The Asexual Spectrum

Many asexuals identify with two orientations: a romantic and a sexual one. According to the Asexual Visibility and Education Network (AVEN), an asexual’s romantic orientation determines “which gender(s), if any, they are inclined to form romantic relationships with.” There are also individuals in the asexual community who identify in the gray area between asexuality and sexuality.¹

**ROMANTIC ORIENTATION**

- **Heteroromantic**: A person who is romantically attracted to a member of the opposite sex or gender.

- **Homoromantic**: A person who is romantically attracted to a member of the same sex or gender.

- **Biromantic**: A person who is romantically attracted to two sexes or genders.

- **Panromantic**: A person who is romantically attracted to others but is not limited by the other’s sex or gender. Similar to biromantics, panromantics will tend to feel that their partner’s gender does little to define their relationship.

- **Aromantic**: A person who experiences little or no romantic attraction to others. Where romantic people have an emotional need to be with another person in a romantic relationship, aromantics are often satisfied with friendships and other non-romantic relationships.

**SEXUAL ORIENTATION**

- **Asexual**: A person who does not experience sexual attraction.

- **Gray-A & Demisexual**: A person who identifies in the gray area between asexuality and sexuality. Other terms that have been used for this gray area include “semisexual,” “asexual-ish,” and “sexual-ish.”

- **Demisexual**: A person who does not experience sexual attraction unless they form a strong emotional connection with someone. It’s more commonly seen in but is not confined to romantic relationships. Demisexuality differs from Gray-A in that demisexuality is a specific sexual orientation in between “sexual” and “asexual,” whereas “gray-A” is a highly unspecific catch-all used for anything between sexual and asexual that does not fit.

- **Sexual**: A person who experiences sexual attraction.

¹Note that this infographic is a limited and not definitive model of the asexual spectrum. Not all asexuals will identify or agree with the definitions in this graphic.

Source: AVENwiki (asexuality.org/wiki/)

THE HUFFINGTON POST
**Sexual Attraction:**
Sexual attraction is a feeling that sexual people get that causes them to desire sexual contact with a specific other person.

**Romantic Attraction:**
Romantic attraction is a feeling that causes people to desire a romantic relationship with a specific other person.

**Crushes:**
A crush is a romantic attraction to someone, a desire for a romantic relationship of some kind, a desire that is possibly temporary in nature, possibly never to be acted upon.

**Squishes:**
A squish is an aromantic crush, a desire for a strong platonic relationship with someone.

**Sensual Attraction:**
A desire to do sensual (but not sexual) things with certain people, especially relating to tactile sensuality such as cuddling.

**Aesthetic Attraction:**
An attraction to other people that is not connected to a desire to do anything with them, either sexually or romantically. They simply appreciate their appearance.