

Cross Dressing Information

Courtesy the Seahorse Society of N.S.W.

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What is a Crossdresser?

"Crossdresser", "Transvestite" or "Transgendered Person" are terms used to describe a person who regularly takes on the appearance of the opposite sex in order to satisfy a deep personal need.

We use and prefer the term "Crossdresser" as it is less limited and coloured by common usage.

Above all, however, a Crossdresser is a real person.

What causes Crossdressing?

What causes a person born physically male to need to dress and behave as a female (and vice-versa) in order to have peace of mind?

There is no present definitive answer. There appears to be a genetic predisposition and a prenatal hormonal basis for a person's gender identity – the mental perception an individual has about his or her gender – which, though subject to social influences, is in dependent of a person's physical sexual identity.

Crossdressing is simply the outward expression by such a person of this essential gender identity and Crossdressing is thus no less real or compelling for this person than the expression by the average male and female of their masculinity and femininity.

Is there a Cure?

There is no cure for Crossdressing for the simple reason that being a Crossdresser is not an illness but a state of being. Crossdressers are "born and not made".

Is Crossdressing new?

Throughout recorded history, and in every human culture, there have always been Crossdressers. In many societies, Crossdressers have been accepted for the reality they represent and their uniqueness has been utilised by such societies for the common good. It is a culture's attitude to Crossdressing that determines whether Crossdressing is or is not a "problem" to that culture.

What type of people are Crossdressers?

Crossdressers come from all walks of life and every strata of society. Spouses, parents, children and friends are Crossdressers. There are no distinctions.

Is Crossdressing Illegal or Immoral?

There is nothing in the act of Crossdressing that offends any law in mainland Australia or in most of the world. Most major religions do not consider the act of Crossdressing immoral.

Does Crossdressing influence sexuality?

A person's sexual preference or sexuality is independent of their mental gender identity. Human sexual diversity exists amongst Crossdressers in the same basic proportions as it does in the general community. In fact, as Crossdressers are part of the general community, your "average" Crossdresser is likely to be heterosexual, to have married and have children.

What is it like being a Crossdresser?

Most Crossdressers discover their need to cross dress during childhood. They have no idea why they feel the way they do, yet quickly find that the expression of this part of their nature results in reprimand and alienation from parents, family and friends – the people they love and value the most. This can result in the development of unreasonable feelings of unhealthy personal shame.

So most Crossdressers become secretive about their Crossdressing and, doing their best to deny and suppress this essential part of their being, grow fulfilling themselves as human being in all the other ways they can. But being a Crossdresser doesn't "go away" any more than the essential self can ever go away. Sustained denial of the expression of this essential self can result in severe emotional disturbance.

Shame, fear and loneliness find expression in thought with such questions as – "Would my best friends, workmates, family, father/mother, wife/partner and my children still want me and love me if they knew this part of me or would they reject me with scorn or fear?".

Many Crossdressers ultimately find it impossible and intolerable to exist like this. They feel compelled to learn about themselves and to "pen up" to themselves and to the significant others in their lives. Rejection may occur, most often Crossdressers are surprised at the level of acceptance they receive, which so often reflects the level of their own self-acceptance. They liberate themselves to enjoy the exhilaration of the expression of this essential part of their being through Crossdressing.

It is possible to be a complete and happy person and be a crossdresser!

What can you do if you know a Crossdresser?

Be open minded. Be prepared to learn some sensible realities about crossdressing.

Above all, know and remind yourself that being a Crossdresser will not change the child, the partner, parent or friend you know and maybe love, into someone different. After all the only real difference is that you know!

Continue to see the individual person concerned and allow yourself the gifts of an open heart and open mind!

What is Seahorse?

The Seahorse Society of New South Wales Inc. is a non-profit self-help organisation established in 1971 and is a Member of the New South Wales (N.S.W.) Association of Self Help Organisations and Groups (A.S.H.O.G.).

The Society's purpose is to provide mutual support for Crossdressers, their partners and families. We:

- maintain a library containing up-to-date references, medical and biographical material about Crossdressing;
- have regular meetings, which are both social and informative, regular outings to restaurants etc., provide practical advice such as where to shop and have experts assist our members in their Crossdressing;
- make available speakers and literature for interested community groups and the medical profession.
- offer free non-expert counselling, by both ourselves and our partners, to Crossdressers, their partners and families. We also offer referral to professional counsellors and medical practitioners if required; and
- above all, we offer Crossdressers a way "out-of-the-closet" to self acceptance and self-respect by being able to meet, question and share experiences with others who, as chance would have it, are Crossdressers.

Our motto is "Crossdressing With Dignity". Through promoting self respect amongst Crossdressers and their families and a better understanding of Crossdressing throughout the community, we aim to achieve just that.

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