

The image features the asexual pride flag, which consists of four horizontal stripes of black, grey, white, and purple. The flag is flying on a silver pole against a dramatic sky with soft, colorful clouds in shades of blue, orange, and yellow, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. The text is overlaid on the white stripe of the flag.

# Asexuality

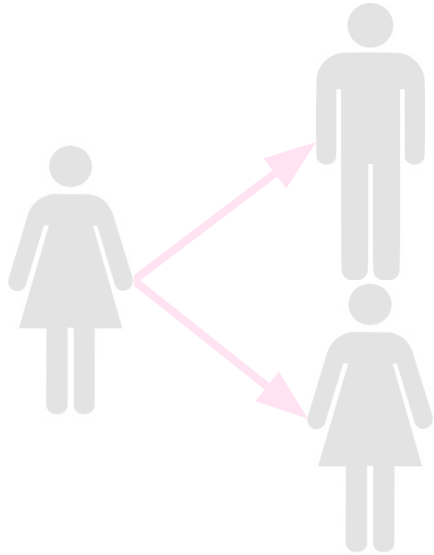
A Beginner's Run-Down

Let's start with the basics you already know

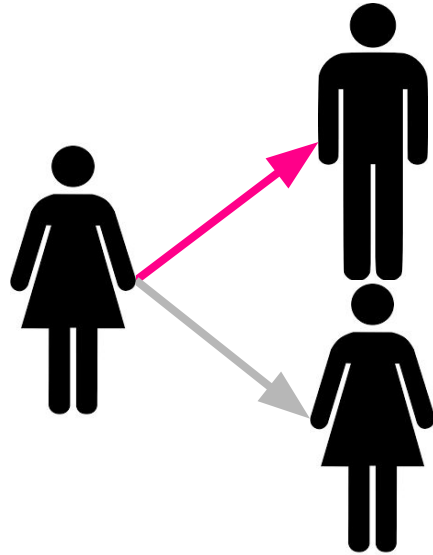
How does **asexuality** compare to  
**other sexualities?**

→ sexual attraction **present**  
→ sexual attraction **absent**

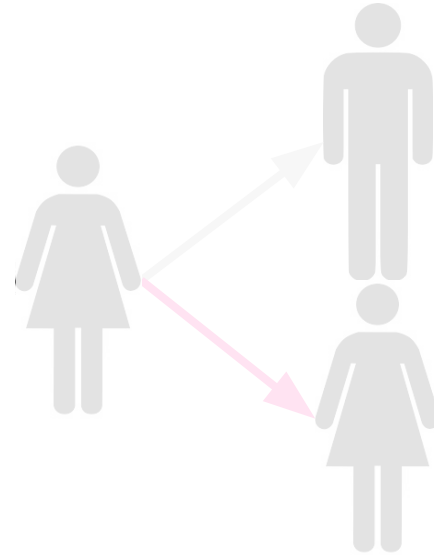
Bi  
(Bisexual)



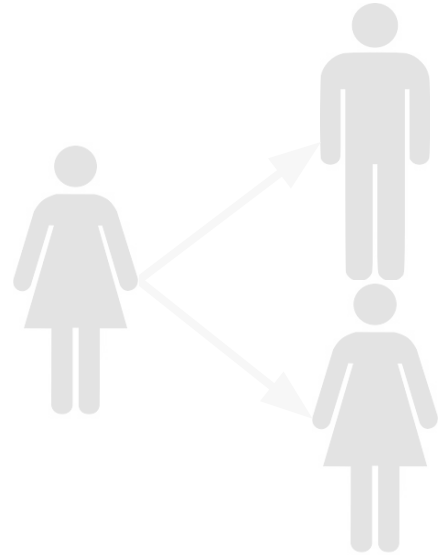
Straight  
(Heterosexual)



Gay  
(Homosexual)

