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00:08

The following program contains language or images of a frank or sensitive nature which may be considered objectionable by some listener discretion is advised.



00:45

Oh yes, you've tuned into after hours a continuing tradition on KPFT Houston 90.1 FM. The crew of after hours is ready to bring you news, interviews and music geared for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered people. Hear it after hours, we may be diverse, but we have one thing in common. We are all out of the closet and urge everyone to come out of their closets. That means standing up for yourself, taking responsibility for your own life and being proud of who you are. Realistically, we know not everyone can do that because of a job or frame of mind. That's okay, we're here for you too. So sit back, relax, and enjoy this week's edition of after hours



02:07

right let's go to a piece of music and we'll come back with dug up church. Now here's a piece of music you are not going to hear anywhere else on any other station. It's a PI openly less openly lesbian group called Z crazy ZR AZ why?



02:22

I'm sure that's not the way to pronounce it. I don't know. I'm sure there's some up anyway.



02:25

There's different like Ireland



02:28

believe what you need to



02:32

so hateful and it's it took me like six months to find this. And it cost me a pretty penny to but they they



02:42

do it took us six months to find your shoes.



02:46

And the things been in his bag. Been in his sack



02:50

really quick to shut these queens up. Hey, Tracy doing come out. Everybody. And you're hearing it on KPFT Houston after hours.



03:05

Wouldn't be prudent. No, no, no, no, that was crazy. Yeah, come out. Everybody. Everybody.



03:11

Look honey.



03:12

You don't have a microphone in front of you.



03:14

Need one I met my barman.



03:17

Didn't she dead? Oh, don't be.



03:21

Could be. Don't be silly. You're Ethel mermans mother. Anyway. Joining us now in studio Tom Richards his has brought along a couple of guests this evening. Don of church and dug up church, Tom. It's your way. Hello. What's your world baby? We're just saying hey,



03:42

look, it's good to be back on again. This is truly a special time for us. We've we've tried to get hold these people several times. And seems like our wires get dropped. But but is my microphone on? It is absolutely that's cool. Okay, and but we finally did it and I'm real thrilled about it. We have dug up church and and I have told some people about the province tonight and they are listening. My fact I was able to talk to a 16 year old kid that promised me he would sorry. And he said that he would that he would definitely be listening tonight because he is he is interesting. So I'm hoping that that little brother that you are listening. But But first of all, and then we have Doug is is from the is an ex member of the ex gay ministries. And for a long time I've been wanting to get my finger on somebody that that belong to that. But that real thrill i see here we have Don's we have Doug's dad in our community There is an organization called PFLAG parents and friends of lesbian gays. During our pride parade, these people get the loudest applause and the loudest cheer of anybody in the parade, even from people that even our dear friends that are on floats and marking up, but when these people pass, most of them will never know all their names, but they always get the loudest cheer, and the loudest applause and we want to welcome you guys here.



05:30

Thanks. Good, good to be here.



05:33

First of all, I am known as a loudmouth activists within the community, I take this from old friends of mine, a couple of them who, who not too long ago, couple years or so, a year, two years ago had passed away from mates, but but most of mine was nourished by them. And I saw the activities and the things that they accomplished by being loud and noisy, and obnoxious. And I and I am that way. But first of all, let me say this. Any ideas or opinions that I express on this program are up for question. And I personally welcomed them. But my sincerity in the cause, is without compromise. question, doubt. And I refuse to accept intimidation from you doubt and question my opinions, if you will. But never feel that you have the opinion to question my honesty, or my sincerity. I do not question the sincerity of our religious, political, and social organizations within our community. I do and will question their message. I do that without fear, or shame, or guilt. In my lifetime, I have too often seen what seems to be well meaning individuals making a concerted effort to work in our community. But their methods often divide and Splinter our community. And that hurts me the most. My questions tonight are not meant to cast doubt based on your or their belief, but rather are meant to find answers to the problems and the fears that face many of our younger brothers and sisters. My questions are based on finding answers to those questions. So So those I love, that I truly love, and that I

truly care about, can erase the fears and doubts of the troubled minds. My questions are based only on hope and love that they my brothers, my younger brothers and sisters can truly no not believe. But know that they are really, and truly very special people. I just wanted to say that to begin with. Okay, that I'm wanting to know. First of all, tell me something about how you got into the ex gay ministry. Tim, what, what key is the ex gay minutes? Because what are they and how do they work? Well,



