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SO, YOU WANT TO TRANSITION?



Well lets get you started. What your mother won't tell you but Aunt Kimmi will.

Kimberly Buck



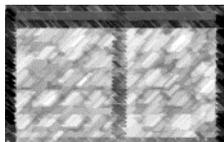
[INTRODUCTION]Often persons identifying as trans consider changes to the degree that they express themselves. Many times a decision is made to further themselves as a trans-person, that is, progress toward transitioning. Not everyone does this, so if you are fine where you are at it is a good thing. Peace with you brother or sister.

For others, there is a desire to progress their transitioning. It is my hope that this paper will help you with that process. It truly is a process and not a journey, as a journey has an end, and a process is continual. Many people consider that I have successfully transitioned (MTF) and it was not without much planning, consideration, sacrifice and work. If you decide to proceed, be prepared to be patient and busy. You may not agree with some of the things I will present, you may know of a better way too. What is important is to hang in with it until you get to the place you want to be. With that said, this document is not intended or represented to be legal or medical advice, use it at your own discretion.

The format that I have chosen to present this topic is fairly low key. Consider it a conversation between us two, you and me. Since we are not chatting face to face, I'll try to anticipate your questions and comments. Please forgive me if I miss a few of them or bring up more then you want. Some discussions are short and some are long. The topics we will discuss have been brought up in discussions I have had with many people, friends and foes alike. This is going to take several cups of coffee to accomplish so get relaxed and let's begin.

So, what do I mean by transition? Well it is usually defined as living your life in a new gender, that is one other the sex you were born as. Many consider that there are different degrees to transition to, all the way from practically no changes to a complete physical and legal transformation into a new gender. If you revert back and forth between your birth sex and your chosen gender I really don't consider that a transition, more of an excursion, still, you may find this document useful.

Transition isn't free, either spiritually or monetarily. Many desirable things can be done cheaply and others will definitely cost, and cost a lot. Clothes at the thrift store may be cheap but SRS for example, is not. Insurance may cover therapy but most likely not voice therapy or hair removal. When seeking professional help choosing the cheapest path is usually not the best, that said, neither is the more expensive approach. Research carefully before choosing!



PLAN! Yes, choose priorities and get started. Don't be afraid to pick the lower fruit first so you get in the mode of getting things done. Reward yourself after completing an item and be patient when it stalls. At times you must muster up courage and tell the person on the phone or behind a desk that you are transgender and requesting a change or explain a confusing situation to a clerk. Do not be afraid, Almost everyone will be happy to help once you explain what it is you need. Be helpful and patient, have your documentation and resources in front of you and don't be demanding. Have all your paperwork

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organized, complete and clear before starting. Occasionally I have had to restate my request as the person I am working with didn't comprehend my request. This happened when changing my name on my insurance, the clerk on the telephone, said, "But Mrs. Buck, you have already changed your last name!". I had to clarify that it was my first name that I was changing. Remember, you know what you want and they don't know until you clearly convey what it is you need to be done.

There are several areas that need to be addressed in a transition and at different levels depending on the degree desired. They are; Reason why, Types of transition, Legal, Mental, Emotional, Physical, Appearance and Medical. Let's not forget after transitioning either. If I ask you in person why you want to transition, I expect a solid, concise and truthful answer. Reader, I also assume that you are of age. Know this, after you transition everyday you will be reminded that you are transgender.

Let me also say that for me transitioning was not only a life changing journey but a much needed, anticipated and necessary event. My life has restarted in a much better place.

A little disclaimer: I am not your therapist, life coach or associated with you. You read this book and use the contents at your own risk.

So, let's get started by briefly addressing each of the areas above. .[END INTRODUCTION]

BEFORE YOU GO FARTHER: THIS IS A REVIEW COPY AND A WORK IN PROGRESS. MANY AREAS ARE INCOMPLETE - STAY IN TOUCH WITH MS BUCK FOR A FINALIZED VERSION

FOR EVERYONE ASSISTING ME WITH COMPLETING THIS DOCUMENT, MY MANY THANKS!

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Bathroom protocol

SOME OF THERE ARE WORKS IN PROGRESS

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SUMMARY / CONCLUSION

LETS GET STARTED!

Give me the wisdom to accept those things that I cannot affect and the strength and courage to change those things that I can affect.

This is a paper not only about Kimberly's transition but yours. She explains each step of the transition process, how to manage your transition, how to do each step and the pitfalls and joys along the way. As you will see transition is both a journey and a process. Your journey starts here and has this as it's beginning, a journey also has an end as you reach your destination. This will take you there. A process is continual and you will learn to incorporate the ongoing process of being trans into your everyday life with ease.

She will take you through each step and explain how and what to do after you transition. While primarily written with her experience with a MTF transition many FTM transitioners will find that many aspects still apply to them as well.

So what is TRANSITION? You hear the term used and it may mean different things to different people, organizations and entities. Transition is a way to deal with your dysphoria¹, that is being comfortable in your sex but changing your gender to that you desire because you are not comfortable with how you present yourself as male or female. You don't seem hear much about gender dysphoria anymore but it is the root of your desire to transition. We will talk about it later. If you don't have gender dysphoria then read on and evaluate that, or maybe you should go elsewhere. If you are strictly a crossdresser and have no gender dysphoria then this document may be interesting to you but not necessarily apply to you.

What does it mean to transition? It may mean different things to different people and different political points of view. I'm traditional and will approach it from that point of view. It means to live your life in a new gender and discard your old one as much as you can. Later we will discuss a few levels and flavors of transitioning. It's not the same for everyone.



[Brief Bio]To begin, I will quickly go over my transition. Please bear with me, this is not an example for everyone, but my approach worked well for me, and my story may help you to decide about yours and the approach you decide on.

All my life I knew that something was missing from who I was. I was always searching for that elusive who am I. I lived a normal life, family and all but always felt driven to find what was missing. I was an over achiever, a story I have heard from many trans people. Eventually I found what was missing from my life. I was in denial; I was also happy I found who I was. At first I was just a crossdresser. Slowly I ventured out into the wilds of Las Vegas. I visited trans-friendly places, made friends and life was good.

After a few years I was very comfortable in feminine form. So much so that I began thinking that it was a life that I was meant for. I was more comfortable as a woman than as a man. I discovered that I had gender dysphoria. To deal with that I began researching transitioning, then, to deal with my dysphoria,

¹ Dysphoria, in this case gender dysphoria is dissatisfaction with your birth gender.

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began planning my transition. At this point I had become more at ease with who I was and who I wanted to be. The internal struggle that most transgender people experience was still there but I was comfortable enough with it to move forward. There was a little pressure from friends to transition but my internal voice was the one I listened to, not theirs. This is the point where I had to decide and choose where I needed to go – that is who and what to transition into.

Per my plan, I retired a few years early and that took one difficult part of transitioning away. I was in a relationship that wouldn't support a transition and finally things snapped. At the sacrifice of our relationship I realized then was my ticket and time to move forward. There was no remaining reason to live two lives, switching back and forth between male and female, waiting to get caught. I could be the real me, the person who I knew I was. It was soon after that I started therapy and it was a big help. I initiated my transition plan with name change, SS changes etc. Occasionally I stumbled but overall everything worked. After that there was no stopping me. I definitely felt like a new person, a happier person. I began to take better care of my physical and mental health. No longer did I have to keep track of two sets of me, friends, etc. A lot of pressure was removed.

That summer I had SRS². I woke up from surgery and cried. Happy tears. I have never looked back. I also knew that to be successful I had to be who I became. In the time since then I have lived my life immersed as a woman. My friends accepted my transition, sometimes very accepting, sometimes not understanding. My response was, "Do you think that I understand why either?" While I don't know why I had to transition I do understand the necessity: To be complete. Did surgery completely address my dysphoria? Not all, but it was a big help.

My core self is still the same, just in female form now. It will always be that way. I very, very rarely do masculine actions anymore. I have the same interest, and a few more. I have friends that know I am trans and many that do not know. However, if they need to know I will not hesitate to tell them. So far this has not become an issue. I find that I don't think like a male anymore, I think more like a female now. And by thinking like a female I also act like one too. Sometimes I hear, but Kim, you are still interested in fishing! Is fishing an exclusively male sport? No.

My transition was complete over two years ago. Occasionally I have to deal with an issue as a result, but those events are becoming fewer and fewer. As an example, I closed down an account over the telephone that I opened in my male name almost 20 years ago. Not only did it feel weird being addressed as sir, and by my old name, but I had to force myself to utilize a male voice. This was uneasy for me as I try to be a stealth transwoman³. I was very much out of character reverting to male. By the way, this is something that I can only do over the telephone now, I look and act too much like a female to ever pass as a male again in person.

Everyone treats me just as I look, as a mature woman. I will admit that that has taken some adjustment on my part too. To be treated differently than I was as a man and accept it and live it. I am treated like a woman now, you will be too. Get over that as an issue. Use it to your advantage. Cis women are far more open to me and I am completely accepted in their inner circles. I know that I will never be a cis

² Sexual Reassignment Surgery

³ Stealth – having an appearance and acting in such a manner that it is not evident that you are transgender.

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woman and can only emulate that. I find that gentlemen treat me differently now, are more patronizing to me but I use that to my advantage too.

I have friends that do not know that I am a transwoman. I will tell them if they need to know. Occasionally we swap stories about things that we experienced or did as children. I have found, that for the majority of cases, my stories still relate as if I grew up as a girl. To be honest, that surprised me. I do however, see and relate to those experiences from a female perspective now. I was recently told by a friend who has known me for quite some time that she didn't know I wasn't born and grew up as a female until she heard me discussing my transition with a mutual friend. She said that the difference between me and other transwomen she knows is that I act more like a cis woman than any other transwomen. How I look had less to do with it then how I think and acted.

Ladies and gentlemen, if you want to be stealthy you will need to immerse yourself in your new gender culture, then live it every minute.[End Brief Bio]

[Why]WHY DO YOU WANT TO TRANSITION?

Let's be honest and serious with each other here. You are about to make a life changing decision. Forever going forward type of decision. Do so wisely.

What is driving your transition? Be real here. Is it to dress differently? Is it for sex? Is it to see what it is like to be the opposite gender? Are you suddenly not happy with your body? How long have you thought this way? How often do you think about it? None of those? Does your concept of transition have an audience? Are you tired of hearing your mom say, "I wish I had a daughter."

Kimmi, your questions are making me uncomfortable! I hope so, this is serious stuff. I'm not your therapist, what I say may hurt.

I am all for transitioning for the right reasons and all against transitioning because it's cool, or your friends are doing it. Internet peeps are telling you to do so maybe? Perhaps it's for sex. Maybe you are good where you are at and find that crossdressing allows you to work as one gender and play as another. Perhaps you are just testing the waters, please don't rush this decision and especially don't rush any implementation.

Do you think that it's cool to be transgender but are not sure what it means to be trans?

Is it strictly for social reasons? Because it will make you better with your friends or classmates? Social media friends are telling you to do so? Social pressure can be very strong, overwhelming perhaps. That does not make it right. If you are truly trans social pressure will have practically nothing to do with a desire to transition. Social media friends great to have but are very transitory and not a dedicated part of your wellbeing. The internet is a great place to research but a very poor place to get personal advice. Tumblr may be a great place to make friends but it is a terrible place for honest life advice. You are the one that will suffer the consequences of a misjudgment, they will not.

Do you have a strong, nay, overwhelming desire to make a physical transition? I know a few people who have physically transitioned. Mentally not so much. If you need to do this do it, but to me it's only half

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a transition. For you that may be all you need. Perhaps you just want a mental transition but not a physical transition?

Be honest with yourself. Do you have a valid reason to transition? Can you live a new life and discard your old one? You are not doing this just because you are unpopular or feel that life is crappy, right? Are you willing to take a couple of years to do so with no looking back? Be brutally honest with yourself on this, deciding to detransition after makes for a very difficult return to who you were. You are not thinking that transitioning will help your family or social problems are you? It won't, it may actually complicate them. Often heard is the story of young trans people coming out only to find that their friends really didn't support them. By then it may be too late to properly go back.

If you think that transitioning will solve your social or family problems, then you are not ready. Simple as that. Only you can solve those problems and transitioning will only complicate getting yourself back into a healthy position. Consider this, transitioning is a very long term physical and mental process. Social issues are transitory, mostly for and at the moment, lasting relatively briefly. In a few days or weeks it may dynamically change. If getting new friends online or physically will change your decision to transition then you are not truly trans. It may seem thrilling, romantic or exciting to be trans, these are not the right reasons. Chat with your counselor or therapist about this concept, but take this also, it must be an independent entity, not associated with any government agency or one that provides "free services". They care only for numbers and not to provide the proper counseling or therapy.

If your transition has an audience, that is, if it is for someone or even something other than your true inner self addressing your dysphoria then stop right here. It's for the wrong reason. That simple. All the happy trans people I have talked with all transitioned for themselves only. Those who were not happy during or after had a lot of external influence in their decision.

How do you know that you are trans? Really, can you answer this question properly? Have you clarified this to yourself? If you can't answer that question honestly and clearly I recommend that you arrange to see a therapist and work through the issue to a clear conclusion. This therapist should be independent of school or social services, sometimes those have an unhealthy bias. Friends or relatives don't count here either, they are more likely to tell you what they think you want to hear rather than to be brutally honest with you like an independent therapist will. Please, please listen to this.

Last, but not least, is this: Are you of legal age? Are you mature enough? Have you experienced enough of life that you will never ask yourself, "What if I hadn't transitioned?" Transition too early and then later in life you may find that you question your decision to miss being your birth sex, perhaps missing out on sex, orgasms, and the awkwardness of puberty. Why is this an important thing to consider? We all look back over our lives, and it is important that you remember that you are and always will be TRANS even after a successful transition. Don't confuse trans with gay or bi either, that is an entirely different thing and not a reason to transition at all.

Let me leave this discussion with this thought: Are you comfortable with moving forward with transitioning? Have you come to terms with who you are and who you want to become? I don't mean a craving or even desire to change, but a sense of comfort with your internal struggle



Lets talk about Gender Dysphoria

If you haven't figured it out by now, I am somewhat clinical. So please bear with me as I discuss this subject with you.

Do you know what ICD:10 F64.0 is?

It's the billable code for a mental / behavioral disorder. It's defined as transsexualism/ transsexuality: "a variant of gender identity in which the affected person believes that he or she should belong to the opposite sex." Hey that's me! I have a valid mental issue, technically a mental anguish. Even has it's own billing code. Doesn't mean I am crazy or anything, it's no worse than the guy that only wants to wear green. Just so you know Gender Dysphoria is identified in several journals and manuals such as the British Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition (DSM-5; 2013), American Psychiatric Association's (APA's) official listing of psychiatric disorders and the WHO International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems.

A recent study reported that 0.58 percent of the population in the United States identify as transgender – the manner in which gender dysphoria often manifest itself. When I began looking into the issue many years ago the percentage ranged between 0.03 and 0.06 percent. Advocates say the increase is due to increased awareness. I somewhat agree and I also think that some is due to the social popularity of being transgender. The percentage of those identifying as transgender in schools increases to 1.65%, far above the rest of the population. Some of the increase is also a result of who is considered to be trans. It's your perception that counts here! I will prod you again right now by asking, "Why are you trans?"

In a general sense dysphoria is an unpleasant perception or feeling that you are not comfortable with something, in the case of a transgender person, the sex of their body. Hey, our bodies are just fine, maybe we would like some of the characteristics bigger or smaller, but overall many people are just fine with how they turned out, some happier than others. It's not like we had much choice in the matter, what with DNA and genes running the show inside us and determining our external appearance and internal hardware. For many the desire to change their appearance has more to do with how they feel they are perceived by everyone around them. As an example, a movie star may get bigger boobs, or butt or have a wrinkle removed. These are essentially esthetic adjustments that in many cases are done to enhance how their sex is perceived, something that results in a perception of our gender by ourselves and those around us. We find ourselves expressing our dysphoria with our bodies in this manner.

For some of us the gender dysphoria is more than skin deep, it's emotional, its spiritual, it's in our perception of who we are, inside and out. Contrary to a common theme I do not consider myself a woman trapped in a man's body. Yes, somehow my brain and body are out of sync with each other. But I inhabit the body I have and I am unable to swap it with another. Yes, I wish that I was born as a female but I wasn't so I must do the best I can with what I have. I can't change the past so I live with it in harmony. Hell, if I was born a female we would not have this conversation. You and I would be different people in many ways. My dysphoria wouldn't exist.

I'm not sure that is the person I wanted to be. The changes that I have made to my body with hormones and surgery are just like those made by the movie star, to enhance my perception and the perception of

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those who I interact with, and be the person who I want to project. I wanted to project a female me. Is this making sense to you?

I am good with the sex I was born with and the gender I am now. You may not be. That may be why we are having this discussion isn't it? There I was before, expressing another part of my dysphoria, I had been acting as a male but felt that to be true to myself I needed to act, look and feel like a female.

