

Cross-Port Inner View

P.O. Box 12701, Cincinnati, OH 45212

The next meeting is May 21 at 8:00pm

A NEW VIEW

By Elaine

There were about 52 ladies at the meeting last month a very nice turnout. There were three new people Bobbie and S.O. Beverly, Dan, Sue, Ray, Renee and Carla we are glad you could make it. We hope you found the evening enjoyable. I was in the audience of the Jerry Springer Show along with Joyce, Belinda, Cindy, Linda the show was aired on April 28th. Joyce and I went to the Crystal Club for one of their meetings. We went up to Columbus at about 2:00 to do some shopping with Laura Walker which was a lot of fun. we did not get followed around the mall as Laura and Joyce did when Laura came to Cincinnati I think we did get stared at but I was too busy shopping to notice much. we still had fun. The meeting was very interesting as I had not been to one of their meetings before. It reminded me a lot of the weekender meetings we had

in the past. But with a much larger turnout. It was a good meeting we talked to many ladies and ate Pizza Casserole and made some new friends. I look forward to going to another of their meetings. After the meeting we took some advice from the clerk at the motel where their meeting was held We then went to the Jitterbug Lounge. I have never been told by a store owner that they could not serve us as there were eight thirsty ladies there. But we left there and went to the Ramada Inn and were able to get some drinks. There was a wedding reception going on. We were asked to dance several times by people in the bar.

On the following day we went to Lexington for the Coronation of the Empress and Emperor of Lexington. It was a gala affair with many fancy gowns and elaborate masks. We were joined there by Bob, Sandy, Ellen all from the Thing Shop with Belinda, Cristine, Stanley and Ron. I have a lot

of fun traveling as Elaine.

TALK SHOWS

I would assume that each and every one of us has viewed a talk show at one time or another. There are a multitude of them to capture our interest such as Phil Donahue, Jerry Springer, Murray Povich, Oprah and Johnny Carson just to name a few. The topics they cover run the gamut from the ridiculous to the sublime. Each in its own way can be informative when conducted in a rational and civilized manner. This becomes most apparent when the topic to be discussed is controversial in nature to begin with.

The host and the guest speaker are basically in control of the show. There for it is very important that the people appearing on these shows are knowledgeable, self confident and stay cool. This is paramount when discussing cross dressing transsexualism or

sex in general.

This point was made very clear on a recent Jerry Springer show dealing with transsexualism. This show had the potential to do some real good in educating the general public on the subject and in general what the cross dressing community is all about. Instead it turned into a shouting match.

Not all shows end up like this. In the past I have viewed a Jerry Springer show when he had Yvonne Cook and her son as guest among others. From our own group Hazel and Jean were guest on the Phil Donahue program and Murray Povich interviewed Tula. In each of these programs the people being interviewed were very composed and made a good impression on the audience. In each instance, these people answered question from the audience and thus the general public became better acquainted with the cross dressing community as a whole. This was not the case in the latest show in question, aired on April 28th. Mickey, who was the focus of the show and wanted SRS without following Dr. Benjiman's prescribed rules on proper care, lost the audience mediately through her attitude and constant referral to sex as apposed to her inner needs and feelings. In other words perceived this to be a sexual issue instead of a gender

issue.

In closing my point is this, when speaking to the public, whether it be on a one to one basis or a talk show, we must first be knowledgeable of the subject and be on guard at all times to portray a good image. Hanging in the balance is how well society as a whole will accept us in the future.

Love Joyce

ESSAY ON FEAR

Part II

On Apprehension and Anxiety

You would be a very strange person (well, stranger than you are) if you didn't feel some apprehension and anxiety on your first trips out in a female persona. Thinking back on my first excursions, the words terrified, paranoid and scared to death come to mind. When, and if, you take the next step toward normalcy in your new role by developing relationships, the anxiety could reach crisis proportions.

Actually, such apprehension in meeting people isn't uncommon, and it's certainly not limited to the transgendered. It even has a name -- Communication apprehension or Shyness. A Stanford University Study in

1979 found that four out of ten Americans experienced apprehension when meeting people on a regular basis. Ninety-three percent of us are shy in one or more types of encounters.

The good news is that the condition isn't fatal or incurable. You can become more confident in your new life, reduce your anxiety and develop new relationships painlessly without extensive counseling.