08:32

probably the best place to start is with my own personal story. I mean, when I was in junior high, was when I first realized that I was probably gay, and that there was something different about myself. First time, I really started to realize that, that that was probably something that was not just a phase, but it was something that I was going to be that way for the rest of my life is what I was concerned about. I didn't know whether that was right or wrong. At the time, I had no reason to believe either way. I was raised in a very traditional family but didn't was never really taught that it was right or wrong. In ninth grade, however, I went out on my own and got very involved in a conservative church here in Houston, that who believed that homosexuality was a sin. And so I adopted that belief for myself at the time and began to believe that the only way that I would ever live a quote, good life is to not be gay and to try and change my orientation. So but in in ninth grade, I spent two I began a 12 year journey to try and change my sexual orientation and I must I will say, very unsuccessful, painful and emotionally trying journey as well.



09:44

During this time, though, were were you going out hopefully to subject with other gay people were at the at the teenage when you were 1617 1819. Did you go out and try to sort



09:57

out gay people? No, I mean, at that age, I didn't know any gay People I didn't and by the given the fact that I started this whole process when I was in ninth grade, before I even started driving. I really didn't, by the time I started to drive and had the ability to, to go out and search it out, I didn't want I didn't want to, I was almost afraid of it at the time. I mean, I had part of what you have to, you have to realize when religion comes into play, or at least in this particular faith that I was involved with, and the belief that I had, it really is your, your really, your focus is to not do anything that might hinder your, quote, relationship with God and for me. And although I'm still a very spiritual person at the time, I believed strongly that my sexuality was not compatible with my spirituality. And I spent a lot of effort and a lot of hours and a lot of emotional pain trying to change that. unsuccessfully.



10:55

But but to say you started, you started at the age of 12. Right? Well, at the age of 12. Now I probably knew I probably knew that I was gay, probably around the age of 14. Yeah, but that was back in the 50s. Now, now since then, the the question of being and not being gay has

come out. And the Christian church has taken a very stopped stand, mainly on the political line, because we have become politically active because they really didn't give a damn about us before. But at the age of 12, who, how did the subject of homosexual homosexuality come up in a straight church? And how did you come to the conclusion? I dug up church and gay, I don't want to be anymore.



11:48

Well, I think I came to the conclusion that I was gay on my own. I think at that time, there was enough talk in the media. And there's enough that I knew what was happening. However, it so happened that I worked at a religious bookstore, as a part time job that was in my neighborhood. And so there were plenty of books and plenty of literature that talked about homosexuality being a sin and changing or curing quote, unquote, homosexuality. And so I had unfortunately available to me a lot of very bad information that helped me develop that part of that, that are you continue down that journey?



12:25

Dawn? Dawn, is is Doug's father, and, and we're extremely happy with friend that you're here. Really we? Did Doug, talk to you at that time about about being gay? No. When did he first approached you, Don,



12:42

Doug only came after us. In the last three years, which was at the age of 27, or six, and all through his adolescence and teenage years, Doug was very spiritual oriented. He did a lot of Bible study, he, he was a very serious young man. And he took these things very seriously. And he studied and he worked very hard. And, and what what we were seeing and thinking was a very serious young man was, was a young man who was struggling with something internally that he was not sharing with us as his parents. And in a way we were blind to that. Or we didn't want to ask the question, but he didn't share it with us.



13:35

Did what? Well, no, at this time, was he not in the ex gay ministries dot, not not



13:42

where they would know you have to repair. What you have to remember is that when I was in ninth grade, I split church ways with my parents, my parents attended one church and I went to a completely different one that was a little more radical, a little more charismatic, and a little different from what I had been raised in, which is a much more mainstream. And so my parents allowed me to, to have that diversion, so to speak. So I, I always say they kind of kept me at arm's length just far enough away to yank me back if I got to way off the deep end. And and I think what happened is, is I really didn't want to share with him what was going on. I mean, I

was, I was embarrassed. I mean, I really felt like, this was the blight on my life. It was so the self esteem was so bad, and you don't want to talk about it. And so the people you share with share with are only people that you think might be able to help you. And for me at that time, the only people I thought might be able to help me. Were people that were in the church that said they could pray for me and that maybe I would, you know, be cured, so to speak.