In many ways this is what has made me a stronger and better person. I understand what men experience and feel, I also understand and now know what women feel and experience. In many ways I am a bridge between the sexes and the genders they represent. Very, very few cis people can say that. In addition, the manner in which I dealt with the struggle in dealing with my dysphoria has been one of discovery and eventually, reward. I completely recognize that I will never be a cis female. I can't be, it's not in either my genetic or physical make-up. I am able to accept and understand and know when I have achieved that goal to a sufficient point. Let me repeat that in a different way, I will always have dysphoria, but I am sufficiently content with my transformation and transition to the point that it no longer beats me up everyday. I can live my life content with who I am.

Still, like a professional athlete I work everyday to maintain or improve who I am. Call it a routine if you like. Really, how many cis people that you know can say that? How many can say they made themselves into the person that they want to be? How many even recognize that they are not who they want to be? Do you know any athletes who decide to stop training because they are good enough? This is strength!

Also recognize that a successful transition is not the end of transitioning, it takes work to maintain your new self, physically, mentally and emotionally. Be happy with accepting this work.

This is how I deal with my dysphoria. I know, I have gone on about this but it took me some time before I figured out how to use it as a resource, well for myself anyway. I attacked my dysphoria head on. What about me was causing it? With help from my therapist and by looking inside myself I knew that I needed to transition, and I figured out what type of transition I needed to do to address it. That is when I developed my plan and implemented that same plan. Consider doing the same, not addressing your dysphoria will be the same as letting it fester and make you uncomfortable. When your discomfort from dysphoria overcomes ignoring it I suggest that you act on it in an appropriate manner.

I will go on some more about this, I have addressed it but some remains and as I mentioned I address it every day. For me, the closer I am to a cis woman in my looks and actions, even thoughts, the more I address it. For you, there may be a different response that addresses your dysphoria. Find that balance between transition and discomfort from dysphoria and implement it

Is that not the ultimate goal? Find peace within ones 'self. Accepting my shortcomings as strengths? You will become a much stronger person! A much wiser person! A much better you! Dysphoria, I embrace you for making me stronger. It's not a weakness or illness. It's a reason, a tool to make yourself into who you want to be and who you are. Buddha be jealous.

[Difficult discussion, part 1]<< HERE I AM GOING TO DISCUSS A FEW DIFFICULT SITUATIONS>>>

Are you married or have a partner?

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What about wanting to transition or cross dress and your family or significant other does not want you to, or you are afraid to bring it up for fear of losing them? You have a very tough choice my friend. Almost everyone who cross dresses occasionally and in secret is eventually discovered by family, friends or work. This is a big burden to carry on a daily basis. Dealing with dysphoria and the possibility of a painful discovery at the same time is a lot to bear. Thank goodness I have the emotional experience and strength to deal with it.

Many trans people I have talked with were married or in a conventional relationship. Sometimes it was convenient, or to produce offspring. Sometimes it was to prove that their birth sex was the gender they should express, a way of compensating for who they were VS who they wanted to be. Many, many trans people over-compensate in an effort to escape their nagging feelings that they don't fit who they show.

Often there is a period of denial where we over compensate and become as masculine or feminine as we can be. We do this to convince ourselves that we are not the person those transgender thoughts in our heads whisper to us, that we can overcome them by expressing ourselves strongly in our birth sex. This is a common story. We end up living a portion of our lives in our birth sex.

Do understand that transitioning will without a doubt change your relationship with your significant other, be it wife, husband, partner. They quite possibly will see your change as losing you. Nearly as a death. They may not understand why they didn't hear those words from you before the relationship became serious. That would make your relationship to them a long lie. Often the person that you may be in a relationship with feels betrayed, wondering what else you have hidden from them. If this happens be prepared to lose your relationship. My ex-girlfriend blamed the female me for stealing the male me from her. From her perspective another woman had taken my male self away from her. She saw that loss as more important to her than my transition was to me. As you can see this is not an easy subject to work out.

If you are very lucky and your significant other loves you very much they will accept your transition. To be honest, I haven't heard this story much at all. But it does happen.

What about you Kim? The loss of my relationship hurt very much. I was hoping that she would understand and support me but that was not the case. By this time I was also on hormones and that enhanced, or should say let me express fully my emotions. I cried for days over the loss⁴ of a long term relationship but then it occurred to me that this was my green light to really go forward with my transition. As painful as it was, that event was definitely my tipping point to make a full transition. While we still talk, she still has trouble accepting me as I am and usually refers to me as she wants me to be, male. Her children on the other hand, are just fine with my transition.

In many ways she sees me as dead, much like people often see each other after a divorce. A friend of mine has completely transitioned but tries to keep her life a secret from her family. She is afraid that her children will be seen as inferior by the community now. I respect her decision but personally think that she doesn't give her children and community credit for the acceptance that exists. Give your friends and children some credit to do the right thing. I recently spoke with my niece, who I have not chatted since before my transition. It went like this:

⁴ Enhanced by the hormone therapy no doubt.

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Hi, this is Kimberly Buck
You mean my former Uncle?
Yes that's me

It was that simple and after that the conversation went well. I sent her a picture and she complemented me. See, even a cold reset went well.

In any case you may be forced to decide what is more important to you. Transition or relationship. Think about their perspective as if you were the one hearing from the other what you just presented. What would be your reaction? Your therapist can help here. If you are seeing a marriage counselor expect your desire to transition to be an issue that the therapist is not equipped to work with. Most transgender therapist are willing to work with your spouse to manage your relationship and transition without issue.

These are important things to remember regarding dysphoria and relationships.

TRANSWOMEN:

Do you want to maintain your existing sexual function?

If a functioning penis is important to you then your transition options are definitely limited. Hormones will eventually decrease or stop your penis from functioning before it's normal time. You can still have a breast augmentation (without any natural breast tissue), facial feminization surgery and hair removal but bottom surgery is out of the question and hormones will eventually lead to loss of sexual drive and erectile dysfunction. So, if a functioning penis is a priority then skip the hormones and bottom surgery. This will limit some options but you may still transition.

If you are considering bottom surgery a neo-vagina will not make you a woman. Honestly, nothing will make you a genetic woman, the best that you can be is a transwoman. There is absolutely nothing wrong with that! Surgery will however, do a lot to address how you see and feel about yourself. In addition, surgery will do a lot to make you passable if that is your goal. A side benefit is the ability to have sex that more closely resembles that of a cis woman. Not exactly, but close and some transwomen still experience dysphoria after, originally thinking that surgery would address all their dysphoria.

The new experience is different from that you experienced as a man. Your orgasm will be different but still very enjoyable, if not better. Enjoy the new you! I think that it is better now! Oral sex is definitely very enjoyable. Penile sex is also enjoyable, be sure to remember that it is from the receiving end now so be ready for an adjustment. That said, be sure not to have sex if you are not ready, you are woman now and therefore in control! What you will find is that many men find post op transwomen very desirable. I really doubt that you will find sex lacking in quality or quantity. You will definitely have to learn how to manage your sexual relationships and a lack of experience here can lead to a lot of crying later. Sex for most females is more relationship than physical. It is quite possible that you find yourself having sex for different reasons than when you were male. Wrap your head and hormones around that concept early on!

A neo-penis will not make you a man. Hey, if you read the section above you know what I am saying. For transwomen on testosterone, given enough time your menstrual cycle will stop, your vagina may

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lose lubrication and your clitoris may enlarge or grow. No question that this will change how you have sex, but sex is still very possible.

So perhaps you want to do a partial transition and not have surgery. To carry on a sexual life with what you were born with. Well that rules out hormones and hormone blockers for sure. It also pretty keeps you in the crossdresser category, even if you transition in other ways. Binding your breasts or severe tucking is only a partial solution and not always successful in hiding. It does mean that, unless you are gay, you will be seen as having sex with the same sex you present, and then seen as gay. Not a problem by me but it adds to the list of items that you will have to deal with to maintain your gender identity.

To summarize what I am saying is that you will still be able to have a satisfactory sexual life. It may be different from what you enjoy now but it is still possible. It may be enhanced even. Your old sexual life will go away to be replaced with a new one. You may decide not to engage in a sexual life too. The choice is yours.

[End Difficult discussion, part 1 Is a conclusion needed?]

[Lets talk SEX]SEXUAL PREFERANCES

Am I gay? LOL, Only if you were before. Personally, I am bi. I found that after hormones I found men a lot more attractive, and that as a female a male partner was very acceptable. I have heard this same story from a lot of transwomen. Regardless, your preference is your decision and within the limits of your comfort area. Whatever you decide it is a good choice.

You may find that you are still attracted to the same sex you were before. Consider if your new self is capable of supporting that. You may also find that you can enjoy sex with either sex. New possibilities now open up and you may find that you have a few things to learn, same if you now like the same sex you have transitioned to. In that case you definitely have a lot to learn. Learning how to approach and interface with people in a sexual manner may require the help from your support group. Think of going through puberty again, but this time you have more interest and knowledge making that journey a lot more enjoyable. Some people find a coach to help them deal with these situations.

Do be cautious with ever exploring your new self and throwing caution to the wind with encounters. There are predators out there!

<<< DEALING WITH SEXUAL ENCOUNTERS >>>

Not long after I started going out dressed I was approached by a gentleman who made a pass at me. I was immediately flattered and at the same time repulsed. OMG! He thinks that I am pretty and sexy enough to proposition me yes, and then my mind went to , "He only wants me for my body!" I flushed, then politely declined and then spent some time after thinking through what had just happened.

What really had just happened? It wasn't the guy, it was me. I hadn't considered that I would be hit on and how to handle it.

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You may find men that some can't take no for an answer and may continue to ask. This has happened me at clubs and occasionally at gatherings. Cis ladies, I don't remember doing this but if I did I do apologize profusely. Welcome to the world and life of women! Transmen, well, you have a choice here don't you? Either fess up to the woman about who you are or appear gay with another man, well I guess it's the same for transwomen who maintain their original orientation too.

That all, it is just fine to approach other people just as you would normally, except I strongly recommend that at some point before the situation turns too interesting that you come out. It's not an uncommon story to hear about a transwoman being roughed up because she assumed the guy knew she was trans or he found out as sex was about to initiate.

On the opposite side of this discussion, how do you encourage and accept an encounter? First, evaluate your safety in doing so! As I mentioned every month transwomen are killed or injured during sexual encounters. Sometimes it's because the men don't realize that you are trans. NEVER LET THIS HAPPEN! Never assume that the other party knows that you are a transwoman. This is misgendering of the worst kind. Anytime you arrange a meetup be sure that everything is discussed and in the clear before beginning. You want a safe, pleasant and enjoyable encounter above all. With any luck it may happen again.

You do have an advantage – You were or are the gender you are seeking an encounter with, that knowledge should help you. It won't help your nervousness out any but that will pass with time and experience.

If you were cross dressing as a sexual turn on then you may be disappointed after full time transition. Once the newness wears out the thrill may go away. The same is true when considering SRS for sexual reasons.

POLITICALLY INCORRECT DISCUSSION

Gender VS Sex << Polish this section>>

I remember visiting a chicken ranch once, the rancher was 'sexing' the chicks into hens and roosters. He was identifying them by genetic markers. Personally, I couldn't see the difference with young chicks but it sure manifest itself later. So, in my humble experience: Sex is the genetic makeup you are born with. This will never change unless you can change your chromosomes. Therefore chromosomes determine sex. Gender is the identification of your sexual attributes displayed, natural or artificial. Some say this is a social attribute. That implies interacting with others, but we all know that even when we are alone we still feel the same way.

That is something we can change! Our chromosomes say one thing but our minds and bodies say another. Recently I had a CT scan, the radiologist report noted the lack of ovaries and uterus in his report. No matter how much I look like or feel mentally and emotionally like a cis woman, I will always be short of those things. As mentioned, many times my medical treatment needs to address my actual physical make-up. There is no sense in getting upset over what I cannot change, after all I have done most of what can be done.

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In my opinion I am and I display the gender I am, and the people I interact with can interpret my interactions to clearly draw a conclusion about my sex/gender based on what they see and who they interact with. Without transmitting your preference to those around you all they can do is make their own assessment of your gender based on your appearance, actions and presentation. My hairdresser recently told me that she and her friends, appreciated the manner I transitioned. When I ask her what she meant she said that I transitioned into a woman, not a half woman, not just a woman on the outside but a woman inside and out. I almost cried. She has been a part of making me who I am now, giving me tips on hair and makeup helping me maintain my passability.

I have been told that I have a reputation in the trans community as being very successful in my transition. I feel that I am --- most of the time.

So I do what I can with what I have and I am very happy with the results. I look, feel and live like a woman, the woman I am. So, I put "female" down when asked for my sex and with medical issues note that I am trans. My Dr knows that most of my anatomy is male but the rest of me is female. There are a few differences in interpreting lab results between male, female and trans patients. It's to my advantage for my Dr's to know what to apply. I take the initiative and work with my Dr's to clarify and understand the nuances of transgender medicine.

I suppose that if I wanted to live my life as both a man and a woman I could and have two choices in doing so. I could do so part time, much like a crossdresser, or mixing the two together. I am not going to tell you what to do but will say that I recommend the direction that is not confrontational. That direction that does not speak for people like myself, who is happy living a nice quiet life. Before transgender was a popular thing no one cared that I was trans as long as I looked and acted like the gender I presented as. Now days it seems to be an issue for both political sides. Please everyone, just ignore me and let me live my life in peace as before.

SOME INCONVIENT REALITY

Are you demanding everyone treat you a certain way? Well, well. You have turned your transition from a personal matter into a political statement. That is what you will be living. Be prepared for a confrontational life. Your immediate group of friends may be fine with it but a majority of society is not, remember you are at best like 0.58% of the people around you. Personally, I do not ask for any privileges for being trans. I am still a regular person inside. Let me live my life as a normal person and I will be very happy. It's bad enough that I have to come out to strangers without them thinking I want something for being trans. Dysphoria is difficult enough without being patronized for it.

This is great place to take a moment to discuss misgendering. *Fact of life*: you may be the most passable person there is and still be misgendered. It happens all the time with me by my ex-mother-in-law. She knew me as a male for 37 years and has trouble adjusting to calling me female. My ego and heart are strong enough to forgive her always. It's not a spiteful action by her at all. And as a result, we still have a close relationship. She definitely does treat me as female, just has trouble referring to me as such. For me it's a personal decision to forgive her. For her daughter it is not and she reminds her mother when it happens that she is wrong.

I am far less tolerant with people who knowingly misgender me, and this rarely happens out in the public. I am careful with my battles though and engage only those that are polite. There is no sense in

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making a scene, especially in public that may cast a negative light on the trans community. Each one of us is a frontline diplomat with the public. Act like you are representing all of us in a positive manner.

When misgendered be polite and ask, not demand, that you addressed as you present yourself. Thank them after they make the correction. Consider this, and I can tell you from experience, that wait staff often address a group of ladies as “guys”. You may be perceiving a misgendering when it is not. That all said, as a male and presenting as a male, I was frequently misgendered. Cool as it was, it was occasionally embarrassing. I usually just let it pass, no matter who I was with. Yes, sometimes this was difficult to do but it was for the best overall. Remember the person in the news a few years back? Except for long hair he/she looked male and expected to be called Ma’am. 99.4% of the people will call you by the gender that you present, no one knows what you want unless you tell them, primarily via your appearance. Don’t get upset if you don’t look like the gender you call yourself and you are misgendered. That’s on you! Consider this, you are a passable transman and your friend calls you Miss, people around you don’t see a Miss. They wonder why someone called you Miss. They put themselves in a poor light.

Pronouns? Look at me and choose. It’s pretty easy to look at me and see that female pronouns are needed, I shouldn’t need to tell you. If someone can’t look at you and easily come up with a valid pronoun then you need to consider your presentation and the manner that you act. Being trans is work, everyday and every minute. Lately there has been a move to remove any gender specific pronouns. This activates my dysphoria in a negative manner, I spent a lot of time, money and other resources to look and be the best woman I can be. I am not a they, them, it or other non-gender pronoun. I want to be called and treated like a female! Don’t take that away from me! Hell, you haven’t even asked me what I think. For me it’s purposeful and intentional misgendering!

Years ago the term used was transsexual, today it’s transgender. Right, I can’t change my birth sex but I can change the gender I am perceived to be. Normally people are born as male or female. Gender expression was either male or female, after all, 99.44% of the population consider themselves that way. Do your best to present in the gender you feel. If it’s in between then expect to be misgendered on occasion. Expect confusion.

So, if you identify as something other than male or female you are not transgender. It’s something else, what I am not sure and I think that you are not sure either. Please don’t hijack real trans people for your political or odd social perspective, that is an entire different dysphoria from gender/sexual dysphoria. Consider that the word “Trans” means “across from” and if you are trans then you are presenting as the opposite gender. The term “Cis” means “on the same side as” so a cis male presents as the gender he was born as, male. I am not sure if there is an acceptable term for somewhere in the middle.

I don’t see demanding that someone address me in a certain manner, with a certain pronoun etc. as any more viable as someone demanding the same from me. Who am I or who are they to make such demands? The English language has always treated male pronouns as gender neutral when gender was not known. Spend some time to learn the non political facts.