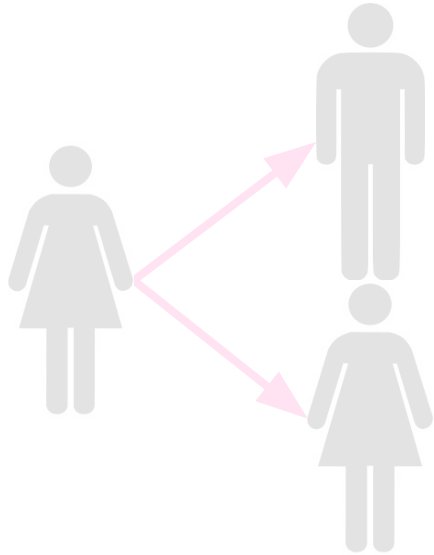


Ace  
(Asexual)

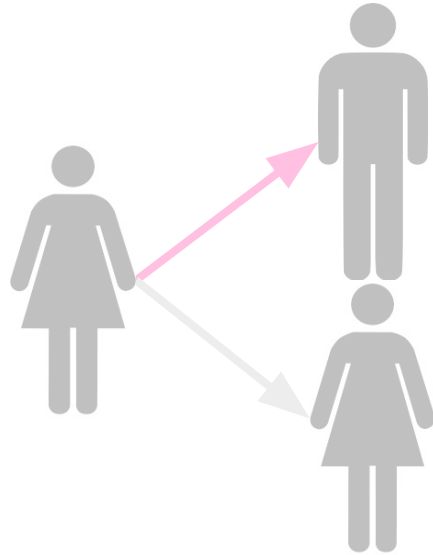


→ sexual attraction **present**  
→ sexual attraction **absent**

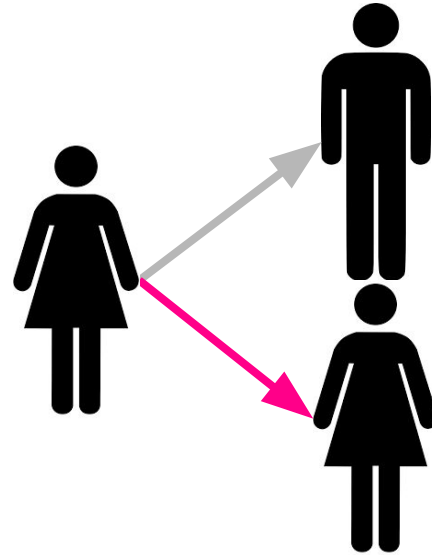
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(Bisexual)



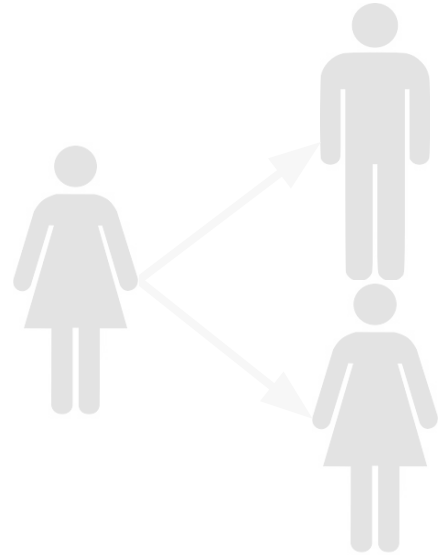
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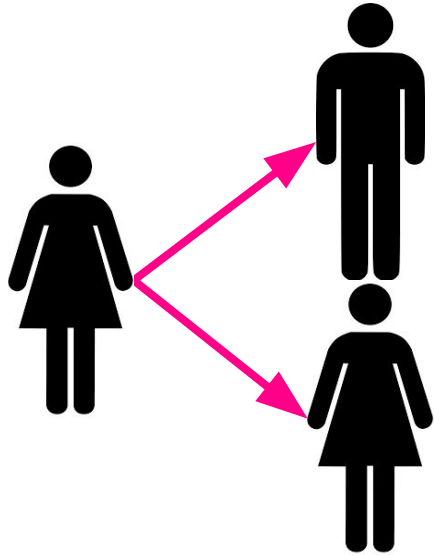


Ace  
(Asexual)

