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gay, parents, friends, homosexuality, people, lesbians, sexual orientation, life, family, child, sexuality, fear, coming, accept, hear, concern, heterosexual, young, decided, relationship

SPEAKERS

Harvey Milk, Jimmy Carper, Roger



00:01

Texas Zydeco band, and special guests interested, then call 526 4000. For more information, and practice your room and join us at KPFT sixth annual Cajun gumbo cook on Sunday, April 8 Pick up some counties while the Hall Park and Lake City off highway three south of NASA road one entry deadline is Wednesday, April 4.



00:21

There is a crippling disease that no amount of medical research can cure. No amount of fundraising by telephones can prevent a disease most often transmitted from parent to child, and unchecked in its early stages can be fatal. The disease is called racism. It's early symptom is the belief that one's racial group is somehow superior to others. In advanced stages, the symptoms of racism are violence, death and destruction. A cure however, exists. It's a non surgical change of heart. It takes time, effort and understanding compassion, forgiveness, respect. Let us agree today that in our homes, in our hearts and in our lives, we will all promote and encourage racial harmony, unity and understanding this message in support of racial unity was brought to you by the by faith.



Roger 01:45

A way of love, a way of life. This is Roger. And I'm written from chapter five family relationships. And I would like to dedicate this chapter tonight to Frank and to all the other young gay and lesbian people who really need this chapter tonight. This chapter is written primarily for teenage lesbians and gays, all of whom are deeply concerned about being gay, how being gay will affect their important relationships. We hope that non gay readers will also learn that coming out means what coming out means to an individual. In this way, they can understand what their own gay family members and friends are going through so that they can be helpful to them. Young gays invariably struggle with whether or not to share knowledge of their sexual orientation, with family or friends. Certainly, being honest about being gay seems to have some obvious advantages. It eliminates the need to live a double life. Always been on guard to keep

the big secret. under wraps can take a lot of effort and imagination, not to mention outright deception. We all try to be reasonably honest and truthful with those we love. The price we often pay for hiding our sexual orientation is to grow apart from family and friends as we erect a barrier between us and them. Under these circumstances, existing relationships can become strained. leading a double life can be unsatisfactory. Nevertheless, many gays feel that perhaps it is better this way, at least for the present. As one young man notes, the very worst thing is to be closeted. A teenager will become a loner that way, even if he or she lives with a family. I mean, living two lives, always hiding. Hiding isn't living. It's frustrating. Yet being openly gay can be just as hard to handle. Heterosexual mentalities, especially those of parents are genuine, generally not capable of understanding facts considered routine by gays. To them. Our sexuality is aberrant, even obscene. No wonder so many gays avoid being open with the straight world as much as possible. Many gays solve the coming out dilemma by selectively telling some people but not others. Frequently, gays come out to one parent, but not to the other, or two brothers and sisters, but not to parents. Similarly, gays may reveal their homosexuality to social friends, but not to friends at work. Weighing risks against possible benefits. Gays decide which friends or relatives to be honest with. There are understandable reasons For all this caution in coming out, risks involved are real. Parents reactions, of course, are of primary concern. Young lesbians and gays are reluctant to burden their parents with the trauma of learning about their sons or daughters homosexuality, not infrequently, parents are shocked and deeply hurt by such a revelation. In addition to sparing parents this difficult personal experience, young gay sometimes fear that the possibility of a harsh negative reaction, parental rejection or retaliation is genuinely threatening and hard to live with emotionally. In addition, parents can exert direct economic and legal sanctions, which can radically affect the lives of young gays. Coming out to a friend can pose equally difficult questions. The friend may be shocked and hurt, but the worst fear is that the friend might not be trustworthy, and one sexual orientation might become the subject of malicious gossip, gossip. Gays and lesbians know that even self acceptance does not come easily. They expect that acceptance from others may be equally difficult. No wonder than that so much anxiety may develop one young gays ask themselves whether they should come out to family or friends. It isn't easy to design decide when and how or even if they should tell their parents. Gay adolescents also worry that they may lose their best friendships after revealing their sexual orientation. But proceeding with caution, and reason for thought young gays can determine what answers are best for their particular situation. Deciding whether or not to come out to parents? And if so when is something to be considered carefully. The following are some questions you ought to ask yourself. What is the nature of your present relationship with your parents? How close are you and how well? Do you communicate with one another? How do you perceive your relationship with your family? How do you perceive your relationship with your family five years from now? How financially dependent Are you upon your parents right now? What will this situation be like five years from now? How open are your parents to new ideas on controversial subjects? What do you know already? Have their ideas about homosexuality from casual comments or conversations? How comfortable are your parents with their own sexuality? Well coming out to your parents ultimately strengthen your relationship. While such an objective, examination of possibilities may seem cold, you have a lot at stake at risking honesty with your sexual orientation. Many parents are quite capable of growing and acceptance of a son or daughter's homosexuality, but others react very negatively. Reprisals have varied from forced visits to psychiatrists to throwing a son or daughter out of the home and withdrawing financial support. While such extreme reactions are no longer common, they do occur and have caused much suffering and hardship for young gays. Let's look at a range of reactions from parents. Brandy relates why she thinks telling her parents can be the wrong choice. I realized I was a lesbian very early. I was totally confused about it. I made the biggest mistake of my life, telling my parents they told me that I couldn't possibly be a homosexual.

