

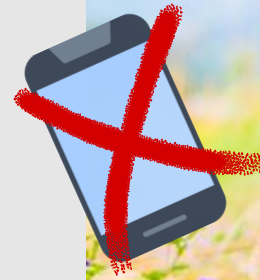
**Do Now**

# Diversity and Relationships (LGBT+ Relationships)



Amjad, 18, is from a very conservative family and has not told them he's gay yet. He's not even been on a date before; but he wants to. A friend suggested a well-known LGBT+ dating app, but Amjad felt overwhelmed by the over-sexualised content on there. 'All I want to do for now is go watch a movie with someone.' He pondered to himself.

**Discuss: Why is dating still harder even today for LGBT+ people who want a long-term relationship?**



Most of us want the same in the long-term when it comes to finding a life partner. What might these qualities be?

*I think everyone looks for...*

# Diversity and Relationships (LGBT+ Relationships)



## Learning outcomes:

Explain how human beings usually want the same qualities in a long-term partner, irrelevant of sexuality. Describe the issues some LGBT+ face in finding committed relationships.

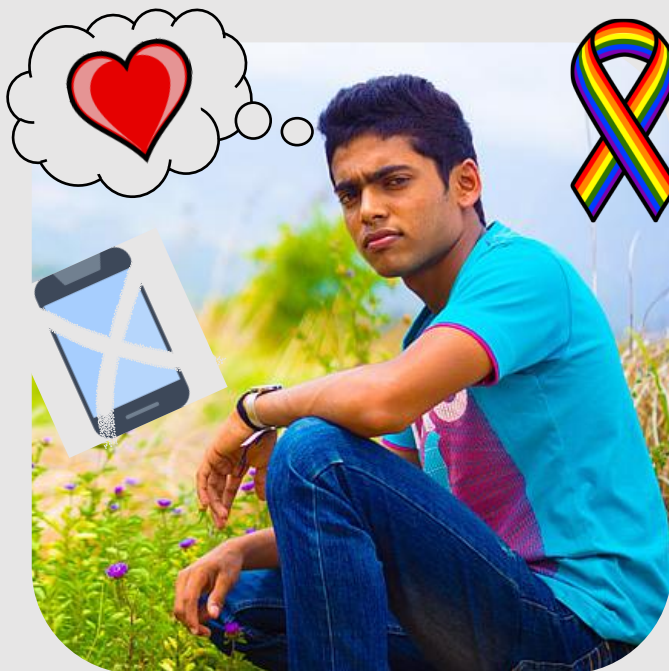
**LGBT+** This is a common acronym we use for the lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and other sexual minorities such as asexual. We'll remind ourselves of the definition of each of these more precisely in task one today.



Unfortunately for Amjad, it is true that many dating apps today are over-sexualised and lean towards people who want to make quick, sexual connections rather than finding a long-term successful relationship. Nowhere is this more of an issue than on LGBT+ dating apps, especially those aimed at gay men. This isn't what Amjad is after, but without being 'out' it's also hard to make connections in the off-line world too.

**Optional, but interesting clip:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UOn9HVQdOGc>



**According to a 2024 survey, most people look for these top three things in a long-term relationship:** (no matter your sexuality)

1. Emotional connection (feeling genuine love and care for each other).
2. Shared values and goals (so you can build a life together)
3. Commitment and stability (so you can relax, trust your partner and feel secure).

# Diversity and Relationships (LGBT+ Relationships)



Let's delve further into the issues that Amjad and many LGBT+ people seeking a committed, long-term relationship are facing today.

**THORNDEN THREE READING!**  
Follow the text in your booklet closely



## Life partner still harder for LGBT+ today?



While it is undeniable that progress has been made toward greater relationships, same-sex marriage is legal in many countries, and media has improved, and societal attitudes have shifted significantly, however, despite these advancements, it remains significantly difficult for LGBT+ people to find long-term, committed relationships compared to their heterosexual counterparts. This disparity is influenced by several societal, cultural, and systemic factors that continue to pose challenges.

