

This is a free pamphlet provided by:

THE INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION FOR GENDER EDUCATION

(a 501(c)3 non-profit organization serving the transgender community)

PO BOX 229, WALTHAM MA 02454-0229

TELE: 781.899.2212/FAX 781.899.5703

E-MAIL: Info@ifge.org Web: www.ifge.org

BOOKSTORE: E-MAIL: Vanessa@ifge.org

This brochure sponsored by: Virginia Ramey Mollenkott, Ph.D Working Toward an Omnigender Paradigm



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

IFGE depends on memberships for a significant portion of its income. If you have an interest in gender issues, please join. IFGE is a registered 501 (c)3 non-profit organization. Our members receive special benefits like: a quarterly newsletter presenting news of IFGE and the community, voting privileges, and a 10% discount on IFGE books.

Please complete this form and

JOIN TODAY!

Name _____ Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Membership Type: Student/Low Income \$20 Basic \$35 Supporting \$100 Benefactor \$500 Payment Enclosed \$ _____ Check# _____ MC/VISA# _____ Exp. Date _____

Confidentiality

- All packages are plainly wrapped for your comfort. The return address merely includes: PO Box 229, Waltham, MA 02454-0229. We do not share our database with anyone, thus no unwanted mail. Your name will be deleted from our database at any time with a written request. To increase your level of comfort we might suggest you get a PO Box. You will receive a numbered membership card. Your membership number must be used when ordering products to receive applicable discounts.



About CROSS-DRESSERS and Crossdressing

AM I A CROSSDRESSER ?

A crossdresser is someone who enjoys dressing as a member of the gender "opposite" from their birth gender, but has no desire to change their sex permanently. Crossdressing is one form of being transgendered.

HOW DO I KNOW I AM NOT A TRANSSEXUAL?

Transsexuals feel "in their soul" that they are the opposite sex. They feel at odds with their own body. Many will crossdress to feel more comfortable, but this is a temporary remedy. Some will undergo SRS (sexual reassignment surgery), or hormone treatment, others simply live full-time crossdressed.

HOW WILL I KNOW IF I'M A CROSSDRESSER RATHER THAN A TRANSSEXUAL?

For some it's hard to tell, because you may be dealing with the frustrations of wanting to dress as a member of the opposite sex and not being able to. Others know and feel their true sex. By allowing yourself the opportunity to periodically crossdress and establish some normal routines while crossdressed, you will develop a sense of what gender attributes you have. It may be some time before the euphoria of crossdressing subsides so you're in touch with your true feelings.

AM I A HOMOSEXUAL IN DENIAL?

Most crossdressers are heterosexual, and married. For the majority, their sexual orientation is toward members of the opposite sex. However, a smaller number are bisexual. Most gay men are attracted to maleness, and not to femaleness.

SHOULD I SEEK PROFESSIONAL HELP?

Crossdressing itself is not considered an illness. So crossdressing alone is not a reason to get therapy. However, there are usually many other issues an individual has around crossdressing. These can include your spouse's feelings, the paranoia of being exposed, and shame. These are issues which can cause stress and other problems where a therapist can be helpful.

CAN I BE CURED?

You're not sick! Many therapists even consider crossdressers to be "gender-gifted." A better question is, "Can I find my place in the infinite possibilities of gender types?" The answer to that question is, "Yes."

IF THERE'S NOTHING WRONG WITH ME, WHY DO I FEEL SO BAD?

We all encounter messages every day which give us clues to the behavior expected of us. If these expectations don't fit our own feelings, we feel out of sorts and alienated. Many

of these clues are gender-related, yet gender is not discussed much in our culture. Most people mistakenly associate gender with sex, but gender is about feelings and behavior. In a support group, you will learn you are not alone, and you are allowed to feel good about yourself.

WHAT WILL A SUPPORT GROUP DO FOR ME?

Transgendered support groups provide a variety of services and activities. Some are more social clubs so the support is through friendship rather than through structured programs. Other clubs provide programs such as classes on the various aspects of crossdressing, from "passing" to voice lessons. They may also have a spouses' support group and referral service. A support group may teach you how to function in public when you're ready for this step. All support groups, however, provide a network of friends. For most people, this is their most important function.

HOW CAN I FIND A SUPPORT GROUP?

IFGE maintains lists of groups all over the country. (You can find a list of national organizations at the end of this article.) It is a good idea to call the group and ask what types of activities they have, what their requirements are, dues, and where they meet.

CAN I PROTECT MY IDENTITY IF I JOIN A GROUP?

Yes. All support groups realize that a member's identity is a personal matter and must be kept secure to protect their family and job. In general, their membership lists are not made public to anyone. Different groups adopt different policies for the security of members. Usually you will be made aware of their security practices when you call. This is a common concern with all support groups, so don't hesitate to ask.

CAN'T I STOP CROSSDRESSING? WON'T IT JUST GO AWAY.

Many people deny the desire to crossdress for years. Denial is a safety mechanism which works, but not in the long term. Crossdressing may be hardwired into the brain. It will not go away. Unless you face your feelings, denial will cause frustration, anger, and depression. You may not be ready to join a support group, but for your own good make a phone call and learn about the opportunities available to help resolve these conflicts. No one should suffer alone and in silence.

WHAT ABOUT MY SPOUSE AND FAMILY?

Many spouses can learn to accept, and even to embrace a partner's crossdressing. There are numerous "gender friendly" counselors and therapists who work with CDs and their families. There are also support groups for spouses and for family members.

ARE THERE ANY BOOKS ON CROSSDRESSING?

Many fine books on crossdressers and crossdressing issues are available through the IFGE bookstore.

Among them:

Miller, Rachel, *The Bliss of Becoming One: Integrating "Feminine" Feelings into the Male Psyche*

"S.," Vanessa, *The Cross and the Crossdresser*

Lesley, Gordon, *Aspects of Gender: A Study of Crossdressing*

Allen, J.J., *The Man in the Red Velvet Dress: Inside the World of Crossdressing*

Rudd, Peggy, EdD, *My Husband Wears My Clothes*

WHERE CAN I GET HELP AND FURTHER INFORMATION?

The following organizations offer referrals, contact numbers for local groups across the country, and support for crossdressers and their families:

INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION FOR GENDER EDUCATION

IFGE, PO Box 229, Waltham MA 02454-0229

(617) 894-8340 FAX (781) 899-5703.

E-mail: ifge@world.std.com.

(Crossdressers and other transgendered individuals.)

SOCIETY FOR THE SECOND SELF (TRI-ESS)

Tri-Ess, PO Box 194, Tulare CA 93275

TRISINFO@AOL.COM

(For heterosexual crossdressers, whether male-to-female or female-to-male, and their families.)

SPOUSES/PARTNERS INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE for EDUCATION

SPICE, PO Box 5304, Katy TX 77491

(Annual conference focused on partners of male-to-female crossdressers and their gender-gifted husbands.)

(Prepared with the assistance of Cally Nichols and the Tiffany Club of New England support group.)