Set Goals

To begin to build confidence and reduce anxiety you need to have a set of goals. These goals should be measurable behaviors. For instance, "I want to be more confident in public places" is not a measurable goal. A better goal would be, "I will go to dinner en femme next Wednesday night." Your goals should have a specific activity you will accomplish and a deadline for accomplishing it. This way when you meet your goal, you can give yourself a mental pat on the back. In addition, when you meet a goal, give yourself a reward. It can be something simple, like breaking your diet with an ice cream bar or buying a new shade of lipstick.

Arrange your goals in a hierarchy of difficulty. For instance, a low anxiety goal

might be: "Take a walk around the block in a dress." An ultimate level goal might be "Have dinner with my parents as a woman." Start with the simple goals and then work your way up to the more difficult ones. This way you develop your confidence incrementally instead of trying to do it all at once. For instance, for most of us going to dark places like movie theaters, plays, restaurants is less threatening than going out in broad daylight. You might start with these types of places, work your way up to early evening, then late afternoon and finally well-lit areas. This then leads to the next stage of the program.

Stockpile Successes

Each time you successfully pass as a woman, recall clearly the situation including the surroundings, the circumstances, the people. You might even consider keeping a journal (if it is safe for you to do so) in which you record these experiences. This way, when you are feeling apprehensive, you can return in your mind to those times you were confident and performed well. Related to this suggestion is another one: When you find a place you are accepted as a woman, return there often. Each time the clerk at a favorite dress shop calls you by your femme name or rushes to show you the new line of skirts

or tells you how gorgeous you look in a new outfit, your confidence will grow. When I start to lose my confidence, I go to lunch at a little restaurant where everyone knows me as Terry. After an hour of being treated as a woman, I feel more feminine and am ready to take on a new adventure.

Talk to Yourself — The Right Way

Apprehension is often the failure of our self-talk. "People have amazingly complex tapes of negative self talk," said one expert in communication apprehension. "What they need to do is pull out the old tapes and put in new ones." It's alright to talk to yourself, as long as you say the right things. Give yourself positive affirmations before you go out and during your excursion. When you start to think, "I can't order, my voice will give me away," take out that tape and put in a new one that says, "Many women have low voices, if I keep it soft and cough once or twice, she won't think anything of it."

Visualize Yourself Performing Well

Before you start on a new phase of your socialization program, close your eyes and imagine the entire scene. What will you see, hear, smell, feel or taste? How will you speak, stand, sit? What will you say?

How will you say it? Visualize yourself doing everything right. Visualize yourself as being confident and being accepted in your preferred gender. This covert rehearsal will prepare you for the real thing when it occurs.

Learn to Relax

There is a well-established link between a person's physical and mental state. As soon as you begin to feel anxious mentally, your body reacts by tensing the muscles. This physical tension then accentuates your mental anxiety, which in turn produces more physical tension, and so on. You need to break the cycle by relaxing at the first onset of tension. Let your arms hang loose at your side. Begin breathing deeply and regularly. Tell your body to relax. You can practice deep relaxation techniques at home by tensing and relaxing each muscle group and imagining a tranquil scene. The ocean works for me, but other people prefer meadows or mountains. With practice, you can place your body in this state of relaxation on demand. Once you reach that point, a few deep breaths and visualization of your tranquil scene will calm your physical tension. Once the physical tension is gone, the mental tension will be easier to handle.

Learn People Skills

Let's face it the GG's have a head start on us in this department. They've been taught directly and indirectly courtesy, concern, conversation making, and friendship building. But, we can learn the same things by observation and rehearsal. Pay attention to how other women start a conversation or respond in a given situation. Extract a principle from that observation then rehearse that principle in private.

Act Now, Feel Later

If you wait until you feel confident enough go to the store or join a club in your feminine persona, then you'll never leave your home. Feelings tend to follow actions. When you go out and act in a confident manner, you will be more successful. With each success, you'll gain more confidence. (Be sure to focus on the successes and not the failures). As you gain more confidence, you'll have more successes. But it all starts with a single act. It can be a small one: going for a walk, buying a package of gum in a store in the next town, dropping by a library. The important thing is to take that first step and build from there one trembling step at a time. Eventually, the trembling will hardly be noticeable.