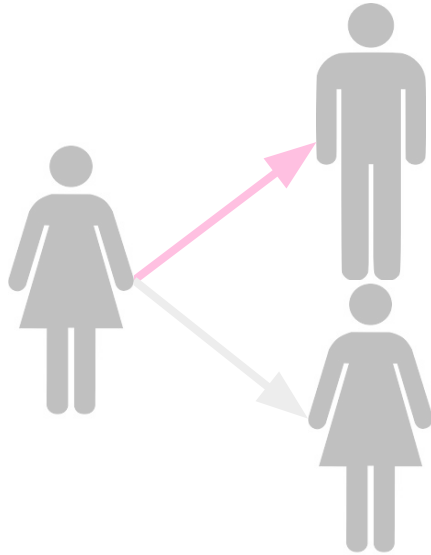


→ sexual attraction **present**  
→ sexual attraction **absent**

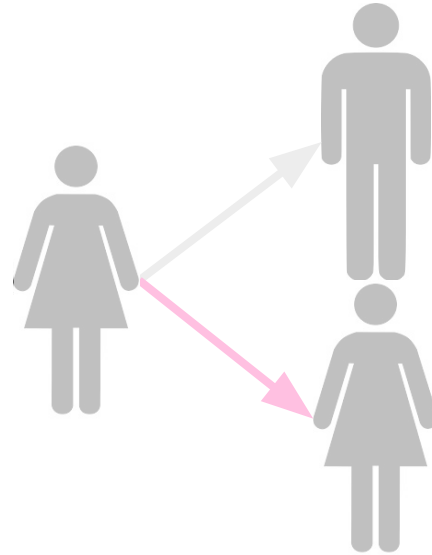
**Bi**  
(Bisexual)



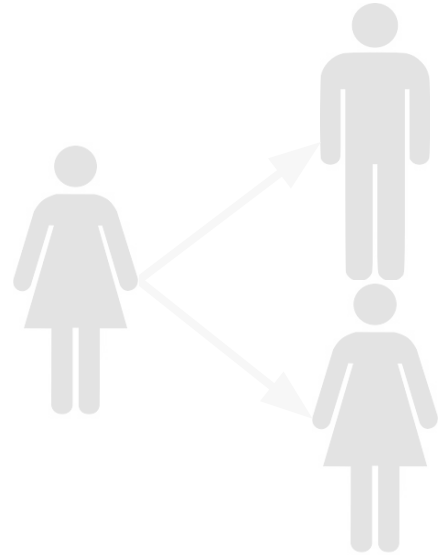
**Straight**  
(Heterosexual)



