

## Gospel-Grounded Sexual Minority (LGBT+) Understanding & Ministry

- While the gospel and worldly ideas about sexuality are irreconcilable, a deeper and broader understanding of these concepts will:
  - Improve our own discipleship
  - Understand where others are coming from and help us not talk past each other
  - Help us be better ministers to our sexual minority brothers and sisters
- While love & inclusion are vital, no amount of either can bridge these conflicts between the world's ideas about sexuality and the Church's.



Latter-day Presentations

## Part 1: Clashing Worldviews: Traditional Morality Versus Sexual Liberation

The world's ideas around sexual identity are fundamentally incompatible with the gospel. If we unthinkingly adopt those ideas without examining the underlying assumptions behind that worldview, we may be led astray.

Latter-day Presentations

## Part 2: A More Nuanced View of Sexuality

Broadening how we think about sexuality can help us have more freedom and flexibility in how we respond to our unique circumstances.

Latter-day Presentations

## Part 3: The Restoration Model of Sexuality

Latter-day Presentations

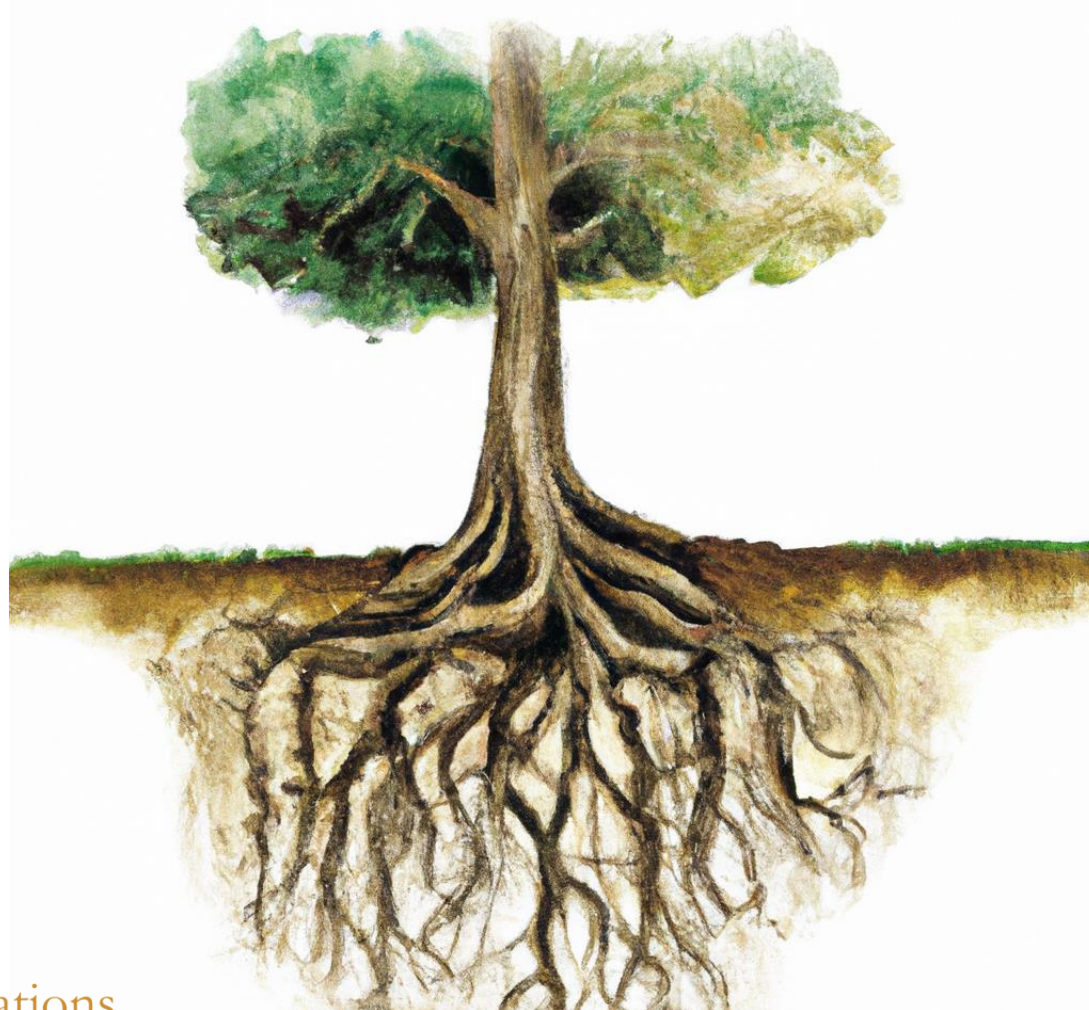
## Part 4: Going and Doing – How To Minister

Latter-day Presentations

## 4.7 Wrapping Up

Some Concluding Thoughts

# Gospel-Grounded Sexual Minority (LGBT+) Understanding & Ministry



# Gospel-Grounded Sexual Minority (LGBT+) Understanding & Ministry

- While the gospel and worldly ideas about sexuality are irreconcilable, a deeper and broader understanding of these concepts will:
  - Improve our own discipleship
  - Understand where others are coming from and help us not talk past each other
  - Help us be better ministers to our sexual minority brothers and sisters
- While love & inclusion are vital, no amount of either can bridge these conflicts between the world's ideas about sexuality and the Church's.



# About Me

- 52 years old, married 18 years, one son
- Lifetime active member of the Church
- Experience same sex attraction, came to grips with it on my mission
- Served in 8 Bishoprics and 5 Elders Quorums.
- Work in Real Estate asset management & development, also a marriage and family therapist (LMFT)
- Been involved in this issue for 25 years
  - Wrote chapters in two books, *A Place in the Kingdom* (1997), and *Voices of Hope* (2011)
  - Started a support group in DC in 1998
  - Co-founded North Star International in 2006 (currently co-chair of the Board of Directors)
  - Voices of Hope Video (2015)
  - TV show about Latter-day Saint men with same-sex attraction
  - Currently serve on the Reconciliation and Growth group
  - Marriage and Family Therapist, work with some who experience same sex attraction/identify as gay or bisexual
- My views here are MY OWN and definitely DO NOT represent NS or RGP's official positions/consensus

# Presentation objectives

- Part 1: Clashing Worldviews
  - Understand the underlying assumptions behind the different worldviews that undergird various identities.
  - Accept and appreciate that these paradigms are incompatible and mutually exclusive. This explains some of the conflict.
  - This acceptance can lead to clarity, love, and mutual respect, but probably not agreement or consensus.
  - Goal is for audience to understand these differences; I'm not asking them to agree or pick a side
- Part 2: A More Nuanced and Broader View of Sexuality
  - Teach the components to sexuality: attraction/aversion, fluid/fixed, behavior, and identity
  - Too often, the thinking around this issue is limited and polarized. There is a much broader, more nuanced, and less limiting way to see the issue of sexuality. Many sexual minorities feel confused and wonder how to label their sexuality (or gender identity).
  - We explore all the potential dimensions and nuances that can make this up and show how people can map their sexuality in a broader way than the typical (and proliferating) labels.



# Presentation objectives

- Part 3: The Restoration Model of Sexuality
  - We are usually trapped between two worldly models: the pride/embrace model and the sin/shame/disease models.
  - There is another view that transcends either of these and is compatible with the gospel.
  - This section contains suggestions and ideas for those directly affected by these concerns
- Part 4: Implications for Ministry
  - Being an effective minister and encouraging those on the gospel path means we first have to honestly assess where we are at with sexuality and our thoughts about sexuality and the Proclamation on the Family
  - Ideas for how to minister depending on where people are at in their journey
  - How to understand where these people have come from and what they are dealing with
  - Practical ideas and examples of how to help

# Part 1: Clashing Worldviews: Traditional Morality Versus Sexual Liberation

The world's ideas around sexual identity are fundamentally incompatible with the gospel. If we unthinkingly adopt those ideas without examining the underlying assumptions behind that worldview, we may be led astray



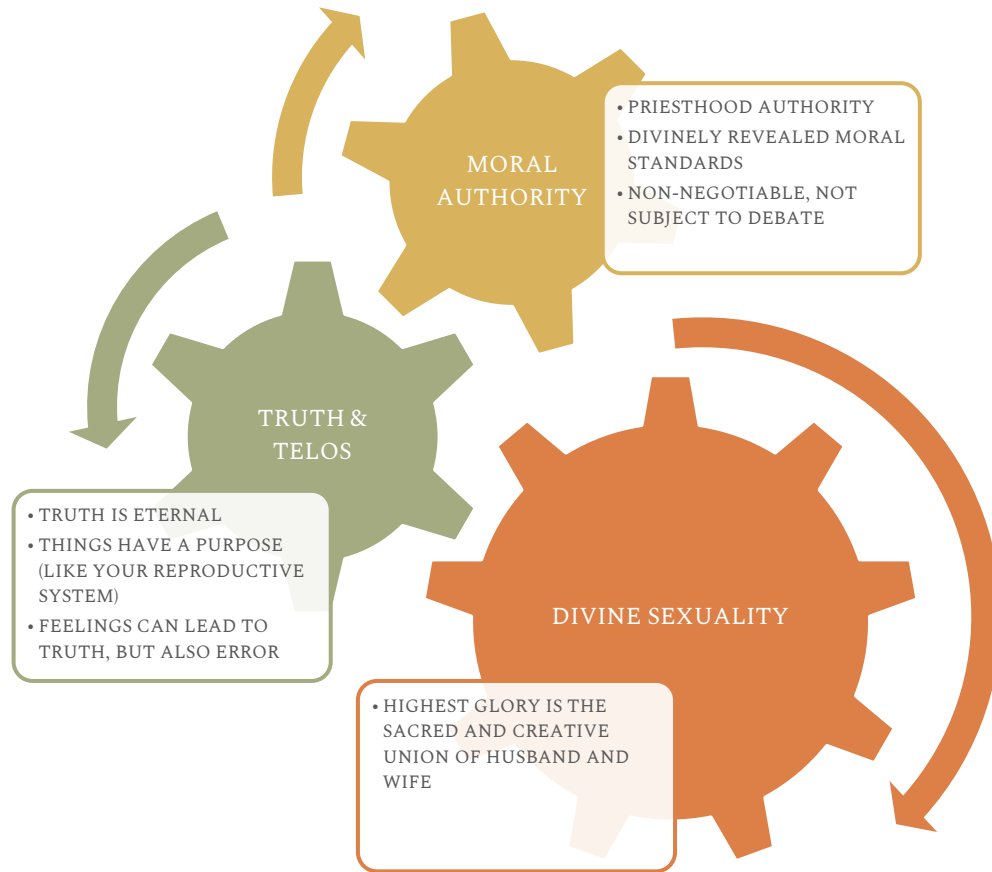
# Worldviews are non-empirical and pre-cognitive

- These are not things we can ‘prove’ or decide objectively
- They are unconsciously chosen. They are more like a lens that you view something through, which colors everything
- A better term is ‘absorbed’
- See this video by Professor Jeffrey Thayne, which demonstrates how people with different worldviews talk past each other, with a specific example of the Proclamation on the Family. Two people who both claim to support it can still come to dramatically different conclusions.

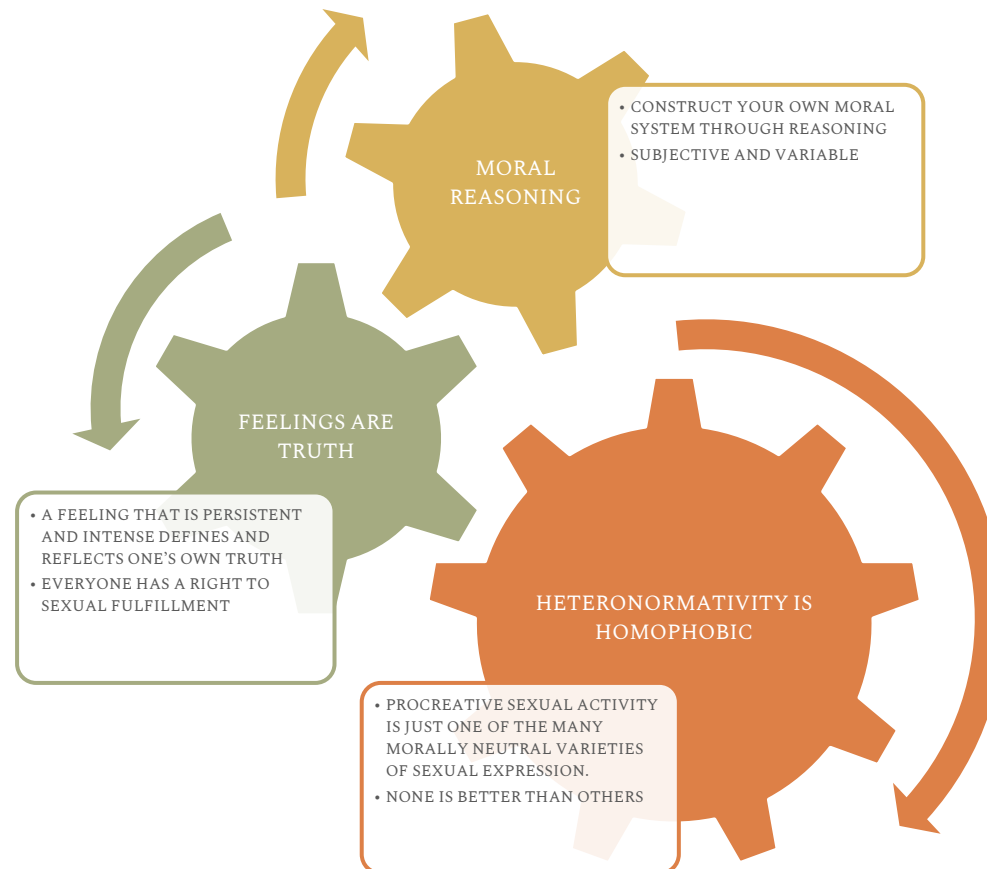




# Natural Law Moral System ("traditional morality")



# Postmodernism & the sexual revolution upended traditional morality



# Three Aspects of Gay Identity

## INNATE

- THE TRAIT IS SOMETHING INBORN (SEE: SKIN COLOR OR SEX)

## IMMUTABLE

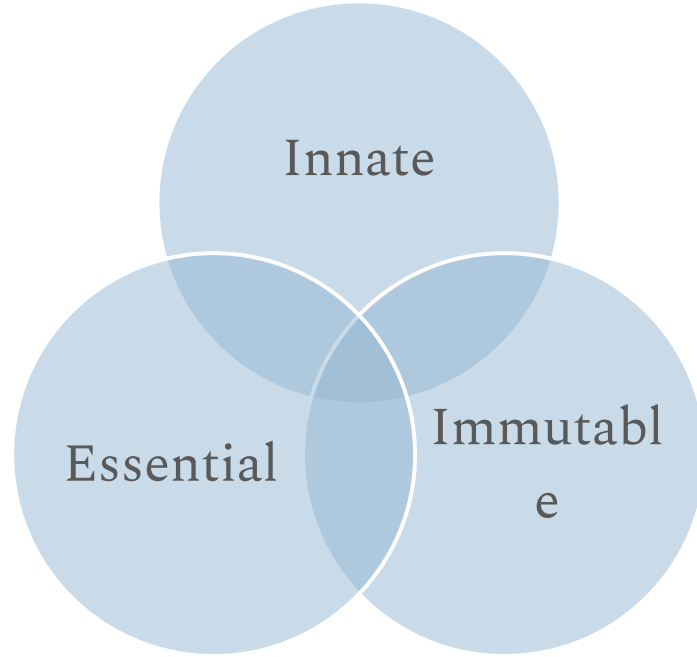
- THE TRAIT CANNOT BE CHANGED (SEE: PARALYSIS)

## ESSENTIAL

- THE TRAIT IS FUNDAMENTAL TO ONE'S IDENTITY (CONTRAST RACE WITH EYE COLOR)



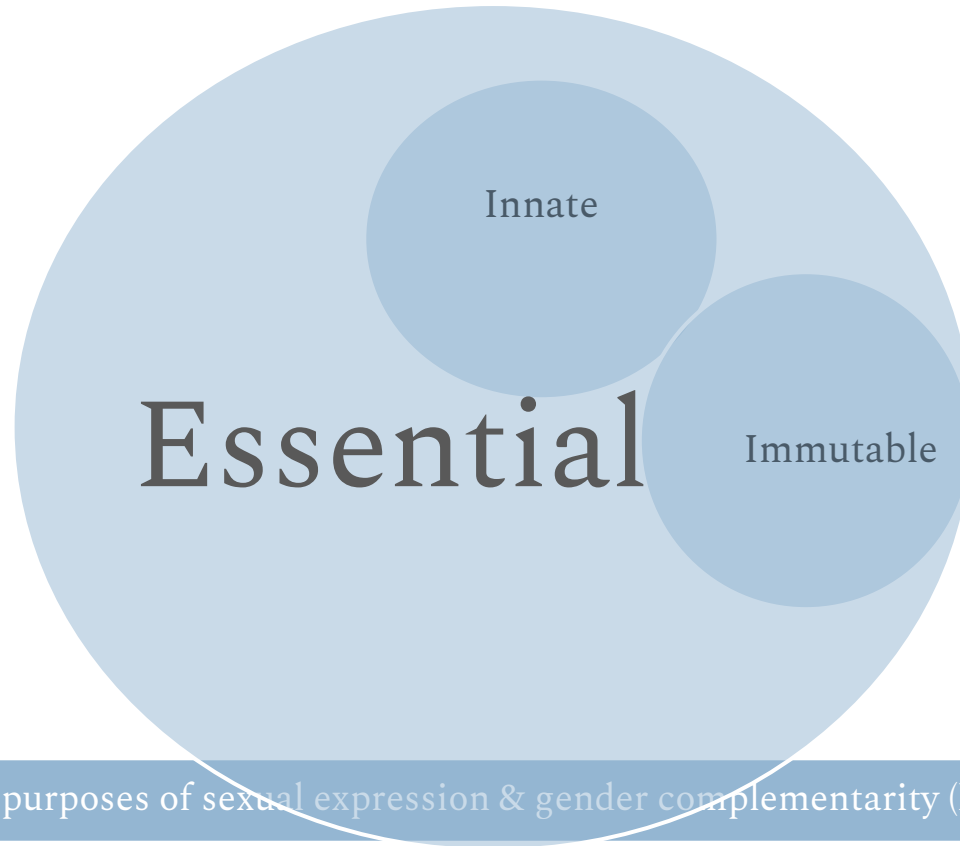
# Three Aspects of Gay Identity



- Rejects revealed purposes of sexual expression & gender complementarity (heteronormativity)
- Asserts that objective truth (& telos) is unknowable/unprovable (subjectivity)
- Rejects transcendent moral authority (moral reasoning)

Foundational  
Beliefs

# Three Aspects of Gay Identity



- Rejects revealed purposes of sexual expression & gender complementarity (heteronormativity)
- Asserts that objective truth (& telos) is unknowable/unprovable (subjectivity)
- Rejects transcendent moral authority (moral reasoning)

Foundational  
Beliefs

# What is queer? 1/3

- “An identity without an essence (\*)... it aims to demolish boundaries” (\*)
- “...defined only by the pressure it exerts on sex/gender norms.” (\*)
- “Something even *gayer* than gay identity itself.” (\*)
- “[Q]ueer theory’s definition of queerness as an anti-identitarian identity, an identity distinguished—specifically—by its lack of specific content (whether that content is understood in terms of sex, sexuality, or gender). Unlike gay identity, queer identity has no necessary, specific referent; it refers to no social or sexual transgression in particular. Rather, it emerges only in oppositional relation to specific, local norms or sets of norms. Queer identity, far from being identitarian, constitutes a resistance to identity. It can therefore be used [in poetry] to name [a refusal] to bring [love] within the fold of the familiar without imputing to their poems either a homosexual specificity on the one hand or a romantic evasion of specification on the other.” (\*)



# What is queer? 2/3

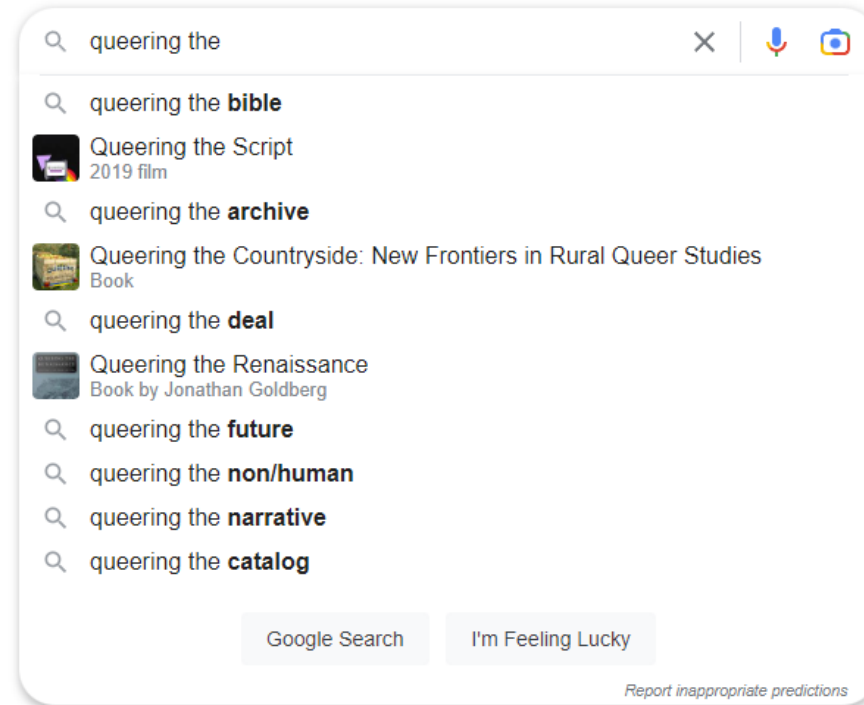
- “Queerness extends beyond the normal queerness of romance to the radical incommensurability of love with established social forms—with standard romantic narratives, family structures, relational modes, erotic vocabularies, sexual identities, even linguistic denotation.” (\*)
- Few people who identify as queer understand this subversive, destructive history of the word, but it nevertheless exerts a profound influence.
- So you can ask people who identify as queer if they understand the origin of its rehabilitation from a slur to a means of political rebellion and social norm destruction, and see if that plays into why they choose to identify with this term.



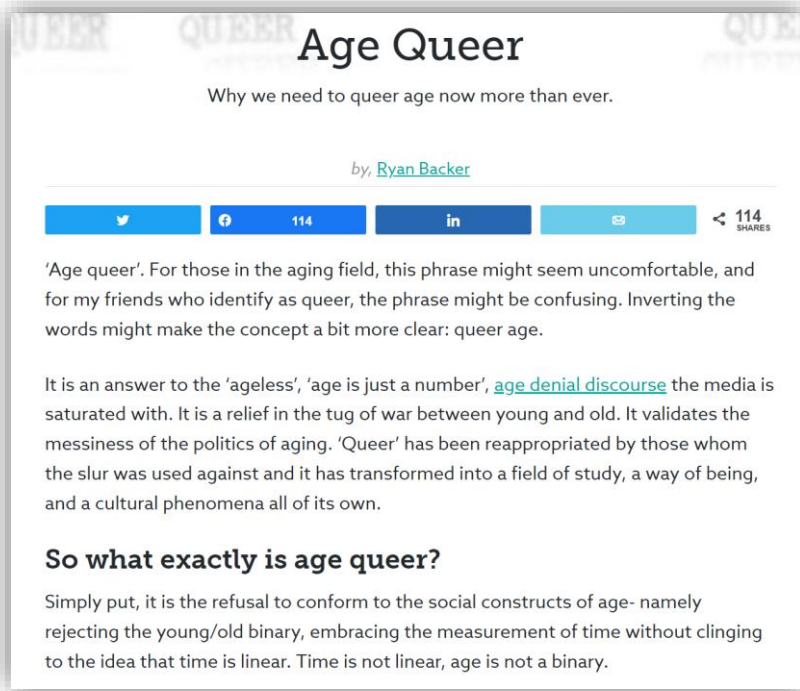


# What is queer? 3/3

- Identifying as queer is associated with decreased mental health and a progressive political identity
- And these two identities are strongly correlated with decreasing mental health. See this article: [“Born This Way? The Rise of LGBT as a Social and Political Identity.”](#)
- The queer label appears to be *designed* to create just this result.
- Note that it can be used as a verb:



# What are we looking at?



**Age Queer**  
Why we need to queer age now more than ever.

by [Ryan Backer](#)

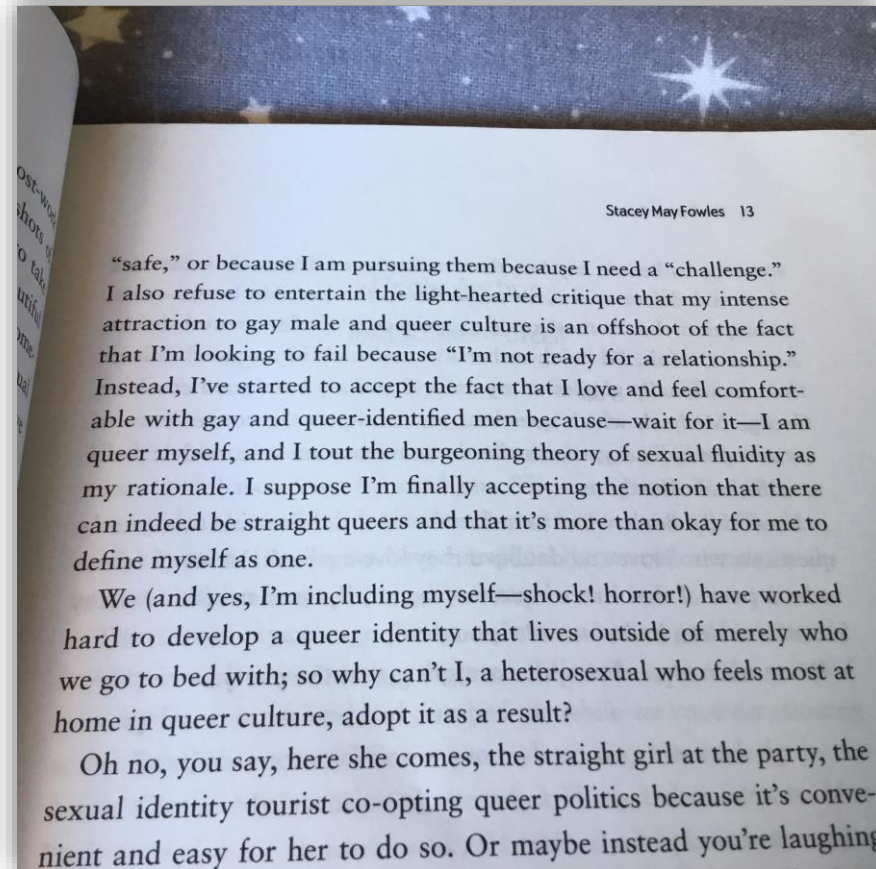
114 SHARES

'Age queer'. For those in the aging field, this phrase might seem uncomfortable, and for my friends who identify as queer, the phrase might be confusing. Inverting the words might make the concept a bit more clear: queer age.

It is an answer to the 'ageless', 'age is just a number', [age denial discourse](#) the media is saturated with. It is a relief in the tug of war between young and old. It validates the messiness of the politics of aging. 'Queer' has been reappropriated by those whom the slur was used against and it has transformed into a field of study, a way of being, and a cultural phenomena all of its own.

**So what exactly is age queer?**

Simply put, it is the refusal to conform to the social constructs of age- namely rejecting the young/old binary, embracing the measurement of time without clinging to the idea that time is linear. Time is not linear, age is not a binary.



Stacey May Fowles 13

“safe,” or because I am pursuing them because I need a “challenge.” I also refuse to entertain the light-hearted critique that my intense attraction to gay male and queer culture is an offshoot of the fact that I’m looking to fail because “I’m not ready for a relationship.” Instead, I’ve started to accept the fact that I love and feel comfortable with gay and queer-identified men because—wait for it—I am queer myself, and I tout the burgeoning theory of sexual fluidity as my rationale. I suppose I’m finally accepting the notion that there can indeed be straight queers and that it’s more than okay for me to define myself as one.

We (and yes, I’m including myself—shock! horror!) have worked hard to develop a queer identity that lives outside of merely who we go to bed with; so why can’t I, a heterosexual who feels most at home in queer culture, adopt it as a result?

Oh no, you say, here she comes, the straight girl at the party, the sexual identity tourist co-opting queer politics because it’s convenient and easy for her to do so. Or maybe instead you’re laughing



# Fractures in the Movement: 'Gay not Queer'



Owen Jones:  
“Queering the  
Gay Movement”  
(**language  
warning**)



# Fred Sargeant

- Stonewall/longstanding gay rights pioneer
- Attacked for holding a sign called “gay not queer” at the pride parade



# A Fracture in the Movement: LGB not the T & Gays Against Groomers

The image shows a screenshot of a Twitter thread. On the left is the profile of 'LGB not the T' (@lgbNOt), which features a rainbow flag background and a circular profile picture with a lowercase 't'. The bio states: 'Many transgender and cisgender people argue against the inclusion of trans people because sexual orientation and gender identity are considered to be a choice.' Below the bio, it says 'Phoenix, Joined April 2016'. On the right is a tweet from 'Gays Against Groomers' (@againstgrms) with 3,181 retweets. The tweet image shows a group of people with the text 'IT'S NOT GONNA LICK YOURSELF' and the 'Gays Against Groomers' logo. The bio of 'Gays Against Groomers' reads: 'A coalition of gays against the sexualization, indoctrination and medicalization of children. Allies welcome. gaysagainstgroomers@protonmail.com'. A 'Follow' button is visible next to the tweet.



# Sexual and Gender Entropy

## Anthro-pomorph

An animal or object with human-like characteristics

## Furry (n)

Human who is a part of or their fursona

## Kemonomimi

Human with ears and

## Nekomimi

Human with a feline

Epicene

Genderfluid  
(example of female and male)

Transgen

## Taur

Four-legged animal with a human-like upperbody in place of its head



## Quad-ruped

Natural shape of a four-legged animal



## Feral (n)

Natural shape of an animal



## Otherkin

Human that identifies more with a fantasy creature than humans



## Therian

Human that identifies more with a species of animal than with humans



# Why This Entropy Matters: A Personal Toll

- Who would have thought Pinterest could 'queer' a child?



