

Annie M. Henderson, Author, Marks Pride Month by Encouraging Later-in-Life Lesbians to Break Free From People Pleasing

The author and coach says healing lifelong patterns of self-sacrifice is essential for women seeking to live authentically after coming out

LOS ANGELES, CA, UNITED STATES, June 18, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- As Pride Month celebrates visibility and self-acceptance, author and coach [Annie M. Henderson](#) is drawing attention to a challenge she says many later-in-life lesbians quietly struggle with: people pleasing.

"People pleasing is about keeping everyone else comfortable while slowly losing connection with your own needs and desires. Many people learned these patterns because, at some point, it felt safer to please others than disappoint them. The work is learning how to listen to yourself again and make choices from honesty instead of fear," Henderson remarks.

According to [YouGov](#), among self-identified people pleasers, half said their tendency to prioritize others had made their lives harder, and nearly one-third believed they had been socialized to behave that way.

Drawing from her own experience, Henderson says women who come out later in life often spend years prioritizing the needs, expectations, and approval of others while suppressing their true identities.

"Grief, fear, uncertainty, and waves of sadness or anxiety can all be very normal parts of this process," Henderson explains. "It is important for women to have people whom they can reach out to during this difficult time. There wasn't much representation when I came out. And even though I was out, I was still people pleasing."



Annie M. Henderson

Henderson explores these themes in her book, [Later in Life Lesbian](#): Coming Out Later in Life & Leaving Fear, Overwhelm, & Guilt Behind. Drawing on her own experiences, the book offers guidance for women seeking to move beyond guilt, fear, and shame and build lives that reflect who they really are.

"It is important to find the right support system during this time," Henderson says. "Nobody should have to navigate this time alone."

According to Henderson, coming out is only one part of the journey. Learning to let go of unhealthy patterns that have developed over decades is equally important.

"Coming out isn't the finish line. For many women, it's the first time they've allowed themselves to ask, 'What do I actually want?' The next part of the journey is learning how to stop abandoning yourself to keep everyone else comfortable."

Through her coaching services and support group, Henderson provides the kind of community she wishes had existed when she first came out, where women can talk openly about their fears, share their experiences, and realize they are not alone.

"Many women have spent so much of their lives trying to be who everyone else needed them to be," Henderson points out. "Now is the time to learn who they are and to give themselves permission to be that person."

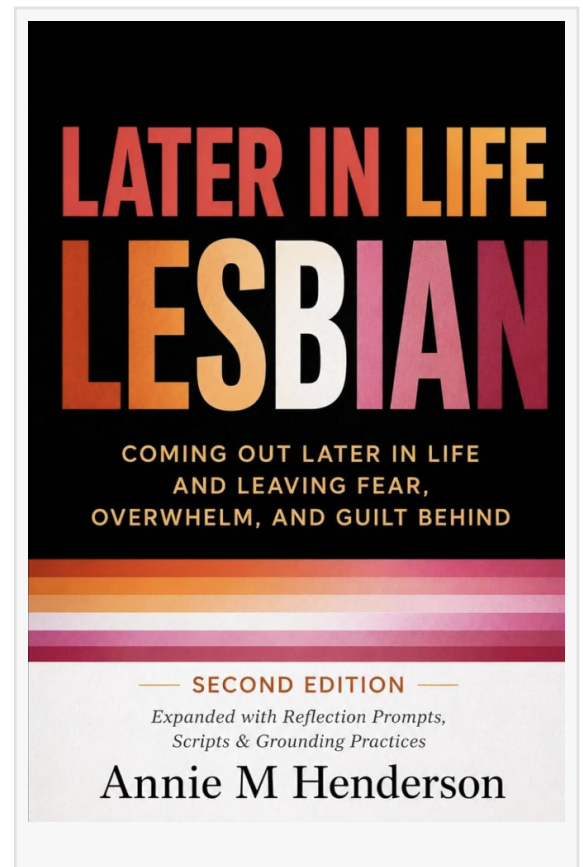
While Pride Month highlights how far the LGBTQ+ community has come, Henderson believes it is also an opportunity to recognize those who are still finding their voices.

"There are women who are coming out in their 40s, 50s, 60s, and beyond," she concludes.

"Coming out doesn't magically erase decades of putting yourself last. Many women are learning that they do not exist simply to make everyone else comfortable. Pride Month is a reminder that they deserve to live fully, speak honestly, and stop apologizing for who they are."

About Annie M. Henderson

Annie M. Henderson is the author of *Later in Life Lesbian: Coming Out Later in Life & Leaving Fear, Overwhelm, & Guilt Behind*, a certified professional life coach, former licensed professional counselor, and former educator. With over a decade of experience, three master's degrees, and an international virtual coaching practice, Henderson works one-on-one with clients across the



U.S. and around the world. She helps people pleasers and women coming out later in life rebuild self-trust, set healthier boundaries, and create lives that finally feel like their own.

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