**Gay**  
(Homosexual)

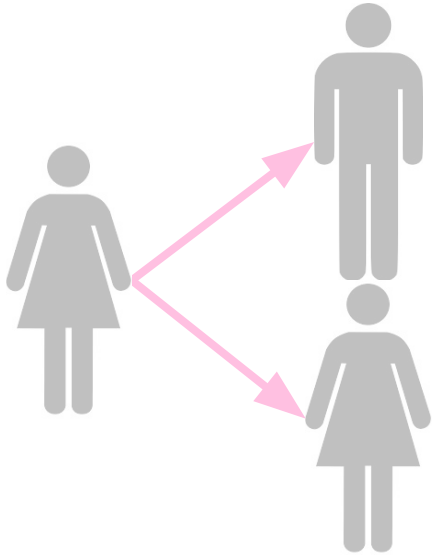


**Ace**  
(Asexual)

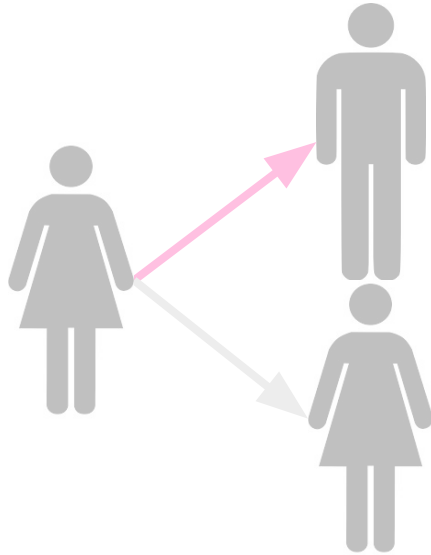


→ sexual attraction **present**  
→ sexual attraction **absent**

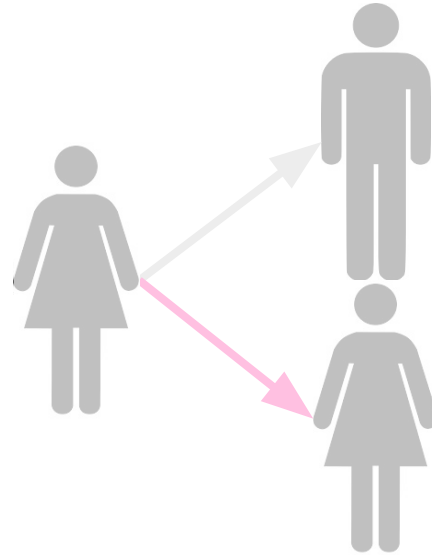
**Bi**  
(Bisexual)



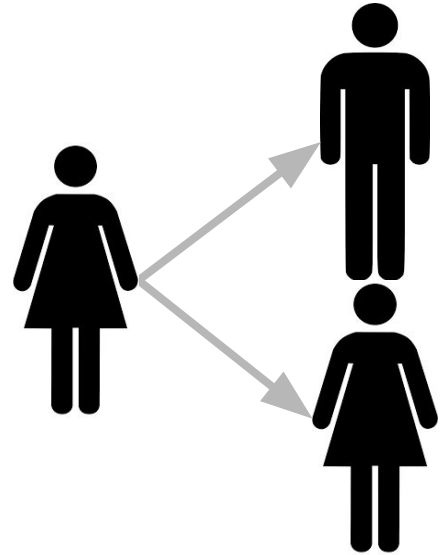
**Straight**  
(Heterosexual)

