

I AM AUTOSEXUAL - A DOCUMENTARY

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Video transcript

CONTENT WARNING:

- Discussion of sexuality
- Non-explicit, PG-13 discussion of sex

DISCLAIMER: (0:40)

Hi! If you find yourself uncomfortable by this title, thinking "it's just another obscure trendy sexuality label," please check out my previous video on the nature of labels, where I delve into pros and cons of labels related to sexuality, gender, neurology, and mental illness, and explore multiple perspectives on the topic so we can all empathize and learn together.

If you're itching to learn about autosexuality regardless, keep watching.

WHAT IS AUTOSEXUALITY? (1:07)

Autosexuality is a sexual orientation where the individual feels sexual attraction to themselves.

It can manifest as:

- Preferring masturbation to sex with other people
- Feeling little or no attraction to others sexually but feeling attraction to yourself.
- Fantasizing about sexual interaction with yourself.
- Feeling attraction to yourself more than what is considered "normal."

It's worth noting that it's possible to be autosexual while still being attracted to others, and like any other orientation, there's different facets of attraction like physical, romantic, aesthetic, emotional, intellectual, sensual and others.

For example, you could be strictly sexually attracted to yourself but not romantically, or vice-versa. Or you could be aesthetically attracted to other people, but not desire anything sexual or romantic with them.

My attraction to myself is sexual, romantic, emotional, intellectual, and sensual. I tend to prefer uhh—"doing it solo" to having sex with other people, though I am attracted to other people as well and enjoy sex with others. I'm attracted to my own emotional depth and intelligence, and I enjoy sensual interactions with myself like self-massage or running my fingers through my hair.

While I'm both autosexual and autoromantic, I lean much more heavily towards being autoromantic. So when I refer to my own autosexuality, you can assume I'm talking more about the romantic side.

While I know I've been autosexual since I was quite young, I didn't have a word for it until a few years ago. I was aware of the label but not the details, and when I delved into it more, I realized this word described my experience very well.

Before I talk more about my own experience, let's clear up some misconceptions about autosexuality.

MISCONCEPTIONS (3:26)

One of the most common misconceptions about autosexuals is that we are narcissists. While it's possible for them to occur together, self-attraction and conceit are two different things. If by narcissism we mean NPD, NPD is more inherently harmful to the sufferer and other people, and often involves a fragile ego, intense need for external validation, and manipulating others to get that validation. Autosexuality isn't inherently exploitative as it is merely attraction to oneself, without the need for intense external validation (although it's sometimes nice to find other autosexuals who relate to our experience).

That's not to say autosexuals have perfect mental health or even high self-esteem. I haven't met an autosexual person that doesn't have bad days, or experience self-consciousness or insecurities, like most humans. In my case, I deal with depression and anxiety, and used to have low self-esteem; yet even back then, I was *still* autosexual.

It's worth noting that confidence and autosexuality can bounce off each other in some cases. Improving my self-esteem, for instance, has helped me find new ways to love myself.

In any case, my sexuality and disposition can still lead others to viewing me as selfish or inconsiderate, despite the fact that I'm empathetic and hate upsetting people—in fact, I have to fight against the tendency to be a people-pleaser. I may be self-focused, but based on my own self-assessment and observations from people who know me well, I'm not an inconsiderate jerkhole, which is very reassuring to me.

My autosexuality, disposition, and neurology go hand-in-hand, so what causes people to view me as selfish is rather multi-faceted and not just based on my sexuality.

—I am an autistic introvert, so I have high needs for resting and alone time. I also have historically tended to prefer doing my own thing, engaging in solitary hobbies over socializing. For most of my life, my first natural response is to say "no" to other people and "yes" to myself and what I want to do. This has occasionally upset other people, especially if I turn down an invitation to an important event or decline social invites repeatedly. This usually isn't personal, it's just me reserving my energy and prioritizing my well-being.

With the misconceptions out of the way, let's talk more about how I experience my autosexuality.

MY EXPERIENCE (6:21)

One question people might have is if someone looks similar to me, would I find them attractive? Well, I might find them objectively attractive, since I think I'm pretty attractive, but I probably wouldn't personally want to date them. I tend to be more attracted to personalities.

But I probably wouldn't even want to date someone who is exactly like me personality wise because I think two of me would be too chaotic. I do like folks who I share some things in common with in any case.

My attraction to myself is only to myself, and wouldn't be the same if I was dating my clone. While this is the case for me and some other autosexual people, I do know there are some autosexuals who would be delighted to have clones of themselves, or seek out people who look like them or have their personality.

Another facet of my sexuality is that I am grey-asexual. A couple other labels that could describe me are libidoist asexual, Aceflux, and fraysexual. All of these basically mean that I'm not sexually attracted to anyone most of the time, but do have sexual desires in certain circumstances. My autosexuality ties into this as well, since I tend to prefer self-stimulation more than sex with other people. It's honestly just easier, I know myself best, and sex with other people involves a lot of communication and effort, and some unpleasant sensory experiences for me (like other people's sweat and body odor), so the downsides often outweigh the benefits.

RELATIONSHIPS (8:46)

Like I said earlier, while there are autosexual people who are strictly autosexual, it's possible to be attracted to other people too and STILL be autosexual. As for me, I am attracted both to myself and other people, so I'm not strictly autosexual—but my experiences with myself are by

nature a bit different than with others, and I often prefer being with myself FIRST, and then I focus on others when I feel replenished and in the mood for other people. In any case, I am my top priority, both out of preference and for practical reasons.

