

## **The Issue of Trust**

When I attend conferences or meetings where significant others meet, the issue of trust is usually discussed. Some wives do not really have a problem with trust. They understand why they were not told about their husband's crossdressing: the fear of being rejected, the belief it would go away, etc. Some crossdressers, not understanding the phenomenon themselves, believed the less said the better.

Other wives, however, have much more difficulty trying to understand why they were not told prior to the relationship becoming serious. Being able to trust their partners is very important to them, and they wonder if there are other issues they are unaware of.

There seems to be no easy answer as to how to help both the crossdresser and his significant other resolve the issue of trust. The crossdresser has to convince his partner that there was a reason for his being reticent, that this does not mean he is incapable of being trusted in the future. The significant other needs to try to understand why her partner was hesitant and allow him the opportunity of proving he can be trusted again.

Most crossdressers I have met are upstanding members of society. Many hold excellent jobs and provide well for their families. Such individuals certainly are trustworthy, not the opposite.

To help demonstrate their trustworthiness, crossdressers should keep the lines of communication open. Borrowing clothes or make-up without the partner's knowledge or buying clothes on the "QT" are not exactly inspiring modes of behavior. Certainly a crossdresser starting electrolysis or hormones without his partner's knowledge is going to drive a wedge between them that may be impossible to dislodge.

As difficult as it may be for the crossdresser, particular one who has just come out of the closet and is experiencing a normal "high" as he realizes he is not alone, he may need to bend over backwards in meeting his partner's needs while she learns about crossdressing and put his own needs on the back burner for awhile. Giving her books and other materials about gender issues is a positive step. Participating in activities for couples may help her learn and understand that crossdressing need not be a negative in her life.

Progress at her rate and keep the lines of communication open. This may mean reducing the crossdressing activity for awhile because that is what she wants. But if it helps her to gain confidence again in the relationship and helps her to accept crossdressing, then by all means do it! Regaining her trust is what it is all about!