



Asexuality

Best practice guidelines

Recommended supplement: Attraction

Content warning

Sexual acts are discussed without specificity.

Definitions

'**Asexual**' is an umbrella term for someone who does not experience sexual attraction. Sometimes asexual is shortened to **ace**. Someone who does experience sexual attraction is referred to as '**allosexual**'.

There are many identities under the asexuality umbrella. The term '**asexual spectrum**' (or **ace-spec**) may be used to encompass all these identities.

Someone who is asexual may or may not still experience other types of attraction to any sort of people. For example, an asexual person who is romantically attracted to their own gender may identify as **asexual homoromantic**.

Asexuality spectrum

Every asexual individual may experience their identity differently. Some asexual people like to use more specific identity labels within the asexual spectrum, rather than just calling themselves asexual.

Grey-asexuality refers to **the grey area between** not experiencing sexual attraction and experiencing sexual attraction. People who are **grey-asexual** or **greysexual** may experience sexual attraction infrequently, very weakly, or be indeterminate about their experiences of sexual attraction.



A person who experiences sexual attraction only after a significant emotional bond has been formed with somebody is **demisexual**.

Fraysexual refers to someone who experiences sexual attraction to those they are not emotionally close to, and slowly loses this attraction as they become closer. Some asexual people experience sexual attraction only until it is reciprocated (**lithosexual / akoisexual**), and some asexual people only experience sexual attraction when it is reciprocated (**reciprosexual**).

There are asexual people who only experience sexual attraction while performing sexual acts for others, and lose this attraction when sexual acts are performed on them (**placiosesexual**). On the flip side, there are asexual people who only experience sexual attraction when others are performing sexual acts for them, and lose this attraction when they are the one performing sexual acts (**iamvanosexual**). Someone who is **apothisexual** is sex-repulsed.

Asexual people who perform sexual acts by themselves, such as masturbation, but do not desire participating in sexual acts with other people, are **aegosexual/autochorisexual**. If they have sexual fantasies, they tend to not involve themselves in these fantasies.

A person who is **quosexual** may be unsure if they experience sexual attraction, or find the concept of sexual attraction incomprehensible. Not all quosexual people consider themselves to be part of the asexual spectrum.

Regardless of what identity a person feels best fits their version of asexuality, it is important to respect their identity.

Allosexuality

'**Allosexuality**' is the inverse of asexuality. This umbrella term collectively refers to those who experience sexual attraction and are not part of the asexual spectrum.

Inclusive language

Much of the language we use to talk about sexual acts and experiences of sexuality is not inclusive of asexual people, and dismisses their experiences. The language we use can also reinforce harmful stereotypes about asexual people.



Sexual acts

Asexuality only indicates that a person does not experience sexual attraction. It does not give any indication about their levels of desire for sexual relationships, or how often they perform sexual acts. For example, an asexual person who does not experience sexual attraction may or may not still desire to have sexual relations, and may or may not do sexual actions (by themselves, or with other people).

Within and beyond the asexual community, we talk about different levels of interest and desire to personally perform sexual acts using the following three terms:

- **Sex-favouring**, someone who seeks out sexual experiences and enjoys engaging in them.
- **Sex-neutral** or **sex-indifferent**, someone who experiences sexual actions as nothing overly interesting or note-worthy.
- **Sex-repulsed**, someone who finds engaging in sexual acts or experiences to be repulsive.

This is not an asexual person's viewpoint or judgment on these sexual acts themselves, merely their level of interest and desire to personally engage in them.

Sex and relationships

Engaging in sexual acts and experiencing sexual attraction are not the key elements of a 'real relationship' nor do romantic relationships need to be consummated to be valid. Romantic relationships where sexual acts do not take place, or where sexual attraction is not felt, are not 'lesser' or 'less serious' relationships. Such relationships are not the same as a close friendship. These comparisons diminish the importance of such romantic and non-romantic relationships, and the experiences of many asexual people.

Humanity and adulthood

Sexual attraction, sexual desire, and sexual actions are not 'what makes someone human' or 'just human nature'. They are also not the defining element of what makes someone an adult. The experiences of sexual attraction or sexual activity do not make us an adult, just as the lack of such experiences do not render us children. There are many other ways to explore what makes someone human, or what makes someone an adult, without invalidating asexual people and their experiences.

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Celibacy and virginity

It is important to show the difference between asexuality and celibacy. Celibacy refers to someone choosing to refrain from sexual acts—typically until marriage. Asexuality is not a choice, but a sexual orientation.

Asexual people are not always virgins, or inexperienced in sexual acts. Depicting asexual people as innocent and naive in regards to sex can be belittling and infantilising. Asexual people are also not just ‘waiting for the right person’, nor does having a partner make someone whole or complete.

Disability and neurodivergence

As with all identities, there is an intersection between people who are asexual and people with disabilities or neurodivergence. However, it is important to remember that disability does not cause asexuality, and that asexuality is not a disability or a symptom of disability.

Trauma

There are many reasons why a person might identify as asexual. For some asexual people, past trauma has an impact on their asexuality; however, not all asexual people have experienced trauma and trauma is not a prerequisite for asexuality.

Resources

LGBTQ Wikia: Asexual spectrum

https://lgbta.wikia.org/wiki/Asexual_Spectrum

Detailed list of identities on the asexuality spectrum.