

Biphobia and other myths

Wed, 6/30 1:42PM • 21:47

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

lgbtq, bisexual, phobia, bisexuality, sexual orientation, myth, people, gay, fear, myths, person, number, identity, heterosexual, chooses, bible, denial, heather, podcast, favorite

Welcome to Just breathe parenting your LGBTQ T. Live podcast transforming the conversation around loving and raising an LGBTQ child filled with awesome guests, practical strategies and moving stories host Heather Hester always makes you feel like you're having a cozy chat. Wherever you are on this journey right now, in this moment in time, you are not alone. And here is Heather for this week's amazing episode.

Welcome to Just breathe. I am so happy you are here. Today's episode has been an incredible learning experience for me as I've pulled it together. And I hope that you get as much out of it as I did. A few days ago, I was chatting with my daughter and her friend. And I don't know about you, but I always love hearing things from our teens perspectives. So I told them I was working on an episode for this podcast, and the floodgates of information just poured open. So in addition to my original topic of handling common myths, we are going to talk about by phobia today. I know I can't see you but just nod or raise your hand if you'd heard of by phobia before I mentioned it just now. I hadn't. As my daughter and her friend shared their insight knowledge though. I had one of those. Oh my gosh, of course this makes total sense moments. I mean, think about it before your child was out. What was your first thought when you heard someone was bisexual? Were they confused? It was just a transitional sexual orientation. At some point they would come out as gay. Were they seeking attention? Or it's just a phase or a trend? The disparaging thoughts go on and on right. being bisexual is one of the most misunderstood sexual orientations and people who identify as bisexual or discriminated against and judged from both inside and outside of the LGBTQ community. So I'd like to take just a few minutes to talk about why this is exactly and what we can do to counter it. I always think it's helpful to start with the definition so let's look at the definitions of both bisexuality and by phobia. bisexual advocate Robin Ochs popular definition of bisexuality is the potential to be attracted romantically and or sexually to people of more than when one sex and or gender not necessarily at the same time, not necessarily in the same way, and not necessarily to the same degree. By phobia is prejudice against bisexuality and bisexual people, and denial that bisexuality is a genuine sexual orientation, leading to many harmful and inaccurate assumptions, and the arratia of its existence. For further reference on bisexuality, I have linked a comprehensive and detailed explanation in the show notes for you. Understanding by phobia means taking a look at how humans work. We like things to fit in boxes that can be checked. Anything that exists on a continuum or falls outside of that this or that choice becomes uncomfortable, and it requires compassion, understanding, and oftentimes work and my humble opinion, all humans are capable of this, but many choose to live in the safety of what is comfortable. Before we can take action, though, we need to understand what this denial and arratia are look like and what it means. Denial

takes several forms. The most basic is the hetero sexist view, which is the belief that heterosexuality is the only legitimate and natural sexual orientation.

The next is the monosexual view, which is essentially binary thinking. One can be heterosexual or homosexual. This view produced the saying that you've probably heard which is you are either gay, straight or lying. Finally there is the assertion that bisexuality is merely a social trend. bisexual arratia is the attempt to cancel, revise, or otherwise void the existence of bisexuality throughout history, as well as present day validation in media and other legitimate sources. As you can imagine, multiple stereotypes have stemmed from denial and erasure. By phobia causes bisexual people to be seen as confused, indecisive, insecure, untrustworthy and promiscuous. Now, I want all of us just to pause for a moment here. Many of us have watched and experienced to a certain degree, the turmoil, the self loathing, and the mental anguish our kids are going through or have gone through as they work or have worked through their coming out process to connect with their authentic self right? We know firsthand that no one chooses to be gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, queer, or any other orientation or identity. This is how they were created. So can you imagine how isolating it must feel to be judged and shunned by both the heterosexual community and the LGBTQ plus community for having the courage to step into your authenticity? It is a total double whammy with skepticism coming at you from all angles. It's no wonder that the mental health effects are considerable. bisexual people experience in validation, which leads to low self esteem, low self worth and depression. Not surprisingly, they experience a higher rate of suicidal ideation and self harm as well. So what can we do? Well, first of all, I want anyone who just thought I'm just one person, how can I make any difference, to take a deep breath and wrap your head around the fact that it only takes one person to make a beautiful difference? We educate and empower ourselves. And then we educate and empower those around us. The number one most important thing to keep in mind is that each one of us is a fabulous mix of traits and identities, creating our whole unique person. For example, I identify as straight. I am a woman, a wife, a mom, a creator, a music lover, an advocate, a yogi, a coffee junkie and an avid researcher. If my whole were described by only one of those words, you'd be missing a lot of what makes me uniquely me right? This translates to every single human on this planet. Some of our identifications make us members of the majority, and some make us members of the minority. Very few of us fall squarely as 100% privileged or 100% oppressed the knowledge that each of us can make a difference and that every person we meet has many, many character and identity descriptors helps us as we learn how to confront and eliminate by phobia.