14:47

Were you were you at any time? Active within the ex gay ministry?



14:56

Yeah, I was I spent three years in it. When I was in I went to when I graduated from high school, still not having resolved this issue, still very serious about my faith and very serious about changing my orientation, went to Baylor went was got involved with a church there. The college Minister didn't know how to deal with me, frankly. And so he found a group in Dallas that was a part of the Exodus International Ministries umbrella that was focused on meeting weekly to help gay men change their sexual orientation to strength. Well,



15:33

you have used the word fear here. Okay. This is, is mainly what the ex gay ministries work on. In my correctness.



15:45

I would say that what it really is, is not it's a fear of guilt, or what, yeah, it's a couple of things. Primarily, the issue is, it's encapsulated in the fact that if, if a gay Christian in these folks minds cannot become straight, there is no hope for any future positive life as a Christian or as a godly man, if you will,



16:08

this the same set of weird? No, no, it's true. It is. It's true. We don't want to talk about religion. But But by the same token, it's somewhere in here, we've got to bring up the fact of what is happening. And the fact is happening, that it seems to steal, the Bible is being used as a club. And, and through that the religion itself becomes the spearhead. And allow me to use the word and, and if it bothers people, I don't really care if the religion itself becomes the spearhead toward this hypocrisy, of trying to change the thing that has always amazed me about the ex gay ministries. And it and I want you to comment on this is that it seems to slow whenever I read the Bible, and I do read the Bible or not quite well. I make it a habit to know it. But the thing is, that when Jesus committed a did a miracle, it was instant, it was immediately. But in the ex gay ministries, nobody is healed immediately. It takes years, which is which, which makes the Bible itself where it makes the ex gay ministries up for question, and it makes the Bible into a lie. Because if that happens, then, but everybody else is healed of cancer and all

this other stuff. I see it on TV, they make the claim. But I know that that Pat Robertson is not God, George Burns is because I saw the movie. But the fact of the matter is that that this idea, you can be healed, but it takes years. It is a point of hypocrisy. How, how can somebody who wants to involve themselves Doug, is what I don't understand is is how can you involve yourself in a fundamentalist religion that takes the Bible as a supposedly as it is? And then say, well, here it is, it's taken years to cure this person. There has to be something else involved in this. Why is that not brought out in the gay ex gay ministers?



18:28

Well, I think the interesting thing is that's often one of the things that causes more and more gay and lesbians to leave these groups is because they also see the frustration. You know, I think that the way that the ex gay ministries work is a beginning is first focusing on behavior. That's the first step. So their first goal is to get you to cease from having behavior, then their next step is when you is that is to try and reduce the amount of same sex thoughts, what they call temptations. Whether that's just affections, or fantasies or whatever, that it's the goal to reduce that. And I'll tell you that if you that the human mind is a very powerful thing, and you can you can suppress a lot of thoughts on an ongoing basis and eventually you're gonna you're gonna really either what I call selectively suppress and damage that part of your of your existence. And I think that's what happens



19:29

then. Then would I be right to say that that that poses intervene?



19:35

Yes. Let me ask something here. Sure. Go right. Is it a matter of kind of a guilt thing that you're not praying hard enough? You're not really devoting yourself is that type of thing that when when when you don't when you can't change immediately?



