



LGBTQ+ IDENTITY, FAITH & SPIRITUALITY

KEEP WHAT GIVES LIFE - QUESTION WHAT CAUSES HARM

Spirituality, religion, culture, and LGBTQ+ identity can each be meaningful. Some people experience deep affirmation; others experience rejection, coercion, or trauma.

YOUR EXPERIENCE CAN BE MIXED

- A tradition may hold beloved family, music, ritual, community, language, or meaning while also containing painful experiences.
- You do not have to label the entire tradition as good or bad to name what happened to you.

SPIRITUAL HARM CAN LOOK LIKE

- Using God, doctrine, shame, hell, family rejection, leadership authority, or community exclusion to control identity or relationships.
- Pressuring someone into unwanted counseling, disclosure, celibacy, marriage, or suppression of identity.
- Treating questioning as moral failure.

SEPARATE BELIEF FROM COERCION

- People can hold religious beliefs without threatening, humiliating, stalking, or coercing others.
- A person's faith does not erase another person's right to safety, dignity, privacy, and bodily autonomy.

CHOOSE YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH FAITH

- You may stay, leave, pause, question, reinterpret, join an affirming community, practice privately, combine traditions, or identify as nonreligious.
- No one else gets to prescribe your spiritual recovery.

RECONNECT WITH STRENGTHS

- What teachings, rituals, ancestors, values, music, nature, prayer, meditation, service, or community practices still feel life-giving?
- What parts no longer fit or feel safe?
- What does spirituality or meaning look like when it is freely chosen?

SEEK AFFIRMING SUPPORT

- Look for clinicians and spiritual/community supports that respect both identity and autonomy.
- If family or community rejection affects housing, safety, finances, or healthcare, practical safety planning may be needed alongside emotional support.
- Belonging should not require self-erasure.

Your path may include faith, spirituality, culture, questioning, non-faith, or a combination. It should remain yours.

RECOVERY • HEALING • RESILIENCE • YOU
WWW.RECOVERARRIVEBECOME.ORG

Sources: CDC, Supporting LGBTQ+ Youth (2024); CDC, Parents' Influence on LGBTQ Teens (2024); The Trevor Project, Project SPARK protective factors.