

A Guide to Understanding the Transgender Mystery

By: David H. Fisher, Jr.

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PREFACE

On one of the days while I was writing this guide, I went into a department store in the mall to pay for an item I had charged a few days earlier. I went up to one of the cashiers who was a little overweight, had large breasts, and a thin, curly beard.

I wasn't sure if the cashier was male or female. I said I'd like to pay my bill, swiped my store card, and presented my check. While I waited, I looked at the cashier's name tag, which displayed what is usually a male name. Then I noticed on the top of the name tag were glued two tiny white square pieces of paper. On them were typed "HE" and "HIM."

I didn't know what to say. I wanted to be respectful, but I was a little nervous. Finally, when I was handed my receipt, I said, "Thank you, sir." As soon as I spoke, I quickly turned away, but not before I noticed the most beautiful glow on the cashier's face. Obviously, my words meant a lot to him.

As I went up the store's escalator, tears filled my eyes, and by the time I reached the top, I could barely see. Then the thought came over me, "Why can't we all just respect and accept everyone and let them be their true selves?"

Several days later, I walked through the store again and noticed the same employee working on a display. Though he was about 10 yards away, when he saw me, he waved. As I waved back, I realized how much my words must have meant to him. It made my day!

Part 1: INTRODUCTION

I have divided this guide into 19 individual parts with the hope that each part will guide you step by step into a basic understanding of the transgender mystery. Most people just think it's some kind of ridiculous sexual fantasy. But looking at transgender people just as sexual objects is looking at them all wrong.

After many years of research, I'm going to try to unlock the mystery for you so you will have a fundamental understanding of transgender people. My goal is not to encourage being transgender or discourage being transgender but rather to help you understand transgender people.

As a disclaimer, I am not a physician or therapist, and the ideas are mine. But it is my hope and prayer that I can help you understand the amazing transgender mystery. Once you do, then you will know how to give or get help and support when it's needed.

Of course, every transgender situation is a little different, and there will always be exceptions to every transgender experience, but I've tried to provide a basic understanding of the transgender puzzle.

We will never find the perfect answer to anything, but we can continue trying to find one that is closer than anyone else has been able to find and then keep on searching for an even better answer.

Perhaps you have seen on social media that if you put around 100 black ants in a jar along with around 100 red ants and put on the lid...nothing will happen. But if you shake the jar, the red ants will start fighting the black ants. The enemy is not the red ants or the black ants. The enemy is whoever is shaking the jar.

Being transgender has nothing to do with SEX. Being transgender has nothing to do with POLITICS. Being transgender has nothing to do with RELIGION. But someone or some groups started shaking up the transgender issue that most people had never heard of, didn't understand, and didn't care about.

Political parties and churches then started taking sides over this tiny number of people and are using them as pawns in ongoing culture wars. This is very sad.

Many of the problems of the world are caused due to a lack of understanding, and people are afraid of what they don't know or understand.

I hope that this information will help you understand this small number of true transgender people located all over the world who just want to live their lives as their true selves.

Before we continue, ask yourself this question, “Is there something about transgender people that you are afraid of or concerned about?” If there is, then please don’t continue until you think about your reason(s). I don’t want to suggest any possible reasons as everyone is very different, and your reason(s) are unique just to you. But, if you are uncomfortable about transgender people, there is definitely a reason(s). So, if you have discovered one or more, then ask yourself WHY?

Now...we are ready to begin unraveling the transgender mystery, which, as mentioned, very few people seem to understand. It is not a physical mystery; it is a mystery of our mind, much like the mystery of who we love or whether we are right-handed or left-handed.

Part 2: WHY I DID MY RESEARCH

As a senior citizen, lifelong Republican (but voting for a candidate and not for the party), Christian, married to my wife for 47 years until she died of bile duct cancer, and father with 3 children and 7 grandchildren, you wouldn't think I would be interested in understanding transgender people.

Well, I wasn't interested until I became a voting lay representative of my church at the United Methodist Church Annual Conference. When I started to go into the door of the conference, I was offered a pride pin, which I did not accept. I thought homosexuality was ridiculous.

I soon learned the United Methodist Church might split over the LGBTQ+ issue, so I decided I needed to know more before I could be a conscientious voter. I started a lengthy research project on my own. I soon learned there were many LGBTQ+ categories, so I decided to concentrate on transgender people, which I considered the most confusing and controversial, and thus began my interesting adventure.

I read numerous books, articles, and watched hundreds of YouTube and TED Talk videos and ultimately developed an understanding of gender dysphoria and respect for TRUE transgender people.