combating by phobia means confronting and combating homophobia to. And just like homophobia, one of the root causes of by phobia is ignorance and fear. I love this quote, the easiest enemy to hate and fear is the enemy you've never met. I'm not sure who first said this, but it is undoubtedly true, especially with regard to LGBTQ plus people. Those who yell the loudest or spout the ugliest words have likely never met a person who is gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, queer, or any other sexual orientation or gender identity. They've never taken the time or had the opportunity to get to know all of an LGBTQ plus person's character and identity descriptors. Whether the prejudice is conscious or unconscious, it is likely based on generations old myths and stigmas that have never been re examined. The hate the fear, the misinformation have been passed on for so long. But my guess is if you asked why these beliefs are still held, you would not receive a clear or substantive answer. So we can't Do that with a sincere invitation to meet and have an open conversation with someone who is bisexual for those who

are bi phobic, and someone who is gay, lesbian, transgender, or queer for someone who is homophobic. It could be a neighbor, a relative, a teacher, or the owner of your favorite shop. This eliminates the us versus them narrative, and brings it back to just being human beings. We stand up for and support those who are bisexual. We counter negativity and correct bisexual myths. I found a great web page that lists the most common bisexual myth that I will link in the show notes for you. So make sure you check it out. It's really great. Our work as bisexual allies specifically, is to educate others, which automatically dispels fear and makes our society a place where bisexual people can come out to heterosexual and homosexual people alike without fear of judgment. So moving on to the broader conversation about common LGBTQ plus myths. And depending on where you are on your journey, you could probably list at least five without batting an eye right? I definitely can't at this point. Whether this is your first or 50th time hearing these know that these are the most common things thought and said by those who are misinformed. So being prepared with a response and accurate information to back it up is key. There are many great websites out there and articles and information that discuss these myths as well as provide factual information. And I'm providing a link for just one of them and the show notes for you. So Myth number one is that being LGBTQ plus is a choice. I know that I covered this earlier in the episode and I say it quite frequently on this podcast. But I just feel so strongly about the absurdity of this statement. As parents of an LGBTQ plus child, we know that no one chooses their sexual orientation, or gender identity. It is how they were beautifully and wonderfully made. We have witnessed the hell that so many of our kids experience as they are working through their process. And to certain degrees, we feel their pain as only a parent can write. So here's your response for anyone who suggests this myth to you. All you need to do is witness the self torture and agony of one person's coming out process to know that this is not a choice.