Post Script

As a post-script to these three essays on fear, I'll leave you with a quotation I heard on the radio today: "A ship is safe in the harbor. But, that isn't what ships are built for."

A GOOD FRIDAY FOR SPOTLIGHTING

Back in April, 1982, when I was much less of a friend to myself than now, I worked for one month as an I.D. checker at a popular motel bar on our side of town. On an otherwise slow night, an entourage arrived to lighten things up: a gaggle of dressed up people with plastered, media smiles and pancake makeup. In their center was the only person I recognized, but that was because I had seen Mr. Jerry Springer get on Channel 5 and offer up freewheeling commentary on everything from gun control to birth control. Something political was happening; I could tell by Jerry's bravura smile and the officious atmosphere suddenly apparent in the bar. There was also the unmistakable Springer voice, which seems to be a New Jersey brogue tempered with Cincinnati's special brand of nasal twang.

Ten years to the month later, Jerry Springer would be another ex-politician with an old check-writing problem but

with an important difference: he now has his own hot-topic style talk show.

In the past few months Jerry has had drag show performers and transvestites with their significant others. Now he and his producer wanted to do transsexuals. They would try for a different angle: have someone on the show who had started along the journey to womanhood and then aborted it somewhere along the way.

Friends of mine obtained five "priority" tickets for us. The taping would take place on Good Friday (an omen with all sorts of imagery of crucifixions and resurrections). I arranged for the day off and even went to bed early the night before to look well rested and chipper for the cameras. Seated as we would be in the priority seats, someone said, there would be a good chance we would be featured in the background when Jerry scrambled up the stairs to field comments and questions. And of course the camera, as I had noticed from viewing other Jerry Springer shows, likes to pick on people in the audience for cutaway close-ups.

Cindy, Elaine, and I rode downtown in Joyce's white MaryKaymobile, parked, and joined the crowd clamoring around out in front of the channel 5 building. A receptionist sent the crowd cattle style onto elevators while

we waited out in the lobby for special escort into the studio. The show's producer sat us down in two rows of seats elevated above the floor, the priority seats, or "hot seats" as we would learn later.

As the rest of the studio audience filed in, we saw Barbara and Bobbie enter along with them. Linda would join us once the taping began. Just before Jerry arrived, a perky young woman with a wispy pixie do bounced in and briefed us on the taping. "What's this show going to be about?" somebody asked. She answered that there would be transsexuals on the show and a chorus-like groan bellowed out from the audience. But this show would be different, she said, featuring not only the man who decided not to go through with SRS after proceeding all the way up to it, but there would also be an interesting character named "Mickey."

Mickey, it seems, wants to have the SRS operation, however disagrees in principle with the rule that the candidate must dress as a female for a year. He wore an olive drab hawaiian shirt, brown slacks and tan hush puppies and stated that a considerable number of women never wear dresses or fancy makeup and are women none-the-less. He would like to be just like one of them (it must be mentioned that Mickey did have his longish hair swept

up and swirled into a feminine style).

So far, so good. And uneventful. Then Jerry asked Mickey "So, why do you want to have the operation?" As if on cue, Mickey responded "So I can have sex with a man." Another groan from the groundlings. And I hung my head, thinking what a long hour this was going to be. Jerry asked a few more questions, then opened it up to the onslaught, I mean audience.

A voice boomed from somewhere near the back of the large room:

"You are not a woman! You are a man! There is no operation you can have that can make you a woman!" The voice reminded me of one half of a roller-derby shouting match and a small breeze kicked up from the motion of all the heads turning to look at the shouter. One of the panel members later described her as "past petite" yet the ladies I work with were much less polite in their assessments. Most discouraging of all was the resounding "Hear! Hear!" that rose from the audience at her diatribe.

John from Texas entered the stage, a casually dressed blond man in his mid-twenties. He would be the man who decided not to go through with a sex change after proceeding through nearly all the steps to

get there (including living full time as a woman for five years). Maybe this is just me, but I expected someone older and more pious than hip young John. The crowd was kinder to him, including one woman who stood up and said "it was a damn good thing he caught himself from doing such a drastic thing when it was so clear he had so much to offer as a man."