While doing my research, I developed two thoughts. The first thought is...when we are young, we are full of curiosity. As we mature, curiosity is often replaced by opinions, and opinions can block curiosity, understanding, compassion, and creativity. The second thought is...closed minds don't grow. I hope that you will continue with curiosity, with compassion, with understanding, with an open mind, and with an open heart.

It became obvious to me that it's important to understand being transgender before forming any opinions. And once we really understand transgender people, we will have respect and compassion for them and realize that they are not a threat and there is nothing to fear.

When accepted, transgender people can and should be an important part of our communities. They have a special ability as they can see life, in many ways, from both the male and female perspectives. Very few people are that fortunate. There is so much the world can learn from TRUE transgender people.

I hope the following will help children, parents, teachers, physicians, politicians, and transgender people themselves understand being transgender. It is my hope and prayer that when you finish, you will see transgender people in an entirely new way like I now do.

Part 3: BIOLOGICAL SEX AND GENDER

It appears that we've had it all wrong about biological sex and gender because they are actually in two different worlds: the physical world that we can see and touch, and the invisible mental world of knowledge that can't be seen or touched and can only be experienced by each unique person internally.

For transgender people, their physical world is their biological sex, and their invisible mental world is their knowledge of who they are, which is not the same as their biological world. And, no one can experience or fully understand someone else's invisible mental world.

When we are born, the doctor or person who delivers us immediately discovers our biological sex. Granted, occasionally this is not obvious, but that exception is not the topic I'm going to discuss. We are going to look at being born as a biological boy/man or a biological girl/woman.

As we begin our discovery of the transgender mystery, it is helpful to realize that we all know who we love, and yet we can't explain how we know. We just know. Think about who you love and then explain how you know. You can't; you just know!

Or, think about which is your dominant hand. You can't explain why, you just know whether you are right-handed or left-handed.

Years ago, it was thought that if you were left-handed, something was wrong with you. School desks had the writing area on the right side. Teachers often tried to get left-handed children to write with their right hand. Usually, this didn't work.

Today, left-handed people are considered normal, just like right-handed people. They are still in the minority, but they are normal. Some people are ambidextrous and can write equally well with either hand.

Our oldest son is left-handed. I remember one day his teacher told my wife she thought he was left-handed, but when she saw him writing with his right hand in class, she asked him why. Our son explained that it was because his left hand was tired. This is rare but normal.

We also know who we are sexually attracted to, but again, we can't explain how we know. We just know. This isn't always related to our biological sex, where a man is sexually attracted to a woman and vice versa. Sometimes a man is sexually attracted to another man, or a woman is sexually attracted to another woman. Again, they can't explain how they know. They just know who they are attracted to.

If biology controlled who we are sexually attracted to, then it would be “impossible” for a man to be sexually attracted to another man or for a woman to be sexually attracted to another woman. So obviously, biology does not control who we are attracted to.

Now let's move from biological sex to gender. Gender is NOT another word to describe our biological sex. Gender is the gender we know we are and is not controlled by our biological sex. Again, it is impossible to describe how we know; we just know. It is not how others describe our gender or what we see in a mirror. We know our gender like we know who we love and who we are attracted to sexually.

This is usually very difficult, if not almost impossible, for most people to understand, as most of us feel others should feel like we do as a biological man or as a biological woman. But we are all different, and that is actually a beautiful thing.

I remember when I was a swimming coach and met my future wife. I was immediately attracted to her. Over the three years we dated before we got married, that attraction grew to love. I can't explain why I loved her. I just loved her, and even though she died after 47 years of marriage, I still love her.

As far as TRUE transgender people are concerned, they know their gender and who they are sexually attracted to just like everyone does, and again it's just like we all know who we love.

If we stop and think, we know our gender, but unlike describing our biological sex, it is impossible for any of us to explain our gender to someone else. We just know it! And there is a wide range in everyone's gender.

Part 4: WHAT IS A WOMAN? (OR WHAT IS A MAN?)

A popular question that many have been asking is, “What is a woman?” So let's explore this question.

What is a woman? A woman is a human being.

What is a man? A man is a human being.

What makes up a human being?

Perhaps many years ago, the YMCA answered it best with its triangle...

Mind

Body

Spirit

Therefore, there are three parts of a human being:

A mind, a body, and a spirit.

The body does not control the mind, and the body does not control the spirit. So what is a woman? If you are speaking of just the biological body, then we all know the answer. But the body is only one-third of a human being.

The mind has tremendous power, while the body has very little power except what the mind gives it. The mind controls most of the body and causes it to act. As a simple example, if someone rings our doorbell, our body doesn't tell us to go answer the door. Our mind is what makes the decision to go see who is at the door and tells the body to go to the door and find out.

The spirit or soul is the life of the body and the mind. Jesus tells us that when we go to heaven, we neither marry nor are given in marriage. So the soul seems to be neither a woman nor a man.

