

Bi+Pride 2022: Speeches in English



5. Rosa's Bi+Pride Speech

- Bisexual, married to a man -
- moved from Switzerland to Hamburg 2 years ago
- Wheelchair user with assistance dog
- Actively advocates for more inclusion
- Assists people with assistance dogs with access problems
- Can be found with her own assistance dog Elvis on Instagram
@space_poodle_elvis

We are all here today to advocate for more visibility for bi+sexual people. Too often we are forgotten, ignored or not taken seriously. People wonder if we really exist, or if we just "haven't decided yet."

I would also like to use my speaking time for people with disabilities. Because we too are often forgotten. Even though sexual orientations and gender identities also exist in great variety within the disabled community, the dialogue - if at all - still begins with the question: "Can you even have sex at all?". Disabled bodies are not considered normal, not considered desirable. Sexuality and intimacy are simply unimaginable.

This can have fatal consequences. If the image dominates that a disabled person's autonomously sexual activity seems absurd, then there is little space for dialogue. There is little education or official places to reach out to. We all know how difficult it can be to connect with like-minded people as a bisexual person. To connect with like-minded people, to be seemingly invisible.

For people with disabilities there are some additional barriers. In order to be able to participate in an event like today, additional obstacles have to be overcome. Depending on the event, we need sign language interpreters, who have to be available and paid. The venue and the way to it must be wheelchair accessible. Many are dependent on assistance, with which one then also first comes out and - the recurring theme being taken seriously. These are just a few examples.

We depend on others to think of us, listen to us and plan for us.

For those affected, invisibility is not only frustrating, but also dangerous. On average, 5% of all adult women have experienced violence themselves. Among women with disabilities this figure is significantly higher at 75%. Adult women with disabilities are also up to three times as often as non-disabled women. For men with disabilities, the figures are somewhat lower, but still significantly higher than those of non-disabled men. Violence is primarily perpetrated where there are dependencies and power imbalances. Let us think here of the approximately 200,000 disabled people living in institutions in Germany and the approximately 330,000 disabled people who work in workshops.

Even if sexuality is a taboo subject, people question themselves and their preferences. This does not mean that there are fewer queer people. But there is a lack of help and support, and people are left alone with their questions and problems.

We are all here today to ensure more visibility. Let's make sure that all bisexual people are invited. Think about people with disabilities when organizing events.

Ask, listen and think outside the box. Let's make the bisexual community together as accessible as possible, so that no one has to remain invisible. Thank you.