

Riddle Homophobia Scale

Below are listed four negative homophobic levels and four positive levels of attitudes towards lesbian and gay relationships/people. They were developed by Dr. Dorothy Riddle, a psychologist from Tucson, Arizona.

Homophobic Levels of Attitude

- 1. Repulsion:** Homosexuality is seen as a "crime against nature". Gay/lesbians are sick, crazy, immoral, sinful, wicked, etc. Anything is justified to change them: prison, hospitalization, negative behavior therapy, electroshock therapy.
- 2. Pity:** Heterosexual chauvinism. Heterosexuality is more mature and certainly to be preferred. Any possibility of "becoming straight" should be reinforced, and those who seem to be born "that way" should be pitied, "the poor dears".
- 3. Tolerance:** Homosexuality is just a phase of adolescent development that many people go through and most people "grow out of". Thus, lesbians/gays are less mature than "straights" and should be treated with the protectiveness and indulgence one uses with a child. Lesbians/gays should not be given positions of authority because they are still working through their adolescent behavior.
- 4. Acceptance:** Still implies there is something to accept. Characterized by such statements as "You're not a lesbian to me, you're a person!" or "What you do in bed is your own business," or "That's fine as long as you don't flaunt it!"

Positive Levels of Attitude

- 1. Support:** The basic ACLU position. Work to safeguard the rights of lesbians and gays. People at this level may be uncomfortable themselves, but they are aware of the homophobic climate and the irrational unfairness.
- 2. Admiration:** Acknowledges that being lesbian/gay in our society takes strength. People at this level are willing to truly examine their homophobia.
- 3. Appreciation:** Value the diversity of people and see lesbian/gays as a valid part of that diversity. These people are willing to combat homophobia in themselves and others.
- 4. Nurturance:** Assumes that gay/lesbian people are indispensable in our society. They view lesbians/gays with genuine affection and delight, and are willing to be allies and advocates.

*Source: <http://www.wiu.edu/UCOSO/riddle.htm>