

# The Man's Contribution in Forming His Own Sexual Identity

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In the present article we undertake identification and analysis of the role played by the conscious decisive factor in forming male homosexuality. We point to the determinants of homosexuality: disturbed family relationships, a latent erotic relationship with the mother, and mental elimination of the father. At the same time we notice that at the foundation of this relationship there is a certain conscious volitional element of the will to stay in an erotic relationship with the mother. We present this specific relationship with the mother as seen in seemingly trivial, sometimes symbolic events. We show how bringing this erotic relationship to light causes the man to change his perception of himself and of the surrounding world. The description and the conclusions that have been drawn are based on our work with a thirty-year-old client of the Marital and Family Counseling Services in Lublin, Poland, who participated in therapy for two years. All the data making it possible to identify the client have been removed.

*Keywords:* homosexuality, Oedipus complex, enmeshment, disturbed family relationships, awareness

In his psychoanalytical theory of personality, Sigmund Freud points out that every behavior has its motivation that, firstly, is hidden from us (repressed into the unconscious), and, secondly, has an inner character (Freud, 2003; Zimbardo & Gerring, 2012, p. 578). This is a statement that may seem in opposition to the arguments based on reference to environmental factors. These motivations point to the fact that an unsatisfied need of a relationship with the father and being thrown out of the men's world can be the source of male homosexuality. This inflicts a wound upon an adolescent boy who, by entering homosexuality, hopes to cement his relationship with his father. Hence this theory stresses relational and environmental factors; it points to elements of the family system: a dominating mother and a withdrawn father (Nicolosi, 2009).

In the present article we are trying, on the one hand, to make a revision of the theory of relational-environmental determinants of homosexuality. On the other hand, we want to draw the reader's attention to and stress the fact that at the base of forming an unwanted homosexual orientation there is also a whole series of personal decisions. We base our study on an analysis of our patient Stanisław's motivations: he remains in a close relationship with his mother, one that excludes his father. While in our previous article we first of all pointed to the factors that constitute homosexuality (Szopiński, 2017a),

in this writing we want to go a step further, in order to show that at the source of homosexuality there is a series of presumably conscious decision-making acts.

When Stanisław was growing up he was very closely connected with his mother, and consequently even as an adult he visited her frequently and maintained her garden. He has both sisters and brothers. He felt helpless in the face of compulsive masturbation connected with watching pornography and casual physical homosexual contacts. His motivation to start psychotherapeutic work on himself was religiously determined, as he belonged to a religious community and he was a practicing Catholic. Psychotherapeutic sessions were continued for two years with several breaks. One of the last sessions was a breakthrough for him, as the subtle and latent erotic relationship between him and his mother made itself evident by a dream that horrified him. The client confirmed that the way the therapist had provided guidance had led him to understand the core of his problem, and, contrary to all previously started and given-up therapies, this one has revealed his enmeshment in the erotic relationship with his mother that he had not realized earlier.

What is worth noting is that our paper is based only on our client's perception of his parental relationship and his feelings. We do not present here the father's perception nor his feelings. That is why we do not invoke the father's arguments.

## Separation from the Mother as the Foundation of Forming Male Sexual Identity

Formation of sexual identity is a long and difficult process that is sensitive to all kinds of disturbances. One of the best-known theories of sexual identity formation is Freud's theory based on the so-called dissolution of the Oedipus complex. At its foundation lies the assumption that a positive image of the father is the material for establishing moral principles for a boy who is being supported by his father's authority, by his father's knowledge, and by the cognitive contents concerning the proper patterns of behavior the father hands down (Freud, 2014, p. 174). This theory was repeatedly criticized, first of all in feminist circles (Coward, 1984; Mitchell 1993). However, it has become the foundation of other theories of sexual identity. One of them is Chodorov's (1978) theory of cultural gender identity.

