

Homosexuality: A Topic that Invites a Slew of Controversies



The word homosexuality is enough to cause a sense of perturbation among the people who have not been able to or have deliberately avoided acknowledging the fact that two individuals of the same sex can resonate with each other in much the same way as the ones with different sex. Individuals with such an “infrequent” sexual orientation are subject to excruciating discrimination and contempt by the members of the various communities which consider this “biological orientation” a “sin.” Such discrimination operates both at a conscious and a subconscious level. It is even more disturbing to realize that most people are not cognizant of the fact that their disparaging and demeaning attitude toward homosexuals can create an inimical and everlasting state of psychological turmoil for them. The stereotypes associated with homosexuals have perpetuated down the centuries and would continue perpetuating unless appropriate actions are taken to rectify them. However, awareness cannot be efficaciously propagated till people are not ready to leave the oblivion they have been living in since their childhood. Thus, the first step to bring about a change in the irrational and negative attitude would be to help those people come out of the oblivion and realize that there is a flaw in their conditioning with respect to the people who lie outside of what is considered as “normal.” Only then can we anticipate the desirable changes in their attitudes toward the marginalized. The second step would be to induce empathy in the hearts of such people toward homosexuals so that they can place themselves in the shoes of the individuals they have always ostracized and detested. From then, these people will embark on their journey toward modifying and confronting their belief system. Since such attitudes have been conditioned for decades, crumbling them would require due tenacity and a sequence of formidable efforts. A ray of optimism has started to caress the homosexuals in various countries that have legalized same-sex marriage. The USA, Brazil, Taiwan, Argentina are a few examples. However, homosexuals, in myriad parts of India, are still struggling to be accepted as a part of a cohesive group. Another aspect that such uncongenial attitudes involve is the fact that homosexuality is considered as “mental illness” that can be cured through psychological interventions.

The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders-II listed homosexuality a mental disorder in 1968. Homosexuality continued being perceived as a disorder for many years till it was finally eliminated from it in 1973 when the researchers found that homosexuality bears no relation to psychopathology. However, considering the level of vitriolic acts (including the ones which may be inadvertent) manifested by the detesters of homosexuality in India is sufficient to show that we are regressing to the 1960s even in the face of contradictory evidence that suggests homosexuals are as psychologically healthy as are heterosexuals. Thus, it is the time that we stood up and started to revere all kinds of sexual orientations.

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