



THE SWEETHEART CONNECTION



THE OFFICIAL TRI-ESS NEWSLETTER FOR WIVES AND PARTNERS WINTER 1994

The Sweetheart Connection is published four times yearly. Subscription costs are: \$12 yearly for four issues, or a wife/partner may join Tri-Ess separately from her partner for a cost of \$10. She will receive membership and the Sweetheart Connection. If she chooses to receive The Femme Mirror, her annual cost will be \$25. Letters, comments and articles are encouraged and may be sent to the editor: Linda Peacock, Director, Tri-Ess Wives Partners Concerns, PO Box 24031, Little Rock, AR. 72221. For further information, call 501 [REDACTED] after 5 PM CST on weekdays or anytime on weekends.

NATURE'S LEAD

Gwendolyn Spencer, Tapestry

As winter sprites dance across the
landscape,
And you stand in nature's nape,
Glance into the barren land
Know the warmth of where you stand.

Stand for right and do no wrong,
For in righteousness, you will be strong.
Know that just as no season comes before
its time, words can have meaning outside
the rhyme.



**"Share your dreams, your ideas,
your values, your hopes, and
your fears.....
You may be surprised by the
results."**

(June Read in Relationships:
One Step On the Path.)

WHEN TO TELL

Julie Freeman, The Devil Woman

No matter how many meetings one may attend, no matter how many gender birthdays one may celebrate, no matter how many outreach activities one may participate in, it is still astounding how many individuals are **STILL** deep in the closet, unaware of support groups for the transgendered and their families and friends. You would have thought by now that everyone must be out - there have just been too many talk shows on gender and too many movies on crossdressing for anyone to be left in the dark.

But perhaps in the dark is where many prefer to remain. Certainly, we know that society is still hostile and that openness and candor in the wrong place at the wrong time, unfortunately, leads to negative results. But the closet may **NOT** be where the individual wants to be. It is where he believes he must stay in order to preserve a relationship that means much to him. It might be his family. It might be his job. It might be a close friend. What can we tell this individual? What can we tell someone who has already lost family because of his revelations? What can we tell someone who believes that he can "cure" his behavior, that crossdressing is

not worth it if it means losing a loved one.

I wish we had the answers. Some have been lucky; they decided to be honest and open, knowing they were taking a risk, and it worked out; their family members were supportive and their friends did not turn their backs. But others have not been so lucky. Divorce and broken relationships dot the gender landscape - perhaps not any more unusual than society's, but does that matter when there is hurt and pain? I know from my own involvement with the gender community that crossdressing does not go away, that deciding to "quit" does not work, that trying to stifle what is a natural behavior will cause more heartache and despair in the long run than being honest and incorporating the crossdressing into one's life in a positive manner.

So my heart goes out to those who retreat to their closets because they have been hurt or fear being hurt again. All of us need to work together to find ways to help individuals deal with fear and rejection and continue to work in the areas of education of those who do the rejecting. There are no easy answers to so many of our community's questions. Let us at least keep the hotlines going; let us continue to be there for support.



"I have wept in the night for the shortness of sight, that to somebody's need made me blind; but I never have yet felt a tinge of regret for being a little too kind." (Anonymous)



A LETTER FROM A FRIEND I'VE NEVER MET

Dear Ms. Peacock,

Our never having been "formally" introduced, I must demur to the more formal address. I don't, however, stand on formalities, so let me get right to the purpose of my writing.

I am single. I have been a member of Tri-Ess for a good many years. My name is not unknown among readers of The Femme Mirror for reason of my service as a member of the editorial staff for a number of years and my current activity of being a contributing editor to the publication. My "single" status has precluded my having a direct personal interest in affairs within Tri-Ess directed toward wives and partners. Nonetheless, I have been a consistent and strong supporter of the family atmosphere and the orientation within Tri-Ess which supports the family and those in committed relationships. In fact, I've had and still possess a powerful sense of affinity for spouses and partners of crossdressers of all sorts. This makes me somewhat more supportive of the workings of SPICE than would be the case were I a typical single.

As a result of my concern for spouses and partners, I've often identified more with spouses and partners when problems have arisen than with the crossdresser involved. This has gotten me some strong criticism by some within the sisterhood who seem to think because I am a crossdresser, I should naturally "side" with

the crossdresser. My sympathies in general, lie considerably more with the spouse or partner than with the male crossdresser, I have to admit.

