**Table 1: Participants’ emotions experienced whilst coming to terms with being homosexual (N=10)**

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| **Theme** | **Number of participants**  | **Quotations to illustrate the theme** |
| Confusion  | 3 | “I was so confused. I had never met a gay person in my life besides myself” (Rotonda, male). “I didn’t know what was happening because I clearly understood that this is wrong” (Zandile, female). “I didn’t even know who to ask or who to talk to because I knew it was a sin, and I couldn’t out myself to anyone” (Thami, male). |
| Denial  | 4 | “I began to over masculinise myself” (Nhlanhla, male).  “I started off as bisexual actually; I couldn’t accept that I’m lesbian” (Asanda, female).“I had quite a few girlfriends at once, to prove that I’m not only straight but I am a player also” (Sihle, male). “I started wearing dresses. I even forced myself to have a crush on a guy” (Zandile, female).  |
| Anger towards God | 4 | “I always asked God why did this have to happen to me, why didn’t he give me a fair chance at life” (Vuyo, male).“My family and I are so devoted to you, why would you punish us so badly” (John, male). “God said he loves me but why would he give me that is going to make the whole world hate me” (Roto, male). “God is unfair” (Asanda, female).  |
| Bargaining with God | 4 | “I prayed with all my might, I fasted for days just praying that God takes it away” (Sihle, male).“I gave God time frames, I would ask him to prove that he loves me by taking these feelings away”.“I even got baptised, thinking that my sin would be washed away” (Zandile, male). “I pray hard and asked God to take it away, I even swore that I would deliver the good news of salvation to everyone I met” (Vuyo, male). |
| Shame and self-loathing  | 4 | “I kept it a secret. It’s still a secret to others even now” (Nhlanhla, male). “I hated myself so much that I tried to kill myself so that I wouldn’t be this disgrace that I am” (Zandile, female). “I was so ashamed of myself; I went through a phase of depression” (Sihle, male). “I didn’t feel clean; I didn’t even want to be around other people, that’s how much I disgusted myself” (Mzwanele, male).  |