Contrary to Freud, Chodorov recognized not so much the relationship with the father, but rather the relationship with the mother as the one that develops sexual identity. In her opinion a child in his early stage of life is strongly connected with his mother because it is she who best satisfies his needs. Moreover, a child in the early stage of his development believes that his needs are identical with the needs of his mother (Balint, 1982, pp. 56–57). For him the relationship is natural, as it is formed since the moment of conception. What is more, the fact that the relationship lasts from the moment of conception gives a boy an illusory conviction that his relationship with his mother will always be as strong and the focal relationship as it is in the early stage of development. At this stage he believes naively that the only thing that may change in this relationship is perhaps the form of the relationship—from a childish one to one in which he and his mother will be partners—but he believes the strength of the relationship or its exclusive form will not

change. However, as the boy becomes mature, his relationship with his mother has to be broken, the goal being, firstly, acquiring the sense of his feelings being something different from his mother's feelings, his needs not being her needs. Secondly, this break forms in him a sense of his own separateness and independence from his mother (Giddens, 2012, p. 131). In the child's consciousness the process of being separated from his mother is sometimes painful. It is equated with being rejected by the mother, being hurt, and it appears to be a certain kind of disturbance of the former relationship. It introduces the child into a world of uncertainty, pain, and a sense of loss (Balint, 1982, pp. 56–57).

What should be stressed, however, according to Chodorov's theory, is that the process of being separated—freeing oneself from the special bond between the child and the mother—proceeds in a different way in the case of boys and in the case of girls. Girls, because of the identity of their sex, remain more closely tied to the mother; however, a lack of a break of the bond between a girl and her mother when the girl grows up may result in dependence on the identity of another person—another woman or man. This psychological rule explains a greater frequency of the occurrence of male homosexuality.

Boys need a radical separation—being freed from the only and unique relationship with the mother. They develop their masculinity by negating what is feminine. Hence also in their adult life they are more predisposed towards activity, action, achieving, at the cost of understanding themselves, their emotions, and working out the ability to establish their own relationships (Giddens, 2012, p. 131). This is why a man's life is often accompanied by *alexithymia* (Greek: *lexus*—word; *thymus*—emotions)—a lack of words or definitions of the experienced emotions. It is the inability to recognize and cope with them in a constructive way (Wexler, 2008, p. 55).

The meaning of the above-mentioned separation was stressed in the past by practicing the so-called rites of passage (initiation rites). In primitive cultures these initiations played a very significant psychological-social role (Wargacki, 2006, p. 283). The rites allowed for consciously forming manhood, building his courage and valor. These rites strengthened his strong will, gave him a sense of efficiency, facilitated making decisions, and what is most important—they allowed him to be free of emotional dependence on his mother and to satisfy the inborn need to be a man. From the sociological point of view, they integrated him socially, and from the symbolic point of view, they allowed him to understand the cultural reality in which he was to live. “And finally, the rites are recognition of masculinity, they are a kind of a lodestar, owing to which we find the way on the edge of self-confidence and being lost, on the edge of being a boy and being a man” (Wargacki, 2006, p. 292).

Hence, entering manhood, being separated from what is feminine, in a natural way is joined with the experience of pain, even some suffering, and with a sense of being abandoned and of loneliness. It is because growth and every kind of development happens by a trial of pain, by tolerating it with some effort, with leaving the zone of safety, of warmth, of what is known and entering what is mysterious, dangerous, unknown—as what is masculine appears to a child in just this way. The bond between the child and the mother is formed from the moment of conception. When a child is born, he is tied with his mother (the umbilical cord). He does not have to establish a relationship with her because it already exists. It is different in the case of the father. The father as a symbol of masculinity appears to the child in this configuration as someone different, separate, mysterious, severe, or even alien. A relationship with him is not formed in a natural way, but it requires

building (Biddulph, 2015). However, it is the only way to form masculinity, and if it is not done in the proper time, when masculine identity is formed, in his adult life such a man will never be self-reliant, strong, able to endure pain, to make decisions and to take their consequences.