I know that for some it is nice to be included in a group - a group of people like yourself. There is always comfort with being with your own kind – even if diversity means just that? Umm, Isn’t that duplicitous? Personally, I refuse to be used for a political gain and trans people have been, and are being used in that

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manner today. As such, I may attend events but I am cautious to not support them for political means of any kind.

I know that this view may not be the politically correct one. For me it fits my lifestyle. Look at me, what do you see? I am she, a transwoman, I don't need to tell you who I am.

DIFFERENT TYPES OF TRANSITION <<This section needs to undergo rewrite>>

Who do you want to become? Take 5 minutes right now and write your future biography. I will be happy to wait for you to finish right here. Can you do so, if you can, do you have a good idea where you are going and where you want to be and I don't mean a Dr. or fisherman. If you can't, then consider that you don't know where you want to transition to, who to become. If you don't know how can you get there? This is a good topic to bring up with your therapist.

Do you want to: <Clean up a bit..>

Daytime birth gender, night as the opposite in your house. Lets call this hidden crossdresser

Live as a trans person, openly so? Transitioning between male and female as you want or need to? No surgery, Lets call this crossdresser

Make a physical transition but not mentally or emotionally? I call this a half transition.

Live in your trans gender for a while. Temporary? Test the waters? Lets call this discovery

Live in your transgender from this point on. Wearing opposite gender clothes and keep original identity for the most part. Lets call this transgender life

Transition into a stealth person. Hiding your birth sex. Lets call this stealth

Transition into a stealth person. Keeping your birth sex secret. Let's call this stealth +

Become non-binary. A mixture of both genders. Confusing to others at best but not an impossible situation to live with.

Become a drag queen, seriously! You don't consider this transgender you? It's all about the show for the man ladies.

As you see, I consider only three of these true transitions. The others aren't transitions, they are intermediaries.

Look at this concept and following cases:

1. You were born in America, therefore you will always put America down as your birthplace. You move to Italy, now, even if you learn the language, dress, work and look like an Italian, you were still born in America. Everyone accepts you as an Italian. You will never be a native Italian. But you can act and look like one.
2. Your friend was also born in America, he/she moves to Italy and learns the language and acts and speaks like an Italian in the village but at home speaks English and acts like an American. Acts like an Italian but everyone knows he/she is an American.
3. Your next friend was born in America, acts like an American but at home acts like an Italian.

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4. Another friend was also born in America, he/she only speaks English, even in the village and definitely at home. Everyone knows that he/she is an America. They wish that they blended in.

Case 1 defines a stealth trans person

Case 2 defines a cross dresser

Case 3 defines a closet trans person

Case 4 is a trans person unable to transition.

Lets discuss this for a minute. There are many types of transitioning and you need to select the one that best suits your and your lifestyle. There is no "right" transition, there is your transition. In the end you will be the person who will need to adjust to who and what you are becoming. Some of these transition styles will require an adjustment on your lifestyle, sometimes for the better and sometimes for the worse. Accept either that comes your way.

<< END OF DIFFICULT DISCUSSION SECTION >>

[Legal] Legal section will move to later in the document – It's here as it was an early request...

Why should you change your identification and paperwork?

- To prevent/reduce misgendering. For some this reduces dysphoria and perceived negative interactions between you and the person misgendering you.
- To lay a legal foundation for your post transition identity
- To document your changes for legal purposes.
- To satisfy your gender dysphoria.

Most people that transition consider updating your legal identity a necessary step. It is not fully supported in all states however, so do your research before setting your expectations. It is still possible to transition without changing your ID at all. Expect a few odd looks and occasional explaining. Do consider the pitfalls of having some of your identification in one name and/or gender and other ID in another. To reduce those issues have documentation available that explains the change/difference. Consider having copies as a PDF file or picture on your phone if needed. There will be times when this becomes necessary.

LEGAL PAPERWORK: This includes the following:



Name change and other Paperwork. (This section will move back in the document in the final version)

Many people desire this so that it is easier to interface with the government and other authorities. One important thing it will do is to prevent you from having to live two lives, that is switching between a male and female life. For some this may not be what you want for others it sure makes things easier. If you are considering a complete and full time transition this step is a must. I know people who kept their birth name but use their trans name except when identification is required. This will work for those who live two lives but not so well for stealth people.

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Being a resident of Nevada helps, but mixed residencies can still be processed and work. Certain steps may need to be performed in a specific order, others are not so dependent. It's better to change your name early so that you don't need to repeat filings. If you were born in Nevada the name and birth certificate may be changed at the same time.

It can take some time for all the changes and updates to complete. Some items need to be completed before others can start. Government agencies aren't known for speed and Covid has slowed a few processes even more and for the foreseeable future. Keep a paper or file for each item and include the following for tracking:

- Title at the top
- What it is for – Birth certificate etc.
- Agency you are contacting
- Web addresses, main and those specific to your request
- Agency phone number
- Agency address
- Date of any mailings, email, forms filled etc,
- Copies and originals of things sent, certified mail receipts etc.
- Tracking numbers from certified mail, Fed-Ex etc.

Lets get into the tasks:

- Name change
 - Choose well, you will have to live with your new name forever or what will seem like that if you don't like it later. This may be done without a lawyer by filing paperwork with the Clark county family court system. No advertising is required if you check the "For Transgender Name Change" box so it stays confidential. Cost is regular court filing fees. It is handled administratively and takes only a couple of weeks if even that. Be sure to get several certified copies from the clerk once the court completes the process. If you get this done early it will prevent you from repeating a process just to update your name.
 - Remember, once done it is now your legal name and further communication will be in that name. For a bit you may have a dual identity so have a plan to get everything changed into your new name. Keep a copy of the paperwork with you if questions come up.
 - For Clark County Nevada, go here: <https://www.familylawselfhelpcenter.org/self-help/name-changes/name-changes-for-adults>. It usually only takes a couple of weeks. File the required papers in person at the family court's clerk office. Take your filing fee with you. Return in a couple of weeks and pick up certified copies (several) of the name change order. Only a certified court order will do. These have an embossed or raised seal from the clerk and cost a few dollars.
 - For other states check with your local court system. Name changes are common legal procedures, You will be required to file, and in some locations publish your name change. You may need to certify that it is not to escape debt or legal matters. In some locations claiming the change is for transgender identity streamlines the process so be sure to check for and do that option.

- Gender change on ID
 - For some, such as a drivers license it is as easy as checking a box when you renew your license. For others more is required such as a letter from a Dr. certifying that you are under their care for treatment of gender dysphoria.
 - For some changes, such as birth certificate, application must be made in the state you were born in.
 - Go online to the agency involved and search for name and gender change. Download and fill in the forms. Make copies and send the originals in with any supporting documentation needed.
 - File the change with the appropriate fee. Fees usually are not excessive.
 - In some states, such as California, you may petition the court for a legal order to change your gender. This court order does not change your birth certificate and is used in conjunction with it to verify your new gender. This is useful if you were born in a different state other than California, it directs the user to recognize your new gender as your sex at birth even with your birth marker being different. You will need to be a resident of the state you file in.
- Social Security (SS) << May be redundant? |>>
 - Many other services check with SS to verify your identity. This was my second stop after my name change. Unless you have new birth certificate or new passport with your new gender on it you need a letter certifying that you are under a Dr's care for treatment of gender dysphoria presented to them to complete the process and change your gender marker to female or male. Download and submit completed forms with ORIGINALS. The government works slow so be patient. While a birth certificate was not required you may obtain and submit a new one as backup documentation. <Note I understand that this process is being updated, please go online and check!>
 - **Please note:** that there are two parts to SS, the retirement pay-in , disbursement portion and the Medicare portion. Medicare will update your information once you request it separately. If you are not yet in the Medicare program you should be OK, but check anyway.
 - Once you get your new Social Security card be sure to go to HR and have your work record updated. Once done your taxes will be updated as well.
 - **Here is a link to the website:** <https://faq.ssa.gov/en-us/Topic/article/KA-01453>
- Birth Certificate
 - This depends a lot on the state you were born in. In addition, you may be issued a provisional certificate bu some states. Those are recognized as being a legal and right certificate but is issued by the state registrars office instead of the original issuing agency. The original is kept as a sealed document. Download paperwork from the state website, look for any instructions that may be special for transgender individuals, usually those are designed to streamline the process. In some states you may only be able to request a correction in name, perhaps gender with a court order. Read the instructions carefully and have someone good with paperwork review skills carefully look over your application.
 - I changed my California Birth Certificate and they will reject it if ANYTHING is not absolutely correct including the color of all ink. I sent in originals of the following:

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submittal, my original birth certificate, original name change court order (can be a state other than California), Completed CA form VS 24, and a check. As is usual with me, I included a cover letter and a copy of a letter indicating that I was under a Dr's care for transition. Overkill perhaps but it shows sincerity.

- Not all states will grant you a new birth certificate and your old one along with the Dr treatment letter and name change will have to do. Write your state and request a change in how they do business.
- Drivers license
 - For Nevada nothing is required except a visit to DMV (be sure to make an appointment), however, if you are changing your name too then do your license after your name change and you receive your new Social Security card as you need to show originals. Oh, your original drivers license too.
 - This was fairly easy but to avoid having to make several trips, do it in the proper order, that is after you get your new SS card as the State will check with SS to verify your identification. So, you can change your gender and name here in one stop. Dress appropriately. A picture will be taken so clean up.

Take sufficient original paperwork to get a real ID so you don't have to do this all over again. You will need to present all of the following:

- Proof of Identity (one document use your existing license) **AND**
- If you have changed your name, Proof of All Name Change(s) **AND**
- Proof of Social Security number (new card/name) **AND**
- Proof of your Nevada residential address (two documents) **AND**
- an Application for Driving Privileges or ID Card (DMV 002):
- Applicants Born in the U.S.
 - U.S. state-issued birth certificate (original or certified copy)
- You may use a passport only if it has all your updated information.
- Visit the Nevada Real ID website. Some of the requirements are time sensitive
- I really don't recommend "X" i.e.. None identified, as the license becomes an ID that may be used to obtain other paperwork and X is not accepted everywhere, especially overseas.
- Passport
 - A passport is pretty much the holy grail of identification but also the one document requiring the most documentation. I did mine last as by then I had well documented my change. It went through without any issues and documents only need to be the last issued, they don't age out.
 - If you already have a passport it can also be changed but the procedure is very much the same as obtaining a new one. Without sufficient documentation, such as updated birth certificate and gender treatment letter, it will be issued as "limited Validity", that is a passport with less legal standing and may not be recognized by some countries. This type of passport also needs to be renewed more often than a full passport. To get a full passport submit certified copies or originals of your new birth certificate, name change, State or other official state or other federal identification. If you have an existing

passport sent it in also. The Post Office or city offices in Henderson is a great place to turn in your passport request.

- PLEASE NOTE: You are now allowed to select with additional documentation “M, F or X” Think your choice over carefully if you plan to travel overseas. They don’t follow the same rules as we do in the US and may pull you aside for having a passport that does not match your physical make-up. Modern scanners utilize software that can tell the operator your genetic gender and sometimes even after surgery, X however is not a gender, especially overseas.
- Medical Records
 - Your old records will always say your old name and gender. Get over the idea of changing that. It’s the going forward part that is important! Many offices are not able to change past records.
 - Contact your health care provider and see what is required. Explain to them carefully what you are doing. As I have mentioned before, take copies of any paperwork you have to support your requests.
 - During your transition work with your Dr and provider to update your name, gender marker may take a while longer, be patient as they want to know your birth gender.
 - Hormones can complicate treatment as your body responds differently now. After surgery you will have mixed hybrid needs and that should be discussed with your Dr(s). Initiate this conversation with your SRS Dr. Whenever you enter any healthcare service be sure to let them know you are transgender and are willing to answer any questions that you can. Do point out to the Dr(s) that you prefer to be indicated as your desired gender constantly, as acceptable lab values change by gender for some analytes, and using a consistent marker is the preferred and best approach. I researched and gave my Dr copies of papers citing the changes. What I am saying is, don’t insist that everything should be considered in your new gender.
- Credit Cards/Bank/Utilities
 - Visit your bank in person with your cover letter, new drivers license, SS card. Birth Certificate and Name change papers. All originals, certified copies etc. You may find that one thing will change and another doesn’t or lags. Don’t get pissed, try again.
 - If it has to be done via mail then ask if Notarized copies are OK or send a prepaid send an addressed stamped envelope with your originals to improve the odds of getting them back.
 - Call your credit card company and request the change. Often you can FAX copies to them.
 - I have heard that online banking companies can be difficult to update. You may need to consider opening a new account and transferring your funds from the old one to your new one.
 - Your Credit: You may find yourself in a position that I did, I was starting out with no credit history except on items I had updated my name on. Consider this if you will need good credit in the future. It takes time to reestablish your credit.
 - Since your SS number is used by the IRS for tracking that gets updated when you file. I found that that did not promote companies to update my credit based on that.
- Online, email etc.

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- Often you can update your profile but if you have a male-centric screen name most of the time you are stuck with it. Once again, get a new email address early so it may be used in the paperwork I mention early in this document. Sometimes your screen name can be changed for a fee.
- You don't need to file a change of address. Mail will arrive at your address in your new name.
- WHEN DONE: you should have the following documentation for your new life (not in order of completion)
 - Court ordered name change
 - Social Security Card
 - Health insurance or Medicare card if applicable
 - Drivers license & car registration
 - Bank account & card
 - Credit Cards
 - Utility accounts
 - Birth Certificate
 - Passport
 - New email address
- One more thing!
 - I made copies of the important documentation, kept it in a folder and placed it in my purse. Occasionally – not often, I would find myself in a situation where I needed to explain my changes and show the documentation. Having copies with me kept me from making a return trip.
 - Your old credit cards etc are still useable but if you need to use one and show that its you – in your old name, occasionally it may be difficult to do.
 - Many places no longer have offices that you can interface with someone in person, making it difficult to change the account. You may find that the old account will need to be closed and a new one opened. Be prepared to respond to the fact that you will be treated as if you have no credit or personal history.
 - You are not a victim. I have done many things as a transwoman, such as change license, initiate retirement accounts, refinance property, lease an apartment and the fact that I was a transwoman never was an issue. If you hear it stated that being trans was an issue when interfacing with government or private companies then it was an issue between two people, not between trans and cis. If you definitely feel that you have been discriminated against, and have proof, then file a complaint at:
<https://www.consumerfinance.gov/complaint/>
- Holding

Please note that “treatment for gender dysphoria” means that a physician, such as an endocrinologist or therapist, has agreed to put in writing that you are under their care and active treatment. The Dr. may have a template but they are also downloadable from the SS website. And yes, it should be in your new name.

ADVICE: Make copies of everything. Anything mailed should be sent certified. Notarize everything that needs it. Write a cover letter explaining that you want done. Be sure to include a telephone number

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and address. Just in case there are issues keep a copy of what you sent in case you need to reference what was sent. Many forms may be downloaded and filled out on computer, only requiring your final signature.

Note that nowhere have I said that surgery is required to get any of this paperwork. However it may help if someone is on the edge of denying issuing paperwork. You are working with bureaucrats

I should say that falsifying any information in any state or federal forms may result in severe penalties.

MENTAL & EMOTIONAL



Honest, the desire to transition should not be entered with the idea that, “I can always go back to the way I was. “ There WILL BE a point of no return WITHOUT A LOT OF PAIN AND EXPENSE. It’s a lot better if you are absolutely sure before beginning. That is why it is suggested that you live a year as, that’s right, living in an immersive transitioned state for a year. If you find, that after a year, all is good physically, mentally and emotionally, you can go on. During that year you will gain many of the skills needed later in your transition. If, during this part of your journey, life is difficult, overly negatively emotional, draining or troublesome and you find out that this is not for you then all can be reset without issue.

At first you may be scared, afraid to be made, or to reveal who you are. During this time you may be living the two lives I mention. As the year progresses it will become easier and you will feel more comfortable and you may favor your new self. If you haven’t already this is a great time to find a therapist and start that path. If you start hormones during this time you may find yourself on a one way path. I encourage you to find and stay with your support group.

Find a good therapist and go over the concept before changing your name or other documentation etc., that said, it’s never to late to start and a refresher later never hurts. I am not talking about psychotherapy, but a therapist that will help you explore who you are. You are not crazy, hopefully not confused, and have a desire to actually BE and LIVE as the opposite gender. Just wanting to dress differently is not enough. Live it and see if you can cope with the change. Therapist are a great help for crossdressers understanding who they are too.

A therapist can also help you with any emotional issues you may have brought along. Your friends and family may be a great help but a therapist approach is different. They are far more honest with you. Be clear and up-front about why you are there. Be brutally honest. You are not there to fix a relationship, you are there to explore you! To build confidence in who you are. Develop a trusting relationship with your therapist or find one that you can do that with. Do not compromise on this step. You won’t progress if you won’t listen to your therapist or be willing to tell them everything.