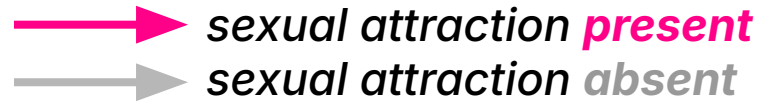


**Gay**  
(Homosexual)

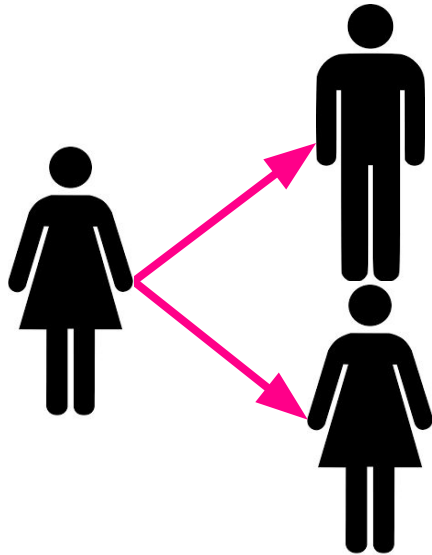


**Ace**  
(Asexual)



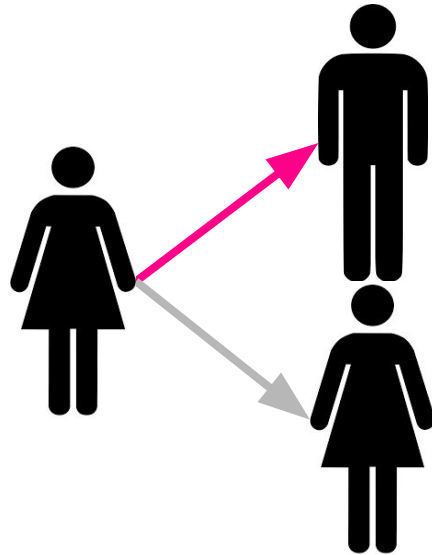


**Bi**  
(Bisexual)



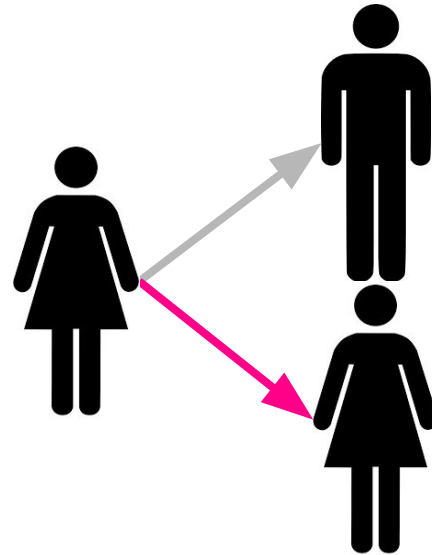
Absent for none

**Straight**  
(Heterosexual)



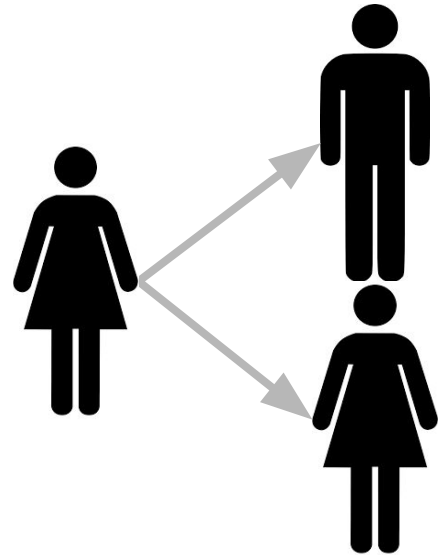
Absent for one

**Gay**  
(Homosexual)



Absent for one

**Ace**  
(Asexual)



Absent for all

# What does **asexual** mean?



*An asexual person is a person who does not experience sexual attraction.*





# What does **asexual** mean?

- Does not experience **sexual attraction**
  - Is not “drawn to” people sexually
  - Does not have the intrinsic urge/desire to:
    - Act upon others in a sexual way
    - Have others act upon you in a sexual way
- Does not find anyone **sexually attractive**
  - May find people *aesthetically* attractive or *conventionally* attractive, but these attractions are not accompanied by arousal + urge for sex

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# What does **asexual** mean?

- Never feels arousal that is **triggered by**, and **directed toward**, a specific person that causes an urge to have sex with that person



*Asexuals are unfamiliar with the emotion or physiological response that these images portray (of people being sexually entranced/aroused/excited by others' bodies or actions).*

# What does **asexual** mean?

Distinguishing attraction vs arousal vs desire

- **Sexual arousal:** physiological urge to orgasm. May be triggered by specific people, or by other stimuli (e.g. erotica), or happen without a trigger.
- **Sexual attraction:** sexual arousal that (1) is triggered by, and (2) targeted toward, a specific person, and (3) results in sexual desire toward that person.
- **Sexual desire:** the desire to have sex. Typically caused by sexual attraction, but may stem from other motivations, e.g. to have children, bond with your partner, do something together that they enjoy, orgasm because you are aroused, etc.

# What does **asexual** NOT (necessarily) mean?

- **Sick** (physical ~ hormonal ~ mental ~ trauma)
  - Natural variation in human sexuality
- **Inexperienced** (virgin ~ celibate ~ incel)
  - Experience of attraction itself *versus* choice to act on it
- Does not like, enjoy, or understand sex/sex-related stuff
- **Zero libido/arousal** of any kind
  - If experienced, not triggered by/directed toward others
- **Zero attraction** of any kind toward others
  - If experienced, not sexual (see: Split Attraction Model)