This first pain that produces a man is described in a literary way by Kosztolanyi in *Skylark*: “I became a man when I saw my grandpa dead, my grandpa, whom at that time, as a ten-year-old, I loved most. I am also a poet, an artist, a thinker since that time. A striking difference that there is between a living man and a dead one, a difference that is expressed in the silence of death, made me realize that I had to do something. I started to write poetry” (Kosztolanyi, 2007). No doubt this pain is not sufficient for the whole life. This is why Hemingway in *The Old Man and the Sea* describes a man whose essence is physical effort, sweat, muscles, aching body, raw fish, and exhaustion (Tyrmand, 1993, p. 186).

Today there is a very clear lack of conditions facilitating the formation of male traits. It used to be hunting, struggle, hard physical work, and more struggle. Today the computer world does not help in the formation of masculinity (Burdieu, 2001). In turn, the world of women is becoming more and more attractive.

### **The Realization with the Mother: Exclusiveness, Infantilization, and Idealization**

Our client describes his relationship with his mother in terms of emotional closeness. He has really positive feelings for her. He describes her as tender, sensitive, caring, warm-hearted, and close. Also it is not surprising that the client’s positive feelings towards his mother translate into a positive image of anything that is “maternal” (coming from his mother). His mother’s family is also

perceived as closer and “better,” which raises more positive emotions.

Hence here we have a reversed symmetry of Stanisław’s relationship with his mother with respect to his relationship with his father: a very positive picture of his mother and a very negative one of his father. What is more, the client characterizes this relationship with his mother in terms of “a special relationship,” the only one that is in a way exclusive. He confesses that his mother was someone exceptional and the only one—full of feelings and warmth. So he defines himself as someone who has a strong bond with his mother, as “the son of the mother loved by the mother.”

Let us analyze each of the words mentioned in the subtitle.

### *Exclusiveness*

Our client feels that his relationship with his mother is the only one of its kind, full of love and mutual understanding, or even fusion. He states that between him and his mother there is no great separation. In effect he transfers this unique and well-known relationship also to other women.

Such a sense of exclusiveness of the relationship between the mother and the son is formed in a situation of enmeshment, in which it is the father who, for some reason, either removes himself from the marital subsystem, or is removed from the family system by the partner, and someone better takes his place. He is the son who can satisfy his mother’s needs better and more adequately, at the same time becoming her mental partner (Szopiński, 2017, p. 97). In psychoanalysis this situation is called “the Oedipus complex.” In our client’s relationship with his mother is also the element of a lack of separateness characteristic of the early childhood stage, in which the child identifies his feelings with those of the mother (Balint, 1982, p. 56). Hence we are dealing here with the situation of staying at the stage of early childhood permanently.

### *Infantilization*

Staying in such a relational configuration requires from our client adopting certain defense mechanisms because staying in the aforementioned relationship consistently would have to lead him to fully adopting the role of the mother’s partner, which—due to the son–mother relationship—cannot take place at the conscious level (Kutter, 1998; Szopiński, 2017). Moreover, a child who is not separated from his mother is convinced that his relationship with his mother will always be so close as at the time of his childhood (Balint, 1982, p. 57). However, as he grows he notices that the relationship, in order to be ever complete and exclusive, would have to enter the stage of closeness characteristic of an adult woman and an adult man. But the child’s entering into such an arrangement consciously is impossible, as it would be connected with accepting himself in the role of the mother’s sexual partner. For this reason such a child (according to an unwritten arrangement with the mother) makes the decision about “not growing up” and remaining in the role of his mother’s best son. Young and Klosko (2012) stress that the biological strength of the child’s bond with his mother may vary and may be marked by various levels of strength. Certain small things may prove that such a specific mother–son relationship has arisen—e.g. a problem with finding a steady job or remaining permanently unemployed, being unwilling to enter permanent relationships or (as it is the case with our client) letting the mother call him “Staś” despite his adult age. Hence the question arises about who was responsible for programming the child’s infantilization. The mother? The father? Or both of them in mutual agreement? During the therapy the client realized that this diminutive of “Stanisław” (“Staś”) that he had in his identity card did not suit his age anymore. The specific entry in the card had a double

meaning: an adult one (Stanisław) and a childish one (Staś).

