

COMING OUT
Vivienne Cass (1995)



1	2	3
IDENTITY CONFUSION	IDENTITY COMPARISON	IDENTITY TOLERANCE
Who am I? If what I do/think means that I'm not straight, does it mean that I'm gay? I must be different to everyone else.	Where do I belong? What will other people think of me?	I'm probably gay. I guess I can try and cope with it. I'd much rather be straight but I know I'm not.
Thoughts, feelings and behaviors conflict with how the individual has been taught to see themselves.	Fear of negative response from others. Self-esteem may suffer.	Beginning to accept their homosexuality, which lessens their confusion whilst increasing feelings of isolation. Beginning to tell others. Fear of being "found out". May begin to look for gay/lesbian contacts.
4	5	6
IDENTITY ACCEPTANCE	IDENTITY PRIDE	IDENTITY SYNTHESIS
I know I'm gay and I have quite a few gay friends. I still haven't told some people that I'm gay, but I probably will one day.	I'm gay and it's the best thing – better than being straight. I'm going to try and get really involved in gay rights and only mix with other gay, lesbian and bisexual people.	I'm gay and that's great, but I'm also a great friend/student/brother, etc.
Individual now sees identity in a positive way. Development of friends/relationships with other gays. Identity is not yet public and the individual adopts a strategy of "fitting in".	Living openly and honestly as a gay/lesbian person. Becoming more aware of society's expectations creates conflict, which may result in a feeling of gay pride.	Open contact with heterosexuals who accept their identity allows an individual to again feel that they belong in society. Being gay/lesbian is no longer an issue and is now in context.

