

**APPENDIX C**

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**Transgender**

**Leadership**

**Workshop**

**July 6, 1996**

**ICTLEP  
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# 6 Stage of Development

## STAGE ONE IDENTITY CONFUSION

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### I Think I Am Different

Stage One is characterized by the growing realization that "I don't seem to have the same thoughts and feelings that the other people of my sex seem to have". "The more I observe and hear, the more it seems like I am inordinately 'different', somehow; and maybe not 'normal'".

For many people in the TG community, these realizations come very early in life, often by age three or four. The feelings grow from their desire to play games considered socially inappropriate for kids of their assigned gender role. Boys, for example, who prefer to play with dolls, play "house", play "girl games", and sometimes to express a desire to wear dresses and have longer hair and other manifestations of the appearance of girls that they observe. Girls, for example, who prefer to play rough and tumble games and sports, who prefer to be "one of the boys". There is not nearly the social abuse for girls who act like boys, however, so Identity Confusion likely will not become so prominent at the early age.

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### Labeling

The process can only begin, and grow, when the individual is able to label their own behavior; outside observations—taunts, feedback, etc.,— cannot trigger this Stage.

As these people grow older, and are better able to process information, but are still in Stage One, there will also be an ongoing internalization—personalization—of external transgender information. "When I hear or see things related to being transgendered, such as a cross-dressed character in a movie, a TG guest on a talk show, or even a TG joke, it prompts a sense of recognition: "This feels like it has something to do with me." The more this internalization of transgender information happens, the more confused the person is likely to feel about their gender identity.

*For as long as I can remember I knew that I was different. I felt awkward and out of place. I was different because I didn't react to things the same way other boys my age did. For example, my reaction to Annette Funicello, who appeared on Walt Disney's "The Mickey Mouse Club", was not like the boys around me. Being the first Mouseketeer with breasts that could be perceived beneath her sweatshirt, Annette was the heartthrob of most early-puberty boys. I*

**macho/aggressive. People in hiding—people with low self-esteem—often do not make good team players in the corporate world. In some cases, the anxiety of denial is so strong that the individual copes by abusing alcohol and other drugs.**

**Some transgender people never leave Stage One. These are sometimes the people who tell or laugh at anti-GLBT or AIDS jokes, and who often engage in gay and TG bashing, either verbal or physical.**

**Many of these people count on the consensus of their peers that being transgendered is wrong in order for them to maintain their resolve not to acknowledge their own feelings. These transphobic people can be heterosexual, bisexual, and transgender.**

**In sum, Stage One is about the realization of difference, and the development of strategies necessary to deal with the resultant personal identity crisis of "Who am I?" The essence of that task is "I think I am different". Movement toward Stage Two happens with growing acceptance of the idea that "I know I am different", and therefore the implications of that difference must be understood.**

## STAGE TWO IDENTITY COMPARISON

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### A Desire to Learn More

With a personal desire to learn, transgendered people move into Stage Two. At this point, they have begun to accept the possibility that they might be transgender but now need to consider the ramifications.

In Stage One, the issue was self-alienation. In Stage Two, individuals face the issue of social alienation.

This social alienation is often characterized in its early period by a feeling that "I must be the Only person in the world who feels like this...", which is accompanied by extreme anguish.

"If I am transgender, what will it do to my relationships with my family and friends? Will I be able to pursue the career of my choice? Will I be able to get married and have children? Can I maintain an intimate relationship with my church?" How people face these questions is again influenced by a variety of factors, particularly the hostility they experience in groups of people around them toward *anyone* seen as different .

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### Fear of Negative Reactions

If I am able to begin accepting my feelings and behavior as transgender, but highly fear the negative reactions of the important people in my life, I devalue transgenderism; I might choose to move far away from the significant people in my life to protect my secret.

Individuals who begin to accept the probability that their feelings or their behavior might be accurately described as transgender might also then begin to search for more information on the subject. They may look for books, read pamphlets, or seek out someone with whom they feel they can talk. It is in this stage that people are most likely to seek out, and make first contact with a Transgender support group (usually anonymously) or a gender-sensitive Employee Assistance Programs (EAP) and ask for information.