You may not think that a therapist is needed, that is your choice. However, treatment providers who follow WPATH 7 guidelines will insist on letters from your therapist. There is NO shame in therapy at all, only gain. You must approach it with an open mind and not something that must be done as a procedure.. Personally, I am a believer in therapy. My insurance paid for the bulk (I had a co-pay) of my time with my therapist. You may find that they are more affordable than you think. Many offer a reduced rate if you cannot pay the full amount or full co-pay.

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How do I find a therapist? Definitely not an easy task but choosing the right therapist is very important and don't stop after finding one, just because they discount or take your insurance. Start by asking your friends, especially trans ones. Since telephone books are a thing of the past the internet is your starting point. A few transgender support sites have pages with references listed but many times I find them very outdated. Start with Psychology Today ([Find a Transgender Therapist, Transgender Psychologist, Transgender Counselor - Psychology Today](#)) and select your location. Read over the bios and do your best.

You will find that therapist have different approaches to counseling so review their profiles and select those you wish to contact. Write down questions to ask the therapist you select and rank their answers to help pick the best. Be sure to completely and fully articulate what it is you are looking for. Also keep in mind that it is common for therapist, even before COVID, to conduct sessions via internet. Most important is to be so comfortable with your therapist that you feel free to open up to them completely.

Therapist don't tell you what to do, they help you discover that inside you. They are guides, not masters. Sessions are not the only time to consider your conversation, think about them between sessions and bring discussion to each. You should find yourself getting more comfortable and open as the sessions go along. While you should not rush them do consider that progress needs to be made. Also consider if your need for the type of therapist has stayed the same over the sessions. Toward the end I changed from a clinical style therapist to a more spiritual one and that was a great catalyst for me to move forwards.

EMOTIONAL

From my perspective, one of the benefits of transitioning was an opportunity to freely display emotions that I had been hiding for a very long time. That did a lot to address my dysphoria. I am sure that you have been there, holding on to the emotions of the gender that you are presenting. Maybe not, you are a step ahead of me then.

I know a few people who have made a successful physical transition but never saw the need for a mental or emotional transition. Different people have their own level to transition to. In many ways they remain a man in a dress or a woman in pants. The choice is yours. It's a fact, men are often less emotional – at least they tend to display less emotion than women. They seldom consider emotional repercussions when dealing with others. So, the converse is also true, women are more likely to display their emotions and live life with their emotions an active part of who they are. Keep that in mind as you assume your new gender, not only does the world expect your emotional display match your gender but it will help you become your new true self. Ladies, it's OK to cry, to show your emotions. Transmen, sorry to say that it may take some adjustment to internalize your emotions like a lot of men do. I recommend that you embrace the new emotional you in your daily life. These are not deal killers unless you intend to go full stealth. On the flip side of this situation, do not go overboard and exaggerate your feelings thinking that will help. It may be seen and unstable or insincere. Instead be even.

If you are not sure how to proceed with this definitely do bring it up with your therapist. It's a very important component of your new life.

HORMONES



While we are discussing these things, let's take a minute and discuss the effects of hormones. Everyone, they affect not only your physical body, and in a permanent manner, but hormones will change the way you perceive and see the world, think about everyday things and emotional make up. I definitely think differently now and hormones have helped open up my emotional self. Certain bodily functions may be enhanced and some will be diminished too. Discuss these changes with your therapist and Dr prescribing your meds so you understand them BEFORE you experience them. From your peers, find a few people who are taking hormones and ask how they feel differently what they see has changed within themselves. Ask not only speaking about physical changes but emotional and mental changes as well. If these changes make you uncomfortable then I suggest that you take a non-hormone path with your transition.

Hormones come in several forms, such as patches, pills, implants and shots and combinations of the above. They come in different strengths (dosage), frequency of use and formulations. Find an endocrinologist that you trust and discuss what you want with them. Insisting on a certain type is not always the best thing to do as your Dr. may not be familiar with that type and you risk misapplication. There are also different types or hormones. There are hormone blockers too. Each type has it's own strengths, side effects and weaknesses. Be sure to know what they are (type, strength) before starting them as it's quite possible that you will be on them (at least estrogen) the rest of your life. Keep a list of your medications with you in the event that an attending physician needs to know what medications and dose you are taking.

Personally, I went with sublingual pills as I could better control the dosage. If my levels were too high I could take less, too low take more. My Dr. kept me at levels common for a 30 year old, around 200. The cost was low too, only \$2 a month with insurance and about \$6 without. It worked well for me and I developed all the female characteristics I could ever hope for. There was no special considerations and I could keep my pills in my purse unless it was hot. With shots and implants you have to wait it out. Patches could be removed but are expensive. All are drugs need to be kept cool and away from sunlight. Each person will respond to the effects of hormones in the way their body decides to. There are only averages, no definite, "You will develop voice changes or Tanner stage 3 after 9 months" etc. How fast and how much your body will respond is dependent on your genetic make up. You will develop many of the characteristics that you would have had if you were born If you had been born in the body you want. That is what will develop. The only difference is that starting hormones late may diminish their effects.

As for the type, take what works for you and your Dr. Have trouble taking pills? Then patches may be best for you.

Recently, due to COVID I guess, several types of hormones have become difficult to obtain. Suck it up homies, sometimes get what you can and be happy that you are getting what there is.

You may find that early in hormone treatment your emotions seem supercharged, they well may be so, as your emotions may have highs and lows and you may not understand what is happening.. Also consider that you are feeling emotions, suppressed or not utilized much before some may be new to you. Embrace the changes and learn how to live with them. Resist the urge to stay your old self as transitioning is several things: A process and a journey to a new person. It's more than just a change in your physical appearance. Your core person will stay the same, your perceptions of your world may

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change and so with that your responses. In my opinion the best response is to embrace the new you and learn how to be the person you are becoming. You are and will always be the person you have always been, the difference is that you are now expressing yourself in your new gender. In a short time you and your body will adjust and life will settle down. Be sure to share your emotional ups and down with your therapist. Who you are doesn't change, in the end I still have the same interest and skills I always have.



Hormones affect each of us at different rates, physical changes may lead or lag emotional and mental changes. Maintain the dosage that your doctor has prescribed, DO NOT increase your dose thinking it will speed up your changes. That can be very dangerous. Changes depends on your body physiology. If you are not progressing at a rate you want make an appointment with your Dr. and discuss it with them.

Transwomen, at first the effects of t-blockers and estrogen will not immediately decrease your libido, stamina etc. For some people eventually it will, depends on how much T is promoting your sex drive. It can be supplemented if need be, that is one of the reasons to be under the care of an endocrinologist. Let me repeat that. If you are on hormones strong and long enough to effect changes it will eventually result in malfunction of your sexual function that may not be reversible. It is also possible that T was not the driving factor in your sex drive – I don't think it was for me, it is more of a mental and emotional driven device. How do I know? My body no longer produces T and my sex drive remains.

Be cautious with hormones as there may be tradeoffs. Hormones are essential to regulate several bodily processes so being totally without may not be a good idea. For example, bone health is dependent on having some degree of estrogen or testosterone present. Be sure to work with your endocrinologist to get the right balance. It is also important to convey your desires to your doctors.

Changes in hormone levels have a great potential to affect your emotional well being. I found that if my levels were high or had dropped, that I became emotional. Seemingly innocent things would cause me to cry. In the middle I was very stable. That makes for another reason to being able to make timely adjustments in your dosage. It is important to pay attention to your well being and catch issues from dosing early. That said, you are a new person now. Learn who you have become and enjoy that. It really helps to pay attention to your emotional and physical self.

What did I observe with hormones?

- Softer facial features. This took a year or so.
- Softer skin
 - Yes, my skin became noticeably softer, other people notice it and tell me so even. My feet became cracked too, WTF! Being like a cis woman can have its issues too.
- Changes in hair growth pattern.
 - 5 o'clock shadow now take a day to develop and what does in a finer hair.
 - Not necessarily on top of my head, but it grew more in a few places and less in others.
 - For some girls it may stop hair loss, it will not grow back a bald head. For me no change. Sorry, you may not get to toss your wig.

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- I developed more feminine emotions and feelings and was better able to project them. For me this was a plus. What develops is a function of your emotional state at transition. The feminine part of me was screaming to be let loose and I found that I felt better after I did.
- Here is a transgirl talking about her emotional changes at the beginning of her hormone treatment: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sZ_N1pEHDY4
- Breast growth – I discuss this in depth later but I will touch on it. Growth depends mainly on your genetic make-up. Don't rush it.
- Changes in fat distribution – Not only facial but elsewhere in my body, such as hips, thighs etc.
- Muscle loss – Definitely happened. I definitely not as strong as I was. I have taken a different approach to how I handle heavy objects now. Sorry, but exercise will only do so much anymore.
- Muscle gain: Yah transmen! Just remember that you will still have to work for it.
- Medical:
 - My PSA results are now always undetectable. Some of my lab values changed and I researched and found supporting documentation that I gave my Dr to help her understand those changes. Your leftover male parts will still require attention, likewise if you still have female parts they will still require the proper attention.
 - After surgery your hormone levels will need adjustment, no longer will competing hormones fight each other.
 - I gained weight, or should say that it is much harder to not gain weight. One side effect of this is that as my fat content grew and shrank the feminine fat patterns stayed and the male ones went away. Read between the lines here.
- My appetite definitely increased, It will increase even more if you are taking progesterone. Losing weight is a daily battle now. I lost 30 pounds for my surgery and it was difficult to take off and very easy to put back on. Welcome to womanhood. Transmen, I really don't know, research required.
- I have noticed this over long term that my fingernails have changed, they are more dished and a little narrower.
- From what I know, estrogen will not cause problems with existing health conditions. T-Blockers may, and as an example, spiro lactone affects your serum potassium levels. <rephrase>>
- <Blank placeholder>

I originally got my prescription from a licensed physician, an endocrinologist. They are the type of Dr. specializing in internal medicine and the effects of hormones. My current endocrinologist monitors my estrogen and other hormone levels with regular bloodwork and sets my prescription as needed. I really don't recommend shortcuts here, such as planned parenthood as other hormone values besides estrogen need to be monitored. Once again, do it properly and live a long happy life.

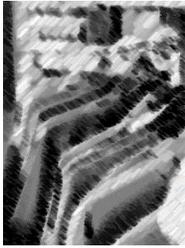
You may be tempted to be your own Doctor and obtain your hormones via the internet or other means. This is not especially difficult to do but it may be dangerous to do. It usually means that you cannot check your blood serum for hormone levels and run a risk of too low and little effect or too high and run the risk of self injury such as blood clots or violent mood swings. As discussed It is well worth it to find a Dr familiar with hormone treatment to give you a prescription and blood test. Ask your primary physician or support group about who to see. An agency without a licensed and certified physician administering the hormones is just as bad and some that are in the habit of handing out drugs without proper follow up can endanger your health. No regular blood test? Then go away and find a Dr that

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cares. There are also a few on-line services that will analyze samples and report your levels back. Don't take the risk of out of limit levels. Live to enjoy the new you.

Personally, I found that keeping a journal documenting my physical and emotional changes was helpful. Be sure to write down your feelings and thoughts. Feel free to share your writing with your endocrinologist and therapist as they can help you with any issues that come up. When seeing a new Dr, ER staff etc. you must tell them that you are on estrogen, or blockers and don't be ashamed or shy, they have seen this before and knowing all your meds may well save your life.

Appearance & Voice



You have to look the part. Look around you, watch men and women that you want to model and take stock of what they wear. Every person has a style but don't be afraid to change it up. Almost all of my old clothes were either given away or turned into rags. Hell, they don't fit me right anymore anyway. You don't need to be dressed in the latest styles but do try to be current. Discount stores and secondhand stores are great places to shop and affordable. Mistakes in size or design will not cost you much either. Many trans meet-ups feature a clothing swap. The great thing there is a majority will be your size. Experiment with your style before moving on to the retail stores with a set style in mind. What style type? That depends on you and what you want. Want to fit in or stand out? Are you passable and want to be stealthy? Choose your style to match. Remember that you will be wearing everyday clothing more than anything else so don't buy just fancy dresses. Dress for the weather too, and to enhance or reduce certain features as well. Personally, I like to dress like everyday people, an offshoot of my dysphoria to be passable I guess.

It doesn't take long to learn to button on the other side of your blouse, lol. Regardless, do pay attention to personal hygiene. For transwomen, hair removal is a must. There are many laser hair removal services around. Save up some cash and get started. It works best before your hair turns grey, after that electrolysis is the only real option. Laser hair removal is not especially painful or expensive and one of the least invasive body modification surgeries that you can have. For transmen, find facial hair style that matches your hair growth and new facial features.

Dressing down to sweats to 'hide' yourself is just running away. On the opposite end dressing like a drag queen is only likely to draw unwanted attention to yourself. Face the challenge and dress like everyone you see around you. It will make you happier in the long run. Think that adapting your male clothes is good? Not necessarily so girl!

Why are men's and women's clothing are different? There are several reasons, some obvious and some not so much. First of course is that clothing must physically fit who wears it. Second and very important is that it helps us tell everyone around us what gender we wish to be seen as. Dress androgynously and people may have difficulty decoding that you are male or female when you want to be addressed as only one of those. Don't confuse your audience with a mixed marketing message, make a clear statement.

Breast and hips often make it difficult for men's clothing to properly fit a woman's frame. Intimate wear for women doesn't properly fit male anatomy. Panties are tight and a bra has nothing to support and will ride up uncomfortably. Try using a urinal with panties on, not easy to do and yet very easy with men's underwear. On a woman men's underwear don't fit hips properly and leave a line on your tights

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or skirt. I was surprised how comfortable that tight panties and pants felt after my surgery, they would have been uncomfortable with male genitalia.

This brings up the fact that wearing tight fitting clothing to display your features such as breasts, hips, “package” etc. is a regular part of our daily interface with everyone. It pays to advertise – that is let people know the new you with your clothing. Women dress in competition with other women (I am prettier than you!) and men to show who they are or for comfort. Guys and girls keep this in mind when you dress for going out for the night, dress for your audience. Each target audience had a different perspective with regard to what interest them.

In addition, each social setting has unwritten rules (except for from Miss Manners) about what to wear. Look at what most people wear at the grocery store and wear that type/style of clothing when in the grocery store. Same goes for the night club. Wearing a pants suite or tails to the night club is just too much. That is a time to wear something sexy. Check with the cis people where you are going. Unfortunately, many trans people fail to follow this convention and that makes them a poor choice regarding what to “wear there.” That is fine if you are among a group of trans peers but sometimes poor in the wild unless you want to stand out poorly.

Remember – you are selling your appearance as one gender or the other. Be clear with this!

Girls, consider this as a guide:

- Grocery store: Wear comfortable clothes for yourself unless you are trying to make an impression with the green grocer. You are dressing for yourself.
- Restaurant with friends: Semiformal and comfortable. Still be yourself.
- Work: Business casual or as required. Do be careful to impress the men and not cause a second glance from the women. Dress for work.
- Club: Be a sexy gal! Dress for the men and make the women jealous. Know your audience!
- Regardless of what you wear be clean, neat and tidy. This includes accessories like purses.
- Is what you are wearing matching? Not mixing plaids and stripes are we?
- Find what colors look well on you! Wear those.

Transwomen, I know it’s awfully tempting to put on your best dress, a full styled wig and heels when going out with your trans girl friends to the local Italian restaurant. Almost all the cis ladies will be dressed far more casually. Save it up for special occasions. Trust me, you will look cute and sexy in something less fancy.

As far as hairstyle, do ask for help. Certain face shapes work better with certain hair styles, locations and even clothing. Your cis friends and hair dresser can help!

Let me give you some more advice, everyone is not staring at you thinking, “there is a trans person”. I know that I did in the beginning. There is no need to be self-conscience, at all. Once I realized that in everyone’s eyes I was just another person I became a lot more comfortable. That confidence in itself will help in being passable. You are going to have to go out in the real world, in your new gender and do the things you always do. The most important part is not your facial features but your overall appearance and your presence. Act, speak and dress like the gender you are, that gives those around you the clue that they need to properly see and address you in the gender you want them to. Practice moving and walking like the gender you are presenting. Do it until it is second nature. I used to say that

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I subtly tell everyone how I want them to see me. Those around me don't realize it but I am telling them "Woman here!". This is not acting, it is being who you are.

Where to buy? Where you are comfortable. Online is OK but sizes are not always consistent and you may get addicted to buying too much online. Buy where your budget allows and be careful with impulse buying that looks good on the rack but awful when you get home. Not sure where to go? Ask your cis friends!

Sorry to say but especially for the ladies, what to wear can be a lot of work. I have 5 times more clothes that I had before. Something for every occasion and sets of matching outfits (jewelry, dress or blouse/skirt/tights, and shoes) for different occasions and seasons. I will try on three different outfits before settling on what I want. Shoes? Can a woman ever have enough? Transmen, welcome to easier.

Facial Hair

It will be affected! Transmen will notice a permeant increase in facial hair. Take some time to apricate it and choose a style that you like. It may be a neat beard, fuzzy or close shaved. In cold weather it will be apricated if longer!

