T TAKES A VILLAGE TO RAISE A CHILD, AND IN SOME WAYS, the same can be said about writing a book, and I owe a debt of gratitude to the many people who helped make this one possible.

First and foremost, I must thank the National Institute of Mental Health at the National Institute of Health, which funded this project (I Ro3 MHo68272–01) and therefore made it possible. A special thanks goes to my program officer, Emeline Otey, who believed in this project from the start and played a big role in making it happen.

Of course, this study would never have happened if it were not for the sixty-five families who were gracious and generous enough to share their stories with me. They taught me the importance of unconditional love and the persistence of family bonds and for this I am eternally grateful. Their stories will stay with me forever.

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encouragement and for introducing me to CUP. I also wish to thank the external reviewers whose feedback helped me enrich this work.

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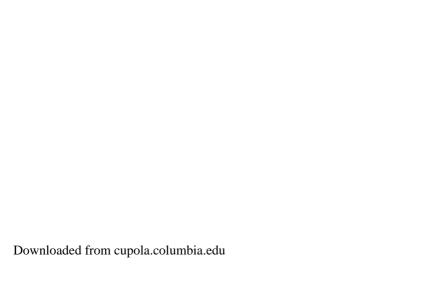
I was initially introduced to family therapy by Professor Max Siporin when I was a Master of Social Work student at the State University of New York at Albany. I distinctly recall being inspired by a videotape he presented in class showing Virgina Satir's sensitive work, which, as a student, I suspected was magic. (Now, as a seasoned clinician, I am certain of it.) My formal family therapist training really began at Project Strive, Inc., a home-based foster care prevention program where David Bosworth, the executive director, had the wisdom to hire Anne Itzkowitz from the Philadelphia Child Guidance Center to train us in structural family therapy. From that point on, I was fortunate to have received training and inspiration, either through formal programs, workshops, or consultations, from Salvador Minuchin, Carl Whitaker, Michael Kerr, Monica McGoldrick, Insoo Kim Berg, Steve DeShazer, and Maurizio Andolfi. I am grateful to have known and learned from these gifted individuals, and each has left an imprint on my thinking and my clinical work.

A very special thank you must go to my dear friend and mentor Michael P. Nichols. Good teachers model and demonstrate skills for their students to copy. The really great ones help their students find these abilities within themselves. In his ongoing support of my work, including his sensitive review of previous drafts of this book, Mike pushed me to find the heart and smarts inside of me and gave me the courage to infuse them throughout the text. Having him in my life has been a gift for which I am eternally grateful.

My mother and father taught me many valuable things. One is to always aim high. From an early age they taught me the sweet pleasure of achieving

lofty goals. They also demonstrated the importance of staying connected to loved ones, no matter what. If anyone is wondering, my parents had a very difficult time when they learned in 1979 that I was gay, and it took them several years to adjust. But we never let go of each other, and, eventually, like the parents in this study, they came around. When you have a family such as mine, whose members are passionate people with strong opinions, bruising arguments are inevitable. However, I always know that, no matter what happens, we will still love one another, and, in each other, we can always find a home to return to.

Finally, I must thank my partner of twenty-seven years, Timothy Murphy. Anyone who lives with someone who is writing a book knows how difficult and lonely it can be. Tim deserves a lot of credit for this book, as he did all the things that made it possible for me to have the necessary blocks of time to write it, including, but not limited to, maintaining the house, caring for our garden, and putting up with my alternating periods of crippling self-doubt and towering grandiosity punctuated by long emotional absences. One of the great mysteries of my life is how I managed to be lucky enough to have this smart, strong, devoted, and sensitive man as my partner. What I do know is I will never be able to thank him enough—and that I will love him forever.



COMING OUT, COMING HOME