The core of Stage Two is the realization that all the guidelines for life—behaviors, ideals, and expectations—are no longer relevant to their life, and that nothing has replaced those guidelines; the individual is faced with finding new meanings for life.

The social alienation of Stage Two can grow so deep that suicide becomes a viable option.

If other people's attitude is that they prefer not to be confronted with a person's transgender orientation, they send out clear messages that secrecy will be rewarded. "If you want to be promoted, keep quiet, stay in your birth-role and play the game." Such a message sabotages all efforts to otherwise create a productive teamwork environment. It is a message that is picked up not only by GLBT people, but also by those heterosexual people whose personal secrets (divorce, inter-racial marriage, pregnancy) cause them to feel cautious and to expend a lot of energy to keep their own secrets.

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### **Failures of Therapy**

Traditional professional therapy often fails at this point, because the therapist will attempt to deal with transgender issues, when the real issue is personal, social, alienation, and the loss of old, familiar life-structures.

In sum, Stage Two is about beginning to learn about self, and to learn about the ramifications of the newly-emerging life options. The essence of Stage Two is about separation from the society of "normal". the individual begins to incorporate new options into their life.

## **STAGE THREE IDENTITY TOLERANCE**

In Cass's third stage, individuals have come to accept that they indeed are probably Transgendered, and they begin to recognize their social and emotional needs. The heightened social alienation of identity tolerance leads the individual to find new social groups to work within.

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### **Active In TG Groups**

Getting active within the Transgender community—within TG support groups—is important to the individual's developing sense of self. It is in those groups that still-closeted TG men or women will begin to identify role models and to sort out what personal limits might exist for their own needs. They can identify with and learn from other people who express ideas and feelings similar to their own, as well as rejecting the ideas of those individuals who have seemingly gone further or in a different direction than is currently personally comfortable.

Success at finding such a support group and feeling at home in it can depend upon a variety of factors, including the individual's sense of their attractiveness, their age, their race, their social skills, and the availability of such a support group. For many individuals, a national transgender workshop/conference will provide the security, comfort, and information that a local group cannot.

In some major corporations, managers encourage all of their employees to attend GLBT workshops, which make it easy for closeted TG people to learn more about themselves without having to "come out."

The quality of the contacts made in the Stage Three search for support affects the individual's level of self-tolerance in their emerging new gender identity. For some, contact with other transgendered people will be perceived as rewarding, for others the experience will be perceived as punishing. In addition, poor social skills, shyness, low self-esteem, fear of exposure, of police, of the unknown, each and all can create a negative experience.

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## **Terminology**

For the transgendered person in Stage three, forming a new identity has a special crisis; that of what to call themselves. Terminology becomes an overbearing concern, as they struggle to find words to describe how they are feeling, even though those feelings change as they continue to learn about themselves. In some respects, this terminology struggle looks like a Stage One event, as TGs once again work/struggle toward, and against, being "different". With the defining of terminology and newly-developing definitions of self, comes the search for others who are more like they are—and the rejection of those who are different—from their life. This tumultuous period brings much conflict as new friends are made and then pushed away. This Stage also brings separation within the TG support community, as TG people segregate themselves into groups of crossdressers "or" transsexuals; typically the transsexuals will berate others as being "only crossdressers".

If the contacts made in this stage are with self-affirmed individuals who see being Transgendered as legitimate, who provide a positive role model for the closeted TG person in search for what being TG means, it is more likely that the individual will become self-tolerant.

Some people surround themselves with other closeted people and feel that it is good enough to have a small group of GLBT friends with whom you secretly meet on occasion. The overall productivity of these closeted TG people will always be affected by the energy they put into keeping their secret.

In sum, the primary task of Stage Three is to embrace the meanings of the newly emergent information and life-options; to begin to resolve the absolute social alienation. The essence of that task is resolved when the individual is able to say to self, "I am different because I am Transgendered", and thereby begins to incorporate new options into their life.