# A Population-Based Study

Americans' Self-Identified Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity, by Generation and Gender

	<b>Bisexual</b>	<b>Gay</b>	<b>Lesbian</b>	<b>Transgender</b>	<b>Other</b>
	%	%	%	%	%
<b>Generation</b>					
Generation Z	15.0	2.5	2.0	2.1	1.2
Millennials	6.0	2.2	1.3	1.0	0.4
Generation X	1.7	1.1	0.8	0.6	<0.05
Baby boomers	0.7	1.0	0.7	0.1	0.1
Traditionalists	0.2	0.4	0.1	0.2	0.1
<b>Gender</b>					
Women	6.0	0.4	1.9	0.8	0.4
Men	2.0	2.5	0.1	0.6	0.2

--Figures represent the percentage of all adult members of each demographic group who have that sexual orientation or gender identity.

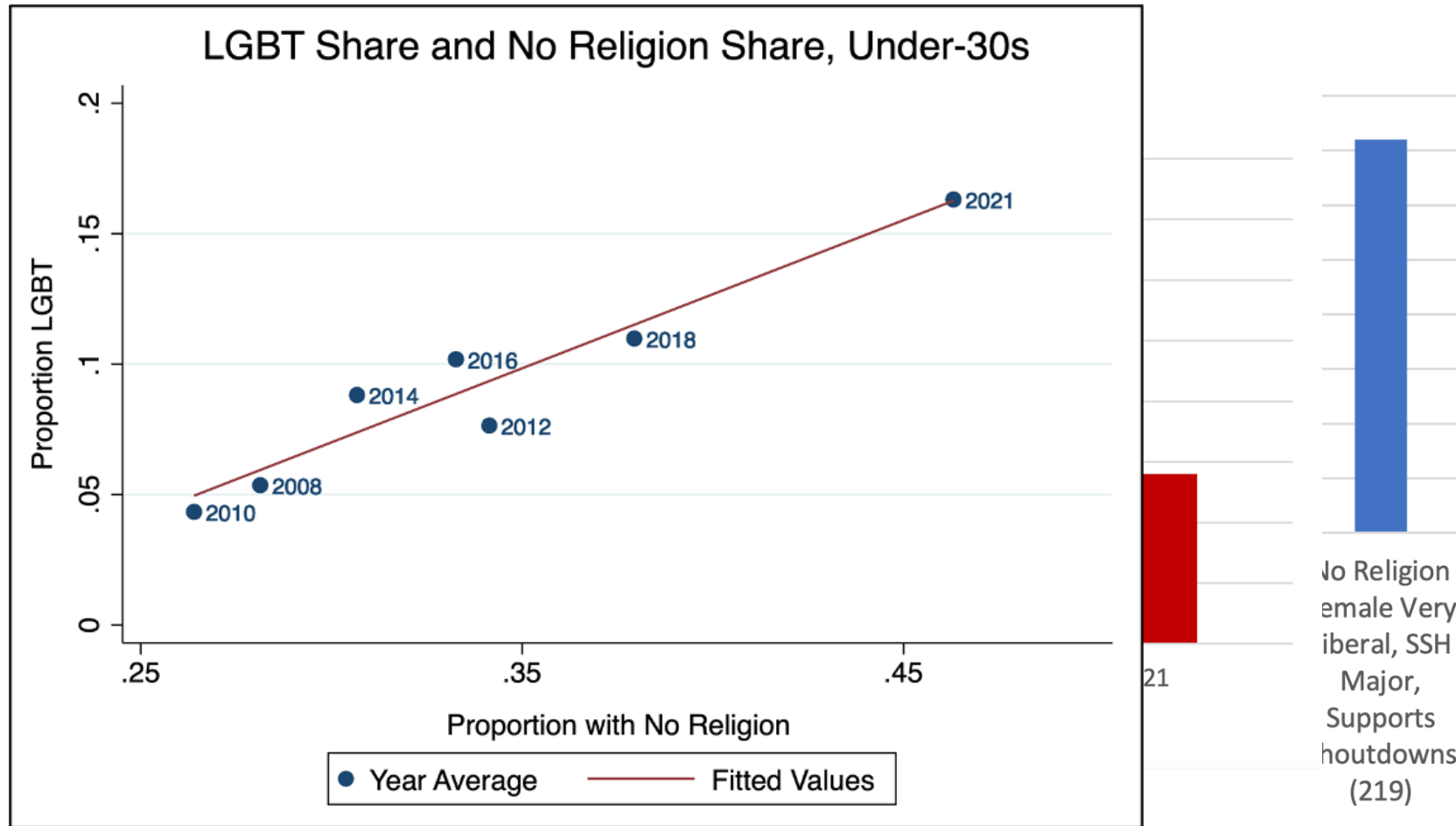
--Some respondents identify with multiple sexual orientations or gender identities.

--Generation definitions are as follows: Generation Z, born 1997 to 2003; millennials, born 1981 to 1996; Generation X, born 1965 to 1980; baby boomers, born 1946 to 1964; traditionalists, born before 1946.

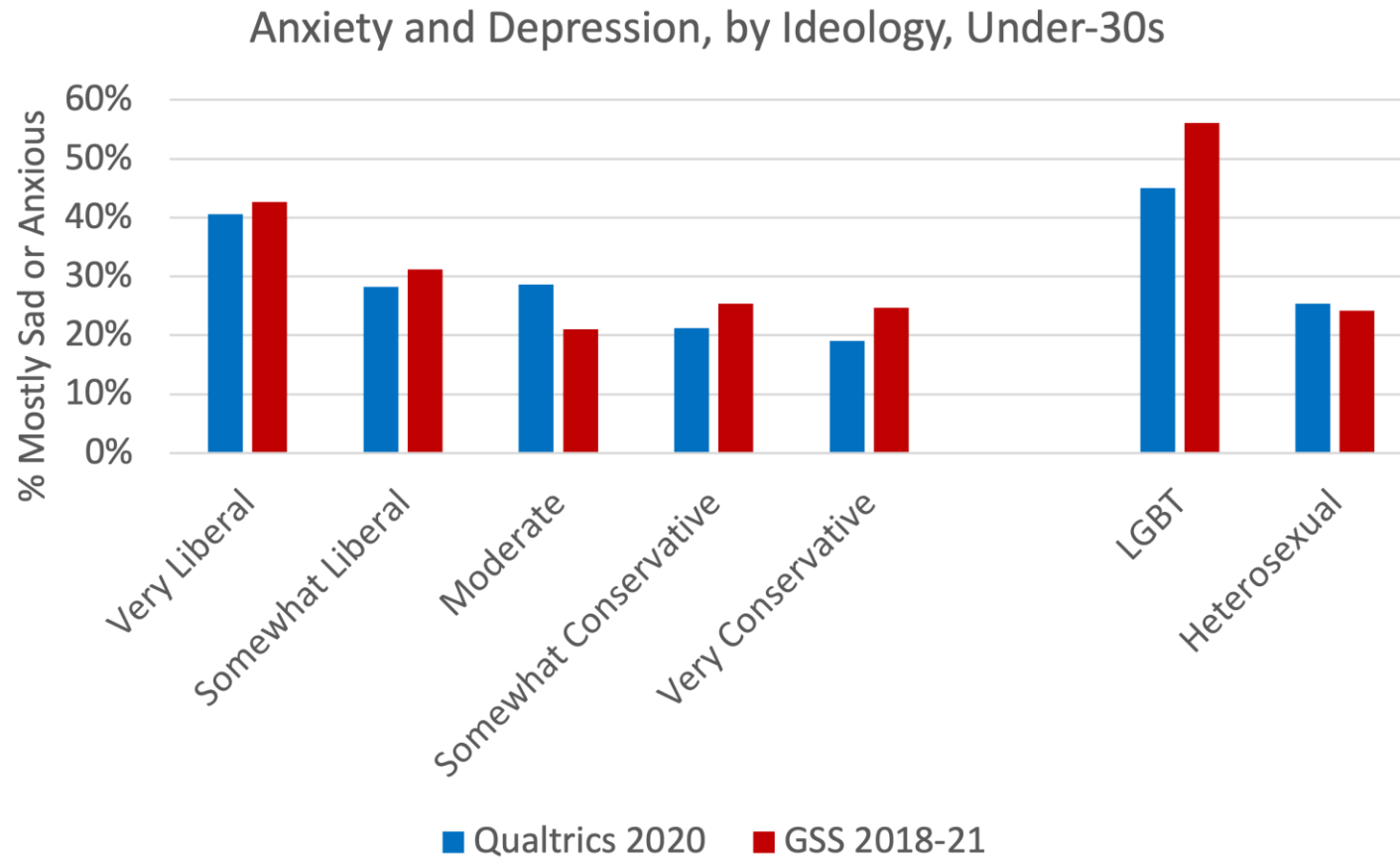
GALLUP, 2021

and 34 in other year bands. Year is a statistically significant predictor of a female bisexual having male-only sex partners.

# Kaufmann: LGBT Identity Increasingly Identified with Political Progressivism



# Kaufmann: LGBT Identity Associated with Poorer Mental Health Outcomes



Credit: Derek Thompson, The Atlantic; data from the CDC.

# An Experimental Study

## Exposure to continuous or fluid

light on the mechanisms that are involved in the transitions away from the completely heterosexual descriptors. As perceptions of homogeneity are considered to be central to essentializing social categories based on elements such as sexual orientation<sup>39</sup>, and this essentialist tendency plays a role in making the members of such groups (e.g., heterosexual vs non-heterosexual individuals) seem more distinct from each others<sup>40</sup>, the role of perceptions of continuity and fluidity in reducing essentialism-derived taxometric notions offers a promising direction to explore.

necessary to examine these findings in a heterogeneously-aged community sample. Study 2 failed to directly replicate Study 1 in a nation-wide, more heterogeneously-aged, community sample. Nevertheless, manipulating sexual orientation impacted sexual orientation self-ratings in line with Hypothesis 1. Whereas only 8% of participants in the control condition reported being non-exclusively heterosexual post manipulation, 36% of those who read the continuous account, and 21% who read the fluid account subsequently described themselves changed following our manipulations? Did we change the sexual orientation of our participants? Surely not. To make sense of the shifts observed we need to recognize that measures such as the Kinsey scale can only possibly assess "self-perceived sexual orientation"<sup>44</sup>. Although self-perceived sexual orientation is partly informed by actual sexual/romantic experiences (which gender/s we find sexually arousing, crush on, fantasize about, have sex with) these experiences are filtered through appraisals of these thoughts, feelings, and behaviours based on a range of personal beliefs and attitudes. This means that two individuals, with identical sexual experiences, could report quite different sexual orientations. The present study found that manipulating participants beliefs about sexual orientation changed how they *interpreted* their sexual/romantic experiences and the subsequent global assessment they made when rating their sexual orientation. As considerable effort has been undertaken to understand mental health<sup>45,46</sup>, substance use<sup>47,48</sup>, sexual health<sup>49-51</sup>, discrimination<sup>52</sup>, and even physiological differences<sup>43,53-57</sup> between exclusive and non-exclusive heterosexual individuals, clarifying the cognitive and attitudinal variables that may predispose a heterosexual person to adopt respective labels is surely important if we are interested in the causes of differences (e.g., mental health, sexual health) between exclusive heterosexual and non-exclusive heterosexual populations.

subsequently reported being less exclusively heterosexual, and regardless of political alignment, participants reported less certainty about their sexual orientation, relative to controls. In Study 2, after exposure to fluid or continuous manipulations heterosexual participants were up to five times more likely than controls to rate themselves as non-exclusively heterosexual. Additionally, those in the continuous condition reported less certainty about their sexual orientation and were more willing to engage in future same-sex sexual experiences, than those in the control condition. These results suggest that non-traditional theories of sexual orientation can lead heterosexuals to embrace less exclusive heterosexual orientations.



# Part 2: A More Nuanced View of Sexuality

Broadening how we think about sexuality can help us have more freedom and flexibility in how we respond to our unique circumstances.

# Identity As a Box

- The world is obsessed with identity labels
- Which one should I pick?
- Where do I fit?

Q?

P?

S?

A?

I?

T?

L?

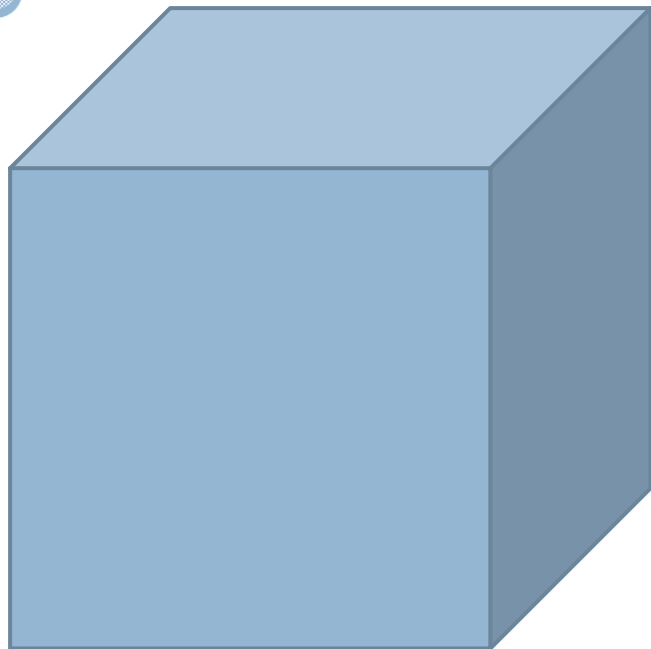
Q?

G?

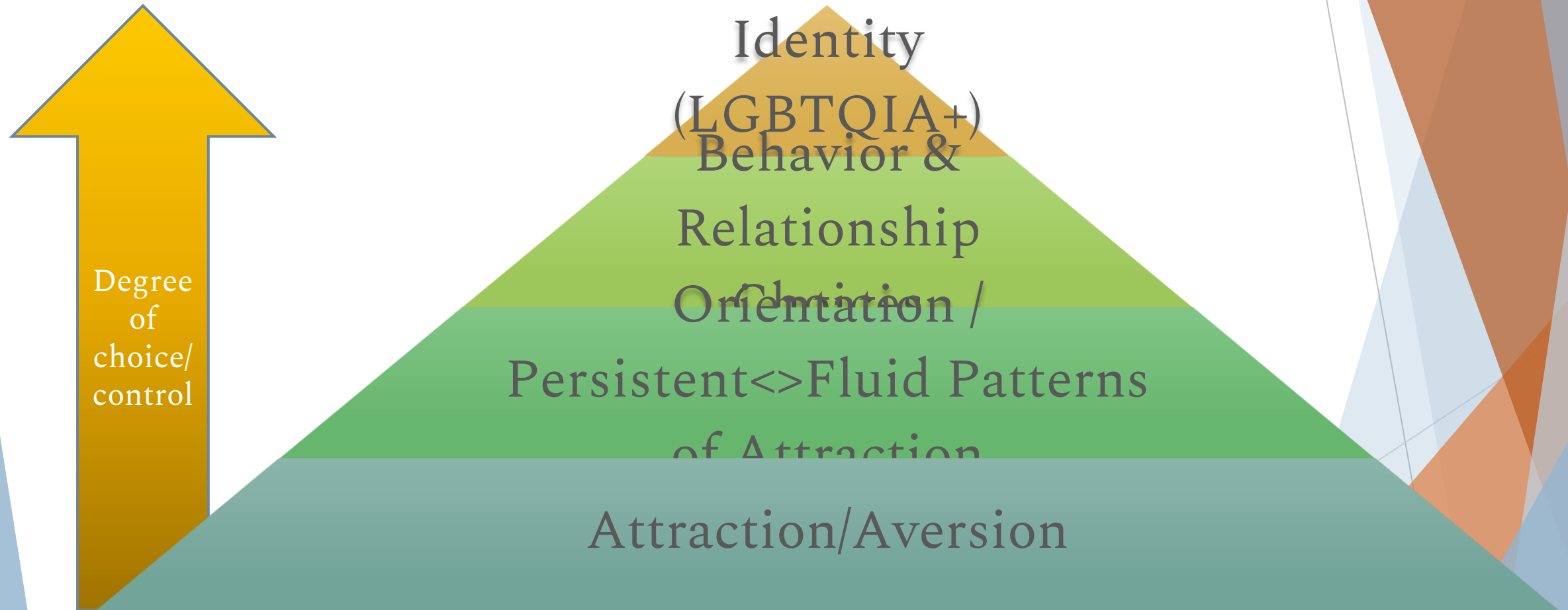
B?

A?

P?



# Thinking Outside the Box: Components of Sexuality





# Aspects of sexuality

- **Attraction**
  - Fantasies
  - Dreams
  - Arousal patterns
- **Orientation:** “Sexual orientation refers to an **enduring pattern** of emotional, romantic and/or sexual attractions to men, women or both sexes.”
  - Homosexual/Same-sex
  - Heterosexual/Opposite-sex
- **Identity:** “Sexual orientation **also refers to a person's sense of identity** based on those attractions, related behaviors and membership in a community of others who share those attractions.”
  - Gay
  - Bisexual
  - Etc.
- **Behavior**
  - You don't have to engage in sexual behavior to know your orientation



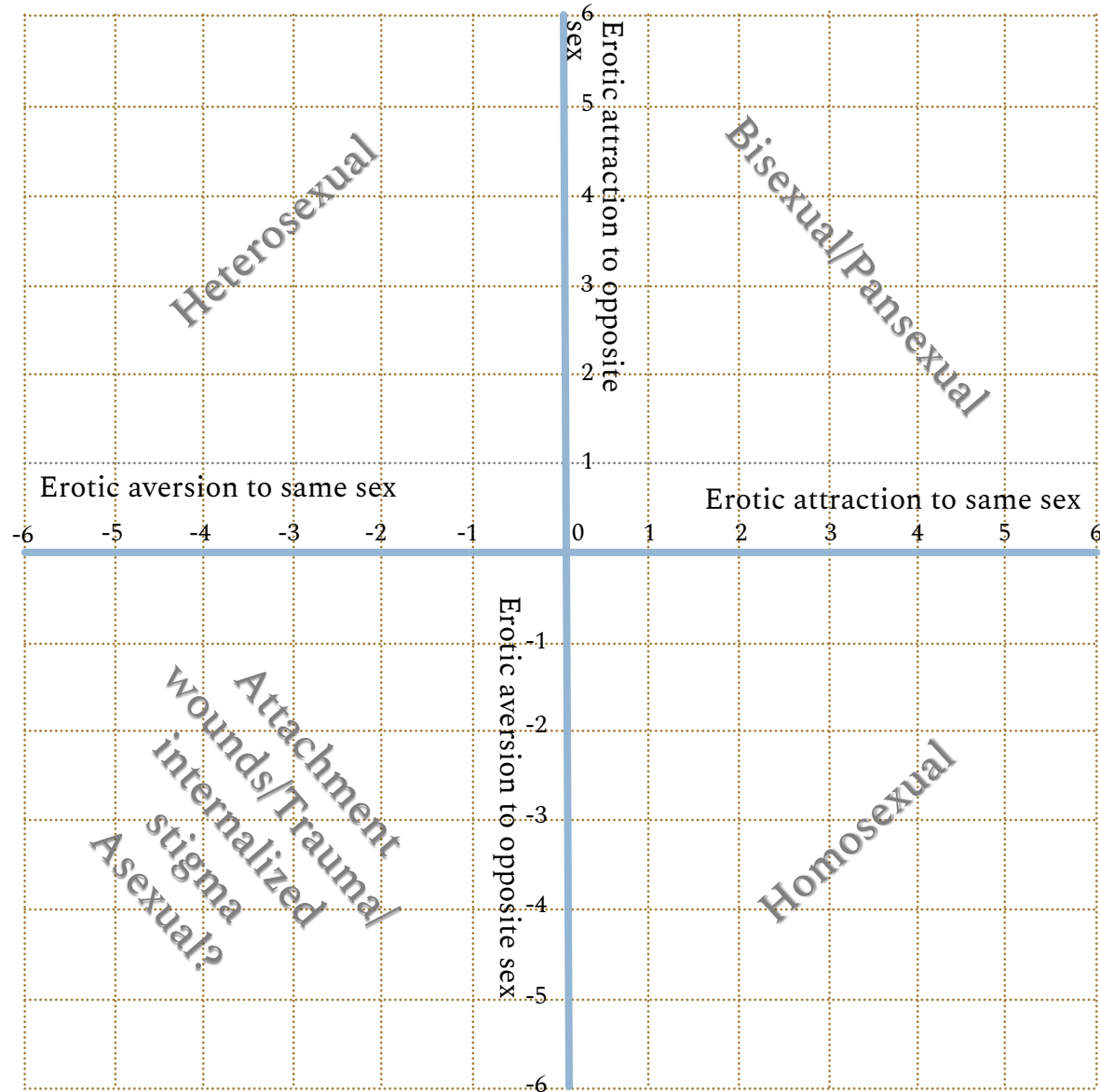
# Orientation is NOT Identity

- (Though many people do not realize this.)
- And the APA (now) disagrees with me

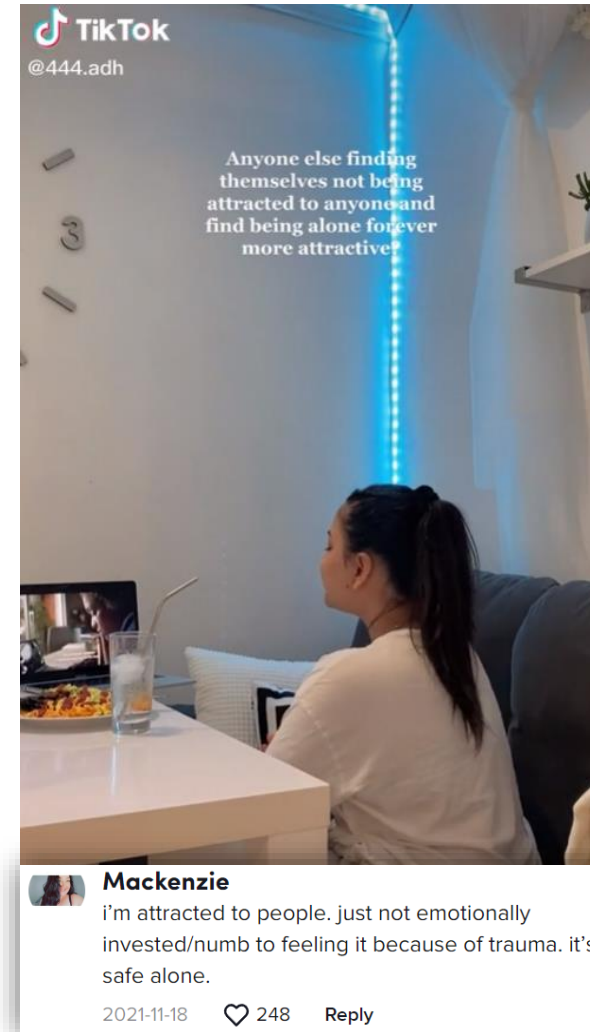
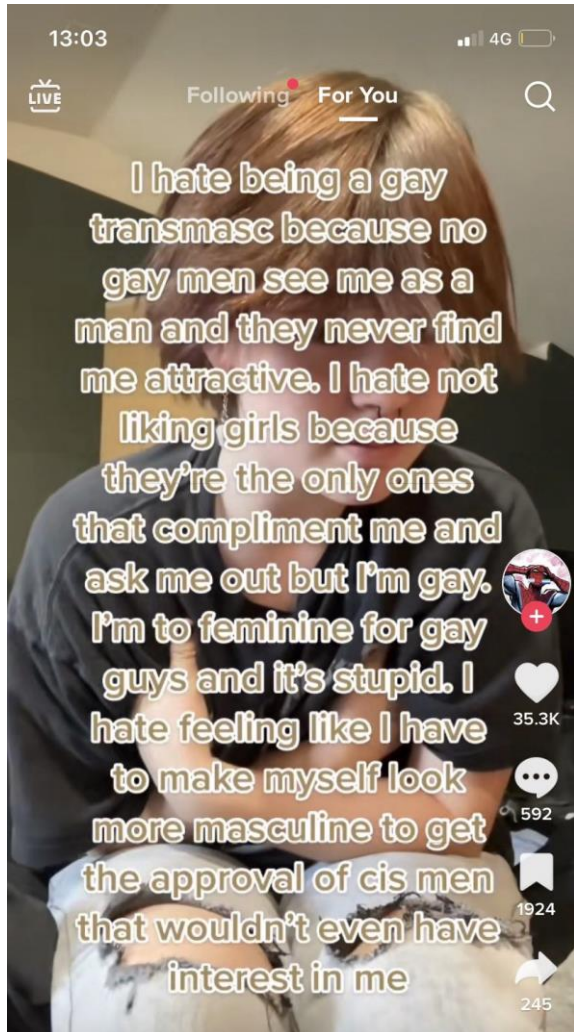
# Beckstead Scale

- Kinsey scale (1-6, totally heterosexual to totally homosexual) is too simplistic
- There are levels of attraction/aversion in two dimensions
- There are various aspects of sexual identity/orientation (erotic, romantic, social, aesthetic, etc.)
- There is fluidity along these scales, at least in some people.

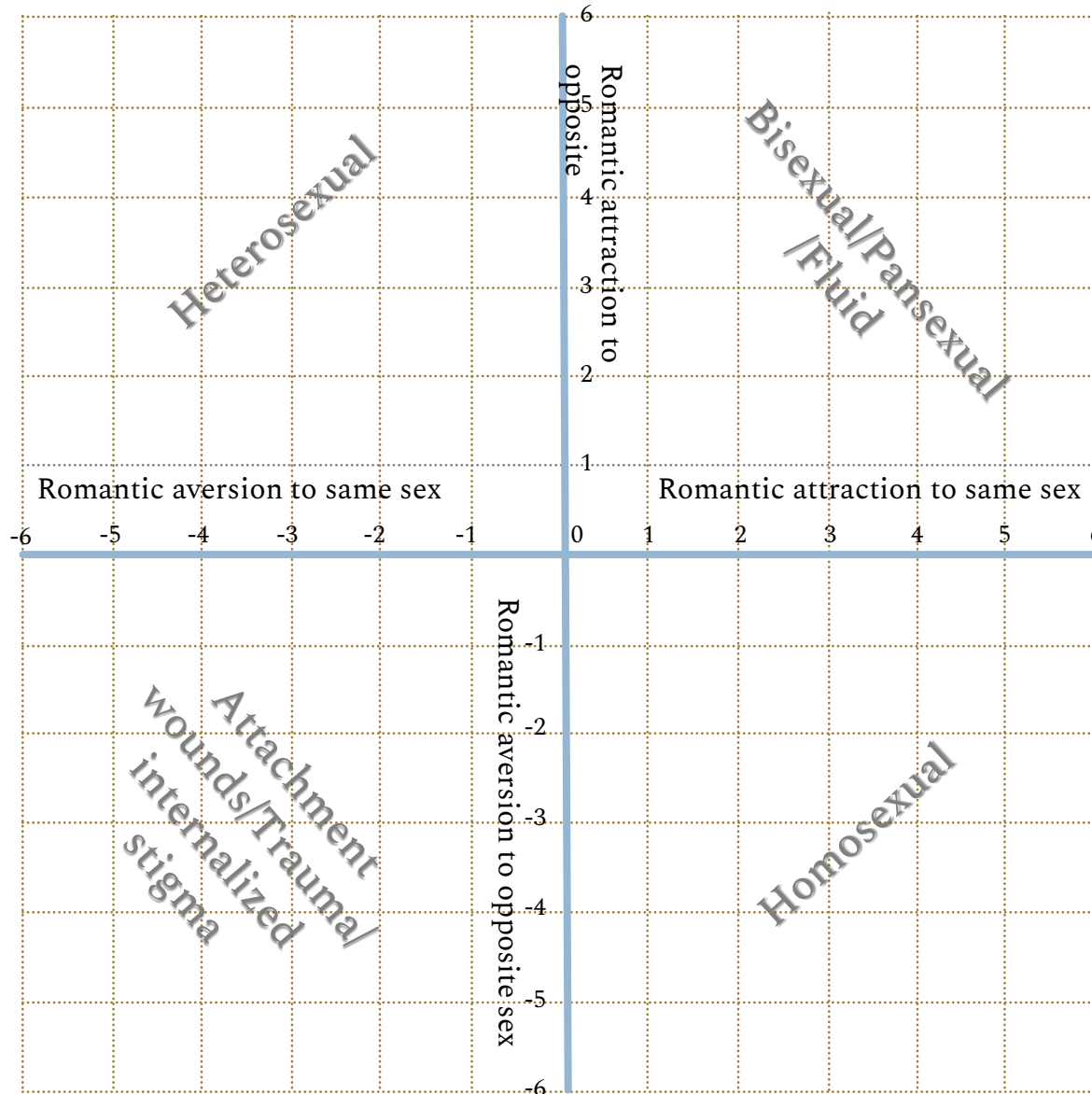
# Sexual Attraction



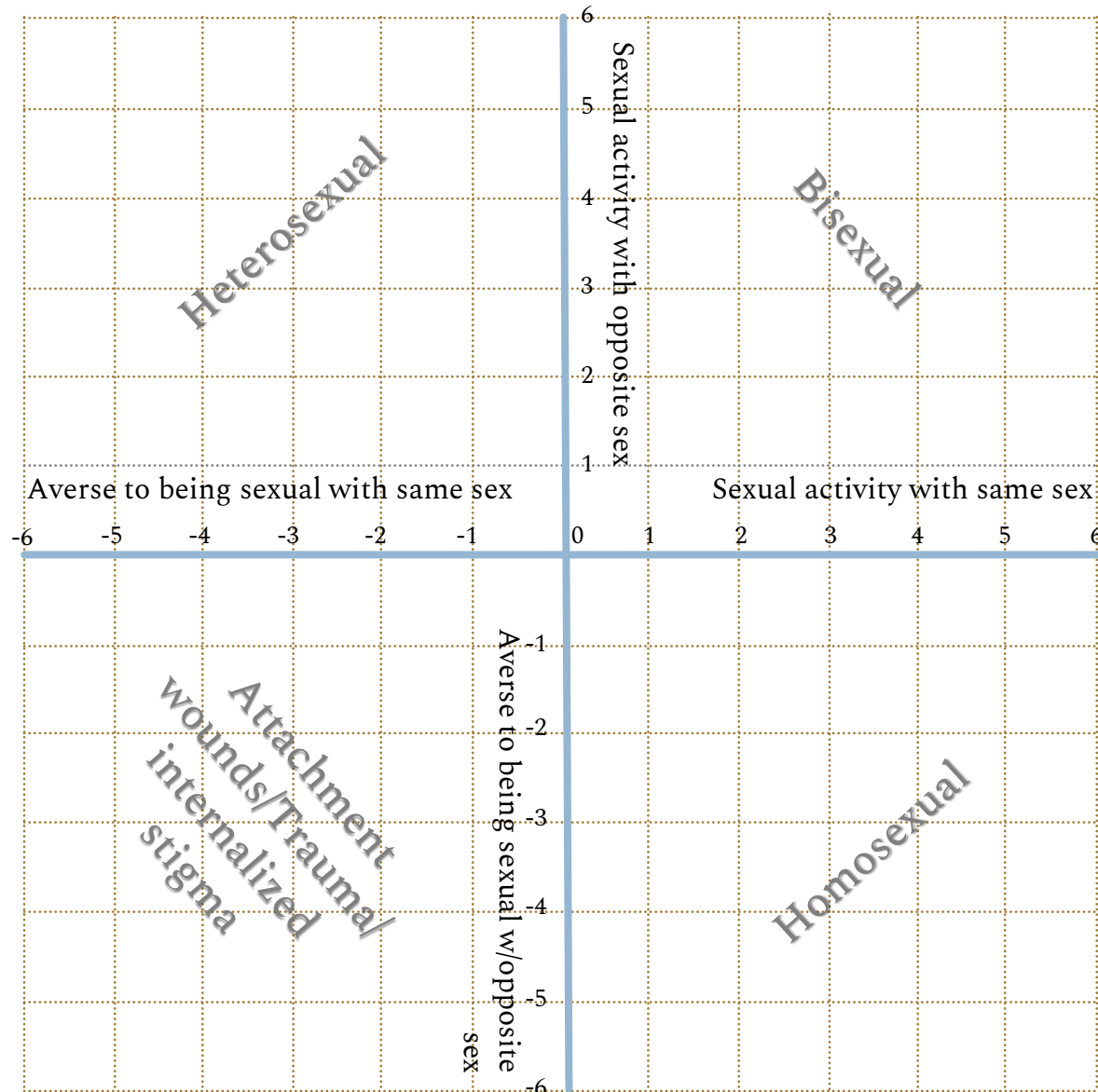
# Examples of attachment wounds/trauma/internalized stigma