I just finished reading your "Good-byes" article in The Femme Mirror. I like it very much. Intuitively, you deal with the core issues found in the process of grief resolution. You deal with loss, the trigger of the process. You deal with self-image and the assault thereon which follows loss. You deal with time, the great healer, as well. In fact, you touch on all the elements of the grief resolution process which (when I suffered the indignity and loss of a wife divorced me after having been married 25 years) I named: Fears, Tears, Sad, Mad and Glad. Frances Kubla-Ross, MD, writing in her famous text, "On Death and Dying," spoke of grief resolution as a five step process in which the steps were often concurrent, intermingled in no particular order, but ultimately all had to be experienced. Basically, those five features of the process repeat in every case of loss, be the loss large or be it small. The one critical thing I've found as a Psychologist working with grief stricken people is also constant. This constant thing is, the only way out of the grief process is through it. This sounds trite, I know, but it remains the fact of the matter. Denial of grief, repression of feelings, and such common psycho defensive methods simply prolong the agony of the ordeal. With the help of a caring person, someone who will merely listen and support, plowing straight ahead as in "damn the torpedoes, full speed ahead," works to shorten the time in the process and to lessen the depth of the grief. This works, however, only when one is supported emotionally and the supporting person does not have to be a trained professional but does have to be a truly caring, LISTENING, loving person, one who is wise enough to keep advice to herself and knowing enough merely to love the person through the time of agony. This is, in essence, what I see you SPICE

leaders do for spouses and partners who have suffered what can be seen in no other light than as a loss, be it loss of a dream, loss of a fantasy, loss of innocence, loss of trust, loss of traditional values, loss of whatever. The work is, as you say, vital and needs to be shared across the sociological spectrum.

I applaud your sticking to your guns when those who detract offer criticism about your choosing to attend mainly to the spouses and partners of heterosexual crossdressers. As you know, I'm sure, Tri-Ess as a whole has been scored roundly for focusing exclusively on heterosexual crossdressers and their families. We've been called all manner of bad names and our leadership attacked personally on many occasions by those who by choice or by occasion of persistent ignorance have refused to comprehend the only way a small group with limited resources can do any good is to focus their energy, time, talent and resources on a clearly identified target population. People don't seem to understand such a focusing is not meant as a discrimination technique based on some sort of notion of being better or more important than someone else, but is rather, a recognition of the reality of the situation. No single individual and no small organization such as Tri-Ess can succeed to any degree whatsoever when trying to be all things to all people. Success comes only by marshalling available resources and applying them where your talents will allow you to do the most good.

Keep the faith. Hang in there and do the good work you are clearly called to do!
Respectfully, Dr. J. Reviere, New Mexico

(Ed. note: Dr. Reviere wrote me last June 30th, and I found the letter to be eloquent and a confirmation of what I feel I must do in this community. The letter writer speaks to all of us, evincing sympathy for us, the woman partner, and obviously no stranger to the pain so many of us live

with and are trying to overcome. Dr. Reviere also offers us confirmation of our work as a national organization, striving to help those we can best help. Thank you, Dr. Reviere.



Tri-Ess Sorority

**"Kind words produce their own beautiful image in man's soul."
(The War Cry)**

(The next two articles were written by Julianne, a transgendered man, and Gayla, his partner. They are members of Iowa Artistry, and their presence at SPICE made the event even more special. They are an extraordinary couple, and it is my joy to call them friends. Linda Peacock)

JULIANNE'S JEWELBOX

Julianne [REDACTED]

In the hot summer days following Independence Day, Gayla took me along to the second annual SPICE (Spouse/Partner International Conference for Education) in Chicago. The conference turned out to be a challenging and rewarding experience for both of us. It is also a challenge to do the event justice in a few paragraphs, but here's an attempt.

SPICE is geared primarily toward the spouses and partners of crossdressers. In the interest of providing a safe and nurturing environment for these women, the house rule was **NO CROSSDRESSING!** I certainly had my share of apprehensions at the thought of being cooped up in a room with two dozen men who all know and share my secret and **not being able to do**

anything about it!