Transwomen, with hormones your facial growth will slow down but not go away. You may find that it becomes finer to the touch. Yah! For me I develop a light 5 o'clock shadow at the end of day two. So, if I have to, I can skip shaving in the morning - but I will say that I feel self-conscience all day if I do. Shaving is very easy as there is not much hair to remove. Afterwards I apply lotion or sun blocker to my face. It not only makes my skin softer but reduces wrinkles and other defects too. Only takes a few seconds every morning. Sun block has additional benefits, it decreases or removes darker patches or blotches on your face, well given enough time.

Personally, I consider facial hair removal to be an important part of my transition.

Consider laser hair removal but do it early as it is not very effective on light hair, the kind that us older people have. It is not recommended for darker skinned people as dark skin absorbs the laser light. This also includes tanned light skinned people, I got in the habit of wearing the best sun block I could find and a hat when I was having laser treatments. Laser works on more than your face so leg and arm hair can be removed if you like. You may find that an occasional touch up a few years after is required as well. The first few treatments can be somewhat painful as the hair growth cells complain while they are burned out of existence. Soon the hair is gone, and the pain will go away. That is how you know you are done; this may take 6 months to complete. Each session will take about 20 minutes so get to know the technician. Time between sessions is set by how fast your hair and skin recovers so less time between sessions may not always be a winning approach. Like a lot of transitioning items, take the proper amount of time and do it right and only once.

Electrolysis is an option if laser isn't. It's painful, may leave scars and time consuming. But it's still an option. As with all other work performed be sure to get the best that you can.

Selecting the proper color of foundation and makeup to hide dark facial hair can be difficult (usually orange tones), consult friends, cosmetologist or even YouTube for advice. By the way, the salesclerks are perfectly fine with you checking make up out in male mode. (well, in Las Vegas anyway!)

[[Expand on in this section: Your hair

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Natural is best but for a lot of transwomen male pattern hair loss can be an issue.

Oil

Wig]]

Jewelry

Pierced ears. Honest, for me this was and is a must. I did it early on. I was on the defense at work after I had them done . I decided on the ‘None of your business” approach when asked about it. The procedure was relatively painless, and attention is required for the first several months to ensure that your ears heal properly. I went to Claire’s, it cost \$20, and I got a set of cubic zirconium for an additional \$18. I am sure it’s more now. Do remember that you will be wearing something in for 24/7 during the next 6 months. Keep the holes clean, and you won’t have a problem. If you notice they get tender apply antiseptic right away, take out and clean the stud thoroughly too. 70+% rubbing alcohol works well, I don’t recommend 50%. The piercer will usually give you an antiseptic solution to use and that works well too, just use it often. Studs removed before total healing must go back in the hole without delay to prevent the piercing from closing up. Don’t need to go through the process a second time.

Certain types and lengths of earrings work well with certain face shapes, hairstyles and clothing as well. Earrings should also match your other accessories such as your necklace and bracelet. As an example, white small pearl necklace demands a white small earring and if you desire a pearl bracelet. Be careful not to wear a necklace that draws attention to your neck if you have a pronounced Adams apple. Low cut blouse? Go for a longer necklace that dangles in your cleavage. Think about where you want the person opposite you to look.

While we are here examine your choices against the clothing that you wear. Fancy clothes means fancy jewelry like cubic zirconia. Don’t mix silver and gold together either. Jeans and a simple blouse look best with simpler jewelry like simple studs and a watch. Jeans and a rugged look? Organic necklace such as wood colored stones work well, earrings need to go along with this too. It’s tempting to get really fancy when it isn’t appropriate, simpler is always better.

You will also need a place to keep your jewelry, box, tree etc.

Don’t forget about those YouTube fashion channels targeted at young women and men. Start by searching for someone showing the styles that you prefer. Scroll through the various people find a style you like or the current one. Ladies, if this seems like a lot or work then I think that you need to reconsider the level of your dysphoria! <<Clean up>>

Makeup



There are several different styles for transwomen makeup. It depends on what you want to present. For me I want to look like an everyday ciswoman. For the most part that means the least amount of makeup needed. Within your ciswomen friends, you have those right? Find one who’s makeup style you like. Ask her to help you with makeup. What she buys, how she sets it out on her vanity, how she applies it and what she looks for. How to recover from mistakes as well. Something to consider is that as

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you improve your skills it is better to buy better makeup. I got pretty good at putting on and taking off makeup as I would dress every night, and occasionally have to remove it right after getting home so I could go to work in the morning.

Tip: Buy decent makeup for wearing out. The crappy dime store stuff looks like just that, and it usually doesn't wear well either. What it is good for is practice. You should practice putting it on and checking to see how you look. Figuring out how to remove it is also a necessary part of it too. Unless you have transitioned going to work with lipstick or mascara on in the morning is very embarrassing! Yes, ask how I know that. There are accessories to makeup, Q-tips, sponges, wash towels, lighted mirrors, etc. Get those as you need them.

The first style I will discuss is what I call Diva. You know, like the drag show divas. Great for the gay clubs but very little else. It is overly bright and applied heavily. Eyes and lips are excessively emphasized. Wigs are usually over stylized and large. Not at all good for the passable look.

Next we will look at the glam approach. You often see this when cross dressers get a makeover for events. Pancake foundations, stylized for the face and more a coating of paint than anything else. The effect is to smooth everything out while emphasizing female features. It may be used to hide close shaved facial hair for example. It is usually done by an artist and generally expensive as well. At the end of the night it comes off and a bare face emerges. Personally, I can spot these girls as soon as I see them.

Ciswomen approach – used to emphasize already feminine aspects such as eyebrows, lips, cheeks and eyes. Can be heavy but usually not. Color selection is important, if you aren't sure what colors to use for yourself then get help with your selections. Nude foundation and blush powder may be used if you want to emphasize your cheeks. I may wear this when clubbing.

Minimal approach. Honestly, this is my choice. Use the least makeup needed. Usually light amounts of lipstick in muted colors, no liner. Eyebrows match my hair color and mascara. If I wear make up to go shopping etc this is it. What I do wear out daily is sunblock when outside or lotion if I am inside. Lipstick usually matches either accessories, clothing or facial tone. Occasionally, bright lipstick may be used to emphasize your lips for a reason.

Remember that makeup selection is affected if you have dark stubble underneath. Certain colors, generally those more orange, hide it better than others but overall the color must be a good match for the rest of your natural skin color.

Something that I noticed is that prolonged time on hormones changed my color perception and I am able to see subtle nuances in colors that I never did before! I am also better able to know when colors or tones make a match now. Before, these skills were lost to me.

Now that you have a female face take better care of it. Wear sunscreen when going out into the sun to maintain an even color without sun damage. Use a moisturizing cream every day! Wear a big girly hat when working outside in the sun. My dermatologist noticed my skin and commented that my face looked better when I started that regimen. Transmen, welcome to the rugged look – but still use the sun block.

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If you put make up on after work and take it off for work expect an occasional slip up, forgetting to take mascara etc. off will lead to an interesting morning. Carry a few cleanup wipes just in case. The same applies to your nails too!.

The same YouTube advice given before applies here too.

Nails

Due to health issues my nails are very thin. I use nail polish not only for fashion but to improve their strength. If you are active then longer nails are difficult to maintain. While I was working I got very good at putting on my nails and taking them off before work.

Some girls like acrylic nails that glue on. They look and work well unless you need to use your fingers a lot.

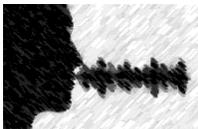
<< Flesh out >>

The same YouTube advice given before applies here too.

I was in a nail shop getting a mani-pedi a couple of weeks back and in the seat next to me a mom had her little girl with her. I realized that was an experience that I never had an opportunity to do. That little girl was having a lot of fun, getting her nails done and learning how to take care of beauty at the same time. Being older, I had to learn from my female friends how this worked (I am grateful for that BTW, always have a blast going in with them) at a lot later stage in life. I got the barber shop experience as a kid, not the same. It's pretty much the same going to a hairdresser, each gender has their own experiences. Learn to embrace and enjoy them in your new gender

In Progress

Voice



Men and women not only sound different but they have different speech patterns as well. There are a lot of tutorials on you tube but they only take you so far and almost all only address pitch. As good as that may sound for free help, I strongly recommend that you find a speech therapist to help you with improving your voice patterns as well as your pitch. Let me reinforce that concept, the pitch I speak at is not as important as what I say and how I say what I say. A therapist will help you know what to say and how to say it. For transwomen start with voice therapy, it is cheaper, safer and may work better than you think, in fact, I think that you will find it may be all you need to do. Vocal cord surgery is available but risky, expensive and time consuming. Many times, the surgeon will require voice therapy anyway and it is not as expensive as you think. You will also find that when speaking with someone in person your appearance will help sell how you sound. The holy grail is on the phone. If you want to work on your voice pitch download an app for your phone or tablet called "Voice Tools" and practice with that. My voice is at the bottom of the female range but how I speak and what I say is the most important part of a passable voice, especially on the telephone.

My goal was to be identified as female on the phone 95% of the time. With phrase and pitch practice I have met that goal. I found that singing helped me practice in a higher pitch. Practice saying "Mi" and "Meee" in a high pitch to help you maintain and recognize that pitch when speaking. Try it: "Me, My,

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Mam, Mine”. After bit you will think the words, in the higher pitch and then speak in that pitch without vocalizing them. Transmen, try the same but with a lower pitch with words such as “MO, MU, BOO” and other naturally sounding lower pitch sounds. Don’t overdo reaching for that low or high note, straining your voice doesn’t help. At first I doubted myself but after some time I got better. Now, a year and a half later, I checked my pitch with Voice Tools and was pleasantly surprised to find my pitch well within the female range. I think that most of that is overtones, but I also think that a years’ worth of practice by using has brought me here. It may take time to get the results you want but they will only come with practice and patience.

My biggest issue now is cracking, sometimes called vocal fry. It’s what I am working on right now. But you know, it’s an issue that I always have had. When it happens now I have learned to let more air out to counter it.

It's important to remember that you sound different to other people then you sound to yourself. We always seem to overly criticize our own voices in a negative light. Don’t let that stop you, slow you down or even discourage you from going forward.

The clips on YouTube are often made by people with an extensive vocal range to start with. I never had that range myself and never will. I accepted that and do my best and it seems to work well. Your voice will sound good only after practice, and more practice, tools and only slight changes in pitch and range. You may find that you can increase your pitch naturally by practicing raising your larynx up in your throat while you speak. Those videos rarely address how you speak and what you say either, and those are the most important parts of feminizing your voice.

Ladies, after several months of practice and use you will also find that your voice will come out in your new fem style without even realizing you are doing so. Concentrate on how to speak like a woman, bright clear sounds, emphasized vowels and strong enunciation. Make up a cheat sheet and refer to it. Mine says:

VOICE REMINDERS

Slow down girl, speak slowly and clearly. Pace your words.
Speak comfortably---- Volume, pitch and speed.
Emphasize light sounds and quicken dark sounds.
How you speak is more important than pitch.
Enunciation is important!
Lengthen vowel sounds – Think southern without the drawl.
Emphasize a point with **pitch**, not volume!

With time you will find that you don’t even think about your voice, it will come out as you like automatically. Time, practice and acceptance of your new self will reinforce your new voice. Overall be patient. For some a new voice happens within several months, for others it’s a year or two before you are comfortable. Yes A YEAR OR TWO. It’s not just pitch but how you say what you say. You will find yourself learning new speech patterns.

The following is from a voice surgery center:

What is voice feminization therapy?

Many people choose to have voice feminization therapy before and after surgery. In addition to adjusting the pitch of your voice, a speech-language pathologist helps you feminize:

Intonation (adapting the sound of your voice to express emotions).

Loudness.

Nonverbal communication, such as eye contact, gestures, articulation and pausing.

Resonance (how you pass air through your vocal folds to control the intensity of your voice).

Those are a few of the things that you will learn with fem voice training.

For transmen on hormones, your voice will deepen and permanently change, learn to speak like a man though and you will be successful. Guys, your new deeper voice change is a forever thing so be sure! Work not on pitch but on what is said and how the words are put together. Speak sharper (think barking it out), and depending on what you do, coarser. Many men are usually not as articulate a woman either, they often speak first without through thinking. SO the same thing applies here, how you say what you say is the most important, as an example, men tend to raise their voice to emphasize a point.

Everyone, listen to how other people speak. Scripted speech, such as from a movie or TV, is often written by one person and that trait shows in the writing. Ever notice how neutral and plain it is? It's a poor choice to use as an example to learn speech patterns. Listen to people in a natural setting. Choose who you listen to carefully and repeat after them. I cannot emphasize too much how important that practice sessions are. For FTM, learn to speak clearly and deliberately, lengthen your vowels. For all, speak comfortably, it won't work well if you are straining. Emphasize those sounds that are masculine or feminine as needed, speak the other sounds more quickly. FTM, be patient, it may well take a couple of months before you feel like you are getting somewhere. It takes time to train and build a new speech pattern that you can use without thinking about it. Remember, journey, then process.

Consider it an immersive training. Sing, repeat ads on TV and radio to practice. Moments alone can be practice sessions. Feedback from friends is very helpful. This is a change in how you think – it will show in your voice. If you want to be stealthy it is a must.

Even long after you have 'perfected' your feminine voice it may occasionally waver. Mine does, I live with it. Every day is not a rose, some are just carnations. 20 minutes later your voice will return to your new normal and everything will be good again.

In Las Vegas I recommend the Vegas Voice Institute: <https://vegasvoiceinstitute.com/> (702) 558-9900 You can arrange to do sessions in person or remotely if you wish. Personally, I found person to person meetings worked better as I got better feedback, but that is a personal opinion, yours may be different.

WORK

For most transitioners work gets in the way. How do you explain it to everyone who know you in your current gender? There are many aspects of your workplace that may change. Some co-workers will definitely not be happy and others may not care.

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It's definitely easier when starting a new job or with an employer that you have not been at for long. Positions with limited interface with clients or other co-workers are easier too. People I know who have entered a new job after transiting seem to do well. Sometimes they are afraid that they will be outed but it's not such a big deal if you are already well established. I definitely would have transitioned between jobs if that was available.

To successfully transition at work takes a lot of time, patience and research. You may read up on the Federal, State and local laws think that this is all you need to do. It's not. Don't forget your companies' policies and procedure, both on the corporate and local level. That said don't count on them to protect you or prevent a hostile environment from occurring. Piss off your fellow workers, your boss or HR and there is little that can be done to save you. I have seen where just one very vocal employee was able to get HR to do their dirty work. Usually your employer has a better legal staff than you can get and are more likely to win a legal battle.

I know that you didn't want to hear that but when the situation becomes social, economic or political there will be issues. Showing up one day in a dress, make-up and calling yourself Sally is a sure way to trouble. The company will find a way to make all your positive reviews in the past into negative reviews in the future. You will find out that HR is not your friend!

Instead, find someone with at least some power who can and are willing to be your corporate advocate. Have them introduce the idea to HR with the promise that you will work with them to develop a plan. A WRITTEN plan. If it involves a year and using the guest bathroom on the 3rd floor until you are back from SRS be happy that they are working with you.

I worked for the County and discarded the idea of transitioning at work for several reasons:

The County was big on promoting equity, blindness to gender etc. But they were also very poor on following through with promises. I saw this many times. Most of the time it never turned out well for the employee. In fact, I can't remember a single instance where things turned out well. When they don't life will not be easy after.

My professional equity would begin again at zero. I would be reestablishing my past accomplishments. If someone looked into them, they would question if I had stolen them. Sounds silly but transitioning is often seen like a divorce or death by many.

In the end, I would need to reestablish my relationship with all internal and external clients. It took me years to establish these relationships! Imagine having to explain to everyone that you were now a female. Maybe if I was young it would have been OK but I was close to retirement anyway. Many times I related in meetings that were not one on one but one on many. Bring up my transition to those who knew me before in that situation would have been a big distraction.

I would have loved to transitioned at work but it was just too impractical. In what situation would I have? If I transferred to another department, changed jobs or in some manner began a new start. Having a new SS card and drivers license with my new me would be a help here. I would tell them I was trans, but it would be a lot easier if I just started out as the new me and they knew I was trans. This is a situation where being very passable would be a big help.

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I did what I could and still be within policy guidelines. Hair for example, there was no restriction on how I wore my hair, so I grew it out long, but kept it clean and neat in a ponytail. They couldn't say a thing. Another was earrings. Yes, got them 2 years before I retired. Has Ha, they couldn't say anything. I am sure that I was annoying people but I was also in a position where annoying then wasn't a big issue. As I mentioned I just said "None of your business" when asked.

To be honest, being at least fairly passable is an enormous help in your journey through your new life. No looks when in the bathroom, almost universal acceptance when in public. Odds favor that you are far more passable than you think you are! Before I got my ID updated I almost always got a second look when presenting it, they were expecting to see female on my ID, after, never. In many ways your transition will never end as you make adjustments in your life. Serious illness? Transiting needs to be mentioned. Do you have a will? Deal with your property having different names? Burial request?