**Ace people *can* be these things, but we are not *necessarily* any of these just by virtue of being ace.**

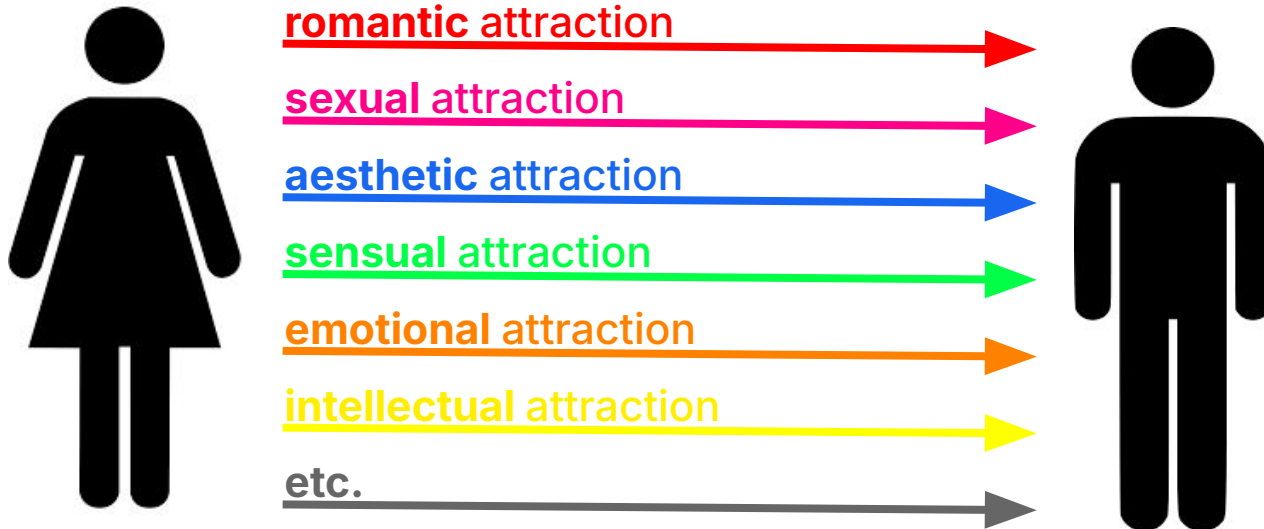
# What does **asexual** NOT (necessarily) mean?

- **Sick** (physical ~ hormonal ~ mental ~ trauma)
  - Natural variation in human sexuality
- **Inexperienced with sex** (virgin ~ celibate ~ incel)
  - Experience of attraction itself vs of acting on it
- **Repulsed, confused, etc.** by sex/sex-related things
- **Zero libido/arousal** of any kind
  - If experienced, not triggered by/directed toward others
- **Zero attraction** of any kind toward others
  - If experienced, not sexual (see: Split Attraction Model)

*Ace people can be these things, but we are not necessarily any of these just by virtue of being ace.*

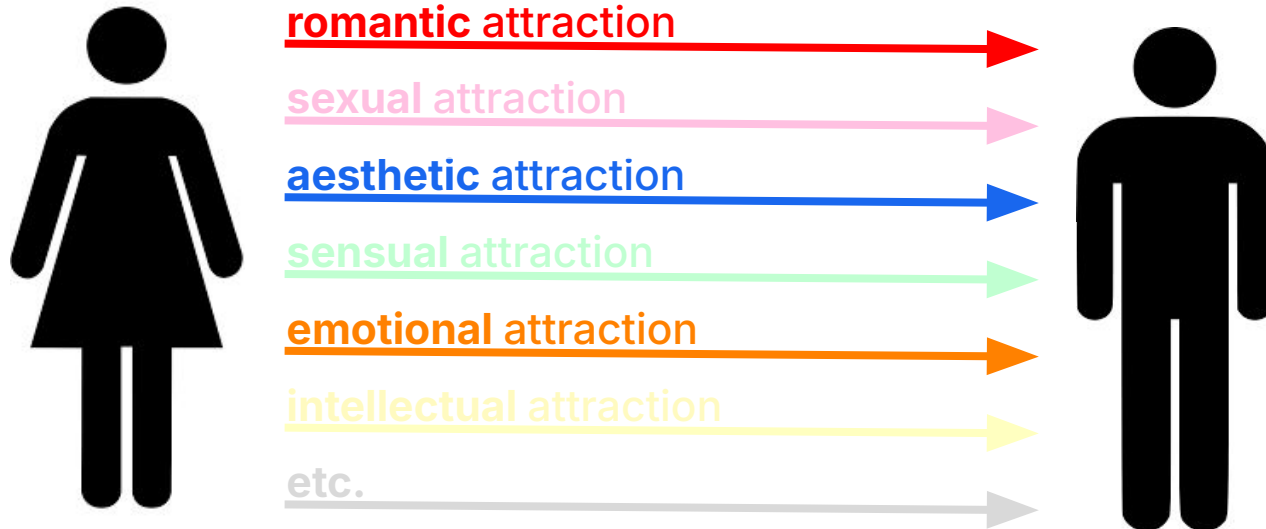
# Split Attraction Model (SAM)

