or gay/lesbian, but engage in sex with another gender just to satisfy their curiosity or “see what it’s like.”
8. *Hedonistic bisexuals*: primarily straight or gay/lesbian but will sometimes have recreational sex with a different gender purely for sexual satisfaction.
9. *Recreational bisexuals*: Under the influence of drugs or alcohol, these primarily heterosexual individuals engage in gay or lesbian sex.
10. *Isolated bisexuals*: 100% straight or gay/lesbian at the time (now), but had one or more sexual experience with another gender in the past.
11. *Latent bisexuals*: These are individuals that are completely straight or gay lesbian in behavior, although they have strong desire for sex with some other gender, they have never acted upon it.
12. *Motivational bisexuals*: straight women who have sex with other women to please their male partner who requests it for his own titillation.
13. *Transitional bisexuals*: temporarily identify as bisexual while in the process of moving from being straight to being gay or lesbian, or going from being gay or lesbian to being heterosexual.

Dr. Mary Ford in her study explains the four stages of bisexual identity. Her ground-breaking research helps to find out the steps bisexuals go through to fully identify and acknowledge themselves as “bisexuals”.<sup>[2]</sup>

- *Confusion over sexual orientation.*
- *Discovery of the bisexual label and choosing to identify as bisexual.*
- *Settling into and maintaining a bisexual identity.*
- *Transforming adversity.*

## References

- Bisexual Resource Centre, “What is Bisexuality”, Retrieved from <https://biresource.org/resources/youth/what-is-bisexuality/>

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