Therefore, though it is rare, a biological body can have the mind (gender) of the opposite biological body. And, which is more powerful? The answer is the mind. The mind is what causes the body to want to transition so it can become who it knows it is.

However, transgender people never can become the perfect person they know they are because they are transgender. And what is wrong with being transgender? Nothing!!

So what is a woman? Or what is a man? The answer is, it's the mind (gender) of the human being. Is it male or is it female?

All transgender people are different, just like all people are different. For various reasons, including safety and acceptance, some transgender people choose to outwardly present as their biological sex by the way they dress and wear their hair, etc.

This is very hard for them as they are hiding who they really are inside. This can create or add to what is called gender dysphoria.

Part 5: GENDER DYSPHORIA

What is gender dysphoria? This occurs when a transgender person's biological body at birth doesn't match their knowledge of who they are. For example, if they are born a biological male but know they are a female, this causes gender dysphoria.

What happens is the transgender person's brain tries to process this in the background, but it can't. Much like an endless loop in a computer...it is stuck. A high percentage of their brain is working in the background, and they miss a lot of what is going on all around them. They are often not mentally present in relationships.

An example is if they go to a movie, a lot of the movie doesn't register, and days later they can't recall much of the movie. This is hard for people who aren't transgender to understand, as they don't experience gender dysphoria.

Here is another example that is easy to relate to. Have you ever left on a vacation and suddenly wondered if you closed the garage door? You find out that none of the passengers in your car are sure it was closed either.

This becomes a problem your brain can't solve! Your mind starts going in an endless loop. You lose a lot of your connection with what is going on around you as your brain is using most of its power trying to solve, again in the background, a problem it can't. The only answers are to go back home, call a neighbor, check a video camera, etc.

That is what gender dysphoria is like. For example, a transgender woman knows her inner self is female, but what she sees when she looks in a mirror, and what other people see when they look at her, is a man. She is a female mind (gender) in a biological male body. Her brain is caught in an endless loop. The only answer is to discover that she is transgender, and to relieve her gender dysphoria, she will probably need to transition. Being transgender is hard, but not as hard as being someone you're not.

Part 6: THE WANT-TO-BE TRANSGENDER CHILD

To begin, let's divide possible transgender people into three groups: those who WANT-to-be transgender, those who THINK-they-are transgender, and those who are TRUE transgender. (I could have used REAL, GENUINE, or AUTHENTIC instead of TRUE.) To discover which group they are in takes time, love, and understanding by family members, friends, acquaintances, and often with professional help. The only person who can determine if a person is a WANT-to-be, a THINK-they-are, or a TRUE transgender person is the person themselves.

As we look at the transgender child, it's important to understand that children and young teenagers tend to want instant gratification without thinking things through.

As a child, almost all of us want to be like someone else. I know from time to time while I was growing up I thought it would be neat to be a football player, a basketball player, a baseball player, a doctor, a lawyer, an astronaut, a fighter pilot, a policeman, and even a politician.

As I investigated or experienced each of these occupations, for one reason or another, I realized I wasn't comfortable with any of them. Keeping this in mind, let's first consider those children who WANT-to-be transgender. They probably make up the largest group and are usually children, who currently seem to mostly be made up of girls who want to be or wish they were boys. Often, these are groups of two or more girlfriends.

As they are nearing puberty and are starting to like boys, they become concerned with their changing bodies, and some think their problems would disappear if they were boys. It's kind of like the saying, "The grass is always greener on the other side of the fence." Usually, you quickly find out this isn't true.

For example, the WANT-to-be transgender boys discuss with their girlfriend(s) that it would be neat to be a boy. If they were a boy, then they could be popular with their friends.

They watch Instagram, YouTube, and other online communities that portray how wonderful it is to transition to being a boy. They reinforce the idea with each other and start dressing up together privately as boys.

As this continues, they may begin, in small ways, presenting as boys in public as well as secretly. They may ask to be called by their newly chosen boy name in school. Sometimes they hide this from their parents. More and more, they begin to wish they

were a boy and think about transitioning to being a boy. They learn about taking testosterone and having their breasts removed.

Once this is discovered, it is important for parents and often the child's teachers to immediately work together to help the child work through this phase of their life. One of the clues of a child who just wants to be transgender is when two or more children are considering transitioning together.

Since there are only about .7% of the population that are truly transgender, that means about 99.3% of the population are NOT transgender. So the chances of two friends being true transgenders are very small. If there are 3 or more friends that are considering transitioning, the chances are overwhelming that they are NOT transgender.