Because homos were sick. I refuse to accept their opinions and insisted I was gay. So they placed me under a psychiatrist treatment. After a year, I was convinced I was a heterosexual. I spent the next two years hating myself and the rest of the world. I tried to get involved with church activities, but I only became depressed and frightened. Last year I came out again to myself, but did everything possible to hide my gayness from my family. I found the phone number of the Detroit gay liberation in the phonebook and called their rap line and attended a few meetings of their youth group. I'm now 17 I suppose my life isn't bad for gay youth. Sure, High School in deceiving my parents are hell. But I go out with other lesbians occasionally and still attend youth group, I have my sanity. Life is bearable because of the rap line and the group. I am not totally alone. My advice to other gays, contact the gay liberation group in your city and ask about a youth group. Don't come out to your parents or friends until after your 18th birthday. Jim from Atlanta, waited until he was 18. But still found telling his parents was not easy. I knew I was gay from when I was a junior in high school. But I had not come out to my parents about being gay. I had wanted to on many occasions, but decided to wait. After all, there was no real need to rush this business. I knew that once I turned 18 I would tell them and I did. My mother took the noose hard. She said that I was sick and should see a doctor and I had better change. My father said little I told them how hard it was for me to tell them, but I had to. As time has passed, my parents have still not totally accepted me. But they have come a long way so far. My mother still says she hopes I will go back to normal. I asked her what is normal is the straight guy on drugs down the block normal. I feel that in time she will accept me. As it stands now. I am her homosexual son. Although I was just her son up to when I came out. Tim from Western West Virginia told his parents and he found them to be supportive. My Being gay doesn't interfere with my belief in God, or the way my parents treat me. My family understands my homosexuality, and they don't put me down because of it. A lot of people think it's nasty and dirty. But it is a way of love and a way of life. My parents always told us to come to them if we needed to talk. They listened to how I felt. They said that I was I would always be their son, and that they loved me. Jeanette to found that her mother was ready to stand beside her and could accept her. The first positive thing that happened was when I read a good book about being gay, my heart filled with hope that I could work things out. I was so tired of hiding my true self, to from others. I told my close friends and my mother and telling my mother was the hardest thing I ever did. But she loves me. And I think, I think love. But she loves me and I think loves me even more for my courage and strength to tell her. If you're thinking of telling your parents, it might be wise to put yourself in their shoes and imagine some of the fears and concerns that they may have fear, guilt, and shame and a sense of failure or common emotions, which parents feel first when they learned their child's homosexuality. They often ask themselves where they went wrong. They fear what all this might mean for your life and future happiness. They may worry about what other family members or friends may think. Those who are rigidly traditional may have a value system, which insists that your homosexuality be condemned and questionably. Parents of gays are as much victims of anti gay prejudice as are their children. Those psychiatrists who believe homosexuals to be sick, have advanced, much publicized theories which stress that the cause of this sickness is a distorted relationship with one or both parents. As a result, parents of gays often feel that they are to blame for their sons or daughters homosexuality. If you're coming out to your parents, be aware of this concern, and be prepared to show them that such theories are unproven. Scientific research has yet to discover the causes of sexual orientation, whether heterosexual, bisexual, or homosexual. Gays come from all types of family backgrounds, and from all ethnic groups with varying traditions of child rearing. Clearly at this time, all we can say is that we don't know what influence if any, the family has in relation to homosexuality. In addition, it is useful to emphasize that regardless of how it happened, you are gay. Speculation over why It leads nowhere. Instead, communicate your acceptance of your sexual orientation. indicate that you are the same person you have always been. You haven't changed by coming out. You have just shared some important

