

Partnership Proposal

This is a discussion document offered to local churches, related organisations and professional counsellors interested in developing a co-ordinated capacity supporting those who struggle with sexual brokenness, especially homosexuality, within the local church context.

CORE Vision

CORE seeks to provide support for relationally and sexually damaged and wounded adults who seek wholeness, and desire to walk in obedience to the Gospel of Christ. Grieving for those whose sense of rejection and abandonment is increased through the well-intentioned, but often misinformed acts of Christians seeking to uphold the Biblical prohibition on homosexual acts, **CORE** seeks to explore appropriate patterns of relating in both singleness and in marriage. It takes seriously the Biblical injunction to "love one another deeply, from the heart" (1 Peter 1:22), and promotes the idea that change is possible.

CORE values: ...

- healthy Christ-centred self-love as the basis of successful relationships with others
- healthy relationships that are neither dependent, avoidant, nor co-dependent, but are interdependent
- the perspective that individual journeys towards relational wholeness sometimes go awry. The search for intimacy can be derailed by many imitations
- work which understands the homosexual drive, in both men and women, as a reparative impulse aiming to realise wholeness, which can be nurtured in a Christ-centred way
- recognition of the danger of Christian Churches misunderstanding the plight of men and women seeking to overcome homosexuality by working through their issues in fellowship with other believers
- the sufficiency of the Word of God, the fellowship of believers, and the support of professional therapists to enable the relationally and sexually broken individual to find wholeness and completion in Christ
- the right of others, including other Christians, to hold different views and practices in relation to homosexuality.
- **CORE** seeks to provide information supporting informed freedom of choice to those seeking guidance in respect of sexuality. However, it reserves the right to promote lifestyle choices that support those who decline gay-affirming options in favour of gender-affirming alternatives.

What is **CORE**?

Core is a voluntary Christian initiative that aims to encourage an informed, compassionate and co-ordinated effort to support those who struggle with sexual brokenness.

Why do we need **CORE**?

1. CORE is concerned that local churches take responsibility for this area of ministry rather than abdicating the role to other bodies or individuals
2. Specialist training and resource development is time-consuming and can be expensive. A co-ordinated effort is a viable approach to increasing skilled capacity for more than a few
3. Few churches can offer moderated, e-learning opportunities and reliable, professionally presented and vetted resources to support those struggling
4. Expressing informed disapproval of homosexual practice in particular can be misunderstood. Working together will improve our communication skills with those who disagree with our views.

How does **CORE** look in a local church?

Exactly how local churches develop ministry initiatives in this area is entirely up to them. CORE offers training and capacity development by using a range of experts in the field. How this translates into local settings will depend on how local churches wish to engage with the project.

Who manages **CORE**?

It CORE Advisory Group directs the strategic development of this initiative, and will explore the desirability and feasibility of establishing an independent Christian charity registered in Northern Ireland to facilitate the work of **CORE**.

Proposed CORE Training opportunities

There are a number of UK organisations, both Christian and secular, offering training and advice in this area. **CORE undertakes to offer information about scheduled events** occurring locally, nationally and internationally, where appropriate, to facilitate skills and capacity development.

It is proposed that a number of **awareness raising** and bespoke **leadership development** opportunities, relevant to this area will be offered according to demand and interest.

CORE training seeks to affirm a responsible approach to using the Bible in examining the issues of relational, sexual and emotional brokenness. Successful engagement with training will provide participants with opportunity to:

- Undertake a personal 'training needs analysis'
- discuss case studies with experienced field workers
- practise assessing individuals who present personal concerns and issues
- learn when, where and how to 'refer'
- develop small group facilitation skills
- clarify appropriate pastoral support styles
- gain evidence for your personal development profile

A range of **short course seminars** are offered on request, examples of which are listed below:

- 'No' to gays, 'yes' to slaves? What does the Bible say about Homosexuality?
- Supporting my child: Did I go wrong?
- Overcoming homophobia in the church. What can we do?
- Gay Clubbing (or the 'Clobber Passages')
- Lessons from 'Brokeback Mountain'
- 'Two to Tango' emotional partnerships in co-dependency
- Complimentarity in brokenness: why some relationships are addictive
- Walls and boundaries – what's the difference?
- Love addiction and crushed selfhood

CORE Mentor training

CORE values the voluntary participation of counsellors, friends and mentors. It seeks guidance on developing appropriate mentoring training to equip supportive individuals. Suitably trained Mentors play a vital role in affirming the integration of the homosexual struggler within the Christian community. There is no greater gift than personal support from salient individuals for any who struggle in this area.

CORE e-mentor training

The CORE learning site (<http://learning.core-issues.org>) is undergoing development in the MOODLE environment. Moodle is a reputable open-source virtual learning environment offering a powerful capacity to deliver and manage online learning in a secure, closed environment.

CORE offers training for those interested in Course Design and on effective e-moderation techniques.

CORE Links

CORE seeks to work in harmony with any group or institution with similar concerns

CORE will work with any organisation or individual who supports the **CORE** Values. It seeks to be a non-sectarian, Bible-based ministry informed by current debate and the professional practice of sympathetic clinicians, therapists and Christian leaders.

Visit the **CORE** website at www.core-issues.org

Contact CORE

Please contact **Mike Davidson** if you would like further information about this initiative, or wish to explore any aspects of this document proposal.

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Mike Davidson (BTh PhD) co-ordinates CORE Ministries and manages the **CORE** websites. He is resident in Northern Ireland and originates from Southern Africa.

He understands the issues of homosexuality from personal experience. He is interested in developing CORE as a service to the church in Northern Ireland, and is grateful for those who support and guide this initiative.