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TO: Clf Prison Ministry, The

SUBJECT: MP 93 Some more clarity

DATE: 09/22/2016 08:41:14 AM

mp 93 Some More Clarity 9-21-16

This past week gave me a little more clarity. I felt really depressed so I reflected on what I felt prior to the depression. I felt anxious about trying to start intimate relationships. It reminded me about how I did feel when I separated from my wife. I was overwhelmed by anxiety about seeing people particularly starting to see guys. I knew I wanted to too, but my experience with my first boyfriend who was my only male/male relationship really is not very reassuring. I did not feel very confident sexually and felt fearful and anxious. Also the process would mean I would be outing myself. I had lived a closeted life for so long, coming out would be a real sea change mentally.

The feelings became so over the top that I stuffed them and denied them. I created a false story to make myself feel better - that I really wanted to go back to my wife. The truth of my fear and anxiety, I swept under the rug. So there is shame for not facing my fears. There is guilt of dragging my wife and Max through more time in an unsatisfying marriage. There is grief about not leaving another relationship when I knew I should (first my boyfriend then my wife). Finally grief for staying closeted (my bisexuality) for so long.

All emotions were ignored with a more comforting story. It was not long before my porn obsession started to help keep the feelings of shame, guilt and grief safely under wraps. Previously I tied the porn to distracting me from just the older issues of grief of staying in an unhealthy relationship with my boyfriend. Which is certainly part of it, but I realized the same feelings washed over me (fear and anxiety over sexual expression and coming out of the closet) that I had more current feelings I was trying to repress not just older issues that I was stuffing.

So with these thoughts I contemplated addressing these issues when I leave prison. I am glad I have 18 months to work on it here before I go home. I do not want to be back in the same situation after all these years. But the truth is I will not be because I am not the same person. I have much greater ability to hold my fears and anxiety and the courage to act in my best interests anyway.

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