So what should parents do? Well, they should ask open-ended questions and try to understand, and not attempt to fix a problem. They shouldn't argue with their child, or their child could become defensive and come up with ideas to prove they are transgender. Parents should be careful not to get into a debate or argument with their child, as then the lines of communication can become closed.

A technique that can help the child is for the parents to allow their child to express themselves as the opposite gender from their biological sex at home and give the child time to discover their true self.

For WANT-to-be transgender children, over time, if they get involved with school activities and get their mind off being transgender, they will slowly feel comfortable with the gender that is the same as their birth sex.

It can help if they also associate with new friends where they are not thinking about transitioning. It is vital for parents to approach the situation with love and understanding. They should give their child the freedom to calmly think, with an open mind, about who they really are, and parents should always remain kind and neutral.

This can be somewhat compared to adults who discover a new car that they would like to own. Though they don't need a new car, they may unconsciously convince themselves that they need one, even though there is nothing wrong with the car they own, and they purchase the new car.

Once they start paying for the new car, paying the higher taxes, and paying the higher insurance costs, they quickly realize they really didn't need the new car. But now it's too late. And to make matters worse, once they drive out of the dealership, the value of the new car usually goes down substantially.

Transitioning is a very serious step, and it's important that the WANT-to-be transgender child does not make early, serious mistakes. However, if the WANT-to-be transgender child continues to say that they are transgender, then professional help is definitely

needed. But...it's important that puberty blockers, opposite-sex hormones, and surgery should not be pursued at this time. This will all be discussed later.

Part 7: THE THINK-THEY-ARE TRANSGENDER CHILD

Now let's consider those children who THINK-they-are transgender. This is different from those who WANT-to-be transgender. Those who THINK-they-are transgender are usually older and look back at their lives and wonder if some of the things they did in the past might indicate that they are transgender.

In this group, the majority seem to be boys wondering if they might be transgender girls. Their favorite color might not be blue, some of their younger friends might have been girls, they may have tried on girls' clothes, or they may be more emotional than other boys, etc. They begin to worry and think they might be transgender.

Occasionally they may actually start having the same feelings as the WANT-to-be transgender child, but this usually happens after they have begun thinking some of the things they did in the past might mean that they are transgender.

To find out, they might experiment with allowing their hair to grow, wearing earrings, or wearing clothes that are more feminine, etc. They too should be allowed to experiment with their feelings and be not told what to do.

Like those who WANT-to-be transgender, eventually, it may become helpful to seek professional help as they may continue to be concerned with some of the things they did in the past.

Since they are a THINK-they-are transgender child, their worries will eventually go away, and they will become uncomfortable acting transgender.

Part 8: THE TRUE TRANSGENDER CHILD

This is by far the smallest group, which, as I previously mentioned, is only around .7% of the entire population. However, if you think about it, if this percentage is fairly accurate, then in a town of 100,000 people, there would be around 700 people who are transgender. In a school with 500 students, there could be about 3 to 4 students who are transgender. However, many of them haven't discovered they are transgender yet.

Most TRUE transgender children know something is different about who they are, but they have no idea that they are transgender. Many won't admit, even to themselves, that something is wrong.

Some may wear their hair like the opposite-gender or hide opposite gender clothes and secretly wear them when no one else is at home. It becomes their own secret world. Often, they feel guilty.

It's extremely important to acknowledge that all humans are different, and this certainly applies to TRUE transgender children.

Nevertheless, some are almost immediately aware that they are the opposite gender of what they see in the mirror. This becomes very confusing to them, and some will tell their parents.

A good mystery book has little hints (clues) throughout the book. Like solving a mystery, parents should always watch for gender clues as they raise their children. On the rare occasion that they observe that their child seems to act opposite of their biological sex, they should make the child feel loved and free to be themselves.

TRUE transgender children will also need love and gentle understanding from their teachers as well as their parents. They need to be allowed to be themselves without being encouraged or discouraged about who they feel they are.

Unlike those who WANT to be transgender or who THINK they are transgender, the TRUE transgender child doesn't change who they know they are.

As discussed previously, think about whether you are left-handed or right-handed. To be encouraged to write with the wrong hand is like being encouraged to act like and be someone you know you aren't.

If TRUE transgender children are not given the freedom to be themselves, it can lead to confusion, anxiety, and depression. Or, it can possibly lead to attempted or successful suicide.

For TRUE transgender children, it is important for their parents to proceed slowly along the path of allowing the child to be who they know they are. After some time, it will become obvious that the child is a TRUE transgender child, and it will be time to seek professional help before taking additional steps.

Part 9: THE ROLE OF THE TRANSGENDER CHILD'S TEACHERS

Teachers play an important role in all children's lives. Of course, they help their students learn their ABCs, but also they should be trusted grown-ups that students can look up to, count on, and respect. They represent truth, honesty, and understanding.