19:54

Absolutely. That's one of the biggest parts of it is that there is a tremendous burden on the individual How to Pray fast. I mean, I can remember spending three days where I would not eat anything except drink water. And i By the third day, mind you, I was out of it. But all because I knew that at the end of that third day, I was supposed to have a prayer session with my pastor. Now, worst experience of my life, but in my mind, I always felt like there was one more thing that I probably could try, and it would work. And I finally realized that I've tried out I've tried it all. I mean, I've been through demonic exorcisms. I've been through fasting. I've been through Bible study, I've been through all of this stuff. And for me, I begin to realize, you know, maybe this isn't exactly what whoever created me wants me to be doing in the first place? Well, did



20:44

you just say that they practice exorcisms like the Catholic Church does? Well, not

you just say that they practice exorcism like the Catholic Church does? Well, not



20:49

like the Catholic Church. But for me, I mean, I was involved in a very non denominational religion and I often i There were two specific occasions where I had formal appointments with my pastoral, the people that were my pastors or ministers to pray for me to basically have the quote demon of homosexuality removed. Now mind you didn't do anything. I mean, except make me feel really stupid when it was all over. But



21:18

it's funny, because you know, now, back then I was so mentally screwed up, that now it's kind of like I've been freed of a couple of other things. Because it's so much it's so much better now, having accepted my sexuality, rather than trying to have have rejected it like I did, Doug, this, this is just, you know, an outsider's perspective on this. But it seems to me that from this, this group that you were involved with, that the extremism, just kind of could build, and build and build on itself. And the fact that there was a pastor that was involved with this, that was, you know, meeting with you after, you know, three days of fasting or, you know, holding these exorcisms that, you know, that in itself, was just going to lead this, you know, as a different sort of, I don't quite want to say it, but fanaticism, it, was there something else in this group that led you to associate yourself with it. I mean, particularly striking to me is the fact that, you know, this was not the religion that was being practiced in your home, but something that you chose for yourself.



22:28

It's a real good point, I will say this, that the church that this took place that happens to be probably the largest attended Southern Baptist Church in Waco. That, of course, being Baylor University. And I'm not saying, mind you, this is a very different Southern Baptist Church. This is not a traditional, and it's more of a charismatic one. But we're talking four to 600 college students every Sunday. So this was, quote, the place to be when you went to Baylor, and it was the church to go to. So for their for some, at some points, there was that level of involvement. But I pursued this because I felt like I wanted more in my own spiritual life that I had had growing up. And that happened long before I ever got to this point. And these folks, I mean, this is not something that's like, when I talk about these exorcism times, these are not something off the Sci Fi Channel. These are just people, typically people that you wouldn't recognize on the street as being any different for anyone else. We're not talking televangelists type people, these are normal folks. But they would go through extensive prayer times where they would be praying over me or saying prayers over me. Speaking to what they believe were demons that were inside of me of homosexuality. In one case, it was a very common experience. The second case, it was an hour and a half of these two men basically yelling over me while I was eventually crouch, crouch crouching in a fetal position almost on the floor. Now, I don't even remember much of this, but it was. And yet, here are these knees. These are guys that have kids, they're, they're frankly, kind of hip folks, except they're really a little whacked out on this particular issue. So I mean, it's kind of a I don't want to say wolf in sheep's clothing. But the phrase comes to mind, you know, I mean, it didn't look like it was some really way out fanatical thing. From from my perspective,



24:22

would it be fair to say then that that this particular group was the peer group that you wanted to be associated with at Baylor? Absolutely.



24:30

That's definitely part of it.



24:32

Could this then be looked at instead of, you know, the, the sexuality issue as just a typical thing that one might experience going off to college and having to associate yourself with a new peer group?



24:45

It is but it's, it's magnified almost 100 times because you have a you have a peer group whose sole focus is to be pleasing to God, if you will, where and and from from my perspective Give that that was all I lived for. And that was all that these be that was a good person. So there was a peer pressure that got me to that point. But from that point it turbocharged on 100 times more with the intensity of having to deal with the fact that this was a religious issue for me, as well.



25:18

But this went on for years. Right? Yeah. Oh, yeah. And, and I think this is probably where some some confusion is sitting in. Were you in the ex gay ministry since age 12? No. When did you get into the payments?



25:37

I joined my I was first involved with a formal Exodus ministry in the summer of 90 or the spring of 19 atsf. International. Yes. And it was a group out of Fort Worth. Yes, I drove to work from Waco to Fort Worth for an hour and a half meeting every week, for six months. I went to and then when I came to Houston, I was involved with a group here in Houston known as Christian Coalition for reconciliation for almost a year.