The various session leaders throughout the three days were exceptional in their knowledge and understanding of the gender community and our particular place within it. People like Peggy Rudd, Sandra Cole, Niela Miller and others provided a marvelous collage of wisdom, understanding, and personal experience as they made their talks and shared so much with each of us. For the most part, each of the professionals donated their time and energy to make this event the success that it was.

Some of the sessions became emotionally charged as we struggled with issues such as the balance between masculine and feminine sides of a personality, sexual intimacy and boundary setting between partners in a relationship. The skill of the professionals and the outpouring of love and affection among the participants was nothing short of remarkable.

My initial anxiety turned into a sense of discovery and healing as we shared pieces of ourselves with each other. As I communicate with these newly found friends by letter or by phone, I feel that I will nurture these newly developed relationships that could last a lifetime. I also feel that our participation in SPICE will be something that we treasure and remember when we meet at future events.

The initial feeling of the conference leaders was not to let the men participate. However, the SPICE coordinator, Linda Peacock, persuaded them to let us come along. Many of the women who brought their partners felt that the experience would not have been as complete without them. I am personally grateful to Linda for allowing me to become part of this wonderful event.

In the coming months, Gayla and I will share some of our SPICE stories and lessons in upcoming meetings. For those

of you who have a spouse or partner, I recommend most strongly that you make plans to attend SPICE '95 in Memphis, Tennessee (July 1995). If you get only a small fraction of what we received, you will feel that your effort is well rewarded. Mark you calendars NOW!



SPICE THOUGHTS

Gayla

Julianne is absolutely correct in that I'll never be the same after SPICE '94. I met women who will be sisters to me forever, to whom I can turn to share in my joys and sorrows.

As a matter of fact, I've already been in touch with any number of them. We are our own sisterhood, if you will.

We were from all walks of life. Some of our partners were professionals, some were laborers, some were house-husbands. We came from different backgrounds as some of us grew up on farms, some in the city, some in professional homes. We were all shapes and sizes, all races, all different likes and dislikes, all having different hobbies, all having different beliefs and values. Some of us were raised as an only child and some of us happened to have many siblings. **SOME OF US HAD NEVER SEEN THEIR HUSBANDS DRESSED.** Some have done sewing and shopping for their crossdresser. Some of us were totally accepting, some merely tolerant. The only thing we all had in common was that we were committed to a good relationship with a crossdresser.

The facilitators and leaders who know the

gender community and issues well, helped enable us as women to look at all areas of our lives. We began at the beginning with who was our most feminine role model and mentor in our lives. What did this mentor do for us to help us define our femininity?

We learned how to use our dreams to help us understand what our subconscious is trying to tell us at any given time. We learned the importance of active listening, unconditional love, and emotional intimacy vs. sexual intimacy. Only after all this base was laid did we dare venture into the hot topic of boundary negotiation.

During the entire conference, the presenters and leaders did their very best to create a safe space for us as they did for our crossdressing significant others. You see, most of our sessions were held separately; even lunches. We got together for only a couple of joint sessions and always for dinner.

The most important thing we all learned was that we are very special women; we are unique in our femininity; there is no right or wrong in how we feel. Our lives can be full of new experiences, lots of joy, some challenges, many rewards, and lots of love. We only need to look at our relationship and who we are as part of this relationship and who our partner is as a man, a friend and a husband/partner. (He just happens to be a crossdresser.) We are beautiful people! So glad our husbands chose us and see us that way. Wive/partners, enjoy your womanhood and femininity.



Deck the Halls

ONNALEE'S OP/ED (The Beta Gamma "En Femme")

April's "Mirabella" magazine stimulated some thought and talk at home. In "The Lost Girls," the author writes of the brick wall that "boisterous baby amazons" hit sometime after turning age 11. Audacious young girls who one day "wanted to know everything, and now...just stand on one foot, and giggle and preface each remark with 'I don't know...'" I never had brothers, boy cousins or neighbors; our only son is autistic, so I have no experience of young boys growing up.

As I struggle to understand the CD scene, I find that I must examine my own history as it has shaped my thoughts and feelings. Another article in the same magazine triggered identification. The author was in Grenoble, France in 1958 (it was 1956 for me), "searching for her identity, or for a man. Not that I could tell the difference." A psychological posture common and expected of my generation, I discovered at SPICE.