# Romantic Attraction

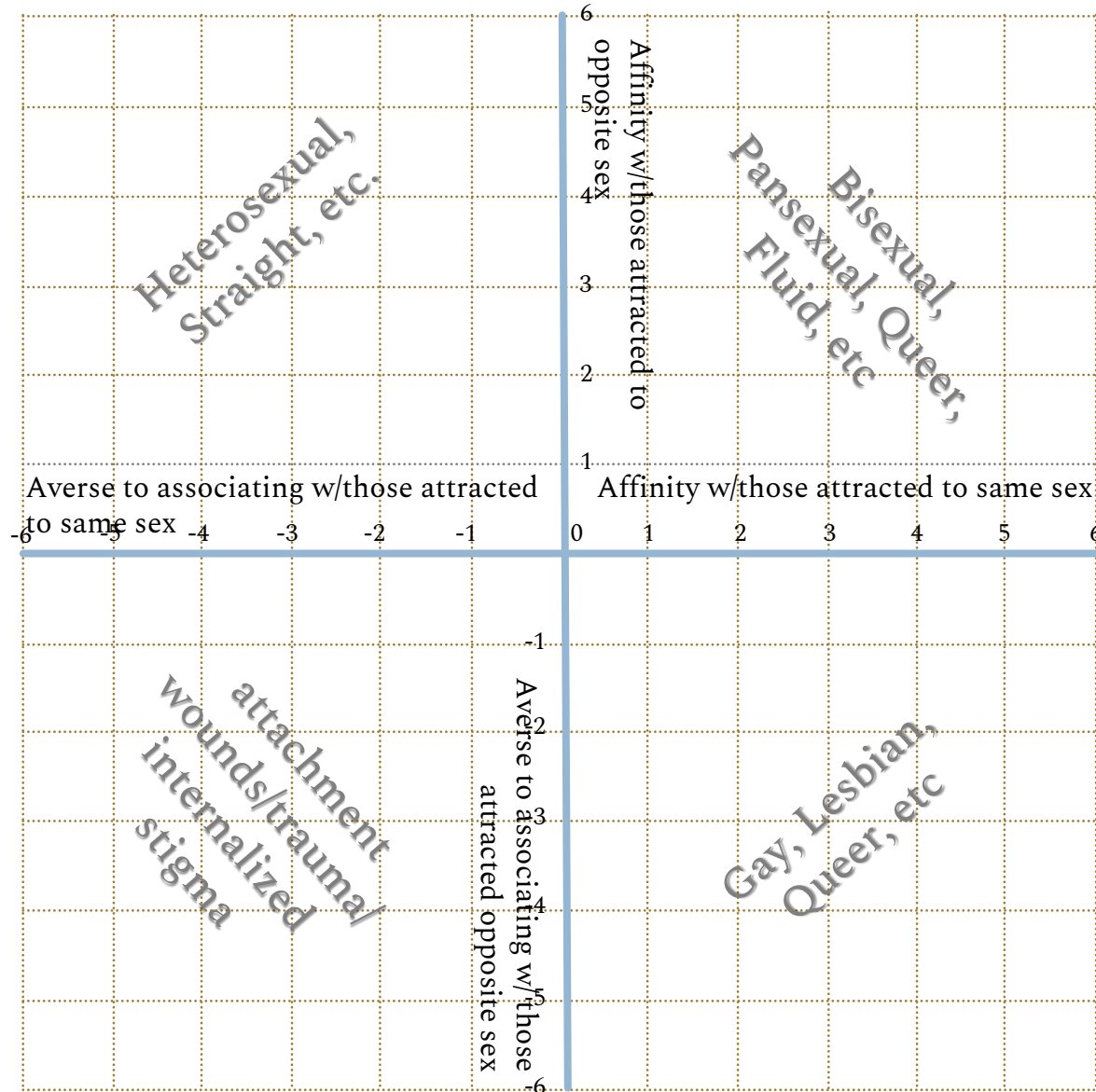


# Sexual Behavior

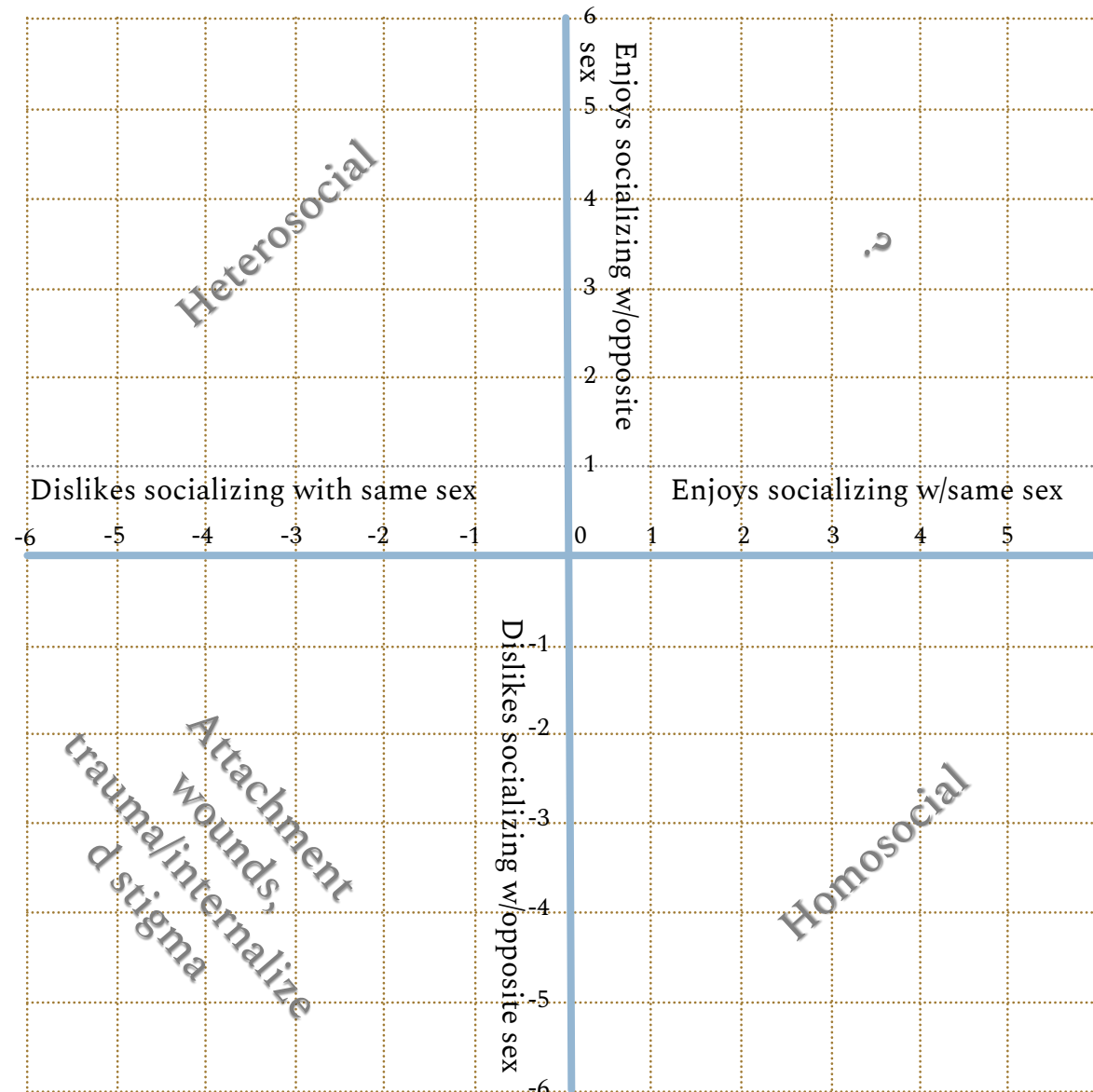




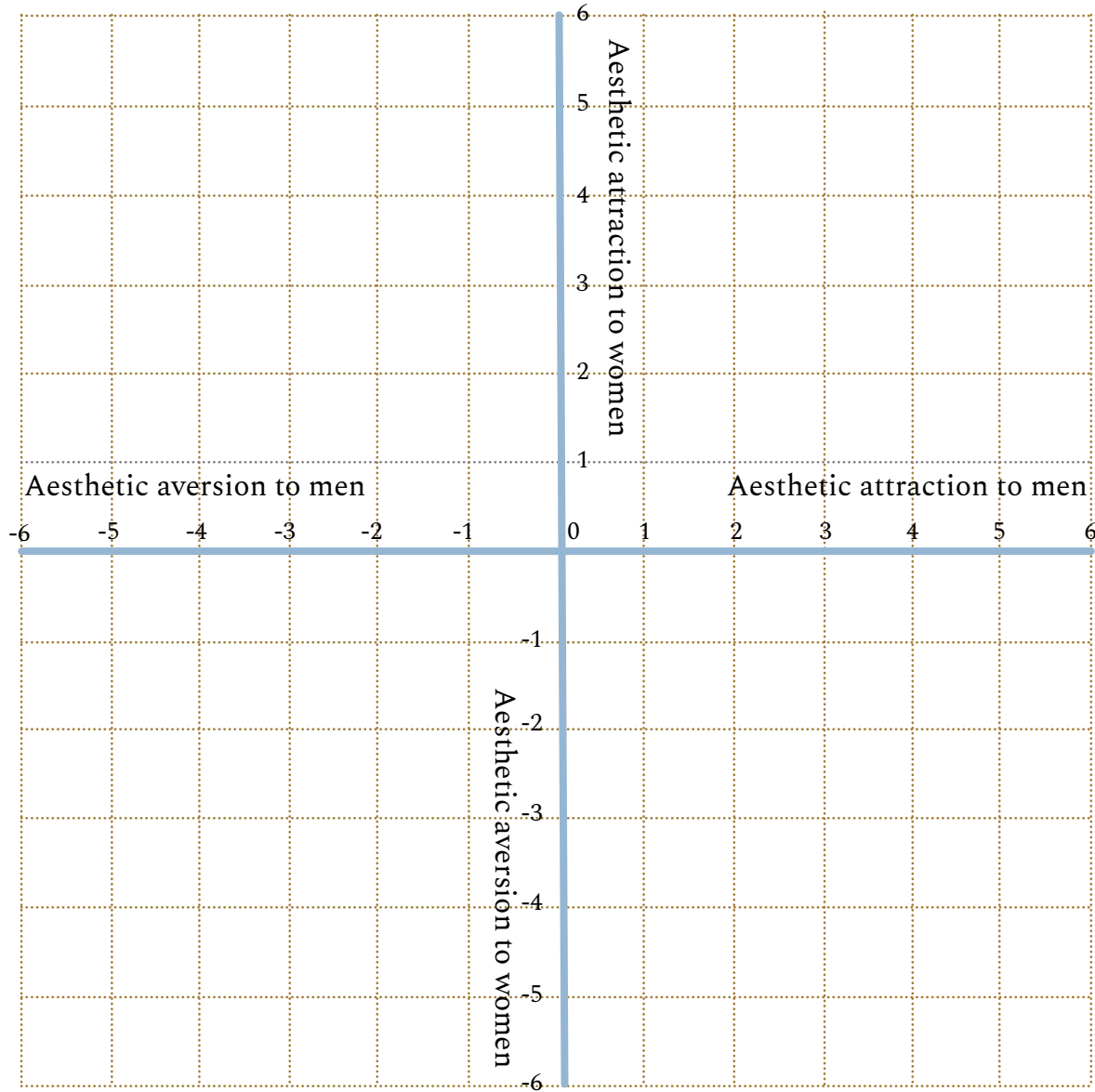
# Sexual Identity/Social



# Affiliational Attraction



# Aesthetic Attraction



# What causes sexual orientation? Is it a choice?

“There is **no consensus** among scientists about the exact reasons that an individual develops a heterosexual, bisexual, gay or lesbian orientation. Although much research has examined the possible genetic, hormonal, developmental, social and cultural influences on sexual orientation, **no findings have emerged** that permit scientists to conclude that sexual orientation is determined by any particular factor or factors. Many think that nature and nurture both play complex roles; most people **experience little or no sense of choice** about their sexual orientation.”



# A dissenting voice in the discussion of choice

‘I am gay – but I wasn’t born this way’



*By Brandon Ambrosino / Images by Ignacio Lehmann* 28th June 2016

Is sexuality purely the result of our biology? Brandon Ambrosino argues that simplistic explanations have ignored the fluid, shape-shifting nature of our desires.

**Sexual Revolutions**



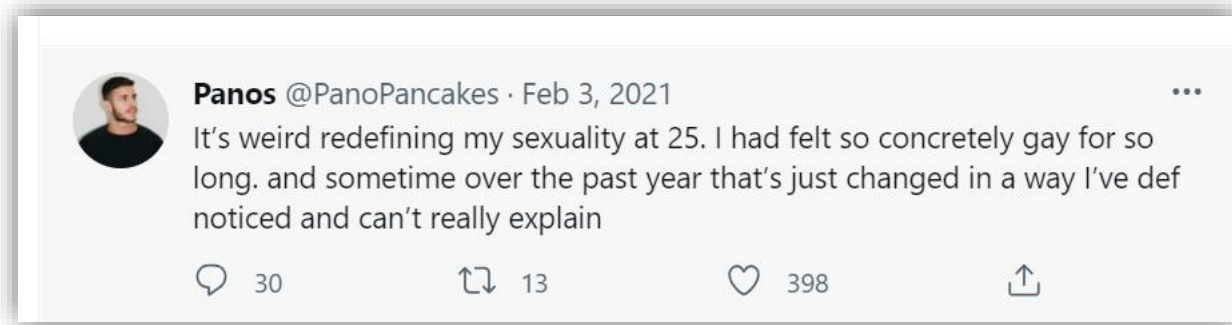
# Another dissenting voice in the discussion of choice

The claim that homosexuality is legitimate because it is not chosen is androcentric, treating a common male experience as generically human. Apparently, the vast majority of gay men in the U.S. do understand their homosexuality as an orientation they did not choose or create. But lesbian identities span a continuum, from a model of lesbian identity as a conscious political choice to a determinist model like that of most gay men. The “born that way” stance not only “lets the other side set the terms of the debate” in heterosexist terms, but [also denies] “the complexities of the lesbian world.”

Vera Whisman, *Queer By Choice*

# Can Orientation Change?

- Not if it is *defined as being unchangeable* (“an enduring pattern”)
- But see: sexual fluidity
- Identities **can** and **do** change.
- Ultimately this is too reductive of a way to conceptualize change



# Can Orientation Change?





# Just one study quote

self (Diamond, 2000). Research on sexual orientation, however, indicates that sexual attraction, behavior, and identity demonstrate remarkable variability *within* persons over time (Katz-Wise, 2015), making one's identity a poor indicator of lifetime attraction or behavior (Diamond, 2008). People are likely to explore their sexuality over their lifetime (Harper, Serrano, Bruce, & Bauermeister, 2016; Tolman & McClelland, 2011), during which one may engage in same-sex activities without adopting an LGB identity (Lefevor et al., in press).

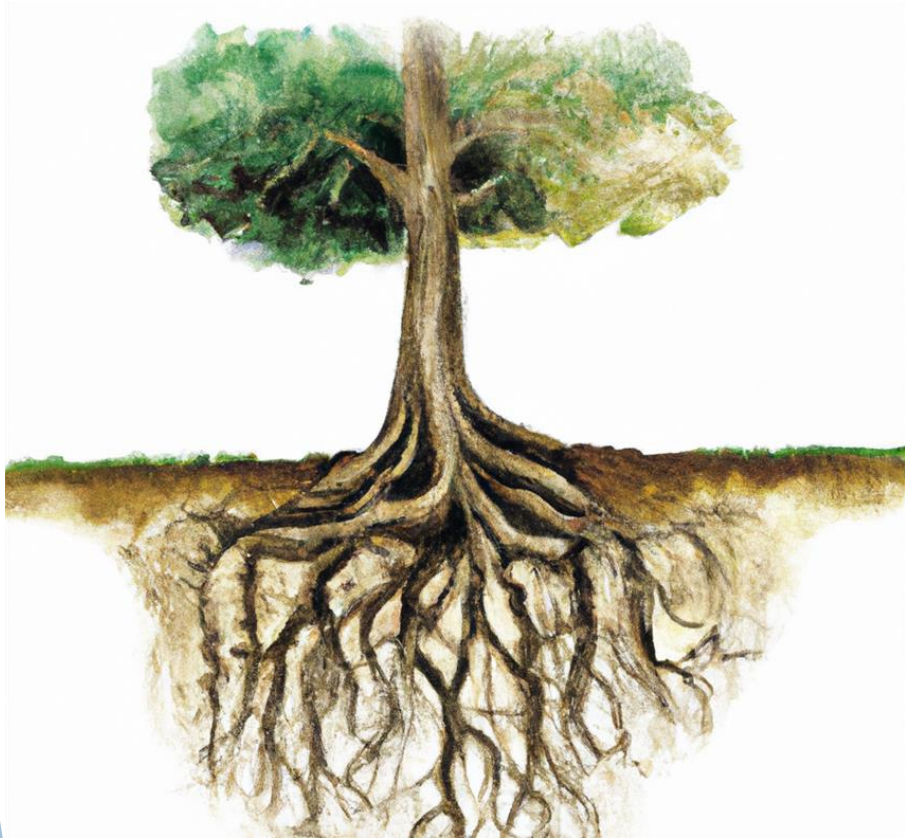
Lefevor, G. T., \*Park, S., \*Acevedo, M. J., & \*Jones, P. J. (In press). Sexual orientation complexity and health-related outcomes: Is sexual orientation discordance useful? *The Journal of Homosexuality*.



# Part 3: The Restoration Model of Sexuality

# The Restoration Model of Sexuality: Rising Above Two Demonic Systems

These two extremes lead us away from truth and growth



# Part 3.1 Transcending the False Binary of Pride and Shame

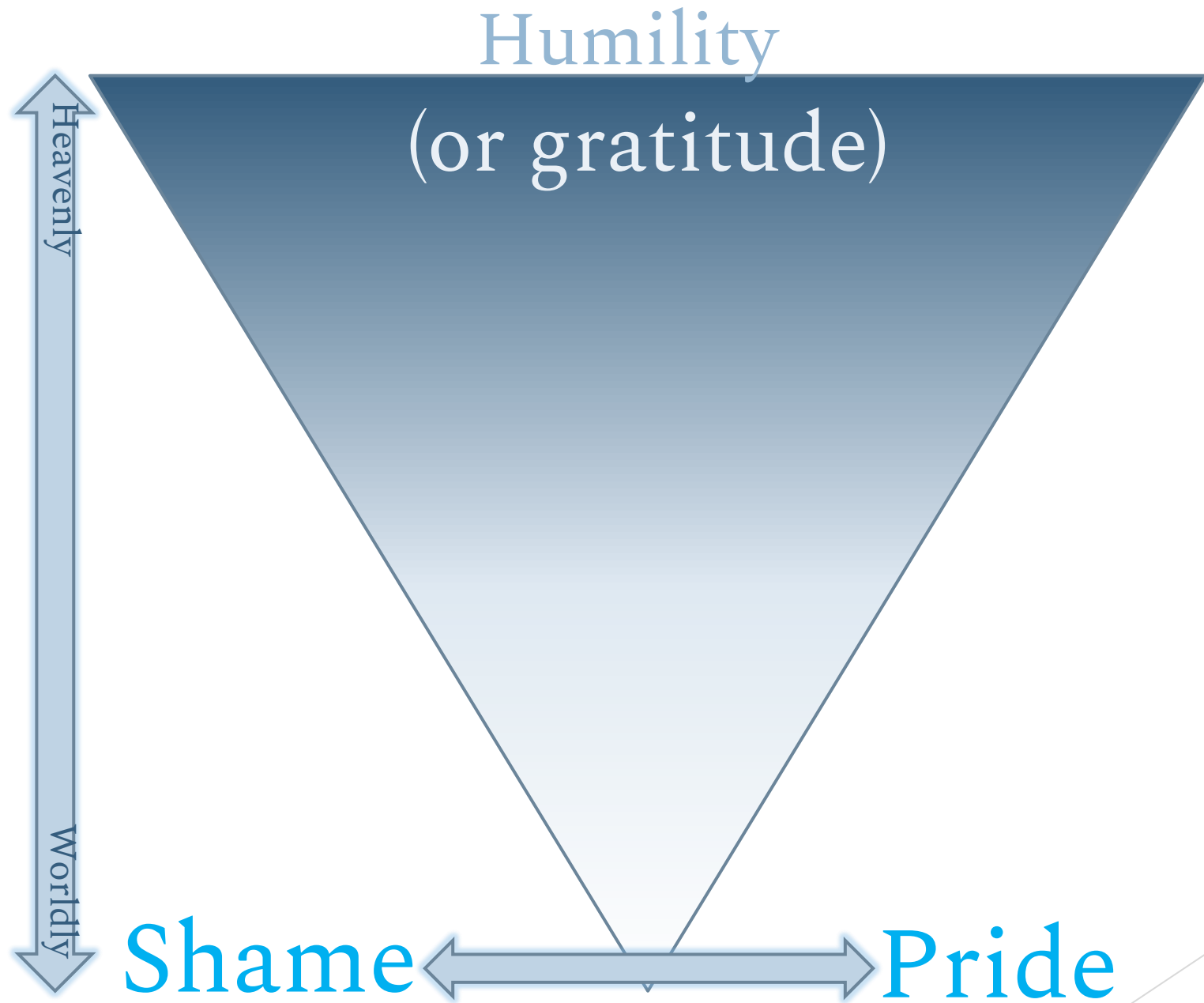
- *LGBT+ identity*

- *Views of change*

Pride

Shame





# The Pride/Embrace Model

- There is nothing wrong with homosexual behavior (at least in a committed relationship, but usually even that is not emphasized).
- All varieties of sexual expression and behavior are equivalent and equally good, so long as they are consensual.
- Same-sex couples are *exactly* the same as opposite-sex couples.
- Homosexuality is innate and unchangeable, and it is harmful to ask or expect people to restrain their sexual expression if this is “who they are”.
- Gay people are “born perfect” and do not need to change anything.
- Though innate & unchangeable, it’s nevertheless cause for pride & celebration
- Any problems or pathologies are solely due to homophobia, repression, minority stress, and the failure of the Church to accept and embrace homosexual behavior and gay couples.
- If homophobia disappeared, and the Church accepted homosexual behavior, gays’ mental health would dramatically improve, and their suffering would be eliminated.



# The Sin/Shame/Disease Model

- Sexual feelings are a choice or the result of sinful behavior/choices/beliefs
- Sexual feelings are because the person is unworthy or rejected by God
- Gay sexual feelings are worse than heterosexual feelings. Same with behaviors.
- If you work hard enough (or fast/pray enough), you will be able to overcome these feelings
- Once the feelings are overcome, *then* you can participate fully in the Church
- Experts and therapists have the answers and those answers fit every case.
- Religious equivalent to the medical “disease” model



# Shared heresy at both extremes

There is no meaningful distinction between behavior and feelings

Pride-identified:

If you have the feelings, it is harmful *not to* act on them, and inevitable that you eventually will.

*“If you’re gay, just be gay.”*

Shame-identified:

Having the feelings is as bad as acting on them

*“You’ll be worthy and acceptable once you no longer have these feelings.”*



# There are elements of truth in both sides!

- We can control our behavior
- Our choices *can* influence how we respond to our circumstances, and that includes how we construct (consciously or unconsciously) our identity.
- God's purposes and glory can be fulfilled through this experience
- Suppression/hiding/shame is harmful. (Contrast w/bridling)  
(Look for the righteous root/desire in the behavior. It will always be there!)



# Is that all there is? Pride or Shame?

- We usually stop there
- But what if there is a higher and holier way than *either* pride or shame?

# By Proving Contraries, Truth is Made Manifest

# Ways of conceptualizing an LGBT+ identity/orientation

## Restoration Model

Pride/Embrace Model	Sin/Shame/Disease Model
My intelligence/spirit was created gay	Something that <i>must</i> be overcome, immediately!
I will forever be incapable of joyful union with the opposite sex	Resistance/opposition or hiding
Sexual identity is something to embrace, celebrate, and center my identity around.	“Ex-gay” (note how this is inherently conflictual and co-dependent).

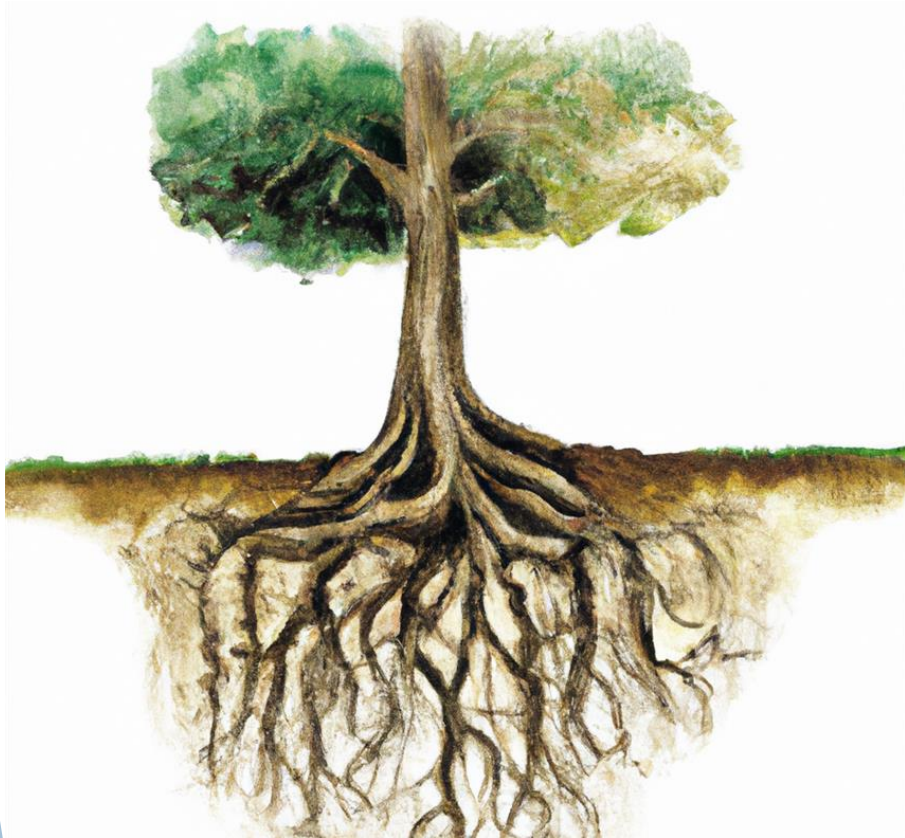
...for his parents. But that  
**the works of God  
should be made  
manifest in him.”**



# View of Change

	Restoration Model	Disease Model
Pride/Envy	Change is inevitable. Growth optional. Strive for growth!	Orientation can
Unnecessary/unnatural	Submission/surrender/consecration	
God just wants the best for you	“If thou wilt...” “...but if not...”	should change to have full fellowship
Born Perfect	The principle of compensation	means you must struggle enough.
God doesn't want you to struggle	It's not about changing from gay to straight, but from fallen/natural man to redeemed man.	is not controlled
I could never be straight in the next life, so I will be the opposite sex	Feelings may broaden to enable heterosexual dating/marriage, which can be a goal, but achieving that is not essential to this life.	thought & feelings <i>must</i> undergo an change
	Identity is under our control and should be a cautious, deliberative choice.	





