

I almost named this zine, "Talking to Conservative . . .," but I changed "to" to "with" because no one really likes to be talked to. Changing how someone thinks or acts requires a commitment to conversation. It isn't just a "one and done" thing. It requires time, effort, and being OK with small changes over time.

If you are a Queer and/ or Trans person and this kind of conversation is too difficult or damaging, please consider asking someone else to cultivate this conversation. **You need to protect yourself and your self-worth.**

Talking with Evangelical Christian Family Members about Loving Their Queer & Trans Neighbors

By Lynn R. Huber (2025)

- Before initiating conversation.**
- Ground yourself. This isn't just a "woo-woo" thing to say. Whenever initiating a difficult conversation, it is good to make sure you are feeling confident and strong.
 - Make sure you are going in with good intentions and an attitude of care. You are asking someone to change how they think because you *care* about what they think and the lives of others around them.
 - Choose a good time and place to talk.
 - Think about what you want to say in advance but be willing to listen. No one likes to be "preached" at.

- Possible biblical talking points.**
- Many evangelical Christians emphasize the importance of Jesus saying, "Love your neighbor as yourself" (Mark 12:31). You might talk about what it means to love queer and trans neighbors "as you yourself." How does your family member want to be loved and how can they extend that same love to their neighbors who are different. If anything, this might encourage someone to be tolerant.
 - Evangelical Christians often talk about people being made in God's image (Genesis 1:27). Even though some read the verse, "male and

- female, God created them," as a suggestion that there are only two genders, it also suggests that God is both male and female. If humans are in God's image, isn't it possible that we also have complex gender identities?
- At the very least, Genesis 1:27 suggests that humans in their variety reflect God's creative abilities. If someone truly believes they are "born this way," why should another call into question God's creative power?
- Similarly, Psalm 139:13-14 praises God for creating our "inmost being." Surely, this includes our very gender and sexual identities.

- If a family member tries to suggest that the Bible says God only created two sexes, you can remind them that the Bible recognizes people outside the gender binary, even though it uses the outdated language of "eunuch." In Isaiah 56:3-5, eunuchs who are faithful to God are promised "an everlasting name." Also, one of the first converts to Christ in Acts is a eunuch from Ethiopia (Acts 8:26-40).
- Paul writes, "Nothing can separate us from the love of God" (Romans 8:38), presumably that includes our gender and sexual identities.

- Things to remember:**
- Conversation is more effective than debate.**
 - Try to avoid being defensive.**
 - Resist using labels like "homophobe" or "bigot." People don't like being put in boxes.**
 - Don't be afraid to let someone know if their words hurt you.**
 - Conversations like this might not "bear fruit" immediately.**
 - Don't give up HOPE.**

For info about the author of this mini-zine go to: www.lynnrhuber.com

Books to recommend to your family member:

David Gushee's *Changing Our Mind*.

Colby Martin, *UnClobber: Rethinking Our Misuse of the Bible on Homosexuality*.

Web resources for you:

There are several free, digital books available in a variety of languages on topics ranging from Sodom and Gomorrah and gender diversity at <https://soulforce.org/>.

<https://whosoever.org/> also has a lot of great content to help you prepare for these kinds of difficult conversations.

Fast Facts

to help allies with conversations on trans* acceptance

(trans* is being used to signify people who are transgender, non-binary, and gender expansive)

Content Warning: Includes mentions of anti-trans* violence.

Lynn R. Huber (2025)

One thing ALLIES can do to address anti-trans* hate and violence is having conversations with family members and friends about the importance of accepting and loving trans* people.

Thank you for taking this step.

2.3 million people in the US identify as trans*.

That may seem like a big number, but it is **only about .95%** of the population, according to USfacts.org.

Arguments about trans people in the US often fail to acknowledge that they are very much in the minority. That makes them vulnerable as a group and underscores the need for ally support.

Young people (18-29) are more likely to identify as trans* than older adults. According to the Pew Research Center, **5.1 %** identify in these ways.

This number, which is increasing, is NOT because of “social contagion.” The

Journal *Pediatrics*, which published a 2018 study supporting the theory, published a correction article in 2022. In the correction, researchers noted that the high likelihood of bullying and stigma actually prevents young people from identifying as trans*.

It’s important to recognize that the “social contagion” theory has been **refuted** by the same journal that initially published the article

introducing the idea, since the original piece *continues to be used against trans* youth by US lawmakers*. See: <https://tinyurl.com/ueaadnyd>

FYI: Being trans* is NOT a disease!

This epidemic of violence is nationwide: cases have been recorded in 199 cities and towns, across 41 states, territories and the District of Columbia. Even though this violence isn’t just a “red state” reality, there are worse places to be for trans* people. Texas and Florida, where anti-LGBTQ legislation is rampant, are among those states with the highest numbers of fatalities.

Sadly, many of the perpetrators of anti-trans* violence know their victims.

For more info, see: <https://tinyurl.com/57n2n94d>

Being trans in the workplace.

According to a 2024 report from the Williams Institute (UCLSA), **82%** transgender employees reported **experiencing discrimination or harassment at work**, including being

fired, not hired, not promoted, or verbally, sexually, or physically harassed because of their sexual orientation or gender identity at some point in their lives.

71% of transgender employees engaged in “covering” behaviors at their current jobs to avoid harassment or discrimination related to their sexual orientation or gender identity.

Over **one-third** of trans people in the workplace reported changing how they dressed (36%) or their physical appearance (37%) at work.

“Very demure, very mindful” is a humorous meme by trans creator Jools Lebron. While it was a cute video, it also points out the reality that trans people are expected to “pass” or “tone it down” when they go to work.

What are ways that we can change these expectations?

Violence against trans* people.

According to the Williams Institute at UCLA School of Law, trans* people in the US are **over four times more likely** than cisgender people to be victims of violent crime. Moreover, **only about half** of the violent victimizations of trans* people are reported to the police.

According to the FBI, anti-trans hate crimes **increased 35%** in 2022.

Black trans* people are disproportionately impacted by this kind of violence. The Human Rights Campaign reports that **61% of all victims of fatal violence** against trans* people are Black transgender women.