information about your family, about yourself. Finally, tell your parents that you love them. That and that you want their support. Coming out to parents is often very, very emotional experience. Thus, choose your time appropriately. If your home is already beset with some problem, it would probably be wise to postpone coming out. The news of your homosexuality may be very hard on the family and coming out should not be clouded with other unresolved issues. Expect some tears and perhaps some anger. You should try to remain calm, open and honest. If the situation gets too hot, hot, walk away. But don't close any doors to future communication suggest that the discussion can resume when everyone is less upset. Because coming out to parents is so emotionally charged. Many gays prefer to wait until they are no longer living at home. When gays have some distance from their family and have achieved some independence, many decide to come out in a letter to their parents. This approach has some particular advantages. A letter permits you to plan what you want to say and then to write it and rewrite it in order to best express your thoughts and motives. The letter also gives you the chance to come out without being interrupted or cross examined. Similarly, it gives your parents a chance to react and to think before responding. There are several books and pamphlets directed to parents of gays, which you might send along with your letter. This material may help them to see how other families have handled similar situations. The very least it can do is establish the fact that other parents have gone through a similar experience. Coming out involves more than simply making an announcement. Coming out to parents means a commitment on your part to helping them understand you as a gay person. There will be many questions. These should all be carefully heard and answered. Unless a question seems either insulting or an invasion of your privacy. Many questions will naturally reflect a loving parents concern for how your homosexuality will affect the rest of your life. Parents will be particularly worried about how this will affect your employment and career options. They may also wonder how you feel about not having children. Or they may express disappointment that you will never make them grandparents. They will wonder what your friends are like, or if there is someone special in your life. The questions may be hard, you don't have to have all the answers. Nevertheless, once you have started the process of coming out to parents, you have an obligation to stick it out and hear their concerns. It takes two sides to communicate. In some families, brothers and sisters may also be affected and consider coming out. This is particularly true. If your siblings are about your age or younger. You can expect that they to know little about homosexuality, and will no doubt have questions of their own. They may wonder if they will also grow up to be gay. They may fear that their friends will reject them because of your sexuality. Here as elsewhere by being sensitive to the feelings of others, you can usually allay their fears as you let them know what your gayness means to you. It might be wise to involve parents in the timing of your coming out to your brothers and sisters, especially if they are much younger. So some gays are forward into direct with their families about their sexuality. Others choose not to come out but do live their lives fairly openly, letting their families draw their own conclusions. This indirect method of neither hiding nor lying yet not pushing issue works very well for many gays who take this approach believe their parents must know about them. Yet everyone is spared the emotional trauma of having to consciously deal with the situation. Granted, it is a compromise that many find this alternative to coming out a workable solution. It worked for Milly, who is a sophomore at a community college in our hometown. Although I came out at school, I didn't get home. I chose not to, mainly because I didn't want to hurt my parents. I'm sure my mother knows. But if I told her, I don't think either of us could handle it. At least not while we're living at the same house. aunts and grandmothers keep asking me if I have a boyfriend. But my immediate family never inquires into my love life, probably because they're afraid to. Coming out to your family can be accomplished in any number of ways. If you decide to come out to them, it is your affair, how best to handle it. Don't feel obliged to choose one way or another just because a gay friend or trusted counselor makes some specific suggestions. You know your SAT family situation better than they do. There is