# Part 3.2 Transcending the False Binary of Pride and Shame

- *Sexual Behavior*
- *Common Themes and Language*
- *Non-Heterosexual Relationships*
- *Traditional Relationships*
- *Church Doctrine*
- *Heterosexual Marriage*
- *Being Single*
- *Handling Temptation*

Pride



Shame





# View of Sexual Behavior

	Restoration Model	Sin/Shame/Disease Model
<b>Pride/Embarrassment</b>	Procreative sex w/in the new & everlasting covenant is the highest and best form of expression.	Non-heterosexual sin is abominable...
All forms of sexual expression are equally good and healthy	Sexuality is a gift from God just wants me to use it	...more grave and shameful than other sexual sins...
God just wants me to use it	...but not for me alone	Something to hide and never speak of. "I'll take this secret to my grave."
Sexual pleasure can be increased through advanced techniques.	consecrate to a higher glory	Disease-ridden
Vital to being healthy	Sex is beautiful and fun	Millstone hanged around neck
...to the point that some people are "right"	...within the bounds of righteousness and chastity	Thorn in the flesh
Unfair to ask someone to be <u>single</u> .	There are ways to express love righteously and chastely	
	Sexuality is a stewardship we consecrate to God & His purposes	
	"My grace is sufficient"	



# Common Themes/Language

	Restoration Model	
Pride/Em	Transcendence	Sin/Shame/Disease Model
Inclusion	Belonging	Struggle
Unconditional	Connection	Conflict
Celebration	Submission/consec	“Cut it out”
Pride	Bridle/channel	Destroy it
Constant emphasis		Ignore it & hope it goes away



# View of Non-Heterosexual Relationships

Pride/Emb	Restoration Model	Disease Model
“Gay couples are as straight couples	A cul-de-sac...	y unhealthy and
...in value	Can be happy & healthy by the world’s standards	py living that way.”
...in satisfaction	Gay couples can reflect certain Christlike principles, but spiritual progression & growth will be limited.	ly happy.”
...in emotional health	Some aspects of heterosexuality are <i>also</i> incompatible with celestial relationships	evitable
...in righteousness are approved of b	Divorce is <i>always</i> tragic	erosexually, even if hiding.”



# View of Traditional Relationships for Sexual Minorities

<del>Pride/Embrace Model</del>	<del>Sin/Shame/Disease Model</del>
“Gay couples are exactly the same as straight couples...”	Always inherently unhealthy and promiscuous
...in value	“I’d never be happy living that way.”
...in satisfaction	“They’re not <i>really</i> happy.”
...in emotional health and stability	Gay divorce is inevitable
...in righteousness (all family types are approved of by God)	“I <i>must</i> marry heterosexually, even if it means lying & hiding.”



# View of Traditional Relationships for Sexual Minorities

Pride/Embarrassment	Restoration Model	Sin/Shame/Disease Model
Always inherent and unfulfilling, the	An ideal to revere & strive for	Proof that I'm "cured"
"I'd never be happy this way." (married to)	... in whatever way works for you at the moment	Now I can be fully accepted and happy as a member of the Church
"They're not really	A viable option for	I have to be the 'typical' spouse
Divorce is inevitable	Courtship & marriage usually follow the (and that's okay)	I shouldn't tell spouse before
"I must have the intensity of sexual romance to my spouse or I'm depriving my spouse."	Divorce is <i>always</i>	If I don't match up to what I think every 'normal' spouse does and feels in a marriage, I am failing myself & my spouse, so I need to pretend harder.
The church discourages	When these marriages work <i>really, really</i>	The church pushes them.
	This isn't a game your chances are the success or failure of marriage.	
	To be undertaken with careful consideration	



# View of Church Doctrine on Sexuality & Marriage

Pride/Emb	Restoration Model	Disease Model
It's going to char sex sealings (and	Gender & gender complimentarity are eternal principles	and shame
Advocacy from w from without wil	The highest/holiest relationship is royal/priestly marriage (not romance)	lling short & will ole to God/Church
Church leaders a just don't know a	Enables infinite & glorious creation	ows how I'm ort, rather than an
When they do the	Places demands on all who seek to enter this divine order	wards
It's just like black	Celestial kingdom will also not contain certain worldly ideas around heterosexuality	ss & unacceptable
It's just like plura	Not about Victorian ideal of romantic love/love object	broken



# View of Role & Importance of Heterosexual Marriage

	Restoration Model	
<b>Pride/Em</b>	A calling and opportunity	<b>Disease Model</b>
Unjust	To serve and bless in unique	e
Unfair	ways...	ntil married
Unrealistic	...for as long as it lasts	es me
	unworthy...	
Will lead to misery, loneliness and probably suicide	...of full fellowship & participation in the Church	





# View of Being Single

	Restoration Model	Disease Model
Pride/Embarrassment	A calling and opportunity	Stigmatizing
Unjust	To serve and bless in unique ways...	Not a choice
Unfair	...for as long as it lasts	Until married
Unrealistic		Makes me unworthy...
Will lead to misery, loneliness and probably suicide	...of full fellowship & participation in the Church	

# View on Handling Temptation (e.g., lust)

	Restoration Model	
Pride/Em	Appreciate...	Sin/Shame/Disease Model
Revel	...without needing	Avoid
Indulge	...in the season the	Deny, suppress, fear
Objectify/reduc	Give credit/gratitu	Make it disappear/not exist
Idolatry	Not ours to take/ca	Ingratitude/resentment
Possess	Glorify God & rece	Dispossess/disembody
Glorify creature	beautiful creation	Deny or resent the divinity in
rather than the	Loves the truth, ev	God's creation
Change the truth	Recognizes role of	Change the truth of God into a
lie	youth), process of	lie
Extortion	own destined glory	I don't deserve gifts/blessings
Taking to exces	glory of our own re	Never be free of strong
	to any fallen, mort	temptations
	to decay.)	



# View on Handling Temptation (some scriptures)

“Verily, this is fasting and prayer, or in other words, rejoicing and prayer.

“There hath no temptation taken you but such as that which is good; but they glorified him not as God neither were thankful; because that which they showed was their giving, with cheerful hearts and countenances, not who will not suffer you to be tempted, but became vain in their imagination.”

the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.”

“Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools; Verily I say, that inasmuch as ye do this, the fulness of the earth is yours, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air, and that which climbth upon the trees and walketh upon the earth;

“And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man, and to birds, and four footed beasts, and creeping things. Yea, and the herbs, and the good things which come of the earth, whether for food or for raiment, or for house, or for barn, or for horse, and for fodder, for vine and for

“Wherefore things which come of the earth, in the season thereof, are made for the benefit and the use of man, both to please the eye and to gladden the heart; to dishonour their own bodies between themselves:

“Yea, for food and for raiment, for taste and for smell, to strengthen the body and to enliven the soul.

“Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than used, with judgment, not to excess, neither by extortion.

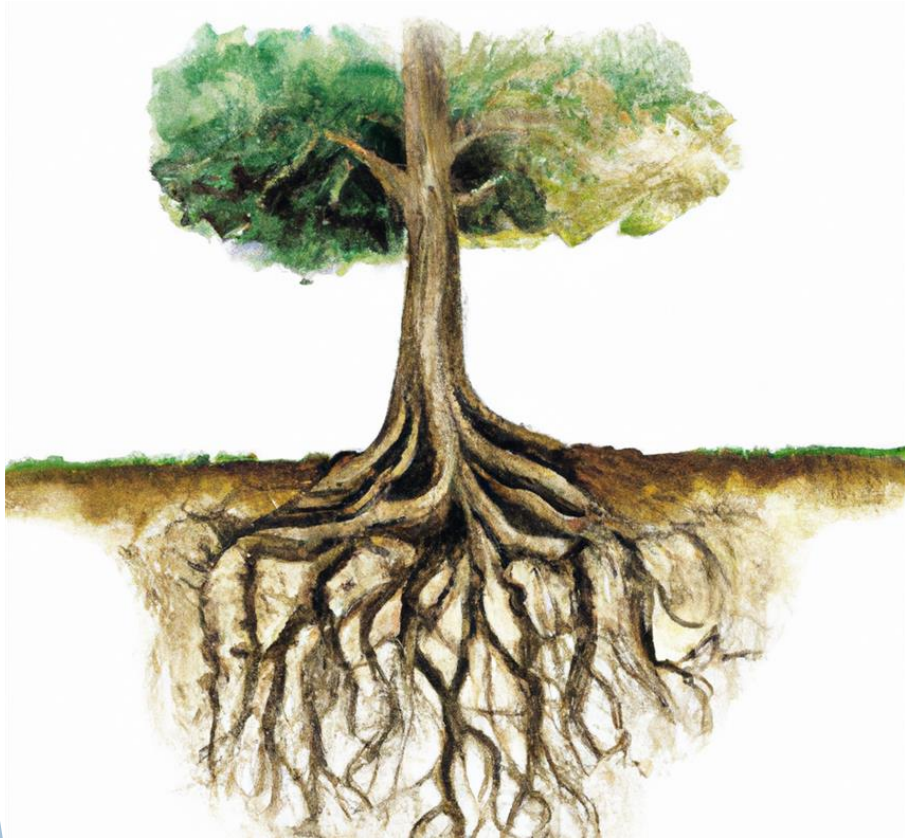
“And in nothing doth man offend God, or against none is his wrath kindled, save those who confess not his hand in all things, and obey not his commandments.” – D&C 59:14-21



# View of What We Should Be Aspiring To

	Restoration Model	Sin/Shame/Disease Model
Pride/Emulation	Aspire to future glory	
Self acceptance	Patient with the process	This part should be cut out & killed
"I'm perfect just the way I am"	Willing to keep trying even if falling short	Nothing can redeem me
Recognize pre-emptive wholeness	Metanoia	I am irredeemably broken
I don't need the atonement	Μεταμορφώω (metamorphoo)	I'm unworthy of the atonement
	Recognize that healing, growth and transformation can come "in the process of time" through Christ's atonement and us partaking of His divine nature.	
	God isn't done with you yet!	
	Amazing transformations await!	





# Part 3.3 Transcending the False Binary of Pride and Shame

- *What We Aspire To*
- *The Role of Therapy*
- *View of the Adversary*
- *View of Agency*
- *View of Repentance*
- *Religious Practice & Devotion*
- *Envisioning the Next Life*

Pride



Shame



# View of What We Should Be Aspiring To (scriptures)

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? ~~Angels or God, that have entered into the heart of~~  
~~or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword.~~

God hath revealed his secrets by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea,

...~~And, in a multitude of things we are ignorant, but we are transformed by~~

~~the Everlasting things of God that we know not, but the Spirit of God.~~

And we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we

might know the things that are freely given to us of God

Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the

Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

But the natural man receiveth not, the things of the Spirit of God: for they

are foolishness unto him: neither can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned.

-Romans 8:35, 37-39-14)



# View of the Role of Therapy

	Restoration Model	Disease Model
Pride/Emotion	Address internal wounds/trauma	Sexual feelings
Self acceptance	Heal/create/deepen relationships	Sexual feelings
Self discovery/Identity Exploration	Address ancillary mental health issues	Sexual feelings
Soothe distress	Reconciliation of:	Sexual feelings
Values discovered	...internal values/feelings	Sexual feelings
	...horizontal (mortal) relationships	
	...vertical (divine) relationships	





# View of the Role of The Adversary

## Restoration Model

When we are humble, we realize in our bad moments *all* of us have furthered the adversary's cause

Satan does focus a lot of his effort on thwarting family formation and breaking up existing families

Cor If I am a good person, then *of course* the Adversary wants to influence me. (He doesn't bother w/already evil)

This Therefore, I need to seek the gift of discernment of spirits to determine where and how he is doing so

The Also need that gift to discern where God is helping me

in a J. Smith: Anyone w/a body has power over evil spirits. Once  
It is we recognize them, we have power to remove these  
sug influences.

evil He wants to misuse/debase/destroy our bodies. God wants us to care for them, be grateful for them & rejoice in them.

Separation=death. Life=unity; spirit+body=fullness of joy

Break non-deliberate agreements!



# View of Agency

Pride/Emotion	Restoration Model	Disease Model
I have no choice these feelings	I can <i>choose</i> what I want	
Not acting on them unhealthy and i	I <i>can</i> act according to my values	
God allows me to obey Him or	I have the power to act or be acted upon	ents
“I have my agency I want.”	<i>Won't</i> (empowering) versus <i>can't</i> (disempowering)	
	Get a correct understanding of moral agency.	e



# View of Repentance

	Restoration Model	Case Model
Pride/Em	Welcomed	
Unnecessary/re	To be done early & often	
God can approv	A continual process	
commandments	Righteousness is not earned	
Having a standa	Failure is not final	through hard
shame...		
...so instead of r	As long as we are willing to keep	impossible for me
the standard to	trying & repenting, we will be	e I should give
shame/guilt	saved	
I am good just a	Success is guaranteed if we keep	be forgiven, but I
need to change	trying!	e unforgiveable.
	<u>"None is good... but God"</u>	



# Elder D. Todd Christofferson



The way of the world, as you know, is anti-Christ, or “anything but Christ.” Our day is a replay of Book of Mormon history in which charismatic figures pursue unrighteous dominion over others, celebrate sexual license, and promote accumulating wealth as the object of our existence. Their philosophies “justify in committing a little sin” or even a lot of sin, but none can offer redemption. That comes only through the blood of the Lamb. The best the “anything but Christ” or “anything but repentance” crowd can offer is the unfounded claim that sin does not exist or that if it exists, it ultimately has no consequences. I can’t see that argument getting much traction at the Final Judgment.

We don’t have to attempt the impossible in trying to rationalize our sins away. And on the other hand, we don’t have to attempt the impossible in erasing the effects of sin by our own merit alone. Ours is not a religion of rationalization nor a religion of perfectionism but a religion of redemption—redemption through Jesus Christ. If we are among the penitent, with His Atonement our sins are nailed to His cross, and “with his stripes we are healed.”



# View of the Role of Religious Practice & Devotion

	Restoration Model	Disease Model
Pride/Emotion	Authentic spirituality	
Moral Therapeutic	Not escape	
“God just wants to heal you”	About <i>relationship</i> ...	escape feelings
God would never allow something unfair to happen	...not merit	uncomfortable
My mental health is more important than my faith	Blessings/deliverance aren't earned, but are gifts bestowed	burden of guilt
	<u>“Grateful in any circumstances”</u>	ers and keep it
	You cannot be spiritually healthy without being emotionally healthy	triforce myself & my kingdom.
	Christ is interested in our healing, not our good-feeling. Growth, not comfort.	



# View of the Role of Prayer

	Restoration Model	
Pride/Envy	Healing prayer	Disease Model
Moral Therapy	Mighty prayer	Denial
“God just wants to be nice to me”	About <i>relationship</i> ...	Denial
God will respect my feelings	...not merit	God’s love
Will convince God to my wants/desires	A way to align our will with God’s	Denial
contrary to His will	Elijah is the model	Denial
Abraham (re: Son of Man)	The Lord’s Prayer is the model	Denial
	Jesus’ prayer in Gethsemane is the model	Denial
	The Psalms with their continued engagement w/God through all emotions is the model	Denial



# How Are We Supposed to Think of The Next Life?

	Restoration Model	
	We can take hope in the next life...	
Pride	...while enjoying the present	del
Irrelevant	Happiness is available <i>now</i>	n
Just focus on	...even as a fullness of joy is later	already
I'm just trying	God put us on this earth for a reason!	ked in the
don't talk to	...which we only partially understand, at best.	
Only concerned	Allowing that to unfold can bring great joy as	ll I die
Discussing	we see God's hand in our lives.	ent
next life just	God gives us glimpses of what the future holds as we enjoy and appreciate the relationships we have here, the beauties in the earth we appreciate, and the joy we have felt	me
	We <b>“treasure these moments in our hearts”</b> & write them down in “book of remembrance”.	



# Some ideas for deepening your understanding of restoration sexuality

- Seek inspiration on the Lord’s plan for you
- Meditate on the glory of your resurrected, glorified body
  - (compared to anyone you might feel envy for today)
- Meditate on the fellowship of Zion & Celestial glory
  - What it will feel like “seeing as they are seen and knowing as they are known.”
  - “We will receive them into our bosom... and we will fall upon their necks...” (Moses 7:63-64)
- Much of what drives intensity of temptation is a desire for connection and belonging
  - Find ways to improve connection & belonging
  - Ask for what you need
  - Include your local Church leaders in this
  - When it comes to same-sex friendships, be “promiscuous”—a single friendship cannot easily contain or meet all of our needs, but many same-sex friends can. Plus, why confine the blessings of associating with you to just one person? Many, many people can be blessed from friendship with you!
- Make a “covenant with your eyes” to see the whole person (including past & future), integrate, resist objectification/fractionation.



# Some scriptures on the connection & belonging in Zion

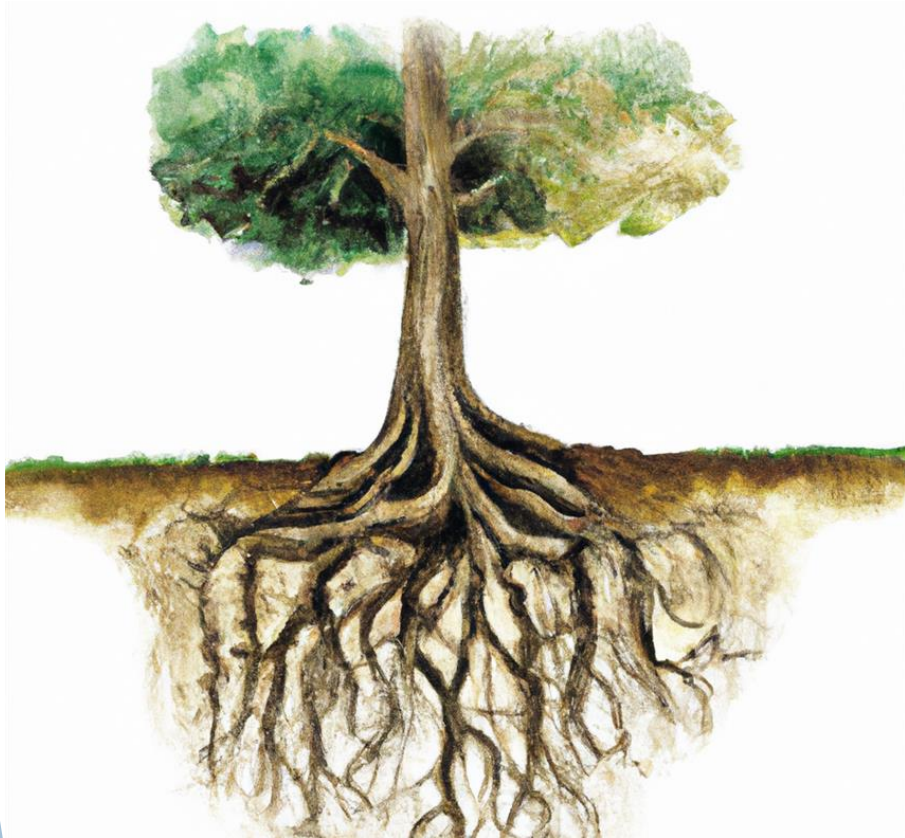
“Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined.” Ps. 50:2

“And the Lord said unto Enoch: Then shalt thou and all thy city meet them there, and we will receive them into our bosom, and they shall see us; and we will fall upon their necks, and they shall fall upon our necks, and we will kiss each other; And there shall be mine abode, and it shall be Zion, which shall come forth out of all the creations which I have made; and for the space of a thousand years the earth shall rest.” Moses 7:63-64

“For I will restore health unto thee, and I will heal thee of thy wounds, saith the Lord; because they called thee an Outcast, saying, This is Zion, whom no man seeketh after.”  
Jeremiah 30:17

“And there shall they fall down and be crowned with glory, even in Zion, by the hands of the servants of the Lord, even the children of Ephraim.” D&C 133:32





# Part 3.4 Transcending the False Binary of Pride and Shame

*Acceptance*

Pride

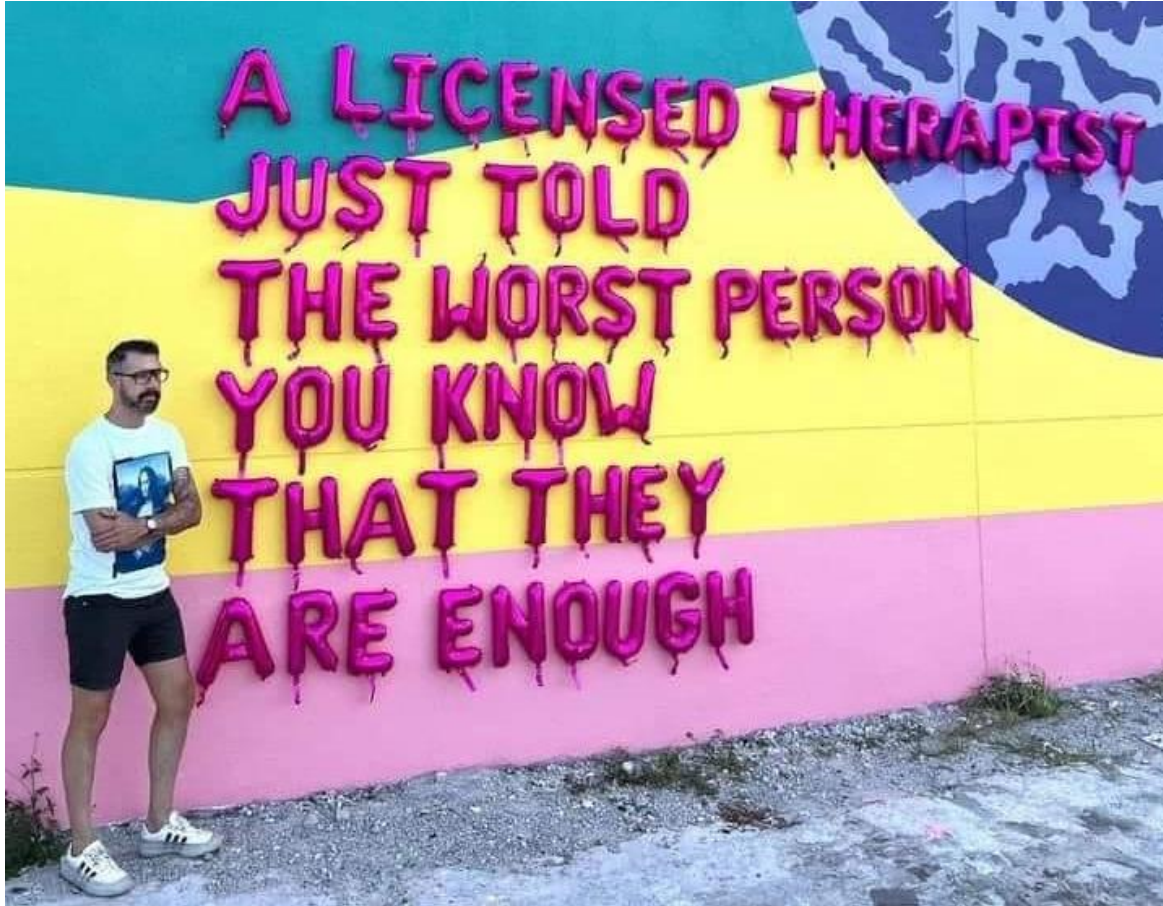


Shame



# What is Acceptance?

Let's talk about what it is *not*:



# What is Acceptance?

When we talk about *acceptance*, we're talking about how we respond to reality.

Think of the 5 stages of grief:



Here, acceptance means something different from “not being rejected.”

Acceptance of reality does not mean

- Being okay with bad things in our lives or in the world around us
- Being okay with awful things other people do
- Pretending that painful things don't hurt

# What is Acceptance?

Acceptance is letting go of:

- Denial
- Avoidance
- Pretense
- Delusion
- Escape
- Numbing
- Drama
- Delay

An acceptance statement can be phrased as, “My present reality is \_\_\_\_\_”





# Buddhism and The Three Poisons

Attachment



Aversion

Delusion

# Seeing Our Thoughts

The mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR) program  
used in medical centers worldwide

## FULL CATASTROPHE LIVING

REVISED  
AND  
UPDATED  
EDITION

Using the Wisdom of  
Your Body and Mind to Face  
Stress, Pain, and Illness



JON KABAT-ZINN, PH.D.  
PREFACE BY THICH NHAT HANH

The only way to free yourself from a lifetime of being tyrannized by your own thought processes, whether you suffer from excessive anxiety or not, is to come to see your thoughts for what they are and to discern the sometimes subtle—but most often not-so-subtle—seeds of craving and aversion, of greed and hatred, at work within them. When you can successfully step back and see that you are not your thoughts and feelings, that you do not have to believe them, and that you certainly do not have to act on them, when you see vividly that many of them are inaccurate, judgmental, and fundamentally greedy or aversive, you will have found the key to understanding why you feel so much fear and anxiety. At the same time you will have found the key to maintaining your equilibrium. Fear, panic, and anxiety will no longer be uncontrollable demons. Instead you will see them as natural mental states that can be worked with and accepted just like any others. Then, lo and behold, the demons may not come around and bother you so much. You may find that you don't see them at all for long stretches. You may wonder where they went or even whether they ever existed. Occasionally you may see some smoke, just enough to remind you that the lair of the dragon is still occupied, that fear is a natural part of living, but not something you have to be afraid of.



# Accepting Our Reality

The mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR) program  
used in medical centers worldwide

## FULL CATASTROPHE LIVING

REVISED  
AND  
UPDATED  
EDITION

Using the Wisdom of  
Your Body and Mind to Face  
Stress, Pain, and Illness



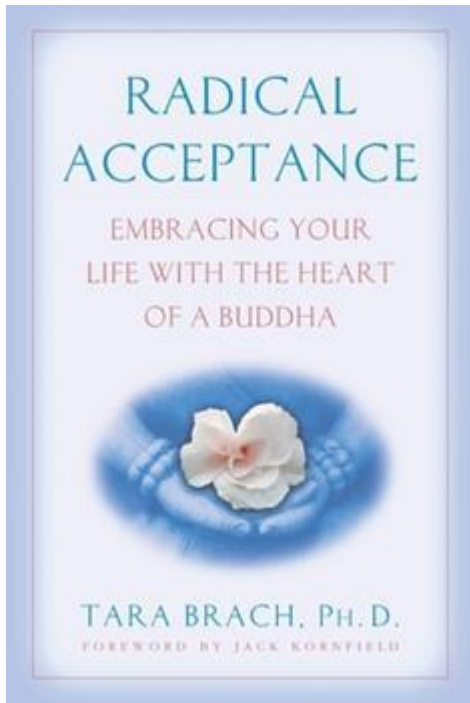
JON KABAT-ZINN, PH.D.  
PREFACE BY THICH NHAT HANH

Acceptance does not mean that you have to like everything or that you have to take a passive attitude toward everything and abandon your principles and values. It does not mean that you are satisfied with things as they are or that you are resigned to tolerating things as they “have to be.” It does not mean that you should stop trying to break free of your self-destructive habits or to give up on your desire to change and grow, or that you should tolerate injustice, for instance, or avoid getting involved in changing the world around you because it is the way it is and therefore hopeless. It has nothing to do with passive resignation.

Acceptance as we are speaking of it simply means that, sooner or later, you have come around to a willingness to see things as they are. This attitude sets the stage for acting appropriately in your life, no matter what is happening. You are much more likely to know what to do and have the inner conviction to act when you have a clear picture of what is actually happening versus when your vision is clouded by your mind’s self-serving judgments and desires or its fears and prejudices.



# How We See



The wing of clear seeing is often described in Buddhist practice as mindfulness. This is the quality of awareness that recognizes exactly what is happening in our moment-to-moment experience. When we are mindful of fear, for instance, we are aware that our thoughts are racing, that our body feels tight and shaky, that we feel compelled to flee—and we recognize all this without trying to manage our experience in any way, without pulling away. Our attentive presence is unconditional and open—we are willing to be with whatever arises, even if we wish the pain would end or that we could be doing something else. That wish and that thought become part of what we are accepting. Because we are not tampering with our experience, mindfulness allows us to see life “as it is.” This recognition of the truth of our experience is intrinsic to Radical Acceptance: We can’t honestly accept an experience unless we see clearly what we are accepting.

The second wing of Radical Acceptance, compassion, is our capacity to relate in a tender and sympathetic way to what we perceive. Instead of resisting our feelings of fear or grief, we embrace our pain with the kindness of a mother holding her child. Rather than judging or indulging our desire for attention or chocolate or sex, we regard our grasping with gentleness and care. Compassion honors our experience; it allows us to be intimate with the life of this moment as it is. Compassion makes our acceptance wholehearted and complete.



# Responses to Reality

Mindfulness facilitates an active choice in our responses

Reality	Natural Responses	Acceptance
Injustice	Denial Utopian delusion	Hope Service Loving persuasion
Discomfort	Denial Numbing Avoidance Fantasy	Acknowledgement Patience Endurance
Ambiguity	Partisanship Projection	Openness Honesty Charity
Conflict	Retreat/Avoidance Authoritarianism Dehumanization	Loving engagement Respect Transcendence
Uncertainty	Anxiety Obsession Overwork	Faith Constructive action



# Development of Acceptance

Starting Point	Development	Acceptance
“I’m gay”	Letting go of the need to identify	“I am living an experience”
“God is responsible for _____”	Letting go of the need for explanations	“I trust God to walk me through my reality and turn my challenges into blessings”



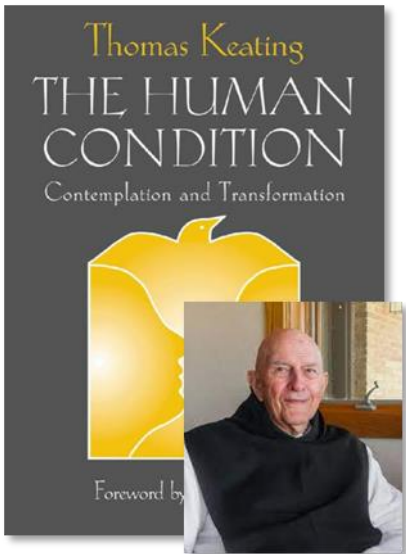
# Final Quotes

As we become more aware of the dynamics of our unconscious, we can receive people and events as they are, rather than filtered through what we would like them to be, expect them to be, or demand them to be. This requires letting go of the attachments, aversions, "shoulds," and demands on others and on life that reflect the mentality of a child rather than that of a grownup.

