

The Role of Ignorance and Religion on Internalized Homophobia and Biphobia

Authors : Andreas Aceranti, Simonetta Vernocchi, Marco Colorato, Guido Bighiani, Lorenzo Moretti

Abstract : Internalized homo/biphobia refers to a set of negative feelings (feelings of guilt, contempt, anger, a sense of inferiority) that nonheterosexuals may feel towards themselves. We studied 22 young males struggling with their bisexuality or homosexuality. All have come to psychoanalysis/counselling because something was “not going right in their lives.” Even though they were all involved in heterosexual relations, they felt that the relationship was not satisfactory, and even tried having affairs with other women, they felt unsatisfied. All revealed that even though they felt sexually attracted to women, they fell in love with other men. When we investigated the main resistances, the answers were almost the same fearing rejection: four from their mates; six from their parents; eight both from mates and parents; the other four were unable to accept the “deviation for religious reasons.” During the sessions, we educated them about sexual orientation and affection, and we spent much time educating them about the normality of sexual orientation. We found out that the majority (20 subjects) were totally ignorant about sexual orientation and had evaluated themselves only on prejudice or religious approaches. After many sessions, 18 subjects stopped coming to sessions as they felt at peace with themselves. Interestingly the four patients who still come to therapy and are still struggling with themselves are the four subjects with religious issues. Based on our experience, the most destructive aspect of sexual orientation acceptance is the lack of education. Prejudice and religion, unfortunately, still play a big role in self-acceptance.

Keywords : prejudice, homophobia, sexual orientation, biphobia, acceptance, ignorance

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