

# Riddle Homophobia Scale

*Taken from Wall, V. (1995). Beyond Tolerance: Gays, lesbians and bisexuals on campus. A handbook of structured experiences and exercises for training and development. American College Personnel Association.*

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**Homophobia is defined as the irrational fear of homosexuals, homosexuality, or any behavior, belief, or others which does not conform to rigid sex role stereotypes. It is this fear that enforces sexism as well as heterosexism.**

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## ***Homophobic Levels of Attitude***

### **1. Repulsion**

Homosexuality is seen as a crime against nature. Gays/lesbians are sick, crazy, immoral, sinful, wicked, etc. Anything is justified to change them: prison, hospitalization, negative behavior therapy, violence, etc.

### **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.

### **3. Tolerance**

Homosexuality is just a phase of adolescent development that many people go through and most people grow out of. Thus, gays/lesbians are less mature than heterosexuals and should be treated with the protectiveness and indulgence one uses with a child. Gays and lesbians 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, you're a person" or "what you do is your own business" or "it's fine with me, just don't flaunt it."

## ***Positive Levels of Attitude***

### **5. Support**

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 irrational unfairness.

### **6. Admiration**

Acknowledges that being gay/lesbian in our society takes strength. People at this level are willing to truly examine their homophobic attitudes, values, and behaviors.

### **7. Appreciation**

Value the diversity of people and see gays/lesbians as a valid part of that diversity. These people are willing to combat homophobia in themselves and others.

### **8. Nurturance**

Assumes that gay/lesbian people are indispensable in our society. They view gays/lesbians with genuine affection and delight, and are willing to be allies and advocates.