

Accidentally in Love

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When I was in the first grade of elementary school, I had my first love. We hung out almost every day. I was crazy about him. I was accidentally in love with this boy. Still I sometimes wonder, what if this “boy” had been a “girl.”

About 8% of the people from Japan belong to the “LGBTQ plus” community. LGBTQ plus stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, pansexual, asexual and omnisexual. Pansexual, asexual and omnisexual are used when one’s identity might shift over time. You see, each of them has a different sexual orientation. They are each different, so we can’t just judge them by their sexualities. I think it’s difficult to understand how they feel or how they think. However, in some way we need to be aware of them. We should not put a label on them easily, nor think that we understand them completely.

My friend who lives in the U.S. recently came out as gay. His parents were shocked when he came out, but they say that they are still proud of him. Most of his friends felt the same way too. Recently, he had a chance to visit Japan. He told me that he made a lot of friends in Japan, but he lost half of them when he told them that he was gay. I reached out to a man who had stopped talking to him. He said that being gay is unusual and strange. He put a label on him and thinks that he knows everything about him. Of course, I was surprised when I heard him coming out, but that didn’t end our friendship. I think that’s because I had known him before he came out. I had a chance to get to know how charming he is as a person. I wish the man had tried to get to know him more.

As a matter of fact, people in the LGBTQ plus community struggle with these kinds of problems especially in Japan. Some lost their lives because they couldn’t find a way to cope with them. LGBTQ plus is not a common topic that is talked about in this country. So, it makes us more ignorant. Most of us are not aware of these problems. Besides, there are few activists in Japan. You may think, “How are we supposed to know all of this?” “How can we know their feelings or thoughts?” “How can we understand them?” The answer is very simple. We need to try. Every one of us. People who belong to the LGBTQ plus community and those who don’t. We just have to open up to each other.

One easy way to get to know about the LGBTQ plus community is to join events. In other countries, such as the U.S. or the U.K. there are events called

“Pride Parades.” In a pride parade, people accept and celebrate their differences. Some of you might know, there was an event called the “Tokyo Rainbow Parade” on March 7th, 2018. About 14 thousand people joined. However, there are few events held in small cities, such as Hamamatsu, where I live. We need more places and opportunities to speak up, to share our thoughts. It is one of my dreams to be able to help others to express their sexualities freely. I hope I can provide a place where people can feel comfortable with their own identities.

People in the LGBTQ plus community are just like us. The only difference we have is our first love. You see, we don’t get to choose our first love. We all fall in love. We are all accidentally in love with someone. (609 words)