



Some Challenges That Aces & Arospec People Face

Challenges living in a heterosexist, ciscentric society:

- Many directly experience homophobia, heterosexism & gender-policing, particularly those who are not hetero-inclined, and/or those who are not cisgender (i.e., cis = having a gender identity that straightforwardly matches the gender assigned at birth).
- Some experience homophobia targeting their aceness / aro-aceness
- Some (even LGB+ & T aces) are rejected from some LGBTQ+ spaces

Amatonormativity— the social privileging of romantic relationships:

- Societies that centre **nuclear families** (which are “supposed to be” based on **romantic-presumed-sexual partnerships**) devalue other relationships, especially non-romantic and/or non-sexual ones.
- ties in with heteronormativity, but exists in LGBTQ+ spaces too

Societal-level and direct interpersonal sexual coercion:

- pressure for people to (eventually) have sex, especially in the context of monogamous, (hetero) romantic relationships
- healthcare providers trying to “cure” aceness & aromanticism
- experiences intersecting with hypersexualisation & desexualisation as tools of oppression (esp. re: race, disability & neurodivergence)



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Becoming More Ace & Arospec Inclusive

- **Learn & offer information** about the diverse asexual/ace spectrum (including aromanticism), about non-ace aromantic spectrum people & about non-sexual & non-romantic ways of doing intimacy
- **Accept aceness & aromanticism** as valid regardless of “cause”
- **Behave as though people who might identify on ace and/or on the aromantic spectrum(s) are already present** (and might not yet know that “asexuality” & “aromanticism” exist or are valid)
- **Focus broadly on consent:**
 - Recognise social-level expectations & coercions
 - Legitimise the option to “opt out” of unwanted things (whether that means sexual contact, sexual relationships, romance, etc.)
- **Challenge values**
 - It's okay to not want sex or romantic relationships (ever)
 - Nobody can ever “owe” sex (not even in romantic relationships)
 - Unpack and resist relationship hierarchies & amatonormativity
 - recognise & respect people's important relationships as important, no matter what “type” or configuration they are
 - Unpack “sexual empowerment” (especially in the context of hypersexualisation & desexualisation, & intersecting identities)

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