one more aspect of coming out to think about your motives may be more negative than positive. If you do not yet feel good about your sexual feelings, you may want to blame someone else for them. In such a situation, turn to someone who can help you rather than adding to the problem. Using your sexuality to hurt anyone is wrong. We hope that the next chapter will be useful if you need to ask for help. If you don't have any, have a concerned caring, motivated motive behind you're communicating your gayness to your family or friends, then you need to re examine your reasons for coming out. We suggest that sharing knowledge of your homosexuality is appropriate only when it is a sincere attempt to improve a relationship. Maintaining friends is essential to all of us, particularly during adolescence. At this time, young people begin to assert their own independence from their families, and to strive to develop their own adult identity. It is a time of growing and testing, which young people usually work out among their peers. exploring new ideas, freedoms and opportunities, as well as developing self reliance and a healthy value system are all part of the challenges of adolescence. In high school, emphasis on dating and heterosexual development is particularly intense. In crowds develop, no one wants to be left out. Some differences are tolerated, and there is usually a group for most everyone to belong to. But there are limits. Young lesbians and gays want to avoid the possibility of social ostracism and reticle if they ridicule if they come out. Alice from Connecticut had a very bad experience when she decided to confide in a friend at school. Her experience was a nightmare that many young gays fear. As I grew older, I tried to express my true inner self to others, and was only hit in the face with awful and painful rejection. Before I knew it, the whole high school had heard and I had tried to express my feelings. I had tried to express my feelings to a girl in school whom I liked. I wrote her letter, and she told everyone I meant no harm. I was only hoping to gain her understanding. Well, all the discrimination and weird glances followed. After that, my whole life came tumbling down. My dreams were crushed. I became emotionally drained and physically as well as mentally exhausted. Finally, I started to get get a little together. I tried very hard to find a lesbian friend but failed. I even went up to one girl who I was almost positive was gay and tried to share my problems. She became filled with fear that I was that it was all a scheme to get her to admit it. She pushed me away and also share it in the gossip. That's when I threw in the towel and stop trying to find someone here. I'm 16 years old, and I feel like 100 Alice is unfortunate experience is hardly true for everyone. The present climate of knowledge about homosexuality is making it somewhat easier for people to accept gays Jack, who is now a junior in high school illustrates how many young gays in their friends cope with the coming out process. Being gay is starting up is starting to use up a lot of time and introspective thought, just on the fact of my being gay. It's all mostly enjoyable, even if it sounds somewhat ridiculous, since I haven't done anything yet. I decided to tell my best friend Richard, we had been talking about being gay. And he asked, Are you or are you planning on being? I hesitated and said, in all probability, I will be. It's amazing the amount of physical effort it took to get that in all probability out to simply say yes, was totally impossible. It took Richard a long time to recover from the shock. After all, he assumed that gays lived in San Francisco, or New York, not here in Montana. He certainly never thought there could be one in his English class. But he soon realized I was the same person I had been before. We're still best friends. telling friends about your gayness requires the same planning and preparation that tellem parents does. It's important to consider why you want to share your share this with your friend. While you're coming out, strengthen this friendship. carefully choose the best way to discuss the subject. Tell your friend that you expect the conversation to remain confidential. anticipate how he or she might react, what fears or concerns might be expressed. Be prepared to help them accept the news as you would a family member. And important thing to remember is that a friend who can't accept you as you really are is no friend at all. feeling strong and good about yourself is essential and coming out because it helps protect you from rejection. If a friend reacts negatively to your coming out, you can end the friendship or you can try to maintain and strengthen it. Help your friend to see