26:06

This is the same queen that you can see out running around the bookstores darlin, Michael Newman, a sweetheart, why don't you call me who you are often seen at the bookstore is no

wonder God hadn't told you to get married yet. But anyway. The are we going to play some music and beg for some money right now? We're gonna beg for some money. Oh, yeah. But we'll



26:33

be right back. Because I want to talk to Dennis father.



26:38

Yeah, yeah. Yeah, that's definitely been in my mind. And we're definitely gonna get you in. We haven't been trying to reject you. But this has been important. This is important to us. But we're wanting to get you involved. Very much. So be brought back folks.



26:54

And you are listening to KPFT in Houston, 90.1 and K ELLs in College Station, the name of the program is after hours. We are queer radio. Four with an attitude and that the proper second, right, yeah. It depends. If he doesn't, or group who



27:16

I'm sorry, that that might remind some of the people here tonight of speaking in tongues.



27:21

True enough. We're getting we're getting some very interesting calls, in fact, am Jimmy. In fact, we need to, we need to thank Scott for giving us a call and making his pledge of support in the name of after hours. Thanks very much, Scott.



27:39

And he did it on the electronic funds transfer. And



27:42

see that's so cool. That's so cool. It's so cool. So cool.



27:47

And we just, we, you just sign up for a certain amount, and total amount and they take it out on a monthly basis, you know, just the 25 a month. And it's done automatically naves a lot on

paperwork, and it kind of hurts you less it's a smaller bite.



28:10

Well remember this to that, that that without your support it they would not allow us here after midnight, they would not allow gay and lesbian on Thursdays? No, they would not. Unless we support it. That's why I do yeah. And and, and, and maybe I go a little bit overboard with with my money. But that's alright, because I know that it's important for promos such as this and and Scott's dating numbers to get on and so forth. And, and so, yes, but we



28:47

don't do that anymore,



28:48

which works for everyone. But me.



28:49

Yes. Well, do you know? Well, one of the other things is we are the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, which supports us by about 20% We get about 90,000 a year, but that's going to be phased out by the year 2000. So we have to pick up that slack. The big kick we want to remain on the air. Yeah.



29:12

20% 20% doesn't sound like a lot on the surface. It's it's a huge amount, though, when you get to talking about the amount of money that it takes to run a radio. So on yearly basis.



29:24

I know. Tower rent alone is 20,000 a year fee. I



29:28

just can't I can't even I can't even put that in my head. That's more



29:31

than your hair.



29:34

That's right.



29:37

I didn't know that. 75% of our budget comes from the listeners. Yes. 75% Yeah, at least. At least



29:43

we get a huge, huge amount.



29:47

But like I said by the year 2000 It's going to be 100%. Yeah.



29:51

And, and we do we do our part here. Everybody can always do more but everybody You hear hear on Saturday nights, from midnight to three on after hours is here of their own volition. Nobody's getting paid for this.



30:08

Can you imagine a radio station that's run by only five full time employees and two part time employees and everybody else is volunteer. That's incredible.



30:21

Everybody else's Jimmy Jimmy does everything else. He changes his voice a lot.



30:27

Yes. Jimmy, is the Mary Ramirez experience.



30:34

So not what kind of what kind of premium?



30:39

Oh, you're gonna talk premiums, aren't you? And I can't find that. I warn me. You gotta warn me when you get a bumper. Okay. Okay, for \$35 for a \$35 pledge, calling in your support. On KPFT. We have a we have a bumper sticker with the the multicolored KPFT logo.



30:58

For \$60. It's a t shirt. And it's the new design. It's red, white, and blue. It's it's a Texas license plate with KPFT on it. And for \$90. You can get two T shirts or a CD case. For \$150.



31:15

We have the KPFT briefcase, it's got the KPFT logo on it. It's really fab \$75 We still have that spring water. That 16 ounce bottle spray.



31:28

You see yes, it's fabulous deal. It's a fabulous deal. It is



31:33

and I'm still looking for that \$500 leadership circle. That would be great. That would really be great. And that you get like a CD among you get tickets, you get invites to special party CRTs studio with



31:48

Jimmy Yeah, well event. And this is a two bedroom house. And many other benefits. That's right. If you're if you're gonna be after the tour with Jimmy, if



32:03

you pledge all those other amounts 6090 150 or 75, you get a date with Scott, if you are in the leadership circle, you don't get a date with Scott,



32:13

which would encourage them greatly to get in the leadership. Leadership circle.



