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Going Home for the Holidays! PFLAG Presentation Friday Harbor, Washington 25 November 2008

- **Coming Out** (For Families, Friends and LGBTQI)
 - Remember that your family hasn't had as long as you have to digest your news
 - Look at your relationship with your family prior to you coming out. If you had a rotten relationship prior to your "news" you will probably have a rotten relationship after and it won't be because of your "news".
 - Pros and Cons for coming out at the holidays
 - Pro: Many family members are there and are a captive audience; can be supportive for each other; can give them a chance to "talk about you" among themselves
 - Con: Many family members are stressed and not at their best during the holidays; once they leave it can be hard to start the conversation again, can leave people feeling disconnected

- **Bringing Home New Relationships**
 - Assumption: We are more similar than different. (This is a belief not shared by all in the LGBTQI community.) "How would you treat situation if you were bringing home an opposite sex partner?"
 - Terms: boyfriend, girlfriend, lover, partner, spouse, wife, husband
 - Family Members/Friends: Ask!
 - LGBTQI: Be thoughtful in your definition. Calling someone you have been dating 2 weeks a "partner" lessens the impact of the word and you lose credibility; that person is a boyfriend/girlfriend/friend/someone I'm dating/lover

- **Homophobia**

“We are all racist, sexist, and homophobic with biases against religion and age. What we do with these biases defines us.” (S. McGuire 2000.)

The person who cannot accept that they are <vulnerable to being> homophobic is the person most likely to commit a homophobic act unintentionally.

Homophobia: an irrational fear of, aversion to, or discrimination against homosexuality or homosexuals, (Wikipedia).

- Internal Homophobia
 - Family Members
 - LGBTQI
- External Homophobia
 - Society
 - Religion
 - Family Members/Friends

USEFUL INFORMATION TO PONDER AS YOU WAIT FOR THE FESTIVITIES TO BEGIN!

Questions for Family Members, Friends and LGBT:

- What is most important to you in this relationship at this moment?
 - To be right?
 - To be connected?
 - To be silent and not talk about it?
 - To punish?
 - To get back at?
 - To understand?
 - To be curious or critical?

Tips for Going Home for the Holidays:

1. Work from the best part of yourself.
2. Be willing to “hang in there” and listen especially when you don’t like what you are hearing!
3. Remember that you and your family members may be on different pages. Are you open to hearing what they have to say?
4. Cake is always good.
5. Remind yourself what is most important to you about this relationship at this moment?