

## **I Was Looking for Love in All the Wrong Places**

*By Chuck*

After many positive and self-affirming years of reorientation therapy, I have come to the wholehearted truth about myself: that my seeking romantic and sexual relationships with other men was, for me, a repetitive compulsion to get my family of origin and emotionally absent father to love me.

As is common with many gay-identified and sexually addicted men, I grew up with severe emotional neglect from my father and mother. Not only was my father never there emotionally or physically, my mother made me into her "surrogate husband" and proceeded to have an emotionally incestuous relationship with me.

As a direct result of attending a Journey into Manhood weekend in 2006, I developed a new awareness as to the consequences of this dysfunctional triad. I had proceeded to have no interest in the opposite sex because my mother had made sure that I never detached from her and that I never formed a healthy attachment to my father or any other man. I was in a hostile dependency with my mother, where I needed her for survival even while I couldn't stand her. At the same time, my mother shamed me over the course of my childhood into never asserting myself as a boy or man.

I discovered on the Journey into Manhood weekend that as a result of this emotionally incestuous relationship with my mother, I grew to overly identify with women, had major gender identity issues (hence my feminized mannerisms) but also held no interest in developing intimate attachments or sexual relations with the opposite sex. I had had enough of women via my narcissistic mother.

My journey out of homosexuality, and into my real masculine heterosexual identity, was replete with many self-defeating and confusing detours. I saw a number of gay-affirming therapists, attended numerous gay-affirmative 12-step programs and support groups. I participated in several "gay pride" parades, and lived very much in a gay-affirmative world in West Hollywood, California. I read a wide variety of gay-affirmative literature and attempted living the gay lifestyle. I was told over and over again that I was born gay and I should just accept myself for "who I am." I was also told by several gay-affirming therapists that I had "internalized homophobia." That is, that I hated myself for being gay.

**NOTHING COULD HAVE BEEN FURTHER FROM THE TRUTH!**

Essentially, as much as I tried to make the gay identity work for me, it never did.

My sexual relations with other men had their foundations built on a total lack of affection, attention and affirmation from my father, and a repetitive compulsion to repeat my childhood sexual abuse.

I was looking for love in all the wrong places.

I am grateful every day for the life-affirming lessons that I learned at my Journey into Manhood weekend, that essentially my needs for affection, attention, and affirmation are legitimate and non-negotiable. As a direct result of this corrective emotional experience, I have finally found heterosexual men who legitimately meet these needs in my life and don't sexualize them.

As a result of the lessons I learned at the Journey into Manhood weekend, I now am legitimately getting my same sex needs met through healthy non sexual experiences with other men. I feel totally not gay anymore and instead I feel a much stronger heterosexual attraction to the opposite sex and 100% better about me.

It is important to note that my personal work did not begin and end on one weekend. The follow up of consistent weekly corrective emotional experiences and real non-sexual emotional attachments with men over the course of several years (via other support groups like a "Soul Group" from another weekend experience called Marked Men for Christ) has been the most effective in my healing.

In my opinion, those who attack Journey into Manhood as a waste of time are ignorant of the real science behind gay-to-straight experience and are operating out of intolerance, lack of respect for diversity, and fear. Journey into Manhood has reaffirmed that my path out of homosexuality is positively real and life transforming.

Without Journey into Manhood along with my own personal therapy work, I would not have discovered how significantly my childhood sexual molestation at the hands of another male distorted my world view and other men.

Journey into Manhood has been an important part of my healing from homosexuality and my family of origin issues. It has made me a more self-loving and others-loving individual, and has helped me feel much better about myself and who I really am.

I'm so grateful that I did not listen to the gay-affirming and politically motivated society and instead, listened to my own inner truth. That is, I am not gay nor was I ever born gay.

Journey into Manhood has been a very positive and healing experience in my life.