



Statement on So-Called “Conversion Therapy”

November 13, 2020

Protect our rights to respectful, ethical, professional support for balancing our sexuality with our faith and values

[Brothers on a Road Less Traveled](#) (“Brothers Road”) is a peer-support fellowship made up primarily of men who — for very personal reasons and of our own volition — seek to align our sexual thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, as much as possible, with our personal values, beliefs, faith, commitments, and life goals — rather than the other way around.

Many in our community have **benefited greatly** from working with competent licensed therapists and pastoral counselors who do not judge our intent or try to force their agendas upon us, but who instead work with us to help us find the most authentic and peaceful resolution to our internal or interpersonal conflicts.

On the other hand, many of us **have been harmed**, sometimes deeply, by therapists who demand that we embrace a gay identity and engage in gay relationships as (supposedly) the *only* possible path to peace, even if doing so would mean leaving otherwise satisfying marriages or cutting ourselves off from faith communities, beliefs, and traditions that we greatly value.

It is from this experience and perspective that we state in the strongest possible terms:

We in the Brothers Road community strongly oppose any kind of “therapy,” “ministry” or “change effort” that:

- is forced upon anyone against their will
- is manipulative or shaming
- is hostile, critical, or anything other than affirming of an individual’s inherent worth
- assumes that same-sex attractions derive from mental illness or sexual deviancy
- imposes a predetermined agenda on an individual’s work, without respect for the client’s goals and values
- uses “aversion therapy” techniques
- uses any wording or technique that could reasonably be expected to induce self-hate, self-rejection, or shame
- presumes that the practitioner has the power to change someone else
- overpromises desired results or outcomes that cannot possibly be predicted or guaranteed.

On the other hand, we strongly support and welcome therapies, ministries, support groups, and programs that:

- are available to individuals who choose — of their own free will and with informed consent — to explore the possibilities for bringing their sexual thoughts, feelings, and behaviors more in line with their deeply held beliefs, values, commitments, and life goals
- actively show respect for and encourage an individual’s right to self-determination of their own life values, personal beliefs, faith, identity, life goals, and choices.
- affirm an individual’s inherent value — regardless of their particular temptations, sexual attractions, or sexual identity, and regardless of how they may choose to address them (within legal and ethical boundaries, of course).
- invite the exploration and potential resolution — to the extent that the individual desires and that may reasonably lead ultimately to greater peace and acceptance — of underlying issues or past hurts that may be driving unwanted sexual thoughts, feelings, and behaviors.

It is essential that any potential legislation that may be intended to protect LGBT/SSA individuals from harmful or fraudulent therapies does so within the context of these principles and practices and NEVER on banning self-determined client goals, beliefs, and values.