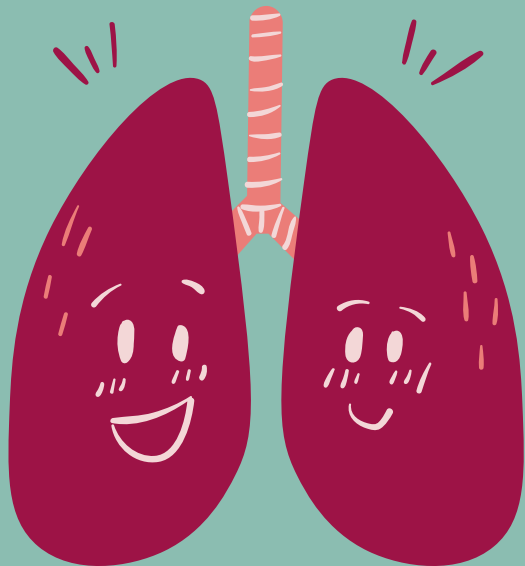


WHAT IS ATTRACTION?

Attraction is an internal experience described as **warmth, excitement, motivation, interest, desire, passion**, or all of the above. When we are attracted, we are drawn toward something. Because attraction is an internal experience, our behavior (relationships, flirtations, care) may not reflect the attraction we are experiencing.



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Community Health
Access Initiative



RESILIENCE +
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MICHIGAN MEDICINE
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

WHAT'S MY SEXUAL/ ATTRACTION ORIENTATION?

AN LGBTQ+ INCLUSIVE
RESOURCE FOR EVERYONE

HOW DO I KNOW WHAT I'M FEELING?

The **feelings and intentions** behind our attraction can be difficult to understand, especially when we get mixed messages about what we "should" or "shouldn't" feel.

The answers to the questions below can help us figure out which (if any) type of attraction we're feeling toward a person or many people. When thinking about a specific person or group of people:

- What occupies my mind more than usual?
- How is my body reacting, if at all?
- What actions am I feeling motivated to take with them?

WHAT IS NORMAL?

People might tell us there is one right way for us to feel attracted or to whom, but the reality is that **everyone experiences attraction differently** and our feelings of attraction can change over time.

There are folks who experience only sexual attraction, there are folks who experience only emotional attraction, there are folks anywhere in between, or who experience no attraction at all. Some folks act on (express) their attraction while others choose not to. **All of these folks are normal.**

Some types of attraction...*

SEXUAL

A desire to engage in physical sexual contact with another person or people. You may be thinking about bodies, touching, and physical pleasure; you may feel arousal.

Romantic-sexual may include a combination of physical and emotional intimacy.

ROMANTIC

Feelings toward another person or people, often involving desire for an intimate relationship somehow different from those self-defined as friendships. You may be thinking about expressions of love or desire, gestures of intimacy or closeness; you may feel "butterflies".

Emotional-romantic may include: dating, falling in love, time alone, emotional intimacy, flirting. **Physical-romantic** may include: physical intimacy (touching, cuddling, holding hands, kissing).

EMOTIONAL

also known as "platonic" attraction

Feelings toward another person or people, often involving desire for friendship. You may be thinking about what they like or don't like, shared interests and feelings.

May include: spending time together, getting to know each other, staying connected over an extended period of time, growing together

AESTHETIC

An observation that someone is physically appealing, often involving a desire to look at or admire someone's appearance. You may be thinking about their face, body, style.

*attraction is fluid and not limited to these definitions