...This is a big project, but it is not yet spiritual maturity. It is just human growth into full, responsible, self-reflective consciousness. It is the first step that the Gospel invites us to take in the process of repentance.

...God approaches us from many different perspectives: illness, misfortune, bankruptcy, divorce proceedings, rejection, inner trials. God has not promised to take away our trials, but to help us to change our attitudes toward them. That is what holiness really is. In this life, happiness is rooted in our basic attitude toward reality.

-Thomas Keating



# Part 4: Going and Doing – How To Minister

# Implications for Ministry Sections

## 4.1: Getting Clear Within Yourself

We need to do our own interpersonal work so that we can effectively minister to others. If we don't, everyone else might just be a player in our own personal psychodrama.

## 4.2: Getting Clear About Interpersonal and Societal Dynamics

What are you walking into? Forewarned is forearmed. Without it, you might do more harm than good to those to whom you are attempting to minister.

## 4.3: Helping the Person in Front Of You

You are a vessel of Christ's love to the individual in front of you. This is not just one exemplar of a group identity.

## 4.4 Supporting Single Sexual Minorities

Being single has unique difficulties in a family-oriented church, but it also presents some unique blessings and opportunities. Let's change some misconceptions.

## 4.5 Supporting Married & Dating Sexual Minorities

Are their marriages doomed to fail? And therefore dating is futile? Do you even know if these people exist in your ward/stake?

## 4.6 Ministry In Action: Case Studies

Putting these principles into practice

## 4.7 Wrapping Up

Some Concluding Thoughts

# 4.1: Getting Clear Within Yourself

We need to do our own interpersonal work so that we can effectively minister to others. If we don't, everyone else might just be a player in our own personal psychodrama.



# Dig Deep: What is Your Zone of Experience?



- Where am I?
- Where is the person I’m ministering to?
- Where are they willing to go?

*I cannot lead someone to a place I myself don’t know*

## M. Scott Peck

Truth is always a paradox. And to teach just one half of the paradox is to teach heresy.

Love is the will to extend one's self for the purpose of nurturing one's own or another's spiritual growth... Love is as love does. Love is an act of will—namely, both an intention and an action. Will also implies choice. We do not have to love. We choose to love... It is not only possible but necessary for a loving person to avoid acting on feelings of love.

To proceed very far through the desert, you must be willing to meet existential suffering and work it through. In order to do this, the attitude toward pain has to change. This happens when we accept the fact that everything that happens to us has been designed for our spiritual growth.





# Dig Deep: What do you really believe about sexuality?

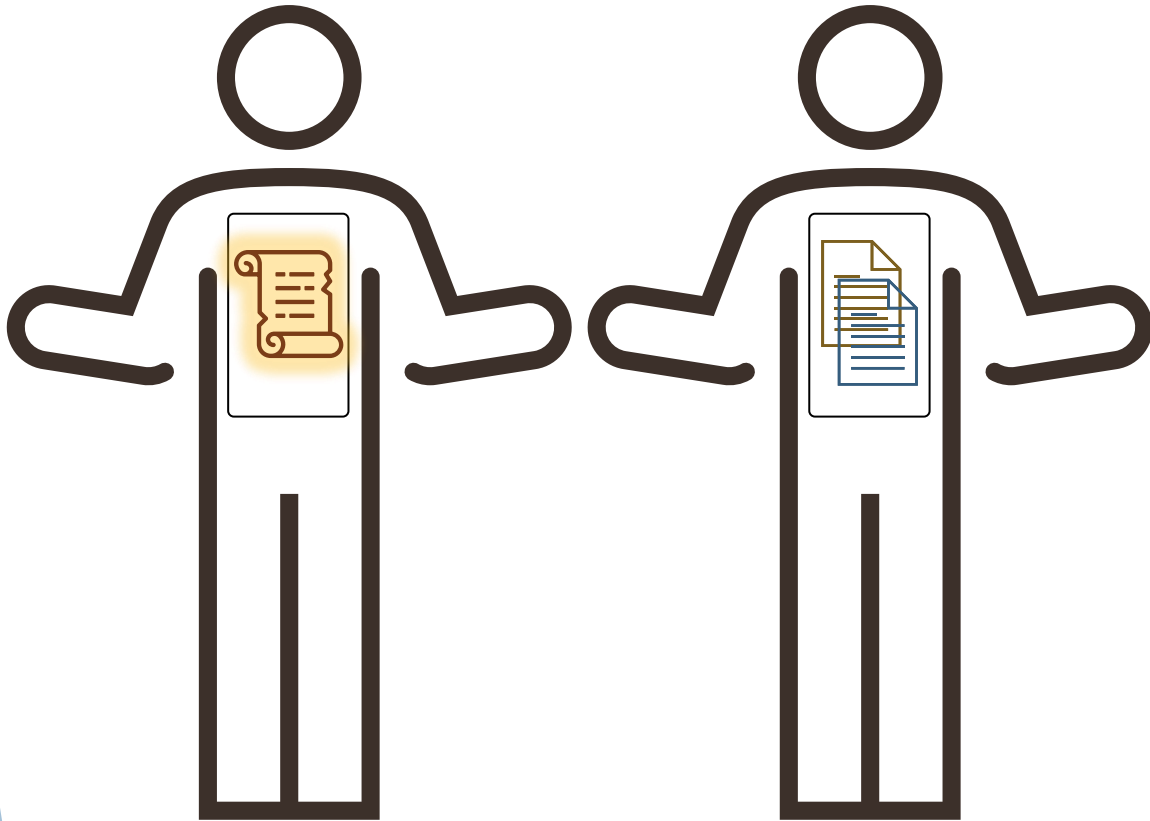
- Even if you never say it out loud, it affects how you minister
- What do you think (broadly) about sexuality and its purposes?
  - Is the law of chastity unfair and unrealistic – even for some heterosexuals?
  - Is all sexual behavior outside of a marriage b/t a man and a woman sinful?
  - If you don't have a personal testimony of the law of chastity & Family Proclamation, you will not be able to effectively help those sexual minorities who wish to remain faithful to Church teachings.



# A Tale of Three Bishops

- The one who stopped supporting the Proclamation
- The one who was bishop of the married student ward
- How my bishop used his own struggles to connect & bless the congregation during his annual “pornography is bad/chastity talk”

# The Problem of Empathy



Fritz Breithaupt, [The Dark Sides of Empathy](#)

## Woman Claims She Blinded Herself with Drain Cleaner to Fulfill Her Life-Long Dream of Being Disabled: 'I Should Have Been Blind from Birth'

"I went blind on purpose, but I don't feel it was a choice," Jewel Shuping said of her decision to blind herself

By Char Adams | Published on October 1, 2015 04:45 PM



"I really feel this is the way I was supposed to be born, that I should have been blind from birth," the 30-year-old says.

Shuping has Body Integrity Identity Disorder (BIID) – a rare condition causing able-bodied people to believe they are supposed to be disabled. She has long fantasized about being blind.

"When I was young, my mother would find me walking in the halls at night. When I was 3 or 4 years old," Shuping recalls. "By the time I was 6 I remember that thinking about being blind made me feel comfortable."

Shuping acquired a white cane in her teens and could read Braille fluently by the time she was 20. As the years progressed, so did her desire to be blind.

So, she decided to take matters into her own hands. In 2006, Shuping claims she found a sympathetic psychologist who agreed to pour drain cleaner into her eyes (the two first met for a few weeks to make sure Shuping was ready).

Source: [people.com](#)



# Allies Require Enemies

	Minister	Enemy
	Seeks to serve	
	Seeks the spiritual growth of the individual at the stage they are at	
	Looks to the underlying issue	
Rant about bullying	Sees the person as an individual, not as a group, not as a threat	"agenda," etc.
Performative virtue-pins, pronouns	Sees the person on a developmental, spiritual journey shepherded by Christ	...which the minister can either contribute to or detract from
LGBT individuals have need to change/Society accommodate	Seeks to nurture the person toward an ability to accept & live according to reality, divine laws, divine design & experience God's love	...which the minister can either contribute to or detract from
Protection of the vulnerable (marginalized & historically oppressed)	Love is seeking the best for the person, not validating wherever they are currently at.	...which the minister can either contribute to or detract from
Create safety (for marginalized/oppressed)		
"Love is love"		

# Am I 'In the Box'? Which one?

Enemies

**THE BETTER-THAN BOX**

<b>View of Myself</b> Superior Important Virtuous/Right	<b>View of Others</b> Inferior Incapable/Irrelevant False/Wrong
<b>Feelings</b> Impatient Disdainful Indifferent	<b>View of World</b> Competitive Troubled Needs me

**THE I-DESERVE BOX**

<b>View of Myself</b> Meritorious Mistreated/Victim Unappreciated	<b>View of Others</b> Mistaken Mistreating Ungrateful
<b>Feelings</b> Entitled Deprived Resentful	<b>View of World</b> Unfair Unjust Owes me

Pride-identified

Allies

**THE MUST-BE-SEEN-AS BOX**

<b>View of Myself</b> Need to be well thought of Fake	<b>View of Others</b> Judgmental Threatening My audience
<b>Feelings</b> Anxious/Afraid Needy/Stressed Overwhelmed	<b>View of World</b> Dangerous Watching Judging me

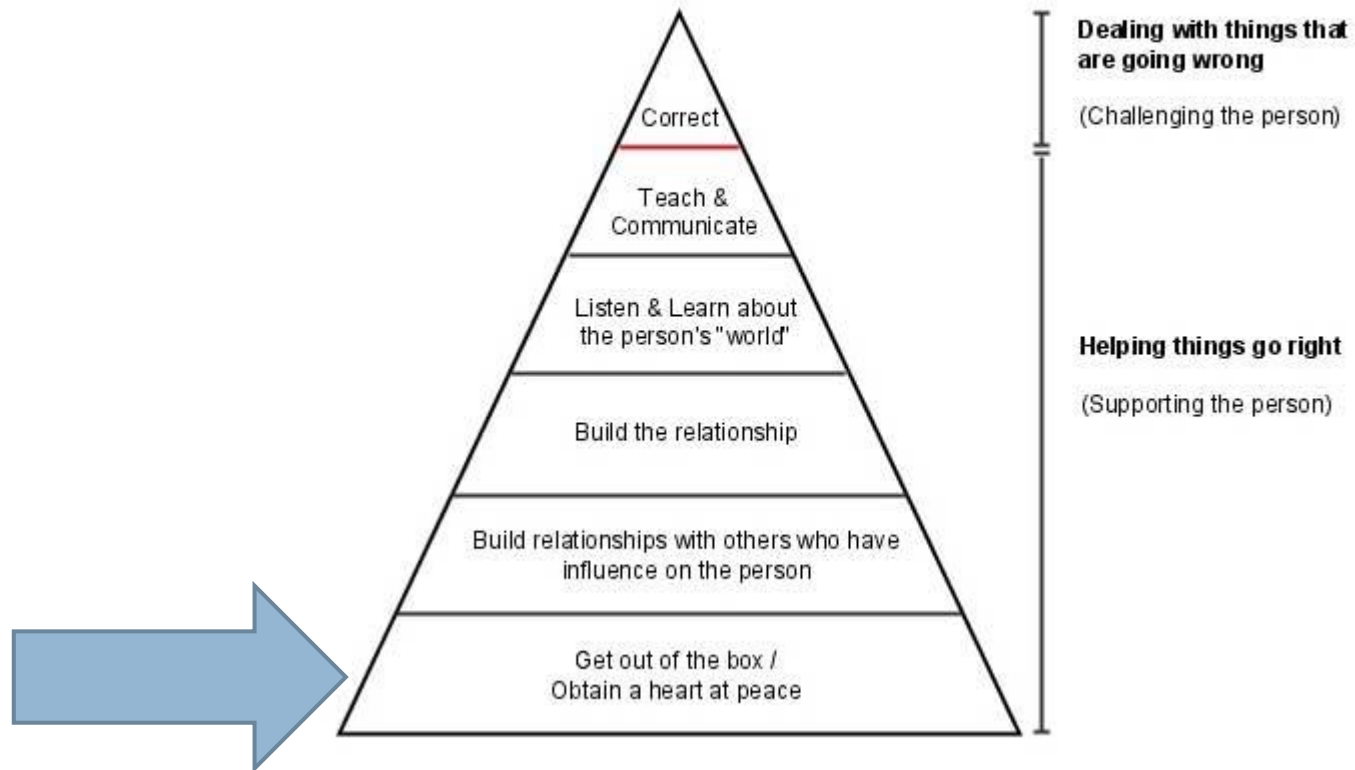
**THE WORSE-THAN BOX**

<b>View of Myself</b> Not as good Broken/Deficient Fated	<b>View of Others</b> Advantaged Privileged Blessed
<b>Feelings</b> Helpless Jealous/Bitter Depressed	<b>View of World</b> Hard/Difficult Against me Ignoring me

Shame-identified

# The Base of the Pyramid of Change

## THE PYRAMID OF CHANGE



# How To Develop Love

Love is both :

- a gift
- and a muscle we develop

You can't fake it

- But you can implement it as a principle of action

# Strongly Felt, But Not Love

- Codependency
- Protectiveness
- Pity
- Validation
- Empathy



# Am I Trying to Ease this Person's Distress or Help Them Grow?

- When we are sitting with someone in distress, are we really trying to ease our *own* discomfort?
- People can sense this, and take the unspoken message that we can't handle their pain
- Be willing to suffer *with* and *for* this person. This is being Christ-like!
- We also need to check our inspiration and seek to do the Lord's will for this person
- Sometimes in our efforts to "help" the person, we are working against the Lord & His will. Seek inspiration in what we say and do.

# Am I Trying to Ease this Person's Distress or Help Them Grow?

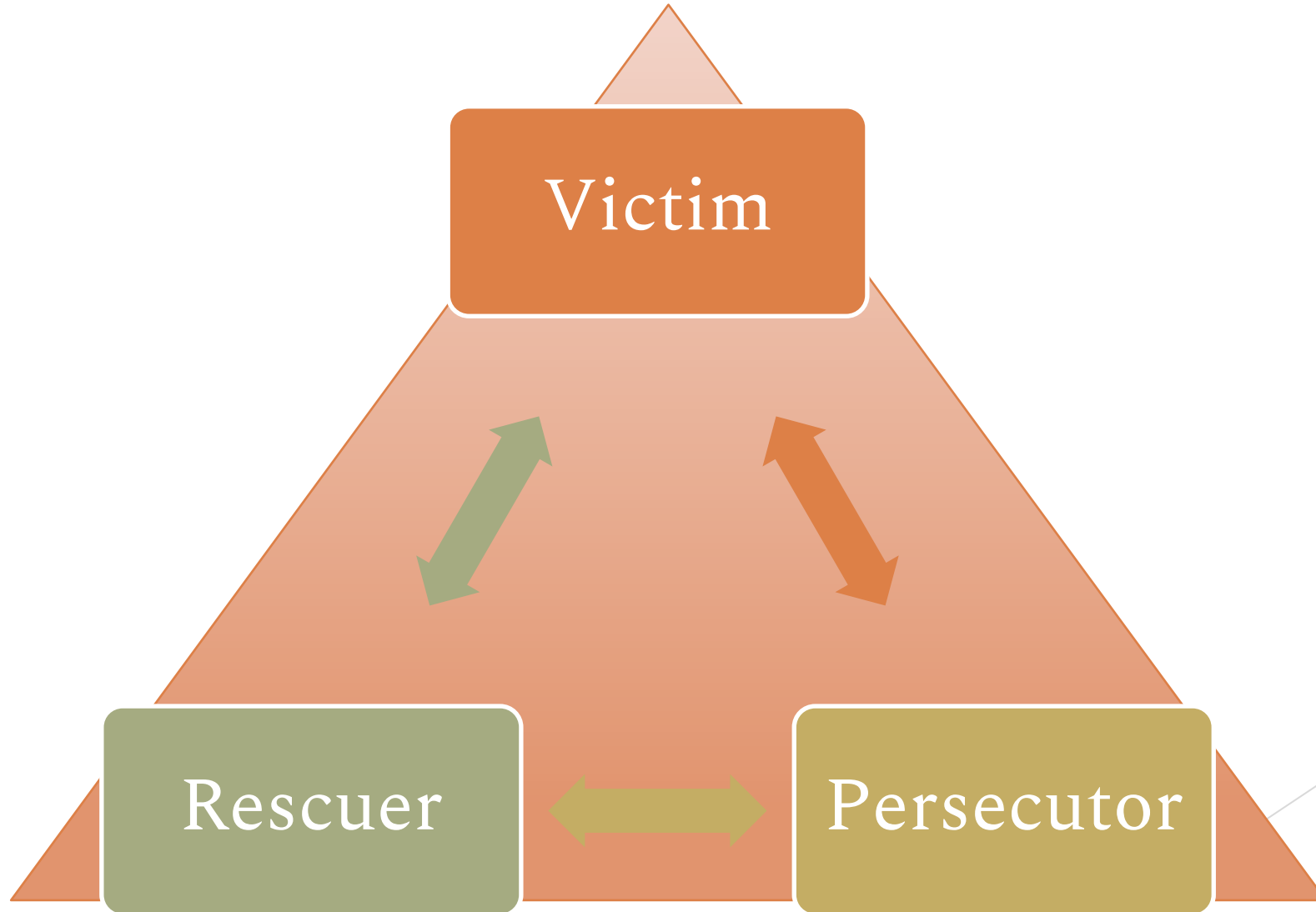
“Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your pleasures.”

-James 4:3 (NIV)

“Go and cry unto the gods which ye have chosen; let them deliver you in the time of your distress.”

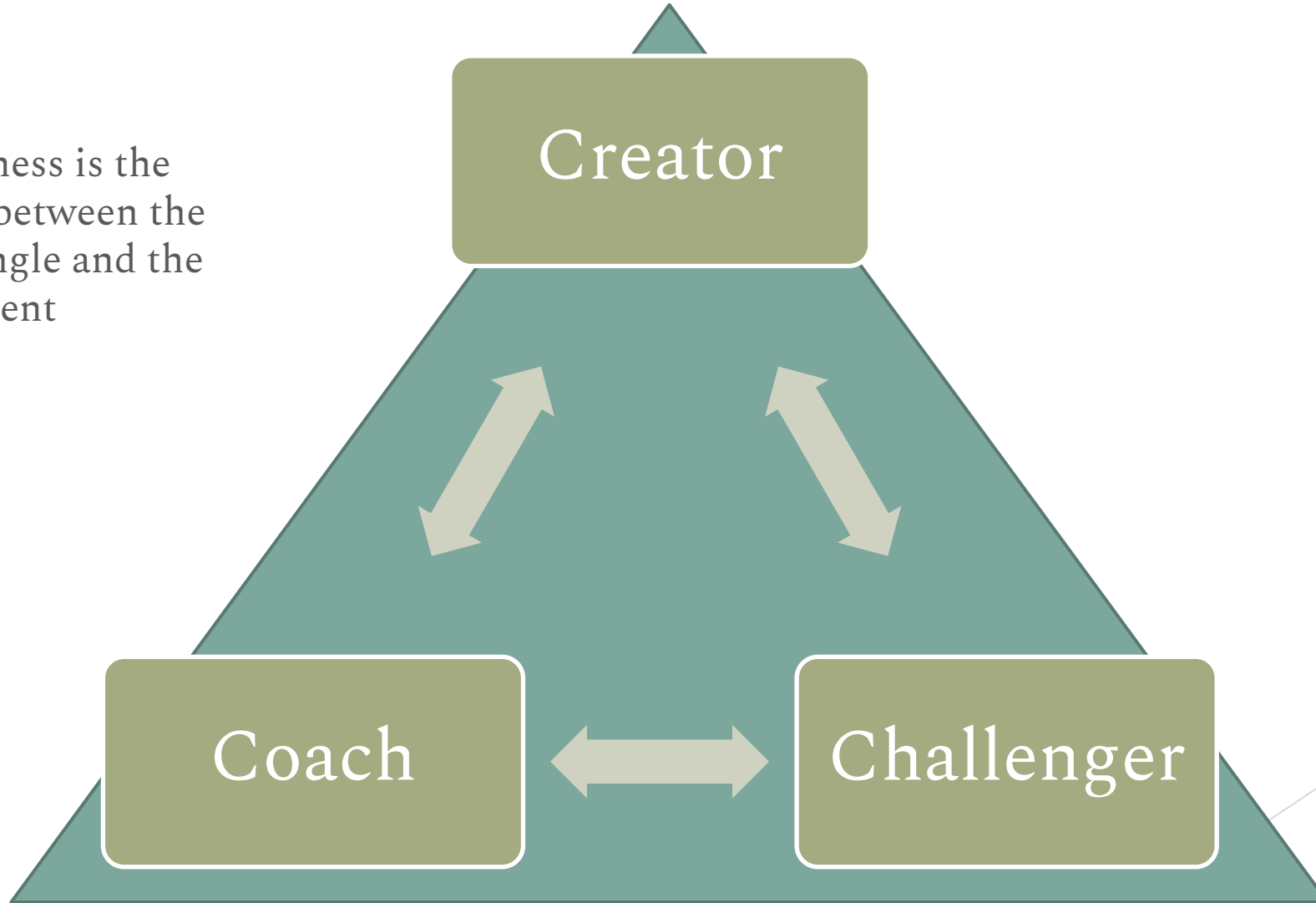
-Judges 10:14 (NASB)

# The Drama Triangle: Where Do You Get Sucked In?



# The Empowerment Triangle: How Can You Help (not fix)?

Self-awareness is the difference between the drama triangle and the empowerment triangle!



# Awareness and Self-Compassion Are Key

- None of us is perfect. But if we can be aware of what is motivating and driving us, we are much less likely to do someone harm.
- Notice what comes up for you when you think someone is “wrong”. Then ask yourself, what is my role here? What does the Lord need me to do?
- Learn to put your ego in check. This isn’t about you!
- Love is boundaried
- But none of us is in a place of perfection
- ...And yet, we are all God has! He can still use us even in our imperfections
- Be willing to be the bad guy for a good cause, because sometimes what a person wants is not what he or she needs
- Rather than trying to convince them they are wrong, try to show them what they don’t yet see, give them a new way of thinking

ARE YOU COMING TO BED?

I CAN'T. THIS  
IS IMPORTANT.

WHAT?

SOMEONE IS WRONG  
ON THE INTERNET.



## 4.2: Getting Clear About Interpersonal and Societal Dynamics

What are you walking into? Forewarned is forearmed. Without it, you might do more harm than good to those to whom you are attempting to minister.

# Understanding the Ally Movement

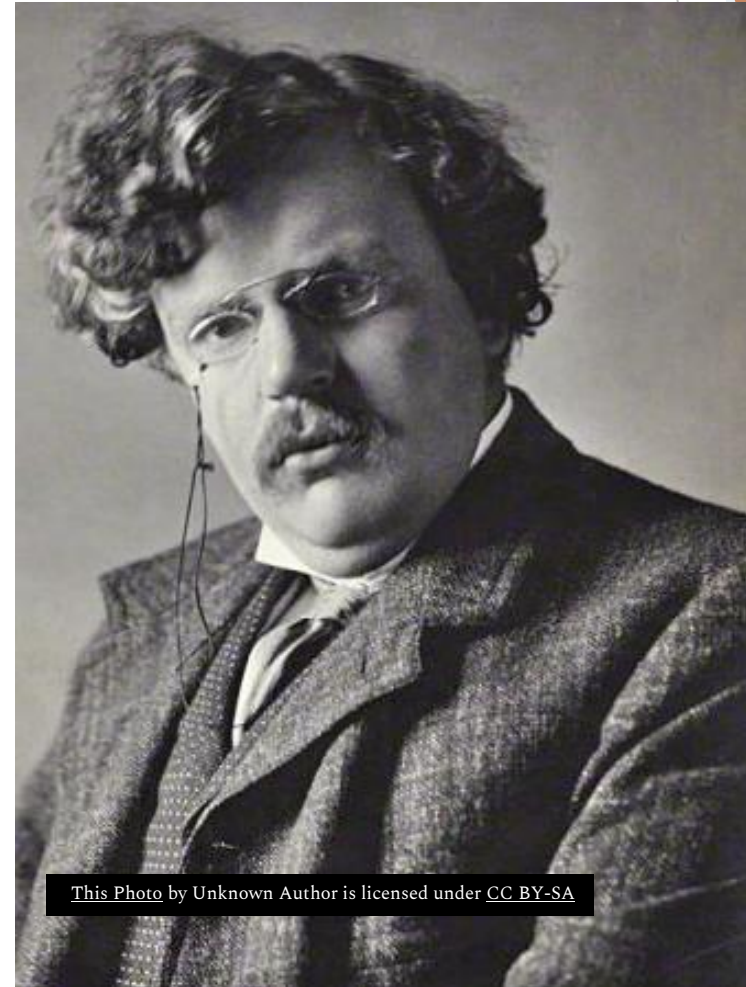
- Individuals and groups seeking to support people who are living the sexual minority experience
- Allies vary in:
  - Their understanding of the issues
  - Their critical thinking skills
  - Their depth of conversion to the gospel
  - Their emotional intelligence
  - Their willingness to forgo their own discomfort & need to be seen as the “rescuer”
- For some allies, their efforts become the thing that gives their life meaning, and ultimately their identity





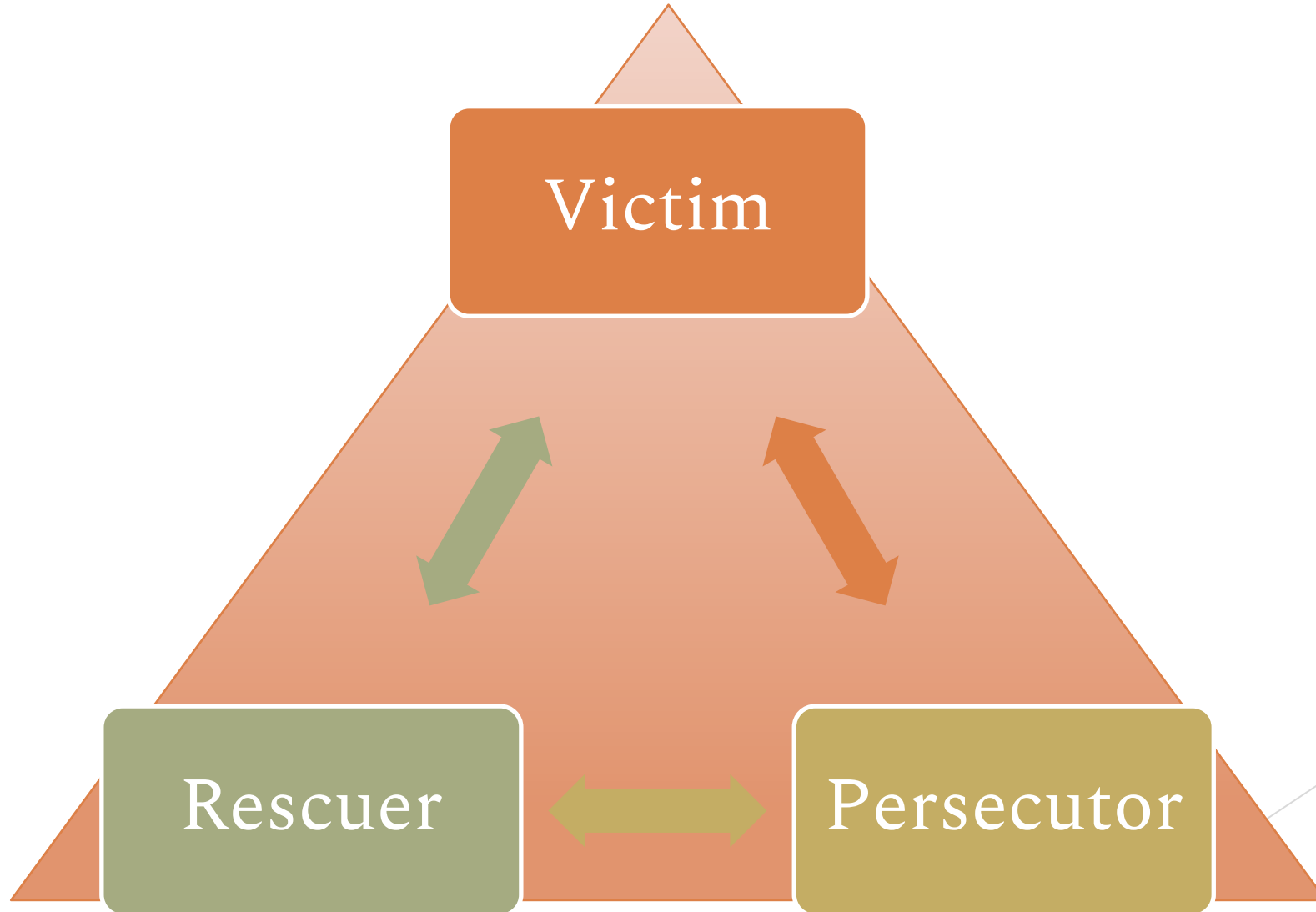
# G. K. Chesterton on Virtues Gone Wild

“The modern world is not evil; in some ways the modern world is far too good. **It is full of wild and wasted virtues.** When a religious scheme is shattered... it is not merely the vices that are let loose. The vices are, indeed, let loose, and they wander and do damage. But the virtues are let loose also; and **the virtues wander more wildly, and the virtues do more terrible damage.** The modern world is full of the old Christian virtues gone mad. **The virtues have gone mad because they have been isolated from each other and are wandering alone.** Thus some scientists care for truth; and their truth is pitiless. **Thus some humanitarians only care for pity; and their pity (I am sorry to say) is often untruthful.**”

