

## Love Beyond Labels

*My stepdaughter is 19 and taking testosterone to change her body into a male. Now he is in a relationship with a male who identifies as gay. I'm so confused. I want to be supportive, but I'm frustrated and sad, and my husband (his father) is a mess. I thought I was open-minded, but I'm finding all this difficult to accept. What can I do to help my family through this?*

**Dear Stepmom,**

Being transgender is a challenging path for the individual and those close to them; however, the freedom and courage to live as our true self is key to the survival and evolution of our species. Your family is taking part in this evolution.

Parental acceptance and support play a crucial role in the trans child (or young adult) being healthy, safe and resilient. It is okay to feel confused and communicate that, but also communicate love. Consider working with a therapist or support group specializing in these issues. The rich possibility exists for a wonderful new dynamic to take shape within your family.

As the transgender actress Laverne Cox said, "It is revolutionary for any trans person to choose to be seen and visible in a world that tells us we should not exist." You and your husband can be a sanctuary for your child in a society that can often feel cruel. Invite your stepson and his boyfriend for a visit with the mutual agreement that it will be a safe space to get to know and understand each other better. Ask questions. Listen, then ask if there's more they'd like to share. Your genuine interest and care will have a profound effect.

A similar situation exists within my extended family. My initial discomfort pales in comparison to the level of joy we all feel through our shared willingness to embrace and celebrate each other beyond labels.

In times of radical change, only love knows how to heal and transform our small selves into the truth of our awakened oneness. Let love lead. There is nothing more important and nothing that this world — and your stepson — needs more right now. Namaste. ☸



**STEF SWINK, RScP**, has been a practitioner since 1999. As a protégé and assistant to Louise Hay, she was a frequent ghostwriter for the "Dear Louise" column. Through speaking, spiritual counseling and workshops, she inspires others to create fulfilling lives they love. Connect with her online at [StefSwink.com/Ask-Stef-Submission](http://StefSwink.com/Ask-Stef-Submission).