Which is what I was attempting to tell in the round robin talks Walter Brockington ran at our (Beta Gamma) meeting in March. I still feel, after a lifetime of conforming to "daughter, wife and mother," standards that included the expectation of self-sacrifice to the needs of others, my struggle to understand and accept myself must take precedence over embracing his crossdressing. My issue is more SELF than gender identity. With most of that "self" heavily invested in my husband, his image changes confuse and fog mine.

I want to attempt an exploration and perhaps explanation of why wives have such a hard time dealing with crossdressing, much less accept it. I found some ideas expressed in the Feb. 28th issue of "The New Yorker" 'Reflections' article by Paul Berman, entitled, "The Other and The Almost the Same," from which I quote and paraphrase: "(Tension) comes in two varieties...that which you might feel for people who are different from you; for the 'other.' The second...is that you might feel for people who, compared with you, are neither 'other' nor '(sister.)' It is (tension, anger, hatred) for the 'almost the same.' But relations between people who are almost the same tend to be highly charged."

..."Why do tensions between people who are almost the same heat up into uncontrollable hatred? It is a matter of self-preservation."

"To the person whose resemblance to you is close, yet who isn't really your double, you might easily end up saying, 'You are almost like me. The similarity between us is so plain, that in the eyes of the world, you are my (sister). But to speak honestly, you are not my (sister.) My identity, in relation to you, consists precisely of the ways in which I am different from you. yet, the more you resemble me, the harder it is for anyone to see those crucial differences. Our resemblance threatens to obliterate everything that is special about me. So, you are my false (sister.) I have no alternative...but to work up a rage against you (for thereby) I am defending everything that is unique about me."

"Since emotional relations fall under the star of irrationality, people who are almost the same might flip-flop into loving one another, bedazzled by their wonderful point of commonality. Or they might sink into confusion about the intensity of their feelings. "when you are in a state of

passion, you don't know if you love or hate, like spouses who can neither live together nor live apart."

Mr. Berman was writing about American racial tensions, but I thought his words applicable to the tensions that can evolve between crossdressers and their wives and partners, particularly when the activity is "forced" into secrecy. I would very much like some responses or feedback on this. I invite your comments. Write me c/o Beta Gamma, PO Box 8591, Minneapolis, MN 55408.

(Ed. note: Onnalee has joined the SPICE Board of Directors - she will be a welcome and valued member and we welcome her aboard.)

CELEBRATION

THE ENVIRONMENT OF OUR MINDS AND HEARTS

(Linda Peacock, Crosstalk)

I have a friend whom I've never met who is a poet, and a good one. He writes poetry twice - once on a noncrossing level, and again, on a crossdressing level. In other words, he writes a poem, then readjusts it to how he feels when crossdressed. He recently asked me my opinion of his work, and I told him that I felt his work was far more powerful when expressed on a non-crossdressing level, that I found the message could easily be interpreted on different levels, accord to what was going on in the reader's mind. I felt that the emphasis on his crossdressing took away from the message itself - and urged him to concentrate on his poetic messages to be accessible to the minds of everyone.

Having the fit of composing thoughts on paper is admirable and enviable. In fact,

having the ability to be able to put your thoughts and dreams into words that others can grasp and enjoy and think about is a true gift, and one which should not be taken lightly.

The interesting thing about being a writer is how two people can interpret what you write so differently. It is much like a piece of music, in that each of us hears it differently, and either likes or dislikes it.

The gifts of music and writing are received so differently because the environments of our minds are so different. Have you ever thought about how truly unique you are in the wholeness of space and time? There is no one else, past, present or future who was, is or will be identical to you. You are a rare and special creature, who has intelligence, thought process, the ability to distinguish between right and wrong, to have emotions, such as joy or sorrow, jubilation or pain.

When we are born, we are like vessels ready to be filled with a magic solution which places us in society. We are innocent, unknowing of all but sound and light and hunger and pain. From birth begins the infusion of society's interpretation of right and wrong, positivism and negativism, guilt, pride, likes and dislikes. From birth, we are literally at the mercy of our outside environment and unfortunately, many such outside environments do not encourage free thinking; rather, we are "thought for."

As a woman married to a man who crossdresses, I faced exactly what each of you faces. I had been "thought for" by my parents, my teachers, other family members and my first husband. Anyone "different" was perverted, a filthy creature. I have heard my father venomously against the gays - yet, as far as I know, he has never personally met or known a gay person. Society told him they were all "bad" people, and of course, to him, society is right.