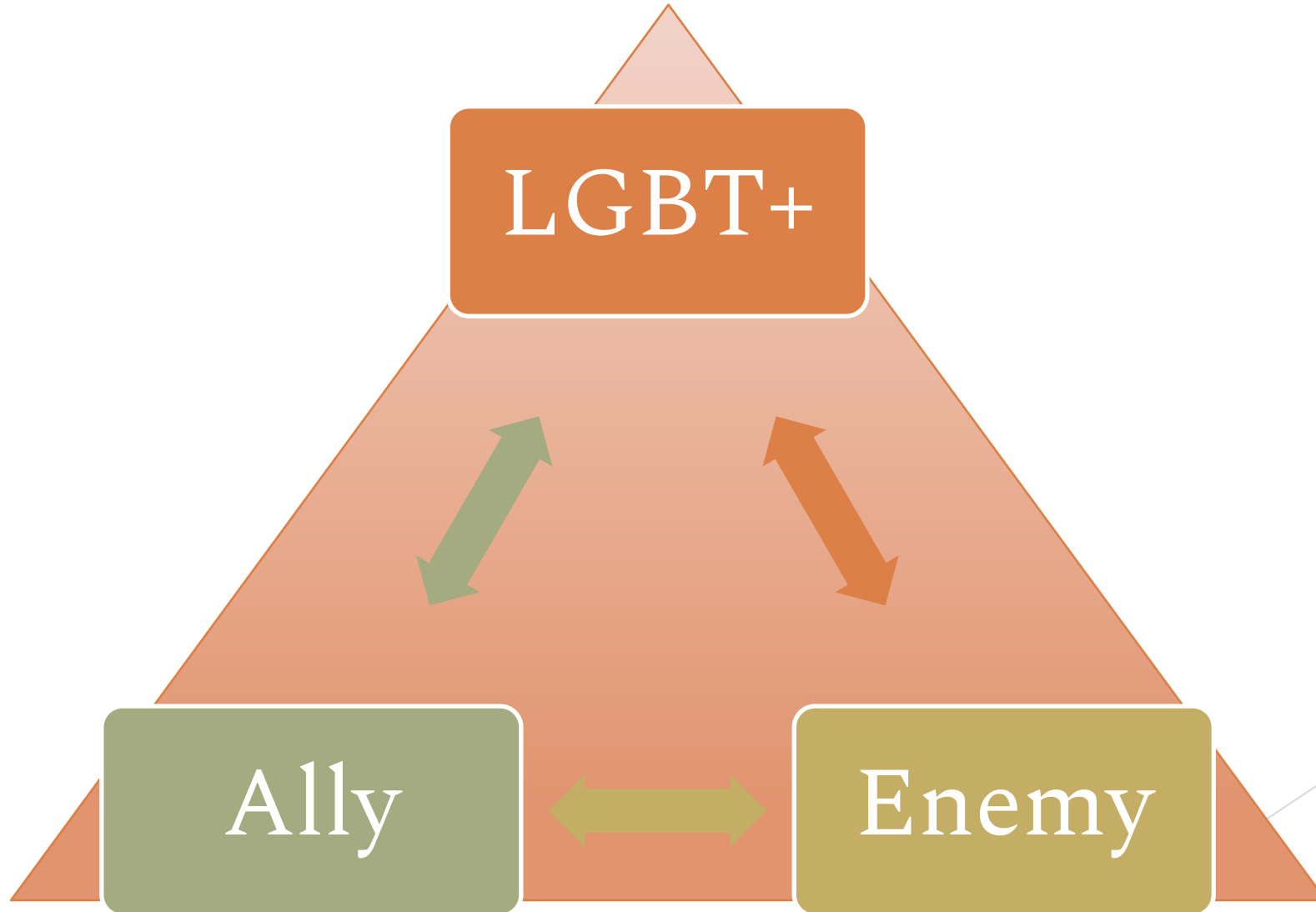


This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under CC BY-SA

# The Drama Triangle: Where Do You Get Sucked In?



# The Drama Triangle: Where Do You Get Sucked In?

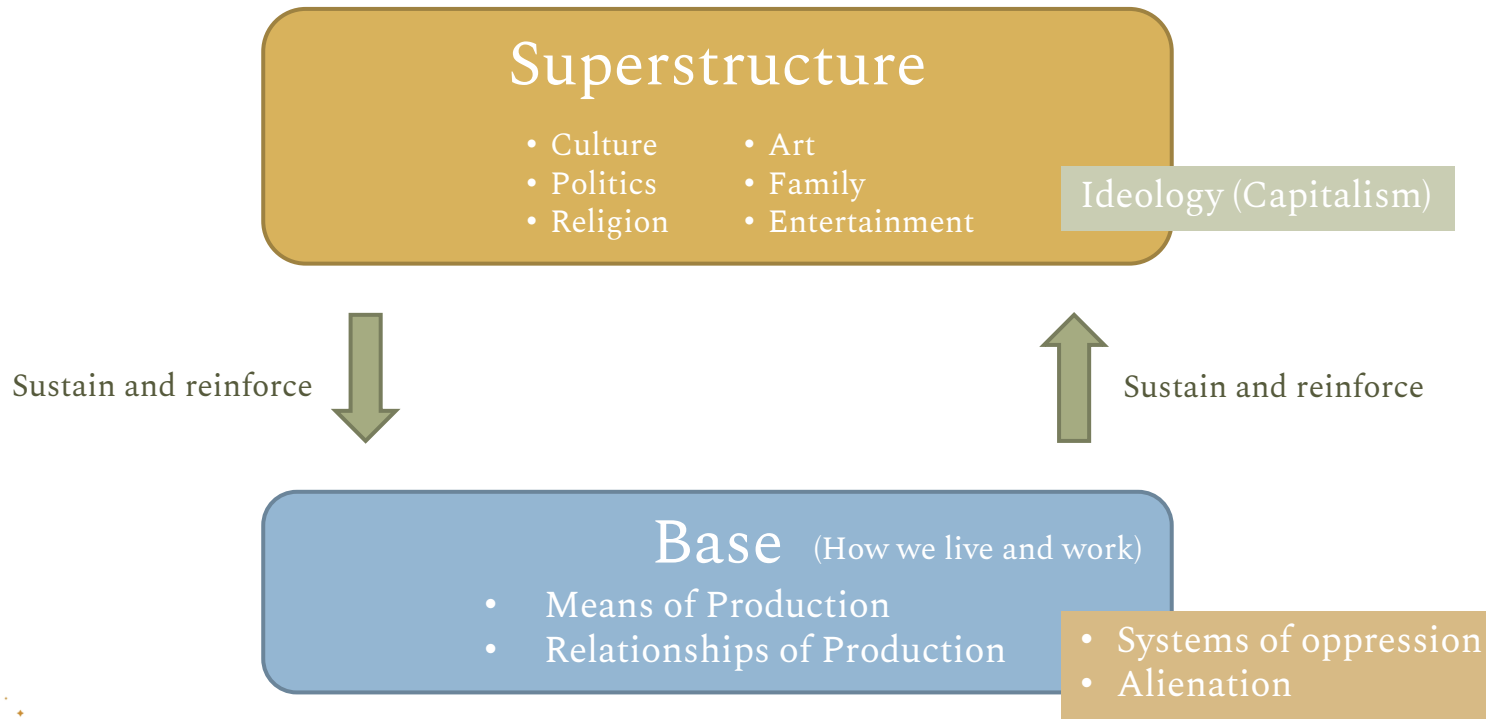


# Ally Messaging: Understanding Marxism

What are Marxist assumptions and worldview?

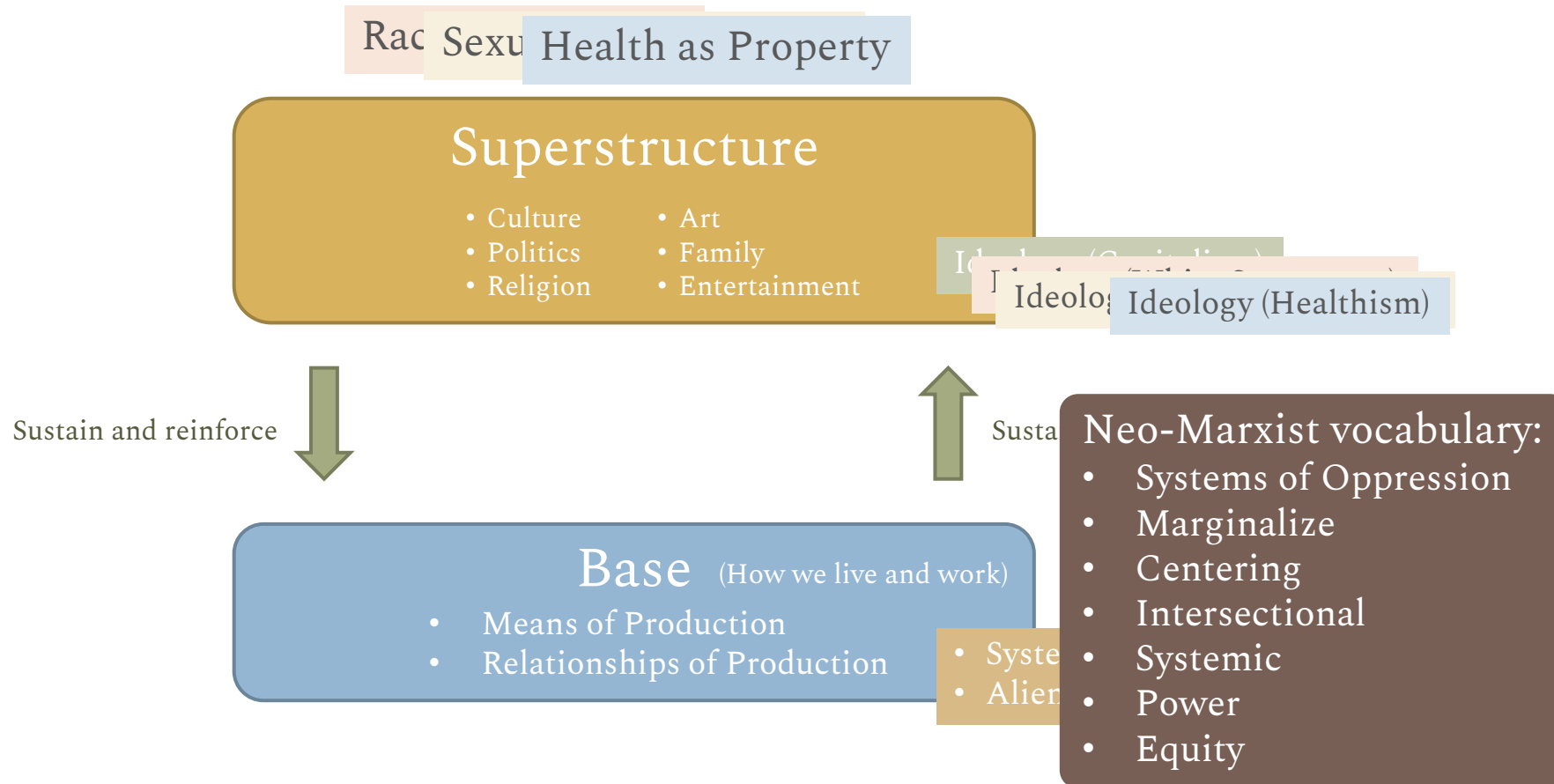
“... the theory of the Communists may be summed up in the single sentence: *Abolition of private property.*” – The Communist Manifesto

## Capital as Private Property



# Cultural Marxism (NeoMarxism, wokeness)

The application of this Marxist “template” of assumptions to other areas of life



# Balancing Love and Truth/Law: Two Excellent Resources

- Ty Mansfield, [Balancing the Tensions of our Latter-day Saint and LGBTQ conversations](#)

- Jared Halverson



# We Shouldn't Judge, Right?

- This is true
- We shouldn't judge individuals, or individual's righteousness
- This sometimes stops us from thinking about anything after this is said
- But we must not allow this righteous principle to cause us to let our guard down
- But we are commanded to judge righteously
- And *warned* to not judge incorrectly.



# The Prophet Mormon on Judging

**14** Wherefore, take heed, my beloved brethren, that ye do not judge that which is evil to be of God, or that which is good and of God to be of the devil.

**15** For behold, my brethren, it is given unto you to judge, that ye may know good from evil; and the way to judge is as plain, that ye may know with a perfect knowledge, as the daylight is from the dark night.

**16** For behold, the Spirit of Christ is given to every man, that he may know good from evil; wherefore, I show unto you the way to judge; for every thing which inviteth to do good, and to persuade to believe in Christ, is sent forth by the power and gift of Christ; wherefore ye may know with a perfect knowledge it is of God.

**17** But whatsoever thing persuadeth men to do evil, and believe not in Christ, and deny him, and serve not God, then ye may know with a perfect knowledge it is of the devil; for after this manner doth the devil work, for he persuadeth no man to do good, no, not one; neither do his angels; neither do they who subject themselves unto him.

**18** And now, my brethren, seeing that ye know the light by which ye may judge, which light is the light of Christ, see that ye do not judge wrongfully; for with that same judgment which ye judge ye shall also be judged.

**19** Wherefore, I beseech of you, brethren, that ye should search diligently in the light of Christ that ye may know good from evil; and if ye will lay hold upon every good thing, and condemn it not, ye certainly will be a child of Christ.

# Some History: Shifting understanding of the word ‘homosexual’

- Ancient/biblical understanding: Homosexuality is something you *do*
  - Therefore, a homosexual is someone who commits sexual acts
- Modern understanding: Homosexuality is something you *feel*
  - Therefore, a homosexual is anyone who feels sexual attraction to the same sex, no matter whether they have acted on it or not.
- This has led to massive misunderstandings and a huge disconnect
- Many so-called ‘homophobic’ comments by church leaders can be better understood to be referring to those individuals engaging in the behavior, *not* simply having the feelings
- Similarly, when Church leaders promised that homosexuals could “change,” from the context it is clear they were referring primarily to *behaviors*.
- Greg Smith’s paper [Feet of Clay: Queer Theory and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints](#)

# So How Much Has The Church Really Changed In What It Believes?

- How we talk about it is different. And much better!
- But did the Church ever officially teach that having the feelings was a sin?
- This is important because it can give the false impression that there has been more movement on the issue than there has actually been...
- ...Which in turn can give false hope that other things will change.

# Why LGBT labels are so important to some



# Why LGBT labels are so important to some

- Adopting the label coincides with the “coming out” process, which usually includes:
  - Reducing/eliminating shame
  - Reducing isolation and loneliness
  - Lessened burden
  - Less negative emotions like depression, anxiety, suicidal ideation
  - Stopping playing a role or trying to conform to a way of life that is incongruent with one’s internal sense.
- So when we challenge the adoption of the gay label, what many of those who adopted the gay identity think we’re asking them to do is:

“Go back into the closet. Go back to shame, self-hatred, isolation, depression, and pretending to be something you’re not.”
- No wonder they resist that! No wonder they want to hold onto the identity, it represents liberation and freedom. No wonder they feel proud and want to have a parade.
- As a developmental stage, it can be important to someone coming out of shame & seeking support
- ...but I continue to believe, if this label is strongly held to long term, it will interfere w/discipleship



# Benefits of being a sexual minority without the label

- Is it possible to have all the benefits of the coming out process without having to adopt all the negative, worldly associations of the gay identity?
- Because the gay identity construct exerts a gravitational pull on the individual
- Yes!
  - You can disclose your feelings to trusted friends and others and get support
  - You can eliminate shame, isolation, anxiety, self-hatred, etc.,
  - You can obtain support for the minority stress associated with being a sexual minority
  - ...all without identifying as gay!
  - And if you do identify as gay, you are careful to avoid adopting the more worldly aspects of that identity.



# Benefits of being a sexual minority without the label

- Is it possible to have all the benefits of the coming out process without having to adopt all the negative, worldly associations of the gay identity?
- Because the gay identity construct exerts a gravitational pull on the individual
- Yes!
  - You can disclose your feelings to trusted friends and others and get support
  - You can eliminate shame, isolation, anxiety, self-hatred, etc.,
  - You can obtain support for the minority stress associated with being a sexual minority
  - ...all without identifying as gay!
  - And if you do identify as gay, you are careful to avoid adopting the more worldly aspects of that identity.



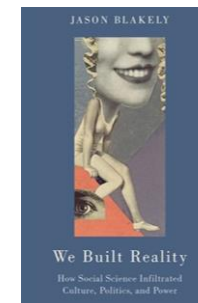
# Introducing the ‘Double H’ Effect

“Efforts at descriptive scientific theory, when applied to human beings, can actually produce new identities, practices, and worlds of meaning. This is due to humans’ uniquely creative meaning-making capacities and is what philosophers refer to as the ‘double hermeneutic effect,’ in which an interpretation of the world shapes the very interpretations that comprise it...

“Viewed from the perspective of the double-H effect, much of social science... is not simply descriptive but also performative. Social science is not... [a] neutral effort at description but... enacts and inaugurates certain realities...

“Social science theories are often slippery... and what often presents itself as social science is instead culture and power.”

-Jason Blakely, *We Built Reality*.



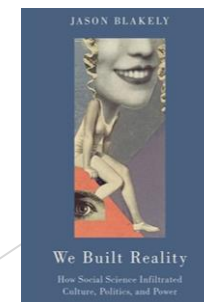
# Introducing the ‘Double H’ Effect

“Efforts at descriptive scientific theory, when applied to human beings, can actually **produce new identities, practices, and worlds of meaning**. This is due to humans’ uniquely creative meaning-making capacities and is what philosophers refer to as the ‘double hermeneutic effect,’ in which **an interpretation of the world shapes the very interpretations that comprise it...**

“Viewed from the perspective of the double-H effect, much of social science... is not simply descriptive but also performative. Social science is not... [a] neutral effort at description but... **enacts and inaugurates certain realities...**

“Social science theories are often slippery... and **what often presents itself as social science is instead culture and power.**”

-Jason Blakely, *We Built Reality*.



# What Are Some Examples of Double-H Effect in This Area?

- Religiously devout LGBT+ individuals are at high risk of suicide
- Queer example from part 1
- The Church hates gay people
- Sexual orientation exists as an objective reality, which must then be lived out in distinct ways.
- Double-H effects may explain most, if not all, of the reason why life satisfaction and mental health of LGBT+ individuals is declining even as rights, privileges, awareness, and acceptance have all expanded dramatically

# “Double H” Comes Home: When My Colleague’s Daughter Came Out As Bi

- She shared this with them when she was 14
- She was sure her parents were going to kick her out of the house
- Who told her that her parents would kick her out?

# “Double H” and Sexual Orientation as Identity

A 2014 New York Times Magazine piece titled “The Scientific Quest to Prove Bisexuality Exists” provides an illustration of the themes explored in this Part — sexual desire, attraction, orientation, and identity — and of the difficulties with defining and studying these concepts. Specifically, the article shows how a scientific approach to studying human sexuality can conflict with culturally prevalent views of sexual orientation, or with the self-understanding that many people have of their own sexual desires and identities. Such conflicts raise important questions about whether sexual orientation and related concepts are as coherent and well-defined as is often assumed by researchers and the public alike.

The author of the article, Benoit Denizet-Lewis, an openly gay man, describes the work of scientists and others trying to demonstrate the existence of a stable bisexual orientation. He visited researchers at Cornell University and participated in tests used to measure sexual arousal, tests that include observing the way pupils dilate in response to sexually explicit imagery. To his surprise, he found that, according to this scientific measure, he was aroused when watching pornographic films of women ...

*Might I actually be bisexual? Have I been so wedded to my gay identity — one I adopted in college and announced with great fanfare to family and friends — that I haven't allowed myself to experience another part of myself? In some ways, even asking those questions is anathema to many gays and lesbians. That kind of publicly shared uncertainty is catnip to the Christian Right and to the scientifically dubious, psychologically damaging ex-gay movement it helped spawn. As out gay men and lesbians, after all, we're supposed to be sure — we're supposed to be “born this way.”*

Despite the apparently scientific (though admittedly limited) evidence of his bisexual-typical patterns of arousal, Denizet-Lewis rejected the idea that he was actually bisexual, because *“It doesn't feel true as a sexual orientation, nor does it feel right as my identity.”*

<https://www.thenewatlantis.com/publications/part-one-sexual-orientation-sexuality-and-gender>

# Double H in the Wild:

## You might be hearing...

### Myths

- “People get kicked out of BYU for who they love.”
- The Church hates gay people

### Reality

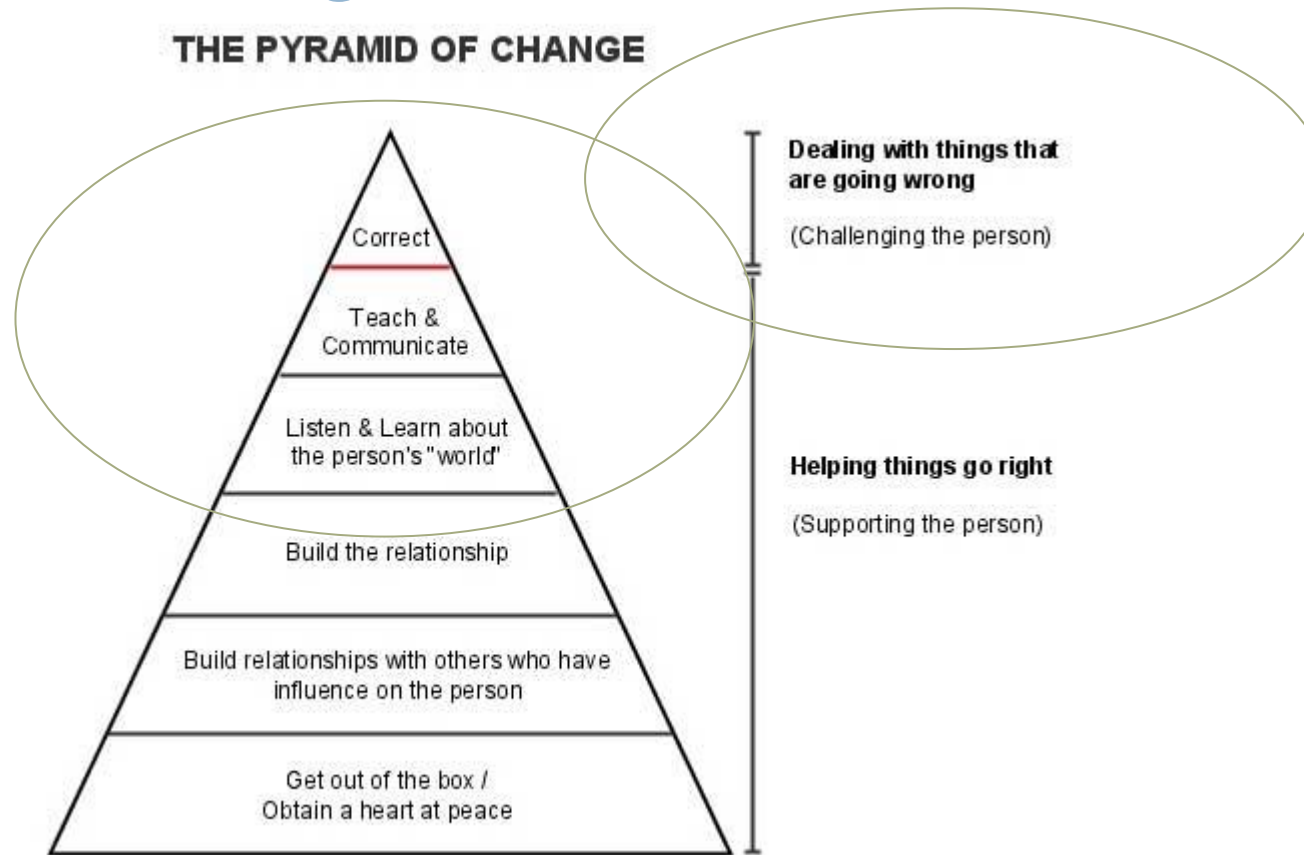
- The most enduring and valuable forms of love are available to everyone and should be shared with everyone
- The Church has moral standards but welcomes all who *desire* to adhere to those standards

## 4.3: Helping the Person in Front Of You

You are a vessel of Christ's love to the *individual* in front of you. This is not just one exemplar of a group identity.

# Where Am I With This Person on the Pyramid of Change?

## THE PYRAMID OF CHANGE





# Ask lots of questions

Both to:

- Learn more about how they understand these concepts personally (this is most important)
- And to help broaden their thinking about possibilities and maybe get them to question some of their assumptions and worldview

# Ministry: What Exactly Am I Walking Into?

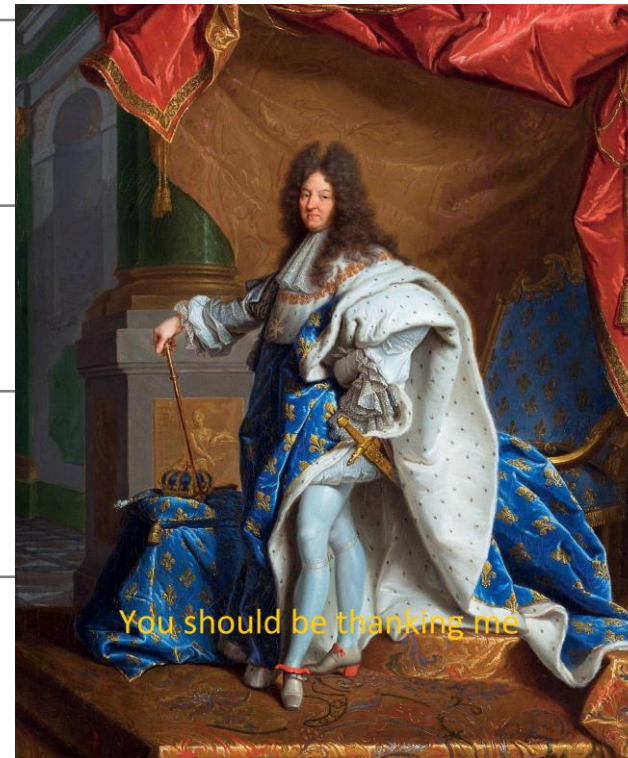
- A set of life experiences, some of which might be extremely painful and confusing
- A set of stories and narratives about those life experiences
  - about God
  - about fairness, unfairness
  - about happiness and unhappiness
  - about the way people should be and act
  - about mental health, wellness, love
- Worldview (expressive individualism)
- Indoctrination (Marxist ally messaging)

# Ministry: What Exactly Am I Walking Into?

- Cognitive Behavior just means *how we think*.
- *Cognitive distortions* are patterns of thinking that contribute to mental and emotional suffering, and increase interpersonal conflict.