Merissa Sherrill Lynn entered the panel after John's brief stint and gave an eloquent and to-the-point speech about the goings on in her heart. Again, our friend from the rear corner made herself heard about what a travesty she thought it was that men would try to be women. This time she seemed to ignite a fire of boldness in some of the other audience members. One lady with big blond hair spoke about a man she knew of who married what he thought was a sweet, pretty young lady, only to find out on their wedding night that "he" had not quite completed his transition.

Of course, someone got up and shed light on the famous bathroom issue, saying "I better not see you (Mickey) in the ladies restroom after this show!"

Dick Wolfsey lurked in the audience and when the jibber jabber about the bathroom issue raged on, he stood up and addressed all the outrage apparent in the room. "So you

see one of them in the bathroom. What's the big deal? Do you think they're going to drop their drawers and expose themselves to you?" He also took on the lady at the opposite corner of the room from him. So armed and prepared was he that he spoke into his own microphone. "Why are you so angry?" he asked, to our friend in the corner.

"I'M NOT ANGRY!" she shot back. Dick Wolfsey continued to spar verbally with her and the other outraged audience members. His closing point: "Mickey is not hurting anyone. It's clear that this issue is felt from his heart and he should be allowed to live the type of life he wants to lead." Discouragingly little audience support on this point. By this time I sat quietly, intimidated and received a shock when a woman sitting in one of the front sections turned around to us in the hot seats and said "There are some men dressed as women here! Why don't they say anything? Get one of them to talk!"

Jerry started to walk toward us again but said "Wait a minute, you might be asking me to put someone on the spot who's real!" Bless his heart. An awkward moment followed where the woman tried to point us all out and some of us cringed and shrunk down into

our seats. Joyce came to the rescue. She stood and Jerry held his microphone on her. "I don't have any problem with who and what I am," she said. "Well what are you?" Jerry wanted to know. Joyce sweetly responded "I'm a transvestite."

From there the tone of the show mellowed, as a genetic woman appeared on the panel to speak about why she supports Mickey in what he wants to do. Immediately after her, Dr. John Felder appeared, to give the ubiquitous scientific/professional viewpoint that always seems to find its way into these shows. He wore somber gray colors, horn-rimmed glasses, and the old-time spiky hair that fit everyone's image of psychiatrist. When he spoke we all learned he had the Germanic accent to accompany the look. In commenting about the overall hostile air of the taping, he spoke a paragraph about fear. People were vocal in their disapproval out of a fear of the unknown.

After the taping we all joined John for lunch and learned all about his life on the south Texas drag scene. My mood for the next few days fluttered around between "mildly discouraged," and "full of self-doubt," as I foolishly allowed all the unenlightened jibber-jabber affect my own feelings about my worth as a person. Luckily I know myself

much better today. 10 years ago all the negative sentiment could have wrongfully dissuaded me from realizing my deepest desires.

By the time the show actually aired, I forgot all the dismal feelings I experienced through the taping and the days afterward.

The next day at work I became an Andy Warhol, famous-for-15-minutes type celebrity. "They showed you a lot!" everyone said and all my co-workers had an opinion of the shenanigans in the audience. Several people said "You should have gotten up and talked about how much everyone likes and respects you here." Many expressed sympathy that, for the taping, we seem to have drawn an audience of fearful people not knowledgeable about the feelings and desires of the transsexual. Everyone who saw the show said it greatly helped them to hear so many sides of the issue. As if, at one point they may have been tempted to react in a way similar to our friend from the corner and that to see it happen and have it dealt with rationally helped them in their "education."

LINDA'S CORNER

A few years ago, when I

went out in public, it was usually because I just wanted to have a good time. Don't get me wrong, I still enjoy myself whenever I'm out and about, but it seems now I am usually involved with some outreach program at the same time.

Last month I spoke at two local universities, did the Jerry Springer number, and spent eight days in Houston working with IFGE. Some of the most important outreach work in years is coming out of IFGE this summer. If you didn't know, I am Programs Chairman for IFGE. This means all of these programs are under my hand, so I report back to the gender community on their success.

IFGE has always understood the importance of working with the "helping professionals". In the past we have invited them to every event, or conference we have put on. We've had special programs for them at the conventions, and encouraged their participation. Unfortunately, we only attract a small handful each time.

This year the approach has changed to, "well if they don't come to us, then we'll go to them." (I wish I had the time and money to attend some of these events, but there will be plenty of time in future years.)