## STAGE FOUR IDENTITY ACCEPTANCE

Stage Four is characterized by continued and increasing contact with other transgendered people. This increased activity validates and normalizes Transgender activity and identity. The earlier questions of "Who am I" and "Where do I belong" have now been resolved, although often in a cruel sense, to be discussed later in this section. In this stage, individuals begin to build a world that supports their personal identity, and they immerse themselves in the TG and/or GLBT subculture.

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### Differing Philosophies

The personal impressions of experiences within the Transgender support groups become paramount to Identity Acceptance. Some of these support groups hold philosophies that fully legitimize Transgender Identity, both privately and publically, but other support groups only partially legitimize Transgender Identity; these groups believe that being Transgendered is a private issue, and not for public "display".

The advantage of partial legitimization is that the basic life philosophy of "fitting in" can be maintained. With partial legitimization, then, the social work becomes "passing", limited contact, and selective disclosure. These behaviors compartmentalize Transgender activities, and reduce the possibility of being confronted by others, especially others they see as important in their lives.

The advantage of full legitimization is that it leads the individual back into considering the full social ramifications of their newly-emerging identity.

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### Hero Status

One additional problem that develops for TGs at this Stage is that any who declare themselves to be transsexuals, working toward Sex-Reassignment Surgery, seem to achieve "hero" status within the group. The problem is that should they later find a personal reason to back out of the transition, their special status within the group will prevent them from stopping the transition; and they will have moved from forced socialization as a male to forced socialization as a female.

On another level, the new identity that was nurtured and developed through Stages Three and Four may have taken a cruel twist, leaving the support group itself as their identity. In this mode, these TGs will attack anyone in the group who does not quickly live up to their own personal expectations of what a TG should be and do; there are many who will expell people from the support group for non-conformity to ambiguous ideals of Transgenderism, such as refusal for a male-to-female transgender person to wear a dress to meetings, etc.



## **STAGE FIVE IDENTITY PRIDE**

The Transgender person enters Stage Five when s/he begins considering his/her role in the rest of society, and when s/he must interact with a world bigger than the comfort of the support group world. Stage Five begins with an awareness of the incongruency that exists between their own concept of self as being totally acceptable as transgender, and society's rejection of this concept.

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### **Segregation**

In Stage Five, the individual segregates the world into two groups: Transgendered (creditable and significant) and non-transgendered (discredited and insignificant). This stage is also marked by TG people having less and less to do with non-TG people and, sometimes, even having less and less to do with closeted TG people.

Because they are spending more and more time in the TG subculture, individuals in Stage Five often appear to have lost their sense of humor and/or proportion. They are angry and frustrated by the years they lost to feeling embarrassed by or ashamed of their gender orientation.

In daily living, the individual is confronted with, and forced to adhere to, an established frame of reference that raises the inconsistency between transgender values and non-transgender values.

These internal conflicts create feelings of anger, from the frustration and alienation that occur outside of the safety of support groups and TG conventions.

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### **The Activist**

In Stage Five, the combination of pride in being TG and anger at "transphobia" can create the activist. Activist TG employees may be accused by co-workers of "flaunting" because they wear makeup or opposite-gender clothing, often inappropriately. These TG employees may also raise eyebrows by talking about their participation in TG conferences and/or events.

For many Transgender people in Stage Five, purposeful confrontation with "the establishment" is seen as the only way to validate that being TG is good; this confrontation helps the individual to perceive the TG culture as more significant. These confrontations also lead the TG individual to deliberately abandon the strategies which were effectively used to hide themselves from society.

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## **Exclusivity**

**The greatest problem within this Identity Acceptance Stage is one of exclusivity; the individual will decide that they alone are the only "real" transsexual, and they will recite a "shopping list" of reasons why each and every other person in the community is mistaken in their own beliefs. It is sad to watch a person's ego move from "I must be the only person in the world who feels like this" (Stage One), to "I am the only person in the world who must be allowed to feel like this".**

**In sum, the primary task of Stage Four is to accept self without the imposition of social ideals. It is becoming secure in the knowledge of personal truth about self. The essence of that task is resolved when the individual is able to say to themselves, "I now know who and what I am, and this is OK".**

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### **Confrontation**

Within the confrontations in this stage, TG employees are likely telling other people—friends, family members, co-workers and managers—that they are TG. Stage Five TG employees are the ones most likely to volunteer to speak as an openly TG person during department meetings on diversity issues.