He has never allowed himself to think of these people as human beings, who live their lives, feeling the same feelings we who are heterosexual feel, loving, laughing, hurting, crying...that one has a different sexual preference in no way makes them less human or not as worthy as us.

So, in meeting and falling in love with a man who was so obviously different from other men I had dated, and certainly a far cry from my first husband, I had to put aside all that I had been infused with over the years, and begin thinking for myself. I had to begin weighing the pros and cons, and I had to begin making my own decisions. Basically, I see it as a maturing of the environment of my mind. My body was grown up, and now it was time for my mind to grow up.

I realized that the decisions I had to make about this man who had taken over my heart needed to be made quickly. Happiness is often a fleeting thing, a quick cool breeze in the heat of daily life, and often it blows quickly out, leaving us just realizing how close it had come to us...and we hadn't felt it.

This man was a sensitive, caring person, who felt deeply and emotionally, who saw in me something far better than I saw in myself, who desired my mind and heart as much as he desired my body. He wanted me enough to take the chance to share his innermost secret - that he crossdressed, knowing that he might well lose me.

And had I allowed all the preconceived notions about people who were "different" to dominate my mind, I would have left. Instead, I chose to change the environment of my mind, to be fair to him and look at him in his entirety, rather than just this one peculiar facet of his personality.

I made my decision quickly and have never looked back. His crossdressing has

been a burden at times, confining, even oppressive once in awhile, but when I look at all the good that comes from this man, the obvious mental connection we have, I find his crossdressing has no impact on our relationship at all - and I encourage him to participate in it as much as he feels he needs to. I do not look at his exterior person - I only see who lives inside.

I realize that my story is different from yours, and in many cases, your husbands and partners did not choose to tell you before you made a commitment, and therefore, did not give you the choice to stay or leave. I can't offer you the magic potion that will make this indiscretion go away. And yes, I feel that this is a type of indiscretion, for it is a betrayal of your trust. You were not given a chance to change the environment of your mind until commitment was made, and he felt "safe." I don't condone what he has done.

However, in spite of the loss of trust you must feel, it is not too late for both of you to change the environments of your minds. For you, there is a chance to put aside all you have heard or been indoctrinated with by society, and give yourself the opportunity to learn about his crossdressing and to see if you can live with this part of him. You can make the decision of how much you can tolerate or accept - and you can make the decision to stay or to leave.

It is more difficult, it is true, at this point in the relationship, especially when there are children involved, but you cannot live the rest of your life in a turmoil about his dressing; you have a right to have a peaceful environment of your mind, of your heart, of your soul. And only you can give yourself this gift.

Your husband or partner, too, can change - in that he realizes what a cruel thing he has done in not trusting you enough to take the chance to tell you before you married him, and to realize that you deserve and have a right to such chances.

Your husband needs to understand how important trust is in your relationship - for without trust, there is no relationship, but instead, simple joint existence. That is not living, it is simply "being there." And your husband needs to recognize how extraordinary and rare you really are. He needs to cherish you, encourage you, be there for you.

Perhaps with such giving on his part, it will become easier on your part to give back to him - once you have regained the trust level you need, once you feel loved and cherished, it might be so much easier for you to look on a mature and honest level at his dressing, and make rational decisions - perhaps changing the environment of your mind, thinking your own thoughts, being you...the unique and special you that you are.

CHANUKAH

IN MY OPINION

(Denise [REDACTED], Alpha Rho, Salt Lake)

I live in a very interesting town. One of the people I work with came to me one day to ask if I had heard a rumor about another teacher and one of our custodians. She had heard it from her husband who had been told by one of the cooks. I told her that I had not heard this rumor and, furthermore, I couldn't believe that anyone could start something that could not only hurt both of these people, but also destroy their marriage, their reputations and their families.

As I contemplated the words I had said to her, I remember a time in my own life when I had once done the same thing. I was running away from my problems, and

instead of making my life better, I was destroying myself and my family, and inviting more problems to come into my life.

I have made a lot of changes since that time, and have found a certain peace in worrying about myself and my family. I still have many hills to climb and I know that with time, I will succeed! I have found that if I work on myself, everything else will take care of itself.

