

[0:00:00]

Alex: Hi, this is Alex reflecting after my interview with Alan Sturt, sitting in the car outside Alan's flat.

I was struck by three things that Alan said that I thought were really, really interesting and quite extraordinary in lots of ways.

The first thing was there's a sort of a current theme going through what he was saying about how the thing that dissolves homophobia, the thing that challenges it, the thing that takes it all away is meeting other gay people, whether or not that was Alan going to his first meeting at Harrow Gay Unity Group and realising that actually gay people were human beings like everybody else, or whether it's the broader changes in society that have happened that Alan attributes to the fact that actually people were just forced to come out and other people were forced to recognise that people they liked and knew and loved were gay.

And I was also struck by the fact that it was his anger that he had been sold a lie about what LGBT people were like that has been so motivating and so galvanising for him in doing the work that he does.

The next thing that occurred to me was just that struck me really was his tremendous sense of purpose and this idea that a lot of his work has been about trying to make sense of something which must at first have made no sense. So, making something positive out of the fact of his homosexuality, which must for the first part of his life, have felt like a terrible affliction and something that only could ever produce bad things, and yet his determination that God made me this way for a reason and I'm going to do what I can to make the most of it.

And related to that, his sort of stoicism really, this idea that he's just got on with it in the face of pretty terrible attitudes from other people in society and other people in the church and his very thick skin and his determination to just get on with it and not worry about it really. And the fact that it is people like him and his tremendous stoicism and tremendous strength of character which have dramatically changed things for the rest of us really which is, you know, obviously very humbling and very encouraging.

And the fact that for him it still goes on as well that even his relatively advanced age in his corner of Northwood he is getting on with it and he's still forcing the issue of sexuality into the public sphere in his church and in his circles and forcing people to face up to it and talk about it and still driven by that anger, actually, that still things haven't moved on in church circles.

[End of Transcript]