In this situation the child is infantilized both by the mother and by himself. He does not allow himself to grow up, remaining mentally a little boy deprived of what is characteristic of being a mature man: fertility. Our client is in a similar situation.

### *Idealization*

In this configuration infantilization is always connected with idealization of the mother. In our client's perception his mother is perceived as someone ideal, as a goddess who is a personalization of what is best and most feminine: religiousness, humbleness, and warmth. In our client this image is so strong that he has a problem accepting facts in the life of his mother that prove that the picture he has of his mother is not true.

When visiting his parents he thought about his not being able to imagine them having intercourse. He is not able to understand, to comprehend or accept the fact that his brother was conceived before their wedding. Although the dates show clearly that it is so, he cannot comprehend it because his mother is so devout, so good—it just does not suit her. It is not possible that she had sex before the wedding. He is able to understand his father, but his mother—he cannot. How is it possible that this happened? For him it is indeed inconceivable.

To save his special position in his relationship with his mother, the client mentally forbids, controls, and does not allow the possibility of his parents having intercourse. He does so in order to protect his conviction about “being a better partner for his mother than his father.” If he accepted the fact of the existence of sex between his parents, he would have to recognize his father's superiority in his relationship with his wife, the client's mother. As he admitted, he is convinced that he might be a better partner than his father and he might show his mother tenderness better than his cold father.

However, infantilization of himself and idealization of his mother only have the character of defense mechanisms, since at the foundation of the mother–son relationship there is the erotic relationship, subtly concealed under the cover of maternal love and obedience to mother. As the client himself states, if he was married, his wife would be in second place. At the same time, he notices that he would be ashamed to give his potential girlfriend flowers, but he may offer his mother a bouquet of roses with no problem.

Our client not only treats his mother as a woman, but also only he may cultivate her garden, to which he is totally committed. A couple of times a year he makes a several-hour journey to the place where his parents live to take care of the garden. He himself does not have any doubts that the garden both in the psychoanalytical and biblical interpretation is a metaphor of an erotic relationship.

He subconsciously perceives the garden as a space tended and cultivated for . . . his mother as a goddess. The client discovers that *it is a “substitute” form of the erotic relationship, which is obviously impossible.*

When the subject of the garden cultivated for his mother appears, the client offers his reflections; he does not know if he would prefer sex with a woman older than he is or one of the same age. He escapes sex because he only associates sex with his mother. But since he may not commit incest, he experiences a block on sex with a woman.

At this moment the otherwise well-behaved client takes the liberty of negating this line of thought and opposes the therapist in an unusually vulgar way. This vulgar form, however, may be understood as a positive sign because as an adolescent the client felt anxious, and it was impossible for him to join his peers who either by smoking or by using vulgar words tried to manifest their masculinity.

However, after a rather long pause the client comes to a session because he is terrified by an erotic dream about his mother.

In it he is in a forest with his parents. At a certain moment he notices a barrier that he and his mother want to overcome. When they start passing it, our client's mother starts to appear to him in an erotic way: she is dressed in a provocative way—she is wearing black-checked tights and a black miniskirt. She looks like she was in a pornographic movie.

What is more, on her neck she is wearing a black collar with a leash held by our client. So in the dream she seemed to be submitted to

him. As the client points out, when he realized that it was a dream, he woke up immediately and felt terrified. In a conversation with the therapist he pointed out that the dream made him realize he has an erotic bond with his mother and that the one who forms the bond is not his mother, but he.

The client took a rather long time before he told his dream in session. He fell out of the previous weekly schedule of meetings, and then he decided to stop coming to them, at the same time informing the therapist that he had started work in a sexoholic group, declaring with joy and pride that for a month and a half he has been free from compulsive masturbation connected with watching pornography. It is also noteworthy here that the previous subtle and latent eroticism in his relationship with his mother took so much time to be revealed. This is because it was covered with exclusiveness, infantilization, and idealization.

