

Gender identity disorder

[Sociology](#), [Identity](#)



Gender identity disorder (GID) or transsexualism is defined by strong, persistent feelings of identification with the opposite gender and discomfort with one's own assigned sex. (" PsychologyToday") Due to a recent change to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, or DSM, " Gender Identity Disorder" will be replaced with " Gender Dysphoria". For the purpose of this paper those two terms will be interchangeable.

This paper will explore the symptoms that lead to a gender identity disorder diagnosis as well as the treatment process and obstacles a person with this disorder may face. It is a difficult process and is not something somebody would endure unless they truly believed they were meant to be the opposite sex. Symptoms of a person with gender dysphoria can vary from person to person but there is certain criterion that must be met in order to obtain that diagnosis from a licensed professional.

Some of the criteria in children includes; Repeated expressed desire to be the opposite sex or that they are the opposite sex, discomfort and/or disgust of own genitalia, cross-dressing for boys or masculine attire for girls, prolonged preference for cross-sex roles in play and games or fantasies of being the opposite sex, desire to only have friends of the opposite sex and belief they will grow up to be the opposite sex. The symptoms for an adult with gender dysphoria is somewhat different because they are of age and able to effectively communicate thoughts and desires.

Some of these symptoms include persistent discomfort with current sex, stated desire to be the opposite sex, frequent attempts to pass as the opposite sex, desire to get rid of genitalia, social isolation, depression and anxiety. The only way for a proper diagnosis is to be evaluated

<https://assignbuster.com/gender-identity-disorder/>

by a licensed clinical psychologist who specializes in gender identity issues. Once a diagnosis is reached what is treatment like? Treatment includes counseling, group and individual, hormone therapy, and if chosen, gender reassignment surgery. Individual, group, family, and couples counseling can all be necessary to help not only the GID patient cope and come to terms with the person they feel they were always meant to be. There is also a network of people that surround that person that will also be affected by this diagnosis and decision. Individual therapy is suggested for the person who is gender dysphoric and mandatory if they want to take further steps in treatment (hormone therapy, reassignment surgery). Group counseling has also been found to be of great benefit. It gives the GID patient the ability to explore the diagnosis in a safe environment with peer's similar situations.

Family counseling for family members that are involved in that person's life, and if in a relationship couples counseling could also be a useful tool. Hormone treatment is used to enable a safe gender transition, both physical and emotional. It is usually part of a multi-stage process that can also include Real Life Experience (cross dressing), hormone therapy and gender reassignment surgery. But it must be noted that some individuals opt to stop with hormone therapy and not go on to change their anatomy permanently.

Hormone therapy is when sex hormones are administered to bring out secondary sexual characteristics. For example a male who desired to be female would be administered estrogen and a female who desired to be male would be administered testosterone to enhance sexual characteristics of the opposite sex. Sex reassignment surgery, gender reassignment surgery is a procedure that changes a person's external genital organs from those of one

gender to those of the other. (Frey, 2006) A person must be deemed a transsexual with gender dysphoria before reassignment surgery is even considered.

A transsexual is a person with gender identity disorder who has overwhelming desire to change anatomic sex. (Ford-Martin, 2011) Other criteria may include recommendation by 2 mentalhealthspecialists trained in gender identity issues or sometimes a team of specialists, undergone hormone therapy successfully for at least one year, living “ real life” cross-dressing for a minimum of a year, deemed emotionally stable and medically healthy or at least existing conditions being treated and controlled. Whatever treatment is chosen is just the beginning of the journey.

There are many ramifications a person with gender dysphoria faces; psychological, social, and religious. According to local psychologist Dr. Gerald Ramsey, Ph. D. in his book “ Trans-Sexuals Candid Answers To Private Questions” he states “ Transsexuals from some religious backgrounds have grown up with the admonition that homosexuality is a mortal sin, punishable by fire and brimstone. These individuals believe they are putting at risk the future of their souls - facing not just the loss of family and friends, but the ultimate judgment of God, which may include spiritual annihilation.

To confront, explore and challenge such beliefs takes incredible personal energy and faith. ” (Ramsey, 1996) As you can see a diagnosis of gender dysphoria affects all aspects of life from potential loss of friends and family to learning to interact and live as the “ real you”. In this paper we discussed the symptoms of a person with gender identity disorder or gender dysphoria.

We also went through the different courses of treatment related to this disorder as well as the potential obstacles encountered.

The process is life changing and isn't something taken lightly.

Bibliography

1. Gender identity, disorder diagnosis dictionary. (2005, 10 24). Retrieved from [http://www. psychologytoday. com/conditions/gender-identity-disorder](http://www.psychologytoday.com/conditions/gender-identity-disorder)
2. Frey, R. (2006). J. Polsdorfer (Ed.), Gale Encyclopedia of Medicine (3rd ed.). Ford-Martin, P. (2011).
3. L. Fundukian (Ed.), Gale Encyclopedia of Medicine (4th ed. , Vol. 3). Ramsey, G. (1996). Tras-sexuals- candid answers to private questions. (p. 80). Freedom, CA: Crossing Press.