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Dennis / Denise

Balancing Himself as a Person with Two Spirits

by Dennis / Denise

Article appeared in Polare magazine: March 1999 Last Update: October 2013 Last Reviewed: September 2015

My name is Dennis or Denise depending on my persona at the time. My wife Madeline and I are the Coordinators for C.D. R.O.M. in Tauranga and the Bay of Plenty, New Zealand. C.D. R.O.M., a New Zealand National caring support group for Cross/Transgender people, their partners and family.

Let me introduce ourselves. We have been married twenty-five years and have three grown up children. Like most of us, I started cross-dressing as a teenager back in the 1960s with no one to talk to; it confused the hell out of me. I wasn't gay but felt better wearing ladies clothing, what was happening? Over the next thirty years I dressed in secret not telling Madeline, I felt guilty because of the lies, worthless and at times very depressed, too much society generated emotional garbage for any individual to carry around.

In 1994, a major incident happened, which really made me look at myself and for the first time I had to find out and be proud of who I really was. I can remember looking in the mirror at Dennis over the years and having absolutely no idea who that reflection belonged to. It just wasn't me, I was lost!

In 1997, we came across C.D. R.O.M. and with the group's support; I started my journey for the truth that would ultimately set me free. I told Madeline very gently and with her help we told our three children and my Mom and Dad, also selected friends. The general feeling with everyone concerned was relief. The barrier I had put up to hide behind which they had all felt, was down. If they couldn't understand my Cross/Transgender personality, they very much appreciated my honesty. On telling our youngest daughter, Michelle of Denise, she offered me her pink outfit. Madeline was most put out that Michelle hadn't offered it to her. Michelle's comment "well Mom, I think it would look better on Dad". Free thinking children are just so accepting of honest parents, thank you Michelle. The first time I saw Denise in the mirror, I knew who that reflection belonged to. Denise had completed the circle.

Today I balance myself as a person of two spirits. I work and earn a living as Dennis, I support my wife and family as Dennis, we all enjoy Dennis for the strong, caring, masculine looking person he is. But my leisure time is for Denise, that is who I would really rather be, feminine, spiritual and sensitive and because Madeline hasn't lost Dennis, she is so accepting and loving of Denise.

Have fun with your Cross/transgender personality. Keep your whole world balanced. Cherish your supportive partner, family and friends. Don't become too vain and watch your feminine side transform you into the very special whole person you are.

Polare Magazine is published quarterly in Australia by The Gender Centre Inc., which is funded by the Department of Family & Community Services under the S.A.A.P. program and supported by the N.S.W. Health Department through the AIDS and Infectious Diseases Branch. Polare provides a forum for discussion and debate on gender issues. Unsolicited contributions are welcome, the editor reserves the right to edit such contributions without notification. Any submission which appears in Polare may be published on our internet site. Opinions expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of the Editor, The Gender Centre Inc., the Department of Family & Community Services or the N.S.W. Department of Health.

The Gender Centre is committed to developing and providing services and activities, which enhance the ability of people with gender issues to make informed choices. We offer a wide range of services to people with gender issues, their partners, family members and friends in New South Wales. We are an accommodation service and also act as an education, support, training and referral resource centre to other organisations and service providers. The Gender Centre is committed to educating the public and service providers about the needs of people with gender issues. We specifically aim to provide a high quality service, which acknowledges human rights and ensures respect and confidentiality.

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