### **The Wealth of Forms of Depreciation of the Father**

In the situation of an unconscious erotic relationship between the son and the mother, the father appears to the son as someone cold, interfering, or indeed unnecessary. Hence the client cannot be happy with his father's achievements or recognize that his family is nice or good. In this arrangement there is the

need of denying not only the father, but anything that is "father's." *In the client's perception, the father is a kind of the opposite of the mother, since he is not caring, sensitive, tender, or warmhearted. He and his family are emotionally distant. His family also appears as worse.*

It can be clearly seen here that it is difficult for the client to take anything that comes from the father's branch, or even more, that anything that comes from the father causes irritation and is stupid. Even all forms of care and assistance from the father are perceived as stupid and irritating.

In our client this anger has an unconscious character, which is confirmed by his utterance. He feels that between him and his father there is an invisible wall. Even though he can see a gap in the wall, he does not feel like going through it. In his relationship with his father, a very clear, unconscious conflict is revealed. Due to this conflict between him and his father, constant quarrels take place. The conviction that father knows everything best is irritating for the client.

The conflict that takes place between Stanislaw and his father is "fueled" by his conviction that his father opposes him in all things, makes his life difficult, hampers it, is his enemy, tyrant, or even rival. What is more, the client feels not loved by his father. He also notices that when he "had an opportunity" to follow his dad, he *rejected* it because of a "lack of love" felt in such a way compared to how his mom showed it.

"In psychoanalytic tradition a hostility towards father is usually derived from fantasies of the child, that he is his own father, because he cannot accept the fact that somebody else has initiated his own life" (Dybel, 1999, s. 168). Hence, it is not lack of love in an absolute, general, abstract sense that matters here; it is the way of loving typical of mother. The client feels not loved by his father, as he does not show his love in the way his mother does. So he makes an



unconscious choice of rejecting his father “mentally.”

However, because the boy’s decision to reject the father occurs in a family system, where every element of the system belongs to a proper subsystem (siblings, spouses, children), pushing one of the elements onto the margin of the system results in the immediate reaction of filling it with elements still present in it. Pushing the father out of the system inevitably leads to substituting his role with another element in the system. Most often this role is taken by the child who starts playing the role of the mother’s partner. This will be connected with overprotectiveness on the part of the mother and a lack of autonomy for the child (Szopiński, 2016, p. 17).

Figure 1 illustrates this properly. The boy depreciates father, but at the same time replaces him in a family system. Therefore, he plays two roles: one, being a child and second, being a partner for his mother.



Figure 1. Mural of the barn by artist Arkadiusz Andrejkow; (Jasło, Poland), Private collection

## The Consequences of a Disturbed Relationship between Parents

Let us pass from the area of psychology to literature for a moment. The well-known Polish writer Gombrowicz, who lived in Buenos Aires, writes this in two of his works (Rębacz, 2001): “I was born and brought up in a home full of goodness.” But at the same time in one of his first works, he makes his protagonist say, “Perhaps the only blemish on our family life was that our father hated our mother.”

The protagonist tries to reconstruct his conception as the fundamental act at which his father and mother should cooperate for his future existence. He imagines his father who forces himself to fertility, one and the only time, with his teeth gritted, with the expression of disgust on his face, against all natural reactions. His mother is a disgusting object for his father.

Later the protagonist notices that his mother is also purebred, but in a different sense, and that his father, an impoverished aristocrat, had married a rich banker’s daughter. Having such knowledge, he already understood that not only psychology, but also the body became the battlefield for his parents who represented races that were hostile to each other. Hence our protagonist searched for the answer to the question: Who he is? What color is a rat engendered by a black male and a white female? Grey? Spotted? Finally, he recognized himself as a rat with no color, which means that it was a symbolic decision, as if made by a man with no identity. Neither of his parents’ races gained advantage in him. And in his works he describes his hetero- and homosexual behaviors (Rębacz, 2001, pp. 48–54).