Breast growth and Surgery

Reduction – I really can't speak well for breast reduction other than general advice. Regardless of the size you start with there is a great potential for a large scar and definitely a loss of sensation. Choose your surgeon well. Choose one whose surgery photos show very small scarring and has testimonials that can be verified. For example, no surgeon has all positive reviews, are the nipples in a natural position?. If you are producing estrogen do not rely on the testosterone to stop breast growth. Every person has a different scarring response. One bit of advice I can give is difficult to follow but do it anyway. No sun or tanning on the scar for a year, and use scar gel, I know you are eager to show off but no sun, do it!. Minimize the scarring!

Price varies by surgeon but do not make that your criteria for selecting who to use! Nobody wants a botched boob job, or a botched plastic surgery procedure of any type! Choose very wisely.

If anyone has experience and wishes to provide me with additional breast reduction information, I would happy to hear it.



Implants, Growth and Augmentation:

Start by considering who you are getting breast for. Is it for men, as in to entice them? Is it for women, so that you can compete with women or is it for you, and perhaps to help your dysphoria or body image? Do you care if others can tell that you have implants or is it important that no one can tell if you have had them? What you do next is determined by what you want and what size you want.

If you have been on hormones you may have begun to develop breast tissue, your genetics may take you anywhere from an A cup to a C cup. As many genetic women will tell you it is an interesting time in your life, then transition, it sure was in mine. You may develop additional sensation. They will itch, they may feel warm. Once they get above an A cup they are difficult to hide and you may be thinking about avoiding baring your chest. After they show, some of the aching and itching will dimmish, except for an occasional twinge. Remember my warnings on hormones?

They may grow for two or three years before reaching their final size, some say up to five. With proper hormone treatment it is unlikely that much additional growth will take place after 3 years, mine

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just filled out after that. Rely on your Dr's hormone prescription. Increasing the dose may actually be harmful and usually is. Growth is more dependent on your genetic makeup than dosage. That all said, in many cases the proper amount of physical stimulation may help with growth. You may find that this is enough for you and as a bonus they are all natural in appearance, feeling and texture.

Transwomen, there will be no more going shirtless outside the house!

Nipple growth. If you are lucky hormones will stimulate nipple and areola growth. This is not always the case. They will most likely stay a healthy pink color and not turn dark. Protruding nipples (and mine do, especially if it's chilly or I am unknowingly stimulated or, more likely, they just want to be that way!) will become a good reason to wear a bra. To continue with that line of thought, they can and will poke out whenever they decide to. Like the cold foods section at the grocery store. Not when you want then to, mind you, when they want to. These actions will be more likely to occur if you are on hormones. Just as for cis-women they will be a major reason for wearing this over that – like a bra.

Without implants your breast will eventually begin to sag and wearing a bra will feel and look better. Certain social situations also call for wearing a bra too.

Most likely you will have boarder shoulders than a cis woman and that will manifest in your breast being spaced farther apart. Unless you wear a tight top or bra you will have widely spaced cleavage. You may find that implants aggravate this. This is actually somewhat natural with cis-women with broader shoulders. So, there is nothing to be concerned about. This aspect makes your cleavage spaced out unless you are wearing a tight bra or a top that brings your breasts close together. A la natural they will be spaced apart.

If you are thinking, "I can't wait to feel my own breasts!" well, they will be just like any other part of your body. Sometimes it feels nice to massage your own breasts, especially after wearing a bra all day, but it isn't a sexual thing unless you are being otherwise stimulated. That said I do enjoy having them touched, massaged and suckled on. Besides really feeling nice, with the right person, it's very stimulating.

Speaking of bra's, seek help in selecting the proper size. I do strongly suggest that you do this as a proper fitting bra not only looks better but feels better too. Ask the sales lady, she will be happy to help. Be cautious with Victoria's secret, they are not known for selecting the best fit or size, but the sexiest fit, uncomfortably pushing them up and out. Odds are your bra from them will be too tight and push up too much, look great but definitely not an all day or night comfortable wear.

While I am here I'll take a second to say how much suffering that transmen go through when they bind. My god, my girls complain when my blouse is too tight! What we go through for our dysphoria. Natural breasts are incredibly tough. Natural breast can take an amazing amount of punishment and come out strong. That doesn't mean you should find out how much.

So, let's talk about implants. When you mention them in your medical history just say "Breast Augmentation", Consider them for the right reasons. Remember early in this section I asked who are they for? If you are thinking, "I just want big boobs!" OK. For me I grew C's but being 5'10" I felt they were a little small for my frame. Turned my C's into DD's, perhaps a little large, but they match the look expected for my body. That is far more important to me than a big size. In retrospect, just D's would

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have been fine and easier to deal with too. Selecting implants that are too large also makes your breasts look unnatural not only in size but from the tissue and implant being seen as separate.

Having natural tissue to begin with was a big help. Modern surgery places the implants under the chest muscles and uses a medium softness 'gummy bear' silicone material but you may choose a softer or firmer material. I chose a material that matched the firmness of my natural breast tissue, and it is almost impossible to find the implant by feeling my breasts. Saline is always a choice but has a higher probability of showing unnatural wrinkles and definitely has a different texture. Medium silicone improves the look by reducing ripples etc. but retaining a natural feel. The media used also affects the ripples. Natural breast tissue may exhibit some wrinkling but not usually like implants do. Definitely have a through talk with your plastic surgeon regarding size and materials. You should have the opportunity to feel the implants they use, feel each material and feel your breasts and find a match. Do remember that they have a 20 year life expectancy and may need to be removed and replaced after that. It is possible for complications such as rupturing, capsular contraction or calcification of the pocket containing the implant to result in earlier removal. Calcification is a normal body response to inflammation and will result in your breasts feeling harder than they did early on, capsular contraction also impacts the look and feel of the implants. My Dr has me come in every year to check for issues and there have been none so far. If there is, the implants are covered for replacement by the manufacturer but the surgery is not.

Your friends will most likely suggest that you get larger implants. That's fine, but larger implants are easily recognized as implants. Often the skin shows the edges or even under the implant. It's not difficult to tell those are not real. I stayed well below the largest allowed, instead selecting a size that matched my frame and provided a natural looking support base for my natural breasts. For me, a natural look was very important. Mine had dropped a bit since surgery and have a natural appearance and feel that I love. The last thing I wanted was that defined outline that many implants show, especially when they are oversized. Implants often come in two shapes, tear drop or round. Round is very common and work well if they are not oversized.

Before surgery you will have to get a clearance from your physician. You know, the one you are working with for your transition. Both my Dr. and nurse became excited for me when I told them what I was there for. Don't do any procedure that may injure your health, you want to enjoy the new you for as long as possible.

The surgery is absolutely invasive and you will feel definite tightness and tenderness for a few days, so take things easy for a week as tissue heals. Personally, I did not find any need for pain medication other than Tylenol. You will feel the presence of the implants under your muscles, especially as you exceed the lifting limit the Dr has given you or raise your arms above your shoulders. Consider that last part when you go home and want a box from the top shelf the first few days following surgery or want to drive. Set any things that you need down at shoulder or below height before surgery. Reach high and a painful muscle tear will remind you to stop. Alternately, someone can do all the lifting and reaching for you. Expect to wear a tight-fitting bra 24/7 for an extended time, until the Dr gives you permission to wear a normal bra without an underwire. This could be a month or so. It's a lot more pleasant during the cooler months! This so the tissues can heal together and form the pocket that the implant will live in. Take very good care of the incision as any tearing or infection will result in a nasty looking scar. Sunlight on your incision is also likely to lead to the scar being a different color as it heals.

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Avoid direct sunlight on the incision for at least a year and good sun screen the year after. Using a scar gel such as Mederma Advanced Scar Jell to help reduce the scar. It definitely helps and I recommend that you do so.

At first you need to sleep only on your back but soon your side and then eventually you can lay or sleep on your stomach. Your surgeon will give you instructions regarding when you can do what. As you heal, feeling the implant will eventually become a new normal and after a month or so it will become a normal thing. Do take it easy for 2 to 3 months and let all the tissues heal thoroughly, by then the Dr will allow you to wear an underwire bra. You will always be aware that the implants are there but not in a painful manner. As mentioned avoid sunlight on the incision for a year and use 'scar gel' to reduce the appearance of the scar. Depending on the size increase your skin may be a little tight for a few days and if you are young and went for very large implants there is the possibility of developing stretch marks. Check the pregnancy products for creams designed to reduce stretch marks. Older people have a more elastic skin and stretch marks are less likely to develop, I developed none. Do not expect any changes in your nipples or areolas from the surgery. If you are on hormones do expect your nipples to poke out more than before, and at any time they desire without your consent. Oh yes, they may become more sensitive for a bit and irritated by clothing.

Soon you will learn how to deal with a chest that extends out farther than before, with your boobs occasionally getting in the way. How to lay on your stomach comfortably, how to properly roll over in bed. If you went in for larger breasts it may take a few days to learn your new center of balance and how to properly walk and turn in a doorway. Walk with your head back and your boobs out. Clumsy at first perhaps, but things will be fine soon. You will find that your old blouses and dresses may not fit properly now! On the plus side, once they settle down, in a year or two, they will remain perky. Your new wardrobe just might contain a few items that you wear just to show your beautiful new breasts off. Good for you! That said, there are times when wearing a bra is a must, it's a social norm as much as anything. Like genetic women, after a day of wearing a bra it will be found in the back seat of your car on your way home from work. It can be removed while driving if you are wearing the right top.

At first you will feel the implants when you use your arm muscles as the muscles are now resting over your implants and lifting anything heavy will cause the muscles to shift the implants around. It is not uncomfortable but will take some time for the feeling to become natural. Your muscles will adapt as well, stretching to better fit the contour. My Dr told me that as a result of the surgery I would not have the strength I originally had but not by much less. So far it's not enough to worry about and I feel that the strength lost from taking hormones was a lot more noticeable.

With larger implants you may find that over time you will need to do certain exercises to maintain proper posture. This is important not only for looking well, as you should project your breasts out as you walk, sit or stand but to reduce or prevent back pain. I do a shrugging type of exercise where I push my shoulder blades back and my boobs forward. 30 of those 3 times a week.

Price varies by surgeon but do not make that your criteria for selecting who to use! Nobody wants a botched boob job, or a botched plastic surgery procedure of any type! Choose very wisely. My surgeon wisely asked me for the reason I wanted implants. He knew I was trans (gave him my complete medical history) was concerned for my physical and mental health. I went in with an idea of how I wanted to look and explained that to him. I looked over pictures of his patients before starting so I knew the quality of work he was capable of. When looking at a surgeon's work pay attention to how

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evenly the breasts are placed (not only horizontally but vertically) and if scars are visible. They should look completely natural by a year after surgery. If they are uneven, show scars or don't look right go somewhere else. Odds are that the bad reviews will not show up on the Dr's website. Also keep in mind that there will always be negative reviews from someone who didn't convey what she wanted to the Dr so read the reviews carefully.

My approach for all aspects of my transition has been to be as natural appearing as possible. So far, I have been able to achieve that. If you are interested in who I choose it is Dr Brandon Reynolds: <https://reynoldscosmetics.com> 702 410 9800. I am often told by both women and men how nice my breasts look. Even after touching them people can't tell I have implants. No scars, no pain, not lopsided. I retained full sensation on one side and lost only a little on the other, I should say that with the second side the sensation is different, it's there but different. No complications, that is exactly what I wanted. To me that is success. I return back every year for a checkup and he checks to make sure that the capsules are encasing the implants properly.

Next is what to wear after you breast are bigger or smaller. A new wardrobe definitely. I found that a lot of tops no longer fit and a few of my dresses didn't either. Hey, a great reason to get new clothes. Personally, I find that I have a much more feminine appearance now, well at least I think so as it makes my waist seem smaller. If you like showing off then check out the sexy fashions. If you are more conservative, then that is easy enough. Do remember that you need to dress per how you perceive yourself or as who you want to be. Find a common theme is a good idea but don't get in a rut either. Don't forget to donate your old clothes to the trans clothing swap. Because I have the cleavage to support it I lean toward a lot more tops that show my cleavage off.

Let me take a minute and mention that you can get implants without hormones or existing breast tissue. If you decide not to take T-blockers or estrogen then this is a workable route to maintaining existing sexual function. They will not look or feel as natural as they would with natural tissue above them. Once again you may see the edges of the implants or even under them a bit. To me this is noticeable even when wearing clothes that cover the breasts. Implants under the muscles do help but does not eliminate unnatural perkiness that they will have. Natural breast tissue above the implant helps soften and naturalize their appearance. Ladies, after having implants I can definitely spot them on another person, I know what to look for now.

It may be that you could be a candidate for a fat transfer procedure. With this surgery live fat is removed from your abdomen and processed saved, to be injected into your breasts or buttocks. Not only will your stomach slim down but your girly bits such as breasts, buttocks and perhaps face may get enhanced too. The fat removed is processed and then injected into your breasts and / or buttocks. After they settle down they look good and feel very natural. The effects may dimmish after a few years as the fat cells die off with time. Be careful however, not everyone is a good candidate for this procedure. I have kidney issues and that disqualified me from any liposuction procedure of any kind. It seems that the amount of lidocaine used can damage kidneys. I was honest up front with my health and that saved me from additional problems with my health in the future. Your long-term health is very important if you wish to enjoy who you want to be. So once again, choose your liposuction provider wisely! Some clinics have technicians on staff and others contract with technicians that travel around the city and service many clinics.

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Regardless of why, how or the type of implant you get, or for that matter naturally grown breasts, you need to treat them well. Implants are tough but not so tough that they may not be damaged. Saline implants are the most likely to suffer from failure due to their softness. As firmness progresses toward the “gummy bear” style failure is less likely. Anything that may puncture the breast is very likely capable of rupturing the implant. Likewise brute weight is more likely to rupture a saline implant and less likely to rupture a firmer implant. Also, in contrast a ruptured saline implant is less likely to result in problems beyond deflating the implant. A ruptured silicone implant must be removed as soon as possible. As a result, I am always very careful if laying on my chest and lifting against my implants. Why take a chance? I also decided on the firmness I have as it matches my natural breast tissue better, making it difficult to tell where natural and synthetic begins and ends.

In the event that you have health issues then let me expand on that when you decide to make your transition it may affect what you do and when. The first is that if waiting means transiting in declining health then transition as soon as you can. If you wait too long then you may not be healthy enough for SRS or reduction/augmentation.

Life with Breasts: Well, you have them now and they may be small or large, all natural, part natural or all synthetic. In any case now you have them and all that comes with it. The first thing is they will be noticed by men and women alike. In some ways you will be judged by them, it’s just a way of life so get over that and live with it just like cis-women do. Do dress with that in mind and blouse, dress and top selection becomes a lot more convenient, things just look better with some breast size above an A cup. I find myself looking for more items with a revealing neckline now. As dear Abby said, “If you got ‘em, flaunt ‘em!” Still, consider them an accessory to the rest of yourself.

They are very hardy however that doesn’t mean that you should ignore them, oh no, just like the rest of you and augmented or not, they need maintenance too. Firm, perky or not do consider a bra when going out and a sports bra whenever jogging or exercising. Squeeze then periodically see if they are tender or have another inconsistency. Get a mammogram, even new boobs need a baseline to check against in the future. Odds are that even augmented breasts will change size and firmness over time. It is natural and expected for them to “drop” over time but they will always be unnaturally perky. How’s your reach? Odds are it’s been affected and for a bit, you may be awkward. Soon you will adapt and all will be good with the world again. Have I mentioned what effects that having additional weight attached to the front of your body can do to your back and posture? Do those exercises or expect some issues or physical therapy in the future.

Oh yeah, seat belts can be irritating at times.

[[Transgender Surgery (Still under construction!)



Your dysphoria has reached a point where surgery sounds like the right thing to do. You have read all my warnings regarding the permanence of hormones and feel that surgery is correct the final step is for you. If you are seriously considering surgery then I would hope that it can be safely assumed that you are making a binary choice to change your gender. In other words, that you are

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seriously considering surgery and do not want to be considered as having other than male or female gender as an outcome.

You will need to find a surgeon and get interviewed, tell the surgeon what you are wanting. Several parts are pretty much the same no matter where you go. You may find that you will need to pay for the surgery yourself, or the state if you are on Medicaid and dependent on the state. Perhaps your insurance will cover it. There may be a small copay as well. In addition, you may need to coordinate with your Dr's, therapist and others to set up all that is needed. Let's look at a list of requirements as per WPATH 7:

- Get a SRS consultation and acceptance.
- Live in your transition gender for a year.
 - You may need proof of some sort, photos, ID etc. Depends on the clinic.
- Obtain letters verifying your dysphoria.
 - WPATH has specific wording on who is considered an acceptable source.
- Obtain funding.
 - You may find that your surgeon or clinic may be of help here. Check with their financial officer. FYI Medicare does NOT cover SRS.
- Get medical clearance.
 - Your physician will provide written clearance to your surgeon. It's time specific and must be done within a certain period before surgery.
- Find a caretaker to assist you after surgery.
 - You will need assistance immediately after release from surgery. Driving is a challenge at first, so is sitting for more than a few minutes. Family, friends or your support group may be a resource to draw from. You will need help for a week at least, more if the surgery is not close by.
- After care.
 - Learn how to properly take care of the new you. Lean on you support team. Cis-men and women are a great source to learn about your new bits. We will discuss some of this later in this document.
- Don't get in a hurry and attempt or expect shortcuts!.

