



Same-Sex Attraction and  
**A Road Less Traveled**



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**Explore Another Path to Peace**

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- Certified Life Coach since 2005
- Creator and co-creator of experiential workshops (“Journey Into Manhood,” “A Woman Who Loves,” and more)
- Married, father of an adult daughter and son
- Began his own inner work (“reparative therapy,” SA, etc.) in 1997



## Mark

- Senior psychodrama and inner-healing (“guts”) facilitator for weekend intensives with Brothers Road and EdgeVenture
- Advisory council board member, Brothers on a Road Less Traveled
- Family physician
- Married, father of four
- Began his own inner work in 2003



**Many people painfully deny, suppress, and hide their same-sex attractions for years.**

**Others adopt a gay identity and pursue same-sex partnerships or hook-ups.**

**Some find satisfaction in that, others only more turmoil.**





# Brothers Road offers a third path:

neither suppressing and shaming  
nor indulging and celebrating  
our same-sex attractions

...but instead, exploring and fulfilling  
our needs for same-sex affection,  
community and brotherhood  
in platonic and affirming ways  
that align with our faith  
and values.







**This is the “road less traveled” we choose for ourselves.**

We support each other in exploring and addressing underlying issues that may be at the root of some of our inner conflicts around our sexuality, faith, masculinity, and self-esteem

... while meeting our core needs for deeply authentic connection.



# BROTHERS ROAD

BROTHERS ON A ROAD LESS TRAVELED

## Who We Are

Men supporting each other in aligning our sexual thoughts, feelings, and behaviors with our values, faith, beliefs, and life goals.





## **We are:**

- Multi-national
- Multi-faith
- Faith-affirming
- Non-profit
- Peer-led
- Volunteer-based

## **We value:**

- Respect
- Free choice
- Self-discovery
- Personal growth





## We believe

- Sexuality can be fluid
- Individual experiences differ
- *“You are good and valuable just as you are. Today. Unchanged. And even if you never change.”*

## We don't believe in:

- Hate
- Shame
- Coercion
- Rejection





# What is “SSA”?

Why does the Brothers Road community (along with many others) usually use the term “same-sex attraction” or “SSA” instead of “gay”?

To many of us, “gay” is a heavily loaded term, socially and politically.

It suggests a certain “gay pride” attitude and an intent to live homosexually active lives (socially, sexually, and romantically) that most of us don’t want for ourselves—and prefer not to convey to others.



SSA is  
WHAT I FEEL not  
Who I Am



# What is “SSA”?

Gay, straight, bi, same-sex attracted, or something else, **each of us gets to choose for ourselves** how we will identify — and whether we even choose to take on a sexual “label” at all.



ssa is  
WHAT I FEEL not  
Who I Am



# This work is not about “turning straight”

Rather, it's about *finding peace*

- Finding clarity
- Self-acceptance and love
- Releasing shame
- Healing old wounds
- Opening ourselves to God's unconditional love
- Accepting and surrendering what we cannot change
- Putting our faith and values *first*





# This work is not about “turning straight”

It's about *building brotherhood*

- Community
- Belonging
- Shared purpose
- Coming to know, deep down, that you truly are  
*a man among men*





# This work is not about “turning straight”

It's about *becoming* the man  
God is calling you to be

- Fully embracing our masculinity
- Becoming more empowered, assertive, confident
- More surrendered to God's will
- More focused on loving and serving God and others
- Becoming a better husband, father, brother, son, friend
- Experiencing a deep, authentic, and lasting change of heart



# This work is not about “turning straight”



It's about **aligning** our sexual choices with our faith, values, and life goals — rather than the other way around!



# Our *real* goal is *peace*

For some of us, this work *has* resulted in some shift in the *nature* or *intensity* of our sexual attractions.

But these tend to be *byproducts* of doing other personal-healing or personal-growth work, rather than the focus.

In any case, authentic peace may be the only goal that really matter.



# Frequent commonalities in our stories



**\* Commonalities, not causes**



# Frequent commonalities in our stories

## A naturally more sensitive personality

- Artistic? Creative? More tender?
- May perceive rejection more easily and feel it more deeply.
- Sometimes more introspective
- Even more spiritual

## Detached from other boys and men

- Feeling unsafe, rejected, unwanted, different
- *“I can never measure up”*
- *“I’ll never belong”*

## Detached from our own masculinity

- Confused, fearful
- *“Unworthy”*
- Never *“man enough”*



# Frequent commonalities in our stories

## Too much feminine, not enough masculine

- Absent or disengaged father figure
- Boy rejects father
- Smothering or controlling mother
- Enmeshment with mother
- Girls are “safe,” familiar
- Boys are scary, risky





