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How do you identify within the LGBTQIA+ community?

Asian, Gay, cisgender man.

If you could come out again, is there anything you would do differently? What aspect would you encourage others to adopt?

To seek more professional counseling on the emotional impact of coming out, especially to Asian parents on the potential impact of the disclosure on the relationship.

How has identifying as LGBTQIA+ shaped the person you are today?

It helped me connect with different communities to move the civil rights agenda towards equality. I have found great mentors and friends, which led me to my current vocation as a psychotherapist. Even the negative -isms such as racism and transphobia in the gay communities along with the homophobia in non-LGBTQIA+ pushes me to continue towards continuing the fight.

Who are the role models or mentors that have influenced you or helped guide you?

There have been many that mentored my growth in the 1980s when I came out during the HIV/AIDS epidemic in San Francisco. Quite a number have died, and others have survived to continue the battle towards equality. I have also been lucky to find refuge and inspiration in the works of great writers and leaders such as James Baldwin, Bell Hooks, Isabel Allende, Thich Nhat Hanh, Paula Gunn Allen, Urvashi Vaid, Jessica Hagerdon, and Eric Rofes. More recently, Brene Brown's work on shame and the impact on self and relationships has been impactful in my work with clients.

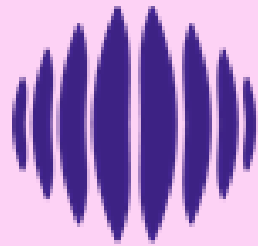


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What brings you joy about your heritage and culture?

I think the collectivist family first traditions can be integrated in societies that put the individual first. I do wish that unprocessed grief and trauma that has been experienced through the generations of API migration and wars would be more actively addressed either through current psychotherapies and/or indigenous healing practices and traditions.



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