When possible, it's helpful for teachers to work in harmony with the transgender child's parents or adults responsible for the child's upbringing. They are an important part of each child's team. Usually, the child's parents or teachers should not hide from each other that a child might have transgender feelings. However, we get into trouble in life if we try to live in black and white as almost everything is gray. Therefore, teachers should be given special gender training so that if a gender issue surfaces, they can determine if the child's safety could be in jeopardy if the parents are informed.

Of course, as mentioned several times, teachers, parents, family members, therapists, pediatricians, friends, etc., should not try to influence the child in any way but instead allow the child to feel accepted and have the freedom to discover who they are in their own way and in their own time.

Since the percentage of children who question their gender and sexual orientation in school is extremely small, it is not necessary for teachers to even bring up the subject in class. Gender does not need to be a part of the school's curriculum.

Should the topic of gender surface, it is helpful for the teacher to mention something like, "Everyone's gender is uniquely different and is normal, just like being right-handed, left-handed, or ambidextrous is normal. A person's gender has nothing to do with the value of the person. The important point is for all of us to accept and respect each other so everyone can be their true selves."

There is no value in having books in school libraries detailing gender, etc. This could unnecessarily confuse students and could cause some unhappy students to falsely believe their world would be better if they were a different gender. This can be a breeding ground for children to WANT to be transgender or to THINK they are transgender. And...the very, very few who are transgender won't need a book in the school library to make the discovery.

Who should be involved in deciding if the TRUE transgender child should transition? Of course, each situation is uniquely different, but generally, first the child must let it be known and demonstrate that they are transgender.

Second, open-minded parents or responsible adults play an important role in the decision. They will have observed the child's behavior for several years and should be aware that the child is possibly transgender.

Third, the child's teachers will have observed the child in the classroom, which is away from the child's home environment, and they will have a good idea as to the child's gender expression.

Fourth, the child's therapist(s) will be an important part of the decision. Fifth, the child's pediatrician would probably have followed the child's development, maybe since birth, and have observed many clues. Sixth, the child's endocrinologist would evaluate the child and, when needed, prescribe puberty blockers and eventually cross-sex hormones. The seventh and last part of the decision could be asking for God's help through prayer.

So...to sum it up, the following is a sequential list of those who should be involved before the child receives puberty blockers and eventually cross-sex hormones:

First...The child

Second...The child's parent(s) or responsible adult(s)

Third...The child's teacher(s)

Fourth...The child's therapist(s)

Fifth...The child's pediatrician

Sixth...The child's endocrinologist

Seventh...Could be asking for God's help through prayer

Interestingly, politicians are not even mentioned in the list, as the decision should only be made by those people who have an understanding of being transgender and know and evaluate each child through personal contact.

As an example, if laws are passed where no child can transition before age 18, they have removed the child, the parents or responsible adults, the teachers, the therapist(s), the pediatrician, the endocrinologist, and God from the decision. This doesn't make sense and doesn't allow physicians to honor their Hippocratic oath. Being transgender is not a political issue; it's a discovery issue.

It's admirable when politicians vote their true conscience and not just vote along party lines. It's so important that each child's care be individualized and not controlled by law.

Part 10: WHEN PROFESSIONAL HELP IS NEEDED

Over time, whether a child WANTS-to-be transgender, THINKS-they-are transgender, or are a TRUE transgender child, if they continue to feel they are transgender, then the first step is to seek the help of a good therapist. One who will work with the parents and the child.

The therapist should help the child uncover their true feelings. This will take time. At no time should the child be encouraged or discouraged by the therapist or the parents to transition, as neither the therapist nor the parents can think for the child.

After meeting with the therapist for some time, it is often helpful to meet with a second therapist for another opinion. Usually, how to proceed will become obvious over time. If the child just wants to be or just thinks they are transgender, the idea will no longer appeal to them, and it may even seem silly.

However, if the child is truly transgender, then, if warranted, puberty blockers can carefully be prescribed by an endocrinologist who closely monitors the child. Puberty blockers are for stages in a child's life and not for a child's particular age.

Puberty blockers will give the child more time to confirm who they are. If at any time, the child determines they aren't transgender, the blockers can be discontinued, and they will begin their biological puberty.

The decision should be made by the child's doctors, therapist(s), and parents, and not by political or religious groups who rarely understand the reality of being transgender. It's vital that everyone involved have absolutely no agenda other than to help the child discover for themselves who they are. If laws are passed denying medical treatment for a child, then other undesirable ways of getting unsafe hormones, etc., might be used.

After several years of being on puberty blockers, if the child still knows that they are transgender, then hormone replacement therapy (HRT) can be medically prescribed. The entire process is very, very serious, and every precaution should be taken so the right decision is made.