The gals are just returning from Washington DC. On May 2-7, the American Psychiatric Association (APA) held its

national conference. We had purchased a half page ad in the program book explaining ourselves, and inviting everyone down to our table in the exhibit area. We handed out thousands of packets which contained information on IFGE and a complimentary copy of Tapestry. Since there were over 10,000 in attendance, I'm sure we made contact with more professionals in just a few short days, that otherwise would have taken years. We were very well received. Many said this would be of real help to them in the future. Even the head man made a visit to our table to personally invite us back next year.

IFGE will make it's presents known at the American Association of Sex Educators, Councilors, and Therapists, Conference (AASECT) to be held in Orlando, FL, from June 3-7. This time a full page ad will find its way in the program. We again plan to staff a table to provide information about IFGE, and give introductory packets containing Tapestry to anyone who visits us.

This time we are on the program. We will be providing a two hour seminar led by Dr. Richard Doctor, along with a panel from IFGE. This conference is expected to draw approximately 350 individuals.

Also, we have been invited to give a seminar at the regional Quad-S conference held in Chicago. This group is

more involved with the scientific study of sex, and gets involved with some really strange stuff. This is also held in June.

Since we're on the topic of IFGE, I just want to remind you that May is IFGE month. We will be taking a collection up to give to IFGE at the "BE ALL" just like we have done in the past years. If you can't make the meeting, feel free to send us your contribution to our PO Box. We'll make sure it is added to the total. This is the only time of the year we reach out to help those in need on a national level, so please help us help others.

If you like crossdressing magazines, but can't seem to find some good ones, I have good news for you. Bob from The Thing Shop asked me if I could come up with other magazines along with the Tapestry he already sells for us. No problem I said. There are plenty of good magazines out there that are not vulgar or sexually explicit, and can be sold without getting in trouble from the law.

I spoke to my good friend Joann Roberts at Creative Design Services, and she sent me down three different magazines to try out. Her most

popular and well known is Lady Like. Many of you probably have seen it. Unfortunately the only place to buy it within a 100 miles, has been a dirty book store in Dayton. It has many stories and pictures of crossdressers from all over the world. It's not at all vulgar, and is very entertaining reading for all.

She also sent Transvestites 'EN FEMME' Photo annual. As you may suspect, this magazine is packed with photos. Some may be people you have met or corresponded with in the past. Anyone can send their picture in, and of course all respectable TV's like to see their pictures in print. Some of these girls are really gorgeous.

Her newest magazine is International Tran Script. This is much more editorial in nature with usually 7-10 special articles, letters to the editor, 8-10 regular features, editorials, resources, and personals. Very informative reading by keeping you up on what's happening in the crossdressing scene.

All three magazines are \$9 each. Unlike some you may have seen in the past, what's in one, is not repeated in another. They are all original work written by crossdressers for crossdressers, not by some slime-ball who just wants to rip you off.

Of course I will be attending the "Be ALL" in Detroit. Hope to see many of you there. Crossport usually gets 6-10 people to attend, and if you ask anyone of them, they all will tell you, it's the time of your life.

Comic Book Hero Reveals He's Gay
reprinted from Cincinnati Enquirer

New York - Superman came out of phone booths. Marvel Comics' Northstar comes out of the closet. Northstar's revelation is depicted in the latest Issue of Marvel's Alpha Flight series, which hit stores this week. The plot is a little complicated. Northstar adopts an orphaned baby who tests HIV positive. There's an outpouring of sympathy for her, when suddenly someone bursts into the baby's hospital room and threatens to kill her. "What could that innocent child have done to you?"

"Northstar demands as he flings the man away from the baby. "My son Michael was a victim of AIDS as well," the stranger says as they tussle. "But he was gay, so people didn't afford him the luxury of being innocent. There was no press conferences, no fund raisers, no nightly news updates. He was just one of thousands who died of AIDS

last year."Northstar responds: " Do not presume to lecture me on the hardships homosexuals must bear. No one knows better than I. For while I am not inclined to discuss my sexuality with people for whom it is none of their business--I am gay!"

"Northstar isn't the first mainstream comic book superhero to be identified as gay. Last spring, the Pied Piper, a character in DC Comic's Flash series, announced he was homosexual.

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Cross-Port is a not-for-profit support group which meets solely for the support of cross-dressers, trans-sexuals and their family and friends.