that, that homosexuality is for you a natural expression of your sexuality as heterosexuality is for others, friends who are sincerely concerned about what you about you will be supportive when they understand more about gayness and about your feelings. Perhaps two special concerns of friends should be mentioned. One is fear of guilt by association. Friends may worry that if it becomes generally known that you're gay, they too might be thought of as gay. How your friends deal with this problem is their responsibility, not yours, but you should be aware of this concern and help them when possible. The second concern is one that may be felt by same sex friends you come out to they may wonder how your sexuality will influence their friends your friendship. Put more directly, they may wonder if you are sexually interested in them. If you sense this concern, try to deal with it directly. And honestly, this issue can easily be resolved by communicating to your friend exactly why you have decided to come out to him or her. As you've as we've mentioned before, coming out is a process that occurs over a period of years, coming out to yourself to the gay community and perhaps to family, friends, fellow classmates or co workers. It's sometime it's something that proceeds as you go as you grow and acceptance and ease with your gay identity. The value of coming out for you can be measured directly by the lessening of anxiety grazed by trying to live a double life coming out is likewise beneficial for the gay community at large. As all people generally come to realize that they have gays in their families, schools, churches and communities. We anticipate that fear and intolerance of gays will diminish. And this way, we can move toward a day when all of us will be respected for our individual merits not prejudice because of our sexuality. And, you know, I'd like to kind of relate my own experience coming out to my parents. I came out to them two years ago. I waited until I was 28. If I had to do it all over again I Wouldn't I set my mother and father down? And my little sister? I have three older brothers, but they were out of town at the time. And I basically just told them, I was in tears, a bowl of jelly. And they said how much they love you. And



30:26

you said, if, if you had to do over again, you wouldn't. I wouldn't wait.



Roger 30:31

Okay. I wouldn't wait. I wouldn't have waited till I was 20 animal to phone them when I was 18. We work.



30:36

But I remember the day you went over there, and you were just terrified. And your mom and dad just went Okay, what else wrong? They felt. So



Roger 30:43

they said they told me I should have told them years ago. And I wish you know, I had prepared myself to lose my family. Because I did. Yeah. Because but yeah, because you did have. And you know what? A witch my mother is yes. And I guess I guess I was kind of lucky. Because

when we moved down here, 20 years ago, we move right next door to a gay man. And he was one of the nicest and most helpful people in the neighborhood. And I guess that kind of helped. My parents accept it. And because they had been familiar with it for so long,

 Jimmy Carper 31:27

that maybe a lot of it Rogers, because your parents love you no matter.

 Roger 31:31

And I know, I know. Also, I do have three older brothers, two of whom are married, and my parents do have four grandchildren. And so the pressure, you know, you know, the pressure on an only child and the only male child is really intense to have children and to find yourself an only male child and being gay, with the prospect of probably not having grandchildren. I mean, you know, there is a possibility that as long as less than that we can adopt adopt in the future. But I mean, you know, at this point, I mean, your parents will, you know, they're not going to think about that. They're gonna say, you know, we're not going to get grandchildren. But, so I'm sorry. I just wanted to

 Jimmy Carper 32:17

tell people I remember that night. I did, too, or just a bowl full of jelly. Yeah, but afterwards, he was just so relieved. And

 Roger 32:25

it's amazing. A ton of bricks was lifted off my shoulder. Why did you tell him? various reasons, I got tired of line. I mean, I was raised not to line and line and line and line for 10 years was just too much for me. And, you know, I've been working on the show here for about six months or so. And

 32:49

you could hear Harvey Milk every week every week screaming Is

 Roger 32:54

that true? Yeah, it does.

 32:57

Yeah, do you mean when you hear Harvey yelling and screaming it actually gets to you. Saying things like

 Harvey Milk 33:03

we must destroy the myths reason for shatter them. We must continue to speak out. And most importantly, most importantly, every gay person must come out difficult as it is, you must tell your immediate family you must tell your relatives you must tell your friends if indeed they are your friends. You must tell your neighbors you must tell the people you're working with you must tell the people to the stories you shot once they realize that we are indeed their children and we are indeed everywhere. Every myth every lie every innuendo will be destroyed once and for all and runs once you do you will feel so much better.