Activism serves another purpose, however. For society at-large, rejection of TG ideals and values, and even rejection of TGs as human beings, can easily occur because of a complete lack of honest education on these issues. The savvy TG activist has many avenues and strategies available, including rabid in-your-face activism, to utilize to help motivate non-TG people to listen and to learn.

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### **Resentment & Animosity**

The major problem in Stage Five is that closeted TG people in the first four stages can be quite resentful of—and carry considerable animosity toward—TG people in Stage Five and vice versa. Those who rely upon the closet for their survival fear that their "brazen" brothers or sisters will "out" them or call attention to them somehow. Those who are out, often forgetting how long and hard their own struggle was, often feel contempt for those who cling to the security of the shadows. This will be especially evident in support groups, shortly before Gay Pride parades, etc.

This animosity is at the core of much disagreement between the members of TG support groups, and the leadership of the groups; it is the primary reason why members and leaders often fight and disagree so much.

Transgender activity in Stage Five has a lot to do with the response they get from the important people in their life. If they are convinced that all TG people are good and all other people are judgmental and rejecting, the transgendered individual will stay solidly stuck in Stage Five for the sake of survival. Each time TG individuals encounter a rejecting parent, clergy person, editorial writer, public official, office mate, or manager, it reinforces their need to stay "ghettoized" and to continue rabid activism. "See, I told you they would reject me. They are as bad as I thought."

If, however, Transgendered people encounter heterosexual co-workers or friends who accept them as they are, who don't ask them to keep it to themselves, who invite them—as they are—into their lives, these TG people begin to lose their ability to see the world as "TG" and "non-TG," as divided into good TGs and bad non-TGs. It is now that the TG individual can move into Stage Six.

## **STAGE SIX IDENTITY SYNTHESIS**

Stage Six happens when the walls between the world of transgendered people and that of "others" comes down and TG people feel their transgenderism integrated into all other aspects of their lives. Stage Six is characterized by a sense of "Yeah, I'm transgendered... [so what?] Let's get on with doing whatever work we are here to do..."

Stage Six is where a transgendered person can comfortably say "Being Transgendered is an important element of my being a productive member of society".

In Stage Six, TG people will still feel anger, still feel pride, and still distrust non-supportive people, but they will also understand that there is as much diversity in the non-TG world as there is in the transgender world, and they will be less inclined to make quick judgments about any other people. This, of course, makes them a better team player in the corporate world.

# A Question of Eccentricism

## *What If?*

Anyone involved in research and/or problem-solving of any kind understands the necessity of setting up a hypothesis, and then testing that hypothesis for consistent validity. A 1986 article in *People Magazine* left me wondering for a long time if one major element of transgenderism hadn't been completely overlooked: What if some, or even just a few, of the people in the transgender community were there for a different reason altogether? What if some of the people were just eccentric? Would it imply a choice? And *What If* these people found themselves in a support group, or under the care of a therapist that promoted sex-reassignment surgery?

The following is presented in the spirit of "Leaving no stone unturned...", and of "Please don't shoot the messenger!"

In the left column is the original article; in the right column are "sound bites" with strategically substituted words, to help you get the flavor of this article.

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## **ECCENTRIC**

Eccentrics aren't mad, bad or dangerous, and they don't mind if the world finds them weird...