One of the most prominent challenges lies in the modern dating landscape, particularly with the rise of dating apps. While these platforms have revolutionised how people meet (and should, in theory, make meeting the right partner easier), they often perpetuate an oversexualised culture, especially within the LGBT+ community. Apps aimed at gay men, for instance, frequently prioritise casual encounters over meaningful connections. Profiles and interactions are often focused on physical appearance or short-term gratification, making it harder for those seeking stability and long-term commitment to find compatible partners. This overemphasis on casual relationships can create a frustrating cycle for individuals who yearn for deeper emotional bonds but struggle to navigate the culture fostered by these apps.

Another obstacle is the limited pool of potential partners in everyday environments. For heterosexual individuals, workplaces, universities, and social gatherings often provide opportunities to meet people with similar interests and values. However, for LGBT+ people, the likelihood of encountering a colleague, classmate, or acquaintance who is not only LGBT+ but also shares mutual attraction and compatibility is much smaller. This smaller pool can make forming connections more difficult and contribute to feelings of isolation. Many LGBT+ individuals must put in extra effort to seek out spaces and events tailored to their community, which are not always readily accessible or widespread.



Cultural and familial attitudes also continue to pose significant barriers. While the UK is generally progressive, many people still come from conservative families, particularly those with religious backgrounds. Such environments can instill a sense of shame or fear about openly seeking relationships, let alone bringing a partner home. This creates additional pressure for LGBT+ individuals, who may feel torn between their desire for love and their need for familial acceptance. In some cases, this pressure can lead individuals to hide or suppress their relationships, complicating their ability to build stable, long-term connections. Whether your family is a traditional Christian Caribbean [one](#), of a strict Irish Catholic background, of Orthodox Jewish descent, or one many other communities in Britain, there are still lingering elements of homophobia in groups that in every other sense may embrace a progressive world.

Adding to these complexities is the growing demographic of individuals in the UK who identify as Muslim. Islam is one of the fastest-growing religions in the country, and like all populations, the same proportion of individuals within this community are gay or lesbian as in the general population—a biological reality that transcends culture or faith. However, Islam, as practiced in many contexts, is not always accepting of LGBT+ identities (although of course some modern Islamic families are).

# Why Finding a Life Partner Can Still Be Harder for LGBTQ+ People



In recent decades, progress has been made toward LGBTQ+ acceptance. Same-sex marriage is legal in many countries, LGBTQ+ people are more visible in the media, and public attitudes are generally more positive than in the past. Yet many LGBTQ+ individuals still find it harder to build long-term, committed relationships than heterosexual people.

One challenge is the modern dating scene, especially on dating apps. Although apps have made meeting new people easier, many LGBTQ+ users find them focused on short-term, casual encounters rather than deeper emotional bonds. This can make it harder for those seeking stability and long-term love.

Another difficulty is the smaller pool of potential partners. In everyday settings like work, school, or social events, heterosexual people are more likely to meet someone who shares their interests and is romantically compatible. LGBTQ+ individuals often need to seek out specific spaces or events, which may not always be nearby or accessible. This smaller pool can lead to feelings of isolation.

# Why Finding a Life Partner Can Still Be Harder for LGBTQ+ People



Family and cultural attitudes also create barriers. While the UK is broadly progressive, many LGBTQ+ people grow up in conservative or religious families that may not fully accept same-sex relationships. This can lead to pressure, shame, or the need to hide relationships. In some families — whether Christian, Muslim, Jewish, or from other traditions — expectations such as arranged marriages still make it harder for LGBTQ+ individuals to openly seek a partner.

Some face the stereotype that gay men are more promiscuous. While some people prefer casual relationships (as in any community), many seek lasting love and commitment. This stereotype can discourage genuine connections and may make people approach relationships with unfair assumptions.

