

Written by Casey in Houston

My marriage has been the BEST thing that ever happened to me (especially in the last 8 months) as my wife really has become my best friend. She knows me better than anyone else and still loves me - in spite of my weaknesses.

Let me first tell you that we had planned on a divorce. During our time of trial separation this summer (we were heading toward divorce after 10 years of marriage at my SOLE prompting) I swore off women completely! I had had enough of the "other" sex...to say the least. Then, oddly, something happened.

The night I dumped my wife and kids I went immediately into the gay part of Los Angeles and wanted to find some "action". It didn't take long before I found a sex club and got all the action I wanted. Oddly enough, however, I found more than I bargained for.

I stayed in the club that night from 10 PM - 2 AM, both wanting to leave and wanting desperately to stay. I wanted to get out of the "heart of darkness" because I couldn't believe that I actually had been reduced to a sex addict---having sex with nameless men, doing God knows what . . .and for what reason?. . .just an orgasm? I had given up my career, my wife, my friends and my own 3 children all for the gay lifestyle (not to mention my reputation).

However, I also found that I couldn't leave. I couldn't get away from the fact that now, at last, I was free to be as hedonistic as I wanted - without shame - along with many other men who didn't feel any sense of shame either.

You see "W", I became convinced that marriage (to a woman) could never fulfill my deepest needs and longings. I had internalized society's message of sex without restraint. That night, in the sex club, I felt free at last! However, the truth is I was free in a very limited sense: it was the freedom of a man in a prison cell. I had locked myself within my own emotional barriers. Late into that black night, for the first time in years, I felt the presence of G-d in an unmistakable way. In this place of true evil, in the heart of this darkness, I sensed the Lord was presenting me with a choice. A "fork in the road" if you will.

That night, I swear to you, I saw my two little boys (twins at 5 years old) running to me again and again calling out 'daddy' - full of the smiles and laughter that emanates from a deep joy and an innocence that comes from children. In the bottom of my soul G-d was making the reality of my choices clear. **I was dumping my sons and my wife for an orgasm.** For all my sweet words and manipulative talk to others about my sexuality ("I'm gay", "I can't help myself", "God made me this way", blah, blah, blah and all kinds of crap like that), I could no longer run from the truth. I was a selfish bastard, an adulterer, who worshipped male bodies (read "penis's") and who used those men to "get off." No more, no less. My version of love was totally narcissistic: "you keep me happy and then I'll love you". I found in the oddest place in the world, the truth --- I had a choice, I could help myself, and I had been lying to myself about being born gay.

That night, many guys left that place happy and satisfied (at least that's what they tell people, including themselves). I left disturbed and sad. G-d spoke, loud and clear, in a sex club...and I heard.

Two months later, I went back to my wife and kids to rebuild our marriage from the ground up. I was willing to do ANYTHING to fix me and to reunite us. I went to counseling (and am still going even though it required us to take out a second mortgage on our home), got on medication (Prozac...dang good stuff), opened up to many others about my true struggles, failures and trials.... and, most importantly, began talking (read "communicating") with my wife.

I began to be comfortable with who I am: a heterosexual man with a homosexual problem. I work

out in the gym and shower with the guys. Instead of running from the good looking ones I used to idolize, I ask them about their workout routines. I no longer fear and envy other men. I no longer sexualize or eroticize attributes of others that I mistakenly thought I did not have within me. I reach out to others now...I call guys a lot to bond with them in a non-sexual way.

My wife and I go to marriage counseling now. There we've grown as a couple. Honestly, I love this woman now more than ever. She knows everything about me. She can tell you about each of my sexual encounters. She knows it all...and still loves me. I am one very blessed man.

Casey Bennett

Before my journey started I was in a deep depression, hated myself for what I was doing, visited bathhouses and bars, and had anonymous sex. I longed for sex with men but once having it, immediately felt regret. As I would pass through the exit door of the bathhouse, I wondered whether I was simultaneously checking out on life. I wanted to serve G-d, but at the same time recognized I could not do so in such unholy places. My behavior spoiled everything; nothing made sense in my life which was a mess of contradictions.

My wife and I were expecting our second child but I could not even talk about spending unhappy hours in dark rooms with my wife. I knew she suspected something. Although she knew I had this problem before and that I had accidentally struggled with gay porn, she did not have a clue about my promiscuous, secret life. I had an idea to quit my life by taking my passport and fleeing to another country, somewhere not to be found and start a new, anonymous life. Maybe in a kibbutz in Israel? Or just in some outlying rural area, helping village people till their fields. It appears ridiculous to me now, but it was real to me then.

Desperate, I decided to look for a therapist who would help me change. However it appeared hopeless since no one in Poland had ever heard about reparative therapy ... except, of course, the gay activists. They made fun of it. They lied as to how those who choose to confront their emotional wounds through this process would be either emotionally damaged or commit suicide. I almost believed them. I googled through the Internet for any advice on change of sexual orientation that I could find, but instead, found myself drifting onto porn sites. It was then I knew I was an addict. What I found on the web made me fall again.

My true journey toward healing started when my wife assured me that she was going to stay with me no matter what the past was. Her statement gave me an incredible feeling of safety. Nevertheless, I had to grow in this feeling during the following two weeks. It was only then when I truly internalized her deep abiding love for me that I confided in her and told her all about my past. She knows a lot because I opened myself up to answer any questions she had. She asked more questions than I expected, including questions which required detailed answers. Some were difficult, because honestly I didn't know the true answers. For the first time I felt comfortable explaining my encounters, secrets, and cheating. It was a

liberating experience because I knew she loved me and would walk together with me as a partner. I would not journey alone. In other words, she would be fully with me, just as I would be there for her. I recognized that by creating a true mutuality of relationship, life would be as G-d intended it to be: a true complementarity of relationship between a man and woman. There is no other person in the whole world who knew as much about me as she. And, no one else could help show me the keys to unlock the doorway of change. After all, it was she who did the Internet research for me and found www.peoplecanchange.com (PCC).

Link after link we found out how much there was on the Internet that could help us. I bought a Polish translation of Richard Cohen's book, "Coming Out Straight." Reading that book in my native tongue was simply amazing. The book, together with the material I printed off the PCC site, was the first light that helped me navigate the long tunnel of darkness in which I had been wandering. But after getting acquainted with these resources and numerous others (such as material from NARTH, JONAH, PATH), I found there was lots of light. I basked in this warm sunlight as I left my self-imposed tunnel of darkness. I felt so happy even though I knew there was a long healing journey of ahead of me.

I read about JIM and I desired to attend! My wife and I applied for green cards to move to the USA. That was how serious my newfound journey had become. Not because we loved the USA so much but because there was help available.

God allowed me to attend JIM much earlier than I expected. After two months I was invited to California to participate in the JIM experience. My wife "A" felt strange to know I was going alone to the end of the world, to Los Angeles, one of the gay paradises, and there to meet 30 guys struggling with SSA. But I was not afraid. I knew I had the strength provided to me by G-d and the encouragement provided by my wife -I knew I would not disappoint either.

When I was in LA, I often thanked my wife, mentioned her in my prayers and spoke of her when we stood in a group circle. Having a supportive, loving and caring wife is a real blessing. I was fortunate to have a wife not only stand by me but to also work with me and become a critical factor in my recovery. G-d bless my wife.

"W"