Eccentric? If you feel you might be, contact Dr. David Weeks. That query, posted on public bulletin boards throughout Edinburgh in 1984, yielded a bumper crop of 130 self-proclaimed oddballs, recruited for the first scientific study of eccentricity. "No research had been done of the subject," says Weeks, 42, principle psychologist at the Royal Edinburgh Hospital, "because most psychologists are looking for crucial issues that cry out for immediate attention. I was fascinated by eccentrics because they provide an indirect approach for looking at four important areas: Schizophrenia, nonconformity, creativity, and the normal personality." A native of Garwood, N.J., Weeks was educated in Scotland. A widower and the father of two children, he counts one certified eccentric in his family - a grandfather who was a passionate science-fiction buff. According to family lore, the grandfather became so agitated while listening to Orson Welles' War of the Worlds

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broadcast in 1938 that he gathered his family and, hoping to escape a Martian invasion, sped to southern New Jersey and drove his car off a pier. Currently, Weeks is extending his search for eccentrics to America. He discussed his work with correspondent Dianna Waggoner.

#### **Who qualifies as an eccentric?**

Eccentrics are the most diverse people in the world and among the hardest to define. In general they are loners and nonconformists who are curious, creative, obsessive. They don't give a hoot what other people think about them. They see the rest of the world as rather mundane and out of step with them. They will put up with ordinary life, but they don't like mass culture - that is, believing what everyone else believes. They are also highly intelligent. The average I.Q. of those we studied was 115 to 120.

#### **How does an eccentric's curiosity differ from that of a normal person?**

An eccentric's curiosity knows no limits. If an ordinary person wants to know about electricity he simply reads a book on the subject. The eccentric might also call the local public utility and go to look at a power generator to see how it works. Then he might knock on some professor's door and ask him about it. One man I read about became so immersed in the study of Robin Hood that he legally adopted the name. He wears a green Sherwood Forest costume, carries a longbow and lives in the forest when he's not installing bank security equipment.

#### **How do you distinguish between eccentrics and psychotics?**

Eccentrics have not lost touch with reality. They have insight into their behavior and usually don't show any of the positive symptoms of illness, such as delusions and hallucinations.

#### **How did the subjects of your study exhibit their eccentricity?**

One woman, an artist, showed up for her interview with a plastic lobster on a leash. It was her mascot, a pet that didn't need feeding. We discovered an ex-Royal Marine commando who

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has hiked along the Scottish coast barefoot, clad only in his pajamas. Sometimes he leaves home for a week to sleep in a cave. There is a woman of 66 who is a frustrated hooper. After our interview she asked if she might demonstrate one of her dances. Before starting she stripped off her dress to reveal an Edwardian bathing costume. Another subject, though fiercely antiwar, lives in an apartment chockablock with his collection of scale-model weapons. We also studied a 43-year-old Scotsman whose favorite topic is the potato—its history, how to clone it, how to cook it, and so on and on. Fortunately the man is well suited for his work. He is a potato inspector.

#### **Do eccentrics think differently from most people?**

Most people think in words, but eccentrics think in pictures. They can leap from a problem to a solution without going through all the steps in between, because they can actually see the answer. The left hemisphere of the brain is where language reside, and most imagery is on the right side, which is vastly under-utilized in most people, but not in eccentrics. They are similar to geniuses in this respect. The difference in many cases is merely a matter of education. Geniuses have better formal education, whereas eccentrics are amateurs.

#### **Do eccentrics accomplish much?**

Eccentrics have so many ideas—some far out, others not so unorthodox—that they find it hard to select among them. One man we interviewed proposed cleaning up oil spills by dropping small plastic-coated shavings of magnetized metal over the oil, then using a giant magnet to drag the slick to a disposal area. Eccentrics have a tendency to choose their most far-out idea and pursue it for years. We found another man who invented what he maintained was a perpetual motion machine, despite being told that the second law of thermodynamics makes perpetual motion impossible. His response: "Perhaps the professors are wrong and I am right."

#### **Do eccentrics see themselves as eccentric?**

Oh yes. That's one of the most intriguing things about them. As children, they were told by friends

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#### **Do Transgendered people see themselves as Transgendered?**

Oh yes. That's one of the most intriguing things about them. As children, they were told by friends

and relatives that they were different. Even if no one had told them, they would have realized it. You can't go through life sane, particularly if you're very intelligent, and not realize that you're different. They have absolute insight into their own mental life. That makes them very good for study because they can tell you what's going on.