These struggles are not new. For some LGBTQ+ people today, the tension between personal identity and cultural expectations mirrors the experiences of gay men and lesbians in the UK in the 1950s and 60s, when many felt pressured into heterosexual marriages despite their true orientation.

Ultimately, LGBTQ+ people have the same human desire for love, stability, and connection as anyone else. But cultural, religious, and social pressures can make achieving these relationships more difficult even in today's more accepting society.

## Now answer the questions in your booklet

1. What progress has been made in society toward LGBTQ+ acceptance in recent decades?
2. Why is the pool of potential partners smaller for LGBTQ+ individuals compared to heterosexual individuals in everyday environments?
3. How do conservative and religious family backgrounds affect LGBTQ+ individuals' ability to form stable relationships?
4. What stereotype about gay men is discussed in the text, and how does it impact their relationships?
5. How does the oversexualized culture on dating apps perpetuate difficulties for LGBTQ+ individuals looking for meaningful connections?
6. What unique challenges do LGBTQ+ individuals from religious backgrounds face when seeking long-term relationships in the UK?
7. How is the struggle of some LGBTQ+ individuals in the modern day compared to the experiences of gay people in the 1950s and 60s in the UK?
8. What do you think could be done to help solve the issues discussed so far today?



For individuals from such backgrounds (remember Aargal from our starter?) the clash between the culture of their home, workplace, or school and their personal identity can make finding potential partners even more difficult. The prospect of an arranged marriage, which remains common in many conservative, religious families, adds another layer of complexity. In many ways, the struggle mirrors the experiences of LGBTQ+ individuals in the 1950s and 60s in the UK, when societal pressures often forced gay men and lesbians into heterosexual marriages. While societal attitudes have improved significantly since then, parallels remain in the challenges faced by those navigating familial expectations and personal authenticity.

Compounding these challenges is the pervasive stereotype that gay men, particularly, are inherently more promiscuous than their heterosexual counterparts. What is true that some (and by no means all) individuals prefer casual relationships—a preference found across all sexual orientations—the stereotype unfairly paints a diverse group with a broad brush. Gay men actively seek stability, love, and commitment, just like anyone else. Unfortunately, this misconception can discourage meaningful connections, as potential partners may approach relationships with preconceived notions or hesitations. Furthermore, societal expectations can sometimes pressure individuals to conform to these stereotypes, even if they don't align with their true desires.

At its core, the struggle for LGBTQ+ individuals to find long-term relationships underscores a universal truth: all humans, regardless of sexual orientation, crave love, stability, and connection. These needs transcend labels and identities, rooted instead in the shared human experience. However, religious barriers, cultural stigmas, and societal expectations create a uniquely challenging path for LGBTQ+ individuals to fulfil these desires—even today.

**What progress has been made in society toward LGBTQ+ acceptance in recent decades?**

**Why is the pool of potential partners smaller for LGBTQ+ individuals compared to heterosexual individuals in everyday environments?**

**How do conservative and religious family backgrounds affect LGBTQ+ individuals' ability to form stable relationships?**

**What stereotype about gay men is discussed in the text, and how does it impact their relationships?**

**How does the oversexualized culture on dating apps perpetuate difficulties for LGBTQ+ individuals looking for meaningful connections?**

**What unique challenges do LGBTQ+ individuals from religious backgrounds face when seeking long-term relationships in the UK?**

**How is the struggle of some LGBTQ+ individuals in the modern day compared to the experiences of gay people in the 1950s and 60s in the UK?**