Part 11: THE WANT-TO-BE TRANSGENDER ADULT

After puberty, a very small percentage of adults may decide that they want to be transgender. This is almost always just an individual and not a group of people. This seems to be more men who want to be transgender women than women who want to be transgender men.

The WANT-to-be transgender adult group is small as they have outgrown thinking that being transgender is cool or will make them more popular.

They may have gone through a divorce or other traumatic experience and feel being the opposite gender would lead to a better and happier life. They should not act too hastily, as they will soon find out living as the opposite gender does not solve their problems. In fact, it creates even more problems.

It is important for family members and friends to not encourage or discourage the WANT-to-be a transgender adult but remain neutral regarding the idea of transitioning. Often it can be helpful for the WANT-to-be transgender adult to seek help from a therapist as there could be many different underlying issues they may be trying to avoid.

Without encouragement, the WANT-to-be transgender adult will usually get tired of wanting to be someone that they are not. If they do continue to want to be transgender, then it is often helpful to live and present as the opposite gender for some time before taking opposite gender hormones or getting irreversible surgery, which can create major problems.

They should not become a member of a group of WANT-to-be transgender adults who encourage each other, as this will delay the realization that they are not transgender and may cause them to make irreversible mistakes.

WANT-to-be transgender women who get extremely mad and upset when they are misgendered should ask themselves, why they are so angry. This could be a strong clue that they are just wanting to be transgender.

Part 12: THE THINK-THEY-ARE TRANSGENDER ADULT

The THINK-they-are transgender adults make up a larger group than those who want to be transgender adults. They are often men who are leading unfulfilling lives and discover the idea of transitioning. Like the WANT-to-be transgender adults, they may have gone through a divorce or other traumatic experience and feel being the opposite gender could lead to a better and happier life. They are questioning whether they are transgender.

They may have read about transgender people and begin wondering if some of the similar things they did as a child might mean that they are transgender. Such as, they like pink rather than blue, want longer hair, their best friends are of the opposite gender, or they have tried on girls' clothes, etc.

They begin to carefully examine their past and look for things they did or thought that are similar to those who are transgender. Since they are just a THINK-they-are transgender adult they will ultimately realize what they did as a child wasn't because they are transgender.

Like the WANT-to-be transgender adults, the THINK-they-are transgender adults should not become a member of a group of THINK-they-are transgender adults who encourage each other, as this will just delay the realization that they are not transgender.

Like all transgender groups, they should not be encouraged or discouraged by anyone but rather be left alone to discover who they are. This could take a few years.

Unlike men who want to be transgender women, they usually don't get upset when they are outed as not real women. In fact, they often worry about being discovered as a man in a dress, etc.

Part 13: THE TRUE TRANSGENDER ADULT

Being a TRUE transgender adult is not contagious and is a very tiny group. Usually, they have been aware that something was different about them since they were a child, but they didn't know what. They may even be married and have a biological family.

Oftentimes, they have dressed privately as the opposite sex and hid it from their spouse or friends for years. They may feel this was wrong but keep doing it. They have lived with gender dysphoria, as previously described, in some form most of their life. Many don't want to admit that they are transgender.

Discovering they are an TRUE transgender adult can happen at any age, even at 90 years old and above. Ultimately, they decide they can no longer continue living without revealing their true selves. Like all transgender groups, they should not be encouraged or discouraged to transition. They should just be accepted. If they are a TRUE transgender adult and are accepted, they are free to evolve into who they really are.

Nonetheless, before taking hormones or having surgery, they should seek the help of a qualified therapist. Even for the TRUE transgender adult, transitioning is serious, and small steps should first be taken to confirm they are truly transgender.

Most TRUE Transgender women have the emotions of women and not the emotions of aggressive men. How a transgender woman reacts emotionally can be a strong clue as to whether she is or is not a TRUE transgender woman.

Part 14: HOW TRANSGENDER PEOPLE SHOULD BE TREATED

Often when we are not happy with ourselves, we tend to criticize and be mean to others. Transgender people are not a threat to anyone who is confident in who they are.

To sum it up, in the beginning, the WANT-to-be transgender, the THINK-they-are transgender, and the TRUE transgender should all be treated the same way. They should all be accepted and allowed to live as who they believe they are. Again, they are not a threat to anyone. Being transgender should not be encouraged or discouraged.

Also, as mentioned before, being transgender is not contagious. Yet, many people who are not transgender can be influenced by others who try to make being transgender a solution to their unhappiness or depression. This can delay their discovery of who they really are.

Yet, again it's so very, very important to not discourage or make TRUE transgender people feel something is wrong with them, as this can add to their gender dysphoria and could lead to self-harm or even suicide. And besides, there is nothing wrong with them.