**Do eccentrics prefer the company of other eccentrics?**

No. These people are introverts, not extroverts. They are individuals and loners; give-and-take would cramp their style. The happiest eccentrics seem to be those who are living alone and accepting it. A lot of eccentric behavior is on the cooler side of life, rather than the hot and emotional side. They don't suffer fools gladly. On the other hand, they do like to talk about their obsessions. You can almost count on it that early in any conversation these people get into their main interest. If you try to walk away, they will go right with you. With no trouble they can become the world's greatest bores.

**Do eccentrics fall in love?**

Yes. But their relationships are a bit tenuous. Their main turn-on is ideas. I suspect that their marriages are more like business relationships, with not a lot of emotional involvement.

**Does eccentricity run in families?**

In about 36 percent of our cases there was another eccentric in the family, frequently a grandparent. In one case we discovered an equally eccentric brother and sister. The woman had wallpapered a public ladies' room in Scotland in order to brighten up the world, while her brother had a habit of sleeping in dumpsters. He'd find one he liked, move his mattress outside and sleep under the debris - not because he had to, but because he enjoyed it.

**Did you find any differences between men and women eccentrics?**

Not many. There were two men for every woman. Men were eccentric at an earlier age, say 7 or 8 years old. Woman started much later, after their children were grown. But within six months their

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eccentricity was in full bloom, almost as if they had been planning for years. The women were also more likely than men to have a good opinion of themselves, perhaps because they hadn't failed in life so much. The men had lost jobs and subsequently some of their self-image. Women eccentrics are also more assertive and less apt to be self-analytical and critical.

**Are parents sometimes responsible for making their children eccentric?**

Eccentrics receive far more attention from their parents than ordinary children, and the parents frequently emphasize how different their child is from what they would have liked. One person we studied was told when he was very young that he was bringing the whole family into ridicule by the way he dressed. On the whole, parents of the eccentrics we interviewed were rigid, hypercritical, strict, and moral disciplinarians.

**Do eccentrics have much of a sense of humor?**

Yes, but they have lapses in taste because they don't pay as much attention to social conventions as other people. They are more extreme and exuberant in their sense of humor. One millionaire, whom we did not study, used to drive around in his carriage until he found a construction site, wait until the workers were on a break, then walk up and announce, "You're all sacked, you lazy sods." He thought this was a good practical joke.

**Do eccentrics have any desire to be normal?**

No. They only want to become more eccentric or better at it. They want people to be more tolerant of them. I saw only one person who was very unhappy, but he had just lost his job and his wife. He didn't want to conform; he just wanted to have the normal things that people want. Without exception, eccentrics are happy in their eccentricity.

"PEOPLE WEEKLY" magazine; vol. 26, no. 19; November 10, 1986; pgs 91 - 94.

Transgenderism was in full bloom, almost as if they had been planning for years. The women were also more likely than men to have a good opinion of themselves, perhaps because they hadn't failed in life so much. The men had lost jobs and subsequently some of their self-image. Transgendered women are also more assertive and less apt to be self-analytical and critical.

**Are parents sometimes responsible for making their children Transgendered?**

Transgendered people receive far more attention from their parents than ordinary children, and the parents frequently emphasize how different their child is from what they would have liked. One person we studied was told when he was very young that he was bringing the whole family into ridicule by the way he dressed. On the whole, parents of the Transgendered people we interviewed were rigid, hypercritical, strict, and moral disciplinarians.

**Do Transgendered people have much of a sense of humor?**

Yes, but they have lapses in taste because they don't pay as much attention to social conventions as other people. They are more extreme and exuberant in their sense of humor.

**Do Transgendered people have any desire to be normal?**

No. They only want to become more Transgendered or better at it. They want people to be more tolerant of them. I saw only one person who was very unhappy, but he had just lost his job and his wife. He didn't want to conform; he just wanted to have the normal things that people want. Transgendered people are happy in their Transgenderism.

# CYCLING:

## The Emotional Roller Coaster

You asked about the "emotional roller coaster"...

