

Hasan's Story

Hasan is a Muslim and identifies as gay and cisgender (normative)

I live, and was born, in Rochdale. Being 18, which is young to many people, I am still growing up gay and Muslim. Although it has not been easy, it has perhaps been one of the most challenging things, but also something that has taught me many lessons in life. I currently study Psychology at Manchester Metropolitan University.



“You most definitely can reconcile being LGBTQI+ and Muslim. Being gay and Muslim is not the end of the world, it isn't the be all and end all of one's life. It's one of the many challenges that as a Muslim you will encounter and in my opinion, an opportunity to learn a life-long lesson that no teacher or university lecturer will be able to teach you. It's something that will stick and prove to live a lifetime.”

One of the most arguably important things that we must consider when discussing whether someone can be LGTBQIA and Muslim is that we have to look at why we can't and what's stopping the many who are so close to being liberated by reconciling faith and religion. For many of us, it's culture and the norms and values which are imposed on us and drilled into us as small, young and likely naïve children. These cultural teachings often have no origination in the Qur'an and simply serve to uphold a status quo in many situations. I for one have experienced this, fearing the shame that may be brought upon my family when I do decide to come out in the foreseeable future.

“I am out, but only to friends and those who I can trust. So far, I haven't received any negative responses and the support amongst my friends has been amazing. The support that my friends give me provides me with a lot of hope that the LGBTQIA Muslim community is able to bridge connections with wider society so that those that need support and help have the helping hand that they need.”

The most notable difficulty that I have faced is trying to stay positive in my own home. As I am not out to my family, there runs a tendency that homophobic slurs are thrown around like a bouncy ball which, a lot of the time, can lead me to feel quite low and upset about myself as a person.

Another difficulty that arguably could be said to not really be a difficulty but has been a problem in my life is dating. As a gay Muslim you can often face prejudice, racism and discrimination whilst trying to find a partner and since there are no real laws in the Qur'an regarding same sex

relationships, there is a tendency to anomie (normlessness) which I feel that many of us younger, LGBTQI Muslims may feel.

“The positive experience has been finding help from places like Hidayah. Knowing that there is some form of very early and hope filled community that exists makes me have hope for my own future as a gay Muslim and the very many of us who are existing in this world.”

Staying positive as an LGBTIA Muslim can be challenging. With all that is going on in wider society and in our own communities, it can be hard to feel like you have a place or sense of purpose in the LGBTQIA community and the wider Muslim community. One thing that people should always remember to do is not to lose hope. Grip onto your hope and grip hard and do not let go because there will come a time where that hope will become a rope to escape and reach so many beautiful things.

Attitudes are changing. Although it's a gradual change it is a significant change compared to ten or fifteen years ago when LGBTQIA were unable to love one another let alone marry. For LGBTQIA Muslims that change is happening soon and something that will be empowering to so many of us.

“Organisations like Hidayah are very important and it's non-negotiable in my opinion. They serve as a hub and safe space for so many of the gay Muslims out there. When you feel as though there are people like you in the world, life becomes a little less isolating, which it can be for so many LGBTQIA Muslims, and you have a little more hope to strive on for a better and improved life.”

I would like to add that those who are going through the same situation as many of us are should not lose hope. Hope for a better future for today and tomorrow.