

## WHY IS GENDER IDENTITY UNLIKE OTHER IDENTITIES SO HARMFUL IF IT IS NOT AFFIRMED?

A person is just a person. A trans person is not a different kind of person. It describes what the person needs. The person needs help to be affirmed in who they are. The person is part of society so society needs to recognise who he or she is.

Gender dysphoria is the dangerous and crippling agony that comes from not been affirmed socially or medically or both in your true identity.

Being affirmed spiritually, as in having your religion agree to drop transexist scriptures, saints, documents and rites is something that is curiously never talked about. A huge concern is the religious notion of demonic obsession. This is not possession but is the idea that a demon is making you mentally unhealthy and egging you on to try and change your gender.

Churches may welcome a trans or even affirm. But the fact is that the Church is bigger than any particular church group and thus it is only a matter of time before something is said or done that will tear down all the hard work done by the person to be accepted and deal with dysphoria. No cleric should be allowed near young people without clearly rejecting teachings, scriptures, religious language that does not affirm trans.

Rubbish such as "God does not make mistakes" does not help for the trans person sees that mistakes still happen. You are making it about whatever platitude you want to think is true. It is not being an ally. And it is not about you. And the Church says that humankind has shut God out so that is why creation has gone wrong despite being originally perfect. The trans sense that their body or existence is wrong is insulted by such rubbish. The transman who suffers from not being a cisman or the transwoman who suffers from not being a ciswoman is very real. If God gives you your existence then this is not a mistake. Nobody can say that going through the agony of dysphoria, the danger of being driven by it to suicide, and how it impacts those close to you and the healthcare is a gift. "God does not make mistakes" is exactly what anti-trans crusaders say too. Trans, if there is a God, is either a mistake or not. Bringing God into it makes the anti-trans sound like the sensible ones or the ones making the best guess.

There are other kinds of identities apart from gender. If they are not affirmed or respected the person may suffer no great or lasting harm. Why gender identity not being affirmed is so agonising is an interesting question. The person is not only given the wrong body or wrong gender role but is made to suffer at the hands of others over it. There is pain that has an internal source as well.

An older person who is very fit may show a marked misfit with their age but they do not report dysphoria.

The trans however is not a victim. This is a person who has to fight their body, fight their society, their version of God, their religion, their family both to defend themselves and to affirm themselves.

Gender dysphoria can and does cause a child or anyone to need a complete transformation. Some do not need medical intervention but to be accepted as their true gender. Some need body parts fixed. Some transmen are content with a beard and double mastectomy. Some transwomen keep their penises. Some need cross sex hormones.

Dysphoria can return and with a vengeance. This is caused by a number of things.

Transphobia can trigger it.

It can just happen.

Dysphoria can come back in a different form. For example, an impulse to have further treatment perhaps full gender affirmation surgery may start.

Trans may report a successful transition but are clear that they need to take steps for life to manage dysphoria. A successful transition is one where the dysphoria is kept at bay or at a manageable level. The risk of mental illness and suicide are high if a person's dysphoria is not managed. Successful can be a very subjective and relative term.

But it is not your job to worry if a person is choosing something that may or may not improve their happiness. The search to be your true self is not the same thing as trying to be happy. A transition that makes you recognise who you are but is not followed by happiness is still a reasonable outcome. Saying, "Change your gender or body if it makes you happy" is you giving permission. That is not your place. It leads to people being refused treatment.

Happiness is never guaranteed no matter what you do. Trying to cause it backfires. The trans person does not need to suffer over you trying to give them a happiness that cannot just happen or be packaged out.

The community needs to accept the person for this plays a huge role in alleviating the dysphoria. Surgery for example is a huge step but if the person is treated as being in some sense invalid the psychological benefits can be destroyed. Failing to affirm trans is abuse and hate.