# Frequent commonalities in our stories

## Too often, a history of abuse

- Sexual
- Verbal
- Physical

## Other complicating factors

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Low self-esteem
- Trauma or painful childhood experiences



# Sexualizing maleness and belonging

Yearning for masculinity and belonging can become sexualized

- Yearning to be included, wanted
- Fantasy
- Exposure to porn or other sexual behaviors

*“The exotic becomes erotic”*







# Stephen's Story

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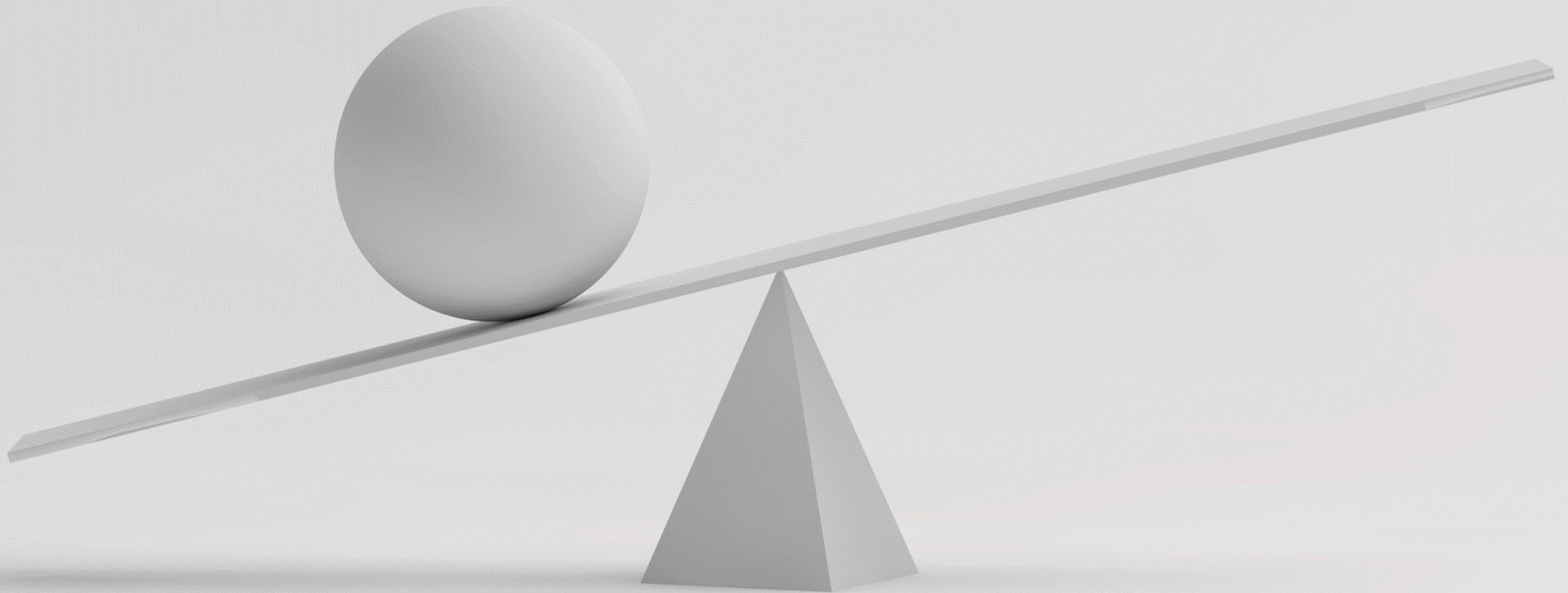
# Nathan's Story

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**Is sexuality necessarily fixed for life?**