There are many forces working against our group. "Alone we will fail, together we will succeed." We must all work together to help the group grow. I will never forget the love and friendship I felt from this group the first time I attended a meeting over a year ago. I would encourage any wife who still struggles with the issues of crossdressing, like I do, from time to time, to come and feel the warmth and friendship that this group has to offer.

I want to close with this thought, which a good friend shared with me: "When one thing in the universe changes, no matter how small, everything **MUST** change!" I intend to leave this world a better place because I was in it!



TRUE GREATNESS

A woman is as great as the dreams she dreams...

As great as the love she bears...

As great as the values she redeems...

And the happiness she shares...

A woman is as great as the thoughts she thinks...

Your husband needs to understand how important trust is in your relationship - for without trust, there is no relationship, but instead, simple joint existence. That is not living, it is simply "being there." And your husband needs to recognize how extraordinary and rare you really are. He needs to cherish you, encourage you, be there for you.

Perhaps with such giving on his part, it will become easier on your part to give back to him - once you have regained the trust level you need, once you feel loved and cherished, it might be so much easier for you to look on a mature and honest level at his dressing, and make rational decisions - perhaps changing the environment of your mind, thinking your own thoughts, being you...the unique and special you that you are.



SO & SO - SELFISHNESS

(Shelley & Betsy - Born Free)

SHELLEY: When Betsy and I chose **SELFISHNESS** as our next column, and I sat down to begin writing, I was in a quandary. What was I going to bring to this discussion? Angela has always worked very diligently to keep a tight rein on selfish tendencies as related to crossdressing, and I feel very blessed for that.

As I considered further, I realized that I have seen evidence of selfishness at meetings and gatherings we have attended, and I heard a LOT about selfishness from some of the wives at SPICE. So, even though my observations here may not be

based largely on my personal experience, they are based on those of other wives and partners.

SELFISH - The dictionary describes it as "caring chiefly for oneself or one's own interests or comfort, especially to the point of disregarding the welfare or wishes of others." The phrases "one's own interests" and "wishes of others" stand out to me as relating to crossdressers and their spouses.

What a dilemma the wife of a crossdresser faces! Once she has accepted and decided to support her husband in this endeavor, it seems she has unleashed an unstoppable force. Especially when he first "comes out." There are clothes, jewelry, shoes, wigs, make-up, etc., to purchase - a strain on the family budget! There are meetings, gatherings and conventions that simply "must" be attended - a strain on time spent together as a family as well as the budget! He wants to spend as much time as possible en femme, including in the bedroom - a strain on their personal relationship!

WIVES, you must realize that there is often a teenage girl within your spouse, who is struggling mightily to emerge. Being a teenager, she tends to think about herself first and others second (if at all.) Sometimes, she doesn't stop to consider the consequences of her actions. There are times when it becomes necessary for you to guide her and occasionally, tell her "no" just as you must with your teenage daughter. Help her, but let her know there are limits and make clear what those limits are!

HUSBANDS, remember that your crossdressing is a very personal thing, but that it also directly affects the lives of those you love. To truly explore the femininity within you involves much more than dresses, wigs and perfume. It means discovering your nurturing, giving qualities. It means considering others

before you act. Your wife wants to be able to experience the woman within you, but she also wants to keep a roof over your heads, family times with the kids, and a personal relationship with the **MAN** she married.

Sounds like a tall order - and it is. The answer: **COMMUNICATION**.

COMMUNICATION. Work together, nurture one another and let your love for each other shine through everything you do.

BETSY: Do you care why your mate is not as excited about your new-found self or why they don't continue to get excited about your second-self after a few months or years. Is it possible pressures from society are just as hard on them as they are on you? Maybe even more. Remember when you have to figure out a lie to explain what, when and where? You had to keep it straight for her only. But what about your mate? Now she has to juggle your lie with friends, children, your family, her family, meet your schedule, hers and maybe your children. It's too much for me to imagine, but put yourself in your mate's life and recognize the havoc it plays with her life! **AND** she has to do it because she loves you. Now stop and think if you have a person bucking you at every turn, insisting on their own way all the time you're doing a juggling act. How excited would you get? The number one problem mates have with CDs is **SELFISHNESS**. You have to put aside your selfish side to realize how they feel, and cooperate together to make plans together, to make your stories work, or your life run smoothly. My dictionary says-**SELFISHNESS:** 1. Concerned with one's activities or needs and usually tending to self-assertion or self-satisfaction; caring too little for others; 2. Excessive concern for one's self and exaggerated sense of self-importance. 3. Taking care of one's self without regard for others. I'm sure your thoughts go immediately to "well what do you expect,

