

Significant Fears

When crossdressers join support groups, it is not unusual for them to inquire about support groups for their wives or partners. Usually their wives have just recently found out about the crossdressing and are under great stress as their once peaceful lives have been severely jolted.

Their fears are quite significant. Does my husband want to become a woman? Is my husband gay? What about our children? Am I going to become a lesbian? Will my husband leave me for a man? How will his job be affected? Will he lose his job? What about our neighbors? What about our relatives? What about our friends? How will they react? Who can I tell? What about our finances? The list goes on and on. They fear his taking hormones – not sure of what medical outcomes may result. They fear his going OUT in the general community, not sure of how society will react. Will he be the victim of insults at the least, violence at the most! They fear his telling others, not sure of how others will react. They fear embarrassment; they fear coming to resent their partner; they fear the end of their marriage or relationship.

Significant others begin to doubt their own femininity as they view their husband's developing feminine side especially if he appears "prettier" than they. Their self-esteem plummets and they wonder if there is something "wrong" with them because the man they chose to love and perhaps marry is not the man they thought they loved and married. They doubt their own sexuality, blaming themselves for the CHANGE in their partner. Sometimes they even fear they are the cause of the crossdressing.

So it is no wonder their crossdressing spouses or partners are looking for support. They probably had no idea the extent to which revealing this side of their personality could affect their wives. Of course, not all wives react the same. Some take the news in stride and never need support; but there are too many others who seem to fall apart at the news and it is this group of wives who need help the most.

They must and foremost be told that the crossdressing is in no way THEIR FAULT and is in no way a reflection of their femininity. They certainly must be told that they are not suddenly going to become lesbian if they decide to accept their husband's crossdressing or for that matter decide to accept their partner if he decides to go through sexual reassignment surgery.

They need to be told there are helping professionals who can help them come to a better understanding of just what crossdressing is and how it can become incorporated into their relationship in a matter acceptable to both. They need to know that it is okay for them to set boundaries; it is certainly not expected that they become supportive of every facet of their husband's crossdressing. They need to know they can progress at their own rate.

They need to know there are many others in the gender community with the same concerns and fears. They need to know they are not alone.

They need to be directed to the appropriate support groups whether it be helping professionals, other significant others, or couples' groups. And it is up to the crossdresser in the relationship to find this help.