**Intensity of sexual attractions (or same-sex lust)  
as a barometer of your emotional state?**

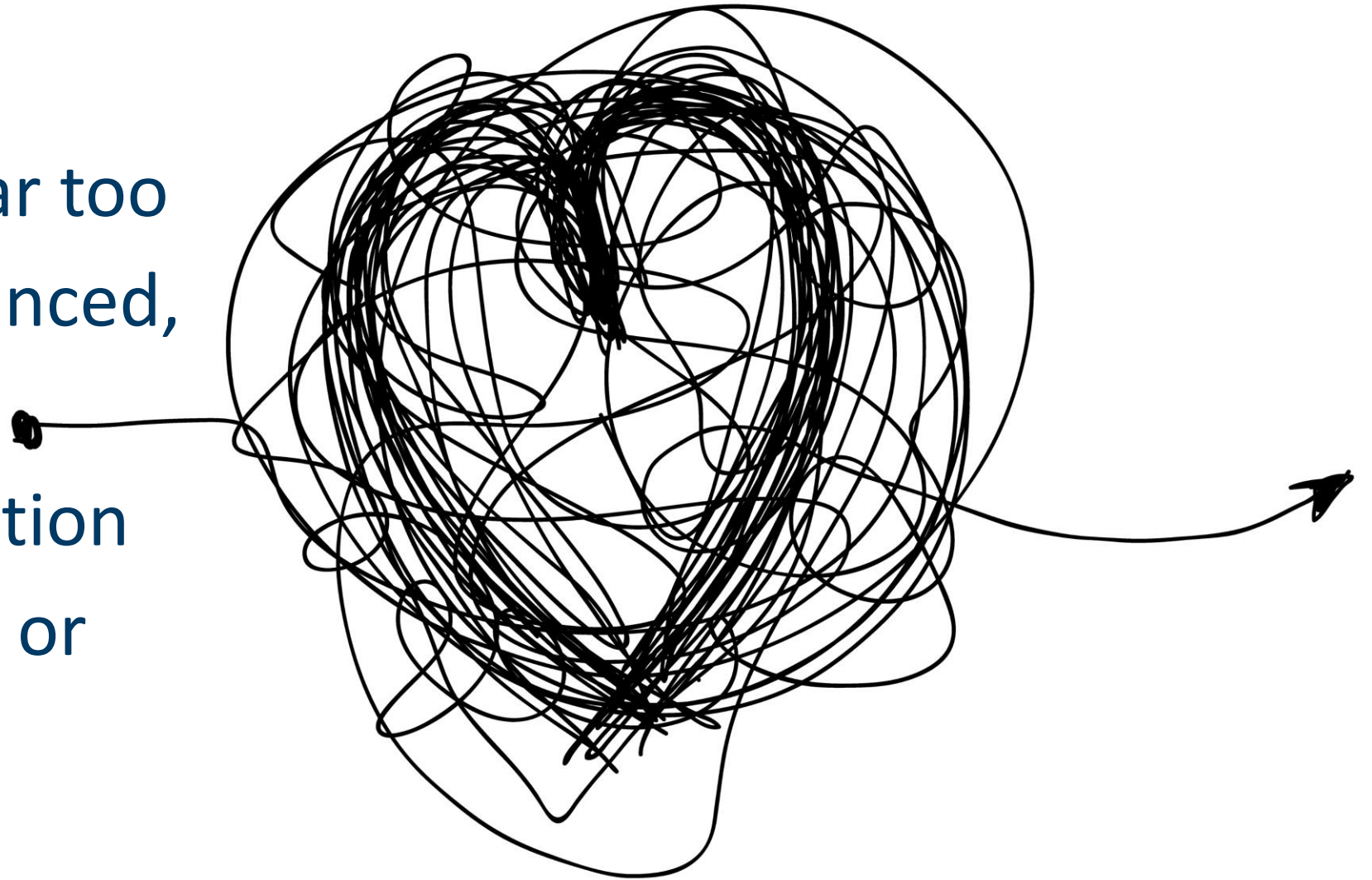




**Are we claiming that some people  
can go from gay to straight?**



Our sexuality is far too complex, too nuanced, and too fluid to answer that question with a simple yes or no.



**And it depends a lot on how you define “gay.”**



***“...courage to change the things we can...”***

**If “gay” is an identity, it can be embraced, rejected, or redefined.**

*Each of us gets to choose how we will self-identify.*



***“...courage to change the things we can...”***

**If “gay” is a lifestyle, it can be chosen (lived out), “unchosen” (avoided or replaced) or adapted to something else.**