Choose your plastic surgeon carefully! There a lot out there and of all different skills. Price is not necessarily an indicator of skill, neither is a fancy looking website. Lean toward board certified surgeons with several years of experience and having a clinic at the same location for several years. I know people who have traveled out of country for successful surgeries. Personally, I prefer to go local in the event that a revision is needed or a problem develops, I can have it attended to quickly and closely. Avoid surgeons who perform breast augmentations at their clinic.

From this point there is only looking forward as going back is extremely difficult. As I said, enter into this with the idea that it is forever, paperwork can be changed back but testes and a penis are very difficult to reconstruct once removed. Right now decide on what type of surgery you want. Each has it's own merits and issues. Think It over completely and discuss it with your support group.

For MTF:

- Full depth vaginoplasty
 - No more penis or testes, Great external appearance, hello neo vagina and what comes with it (care and pleasure). With the right surgeon it matches a cis woman in appearance and most sexual function.
 - Extensive maintenance is required in the beginning, and perhaps the future.
 - What I would have done if I was young.
 - Long term care is required.
 - Neo-vaginal sex
 - You may wear a pad a lot
 - Significant loss of testosterone
 - Sex will be different, but good!
 - You may orgasm
- Partial (shallow depth) vaginoplasty
 - No more penis or testes, No neo vagina either. External appearance is good. Care is easier. With the right surgeon externally it matches a cis woman in appearance.
 - Very shallow vagina and penile penetration is very limited.
 - Easier long term care when older.
 - No neo-vaginal sex, but sex is good
 - Significant loss of testosterone
 - You may orgasm
- Removal of the testes (**orchidectomy**)
 - Easier to tuck and removes the need for T-blockers. (Yah, easier binding) Removes male centric hormones but not past effects
 - Penis reduces in size and after a bit function.
 - Sexual function may be lost altogether
 - Significant loss of testosterone
 - Many I have spoken with report a loss or orgasm
- Breast Augmentation
 - See that section, choose well!
- Vocal cords
 - Risky and has limitations but may be an option you if voice therapy doesn't help.
 - Moderate cost depending on the surgeon.
 - Definitely try voice therapy first!
- Tracheal shave
 - Fairly common and reduces your Adams apple. Consider if it is really needed as there are occasional complications. Has not been an issue for me and it may not be for you.
- Facial feminization
 - Sculpt the brows, chin and cheeks, nose perhaps. This procedure removes bone from your skull and jaw and is very invasive and expensive. Have it done as young as possible after maturity to get the greatest benefits. You will look like hell for a bit but the results can be stunning.
 - I'll throw a face lift into this area. Wonderful thing but expensive. May experience some loss of sensation in face.
- Laser hair removal or Electrolysis.

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- Laser only works on dark hair. If you have light colored hair by birth or age consider electrolysis. Easy to do and among the least expensive procedure. Get it done early.
- Great benefits.
- Not only your face but anywhere you have hair and want to get rid of it.
- Liposuction
 - Not uncommon when older to sculpt the abs and improve your hip to waist ratio.
- Other: This may include silicone butt implants, silicone injections and hair transplants

Discuss your desire, pro's and cons with your Dr, Surgeon and therapist. Surgery is better the younger you are (after the age of consent of course), I wish I would have had mine earlier. Not only will you heal better but you get to enjoy a new life for a longer time. Hormones work better at a younger age too. You can see how important it is to follow the mental health guidelines for surgery. On the flip side of this is that mentally you may not be as well prepared as you will be when you are older. When younger or after retirement you may not have the financial ability to pay for surgery, and as mentioned it is very expensive. Current prices average around \$30,000, not including travel, lodging and aftercare. Enter into your financial agreement carefully and read the contract closely, look for extra cost riders etc. Your final price quote should be 100% inclusive!

Something that I never see discussed is what your life will be like when you are elderly. There is practically no information on how to care for elderly transwomen or transmen. How well does a neo-vagina handle age? Will vaginal maintenance be required? Is dilation forever? Will your neo-penis have sufficient blood flow at old age? Are there issues with infections? What about my implants? Will they need to be removed as they age? While these are considerations to think about, we really don't know all the answers yet. I will try to flesh this out in a later section regarding living your life after transition.

At the opposite side of this is the effects of surgery when you are younger. If any sex organs are removed or negated through drugs or hormones then having your own children will not be possible. If that is a big part of who you want to be then consider putting a family together first. If adoption is acceptable then bless you and go for it when you can. The pros of surgery at a young age are numerous and most pitfalls relate being happy in a new lifelong gender and living as a cis woman but being trans. Mentally, if you are prepared this is a good approach. If I was in the same mental state when younger I would have loved to do this. On a negative side is the likelihood that you have less cash to pay for your transition and if you develop regret later it will have a bigger effect on your life. You may not have established a family yet or long term job. These are fewer items to deal with after surgery.

Surgery and transition when you are older has it's own issues too. Your body may heal slower, physically you may not be as healthy. On the plus side is that you are more likely to be stable mentally, understand what you are getting into, able to pay for it better. You may have a firmly established support group to help out. A few negatives are dealing with work and family transition. You may be better able to support the surgery and transition financially.

For FTM

- Breast removal
 - Usually the first surgery performed
- Penile construction

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- Complicated, complex and risky. Necessary for some, not for others. Jamidoger has a discussion on it.
- Hysterectomy
 - Removes female hormones but not past effects. No more periods, emotional swings, quick menopause. Optional.
- Just because there fewer options doesn't mean that they are any less important or less dangerous or serious.

For non genital surgery – ie, facial, breast reduction or augmentation, voice and Adams apple.

Lets' start with a few pro's and Cons:

<<INSERT TABLE HERE UPDATE>>

SURGERY	PROS	CONS	COMMENTS
Full depth vaginoplasty	Ultimate transformation, vaginal sex. Looks nice.	Takes time to develop, requires attention on a regular basis.	Regular stent use may be required.
Partial (shallow depth) vaginoplasty	Easier to care for. Looks nice. Quicker recovery.	No vaginal sex.	Reduced hospital stay and no regular stent use required.
Removal of the testes (orchidectomy)	Quicker surgery. Removes need for T-Blocker.	Only halfway there	If it is enough to treat dysphoria then go for it
Breast Augmentation	A more natural appearance, timing is as needed.	Welcome to woman problems	Improved looks and sexual appeal
Vocal cords	More feminine voice	Has chance of failure	Explore alternates first
Adams apple reduction	More feminine appearance.	May leave a scar.	Slight chance of issues

Choosing your surgeon

Many factors come into play when choosing your surgeon. You may have decided on a favorite already, perhaps the choice is financial or due to your location. In the end it's your decision. Do consider the following:

- Their initial specialty: Urology, cosmetic or internal? What is important to you? Have they successfully blended their initial specialty with their new work? Very few surgeons start out in the field of transgender surgery although a few are starting out there now..
- Number of surgeries and the frequency. They need practice and recent work to stay competent. Generally speaking new surgeons have been understudies to more experienced surgeons for several years before performing surgery on their own. Check their surgical history.
- Do they have a lot of positive reviews? Your friends recommend them through personal knowledge?

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- They have a clinic and not just an office.
- They, and their staff are helpful and can answer all your questions directly, never with a delayed remark or deflecting the question. Run away if this happens!
- Where the surgery is performed – The hospital or surgery center must be top-notch. Bad reviews are disqualifiers.
- Are they close enough that you can quickly return if revisions or additional aftercare is needed?

My choice was the Meltzer Clinic in Scottsdale AZ, . There were several reasons, Great reviews, close to Vegas, very upfront with what would happen and the cost. History of successful surgeries.

Many universities are often one stop shopping, having all the physicians and mental health professionals in one locations. In addition, you will often have a transition coordinator who will work with the different areas to oversee a smooth transition, surgery and recovery. If you traditionally have a more hands off approach to your health care this is a plus.

My experience

My surgery was performed by Dr Ellie Ley of the Meltzer Clinic in Scottsdale AZ. (she has since moved on to San Francisco) She was an experienced plastic surgeon before becoming interested in SRS. In addition to her expertise and experience Dr Ley is also a transwoman. One of the things that impressed me regarding her work was the lack of scars that her work left. In addition she was an understudy to Dr Toby Meltzer, a surgeon with outstanding reputation and credentials. The surgery center used was Honor Health , at a location not far from the clinic. The center received the highest ratings.

Arranging the consultation was easy to do and the staff was respectful and professional. Everyone I dealt with treated me with the utmost respect and were very helpful. The consultation went well and I knew what was expected from me and what they would be doing. It was not rushed and all my questions were answered. Let me present it this way, There was absolutely nothing out of place, disorganized or off. The clinic was spotless and very well managed from both a physical and emotional aspect. I came away knowing that I was dealing with a very professional organization. At surgery date was agreed on and paperwork signed.

Soon after there was the matter of finances and that went relatively well with it all done via wire transfer. I obtained two letters of approval from qualified therapist and a letter of approval from my Dr to authorize the surgery. This was no trivial matter as I have kidney issues that could have disqualified me from surgery if they were bad enough. The authorization said to be cautious but that I should do well with surgery. This included a list of drugs to avoid etc. Then pre-op instructions arrived that specified what meds to stop and what to do in the weeks before surgery. OMG, it is happening!

The distance between Las Vegas and Scottsdale presented no problems as most interactions up until pre-op could be done via email and phone. I arranged to stay at an AirBNB with an excellent rate and in a very clean and comfortable first floor apartment halfway between the Clinic and Surgery Center. No hotel staff to deal with and no intrusion from the cleanup staff. The host was very nice, left me a nice bottle of wine for me to celebrate with. To assist me with recovery my ex-wife came along. Although the Clinic will arrange transportation for you between the Clinic, Surgery center and where you stay having someone to help you after surgery is a very smart thing to do. Someone not afraid to get you sanitary pads as an example. Choose your post-op care person carefully.

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We arrived the day before my post op consultation to get the lay of the land and enjoy Scottsdale. It was the middle of August and as is typical for the area very hot. The apartment had an excellent AC unit so we didn't suffer from the heat except for when we went shopping. The pre-op consultation went well and I was given meds, instructions and prescriptions. There was a pharmacy very close to the surgery center so we went there not only to get the prescription filled (with a discount!) but to find the surgery center. That night there were pre-op procedures to do, extra scrubbing with the proper soap, internal cleansing, etc. packing my bag with the few things I needed. I set out what I wanted to wear as I left the hospital, comfortable loose clothing, skirt blouse, no bra, panties and sandals. There was no need for money, and if there was my ex could take care of it.

The next morning we arrived at the Surgery Center and checked in. The staff did their pre-op processing, IV inserted etc. Everything was done smoothly and I said goodbye to my Ex as they rolled me to the elevator. Those are my last male memories. The anesthesiologist introduced himself, verified who I was and bid me goodnight. Five hours later my surgery was complete and so was my transformation.

It's not to say that this was the end of my dysphoria, or my transition. Not at all. But it was a giant step to being as complete as I can be. Soon after surgery I slowly awoke, being under for that long makes for an extended recovery. Soon enough I was awake enough to say hello to the recovery staff coherently. They assured me that everything went well and I was wheeled to my room. My Ex was there to say hello and glad to see me. I was glad to see her too. The nurses allowed me a peek to the surgery area but there was not much to see but bandages, tubes and ice packs. No matter, I cried anyway. It was done!

At that moment the surgery became a springboard to the rest of my life as a transwoman. I have not looked back since. Do I miss being a male? No, not at all. I love being female. I love my female body, now my body and mind match each other. The surgery catalyzed the remainder of my life as I wanted it. At the same time I knew that I had a lot yet to do and learn. Looking physically like a woman was not enough. For me being a transwoman is about being as much like a cis-woman in every way possible as I can be. Such is the manner that my dysphoria manifest itself.

So, back to the surgery. Staff was very professional and attended to my needs, changing dressing, filling me in on what to expect while at the Surgery center, what I could look forward to after. They brought ice water as needed, snacks occasionally and conversation as well. I was lucky – or was it unlucky enough to have a room to myself. The Dr visited twice a day during recovery and she made sure that I was comfortable and doing well. My ex visited often and also interfaced with hospital staff when needed. I had no complications to delay my recovery, I am sure that was in part to her presence. Pain med was offered but I opted just for a couple of Tylenol instead. I hear that this can be unusual but for me the pain was not at all bad.

Honestly, I had very little immediate pain from the surgery. I attribute that to having an excellent surgeon.

There was a routine set, check the catheter, Flush the drain tubes, change the dressing (that could be changed) feed me, watch TV and call my friends on my phone. I recover best from these things by sleeping so I did a lot of that. The whole time I was on my back with my legs spread apart. That was the most uncomfortable part. It was several days before they allowed me up and out of bed and when I was

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it felt very nice to be able to walk. Walking meant that I shuffled around with an IV and urine bag still attached to me. But it was good and required to maintain proper circulation in my legs and groin area.

Now, I could tell that the entire surgery region was swollen, and considering the amount of parts re-arranged in the area, not at all surprising. I knew that would be temporary, and I was given medication to help with the inflammation and swelling. The best thing for me was ice packs. Yes. Flannel bags with a plastic ice filled zip-lock bag inside. I am pretty sure that I became addicted to them. I still keep a couple at home in the event that I sprain an ankle etc. These bags cooled the surgery area for the duration of my stay in the Center and several weeks after. In my eyes, better than pain meds. I had been given some OxyContin but never found the pain to be so bad that I needed them. I attribute that to the expertise of my surgeon. I cannot thank and praise her enough. Knowing that she had gone through the same procedure helped me through mine.

Soon I was granted permission to leave with the promise to visit the clinic for follow up visits. The catheter was left in but I was given a plug to insert in it and instructions on how to retrain my bladder to accommodate being filled with urine again. I was peeing into a toilet again, just through a tube. I applied salve into my new parts twice a day to keep infection away. Many new areas were still swollen and I could sit for only short periods of time, the rest I spent on the couch stretched out with an ice pack between my legs. Thank god the apartment had an ice maker in the refrigerator. Occasionally I would put on a swim suite and lay out by the pool. There were specific instructions to keep my new parts out of direct sunlight to prevent scarring (as if I could do that in public). I was instructed to be sure to walk every couple of hours or so to maintain circulation. Walking was not difficult to do but I would tire easier than I liked. We visited several stores etc. and even went out to eat. Speaking of eating I was given stool softeners us use and I will tell you right now that you should use them. My first BM was almost a crying event. A bit painful but it soon passed. Muscles, tendons, skin, internal organs it all complained as strain from new locations took place. But only once. All was good thereafter.

Afraid or ashamed to let others pay attention to your old and new surgical areas? Better get over that! There will be a lot of touching, poking, prodding etc. in the days to come. Expect more from you primary physical or gynecologist too.

I haven't mentioned it much yet but sitting with my new parts was not fun in the beginning. I was used to my male parts sitting on top of my lap and now, after surgery female parts are under my lap. Yes, women sit on their junk and when that junk is swollen it becomes uncomfortable to remain seated. I had a donut pillow to use but it was still uncomfortable. To sit comfortably in the car required some interesting adjustments to the seat position. Thankfully the car seat had a lot of adjustments available and the ride from the hospital was not long. For me that was the worst part of the surgery. It took several months for extended sitting to become possible. The softest cushions often were the worst offenders. I found out what seat shapes and cushions made sitting possible and which to avoid. Consider that in the time it will take if you need to return to work.

Finally the day arrived, the day of my real graduation into womanhood. The ability to pee without the catheter. I had to do that before they would let me return home. We went to the Clinic where the nurse removed the foley. She gave me a cup of tea and showed me where the bathroom was. "When you can empty your bladder let me know". I didn't even feel like peeing then so we waited, read every book and magazine in the waiting room until finally I said, "It's time." Although it wasn't the easiest thing I have

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done for such a natural thing, I let fly and was able to naturally urinate. I let the nurse know and she said, "congratulations to the world or womanhood". I sit to pee ever since.

Honestly, it took a while to become adjusted to my new anatomy. Clothes fit me better, they fit differently and properly now. All is good. I can wear tights and look natural. Pants that fit tight in the crotch actually feel good in that area. Oh, there is the occasional panty adjustment but that is due to putting them on in a hurry. There is an occasional issue, my crotch sweats in hot weather for example. I experience many of the same problems cis-women do. They give you a general idea what to experience after surgery but let me say right now the first year is a definite learning experience on dealing with your new anatomy in a comfortable manner. I'll go over that in a bit but the best advice I can give is to find a cis woman who is comfortable with being your 'pussy mentor'. I was very lucky and a couple of my female friends gave me excellent advice. Even still, be prepared to discover a lot about it for yourself.

Discuss WPATH 7 [SOC V7 English.pdf \(wpath.org\)](https://www.wpath.org/2012/05/21/soc-v7-english/)

<https://www.verywellhealth.com/vaginoplasty-purpose-5070464>

Why do you want or not want SRS?