- There are multiple types of attraction within a typical “crush” or “love” that can be experienced **together or separately** from one another.



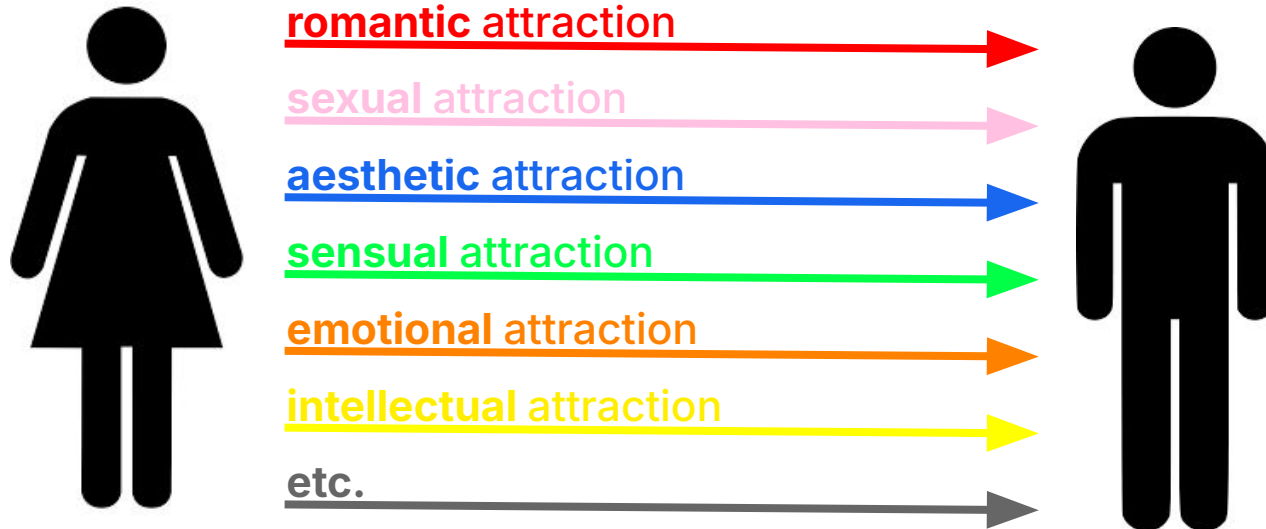
# Split Attraction Model (SAM)

- **Example #1** of what a heteroromantic (or hetero-oriented) ace might experience during a crush:



# Split Attraction Model (SAM)

- **Example #2** of what a heteroromantic (or hetero-oriented) ace might experience during a crush:





We chose the term **"asexual"** to describe ourselves because both **"celibate"** and **"anti-sexual"** have connotations we wished to avoid: the first implies that one has sacrificed sexuality for some higher good; the second, that sexuality is degrading or somehow inherently bad.

**"Asexual"**, as we use it, does not mean **"without sex"** but **"relating sexually to no one"**. This does not, of course, exclude masturbation, but implies that if one has sexual feelings, they do not require another person for their expression.

Asexuality is, simply, **self-contained sexuality**.

*—The Asexual Manifesto, 1972*

# Additional Resources

- Asexual Visibility & Education Network (AVEN):  
[www.asexuality.org](http://www.asexuality.org)
- Asexuality Handbook:  
[www.asexuality-handbook.com](http://www.asexuality-handbook.com)
- Asexuality subreddit:  
<https://www.reddit.com/r/asexuality>