 34:09

I ask people to do one thing come out come out America come out

 34:29

more Yeah, but that's not what I want to hear. Oh,

 Jimmy Carper 34:33


you need to make me woman Marjorie

 35:01

I asked I asked people all over this country to do one thing come out come out America

 35:23

that's Kim Wilde and that's what it's all about. Natural Way love in the natural way

 Jimmy Carper 35:29

child and whatever is natural for you. These

 35:33

I was talking about that the other night with my new friend. How he said, Well, the Bible says But the Bible says that men should not people should not do what's against their nature. And if I jumped in bed with a woman, which I have never done yet yeah, anyway, bro Pat, my little friend from Arkansas. Ah, she wanted to make sure little Razorback was doing okay. Yes, I am.

And David thank you also for calling I appreciate that. Is after hours radio celebrating live from the heart of Montrose about seven minutes to four and no kidding already? Yep, it's time to go. Where to go. Hey, go get Kathleen to come here a minute to talk about her friend. I want to tell you a story. We were talking earlier about homeless people. Yeah, how there are 1000s and 1000s of them in Houston. And I have that song. I didn't think I had it.

 Jimmy Carper 36:30

But when she was asking about yeah, good, good, good. Good. Okay,

 36:44

I do have that song, baby. I wanted to make sure and you we want you to tell us about your friend. Because we were talking about homeless and not just homeless folks. But children. There are so many children that are homeless. He walked in the census. That's what's happening. Roger and I just did the census. By the way. We counted ourselves as gay couple, you can do that now. Yeah. So we were we were talking about the homeless in the census. It was just happening. And there were pictures of some people in the streets. As the census takers were taking it the recognize somebody's face. Is that right? Yes.

 37:17

In last Thursday's post, and I read both newspapers every day, and I'm as guilty as everyone else. So there are so many articles about the tragedies that affect people's lives that generally, and unfortunately, I'd been skimming them. And then last Thursday, on the front page of what the the Houston section of the post was a picture of a man, I recognized a man that I had worked with, for several years, a man that at the time I knew him, had a decent job, an adequate car, a decent apartment, a wife and a child. And then he lost his leg. Well, we kept in touch off and on for a couple of years. And then we'd heard he moved and that was about it. And there he was among the homeless. I don't know why my friend became homeless. But a bunch of us from work are going to try to find him and hope against hope that the ultimate tragedy that that befalls the homeless, hope that he is not content on the street. Hope that he is still in condition to accept help and accept love from people. That's one of the worst things that happens to the homeless, they begin in some cases to like it and accept it and have no yeah, they get caught in that rut and no desire to change it. We've been looking for him driving around looking for him. And I think the only way we're going to have any luck is just to get out there and walk among them. And I'd like to ask you folks out there. If there's nothing you can really do, okay, nobody has a long term solution. But maybe today just hold them in your heart, you know, hold them in your heart. Somebody along the way said one time, in as much as you have done it unto the least of these you have done it unto me. And it doesn't hurt to serve the poor little bit, you know,

 39:48

that's true. I was dispatching a call the other day and it was talking about a man wanted these folks to leave his business because they were eating out of his garbage and they were running off his customers. And as I sent them the leaves out to run off these folks all I could think

on his customers. And as I sent them the leaves out to run on these folks all I could think about. I'm so lucky sitting here with the job. We're gonna leave you with that thought do something not only coming out of the closet but do something for your fellow man today. Okay. See you next Sunday. I love you babies. Bye. Thanks Kathleen



40:28

from The lines on her face, you know what we forgot Mary was Thursday was Rogers birthday and I



Jimmy Carper 40:35

know really crappy about that. It was his



40:39

birthday. He hit the big three. Oh. And we didn't say



Jimmy Carper 40:43

the day too soon either.



40:45

No, no, no, no.



Jimmy Carper 40:46

Happy birthday, baby.



40:47

He didn't look like he's 30 He looks like he's about 40 or 50. Happy birthday, baby. I'll see you guys next week. I love you



41:14

just



41:39

oh yeah, if you happen to be gay and you're a cop, please call me would you mind