***Validating someone's cognitive distortions contributes to a deterioration of their mental health.***

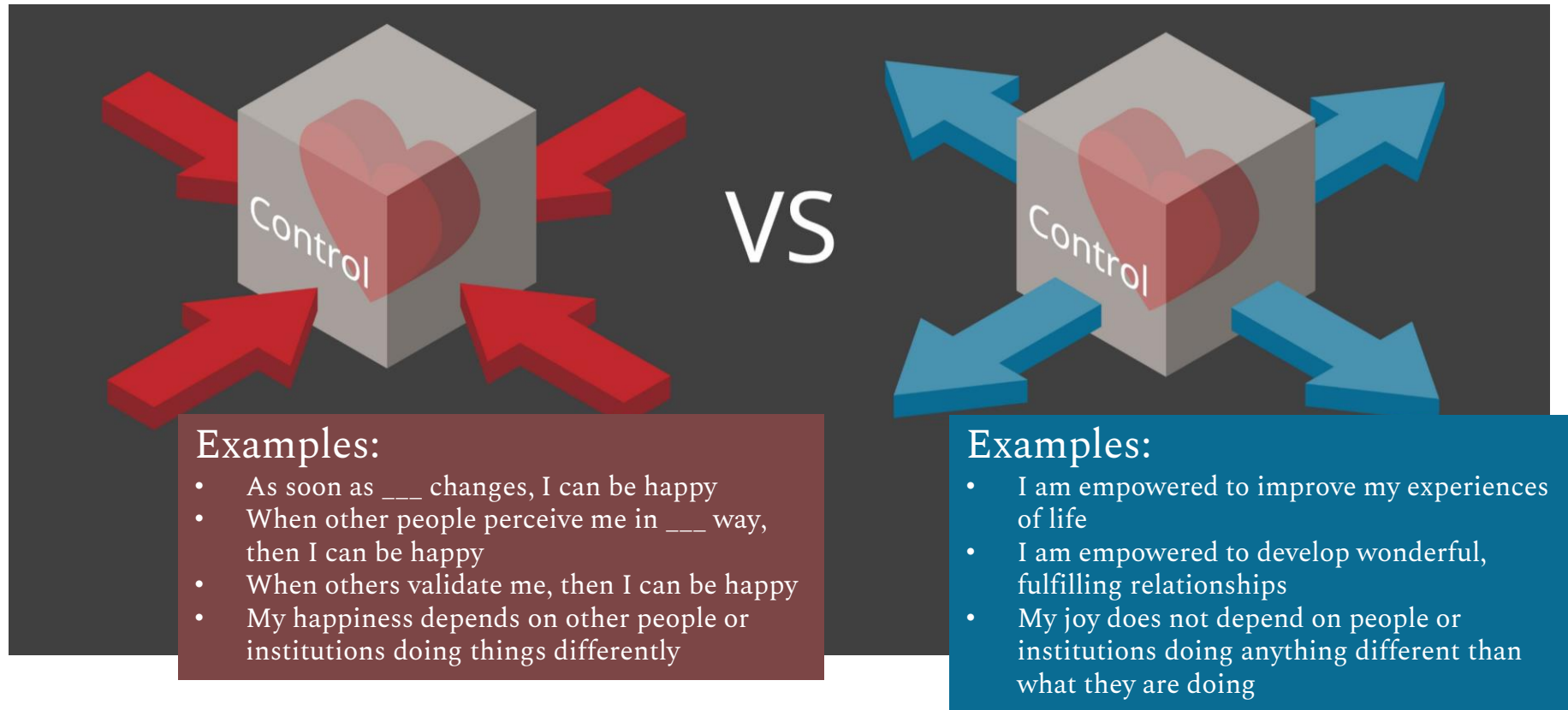
All-or-nothing (black and white, binary) thinking (e.g., “always,” “never”)	Jumping to conclusions <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mind reading</li><li>• Fortune-telling</li><li>• Labeling</li></ul>
Should/shouldn't and must/mustn't statements	Gratitude traps
Minimizing-mislabeling <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Magnification and minimization</li><li>• Labeling and mislabeling</li></ul>	Assuming the worst <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Overgeneralizing</li><li>• Disqualifying the positive</li><li>• Mental filtering</li></ul>



# Ministry: What Exactly Am I Walking Into?

## External and Internal Locus of Control

*Validating someone's external locus of control contributes to a deterioration of their mental health.*



# What Helps and Hurts Sexual Minorities?

- This is now a question that has been answered with research
- Thanks to the Four Options Survey data

# What The Research Says

Method #	Factor #	Method	Theological Conservative		Theological Non-Conservative		Non-Theological	
			M(n)	SD	M(n)	SD	M(n)	SD
25	5	Identifying Authentic Needs	7.55 (72)	1.45	8.05 (93)	1.06	8.26 (77)	1.21
11	2	Accepting Non-Judgmentally	7.53 (70)	1.70	8.04 (100)	1.34	8.27 (85)	1.32
23	5	Reduce Depression/Anxiety	7.96 (69)	1.13	7.83 (96)	1.16	7.95 (75)	1.33
24	5	Learning Assertiveness	7.88 (60)	1.30	7.95 (75)	1.06	7.76 (71)	1.33
28	7	Learning to Connect with Others	7.74 (65)	1.52	7.83 (86)	1.20	7.74 (65)	1.46
13	2	Express Self, Don't Hold In	6.91 <sup>a</sup> (56)	2.06	7.68 (82)	1.32	8.06 (77)	1.46
15	2	Affirm Own Way of Gender	7.22 (65)	1.82	7.44 <sup>a</sup> (95)	1.28	8.00 (73)	1.14
29	7	Working Through Trauma	7.46 (59)	1.75	7.53 (53)	1.41	7.49 (41)	2.06
30	-	Helping Others Distressed	7.49 (61)	1.32	7.33 (85)	1.46	7.56 (71)	1.42
14	2	"Coming Out" SSA/LGBT <sup>c</sup>	6.33 <sup>ab</sup> (56)	2.20	7.38 <sup>a</sup> (99)	1.73	8.17 (83)	1.36
26	6	Demystifying and Identifying	7.65 <sup>b</sup> (69)	1.65	7.00 (75)	1.57	7.24 (58)	2.21
31	-	Accepting Sexuality & Religion	7.00 (59)	1.97	7.57 (95)	1.56	6.95 (65)	2.19
10	1	Learning How Others Accepted	7.82 <sup>a</sup> (71)	1.41	7.39 <sup>a</sup> (95)	1.91	6.18 (65)	2.37
12	2	Affirm/Enjoy/Proud of Attractions <sup>c</sup>	4.91 <sup>ab</sup> (47)	2.37	6.72 <sup>a</sup> (82)	1.72	8.04 (83)	1.35
9	1	Surrendering to Higher Power	7.24 <sup>a</sup> (66)	1.75	6.51 <sup>a</sup> (78)	1.76	4.40 (55)	2.79
18	3	Limit Time Fantasizing	6.99 <sup>a</sup> (74)	1.60	6.46 <sup>a</sup> (97)	1.84	4.24 (68)	1.86
19	3	Distract, Get Busy <sup>d</sup>	6.46 <sup>a</sup> (74)	1.93	6.36 <sup>a</sup> (101)	1.95	4.58 (78)	2.14
27	6	Being Naked, Not Sexual	5.49 (43)	2.91	5.60 (45)	2.28	6.31 (42)	1.84
4	1	Reframing Attractions	7.04 <sup>ab</sup> (69)	1.93	5.30 <sup>a</sup> (84)	2.53	3.28 (67)	2.26
5	1	Prioritize Religious Identity	7.09 <sup>ab</sup> (74)	2.11	5.50 <sup>a</sup> (102)	2.57	2.45 (65)	2.11
2	1	Learn How Others Reduced SSA	6.70 <sup>ab</sup> (64)	2.19	5.38 <sup>a</sup> (72)	2.24	2.65 (46)	1.79
20	3	Avoid Arousing People/Situations <sup>d</sup>	5.87 <sup>a</sup> (70)	2.07	4.99 <sup>a</sup> (91)	2.35	3.55 (68)	2.20
8	1	Express Tradition Gender Norms <sup>d</sup>	5.91 <sup>a</sup> (62)	2.10	4.97 <sup>a</sup> (80)	1.90	3.41 (57)	1.84

# What The Research Says

Method #	Factor #	Method	Theological Conservative		Theological Non-Conservative		Non-Theological	
			<i>M</i> ( <i>n</i> )	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i> ( <i>n</i> )	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i> ( <i>n</i> )	<i>SD</i>
22	4	Having Same-Sex Sex <sup>c</sup>	2.57 <sup>a</sup> (40)	2.33	3.98 <sup>a</sup> (53)	2.60	6.62 (66)	2.17
3	1	Not Identifying as LGBT <sup>d</sup>	6.34 <sup>ab</sup> (67)	2.33	4.62 <sup>a</sup> (88)	2.40	3.10 (72)	1.75
1	1	Believe SSA Attachment Loss	6.31 <sup>ab</sup> (58)	2.51	4.49 <sup>a</sup> (61)	2.59	2.15 (39)	2.16
7	1	Redirect to Hetero Attractions	5.69 <sup>a</sup> (48)	2.12	4.50 <sup>a</sup> (64)	2.12	2.46 (37)	1.92
6	1	Avoid People/Info Affirming LGB <sup>d</sup>	5.92 <sup>ab</sup> (59)	2.08	4.32 <sup>a</sup> (81)	2.07	2.50 (63)	1.52
16	3	Resist/Overcome Sexual Desires <sup>c</sup>	5.38 <sup>a</sup> (73)	2.32	4.26 <sup>a</sup> (101)	2.21	2.74 (78)	1.76
17	3	Suppress Fantasies/Desires <sup>c</sup>	5.01 <sup>a</sup> (72)	2.22	4.23 <sup>a</sup> (98)	2.25	2.73 (75)	1.64
21	4	Using Pornography	2.47 <sup>a</sup> (64)	2.10	3.56 <sup>a</sup> (83)	2.20	5.92 (72)	1.94
33	-	Pair Fantasy to Neg. Consequences <sup>d</sup>	3.43 <sup>a</sup> (48)	2.14	2.64 (50)	1.66	1.85 (43)	1.31
32	-	Anger/Punish/Shame Self <sup>d</sup>	2.31 (59)	1.85	2.24 (78)	1.72	1.82 (62)	1.25

# What The Research Says

## Universally helpful factors:

- Identifying authentic needs
- Accepting non-judgmentally
- Reducing anxiety/depression
- Learning assertiveness
- Learning to connect with others
- Affirming one's own way of gender
- Working through trauma
- Helping others with distress
- Sharing with others
- Demystifying and identifying
- Accepting sexuality and religion



# What The Research Says

## Factors uniquely helpful to the theologically orthodox:

- Surrendering to higher power
- Limiting time fantasizing
- Reframing attractions
- Prioritizing religious identity
- Considering attachment loss
- Redirecting feelings to heterosexual attractions
- Learning how others reduced/shifted their same-sex attractions
- Avoiding arousing people/situations
- Expressing traditional gender norms

# What The Research Says

## Factors uniquely harmful to the theologically orthodox:

- Having same-sex sex
- Using pornography
- Affirming/being proud of attractions

## Factors harmful to all:

- Aversive techniques
- Shaming, being angry, punishing self
- Suppressing fantasies, feelings, desires

## Elder Henry B. Eyring



You and I can do better if we do not stay long with what [those we minister to] see as the source of their doubts. We must listen long enough to show that we care, that we understand, and that we are not troubled by what troubles them. ***But their problem does not lie in what they think they see; it lies in what they cannot yet see.*** . . . And so we do best if we turn the conversation soon to the things of the heart, those changes of the heart that open spiritual eyes.

*(emphasis added)*



# If they have some worldly & harmful ideas, you can't just tell them they're wrong

- Get a sense of their openness to different kinds of conversations
- You have to come at it indirectly
- Instead of proving them wrong, help them see things more broadly
- Help them see things they “do not yet see” as Elder Eyring said
- Help them see ranges & continuums, not increasingly atomized (and isolating) boxes. (See discussion starting [here](#).)
- Your goal is to help them see their choices & options clearly, not to change their mind or convince them they are wrong/sinning/etc.
- One step at a time. Help them focus on this above all: What is my next step?
- Understand the Alma 12:9-11 principle



# Alma 12:9-11

9 And now Alma began to expound these things unto him, saying: It is given unto many to know the mysteries of God; nevertheless they are laid under a strict command that they shall not impart only according to the portion of his word which he doth grant unto the children of men, according to the heed and diligence which they give unto him.

10 And therefore, he that will harden his heart, the same receiveth the lesser portion of the word; and he that will not harden his heart, to him is given the greater portion of the word, until it is given unto him to know the mysteries of God until he know them in full.

11 And they that will harden their hearts, to them is given the lesser portion of the word until they know nothing concerning his mysteries; and then they are taken captive by the devil, and led by his will down to destruction. Now this is what is meant by the chains of hell.

Question: What is hell?



# Which principles will this person be able to receive?

- Consider where the person you are ministering to is at in their personal spiritual maturity & obedience level
- Calibrate your teaching & focus to those areas they are able to currently receive
- Testify abundantly of those areas
- Encourage the next step in obedience
- Seek & be guided by the Spirit always

# The “Tyler Glen Syndrome”

- It is not loving to be unclear
- Beckett Cook’s story
- We don’t need to apologize or be shy about sharing saving truths.
- We always need to follow the Spirit

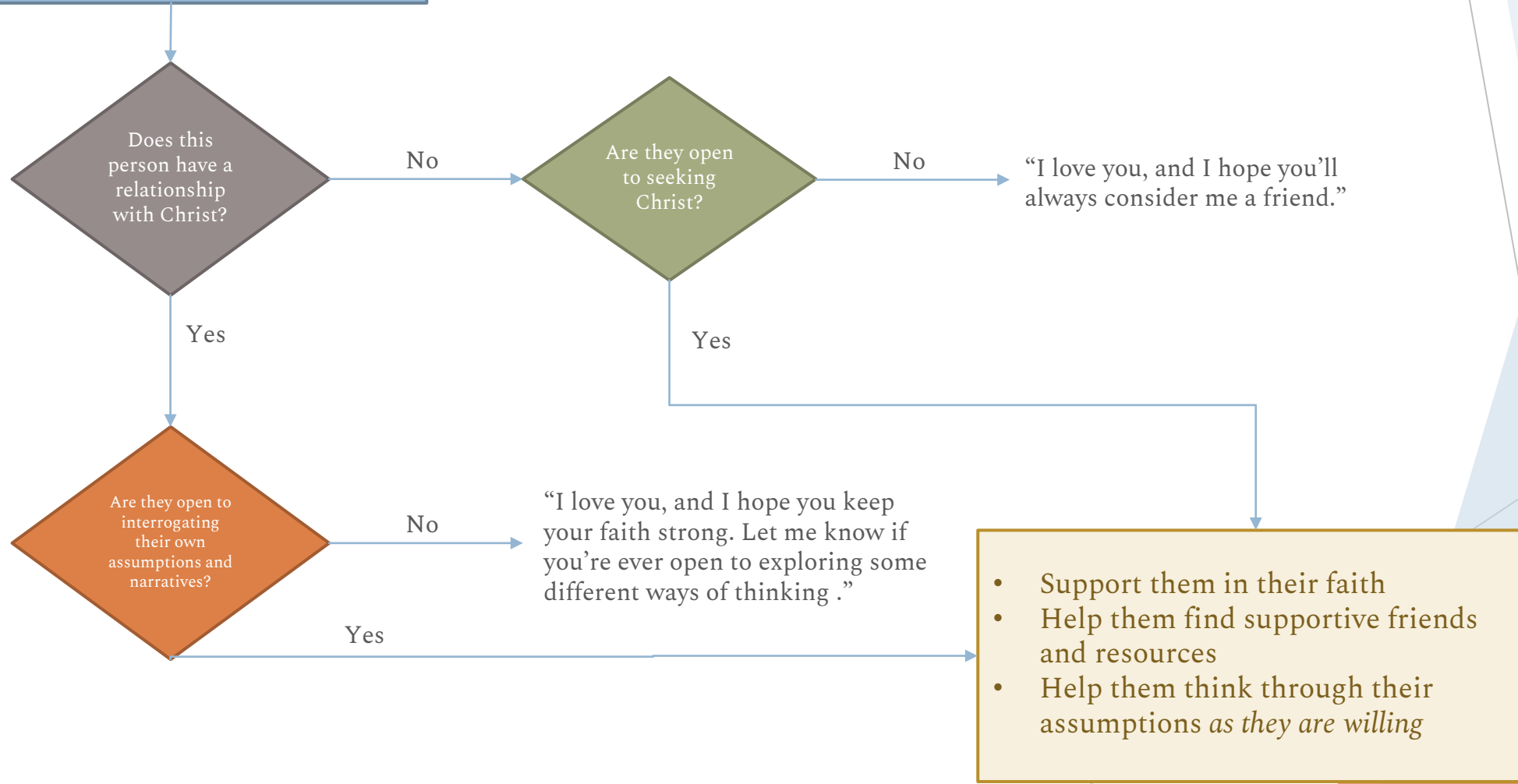
# The “BA” Syndrome

- When a friend of mine when to confess to his Bishop
- Or when another friend of mine confessed gay porn use to his Bishop
- Or when another person I know disclosed his same-sex attraction to his Bishop in Japan
- Is it “Bishop Roulette” or “Individual Inspiration”?
  - C’s Bishop who took his temple recommend away for prolonged pornography use
  - Two young men who acted out together, different consequences. Which one stayed?
  - Sometimes it is too harsh. And sometimes it is too easy.



# Principles for Difficult Conversations

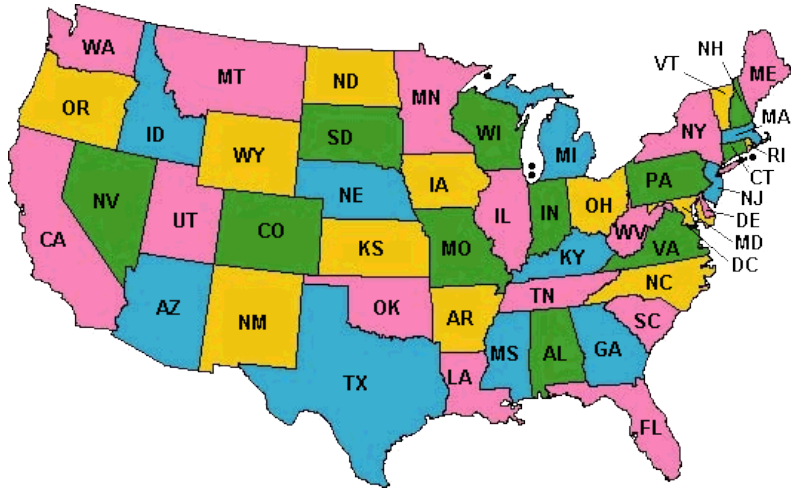
Difficult question



# Assess How Open the Person's Mind Is

- You can't attack this head-on, they will feel attacked and get defensive and close their minds further
- So what follows are some concepts to introduce gently, in the form of questions
- To those who might be open and ready to consider other ways to looking at things

# Questions 1 for Open Minds: Is LGBT Identity a Map or the Territory?



**Versus:**



# Question 2 for Open Minds: What Will Hunger Be Like in the Next Life?

- We know resurrected bodies can eat
- But do we have to eat?
- Will we eat the same things the same way we do now?
- Hunger is an appetite that is necessary in order to keep us alive
- In the next life will we need that appetite? Will it function the same way?
- Will we late-night binge on ice cream? Potato chips?
- Most people will concede that if hunger even exists in the next life, it will be a very different experience than this life.
- Well, sexual desire is another appetite. Why do we assume it will look the same and function the same way it does in this life?

# Question 3 for Open Minds: Did Sexual Desire Exist in our Premortal Life?

- We did not have bodies in premortal life
- We were male and female in the premortal life
- Did we experience romantic crushes?
- Sexual desire?
- Most of us remember the latent period of sexual desire, before puberty, when we might have felt attractions but they were not sexual. Did we have that in premortal life and then lose it, or did it appear as part of our mortal experience?

# Question 4 for Open Minds: Will We Be Americans/Canadians/etc. In the Next Life?

- Many people are proud of the customs, traditions, foods, clothes, and other aspects of their national origin
- ...Or their adopted country they have immigrated to
- Will we still be that nationality in the next life?
  - If we don't, then isn't the resurrection a form of ethnic cleansing?
- Will we still speak the same language in the next life?
  - If we don't, then isn't this cultural genocide?
- Could we possibly be happy in the next life without apple pie, Fourth of July Barbeques, pickup trucks, and country music?

# Question 5 for Open Minds: Is An Arranged Marriage Worse Than a 'Love Marriage'?

- Let's take a trip to India

# Helping People Think Realistically About Change – Challenging Cognitive Distortions

- Some aspects of our circumstances may not change, but how we think about things can really affect our happiness and well being.
- Suffering is inevitable, but some of it is optional. Is this person carrying some unnecessary burdens?
- How we think about things IS under our control
- We should not *unnecessarily* limit what the Lord can do in our lives. Avoid: always/never language, embrace “not yet” or “but if not” or “may”. Healthy skepticism about the future.
- Beware of projecting present frustrations onto an uninterrupted future





# Four parables

- Captain Moroni knew it was easier to fortify a city than recapture it (see Alma 48:7-10; 49:2,4,)
- Lost coin
- Lost sheep
- Lost son
- Don't confuse them by treating a lost coin like you would a prodigal son. Each type of distancing from the Church requires a different sort of ministry.



# You aren't just teaching, you're *ministering*

- It's more about what we do than what we say
- Sometimes the most powerful & healing thing we can do is just sit with people in their pain. Help them feel seen and heard.
- Importance of physical affection
- Blake's bishop (a different kind of inclusion)
- Don't be afraid to invite and ask them to help
- Remember inspiration *precedes* information

# A Note About Suicidal Ideation

- Be aware of “perceived burdensomeness” and “thwarted belongingness”
- Despite the clunky language, some research indicates these are the primary drivers of suicidal thoughts
- Most people don’t actually want to die. They just want their suffering to end.
- Coach them on thought distortions. Help them be aware of their cognitive distortions.
- Ask them to rely on the judgment and beliefs of others when they may not be able to trust their own thinking.

# What To Do if a Ward Member is “Snowflaking” Him/Herself

- Invite them to identify instead of compare (this is a mental practice/discipline)
  - Focus on grace & gifts rather than unfairness & injustice
- Beware of contempt! (Within yourself and in those to whom you minister.)
- Everyone’s struggles are unique, that is true!
- There are commonalities and differences with other peoples’ trials
- When we compare pain, we appear to diminish another’s pain, and the result is disconnection. And when we feel disconnected, everything is harder.
- When we share pain, we feel connected to others, and that makes everything easier.
- “Only the Lord can compare crosses.” –Neal A Maxwell

# Encourage Sexual Minority members to make connections with other Church members

- My friend w/SSA who worked her way down the Relief Society roster
- My friend w/SSA who asked for what he needed
- Service helps us understand that while no one has the same circumstances we do, reaching beyond ourselves can help us appreciate the strength of others and be more grateful for our own circumstances.
- We can learn and gain strength from everyone.
- Talking about these issues with others reduces isolation & lightens the burden.
- Check with them, but almost always these individuals appreciate being asked specifically about this and having priesthood leaders bring it up again rather than ignore it.
- Help these individuals connect with mentors & role models in the ward.



# Encourage Ward/Stake Members To Include Sexual Minorities

- Ask them to sit with you/ask if you can sit with them
- Include them in family activities, invite them to dinner, family home evening, ‘Come, Follow Me’ study, etc.
- Or, ask them for help, see if they’ll have you over to their house, opinions and counsel on matters of life importance to you. They want to feel needed and useful, and they almost certainly have gifts and talents that will bless you and your family.
- Include them with ward callings/assignments. Even with membership restrictions, there are ways to have them help and serve in the ward.

## 4.4 Supporting Single Sexual Minorities

Being single has unique difficulties in a family-oriented church, but it also presents some unique blessings and opportunities. Let's change some misconceptions.

# What are your own attitudes about being single?

- Are they deprived?
- In a state of arrested development?
- Failed to launch?
- Cursed & oppressed?



# Alone, but Not Lonely



# Some Gendered Assumptions We See

## Women

- Pitied
- “You’ve chosen career over family”
- Unwanted/unattractive

## Men

- Rebuked/criticized
- Afraid of commitment
- Just having too much fun to want to “settle down”

What’s wrong with you? Why Aren’t you Married???

# Singles Are Not Developmentally Delayed Adults!

- Sometimes as leaders in the Church we treat single, unmarried members as more than children and less than adults, in some kind of developmental “limbo”
- This view of them can cause us to unnecessarily exclude them or limit their potential
- The Church has encouraged us to involve single people (women *and* men) in leadership.

# Elder Quentin L. Cook

In recent months, our minds have been drawn with particular focus to Latter-day Saints who are single adults. We want you to know that you are loved—and so very needed in building the kingdom of God. For this reason, we felt to search carefully for policies and misperceptions that might limit the Church service of single members. What we found was that Church policy already allows for broad service by single adults—and it could be even broader. We feel today's policy adjustments can make a big difference. We hope your leaders know to put you to work—including as counselors in bishoprics, on high councils, and as organization presidents and counselors.



# Celibacy vs. Chastity

- A cross or a calling?
- Why chastity is a better frame than celibacy
- Why consecration/surrender is a better frame than denial and frustration
- Why being single can be a calling. But we don't have a well-established tradition, patterns, or role models in our Church, particularly for men. See these two things:
  - [A Deeper Longing](#)
  - Eve Tushnet keynote presentation at North Star International Annual Conference



# You can't build a vocation of no!

- The next few slides are courtesy of Ty Mansfield and Tyler LeFevor
- From their presentation at the 2022 North Star Annual Conference, titled, [“Research-Based Insights Into Flourishing as a Latter-day Saint Sexual Minority.”](#)

# Principles for Healing & Thriving: A Concentric Circle Model



\*Slide courtesy of Ty Mansfield



# Be a Happy Person



Camille Fronk Olson

“When I started teaching at BYU, I didn’t talk about marital status or being single. I didn’t think people wanted to take religion classes to find out about the marital status or personal life of their religion teacher. But after that first semester, a student came to me and said, ‘You know, you never mentioned... I just wanted to ask you, are you married?’ And I wasn’t trying to hide anything, so I said, ‘No, I’m not.’... And he said, ‘Well, have you ever been married?’ ‘Well, actually, no,’ I said. And he furrowed his brow and said, ‘But you’re happy! I’ve always been told you couldn’t be happy unless you were married.’”



# We are Inherently Social Beings

- Humans are created as social beings
- Emotions as efficient ways to convey large amounts of information
- Inherent complexity of social interactions
- Emotional problems stem from not recognizing or heeding emotions

# Four Essential Tasks for Flourishing

## Emotions: *Exmovere*

1. Increase **emotional awareness and acceptance** to understand self
2. Develop a sense of trust through **emotional responsiveness**
3. Create **authentic social connections** to share self
4. Gain an **experiential understanding** of self in context

Most of the new arrivals seem incapable of conversation. They just stare at their hands in despair.



# Your PART of Relationship

## *Presence*

Our ability to be fully grounded in ourselves so we can be open to others.

## *Attunement*

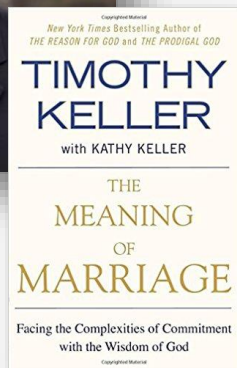
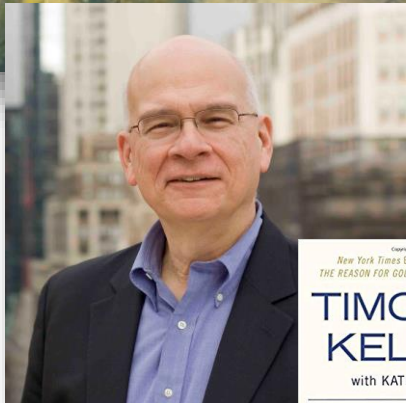
As signals are sent from one person to another, we have the opportunity to tune in to those incoming streams of information and attend fully to what is being sent rather than being swayed by our own preconceived ideas or perceptual biases. When we attune to others we offer a crucial open mind to listen deeply to what others need to let us know. Without attunement, vital information can be lost—sometimes with dire consequences.

## *Resonance*

The physiological result of presence and attunement is the alignment of two autonomous beings into an interdependent and functional whole. With resonance we come to “feel felt” by the other. Resonance is what our human nervous system is built to require for a sense of connection to others. This experience of connection brings with it a feeling of security, of being seen, and of feeling safe. The need for such intimate and vulnerable connection persists throughout our lives.

## *Trust*

When we feel resonance with someone, we open the doorway to a sense of feeling safe and seen, comforted and connected. The brain’s response to such attuned connection is to create a state of openness and trust.



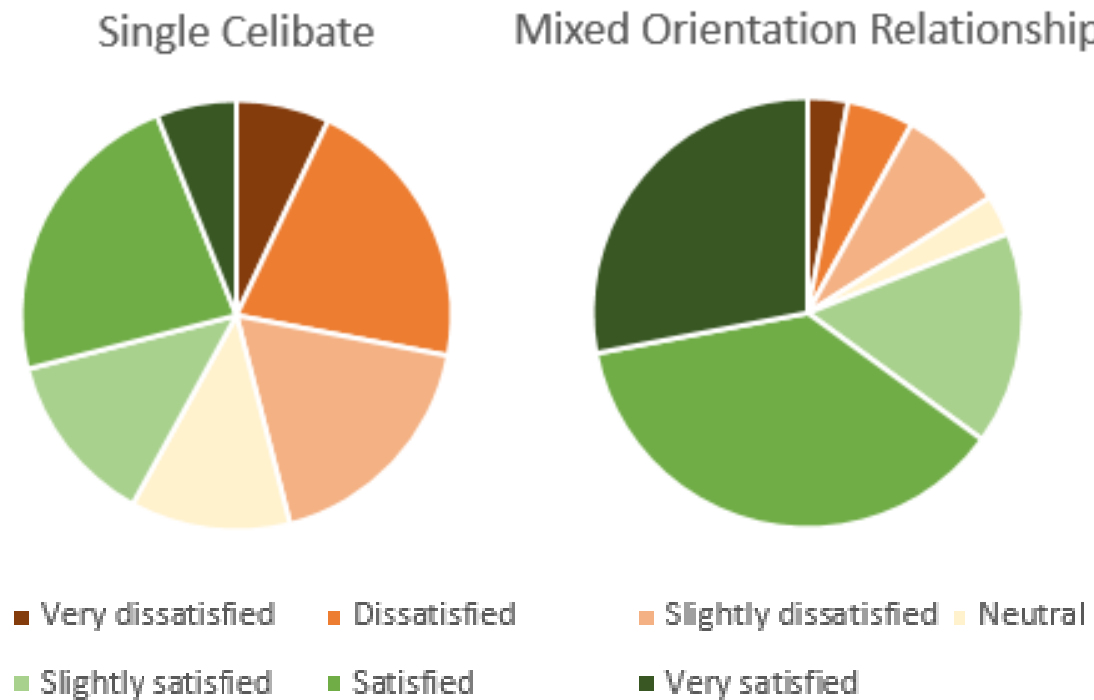
“To be loved but not known is comforting but superficial. To be known and not loved is our greatest fear. But to be fully known and truly loved is, well, a lot like being loved by God. It is what we need more than anything. It liberates us from pretense, humbles us out of our self-righteousness, and fortifies us for any difficulty life can throw at us.”

Timothy J. Keller

*The Meaning of Marriage: Facing the Complexities of Commitment with the Wisdom of God*

# 1) Establish a Strong Network of Friends

- Committing to a life of singleness can be difficult!
- Research shows a discernible health benefit for companionship
- Building connection, intimacy, and mutual understanding
- Establishing commitment





## 2) Find an Authentic way to Express your Sexuality

- It can be complicated to express sexuality as a single Latter-day Saint
- But there are ways to do it within Church standards
- How can single Latter-day Saints express their sexuality?
- “Are We Not all Mothers?” and “A ‘Mother Heart’”
- “Are We Not All Fathers?” – What is “A Father Heart”?
- Why is it that celibate Catholic Priests are called “Father”? Could they have something to teach us Latter-day Saints?
- Sexual expression is channeled through creative expression & personal growth



# Find an Authentic way to Create





### 3) Reconcile sexuality with religious commitments

- Experiencing conflict is difficult on many fronts: loss of energy, depression, difficulty to focus, difficulty in connection and disconnection from God
- Go deeper into both your thoughts/desires/feelings AND your faith.
- Reconciliation can allow you to draw strength from your faith and express your sexuality in congruent ways
- Conflict can transform into strength

## 4.5 Supporting Married & Dating Sexual Minorities

Are their marriages doomed to fail? And therefore dating is futile? Do you even know if these people exist in your ward/stake?

# Heterosexual dating and marriage

- Talk about a minefield!
- When is it appropriate?
- Can you support LGBT individuals you're ministering to in this?  
How, if they don't want to?
- Double H is here again! In a self-fulfilling prophecy.

# Does the Church Counsel Against These Marriages?

- This is commonly believed, but let's look closer.

# President Gordon B. Hinckley

“Marriage should not be viewed as a therapeutic step to solve problems such as homosexual inclinations or practices.”

-“Reverence and Morality”, April 1987



# President Gordon B. Hinckley

“Marriage should not be viewed as a *therapeutic step* to solve problems such as homosexual inclinations or practices.”

-“Reverence and Morality”, April 1987



# President Gordon B. Hinckley

“Marriage should not be viewed as a therapeutic step to *solve* problems such as homosexual inclinations or practices.”

