

Former conversion therapy leader comes out as gay and apologizes to community

[Sophie Lewis](#) September 3, 2019 / 5:35 PM

By Sophie Lewis

The former leader of one of the nation's largest [conversion therapy](#) ministries has come out as gay. Now, McKrae Game is disavowing the organization he founded and apologizing to the people he's hurt.

Game dedicated his life to conversion therapy through his organization, Hope for Wholeness. During an interview last week, he denounced the practice he spent 20 years supporting.

"Conversion therapy is not just a lie, but it's very harmful," [Game told The Post and Courier](#) newspaper in Charleston, South Carolina. "Because it's false advertising."

Conversion therapy is a debunked practice aimed at "converting homosexuals" based on the idea that [being gay](#) is a sin that can be overcome. Game, who is 51, led the South Carolina faith-based organization for two decades before being fired by the board of directors in 2017.

Game [came out as gay](#) earlier this summer, formally cutting ties with the organization. He opened up about his experience in a moving Facebook post last week.

"I WAS WRONG! Please forgive me!" [he wrote](#). "Promoting the triadic model that blamed parents and conversion or prayer therapy, that made many

people believe that their orientation was wrong, bad, sinful, evil, and worse that they could change was absolutely harmful."

Game told The Post and Courier that he came out to a small group of people when he was 18, but was desperate to "meet a girl, fall in love and have a family" so he could continue practicing his faith and go to heaven. For six years, he went through conversion therapy and eventually got married and had two children.

But he said his true sexual orientation never wavered, even as he founded his thriving organization. He was open with his wife, but continued to struggle to suppress his feelings.

Telling Christians they would "go to Hell" for being gay "was probably my worse wrongful act," he wrote. "I'd like all exgay ministry and conversion therapy counselors and organizations shut down."

Game emphasized how detrimental these types of practices are. "The very harmful cycle of self shame and [condemnation](#) has to stop. It's literally killing people!! Learn to love. Learn to love yourself and others," he concluded.

Even though it's been decades years since the American Psychiatric Association determined that homosexuality is not an illness that can be "cured," hundreds of thousands of adults in the U.S. have received some kind of conversion therapy.

Game said he plans to spend the rest of his life apologizing for his actions.

"Most people in the gay community have treated me ridiculously kind," Game said, "Liking me for me now and not who I was. And I hope they just give me the chance to talk to them so I can hear them out and apologize."

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Sophie Lewis is a social media producer and trending writer for CBS News, focusing on space and climate change.