# Stephen Fry on the challenges of his youth and thoughts on longevity



Stephen Fry, the beloved gay actor and writer, has opened up about the struggles he faced growing up as a gay teenager and the fears he now harbours about old age. In a candid interview with The Times, Fry, 67, revealed the internal turmoil he experienced as a young man grappling with his sexuality.

During the interview, Fry recalled how his teenage years were marked by a profound sense of rejection and horror. He described this period as a time when he earned the moniker 'Celibate Stephen'. "In the Eighties, I was so excited by my work that I forgot to have sex. It was also fear: I always felt rejected in gay bars. I couldn't dance; I didn't look cool. All I wanted was to sit and talk," he disclosed.

Growing up in an era where being gay was heavily stigmatised, Fry admitted that he felt a secret horror about his sexuality by the age of 13. He was often overwhelmed by the disgrace and humiliation associated with being gay during that time. "Oscar Wilde had taught me that it would be a life of mockery, exile and secrecy," Fry said. He found solace in literature, drawing strength and inspiration from writers like Oscar Wilde, EM Forster, and Somerset Maugham, who showed him that life could hold more than darkness and despair.

Fry also reflected on the severe impact of the AIDS crisis in the 1980s, a period during which he lost many friends. Despite these hardships, Fry found a unique path toward self-acceptance and professional success, which helped alleviate some of the misery tied to his early experiences.

Earlier this year, Fry spoke about his aversion to living past the age of 100. In a discussion on Evgeny Lebedev's podcast, "Brave New World," featuring fellow comedian David Walliams, he stated his desire to avoid the isolation that can come with extreme old age. Fry emphasised his preference for a pain-free and cognitively sound old age but expressed a lack of interest in extended longevity if it meant outliving his close friends and family. "If everybody – my family and friends – lived into their 120s, then maybe I'd be quite happy to pass 100. But as it is, I would hate to be that lonely Flying Dutchman figure so beloved of history," Fry remarked.

The revelations also touched upon his personal life, particularly his marriage to Elliott Spencer. The couple, who have a 30-year age difference, wed in January 2015, just days after their engagement. The partnership began in 2014 when Spencer, originally known as Mr E., met Fry. The pair have kept their relationship largely out of the public eye, with their last appearance together being at the star-studded Rocketman premiere in London in May 2019.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)