-“Reverence and Morality”, April 1987



# Eric Hawkins, Church Spokesman

“While the church does not promote marriage as a treatment method for same-sex attraction, couples who are trying to be lovingly supportive of each other while being true to their religious convictions deserve our support and respect.”





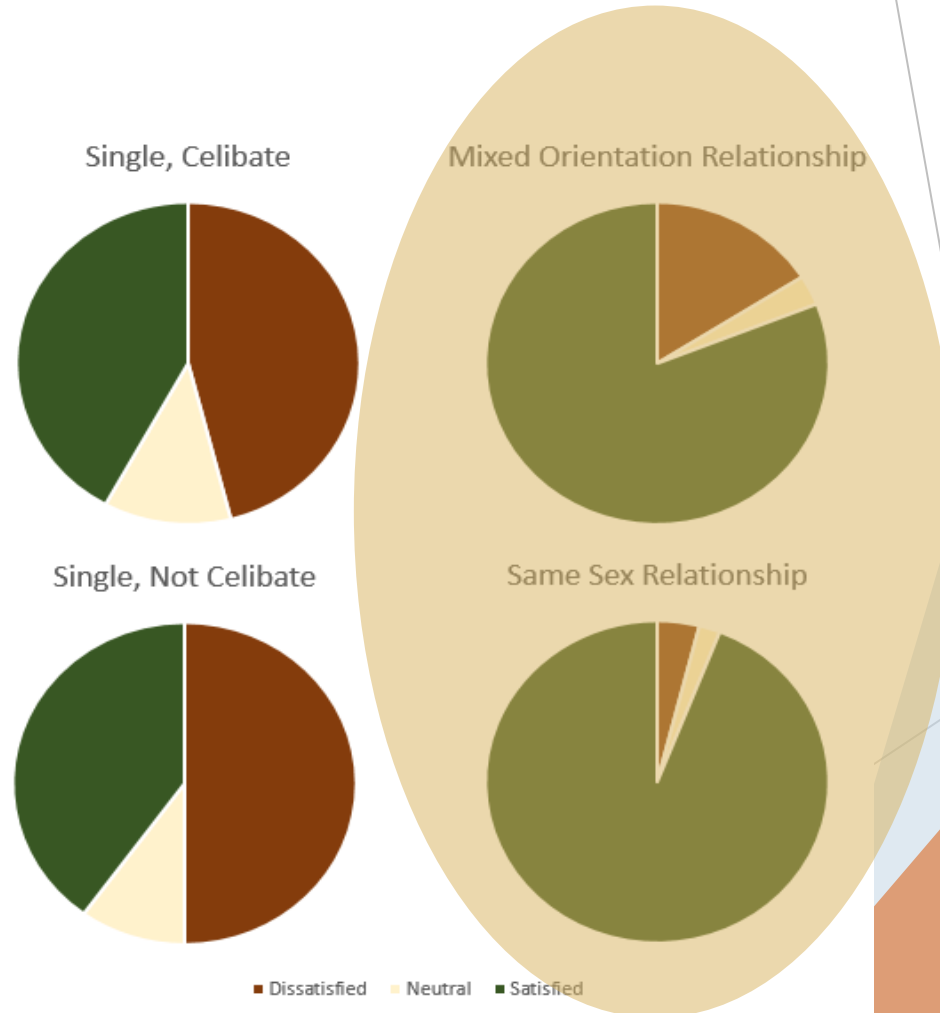
Ok, that's what the Church Says.  
What does the science say?



# Single/Relationship Status Satisfaction\*



	SC	SNC	MOR	SSR
Very dissatisfied	7%	10%	3%	1%
Dissatisfied	21%	22%	5%	1%
Slightly dissatisfied	18%	18%	8%	2%
Neutral	12%	10%	3%	2%
Slightly satisfied	13%	14%	16%	7%
Satisfied	23%	20%	37%	27%
Very satisfied	6%	6%	28%	61%
% Satisfied	42%	40%	80%	95%
Mean Satisfaction	3.95	3.82	5.45	6.38



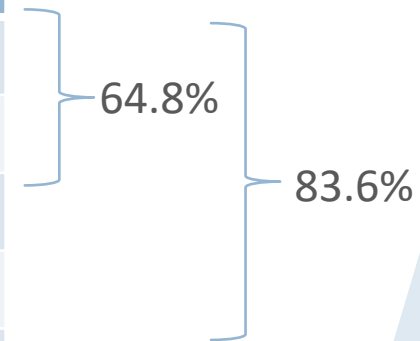
\*Slide courtesy of Ty Mansfield

# Relationship Satisfaction\*

## Heterosexual/Mixed-Orientation Relationship

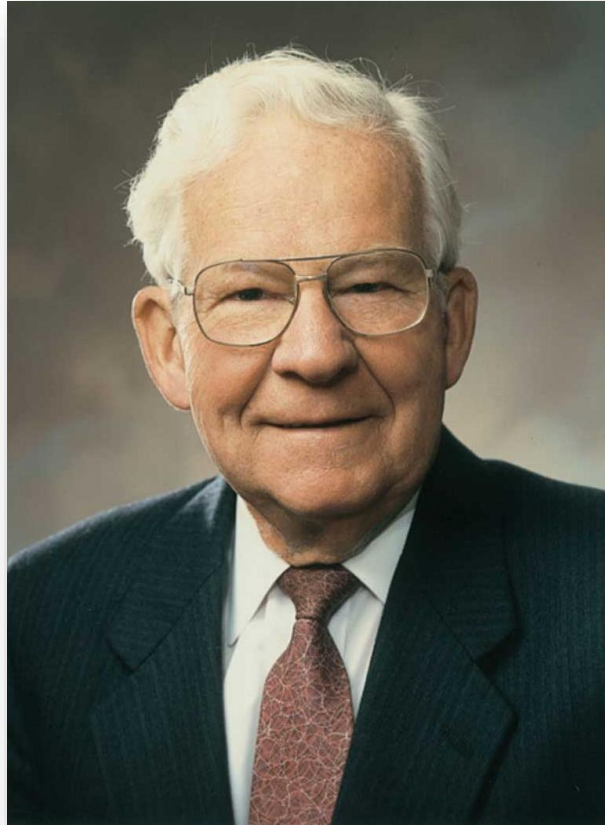


Satisfaction	Percentage
Very Satisfied	28
Satisfied	36.8
Slightly Satisfied	15.5
Neutral	3.3
Slightly dissatisfied	7.7
Dissatisfied	5.4
Very dissatisfied	3.4



\*Slide courtesy of Ty Mansfield

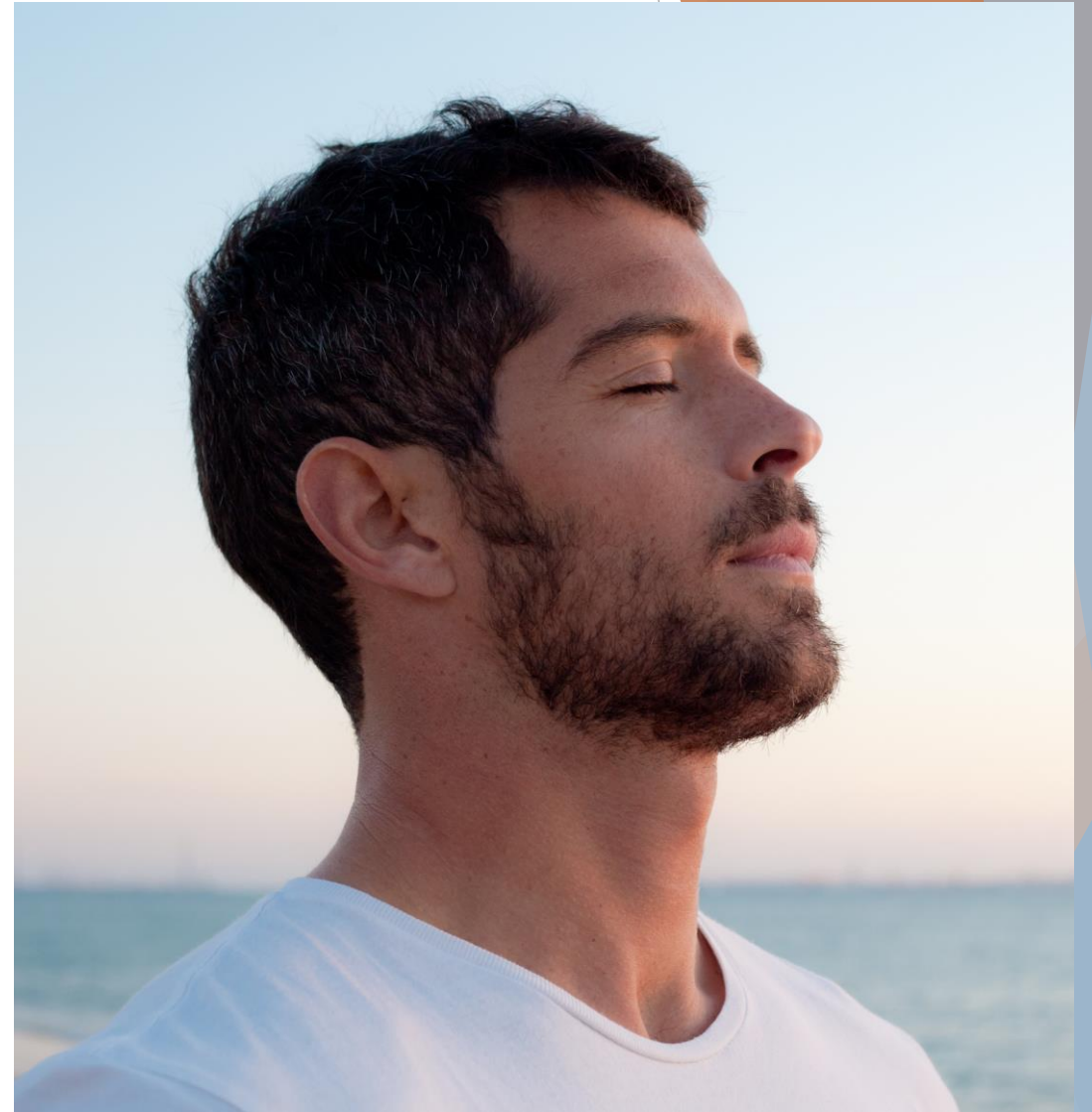
# Be a Happy Person



“I have yet to see marriage, by itself, turn an unhappy person into a happy person. A really happy married person is almost always one who was or could have been happy as a single person... While we are striving for quality conduct in our lives, we must ever realize that being single will never be as painful as being married to the wrong person. Avoid getting married just to be married.”

“The capacity to be alone is the capacity to love. It may look paradoxical to you, but it's not. It is an existential truth: only those people who are capable of being alone are capable of love, of sharing, of going into the deepest core of another person—without possessing [them]... They allow the other absolute freedom, because they know that if the other leaves, they will be as happy as they are now. Their happiness cannot be taken by the other, because it is not given by the other.”

Osho



# Some additional resources

- North Star International conferences always have topics around marriage
- Many Voices of Hope videos
- Annual Couples Summit
- North Star [Couples Fireside](#)

## 4.6 Ministry In Action: Case Studies

Putting these principles into practice

# Before Answering a Question, Look Deeper

- Someone says to you: “Do you believe I will be gay in the next life” or “Do you think I will be resurrected as my natal sex in the next life?”
- AND: you determine this person is not in a position to receive a full answer to this question, perhaps to pick a fight or because they are angry or aren't really curious but are just seeking validation
- Then:
  - Respond to the question under the question, which is usually some variation of “do you love and accept me?” or “Does God love and accept me?” “Is there a place for me in God's plan?”
  - We can powerfully testify to the truth of these questions & they will feel the spirit of that truth.
- DO NOT: Compromise on doctrine or unnecessarily muddy the waters by saying, things like, “there is so much we don't know” or “who knows what will happen?” (even though these things are also true)



# A Case Study: “God Told Me To Start Same-sex Dating” (1/2)

Scenario 1: “I am same-sex dating, but I plan to keep my temple recommend.”

- Remember: your goal isn't to talk them out of it, so much as help them develop their own skills at discerning proper revelation from God versus from other sources
- Have they seen other people make this choice? What fruits have they seen in those people's lives? Have they been able to keep this line? Has it made them happy, or have they just felt more frustrated?
- How long do you think you would be content to be romantic without being sexual?
- Would it be okay for a married person, but one who has had personal revelation that polygamy will be restored, to start dating other women as potential second wives in preparation for that anticipated time, so long as they were not sexual with each other? Why or why not? How would this person know his personal revelation was correct, or in error?

# A Case Study: “God Told Me To Start Same-sex Dating” (2/2)

Scenario 2: “God told me it was okay for me to disregard the law of chastity.”

- Ask: Have they seen other people make this choice? What fruits have they seen in their lives?
- Do you think the rest of the Church is true? Do you plan to be otherwise obedient to your covenants? If that were to change, would that tell you anything about the validity of this revelation being from God?
- What sorts of ‘red flags’ would you see in your life that would show you this was *not* actually revelation from God?  
(make sure they write these down!)
- Remember, you might be the repository of their sacred experiences, because they will forget them.

# Can Personal Revelation Contradict Prophetic and Scriptural Revelation?



We cannot communicate reliably through the direct, personal line if we are disobedient to or out of harmony with the priesthood line. The Lord has declared that “the powers of heaven cannot be controlled nor handled only upon the principles of righteousness” ([D&C 121:36](#)). Unfortunately, it is common for persons who are violating God’s commandments or disobedient to the counsel of their priesthood leaders to declare that God has revealed to them that they are excused from obeying some commandment or from following some counsel. Such persons may be receiving revelation or inspiration, but it is not from the source they suppose. The devil is the father of lies, and he is ever anxious to frustrate the work of God by his clever imitations.

# ..But Maybe It Can!

- The “Martin Harris Principle” – see D&C 3 & D&C 10
- The Alma 29:4 Principle:

*“I ought not to harrow up in my desires the firm decree of a just God, for I know that he granteth unto men according to their desire, whether it be unto death or unto life; yea, I know that he allotteth unto men, yea, decreeth unto them decrees which are unalterable, according to their wills, whether they be unto salvation or unto destruction.”*

# ..But Maybe It Can!

- The “Martin Harris Principle” – see D&C 3 & D&C 10
- The Alma 29:4 Principle:

*“I ought not to harrow up in my desires the firm decree of a just God, for I know that he granteth unto men **according to their desire**, whether it be unto death or unto life; yea, I know that he allotteth unto men, yea, decreeth unto them decrees which are unalterable, **according to their wills, whether they be unto salvation or unto destruction.**”*

# Case Study: “The Church Hates Me Because of Who I Am.”

- What gives you the idea that Church leaders hate you? Can you show me specific statements that you feel are hateful? Let’s go through them together and see if there might be another way to read them.
- Who are you? Tell me about you as a person. What do you see as core, and what do you see as peripheral to who you are?

# Quotes from Church Leaders Expressing Love for Sexual Minorities

“I know many who wrestle with wrenching matters of identity, gender, and sexuality. I weep for them, and I weep with them, knowing how significant the consequences of their decisions will be.” –[Jeffrey R. Holland](#)

# Quotes from Church Leaders Expressing Love for Sexual Minorities

“In the Church, there are widowed, divorced, and single members; those with family members who have fallen away from the gospel; people with chronic illnesses or financial struggles; members who experience same-sex attraction; members working to overcome addictions or doubts; recent converts; new move-ins; empty-nesters; and the list goes on and on. The Savior invites us to come unto Him—no matter our circumstances. We come to church to renew our covenants, to increase our faith, to find peace, and to do as He did perfectly in His life—minister to others who feel like they don’t belong.” –[Elder D. Todd Christofferson](#)



# Quotes from Church Leaders Expressing Love for Sexual Minorities

“I now speak directly to Church members who experience same-sex attraction. ... We want you to know we love you. You are welcome. We want you to be part of our congregations. You have great talents and abilities to offer God’s kingdom on earth, and we recognize the many valuable contributions you make.” –[Elder Whitney Clayton](#)

# Quotes from Church Leaders Expressing Love for Sexual Minorities

“God loves all of us. He loves those of different faiths and those without any faith. He loves those who suffer. He loves the rich and poor alike. He loves people of every race and culture, the married or single, and those who experience same-sex attraction or identify as gay, lesbian, or bisexual. And God expects us to follow His example.” –[Church Website](#)

# Quotes from Church Leaders Expressing Love for Sexual Minorities

“Of special concern to us should be those who struggle with same-sex attraction. It is a whirlwind of enormous velocity. I want to express my love and admiration for those who courageously confront this trial of faith and stay true to the commandments of God! But everyone, independent of his or her decisions and beliefs, deserves our kindness and consideration.” –[Elder Neil L. Anderson](#)

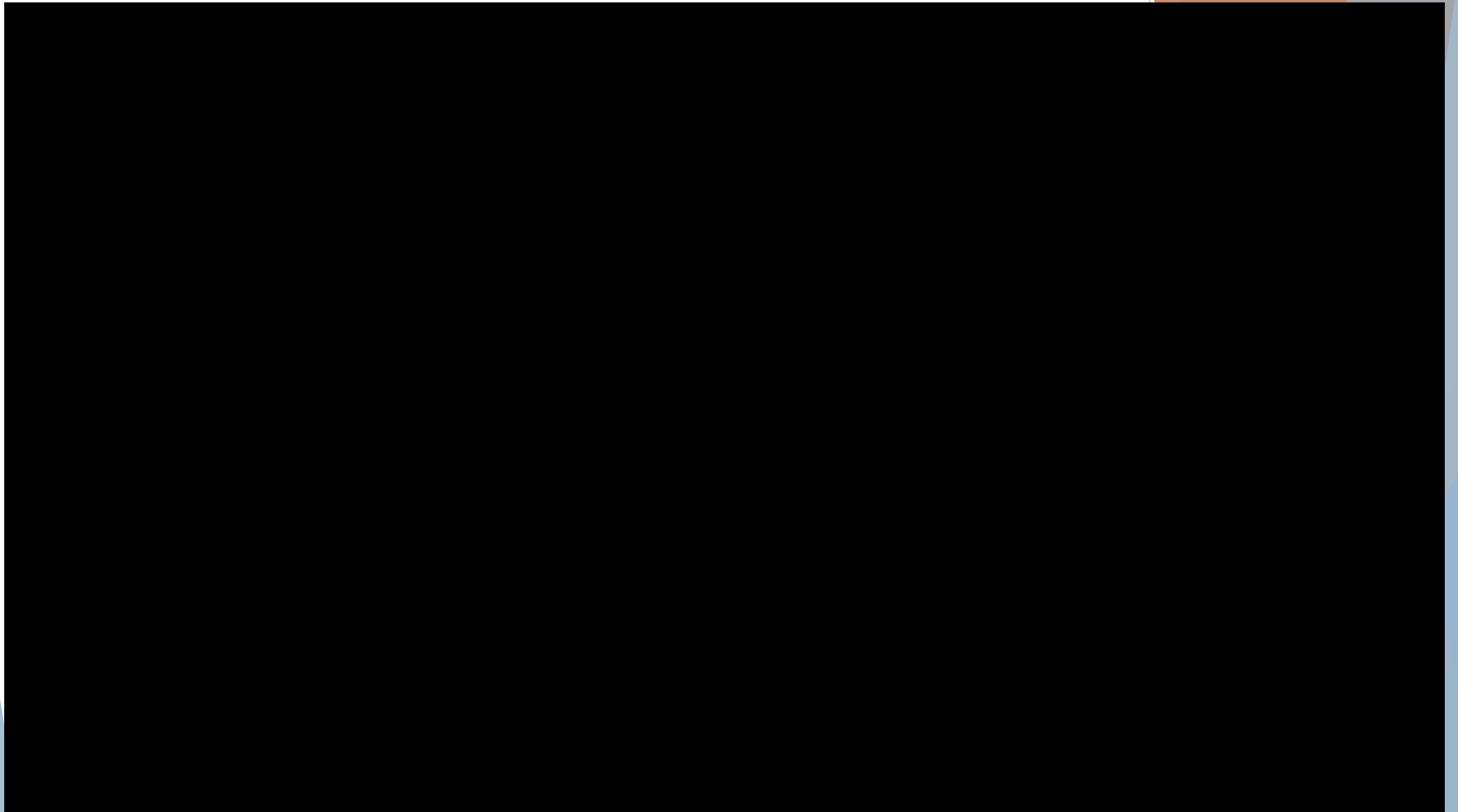
# Quotes from Church Leaders Expressing Love for Sexual Minorities

“Young people struggling with any exceptional condition, including same-gender attraction, are particularly vulnerable and need loving understanding—not bullying or ostracism.” –[Elder Dallin H. Oaks](#)

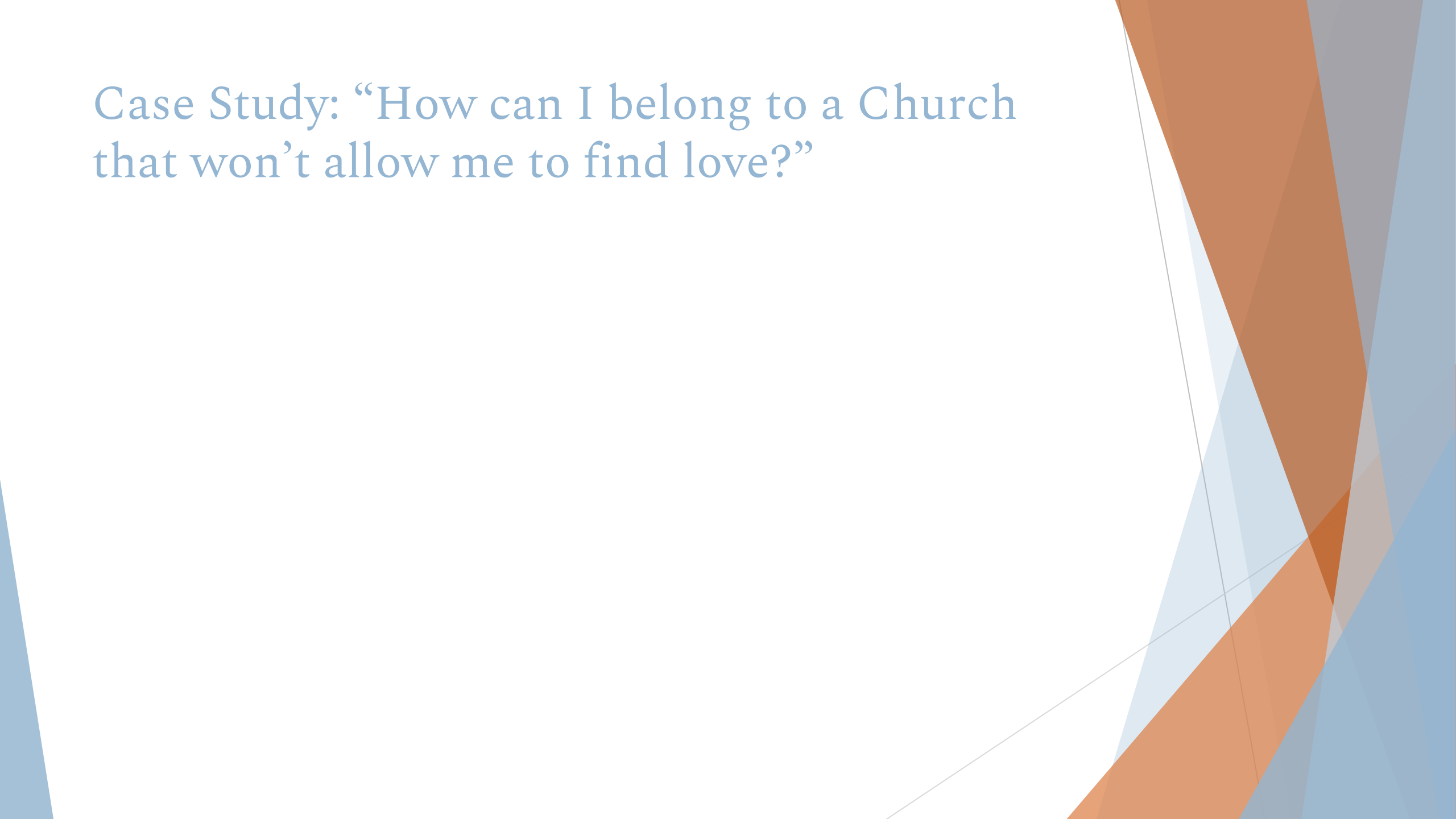
# Quotes from Church Leaders Expressing Love for Sexual Minorities

“Is there a place for me?”



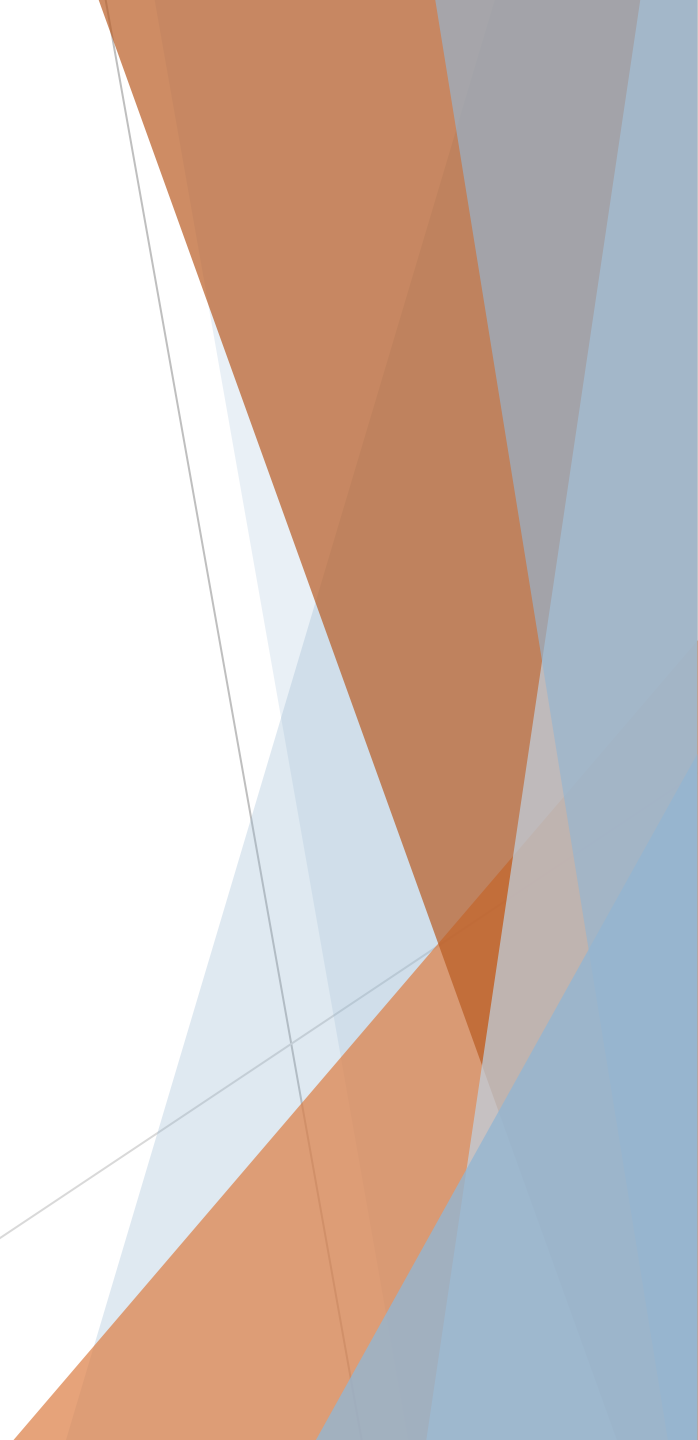


Case Study: “How can I belong to a Church that won’t allow me to find love?”



# 4.7 Wrapping Up

Some Concluding Thoughts





# Watch This Keynote Address from Dr. Mark Yarhouse



Mark Yarhouse, “A Bigger Yes,” from the North Star 2018 Annual Conference

# Some takeaways from Dr. Yarhouse 1/3

- The Diversity-Integrity-Disability lenses vs. “the fallen nature of man” lens.
- “How do we carve a path between the reality of their sexual identity and a sense of purpose and meaning and vocation where God could actually be glorified?”
- Help them look at this from the end (what possibilities does this create for me? Where do I want this to work in my life so I end up \_\_\_) rather than the starting point (i.e., “God created me gay.” – ok, then now what?)
- Be neither a ‘cynical pessimist’ (no one can change) or an ‘arrogant optimist’ (everyone can change, and quickly!)
- Join with individuals in their attribution (“God created me this way,” vs. “this is a thorn in my flesh,’ etc.) and walk through that with them.

# Some takeaways from Dr. Yarhouse 2/3

- It's always better to delay sexual behavior as long as possible
- Young sexual minorities ask two burning questions that the gay community has compelling answers for:
  - Who Am I?
  - Where Do I belong? (or: how can I meet my need for connection and role models?)
- “I know many people who are no more Christlike by virtue of their heterosexuality... I aim for Christlikeness with people. Fostering that walk and their spiritual maturity that will inform the decisions they make about identity and behavior. I don't tend to minister out of rigid categories and labels. I am more descriptive and work with people where they are and help them anchor their identity in the person and work of Jesus Christ.”

# Some takeaways from Dr. Yarhouse 3/3

- Help them find a bigger yes:

“Christian communities send the message of ‘no’ in this area. You have to answer the question, ‘what is the positive vision for a Christian to live into. Realize that the gay community offers a compelling ‘yes’ that meets needs for intimacy and belonging that the Church needs to respond to...”

“Our great call is to create a ‘yes’ that eclipses both the ‘yes’ (to identity, community, intimacy and status) from the mainstream LGBTQ community and the ‘no’ that has been heard from the Christian community. We need a larger, more meaningful yes that eclipses both the yes and the no that people are encountering today. You and I have an opportunity to develop that larger, more meaningful yes, and to minister out of to the glory of God.”

# A Final Plea

- Your loved one may wander from the gospel
- Your covenants, and the strength of their covenant-keeping, can be their anchor, and the strong place that draws them back.