**What do you think could be done to help solve the issues discussed so far today?**

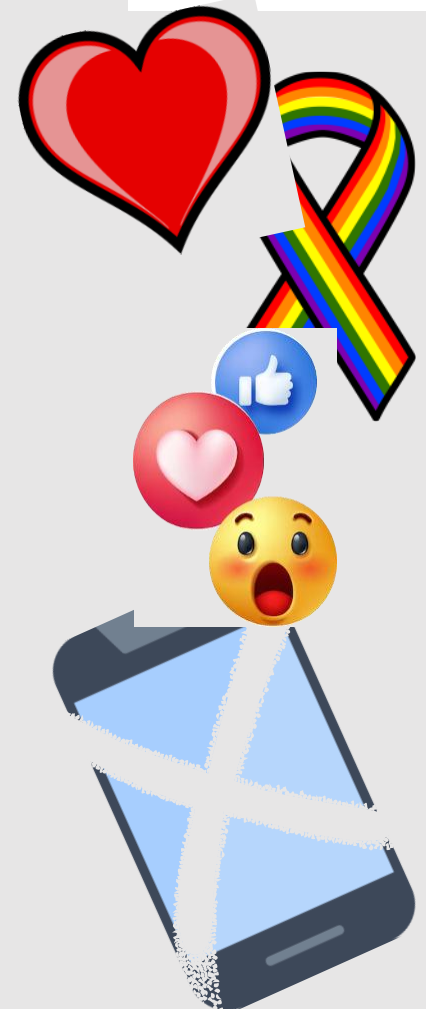


# Diversity and Relationships (LGBT+ Relationships)

So far today we have learned about two significant factors which play a part in why it's hard for some people, such as Amjad, to find a companion.

- 1) Dating apps can be intimidating and overwhelmingly sexual in content.
- 2) All humans essentially want the same thing in a long-term companion; emotional connection, shared goals and values, stability and commitment. This is hard to find online, let alone in real life.

So, in the next task we're going to be taking on an ambitious and creative challenge...



## **Future Amjad:**



*It took me a long time to find my husband, Joe. It took even longer for any of my relatives to accept him. We're at the point now, twenty years later (!) where most of my family acknowledge Joe as my lawful spouse, but my mother will still introduce him to new people as my 'friend.'*

*My advice to young people looking for a partner would be; take your time – don't settle, and never do anything you're uncomfortable with just to please others. You will find happiness eventually.*

### **Discuss:**

- 1) Why do you think Amjad's mother still introduces Joe as his 'friend'?**
- 2) Would you say this was a 'win' overall, when you consider Amjad's earlier worries?**
- 3) What do you think of Amjad's advice for young people?**

# How do you report something you are concerned about?

- It is important to us that all of you feel safe, happy and belong at Thornden.
- We also know that sometimes it is not as easy as simply telling a member of staff
- It could be:
  - A friend you are worried about
  - Someone being unkind to you
  - Something you have heard and think we should know



## How can you report anything you are worried about?

- Speak to a member of staff or parent / carer
- Visit the Well Being Den or Head of Year area
- On Satchel each week you will be sent a link to a form to share any worries you have
- On our school website homepage there is a 'Report a Concern' link.
- In the Student Bulletin there is a 'Report a Concern' link
- On all school desktops there is a 'Report a Concern' logo to click and report anything

# Need Support? You're Not Alone

If anything in today's lesson has affected you, or you want to talk to someone, there is help available.



## **Mental Health & Low Mood**

YoungMinds – <https://www.youngminds.org.uk>

Kooth – <https://www.kooth.com>

Mind – <https://www.mind.org.uk>

## **Talk to Someone**

Your Tutor or Head of Year – We're here to help.

Wellbeing Team and School Nurse

Report a Concern on Satchel

Safeguarding Team with the Purple lanyards

## **Healthy Lifestyle**

NHS Every Mind Matters – <https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters>

Change4Life – <https://www.nhs.uk/change4life>

## **Apps That Can Help**

Calm – For mindfulness and sleep.

Headspace – Meditation and stress relief.

Clear Fear – Manage anxiety (designed for young people).

MeeTwo – Anonymously talk to other teens, moderated by experts.

## **Eating Concerns**

Beat Eating Disorders –

<https://www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk>

NHS Live Well – Eating Disorders –

<https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/conditions/eating-disorders/>