I've taken care of everyone else's needs **BUT MINE** until now? It's my turn." Wait a minute! It's not their fault you are the way you are; it's not their fault that society has set the rules that kept you in a closet. Nor do they have control of the fact they fell in love with you as you projected yourself. True, your second-self makes up a major portion of who you really are (the person they fell in love with) but you are the one who kept it hidden from them. They're finding out now that there is another half of you (that makes the whole they love) but you can't expect them to accept unless you are loving, caring and understanding of their feelings. Who wants to love a **SELFISH B___**? **NO ONE!** Try to put yourself in their place every time there is a conflict. **Women can and do, they are aware and sensitive to the feelings of others.**

SENSITIVE: 1. Receiving impressions readily. 2. Easily affected or influenced. 3. Easily hurt or offended. **If you truly have a feminine side, prove it!** Learn to use it by responding to the needs of those who love you. Allow them to open to you without fear of reprisal or rejection of their fears or needs. Don't hold every little thing they say over their head and throw it at them when the opportunity presents itself. Sound familiar? You've been there! Treat them the way you've prayed all these years that people would treat you - as equal individuals with wonderful difference that make you love them.

Php. 2:3-5 - "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interest, but also to the interest of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus."

If you are not a religious person, these words still hold true as an invaluable way to treat one another. And Jesus Christ was known to be kind, loving and

forgiving. It certainly would be a better world if we all acted that way. Practice this and your lives will be better because you will find people cannot continue to be harsh toward a kind, loving, selfless person.

Remember, when you deal with your mate, it is like setting in two lanes of bumper to bumper traffic, merging into one lane. If each lane takes a turn and every other car moves, the traffic moves slowly, but it moves. If one lane becomes selfish and refuses to let cars in, you have a traffic jam for miles, and people become angry. The longer they wait, the more dangerous they become. They not only could destroy their lives, but many around them. Don't go rushing around, forcing issues when your mates aren't ready. Give them time, space and lots of conversation. Listen to their problems with your dressing and try to come to agreements on limits. Don't try to force change because it's your life. It's their life, too, and the more you try to make them happy, the more they will love you and try to understand you. But, face it, life will never be exactly the way any of us want it to be, crossdressed or not.

"Know that your way of being human is as valid and significant as a man's. Women are not a subspecies in the human race; women are not an auxillary for the men's club."

(Karen Katafiasz - Celebrate Your Womanhood Therapy)



On behalf of Tri-Ess, may we express our deep appreciation to every woman reading this newsletter - for you are unique amongst women, rare, strong, beautiful. Blessings to each of you this holiday season.

S.P.I.C.E. 1995



"YOU NEED SOME SPICE IN IN YOUR LIFE, DEARIE"

The 1995 Spouse/Partner International Conference for Education will be held July 26-30, 1995, at the Wilson World Hotel in Memphis, Tennessee. Presenters for this conference include: Dr. Sandra Cole; Barbara Carnal, MSW; B. J. Seymour, MSW; Joe Roberts (Jo Ann Roberts of Renaissance); Dr. Phil Van Maris; Dr. Peggy Rudd, and many wife/partner leaders from around the country.

Cost for the event will be \$125.00 for the sessions running July 27, 28 and 29; \$105 for any two days; and \$85 for any one day.

We are arranging for some recreation time during the conference, with a riverboat ride on the Mississippi, a trip to Graceland, and possibly trips to Tunica, Miss. for visits to the casinos.

The conference is designed for any woman involved in a relationship with a crossdresser, heterosexual man. Their male partners are also invited and a full slate of programs will be provided for the men, as well as a few joint sessions with the women. However, the conference is specifically designed to help women in these relationships and it is **THEIR** conference. There will be **NO CROSSDRESSING** allowed under any circumstances, as we want to offer these women a secure, safe and unpressured period of time that they can share and learn and heal in.

Contact: Linda Peacock, Director, PO Box 24031, Little Rock, AR. 72221, or call 501-████████ CST, evenings & weekends.