

Why SSA Became a Blessing in Disguise

Written By: "S"

(Posted November 2014)

For me, SSA (same-sex attraction) is a blessing in one hell of a disguise. Every single day between the ages of 13 and 23, I would think and despair endlessly about the impossible struggle I was in, being attracted to other men. Ten years alone, keeping this heavy, shameful secret from every single person in my life. It hurt a lot, for a very long time, in a very deep place.

In October 2013, I attended the Journey into Manhood (JiM) workshop in Israel and had the most wonderfully powerful experience of my life. I haven't been the same since. While SSA was definitely the primary motive behind my decision to attend the workshop and begin therapy, I have realized that the underlying issues, as well as the significant changes I have created in my life since the workshop, span a spectrum far broader than sexuality alone.

Over the past year since the workshop, I have worked hard at gaining awareness and authenticity within myself, and pursued activities and relationships that provide a platform for personal empowerment. I am proud to say that my achievements in these areas have brought about significant growth in my life:

- I no longer live with the burden of harboring a secret. I am who I am, where I am, and I'm OK with that, which is an incredible feeling.
- I have learned to process the attraction I feel toward other men, identify my underlying desires and needs, and meet them in ways that are not sexual, thus diminishing the sexual aspect of the attraction.
- I have processed and shattered negative beliefs about myself, such as the belief that I am "less than" certain other men.
- I found the courage to share my SSA with my parents following the JiM workshop, which has enabled me to have a more open, deep and healthy relationship with them.
- After literally a decade of dealing with a harmful pornography addiction, I have been 100% "clean" since the JiM workshop a year ago (and my smartphone doesn't have a filter).

- I have bonded authentically with other guys, and today I own the feeling of being a good man among men.
- Perhaps most excitingly for me, this past winter I fell head over heels, emotionally and physically, for a fantastic girl. I told her about my feelings for her, and later, about my SSA. I proved to myself that what I had perceived to be impossible is, in fact, possible.

This is not to say that my journey is easy or devoid of setbacks and pitfalls. Far from it. Like all people, I go through horrible days and hard times, when the prospect looks bleak and the journey impossible. Fortunately, these times are few and far between, and I have solid friends, brothers and mentors who help me pull through (as I do for them).

I am not on this journey because of religious, political or social beliefs alone. I would readily swear on a stack of bibles that this therapy has huge, undeniably beneficial effects on many different areas across my life, with the reduction of my attraction to other men and the increase of my attraction to women being very significant among them.