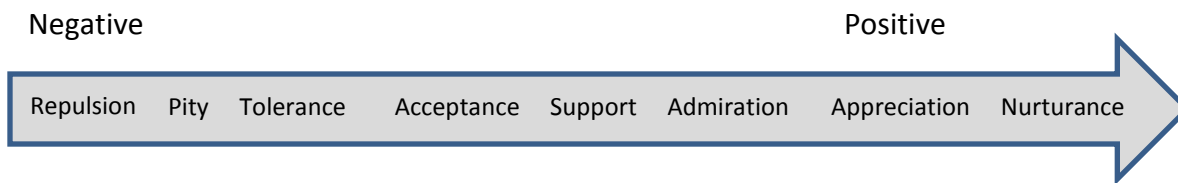


Levels of Homophobia



Negative Levels:

Repulsion: Homosexuality is seen as “a crime against nature.” Homosexual people are sick, crazy, sinful, immoral, wicked, etc. Anything is justified to change them, it: prison, hospitalization, from behavior therapy to shock treatment.

Pity: Heterosexual chauvinism. Heterosexuality is more mature and certainly to be preferred. Any possibility of being straight should be reinforced and those who seem to be “born that way” should be pitied.

Tolerance: Homosexuality is just a phase of adolescent development that many people go through and ‘grow out of’. Thus lesbians, gays and bisexuals are less mature than heterosexual people and should not be put in positions of authority because they are still working on adolescent behaviors.

Acceptance: Still implies that there is something that must be accepted. Characterized by such statements as ‘you’re not gay to me, you’re just a person’. Denies the social and legal realities, while ignoring the pain of invisibility and the stress of closeted behavior.

Positive Levels:

Support: Work to safeguard the rights of LGBT people. May be uncomfortable themselves, but are aware of the social climate and irrational unfairness.

Admiration: Acknowledges that being LGBT in our society takes strength. Such people are willing to truly look at themselves and work on their own homophobic attitudes.

Appreciation: Values the diversity of people and sees LGBT people as a valid part of diversity. These people are willing to combat homophobia in themselves and others.

Nurturance: Assumes that LGBT people are indispensable to society. They view all homosexual people with genuine affection and delight and are willing to be open and public advocates.