These disturbed relationships with the mother and the father create a number of characteristic behaviors. The first of them is a blocked psychological development and difficulty in starting a job or finding a job consistent with one’s education. In addition,



there can be a permanent use of the parents' support. Other resultant behaviors may include the inability to establish erotic contacts with a woman and anxiety about it. Our client in all his life was only able to establish one long-lasting relationship with a woman; however, she was much older than himself. This relationship is a mixture of friendly, maternal, and a little therapeutic relationship. In this arrangement of an unconscious erotic relationship with the mother, the sex drive is realized in a substitute form by pornography, compulsive masturbation, and sporadic homosexual physical contacts. A sense of guilt that occurs here is balanced by "sanctimonious religiousness" manifested by wearing many devotional items (in one session we found ten of them). Does he try to shift his responsibility for his choice of behaviors to the saints' protection, depriving himself of the right to make his own decisions?

To generalize, we can assume these two different paradigms, which are chosen by individuals, characterize their relations with others. Our client has chosen both. In the relation with father he has chosen the relation called stonewalling. In the relation with mother he has chosen a bond-building relationship. As mentioned above, his feelings for his father were clearly negative. Metaphorically speaking, our client paints this relationship in thick, black colors. His father was not absent, but all of his attempts to help his son were refused by his son and identified as negative. Here we have the proof that the father tries to build a relationship, he is active, open to his son, takes the initiative, but what he meets is a wall, built by his own son.

But, as was mentioned at the beginning, everything known about the relationship between father and son is available just from the son's point of view. Therefore, the description of the father-son relationship is poor because any act of refusal has to be poorer than the act of building because it

builds nothing. It must be noticed that the act of refusal validates an act of building with mother. Our client judges it as positive, warm, full of subtle and different colours—almost ideal. This relation is alive, is built and expanded in the son's fantasies. But the role of the son in these two patterns of relationships is not imposed. The son makes a choice: which relationship to build and which relationship to refuse, to destroy.

Now we can ask the crucial question: Does our client develop these relationships automatically, unconsciously or consciously? To make the answer clear we analyse one of his decision-making acts. When he was a student, he discovered that his brother was born "too fast" after the parent's wedding. So he analyses the fact and refuses the result of it. He says to himself: "It is impossible that my pious mother could have sex before the wedding. I could expect that only from my father." At this moment he started to analyse that common mother-father act by making a different moral evaluation of both of them. Is the son's behaviour conscious or unconscious in this situation? Previous analysis suggests the client takes a conscious part of shaping these three components of homosexual orientation (negative evaluation of the parental bond, depreciation of father, making an erotic relation with mother). To explain this fact, we can apply an analogy from a different area. When a young couple consciously decides to take a loan from the bank, this means they make a conscious decision. But are they really conscious of all the consequences? The same thing could happen with building a homosexual orientation. Therefore, consciously building these elements, which are constitutive for homosexual orientation, do not have to be equivalent with an awareness that a synthesis of all of them can cause homosexual orientation. That is the role of psychotherapist—to explain how making this structure can cause a homosexual orientation.

Here we recognize the same dilemma that lies at the foundation of Freud's understanding of the relations between the conscious and the unconscious. Freud was never able to solve this dilemma on the theoretical level, and this is why in his works we can find arguments supporting both the one and the other approach.

On the one hand he accepts the unconscious as the ultimate basis of all processes and phenomena that occur on the level of the conscious, to which they are ultimately reduced. On the other hand he recognizes bringing what is unconscious to the patient's consciousness as the fundamental goal of the psychoanalytical therapy; which, in turn, silently assumes that the conscious, and not the unconscious is the ultimate measure of cognition (Dybel, 2001, p. 97).

### **Conclusion**

A detailed analysis of the session was very helpful for illustrating the elements constituting male homosexuality that are described in the literature: a lack of separation of the son from the mother, rejection of the father, and an unconscious erotization of the relationship with the mother that may assume very subtle forms. This does not mean, however, that the mother always has to woo the son. Rather, because in this bond between the son and the mother, characterized by exclusiveness, infantilization, and idealization, the son in his fantasies sometimes erotizes the relationship. This does not arise from a single act. In this article we try to show a sequence of such minor inner acts forming the model of erotic enmeshment of the son and the mother, which, while it cannot be fully realized, has to be efficiently blocked by the son entering the homosexual orientation. Similarly, it takes conscious decisions to transform the previously learned paradigm of reacting.

