



**“Hear, O Israel:
the Lord our God,
the Lord is one.”**



Information vs. Transformation - R. Telzerow

My husband and I have had the privilege of raising two great children. Our family's motto has been 1 Thessalonians 2:8:

“To share with you not only the gospel of God, but our lives as well.”

We have spent our 24 years of marriage loving kids through a para-church organization, our church's youth ministry, and our places of employment. There have been fun times and a lot of very messy times. But through it all, our desire was to love on kids because Christ loved on us.

This was never tried more than when our daughter, at age 17, was in a dating relationship that we did not totally embrace. During her senior year, it was brought to our attention the boy she was seeing was not only making choices against our family values, but he was encouraging her to do so also.

As a mother bear, I wanted to cause significant bodily harm to this boy, and I wanted to call my retired special agent father to tell me how to do it without leaving marks.

We knew we could not tell her to stop seeing him. Surely she would rebel, choose him over us, and we would lose her more and have less influence over her and her relationship. We didn't know what we were going to do, but we knew what we wanted as the long-term outcome: a healthy relationship with our daughter.

We decided to call the boy and give him 24 hours to tell his parents, and arranged a time for his parents and him to meet at our home. They came over. We shared our deep love and respect for our daughter. We shared she was the most valuable thing in the world to us. We would do anything to protect her and relay our deep love for her.

I remember looking directly at him and saying, “I don't like you, but we trust her for seeing something in you. We want to know what she sees in you, which means we need to spend time with you.”

We then set some boundaries on their relationship which included spending a large chunk of time with my husband and me. We thought he would never come back.

But he did. And God surprised me more than any Bible retreat, sermon, or time spent with my older women mentors ever had through time spent with this young man.

God's voice was louder to me than ever before. God was giving me a journey where I was able to be transformed into His likeness through a very unexpected situation. God painfully pointed out to me that I talked about grace a lot, but my faith was about waiting for people to clean up and fit in my nice little box. Then I would embrace them into the Christian fold.

Initially I was insulted that God would have to point out to *me* (a veteran youth worker) that I had been focusing too much on knowledge and information and had not allowed the Holy Spirit to transform me.

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I began to ask for a changed heart. No matter what was going to happen with my daughter's relationship, I wanted the young man to know the love of Jesus through us. I didn't know how it would come out, but I deeply prayed for holiness for all of us. We walked authentically, admitted our failings, our joys and pains. We admitted we didn't have all the theological answers, but we kept focusing on the relationship. The young man changed. We changed. We all grew closer to holiness.

I was so surprised by God. God used a very unexpected situation, and a very unexpected 17 year old boy, to shift my faith from information to transformation, from a knowledge focused faith to placing God in the center of transforming my heart and faith, to a place of better understanding God's love for us, and for me.

I am now on a journey where I look for God to surprise me so that I can continue to shift my heart and actions closer to His heart. This journey is not as neat and tidy as my old faith travels, but it is much more alive and transforming, and truly a faith worth having.

Space to talk

- D. Hartig & G. Gough

"Force of habit, you could say. The way they talk you're talking away."

- S. Winwood, G. Fleming, and J. Hooker



In November we had the opportunity to work with individuals within a local organization to create space for conversation about working positively with LGBT youth.

Joining with this organization in providing opportunity for people to express their own feelings, confidences and insecurities regarding this topic is valuable. Fostering an environment for collaborative dialogue is critical to empowering individuals to continue to have positive conversation surrounding the topic. Coupling this with the organization's hard work to put hands and feet to collaboration and innovation on this topic found itself in a very successful event for THIS organization.

Regardless of any environment in which there are diverse perspectives on LGBT issues, space can be created for a sustainable, ongoing movement for beneficial dialogue surrounding

positively impacting youth that may identify as LGBT.

Today it's not uncommon to be confronted by news stories about teen suicide or depression. The challenges our youth face today can be, for them, formidable.

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Navigating this conversation can find itself difficult enough, and even more so for LGBT youth when there is so much polarization on discussing LGBT topics.

What opportunities do you have, or can you create, to build beneficial dialogue that can diminish the polarization and help positively impact LGBT youth?

For those who want things to be better.....

If you're reading this, you may have some interest in the conversation between the LGBT and Christian communities. In light of this interest, we'd like to ask you to contribute financially to Bridge Evidence Group's efforts to improve this conversation. Much of our work is dependent on contributions. We are able to do more or less according to the financial support we receive. If you would like to join in this effort, you can make contributions securely, online via Paypal, from our website.

"Well I feel like they're talking in a language I don't speak, and they're talking it to me."

- Coldplay

Third Quarter 2012 Financial Statement

Previous balance	\$3376.94
Total gifts:	\$1500.00
Total expenses:	\$1595.64
Fund Balance:	\$3281.30

Bridge Evidence Group is a 501(c)(3) organization that is committed to financial transparency and accountability.