



## Former Ex-Gay Leaders Unite in Opposition to Conversion Therapy

*In 2014, nine former leaders in the ex-gay movement decided to formally come out against the harmful practice of conversion therapy in an open letter through the Born Perfect campaign. These former leaders support bans of the practice upon minors.*

*The open letter received national media attention, including recognition in TIME Magazine. Since then, the list of signers has grown to approximately 25 former “conversion therapists.”*

*Their open letter has helped guide state legislators to support bans against conversion therapy in Kentucky and Virginia.*

### The Open Letter

Conversion Therapy, also known as “reparative therapy,” “ex-gay therapy,” or “sexual orientation change efforts” (SOCE), professes to help lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people to change or overcome their sexual orientation or gender identity. The majority of those who practice this “therapy” often do so with little or no formal psychological training, operating instead from a strict religious perspective, believing homosexuality to be a “sin.”

At one time, we were not only deeply involved in these “ex-gay” programs, we were the founders, the leaders, and the promoters. Together we represent more than half a century of experience, so few people are more knowledgeable about the ineffectiveness

### The Signers



Members of Former Ex-Gay Leaders Alliance

and harm of conversion therapy. We know first-hand the terrible emotional and spiritual damage it can cause, especially for LGBT youth. We once believed that there was something morally wrong and psychologically “broken” about being LGBT. We know better now. We once believed that sexual orientation or gender identity were somehow chosen or could be changed. We know better now. We once thought it was impossible to embrace our sexual orientation or sexual identity as an intrinsic, healthy part of who we are and who we were created to be. We know better now.

- Alan Manning Chambers
- Anthony Bishop
- Bill Prickett  
Founder, Executive Director (1986-1988), Coming Back
- Bradford Allen Reubendale  
Lay Leader Volunteer (2005-2007)  
Church Network Coordinator (2007), Exodus International Headquarters
- Cat Chapman



deceived, disordered, and impossible.

We grew up with the repetitive message that LGBT people were not enough — not straight enough, not Christian enough, not manly or womanly enough, not faithful enough, not praying enough. Never, ever enough. “Toxic” probably sums it up best. That message is poison to the soul. Especially a child’s soul. It can take a lifetime to get rid of that old programming and replace it with healthy, non-toxic views of yourself. Recovery from conversion therapy is difficult at best. Some remain forever scarred, emotionally and spiritually. Conversion therapy reinforces internalized homophobia, anxiety, guilt and depression. It leads to self-loathing and emotional and psychological harm when change doesn’t happen. Regrettably, too many will choose suicide as a result of their sense of failure. In light of this, we now stand united in our conviction that conversion therapy is not “therapy,” but is instead both ineffective and harmful. We align ourselves with every major mainstream professional medical and mental health organization in denouncing attempts to change sexual orientation or gender identity. We admonish parents to love and accept your LGBT children as they are. We beseech the church to accept, embrace, and affirm LGBT persons with full equality and inclusion.

As former “ex-gay” leaders, having witnessed the incredible harm done to those who attempted to change their sexual orientation or gender identity, we join together in calling for a ban on conversion therapy. It is our firm belief that it is much more productive to support, counsel, and mentor LGBT individuals to embrace who they are in order to live happy, well-adjusted lives. We fully support the aim of #BornPerfect to bring an end to conversion therapy.

- David Foreman
- David Matheson
- Don Brown
- Jeff Coe
- Jeremy Marks  
Founder (1988 – 2000), Courage UK  
Exodus Europe (1988 – 1989)
- Jim Marjoram  
Worship leader and group leader (1997-2012), Living Waters (Australia, New Zealand)
- John J Smid  
Executive Director (1987-2008), Love In Action  
Exodus International Board of Directors (1990-1995, 2002-2008)
- John Paulk
- Kim Brett  
Former Associate, Exodus International – Australia  
Former Leader, Living Waters and Liberty Inc Australia
- McKrae Game  
Founder & Executive Director (1999-2013), Truth Ministry;  
name changed to Hope for Wholeness (2013-2017) as President
- Michael Bussee  
EXIT (1974-1979)  
Co-founder (1976-1979), Exodus International
- Paul Martin
- Randy Thomas  
Executive Vice President (2002-2013), Exodus International  
Director (1997-2002), Living Hope Ministries
- Roy A. Blankenship
- Tim Rymel  
Outreach Director (1991-1996), Love in Action
- Wendy VanderWal Gritter  
Exodus Regional Representative – Canada (2003-2007)
- Wenn Lawson  
Director (1990-1992), Exodus Melbourne, Australia
- Yvette Cantu Schneider  
Executive Director (2001-2005), Living in Victory Ministry

Director of Women's Ministry (2008-2011), Exodus International

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Born Perfect is a campaign to end conversion therapy created by The National Center for Lesbian Rights, a national legal organization committed to advancing the human and civil rights of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community through litigation, public policy advocacy, and public education, [nclrights.org](http://nclrights.org).

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