During a long-lasting psycho-therapeutic relationship two essentially opposing trends may be noticed:

(1) At the beginning negative emotions towards the father come to the foreground. Metaphorically speaking, they kind of overflow a full cup. "Ideal" relationships with the mother, containing erotic relationships, are covered by many layers, at the very bottom of the cup. Revealing them sometimes is shocking for the client, and it may make him take offense or even break the therapeutic contact.

(2) The therapeutic work with the client allowing him to name and to understand the existing family relationships does not automatically change the emotionally learned ways of satisfying the drive. It takes rebuilding the previous inner paradigm. And this is exactly how our client sees it.

Certain recommendations may be pointed out regarding the rebuilding of this paradigm:

(1) Do not to ascribe such a great significance to tiredness. When the client does it, he starts to function and does function on the resources of a little boy—a child. A little boy is not strong enough to cope with everything. He has very little tolerance for pain and discomfort. However, it is important to understand that it is he who brings himself to the psychological state of tiredness, tiredness that is not pleasant, that is not a result of a well-done job. This is tiredness that is a gate to self-satisfying, to homosexual pornography, and to masturbation. When he gives such a significance to tiredness that he pities himself, he makes a tired boy of himself. The fact that it is his decision, who he wants to be, was an important discovery to him. He is either a tired boy with homosexual orientation or a heterosexual man who does what he wants and has a strength to meet the challenges brought by everyday life and duties.

(2) When he is afraid of the future, he gives the power over himself to a little boy again. It is not a real fear, as, for example, fear

of the dark, when he is afraid to walk through a forest in the dark, that matters here. What does matter is a fear that is expressed in the conviction that “I cannot do it, I cannot cope, I am too weak, what will happen to me, let someone take care of me. . . .” But as a heterosexual man he does what he wants, and it is he who is the master of his decisions, which includes the question of his orientation. For him it is a confirmation, and an efficient one, that he gets rid of his homosexual orientation, that he lives as a free man and he does not have to practice masturbation or watch pornography only because he cannot control his sexuality because his orientation is stronger than his power to make decisions. It is too heavy to carry for a boy, but not for a man. The client, as a heterosexual man, through sexual abstinence wants to confirm himself as only a heterosexual man. If for tens of years he was not able to do it, and now he can, this means that he is only a heterosexual man and no one else. For him this is a confirmation good enough that his therapy has come to an end.

(3) Owing to this he can also control his body posture. When he is sitting on a chair or an armchair, when he is talking to somebody, his feet are often tucked up under him, and he only touches the floor with his toes. He sits in a position that is uncomfortable to him. Non-verbally he lets others know that for some reason he lives in an uncomfortable way—he cannot comfortably take care of himself in an actual situation. A change in the paradigm of his behavior happens by paying attention to this type of seemingly trivial behavior and changing them by sitting in a position that is more comfortable for him. It is about a certain conscious decision about how he is sitting and if he feels well with it. Being conscious of how he is sitting allows him to direct his body posture; it gives him the power of deciding about it. It lets him redirect his power. From that moment on, it is he who decides about his program and who changes it. It is not the program that directs him.

Also at this stage helplessness may show up. The client could say that his situation is hopeless, that so much has to be changed—a new way of thinking, of looking, of behaving, of reacting, and new emotions. However, it should be remembered that the attitude “it cannot be done, it is too difficult” is an attitude typical of a little boy who just waits for someone or something to solve the problem for him.

\* \* \*

We cannot avoid mentioning here a spreading trend of thinking typical of postmodernism that perceives in monotheistic religions a limitation of the development of humanity (Wielgus, 2000). The postmodernist conception of man lays a great stress on his freedom of choice, including changing one’s sex. Paradoxically, it does not see this possibility in the case of abandoning the homosexual orientation. However, if the factors determining the orientation happen to be identified (Szopiński, 2017), there is a possibility of agency regarding sexual orientation. But if the factors forming the homosexual orientation are hidden, a man has no alternative but to enter an incestuous relationship.

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