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## How Things Change

### Toward a More Positive Outlook

by Jodie

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In July '97, there began whispers of redundancies at my workplace, which nobody took too seriously. It soon became a reality that they were to happen in September. This was postponed until "early in the New Year", a lovely prospect of "Merry Christmas, don't bother coming back next year." Some positions did go at this time, but had little impact except to make people more nervous. The date was again put off until March, only this time on the 'hit list' were staff with more than ten years service. I had eleven years; nine as male and two as female (this transition was interesting in itself).

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February saw the reality hit home! What was I to do if my number comes up? My thoughts were doom and gloom. Let's face it, age was against me for starters (forty-five and some), being in one job for eleven years, having no

profession, no great education, few qualifications and restricted skills, hell, I didn't have much of an idea what a résumé was, let alone have one. To top it all off, who employs transnys?

About this time, Polare 22 was delivered and low and behold, some employment opportunities were advertised. I phoned a very close friend to see if she had applied. I was convinced to apply as well. And just in case I was made redundant, the interview experience would be helpful if nothing else. Another good friend assisted in preparing a résumé at very short notice.

Several weeks and an interview later I found myself on the short list of a 'bank job', so to speak. I was also informed, that myself and thirty-six others were to be made redundant on 14th April. The day I was told this, was the day after I'd come out of hospital following an operation. Feelings soon picked up somewhat a week later, when I was informed my job application was successful and could start on 20th April.

At the time of writing this, it is four weeks into my new job and all is going extremely well. I am being treated as a person and as an equal, with no hint of discrimination or prejudice; certainly unlike some past experiences. How things have changed.

I am only one case and it's still early days, but it gives the hope that this understanding and tolerance will continue. Attitudes appear to be slowly changing, thanks to the efforts of dedicated people such as those of the Gender Centre and companies and business that make the time and effort to help change those attitudes. I for one am most grateful.

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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.