*Each of us gets to choose how to live our lives.*

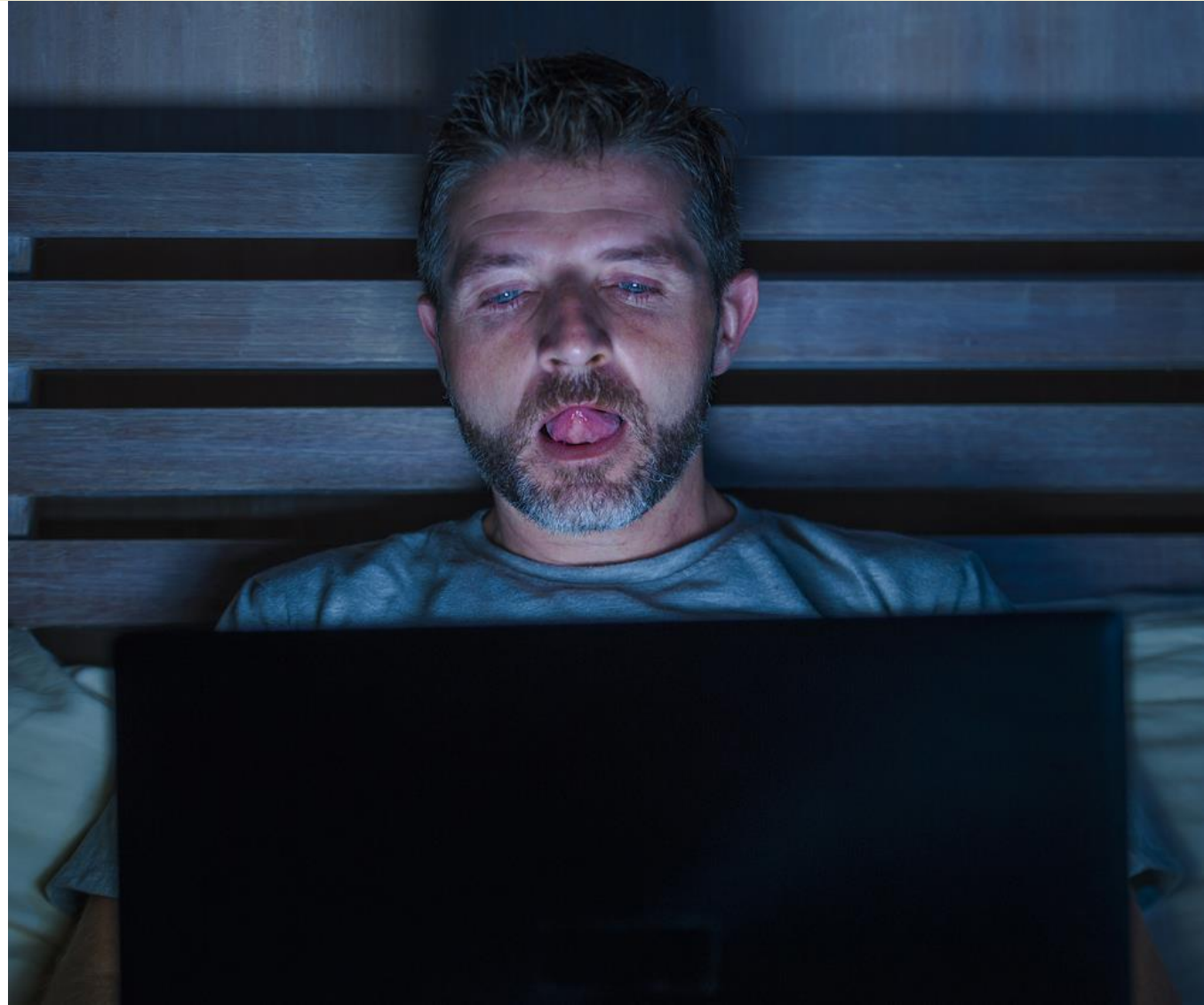




***“...courage to change the things we can...”***

**If “gay” refers to same-sex lust, it can be diminished, surrendered or eliminated.**

*Any of us can be susceptible to lust, whether it’s directed toward the same or the opposite sex.*



***“...courage to change the things we can...”***

**If “gay” is a feeling or attraction**

**We can embrace its “gold”  
(all that is positive about it)**

**While turning from its “shadow”  
(all that is negative or harmful)**

**Sexual attractions and feelings themselves are neither good nor bad,  
but what we do with them might be.**





**Getting started  
on this road less traveled**



# Getting started

**First: Learn what others have experienced**

**Second: Remember, the real goal is peace**

**Third: Decide for yourself**

- Make sure you're authentically self-motivated
- You can't do this work only because others want you to
- You can't be motivated by shame
- You can't be motivated by self-hate





# Getting started

**Fourth: Learn to accept and love yourself just as you are**



# Getting started

If you gain nothing else here,  
we want you to know two truths ...

**1.**

You are good  
and valuable  
just as  
you are.

**2.**

You have brothers  
who see your  
“shadows” and  
accept you just  
as you are.





# Getting started

*“The curious paradox is that when I accept myself just as I am, then I can change.”*

*—Carl Rogers*



# Getting started

**Fifth: Get support, build friendships**

**Sixth: Get sexually sober**

**Seventh: Start your “M.A.N.S. work”**

- Masculinity
- Authenticity
- Needs Fulfillment
- Surrender







**Finally: Be patient.**

**It really is a journey.**





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