32:17



32:17

Scott, do you have that marked new Martha wash?



32:19

Do you want to play that now?



32:20

Why don't we play



32:21

that and while you're playing that one of the things that we did leave out is the number yes it is 526573852 6k P f t is the number to call and pledge your support to to let the powers that be know that this is the kind of programming that you want to continue to hear on KPFT This is the kind of station that you appreciate having in your fair city.



32:45

Nobody that pay their employees would have Jimmy behind the controls of a radio station to send in money now. This is it's not that new but I just found out about it this week. It's off The First Wives Club soundtrack it's Martha wash. I'm still standing which is



33:05

fine she just fat and sassy. Hey,



33:07

hey hey what would you say about me when we back on oh I oh I'm sorry. We're back on Tom you know if you were the sweetie Welcome back because we need to do a stage holding we have some headphones we're talking headphones dug up. We need to do we need to do station ID before we get going where those headphones and you always know what's going on. We need to tell picky we need to tell the people that they are listening to 90.1 FM KPFT Houston and 89.1 ke O 's in College Station and consider



33:37

a pledge we are here talking with with with two indeed when I say special guest they truly are. And we're talking with Doug up church and you have your companion with you and you have not introduced him come over here to the microphone and introduce your companion This



33:59

is my partner have going on about three years now. Tyler Reeves we actually met over the internet. And he's here with me providing a little moral support. Hi there.



34:10

And and in our other indeed verse by some gas and we're glad is Doug's father, Don up church. And we're going to try to we're going to turn to a little bit of the conversation over to Don and and we do have several questions. I it Jimmy out there. YES. Jimmy, you want to desk ask a couple questions here and so feel free to do so there one.



34:42

Yeah, I wanted to direct a couple of questions to Don, about how he reacted to his son's coming out and how he felt and what what went through his mind.



34:56

With me. Doug came out to us as an adult and We had dealt with a lot of his troubles and we'd seen him grow up carefully. And



35:11

did you have any idea? Well, sure.



35:13

I mean, that's the thing when you when you through through his teenage years, he was he was always a unique individual. He was very studious. He was very intelligent he and he, but he didn't like the athletic things. And so you don't know whether your child is just tends to be not athletic and tends to be more intellectual and artistic are if that, does that mean that they're gay? And you don't know and you don't want to ask as a parent. And, and as a, as a, I guess, program to parent if you will. You, you'd have your expectations and you keep those expectations that everything's gonna be just the way you thought it was gonna be, you know, wife and two children and live happily ever after. So you keep that in your mind and you think that he's just artistic or more intellectually inclined, that's. But you always wonder, well, maybe



36:24

Don Whittington, but when he came out to you now, now I have heard several parents say, Well, we have to come out the closet to maybe that's a little difficult for me to understand because because really, my parents never did except dogs. But that one either. Okay, that was

their problem, not mine. But, but did you also have problems dealing with Don?



36:50

Well, I didn't have a particular problem in my relationship with Doug.



36:56

His we have a problem with him being gay.



36:59

His mother and I love him very much. And we use the same individual that that we knew and love the day before he told us he was gay.



37:07

Okay. Can you repeat that? Because there's a lot of people out there that need to hear that.



37:12

Doug is is the same wonderful individual. The day after he told us he was gay, as he was the day before he told us he was gay. And it's just inconceivable to his mother and I knew that, that we would reject Him as our son simply because of this factor, which he had nothing to do with. This was just, you know, the nature of his life what his orientation is, but a lot of parents have. Certainly a lot of a lot of people don't want to think about these things to the degree that they try to understand.



37:54

Don't if, if a if a young brother and sister out there would contact PFLAG and say, I'm wanting to come out. I've come out to my parents are having a hard time. What can PFLAG do to help ease that? That process?



38:14

PFLAG can support their parents more than they can the youth PFLAG by virtue of our does that is super important. Yeah, it deals with people aged over 18 years of age. So PFLAG addresses the parents in the in the adult