All transgender people need time and loving, accepting care. Again, the goal should be to allow the WANT-to-be, THINK-they-are, and TRUE transgender people to discover who they are and not be forced to live to please others and become nothing more than puppets going through life. Again, no one can determine if someone is a TRUE transgender person except the individual person, and this takes time.

People who are different and unique are often the ones who are creative and come up with ideas that make the world a better place for everyone.

Part 15: HOW TRANSGENDER PEOPLE SHOULD TREAT OTHERS

Transgender people know how difficult and often painful it is to transition. Yet, they know it is worth it to become their true selves. But it's important for them to realize that being a transgender person is nothing to brag about to others. They are human just like everyone else. They were just born with a gender that is different from their biological body. And that is OK! In fact, they have the special, unique ability to understand the world from both the male and the female viewpoint. They have the ability in many ways to bring people together.

They should accept the fact that there have never been biological men who could become “pure” biological women and vice versa. However, they can transition to their true gender and live wonderful and productive lives being their true selves. They should be allowed to change their name and gender once they have confirmed that they are transgender.

It takes time for transgender people to discover who they are, and they should recognize that it will take others time to understand the transgender child, student, friend, coworker, etc. So transgender people should give others time to understand and respect them, and not expect immediate acceptance.

If they are misgendered, they should be kind and understanding towards others rather than display anger. True transgender people should not encourage others to transition. But, should actively promote acceptance with kindness.

Part 16: TRANSGENDER PEOPLE AND RESTROOMS

Going back to the basic idea that “Only people who are not happy with themselves are mean to others.” Confident people are kind and respectful to others.

A big misconception is that TRUE transgender adults transition for sexual reasons. This is simply NOT true. Most transition to become who they are and have nothing to do with sex or so they can use a particular restroom. Being transgender is hard but not as hard as being someone they’re not.

It is very important that transgender people respect everyone, and under no circumstances should they make others feel uncomfortable, just as everyone should not make transgender people feel uncomfortable.

When in doubt, transgender people should use a gender-neutral bathroom (like the one in the new Kansas City International Airport), a family restroom, or a single-person restroom such as those that are located in many filling stations and in some restaurants, etc.

At no time should a transgender woman who looks like a man in a dress use the women’s restroom. Likewise, a transgender woman that looks like a woman should not be required to use the men’s restroom.

For example, just because someone says or feels that they are transgender doesn’t give them the right to make other people uncomfortable. Everyone should be respectful of others and use the bathroom of the gender they socially present. If there is any doubt, they should use a gender-neutral restroom.

There are three basic ways to transition. Transition socially (wearing their true gender clothing, etc.), transition medically (taking their true gender hormones), and transition surgically. Of course, many will choose to combine all three.

The key is to use the bathroom where no one looks out of place and where no one is uncomfortable. Most transgender people are kind and respectful, just like most people are kind and respectful. The problems are caused by the few who are not.

Part 17: TRANSGENDER PEOPLE IN SPORTS

TRUE transgender people don't transition so they can compete in sports. Very few of them even have an interest in sports.

I am a former high school and college competitive swimmer, and I coached youth swim teams for 14 years. In my last year of coaching, there were 115 boys and girls on the team, ages 6 to 17. Often until puberty, many of the girls were as fast or faster than the boys.

It seems that if a boy transitions before puberty, HE is now a SHE and should be allowed to compete as a girl. However, once boys go through puberty, they are now considered men and could have an advantage competing against biological women.

But, here is an interesting variable that should be considered. When a boy goes through puberty, he usually grows taller, has bigger bones, and bigger muscles. However, when an adult male transitions to a woman, their muscles weaken dramatically, but their height and bones remain about the same. Thus, the transgender woman has to move a bigger body and bigger bones with weaker muscles, with some obvious results.

One simple solution would be to allow transgender female athletes to compete with an asterisk by their name indicating that they are transgender. If they win a medal, the next-place woman could also receive the same medal. As an example, in outdoor track events like the 100-yard/meter dash, if it's wind-assisted, there is an asterisk after the time indicating it was wind-assisted.

Each individual and situation is unique and different, so only the governing body of the particular sport should make the rules and not politicians, who usually know nothing about being transgender. Everyone should be given the chance to compete, and there is nothing wrong with being transgender.

Part 18: DATING TRANSGENDER PEOPLE

Transgender people have the same basic needs as most humans. Such as the need for acceptance, food, a place to live, financial security, companionship, feeling loved, and a feeling of self-worth.

I mentioned acceptance first because if they aren't accepted, there will be little chance that they will be able to have the rest of their needs.

