



My Thinning Years: Starving the Gay Within

Jon Derek Croteau

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As a child, Jon tried desperately to be his father's version of the all-American boy, denying his gayness in a futile attempt to earn the love and respect of an abusive man. With this he built a deep, internalized homophobia that made him want to disappear rather than live with the truth about himself. That denial played out in the forms of anorexia, bulimia, and obsessive running, which consumed him as an adolescent and young adult.

It wasn't until a grueling yet transformative Outward Bound experience that Jon began to face his sexual identity. This exploration continued as he entered college and started the serious work of sorting through years of repressed anger to separate from his father's control and condemnation.

My Thinning Years is an inspiring story of courage, creativity, and the will to live--and of recreating the definition of family to include friends, relatives, and teachers who support you in realizing your true self.

In 1996, Jon wrote a song dreaming about finding a love and being able to live openly and freely. The song lyrics are in *My Thinning Years* and he recorded the song this summer with Broadway great Miguel Cervantes for others to hear. The song is available on iTunes and Spotify and profits will benefit The Trevor Project.

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