Myth number two, being LGBTQ plus can be cured. I've always found this one so fascinating, like sexual orientation and gender identity are diseases that can be caught and then cured. so absurd, right. But many still believe in conversion or reparative therapy, which have been proven to be so damaging that as of March 20 2020 states have banned its use. If you haven't seen the movie boy erased, add that to your queue immediately. It is based on a true story and rip your heart out. You may have heard of the reparative therapy organization, Exodus International. When it closed in 2013, after 27 years of utter failure, and worse, the destruction of 1000s of lives. It came out with the following statement that I find absolutely fascinating. We apologize for years of undue judgment by the organization and the Christian church as a whole. We've been imprisoned in a worldview that's neither honoring toward our fellow human beings nor biblical from a Judeo Christian perspective, gay, straight or otherwise, we're all project all sons and daughters. Exodus international is the project goals older brother, trying to impose its will on God's promises and make judgment on who's worthy of his kingdom. I have a knot in my stomach just reading that. Not a disease. In fact, quite the opposite. Myth number three, and one of my very favorites. The parents did something wrong. I love this one. And honestly, when Connor first came out and we knew nothing, it was one of our fears. Can I get an Oh yeah, if you were of the same mindset when your child first came out. So, first of all, this is why I do the work I do. And all of you do the work you do as allies and advocates, we have to eliminate the misinformation that is so readily available to knock us down. We need to educate and spread love for all so that a parent's first thought when their child comes out to them isn't? Oh, my gosh, what did I do to my baby? But how can I support my baby on this journey? The statistics are super clear on this one. LGBTQ plus kids who have little to no parental or family support, are eight times more likely to attempt suicide, six times more likely

to struggle with depression, and other mental health issues, and three times more likely to use illegal drugs. Of course, there are outliers to this. But as a guiding principle, this information is super important to understand. So here are your marching orders from Myth number three, I want you to stand in front of a mirror and repeat. I did nothing wrong every day 10 times until you believe it and love and support that baby. Myth number four. The Bible condemns LGBTQ plus people. Now y'all know I feel very strongly about this one. I've talked about it written about it, and it is part of my digital course. So we're just going to touch on the most important pieces here. So you are prepared when someone uses this myth.

Out of 31,000 verses in the Bible, only seven, seven are cited to condemn homosexuality, or being LGBTQ. The word homosexual was not even a word in the English language until the late 1800s, and did not appear in the Bible until the late 1940s. Further Furthermore, looking at the historical context, and following the translations, back to the original texts of Hebrew, Greek, Syriac and Aramaic. There are no words that translate as homosexual, or anything close. Jesus never spoke about homosexuality, not once. And the Bible as a whole actually condemns cruelty toward all and exploitation of those most vulnerable. If you are interested in reading more on this subject, my two very favorite books are unclasp her by Colby Martin, and Mom, I'm gay by Susan patrol. Myth number five. Being LGBTQ plus is contagious. This one is particularly painful for me because we have run into this in our community. Like Myth number two, being LGBTQ plus is not something that can be caught. It is not a disease. And perhaps even more importantly, it is not a behavior that can rub off on others. It is not a learned behavior. It is an inherent trait. Fear and ignorance drive this myth, the most we can do to counter it is to offer accurate information and kindness. We cannot control others actions, but we can control how we respond. And sometimes that response includes letting go of relationships that are no longer positive or supportive of you and your family. So I know this was a lot of information packed into about 22 minutes. I hope this was insightful and helpful for you as you and your family. Continue on this beautiful journey. please reach out to me with questions on this topic or these topics. If you have ideas for future topics or questions that you'd like for me to incorporate into future topics, I would love that. And one final favor to ask before I sign off. If you really enjoy this podcast, please leave me a review on whatever platform you listen to it on. positive reviews are the best way for me to reach others in the world who need to know that they are not alone. Big hugs to all of you and many many thanks. Until next time.

Thanks so much for joining Heather today. Remember to just breathe. Take a few minutes every day to calm and center yourself. Reach out anytime with ideas, questions or feedback. Please rate and review just breathe on your favorite platform. Subscribe to Heather's website WWW dot chrysalis mama.com to receive her monthly newsletter and stay informed. Join the private just breathe Facebook community to chat with other parents and allies and share with anyone who needs to know that they are not alone.