My autosexuality has had mixed results in terms of impact on my relationships, and that usually depends on who I'm dating. I would find it difficult to accommodate someone who wants to spend every waking moment with me, because I need my time alone to feel stable and fulfilled in life. I myself don't need to spend every moment with my partners, so I do really well with people who are independent and emotionally self-sufficient.

I also realize that 50% of a relationship with someone else depends on ME and my perspective. So the way I relate to myself can very much influence how healthy my relationship with the other person is. So it's important to me to put effort into my own well-being so that I can have a healthy perspective of the relationship while maintaining my own individuality. Feeling fulfilled within myself also helps me bond more securely with my partners.

It's similar to the statement "you can't love others until you love yourself," but I actually disagree with that statement. I think it's very possible to love people regardless of your own self-love, but for me, that's just kind of how it works.

Sexually, I might be disappointing to partners who value sex highly, since I do prefer solo play and find sex with others a bit overwhelming if I'm not ready for it. I still enjoy doing it with other people, but not as frequently as most people would probably prefer. I'm usually more interested in sex in a new relationship, but that fades after a short time regardless of who I'm dating or how amazing I think they are. In the long-term, I'm more romantically oriented; that's definitely an aspect of relationships that I feel I experience on a more "normal" level.

THE ROLE OF DISSOCIATIVE IDENTITY DISORDER (10:46)

Over a year ago, I was officially diagnosed with Dissociative Identity Disorder, also known as DID. DID is a dissociative disorder often caused by childhood trauma, which prevents the personality from forming into a singular whole, and instead splits into fragments, or personalities, called alters. For more information, check the links in the description.

My DID plays an indirect role in my autosexuality.

It's not that there is attraction between my alters (beyond friendship and therapeutic connection), it's more that the dissociation itself impacts my self-attraction.

--For example, I'm not very attracted to my physical body, due to being rather dissociated from my own body. So I'm not attracted to my body as much as I am to my inner soul, or my inner self. I see my outer body only as a shell or a vessel for my soul.

--I also don't really admire myself in a mirror often. Again, due to dissociation. But I do know some other autosexuals who enjoy seeing themselves in mirrors.

I (Alyssa) am the only autosexual alter. But Seamus, one of my other alters, helped me find new ways to love myself.

--For example, I hold my own hand at night to help me sleep, something Seamus used to do for me. I also pet my hair as a form of self-soothing. It's worth noting I do consider self-soothing as part of my autoromanticism.

A DEEPER LOOK (12:34)

My autosexuality is like an intense self-love that helps me cope with loneliness. I think it emerged from isolation and introversion throughout my life, paired with me being highly creative/imaginative and neurotic. But I don't see my autosexuality as unhealthy or disordered, since its impact on me is mostly positive.

--My autoromanticism is almost like a kind of meditation or mindfulness, it helps me get in touch with my body and emotions, improving my interoception.

- Like, there's something very grounding about holding my own hand, or caressing my face, or running my fingers through my hair. Body movements like dancing or stimming help me channel my energy and improve my mind-body connection. I can also get high on my own energy when I'm alone and enjoying my solitude.

- I have a very visual mind. So part of me enjoying my own energy would include things like... imagining my inner self as a beautiful, powerful, graceful being. Or picturing my energy as ribbons of light emulating from me and fluctuating with my emotions.

- A lot of my self-love is internal feelings--it's almost as if my brain naturally creates fuzzy feelings and happy chemicals. Adding music to the mix makes it even better, it's like going on an emotional ride with my own soul.

--I also take myself on dates, usually small things like buying myself some bubble tea, or going for walks with the intention of talking to myself and grounding. I also enjoy movie nights or watching anime by myself, or cooking recipes I've been wanting to try. Honestly, I could be doing anything and turn it into a date--to me, it's more about the intention of really enjoying my own company.

- I also like to celebrate Valentine's Day by myself. For a few years, I had a tradition of watching the same movie every year while eating candy I got on sale after Valentine's Day.

-> I also talk to myself frequently, almost like a two-way conversation. It helps me feel less lonely, clear my head, and solve problems. I don't mean to brag, but I'm pretty great company for myself.

-> I also talk to myself as if I'm my own best friend. And to be honest, I recommend this for anyone, whether they're autosexual or not. It can be a great way to combat negative self-talk, like when you make a mistake and think "oh, I'm so stupid" or when you're beating yourself up over your own feelings or situations that are out of your control. So when you're thinking negative thoughts, you could respond to those thoughts with reassurance.

- That's not to say I don't have negative internal monologue, because I certainly do--but it helps to remind myself that those thoughts are not what a good friend would say to me, and from there I can switch my perspective and talk to myself like a friend would.

-> I like the sound of my own voice, both talking or singing.

-I've heard from a lot of people that they hate hearing their own voice in recordings, but personally I enjoy hearing my own voice.

-> I like hearing what I have to say, whether that's to myself or in recordings like podcasts.

For example, in my recent podcast on social media, I made what I thought was a very well-worded statement, a sound opinion, and felt more attracted to myself in that moment.

-> I make myself laugh. Sometimes when I'm by myself, or in conversations with other people, or even in my livestreams.

I also watch my own videos, look at my art, listen to my music, and read my writing sometimes. It's nice to enjoy the things I create, and it motivates me to keep improving my skills. As a bonus, it also helps me feel better about having low views on my content. Though, another important purpose for this is to help me admire these things as extensions of myself.

CONCLUSION (17:55)

Being autosexual has helped me enjoy my solitary time far more, have more confidence in myself, and self-care better. While my self-love is definitely on a level that makes me autosexual, obviously you don't need to be autosexual to love yourself. So if you take anything away from this video, just know that you are an awesome person!! And, go easy on yourself, you and your needs matter, regardless of what you or others might think.