Pride is still a Protest

By Anonymous

One June when I was 18, I was enjoying NYC’s Pride celebration as a young queer person. I was dancing and having fun because it was Pride, that’s what you do! During the parade, my transmasculine friend gently reminded me that the Pride parade was also a protest. This really resonated with me, and was a great reminder of the history of the celebration. We all like to celebrate being queer and the pride that comes from being our authentic selves, but it is also important to remember that equal rights do not exist for all us as a group. We must remember that Pride can be fun, but it is also a protest. With recent legislation in states like Florida, Texas, and Idaho, we continue to be reminded about how intolerant our country can be. In order to change that intolerance, we have to make ourselves known. We must fight for equal rights, especially those of us who have more privilege to stand up for those in our community facing increasing backlash, like queer youth, transgender and non-binary folks, and the LGBTQ+ BIPOC community.

The Stonewall riots did not happen due to passive people just sitting around. These people stood up for their rights. Marsha P. Johnson did not sit down. Why are some of us sitting down? If there aren’t resources for your community, create them. Find ways to connect with others. Being disconnected from a large population center can prove to be challenging for those in rural communities. Social media is a great way to connect with other LGBTQ+ people if there are no easily accessible resources in your area. Peer support is very important for our community, and we must utilize all of the available resources to take care of ourselves.

We must fight the systemic racism our country and community has embedded throughout it. We all belong to the LGBTQ+ community, and we are stronger together when we fight for our rights. We all struggle with equality and this should be a rally point for all LGBTQ+ people. If even one of us is not being treated equally, ALL OF US are not being treated equally. We are a community and it makes us resilient, as evidenced in the celebrations and in the fight that continues today.

It is estimated that over 1.5 million people died...
5 HEALTHY TIPS

...for sober celebrations in recovery.

1. **Create a plan** that includes what you’re doing, who will be there, and what to do if you’re triggered to use. Keep a copy of that plan and include at least one check-in with another sober person.

2. **Celebrate with people who support your recovery.** Cultivate sober relationships and attend celebrations with them. Let your support system know how they can best support you.

3. **Celebrate in sober spaces.** When possible. Find dry parties or bars, or invite your friends to hang out at your house or in public spaces not centered around serving alcohol.

4. **Set ground rules and boundaries** with those you are celebrating with. If and when you are comfortable doing so, have a conversation about your recovery and your desire to stay sober. Know that you don’t owe anyone a reason why you are choosing to stay sober. It can also be less isolating to ask someone to be your sober ally and support you in these conversations.

5. **Connect to other people who are sober and celebrate with them.** Whether that be sober friends and family or people from support groups. Focus on the reason for the celebration and enjoy the moment. Know that you do not have to celebrate alone.

**Bonus: Everyone needs to support sober folks in the community!** Know that everyone has a different relationship with alcohol and other substances. **Challenge the assumption** that use is expected at Pride events.