

## **Straight Man's guide to losing your Gay/SSA friend**

As all straight men know, relationships with Same-Sex Attracted or Gay men are extremely awkward. Fortunately, in recent years, the gay community has done a great job of providing a place for men struggling with their sexuality, so we no longer need to worry about where they will go once they leave our churches. This guide will help you encourage the last few that remain out of your pews and into this community so they can get their needs met, and you and your bros can be released from the burden of intentionally brothering and fathering them. We've found that it is not necessary to employ all ten, as just two or three, applied regularly, will easily do the trick over time.

1. **Never ever, touch, hug, hold or be overly physically affectionate with him, no matter how badly he needs it.** Obviously, if you do touch him, he will immediately fall in love with you and fantasize about you like you are the hottest porn. Needless to say, this is best avoided. "Withhold the Hand", and teach him to find affection elsewhere.
2. **Enthusiastically encourage him to date women.** He needs to understand that marriage is the only way to be part of a family and avoid being alone for the rest of your life. A man's need for men and a man's need for women are, of course, two completely different things, but by firmly pushing him towards women you'll help him understand that his need for masculine affirmation, acceptance and affection are not culturally acceptable in the church, and will just have to be fulfilled elsewhere. Like, in a marriage. With a woman.
3. **Don't take his disappointment seriously.** SSA guys tend to over exaggerate the importance of, inclusion, hugs, initiation, and one-on-one time. These guys need to man up. If an SSA guy comes to you and expresses disappointment with something you've done simply, laugh, roll your eyes and say "Dude, are you serious? Chill out." SSA men are generally masters at masking their true feelings when rejection is in the air, so there is basically no chance of retaliation.
4. **Avoid initiating.** Initiating almost anything –time, intimacy, conversation, physical contact- is the basis of relationship and will make any Gay-guy related problems you are having much, much worse. The more he feels he alone has to maintain the relationship, and the less secure he feels in your desire for him to do so, the happier and freer you will be.
5. **Remember that changing Same Sex Attraction is simple.** It is his responsibility to change, and until he takes responsibility for his own problems and his own life, things will stay the same. Of course, it's clear that a lot of factors, fixed and fluid, biological and environmental, contributed to his homosexuality (just as they contributed to your (presumed) heterosexuality), but it's cleaner and more efficient to remind him that he is responsible for his change in orientation,

and that if it doesn't happen, he has only himself to blame. He may not have asked for this, but it's his deal now.

6. **Treat him differently.** Probably your local SSA guy has undertaken a programme of "trying to fit in with straight guys". If this is allowed to succeed you will never get rid of him. Fortunately, it is relatively easy to put the kaibosh on such an endeavour. Simply make sure that he is always treated just the tiniest bit different from the other, regular guys. Happily, SSA guys are usually quite sensitive to non-verbal messages, so there's no need to worry that he won't pick up on the cues.
7. **Don't distinguish between sexual and relational needs.** Even though taking care of an SSA guy's relational and emotional needs will greatly help him manage his other difficulties, it will be easier to assume that the risks he takes in initiating conversation, physical affection and friendship with you are actually covert attempts to get you in bed. Side-step these accordingly.
8. **Focus on sin, not relationship.** Although all sins are equal in that they represent our personal failure to be who God has called us to be in the world, we all know that homosexual lust, in reality is actually the worst, and probably the grossest as well. It makes things like pride, envy, wrath, sloth, greed, gluttony and heterosexual lust look like a Mexico mission trip. Healing for your friend will come when he Cleans Up His Act.
9. **Make gay jokes.**
10. **Don't get involved.** If an openly SSA guy is somehow able to find a secure base in the relationships in his church, he will keep drawing on that secure base when he needs mercy, support, challenge and refuge. This will soon get tiring, as you likely have your own family to take care of. The sooner he learns that the best people to meet his relational needs are those who share his struggle, the sooner he will be out your living room and into the arms of a similarly minded man who longs to meet his needs and embrace him, regardless of his beliefs, actions, struggles, faults or orientation.

As always, consistency is key. Best of luck!