SRS How far should I go? Full SRS, partial?

Transwomen : After the Vaginoplasty

- Check this web link: <https://www.verywellhealth.com/vaginoplasty-recovery-5069410>
- The best advice I can give you is to find a cis woman and ask her how she takes care of her girly bits. Alternately check out feminine hygiene on the internet.
- Self cleaning oven < Be sure to credit Ross!>
 - Your neo-vagina chemistry is different and will take some time to get the care figured out
 - Douches
 - It's not care free!
- Learn how to wipe properly
 - Top to bottom in front and front to back on the bottom. No double wipes. Consider approved disinfectant wipes if you need to.
- Keep everything so clean now
 - It's easier for transwomen to get an UTI than for a cis woman.
 - Consider what you sit on.
- UTI
 - A lot easier to get one now. They are no fun.
- Yeast and other infections.
 - In your vagina for example.
 - A neo-vagina maintains a different pH than a cis-vagina. This may lead to different bacteria living there.
- Panties, lots here.

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- They must be breathable and comfortable
- Many have a place for a sanitary pad
- How to use a pantyliner and sanitary pads.
- Skirts VS tights
 - Not only for looks but comfort
 - Skirts are cooler and you may find your girly parts breath a lot better. I love them in summer and wear longer ones in winter.
 - Learn how to sit when wearing a short skirt.
 - Learn how to properly enter and exit your car/truck when wearing a skirt.
 - Tights, pants are warmer, nice but you will be more prone to infections and UTI's.
- Where your junk is at
 - Consider this. Guys sit with their junk on top of their lap, ladies, we sit on top of our junk.
 - After surgery sitting on top of your swollen junk is uncomfortable and it may take several months for all the swelling to go away.
 - Always consider what you are sitting on when wearing a short skirt.
- <https://www.verywellhealth.com/vaginoplasty-overview-5074520>
- Don't lie to anyone just to get surgery!!!!
- Your therapist can still help after surgery
- Surgery Procedure
- Get ready: <https://www.verywellhealth.com/vaginoplasty-how-to-prepare-5069745>
- Facial Feminization surgery

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When you fall down in your transition

It happens to all of us. We get tired, we find that we seem to lose interest, events come up that seem designed to block progress, we feel that our wheels are spinning. Our transition has slowed down or seems to have stopped altogether. Shit.

Sometimes we find a brown M&M when we were expecting yellow. It doesn't mean that M&M's are not good anymore, we still like them, but a brown one is not what we expected. I had to change health insurance and my therapist didn't take my new insurance. I found out as I was about to start a session. I cried as I left her office. I was devastated. I had build up a trust, but it wasn't her fault. It was just something out of her or my control. It took some time and gave me a chance to reflect about who I was. Soon I found a new therapist soon and continued. It was for the better actually, my first therapist was rather clinical and the second spiritual. As it turned out that is what I needed to move forward better. Not everything we do is without issues and one character strength that many trans people develop is the ability to deal with adversity and work through and around it.

It's OK to take a break or forced to take a break as long as you don't stop. If you took my advice and planned your steps out then you may find that there is something else you can work on or perhaps reschedule what you were doing. Eat the brown M&M, or even a green one, it will still taste good.

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But what if I have changed my mind about transitioning? That's your personal decision. Retrace your steps if you can but ask yourself, "Will I ever be coming back this way again?" If the answer is yes to that statement then I personally would just pause my transition. Discuss it with your therapist for sure.

What caused this? Do you know why? Is it a showstopper or just a resting point? It's not all that unusual for something to cause you to reexamine what you are doing. Remember that this a journey, you started and are resting along the way. If the arrival point is in sight it may still be reached.

Finally, remember that your peer group can assist you here, either in pausing or to help you pick up again. Ultimately you are the one who decides if you will continue to go forwards.

DEALING WITH LIFE AFTER TRANSITIONING

BEING PASSABLE

As I mentioned, for some people being passable is the gold-standard, Holy Grail of being transgender. Being invisible trans has its rewards and disadvantages too. Unfortunately, not everyone can or will be passable enough to blend in everyday life but you will certainly find that in almost all circumstances it will be good enough. It's not a requirement to be passable but it helps. Do what you can and even that effort will generally be rewarded. I think that you will be surprised by how passable you are and the odds are that you are far more passable than you think. When I first went out into the wild public I thought that every eye was watching me and saying, "There goes a trans-girl!". Yes I was a bit paranoid, I thought for good reason. I was wrong. No one cared who I was. I was seen as just another woman. Even as crappy as I was in the beginning I was a lot more passable than I thought I was. I imagine that you are too. I have also discovered that certain people are better at figuring out you are trans. They include other trans people, ER room nurses and police. Some pick up on your looks, others on your actions. Thing is, these people are usually the ones that are best with you being trans. Don't deny being trans in situations that such people are at.

Even after realizing that, I made it my goal to be passable as possible. I was woman and wanted to be recognized and treated as such. Dysphoria kicks in. Typical for me I made a list of what I needed to do to meet my objectives, goals and solutions:

OBJECTIVE: Pass as a cis woman in my life's journey but know when not to.

1. Know that you are not privileged.
 - a. Not at all, you are just yourself as you always were. Being transgender doesn't earn you any special; rights, privileges or anything else. If anything you may become more self conscience and aware, take better of yourself and care more about those around you.
2. Look like a woman: It takes work to look and act like a woman or man. Observe natural women and men in real life and work on following what you see.
 - a. Clothing & accessories: What are women wearing in life as they perform their everyday tasks.
 - b. Hair; If you have real hair great, find a hair dresser who can find a style that fits you. If you need a wig get advice from wig pros and enjoy natural looking styles.

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- c. The right amount of make-up, if at all. Early on you may think that you need a lot of make-up to be passable but I am sure as you continue you will find out that a minimum is best.
3. Be a legal woman
 - a. Drivers license, birth certificate, passport etc.
 - b. US and state agencies too.
 - c. Proof of transition – ie letter from SRS Dr.
 - d. Finances
4. Sound like a woman
 - a. Voice Therapy
 - b. It's not just pitch, it's how you say the words and what you say as well.
 - c. Practice, practice, practice
5. Act like a woman
 - a. Study how women act and practice, then do it.
 - b. Must be in the wild, movies are not real.
 - c. Blend yourself into that, stay yourself.
 - d. You are a part of what I call "The secret women's world". Part is what you do due to differences in anatomy, part is due to the mental differences between men and women.
 - e. Don't act trans, act like a woman.
6. Move like a woman
 - a. Watch in everyday activities, follow and do.
 - b. Consider dance or other activities to improve coordination.
 - c. Smaller steps.
 - d. Heels? LOTS of practice!
7. Think like a woman
 - a. Displace my male or trans mind, embrace and act female.
 - b. See and understand both points of view but live the female side.
 - c. There is lots of literature by women on how they see things. Check it out.
8. Therapy – So I am happy with who I am and everyone can see that I am happy!
 - a. Don't be afraid to return to therapy occasionally.
9. Cover stories
 - a. When ask about my childhood I have found out that many things I did, and my interactions still held up when I substituted girl for boy.
 - b. I just say I was married and have a son. If it needs to go farther I out myself. Usually don't need to.
 - c. Other times I just fess up. Usually no issues.
10. When to out yourself
 - a. Always for medical
 - b. When using your old identity and presenting as your new self.
 - c. If your past catches up with you while interfacing with law enforcement. It seems to me they already knew I had transitioned.
 - d. If it is imminent then out yourself and do so under your own terms.
11. Be yourself, stay yourself
12. Stay in touch with your support group

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13. Enjoy life
14. Expect issues and deal with them in a timely manner
15. Placeholder

As you can see living an everyday life as a passable woman is a full-time job. It gets easier as I go but I remind myself everyday who and what I am. There are also a few pitfalls of being passable.:

- People in the trans community do not recognize you as such.
- You find that you are hit on frequently, hmm, maybe that is not so bad as annoying...
- You are treated as a woman – and you don't want to be.
- Your old self needs to come out for a task, but now it's difficult for people to see you as who you once were.

There are also a few advantages to being passable too!

- People, especially men, will do anything for you.
- Women treat me better, well like another woman anyway.
- Makes my dysphoria happy.
- I can display my emotions freely.
- Even when people know that I am trans they seem to forget it and see as a cis woman.

When you feel that you are falling back to your old self.

Remember when I mentioned the relative that still calls me him? That was due to years of addressing me as male, she self programmed to address me as male. The same can happen with us, even after we successfully transition. We get comfortable, we find ourselves in old patterns due to friends, places and events. These things happened as we were in our previous gender for a long time and we slip back into old patterns. If you are comfortable with that, cool. If you are on a stealth or very passable track then it's time to evaluate what is happening. How do we know if we have slipped back?

- Voice – tone and conversations slip back into old patterns.
- Hesitation to engage in activities common in your new gender.
- You may dress less like your new gender

So what do we do? Well, the first thing is as it always is when a problem comes up, and that is to recognize it. Consider what needs to be reinforced and strengthened. When this happens to me I think about the early beginnings of my transgender life. I would get dressed, make-up, nails, hair, clothes, etc

Now think about what you are doing that is marginal or outside activities common to your gender. You may have interest not typical for your gender but can participate in them in the manner that your current gender would.

See if you can discover the cause for this lapse.

... Continue

LIVING MY LIFE AS A TRANSWOMAN AND ABOUT MY FUTURE

Daily Life

As I age.....

WHAT transitioning taught me <<This may be where I bring up the advantage of having been the other gender>>

I think that by living as a man, raising a family and working as the same I have not only a perspective of what life is like as the opposite gender from what I am now, and doing that has removed many of the 'What If?' questions that young transitioners have. I don't need to ask, what would it have been like? Would it have been better? Worse? What experiences, friends and lovers have I missed out on? How do I know who I am now is better than who I was?

I do because I lived it and experienced it. There is no 'what if' for me. It has made me wiser and stronger. I often draw on my experiences, emotions and relationships in my daily life as a woman. I feel sorry for those who have lost this experience. There is no 'shoulda – woulda – coulda' that I look back on and sigh about what I didn't do. Living life as each gender has been a big blessing for me and helped me manage a successful transition. I wouldn't trade it for anything.

Physical

Mental

Emotional

Separate political from reality

How I was becoming a real human being in the middle of it all

RECAP:

1. Look like a woman
 - a. Surgery, Form a plan! SRS and breasts. Really this is optional if you plan properly. But without surgery you will have far fewer options in how you dress and exposure.
 - i. Boobs: Well, if you don't want, are impatient or cant grow then then implants are the next step. Implants alone don't look real to anyone and for me that wouldn't work. My natural breast tissue covers over the obvious crease produced by implants even under muscle tissue. Not especially expensive as plastic surgery goes.
 - ii. SRS: There is a lot to consider here, it's a one way street so be absolutely sure that you not only want it but can mentally and physically support it. Definitely can be expensive and selecting the right procedure for you and the proper Dr to do and support it is important.
 - iii. Facial surgery: I didn't do it but sometimes our dysphoria seeks a more feminine facial structure. Costly and painful, be sure to get it from the best. I have seen remarkable results from it. Cost will usually be more than you anticipate.
 - iv. Other cosmetic surgery: Liposuction and fat transfer, laser & electrolysis.
 - b. Clothing & accessories
 - i.
 - c. Hair
 - d. The right amount of make-up, if at all.

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2. Be a legal woman
 - a. Drivers license, birth certificate, passport etc.
 - b. US and state agencies too.
 - c. Proof of transition – ie letter from SRS Dr.
 - d. Finances
3. Sound like a woman
 - a. Voice Therapy
 - b. It's not just pitch, it's how you say the words and what you say as well.
 - c. Practice, practice, practice
4. Act like a woman
 - a. Study how women act and practice, then do it.
 - b. Must be in the wild, movies are not real.
 - c. Blend yourself into that, stay yourself.
5. Move like a woman
 - a. Watch in everyday activities, follow and do.
 - b. Consider dance or other activities to improve coordination.
 - c. Heels? LOTS of practice!
6. Think like a woman
 - a. Displace my male mind, embrace and act female.
 - b. See and understand both points of view but live the female side.
 - c. There is lots of literature by women on how they see things. Check it out.
7. Therapy – So I am happy with who I am and everyone can see that I am happy!
 - a. Don't be afraid to return to therapy occasionally.
8. Cover stories
 - a. When ask about my childhood I have found out that many things I did, and my interactions still held up when I substituted girl for boy.
 - b. I just say I was married and have a son. If it needs to go farther I out myself. Usually don't need to.
 - c. Other times I just fess up. Usually no issues.
9. When to out yourself
 - a. Always for medical
 - b. When using your old identity and presenting as your new self.
 - c. If your past catches up with you while interfacing with law enforcement. It seems to me they already knew I had transitioned.
 - d. If it is imminent then out yourself and do so under your own terms.

WHY THIS DOCUMENT?

It started out as helping my local community. As I started writing I discovered that I could not find a comprehensive transition guide. There are websites with advice, all localized to a product or service that they are selling or promoting. Some even have an active agenda. Bits and pieces of what I needed were scattered in a lot of different places. Very little of it was written by someone who had transitioned

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and very little of it was comprehensive or followed a common thread. What I am trying to do is present an unbiased guide to assist the average trans person in deciding if they want to continue, and what to do and expect if they decide to go through with it.

Once again, Necessary Disclaimer: Read and follow at your own risk. Use this as advice at your own risk.

A Little about me:



I am a 69 year old transwoman. I began my full transition about 5 years ago. 5 years prior I realized that I was trans. A late bloomer I know but I was so happy I figured it out even after that length of time. I retired early to help my transition and there have been smooth spots and rough spots. The best thing I did was to take a piece of paper out, sharpen a pencil and doodle a simple plan. After that I threw away my male clothes and identity. I retain my core personality, my knowledge and most of my interests.

When my past comes up I often think of how it would have been if I was a girl when an event happened. Interesting enough, almost everything that happened still sounds right when I substitute “girl” for “boy”. There are few gender specific topics that I avoid if I can, but these are rare. If you are interested in my life story I am working on that under a separate cover. My friends who have read my story so far tell me that it is very moving and one of their best reads.

People tell me I am very passable and I am lucky in how I look. The rest was by design, SRS, voice, how I act, live, dress, were all part of the planning. I have been living my life as a woman full time (FTM transition) for the past 5 years. I have friends that know I am trans and friends that don’t even suspect that I am. I have chosen to live a stealth lifestyle, and I enjoy that. I have been in the kitchen with a group of women at a party and had a wonderful time chatting about the things that women chat about.
<< Closing statement needed >>

[Section Title]

CA Birth Certificate change links

<https://www.courts.ca.gov/genderchange.htm?rdeLocaleAttr=en>

<https://www.courts.ca.gov/25797.htm>

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHSI/Pages/Correcting-or-Amending-Vital-Records.aspx>

Follow this YouTube channel for a transman’s perspective on many subjects from surgery to life:

<https://www.youtube.com/c/Jammidodger94>

There are many many transwomen channels on YouTube. I can’t really recommend any particular one. However, YouTube is a great place for tips about many things such as wardrobe choice, make-up etc. For many things the channels are mostly opinion, I shy away from these.

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A few areas to flesh out --- soon

Note to self: Go through and mark and delete any parts not necessary to tell the story.

Your pre transition life – it's your PAST life Keep it but don't stay in it..You transitioned for a reason, was it just physical or just mental or both? It's best to know before you decide and implement transitioning.

Transitioned but always talking about what you did before? Who you were before? It's time for new glory days, new stories. Don't stay stuck in your old life of you will only complete a partial transition. I know a few like this, they want a female form but a male mind.

What are your expectations? Do you expect everyone to blindly accept your change? Brazen or stealth? Should I say that I am trans?

Believing in yourself. Makes you stronger, easier to deal with everything, feel better about yourself, relate the people, men and women alike, told me I was beautiful – how long it took to recognize they were being honest and what it meant after I realized what they were actually saying – that I WAS beautiful and they were being honest about what they said. The amount of self confidence and affirmation that what I was doing was right for me .

The trans community.

Your friends: I heard several stories during my transition. The responses went along these lines:

- *WHY?*
 - *My response was, "I can't explain why other than it is something that I must do. Yes it's real."*
- *I don't get it!*
 - *My response was, "I don't either. I may never know understand it. I just know it's something that I must do for myself."*
- *It's about time, I could see it in you*
 - *My response was, "Thank you." Really? Not sure I believed that one.*
- *I wish you a happy life*
 - *My response was, "Thank you."*

Physical. Surgery & Changes.

<https://www.verywellhealth.com/vaginoplasty-purpose-5070464>

Why do you want or not want SRS?

SRS How far should I go? Full SRS, partial?

<https://www.verywellhealth.com/vaginoplasty-overview-5074520>

Dreaming

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The Two gender struggle dreams

How I dream now

Transmen

<https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/treatments/21585-phalloplasty>

<https://healthcare.utah.edu/transgender-health/gender-affirmation-surgery/phalloplasty-recovery.php>