

Attitudes Toward LGBTQ+ People

The Riddle Scale, developed by Dr. Dorothy Riddle, is a model used to understand people's responses towards homosexuality. The scale includes four negative and four positive levels of attitude towards lesbians and gay men. It has been adapted here to apply to other groups in the LGBTQ spectrum.

Negative Levels of Attitude

1. **Repulsion:** LGBTQ+ people are sick, crazy, immoral and sinful, which justifies changing or eliminating them.
2. **Pity:** LGBTQ+ people are somehow born that way and should be pitied. The goal is to help these poor individuals to be as "normal as possible".
3. **Tolerance:** Exploring one's sexual orientation and gender identity is viewed as a phase of adolescent development that many people go through and most people "grow out of", realizing heterosexuality is the only acceptable sexual orientation. Thus, LGBTQ+ people must be protected and treated as children. They should not be given positions of authority because they still are working through adolescent behaviours.
4. **Acceptance:** Still implies there is something to accept, characterized by such statements as "You're not a gay to me, you're a person." "What you do in bed is your business", "That's fine as long as you don't flaunt it." ("Flaunt" usually means say or do anything that makes people aware.) This attitude ignores the pain of invisibility, the stress of closet behaviour and denies the social and legal realities with which LGBTQ+ people live.

Positive Levels of Attitude

1. **Support:** LGBTQ+ people deserve legal and human rights. People should treat others fairly, regardless of one's own comfort with diverse sexual orientation and gender identity/expression.
 2. **Admiration:** Acknowledges that being LGBTQ+ in our society takes strength. This also includes looking at oneself and working on one's own homophobic/biphobic/transphobic and heterosexist attitudes.
 3. **Appreciation:** Values the diversity of people and sees LGBTQ+ people as a valid part of that diversity. This attitude also includes a willingness to combat homophobia/biphobia/transphobia in oneself and in others.
 4. **Nurturing:** LGBTQ+ people are indispensable in our society. This includes viewing them with genuine affection, acting as an advocate.
- think about : where you are on the scale; where would you place your workplace
 - identify concrete steps you and your workplace could take to attain a higher level of attitude

Source/reference:

1. Dorothy Riddle, Tuscon Arizona
2. Designing and Delivering HIV/AIDS Training: A Facilitator's Guide. Canadian Public Health Association, March 2003
3. Ontario Public Health Association. (2011). A Positive Space Is a Healthy Place: Making Your Community Health Centre, Public Health Unit or Community Agency Inclusive to Those of All Sexual Orientations and Gender Identities. The Public Health Alliance for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual, Transgender, Two-Spirit, Intersex, Queer and Questioning Equity. Retrieved from <http://opha.on.ca/getmedia/125e32e7-f9cb-48ed-89cb-9d954d76537b/SexualHealthPaper-Mar11.pdf.aspx?ext=.pdf>