Studies over the past ten years, through the Gender Identity Center of Colorado, (501c3 non-profit) through The Phoenix Project, and through The Institute for Gender Research, have verified that 90-95%+ of the people in the transgender community "CYCLE" in their need to "participate".

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### Needs Cycle

To understand this "Needs Cycle", imagine a graph of your emotions, which would plot as a Sine Wave.

On the "up" side of the cycle, there are feelings of "I need to do this", "I *really* need to do this", "I will do this even if it costs me *everything* I have in life". After the cycle peaks, the feelings shift to: "Yes, it is important, but so are these other things in my life", "I just don't have the time for that that I used to have", "I can't believe I put so much energy into that"; and as the Sine Wave/Need Cycle goes below its centerline the feelings shift to become: "That was disgusting to spend so much time money and energy on that", and at the bottom of the cycle "That is so disgusting I will never do that again". And here we throw away, all of our TG stuff; we "purge".

Then, at some close point after that, the cycle/sine wave starts upwards again, bringing feelings that "I kinda miss doing that", and then "I think I can control it this time", and finally "I need to do this", "I *really* need to do this", etc.

This cycle resembles any other Binge/Purge cycle. And this binge/purge emotional roller coaster causes more problems for us than even the TGism causes....

The very highest peaks of this cycle can include the overwhelming drive to make permanent changes hormonally and surgically. Near these peaks are the overwhelming drive to make permanent or nearly permanent changes socially—in the preferred gender role. The valleys of these cycles contain the overwhelming need to "purge", to throw away everything related to being female in any form. And in-between is in-between...!

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### **Binge**

Studies have revealed that, in general, the "Binge" part of the cycle is driven by Stress, good or bad. However, the "Binge" part of the cycle is also driven by time; there are natural points in life—identified by specific ages—where dramatic life changes will generally take place, anyway.

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### **Purge**

The "Purge" part of the cycle is sometimes driven by stress as well; from mistakes in judgement, such as revealing self to others who strongly disapprove, or in being out in the world in the target gender role, but in inappropriate situations. But the purge part of the cycle is more often just another part of life; it just happens from time to time.

"Cycling out" doesn't mean you were, or are, "bad"; it is just another part of the whole thing! Letting go of the remorse is just part of realizing who you are, really, in the bigger picture. "Cycling out"/"down" is no more of a problem than "cycling up", as long as when you are "cycled up" you do not make irreversible decisions!

The major point of experiencing "cycling down" is to just realize that you will be back, you will "cycle up" again at some point. Put the clothes into storage if you have to, but forget the expense of throwing them away. You *will* need them again, sooner or later, depending on your cycle time (Cycle Frequency).

The binge-purge cycle drives some individuals in the TG community to do really crazy things sometimes, like tearing through transition-on-the-job in two days, or going out "Street-walking" or mall running, etc., when they are clearly not yet ready for such activities.

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### **Dealing with the Cycles**

Additional research has focused on identifying the factors that control the amplitude and frequency of these cycles, as well as on identifying ways to level the cycles so that individuals could deal with life, rather than dealing with cycles.

This binge-purge cycle is much more complicated in those not on hormones of some kind, and in people for whom the TG/crossdressing activities are tied to sexual fantasies and/or release. Hormone programs, prescription and especially herbal, have shown huge promise in leveling these cycles.

It is clear that transgenderism is virtually incurable, in and of itself. It is the manifestations of transgenderism that we seek to manage; for those people who express a desire for this kind of management

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**Evanesce**

Our discovery of *Evanesce* seemed to fulfill two needs. On one hand, we have been able to offer the opportunity for hundreds of transgendered individuals to experience life with elevated estrogens; many of them report some level of breast development, virtually all of them report a vastly increased psychological calmness and level of impulse control.

And my research—and the experiences of hundreds of transgendered people—shows that *Evanesce* can quash this cycle, seriously reduce the amplitude of its peaks and valleys, so that we can deal with life, and transitions, in a more "realistic" manner, rather than on an emotional level.

I wish you the best of success in your future; the decisions that you have made to get you to where you are now, have not been easy. But you deserve the highest congratulations for having taken this journey of discovery.