If a man is attracted to a woman and later discovers she is a transgender woman, does that mean he's homosexual? Absolutely not, he was just attracted to femininity. However, if he is not secure in his sexual identity, often called fragile masculinity, this could be very upsetting.

For their own protection, transgender women should reveal their true identity very early in a relationship and preferably even before going out on a date.

Part 19: UNDERSTANDING THE TRANSGENDER MYSTERY “CONCLUSION”

It is my hope that you now understand that being transgender is real, just like being left-handed or right-handed is real. And, if transgender children and adults are allowed to be who they want to be, think they are, or truly are, given time, they will discover their truth.

If they are accepted and loved during this process, once they know for sure who they are, they can be their TRUE, REAL, GENUINE, AUTHENTIC selves and go on with their lives being productive members of society.

Being a WANT-to-be or a THINK-they-are transgender person is only temporary, but being a TRUE transgender person, if accepted, should be a lifetime of gratification being their TRUE self. If someone told you that you are someone that you are not, how would you feel? We all want to be our unique selves and not who others want us to be.

If transgender people were universally accepted and respected, their suicide rate would go down dramatically, and they could become a unique and important part of society, and then how the world would change for the better.

If the aggressive male or female could see the world from both the male and female perspectives, think how much kinder and more understanding they would be.

The biggest problem transgender people have is coping with rejection by others. TRUE transgender women are not men trying to compete against women. They are women born in a man's body. But TRUE transgender women understand they are transgender and should respect biological women.

Mark Twain felt that Joan of Arc was the second greatest person to walk on the face of the Earth. On May 30, 1431, Joan was burned at the stake. But why? The only reason the Catholic Church could find to burn Joan at the stake was because she wore men's clothes. Think, as a teenage girl, how was she going to lead the French army while riding a horse in a skirt or dress?

As humans, we want to put everything into a perfect box, but nature is not perfect. Once we understand that, then people are free to be their true selves. The pressure to conform is gone, and life becomes enjoyable and wonderful for everyone. But change is always hard. Think how long it took for women to be allowed to vote.

Being a TRUE transgender person is not a choice, and TRUE transgender people aren't a threat to society. Most don't want to be transgender; they just are. Many cry tears of rejection at home because they aren't accepted. Somewhere around 40% attempt

suicide. Many are successful in killing themselves. All because they are human, transgender, and not accepted.

What can everyone do to help them? It's simple: accept them and get to know them.

Remember, if biology controlled who we are sexually attracted to, then it would be “impossible” for a man to be sexually attracted to another man and “impossible” for a woman to be sexually attracted to another woman. But we know some people are sexually attracted to their same sex. So, biology does not control who we are sexually attracted to.

Similarly, biology doesn't control our gender, who we love, and whether we are right-handed or left-handed. So our biological body is just that “BOX” in which our gender, who we are sexually attracted to, who we love, which is our dominant hand, and even our soul all reside.

Thus, everyone, regardless of who they are, should be accepted and comfortable being their true selves. After all, nothing is perfect, nothing is absolute, and variety is the beauty of life. TRUE transgender people are special just like a four-leaf clover is very special.

Years ago, left-handed people were often made fun of, but now they are appreciated for their special abilities. Good examples are left-handed baseball players who bat and/or throw left-handed. According to Google, at least 8 of the 45 presidents of the United States were left-handed. Since World War II, 6 of the 14 U.S. presidents have been left-handed. I think the day is coming when transgender people will be appreciated for their special abilities, as they can often see the world from both the male and the female perspective or viewpoint. And, that is very special. The world could become a kinder and more compassionate place for everyone.

As I mentioned near the beginning, every transgender situation is a little different, and there will be exceptions to every transgender experience. I've tried to provide a basic understanding of the transgender mystery. I hope and pray I was successful, and that groups and people will quit shaking the jar.

Dave Fisher

About the author: David H. Fisher, Jr.

Dave was born and raised in Topeka, Kansas.

He was married to Kathy for 47 years until her death in 2011. They have 3 children and 7 grandchildren. He graduated from Washburn University with a Bachelor of Education Degree and a major in Physical Education and Exercise Science. He pioneered the development of the first pocket computer systems in 1981.

He was the beginning spark behind the restoration of historic Burnett's Mound in Topeka, Kansas, as well as the non-smoking ordinance in restaurants in Topeka and in Kansas.

He is the secretary of the Jayhawker Literary Club and has presented numerous papers. He has made 5 Joan of Arc pilgrimages to France.

He has written 6 eBooks:

Two on weight management: "FAT STATS The Guide to Weight Control" and "Think and Lose Weight."

"Kansas Corn," an original corny joke book (dad jokes).

"He's Here My Story," his experiences with God;

"Who Killed Who? A Love Story," a murder mystery. (Also in paperback.)

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