

Sexual Identity / Group Membership Identity Development

Fassinger et al's "Inclusive" Model

Individual Sexual Identity (I)

Group Membership Identity (G)

1. Awareness. . .

* of feeling or being different

* of the existence of different sexual orientations in people

Self Statement Examples (for women):

"I feel pulled toward women in ways I don't understand." (I)

"I had no idea there were lesbian/gay people out there." (G)

2. Exploration. . .

* of strong erotic or romantic feelings for same sex people or a particular same sex person

* of one's relationship to gay people as a group (both attitudes and membership)

Self Statement Examples (for men):

"I want to be closer to men or to a certain man." (I)

"I think a lot about fitting in as a gay man and developing my own gay style." (G)

3. Deepening Commitment. . .

* to self-knowledge, self-fulfillment, and referencecrystallization of choices about sexuality

* to personal involvement with a group, with awareness of oppression and consequences of choices

Self Statement Examples (for women):

"I clearly feel more intimate sexually and emotionally with women than with men." (I)

"Sometimes I have been mistreated because of my lesbianism." (G)

4. Internalization/Synthesis...

- * of love for same sex people, sexual choices into overall identity
- * of identity as a member of a minority group, across contexts

Self Statement Examples (for men):

“I feel a deep contentment about my love of other men.” (I)

“I rely on my gay/lesbian friends for support, but I have some good heterosexual friends as well.” (G)

(From: Fassinger & Miller, 1997; McCarn & Fassinger, 1996)