

Conversion therapy



What is conversion therapy?



Conversion therapy, also known as conversion practices, is a term covering a wide range of abuse and violence experienced by LGBT+ people when others try to change, alter, 'cure' or suppress their LGBT+ identity.

If someone tries to make you straight or stop you being trans, that is abuse and we would call that conversion therapy.

This kind of abuse happens to LGBT+ people from all backgrounds. Sometimes, so-called conversion therapy is connected to a religion, or to the perpetrator's cultural background or personal beliefs, or it might happen in a medical or mental health setting.

The key thing to remember is that there is nothing wrong with being LGBT+, and that you do not need to be cured or change who you are.

What does conversion therapy look like?

So-called conversion therapy can take lots of forms. This can include verbal, psychological, physical, and sexual abuse.

It might look like being prayed over or exorcised, being made to eat or drink something to 'cleanse' or 'purify' you, or it might look like someone controlling you to limit your movement or contact with others. It could come from a therapist, community leader, or family member who wants to change your identity. It might include being threatened with or experiencing a forced marriage or

sexual assault to 'correct' you. It might happen in your own home, someone else's home, or in a community, religious, or therapeutic space.

LGBT+ people of all ages can be victims of conversion therapy. Those who are being abusive to you may wrongly believe that they are helping you in this way. They may also be caring and loving in other aspects of your life. You may feel like you have consented to or asked for what is happening to you.

What do I do if I am experiencing conversion therapy, or have in the past?

If you are currently experiencing abuse aimed at changing, altering, or 'curing' your LGBT+ identity, or think this will happen to you if you come out, Galop's helpline and advocacy teams are here for you. It can feel very difficult if you find yourself in this situation. Talk to us. Our specialist support can help.

So-called conversion therapy can have a long-term impact on LGBT+ people. If this has happened to you in the past and you are still struggling with it, you can reach out to Galop's support services.

Our support services are **confidential**, and run by LGBT+ people so you never need to explain your identity to us. Our services are open and inclusive of LGBT+ people of all identities, backgrounds, and faiths.

advice@galop.org.uk
galop.org.uk