

Dear Chely,

10-3-2010

I cannot even begin to express to you how much I appreciated your honesty in your article in Curve magazine. What an inspiration you are!!!
Though I am an optimist and a strong Christian, this has been without a doubt the hardest time in my life. I feel alone & like no one understands. Without burdening you with my story, my heart is broken, everything I thought was real was not, and I am struggling every day to just accept myself.

I am 27 years old, from the deep south, and I have been in a secret relationship for two years that ended immediately as soon as someone in her family found out.

I've been in extensive counseling this year, and I believe, or at least HOPE, that I am healing. It just doesn't feel that way today. She and I still work together. I identified with that gaping wound you spoke about.

I live in North MS and have considered moving back home to save \$ and "get my shit together" - yet I feel like the \$ I would save wouldn't be worth what I am sacrificing - which would be myself. I don't want to take any steps backward.

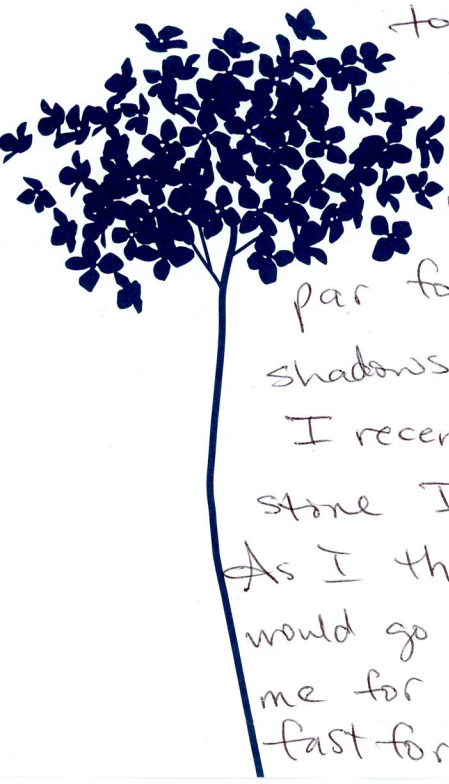
Your story inspires me and strengthens me.

I told my therapist that it was very important to me to have good people in my life - good gay people. I need to know I'm not alone.

Seems all the homosexuals I have known have been skeezy - which I guess is par for the course when you live in the shadows and in shame.

I recently climbed a mountain and threw a big stone I carried up that said "Melissa Bond's shame".

As I threw it off the top, I almost felt like I would go with it --- because it's been a part of me for so long. I often wish I could hit the fast forward button on my life --- just for



a little bit.

Anyway, I know it's such a long shot that you will ever ever read this - I just had to take the opportunity to say thank you so very much for being who you are.

I have big dreams and goals for myself - I currently own my own massage and yoga practice - I also do stress relief seminars and am working on branding myself. There are so many great, wonderful things happening in my life.

I'm just so lonely sometimes --- I feel like the only soul in the world.

Thank you for being brave and standing up ^{for} yourself and all of us out there that are struggling with this thing called lesbian life. It's such a big deal for me to write these words.

I have friends in Nashville, and I see myself living there in the next few months.... Even if it means working 10 jobs. If you need a massage therapist..... I'm your woman!

If you do read this, please pray for me. I know who is in control, even though I seem to forget on a daily basis.

Enclosed you will find a sponsor sheet for the walk to Emmaus --- the heartbead of what it truly means to be a Christian.

It would be an absolute honor to sponsor you on this "3 day vacation w/ Jesus!"

You are such a beautiful soul, Chely.

May God bless you and all you are doing. Self acceptance is key and sister, you are shining so bright. Thank you for being so BRAVE!

You are my inspiration. Rock ON!!!

Most sincerely,

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S. My mom doesn't know either.

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