



# EX-GAYS

# EQUAL RIGHTS

# TOLERANCE

## WHAT IS PFOX?

Parents and Friends of Ex-Gays & Gays (PFOX) is a non-profit organization providing outreach, education, and public awareness in support of families of homosexuals. PFOX also promotes an inclusive environment for the ex-gay community, and works to eliminate negative perceptions and discrimination against former homosexuals.

## WHO ARE EX-GAYS?

Each year, thousands of people with unwanted same-sex attractions make the personal decision to leave a gay identity through gender affirming programs, including therapy, faith based ministries, and other non-judgmental environments. Their decision is one only they can make. But there are others in society who refuse to respect individual self-determination. Consequently, formerly gay men and women are often victims of hate simply because they dare to exist.

Ex-gays and their supporters should not have to be closeted for fear of other's disapproval. Ex-gays do not think something is wrong with them because they decided to fulfill their heterosexual potential. They should not be condemned for the personal decision they have made for their lives.

## WHAT DO EX-GAYS WANT?

The ex-gay movement seeks to ensure the inclusion of former homosexuals in all realms of society. Ex-gays believe that their right to self-determination should not be grounds for intolerance in any form.

Because of the abuse heaped upon them by society, former homosexuals experience discrimination at every level. When a former homosexual marries an opposite sex partner, that ex-gay is ridiculed by gays who used to be his friends. Ex-gays may also be rejected by heterosexuals if their past is known because "Once gay, always gay" is assumed.

While gays can come out of the "closet," ex-gays are forced to stay in theirs because of public prejudice. While gays gain sympathy as victims, ex-gays are criticized and face life-long intolerance for simply existing as living proof that homosexuality is not innate.

Although gay groups advocate for the rights of homosexuals, lesbians, bisexuals, and transgenders, they do not add "ex-gay" to that list. Therefore, if it were not for ex-gay organizations like PFOX, former gay men and women would have no support in an increasingly hostile environment.

## Do gay activists oppose efforts to protect the equal rights of former homosexuals?

They shouldn't, but they do. Gay advocacy groups now represent homosexuals, lesbians, bisexuals, transgenders, questioning youth, and the intersexed. The addition of ex-gays ensures tolerance for all segments of our society. PFOX is not an anti-gay organization – rather, we are a pro-ex-gay organization. All people should be treated with dignity. We respect the opinions of others, even if they disagree with us. Indeed, we do not ask for their approval – only their tolerance.

## Do I have to dislike ex-gays if I have gay friends or family?

No! You can have friends who are gay and other friends who are ex-gay. Befriending the ex-gay community does not mean that you are being disloyal to the gay people you know and love. Some in society reject ex-gays and homosexuals who do not embrace same-sex behavior. This rejection is a form of heterophobia that can be overcome with education and outreach. Individuals who pursue alternatives to homosexuality should not be objects of discrimination or ridicule. \_