

# Overview of Ace Terminology

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[adapted from existing Ace Toronto workshops]



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# Definition

A sexual orientation characterized by the absence of sexual attraction and/or desire

# Attractions

- Many types of attraction!
  - Sexual
  - Romantic
  - Sensual
  - Aesthetic
  - Platonic
- For some people they overlap; for others they're completely distinct
- It can be hard to tell the difference
- **Respect subjective experience**

# Romantic Orientations

- Many asexuals use orientation terms based on other attractions, most commonly romantic
- e.g. biromantic, homoromantic, aromantic, heteroromantic
- Anyone can use these terms
- Some use terms that express confusion or celebrate ambiguity
  - e.g. Quoiromantic

# Relationships! How...?

- Some non-asexuals are in celibate romantic relationships
- Some asexuals are aromantic or choose not to date
- Some only date other asexuals
- Some are polyamorous
- Some enjoy having sex
- Some “compromise” sexually
  - This is not an ideal solution
  - Genuine consent is not always possible in the context of compulsory sexuality

What do you already know?

# Vocab Mixer!

- Each group will get two vocabulary cards and two story cards
- Find the groups with story cards that match your vocabulary cards
- Pick someone to share what you learned

# Vocabulary Words

- Gray-asexual
  - Demisexual
  - Gray-romantic
  - Demiromantic
  - Quoiromantic
  - Z-sexual
- Compulsory sexuality
- Amatonormativity
- Squish
- Queerplatonic partnership
- Bonus: Ace

# Isn't that a medical condition?

- Some aces are mentally and/or physically disabled
- Most aces don't see their asexuality itself as a disability
- Some see their asexuality as *related to* a disability
- **Asexuality does not need to be “cured”**

# Like celibacy or abstinence?

- Asexuality, gray-asexuality, and demisexuality are patterns of attraction, not choices
- Most asexuals also prefer to be celibate
- Some asexuals do have sex
  - Some have an undirected sex drive
  - Some are curious
  - A few have sex to please a partner (but be careful with this!)
- **All aces deserve for their sexual choices and histories to be respected**

# What if you're just repressed?

- Like most people, many aces have been taught that sex is shameful
- Some aces have been sexually abused
- Some aces come from desexualized and/or hypersexualized groups
- **All aces' identities are valid regardless of their race, culture, gender, mental health, or survivor status**

# So you don't want a relationship?

- Some aces are also aromantic
- Some seek out nonsexual romantic relationships
- Some choose to center family, friendship, community, or primary platonic bonds
- **Aces and aromantics have loving relationships of all kinds**

# Acknowledging Privilege

- We are white, cis, thin, and able-bodied, and we have no mental illnesses or disabilities
- People without those privileges often have complicated relationships with asexuality
- Some feel excluded from the community
- **Many aces do not have access to uncomplicated pride**

Questions?

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