LIVE WITH

AND BE PROUD OF WHO YOU ARE

DID YOU KNOW?

LGBTQIA+:

Have you ever wondered about the importance of the Order of the Letters in the LGBTQIA+ Acronym?

In the early seventies and early eighties when the gay rights movement started, the community was being referred to as GLBT as gay men were largely the ones running the effort.

Even though the GLBT community was supposed to be an inclusive one, there still existed some pockets of misogyny. Gay bars in big cities catered to their clientele, but lesbians were consistently not included in those spaces. There was a great amount of harassment that occurred in those bars, but there were very few lesbian bars where the women could enjoy a safe space.

Interestingly, it was the AIDS crisis in the eighties and early nineties that contributed to the shift in the letter order, mainly due to the important role that the lesbian community played in the care and treatment of gay men who were suffering from AIDS.

Lesbians were at the forefront of helping gay men with medical care— they donated blood, provided food and shelter, and stepped in to nurse the ill when many refused to treat them with care and respect.

Their willingness to support gay men in their time of need sparked a closer relationship between the two groups. This increased camaraderie led to a rise in feminism in both lesbians and gay men.

Lesbians became the unsung heroes of the AIDS crisis.

Both men and women in the community became more receptive to feminist ideas and the push to change the order of the letters to have the 'L' come first was a relatively easy one. It may seem like a minor thing– that little letter switch to put the L at the front of the acronym. It is important to know that it is not just about the letters.

The L before the G is about love and compassion, it is about our ability to care for our family and friends who may be overlooked by society, it is about our willingness to ease their pain and suffering.

It is about standing up to injustice everywhere and speaking up for those whose voices have been neglected. It is a reminder of the good that we are capable of doing and also of all the work that we have left to do as a community.

CONTENT SOURCE:LESLEY-ANN JONES
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