



**Makoto** Care worker

When I was a middle school student, I came out as trans male. My mom said "Please care about your mind, just be true to yourself." After my mom passed away, my dad refused to let me go to Thailand for surgery, and this had gone on for 7 years. I explained that I couldn't accept my body the way it was to him many times. I changed my name from female to male. Now, my dad is trying to call me by my male name.

Before I started my job, I came out. Being trans is a hard thing to hide. After I started my job, I appeared on a TV show for people who are Trans. My co-workers watched it. They were understanding and kept their relationships with me the same. The most important thing is to be myself. My dream is to make a welfare facility for aged LGBTQ people. My friend introduced Fuyumi to me and we got married. We are thinking about having children by artificial insemination.

I noticed I was a bit different in my 1st year in high school. When my tutor came out as a lesbian, I was interested in what a lesbian was. My mother had a friend who was a lesbian, and in the past my mom had a relationship with another woman. When I told my mom "I think I might love women", my mom told me "that's good, it's natural."

My dream is to make a support center for deaf LGBTQ people. It organizes training for sign-language interpreters to understand LGBTQ issues. Deaf schools also need to teach about gender and sexuality differences to children. Deaf LGBTQ people who are HIV positive or are experiencing domestic violence also need support. Counselor's offices need to have more services such as Faxing, email and meetings. I want to be able to tell Deaf LGBTQ people that we can talk about what we need. The situation will never change unless we speak up about it. We need to take action in order to change our future.



**Fuyumi** Deaf LGBTQ activist

# Deaf LGBTQ interview in Japan



**Moichi** pastry chef

When I was a college student I struggled, not knowing whether I was attracted to men or women. I experienced many things, and finally I realized that I was in fact attracted to men. When I joined a sign language group first time, I was surprised that there were other gay people there. I was so relieved to know that I was not alone. I'm really glad I had the opportunity to communicate with them in sign language because I could express my emotions and feelings easily. I think that it became the reason I was able to come out to people. Courage is necessary to come out. However, being out made my heart comfortable and strong. Now I feel I am able to experience many things, for example, I teach sign language, do volunteer work, and I am part of a staff for events. I found many things which I didn't have before I came out. It is nice to be gay. My dream is to run a homey atmosphere Café where people can communicate with sign language.

I have worked for an auto company for 17 years. Some people at my office know I'm gay. I had been caught at work while browsing a gay website. I felt like it might be awkward, so I came out in an email, but my co-workers and I have kept a good relationship; me being gay hasn't impacted much in my work life. For example, we work well together, and after work we go out to a restaurant.

When I was living as a straight man, I tried to go out with women but it just didn't work for me. After I came to the realization that I'm gay and I accepted that, my friend introduced me to some gay people; since then my life has changed. Now, I really enjoy fluent conversations in sign language. I have many deaf LGBTQ friends. I'm going to come out to my family and friends to expand the understanding of LGBTQ people. I want to put my mind at ease, and I believe that being out will allow me to be myself.



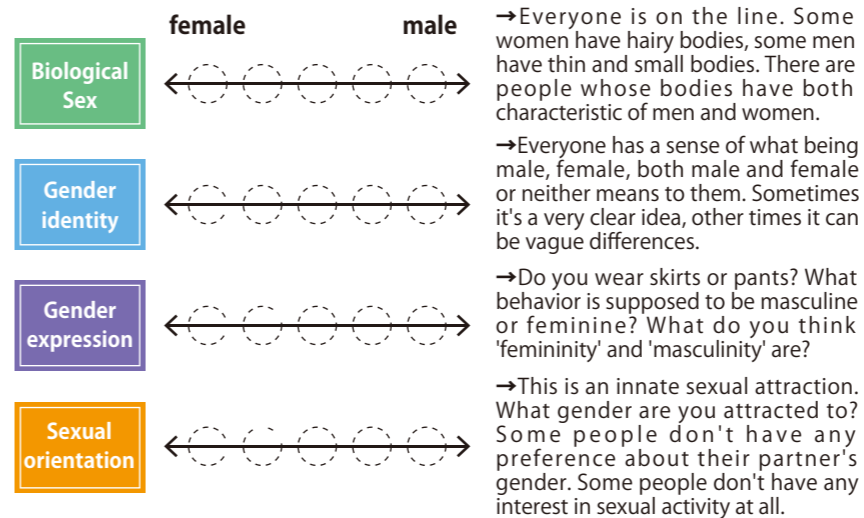
**Shun**

Did you know ?

# FAQ about LGBTQ



## Four elements of Gender



Are the only gender categories "Male" and "Female" ?

**No.** There are far more than two genders. There are far more than two genders. Gender is like a gradient, where everyone lies on a different part of the gender gradient line. Often gender is considered to be separated into four elements. Let's see if we can mark each element according to who you are and what you feel. Figure out your gender!



Are all gay men feminine?

As it is, some gay men are feminine, some are not.

**No.** That is just a stereotype.

Is it a choice people make to be LGBTQ?

Gender identity and sexual orientation are innate senses people can have. Did you choose to be straight? Can you choose to love someone who is the same gender?

**No.** Most of them don't choose to be LGBTQ.

Are there more LGBTQ people in Europe and North America than the rest of the world?

**No.** This is because there are many people who can come out in Europe and North America. According to statistical surveys, 10-20 % of the world population is LGBTQ. Living in a society that doesn't allow LGBTQ to be proud of their identities, and exposing them daily to homophobia and transphobia everyday is hard to survive in. Some studies report that the percentage of suicides of LGBTQ people is six to seven times higher than that of non LGBTQ peoples.



Are there really many kinds of animals that have same sex couple?

**Yes.** Many animals have been observed in relationships with same a sex partner.



There are also some creatures that are able to change their sex! A famous biologist once said "Nature loves variety. Unfortunately, society hates it."



"And Tango Makes Three" by Peter Parnell (2005)