

A checklist of questions

This is a framework, not an exhaustive list, of how you or a friend or a client might approach a decision about being visible or out.

1. Work
 1. Am I in a workplace where others are completely open-minded?
 2. What kinds of attitudes and values does my supervisor hold? (You need to be quite sure of this)
 3. If reactions to being out or being outed or discovered are adverse, then:
 1. Can I get another job?
 2. Are my personal finances enough to see me through?
 3. Do I know about my rights as an employee...
 1. At the workplace (i.e. did you sign any agreement upon hiring)?
 2. At the local level?
 3. At the state level?
 4. At the federal level?
2. Home
 1. Who are the members of your household?
 1. Is this the same group as family?
 2. If the household members are roommates, then...
 1. How long have you known them and how well?
 2. Are there any financial entanglements? (lease, deposits, billing, banks)
 3. Are there social entanglements? (with you or with the others)
 4. What is the lease term and how does it read?
 3. If they are siblings and parents, then...
 1. (See Family below)
3. Family
 1. Parents, Siblings, Children, Other relations (grandparents, adoptive or step-parents, aunts, uncles)
 2. For EACH of these categories:
 1. Have any negative attitudes been *openly* expressed?
 2. Are there economic stakes? (financial support, loans, health care, housing, food)
4. Social
 1. Does your social network include a mix of attitudes? (most do)
 2. Is there a "grapevine" effect?
 3. Are there specific individuals who are more likely to gossip?
5. Community and the Public Sphere
 1. Intersects with the larger public sphere as well as most or all of the other categories
 2. What is your level of risk in public spaces?
 1. Is your demographic large or small?
 2. Are the chances of bumping into someone high, medium or low?
6. Personal
 1. Are you working through difficult personal matters that require your full attention?
 1. Parents (your own)
 1. Aging
 2. Attitude
 2. Parental (*as* a parent)
 1. Children are a full time job.
 3. Your own past
 1. Trauma
 2. Health issues, physical or mental/emotional