

**Courage** offers spiritual support and fellowship for men and women 18 years and older with same-sex attractions who are striving to live chaste lives.

## The Five Goals of Courage:

1. To live chaste lives in accordance with the Roman Catholic Church's teaching on homosexuality.
2. To dedicate our entire lives to Christ through service to others, spiritual reading, prayer, meditation, individual spiritual direction, frequent attendance at Mass, and the frequent reception of the sacraments of Reconciliation and the Holy Eucharist.
3. To foster a spirit of fellowship in which we may share with one another our thoughts and experiences and so ensure that none of us has to face the problems of homosexuality alone.
4. To be mindful of the truth that chaste friendships are not only possible but necessary in chaste Christian life, and to encourage one another in forming and sustaining these friendships.
5. To live lives that may serve as good examples/role models to others.

*"I'm so grateful for the fellowship and moral support I've found through Courage. Where else could I find people who love the Lord and the teaching of the Church, and who also know what it's like to be tempted by same-sex attractions? Courage helps me to keep striving for chastity with patience and hope."*

—Catherine, *Courage* member

## **"Courage is doing the work of God!"**

St. Pope John Paul II, *The Great*

For more information contact the central *Courage* office:

*Courage* International, Inc.  
8 Leonard Street  
Norwalk, CT, 06850 USA  
Phone: 203-803-1564  
Email: NYCourage@aol.com  
Website: [www.couragerc.org](http://www.couragerc.org)

**Archdiocese of San Antonio Chapter  
Fr. Richard M. Samour - Chaplain**  
HotLine: (210) 996-1371  
[rmscouragea@gmail.com](mailto:rmscouragea@gmail.com)  
[www.couragesatx.org](http://www.couragesatx.org)

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*I've had these feelings for so long—keeping them hidden, afraid to speak out. . . .*

*What if it's true?*

*What if I am "gay"?*



## **WHERE DO I GO FROM HERE?**

**A Guide for Young Adults Experiencing Same-Sex Attractions (SSA)**



## “Why do some people have these feelings?”

- ❖ Having same-sex attractions (SSA) is usually not a choice. God loves you regardless of your sexual attractions. You will always be His child.
- ❖ Sexuality develops and changes over many years. The fact that a person feels same-sex attractions now does not mean those feelings will continue.
- ❖ It’s important that we avoid labeling ourselves as “gay,” “lesbian,” or “bisexual.” We are much more than our sexual attractions! Sexuality is an important part of who we are, but first we are persons, men and women in Christ, children of God.
- ❖ Persons with SSA are often isolated and feel shame and confusion. LGBT groups may seem to offer a sense of acceptance and comfort, but they will not challenge you to understand your *true* identity in Jesus Christ.
- ❖ We are children of God, created with free will. Our sexual attractions are often not chosen and should not be the cause of shame or guilt. It’s important to remember that while who we are attracted to may not be our choice; what we **DO** with those attractions **IS!**

## “Shouldn’t someone just accept that he or she is ‘gay’?”

The tidal wave of misinformation about sexuality that is crashing down on our world is hurting people. We must always distinguish the “person” from the “inclination” and the “actions” of that person.

Inaccurate information and misguided compassion perpetuate ignorance and can make people with SSA believe that they do not have free will to determine how they define themselves, and that they don’t have the ability to live chaste lives.

By resisting the “gay” or “lesbian” label, we assert our personhood and reject the notion that our sexual inclinations define us.

## “What can we do with these feelings?”

**Acknowledge them!** Sexuality is an important part of who we are, but we are so much more than our sexual inclinations!

**Chastity**—striving to do God’s will in the area of our sexuality—can ultimately bring inner peace; it helps us love God, ourselves, and others aright. Chastity requires self-knowledge and self-mastery but it does lead to human freedom and joy.

**You are not alone!** It’s important to stay connected to others who welcome us as we are and who understand our struggle

as we strive to understand SSA and strengthen our relationship with God.

## “What does the future hold?”

As young adults who experience same-sex attractions, we do have options, even if they may seem difficult and challenging at first.

- **God Loves Us:** We are beloved children of God, regardless of our desires or inclinations.
- **God Permits Us To Make Choices:** We are born with free will. Our emotions are good, but they must be guided by intellect and reason.
- **God Is With Us:** And with His Grace, He has promised that any hardship can be overcome, if we choose to seek Him first.

If you’ve been away from the Church, come back! Talk to the Lord; He is waiting for you!

The Church does **not** reject persons with SSA; all persons with SSA have a right to be welcomed into the Church community. We come to the Church **as we are**, with the intention and desire to do God’s will.

Visit the *Courage* website for more information about choosing a life of chastity.

**“You shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free” (John 8:32).**