

Transgendered Definitions

Like any marginalized community, the Transgendered Community is rife with phrases and terms that may not be familiar to non-transgendered persons. These definitions may help to understand this community.

Androgyny: Having both male and female characteristics, or neither.

Butch / Femme: Adjectives used to describe one's gender performance. A masculine person (of either gender) can be described as butch; a feminine person can be described as femme

CD: Short for **Crossdresser**, someone who dresses occasionally in the clothing of the opposite gender

Drag Queen / King: Someone who cross-dresses for effect or for entertainment. Often very glamorous or outrageous in appearance.

Female Impersonator: A man who impersonates a woman for entertainment.

Fetish Dresser: Someone who cross-dresses for sexual purposes, often related to a specific item of clothing. Fetish dressers usually do not identify as the opposite gender

FTM: Female-to-Male, refers to someone born female who identifies as male

Gender Assignment: A controversial practice, in which an intersexed infant is assigned a gender at the time of birth. Such assignment is usually accompanied by surgical or hormonal modifications to

help the child pass and develop in the assigned gender role.

Getting Read: Having someone identify that an individual is transgendered. Getting read can be dangerous in some circumstances. Also known as getting "clocked"

GRS: Gender Reassignment Surgery. The "Sex-Change Operation", sometimes known as SRS (Sexual Reassignment Surgery)

Hermaphrodite: not commonly used, refers to a person with visible gender cues (usually genitalia) of both genders. True hermaphrodites are rare, and are included in the intersexed category

Intersexed: refers to a large class of genetic or hormonal conditions that result in an individual being physically between genders.

MTF: Male-to-Female, refers to someone born male who identifies as female

Non-Op: Short for Non-Operative, refers to someone who for medical reasons or personal choice does not plan to undergo GRS

Passing: Being taken as one's preferred gender without question or incident by others.

Pre-Op: Short for Pre-Operative, refers to someone who has not yet had GRS, but who intends to undergo such surgery

Post-Op: Short for Post-Operative, refers to someone who has undergone GRS

Pro: Short for Prostitute (or Professional). In TG circles, a TG person

who makes his or her living as a sex worker.

RLT: Real Life Test. Most TG persons must live and work full time in their desired gender role for a period (typically one year) prior to being approved for GRS

SO: Short for Significant Other. Transgendered persons often have a primary relationship with a person of either gender (spouse). SO's can be greatly affected by their partner's transgenderism

Stealth: Refers to a transgendered person who has transitioned and is living in their preferred gender role without other people knowing that they are transgendered.

TG: Short for Transgendered. An umbrella term used to encompass all persons who are cross-gendered.

Transition: The act of switching genders. In most cases, Transition precedes GRS. Many TG people live part-time in their preferred gender role prior to transitioning to full time.

TS: Short for **Transsexual** - someone who strongly feels that they are the opposite gender from their birth gender, and who seek to correct their gender, usually through hormonal and surgical intervention

TV: Short for **Transvestite**. Someone who dresses and assumes the role of the opposite gender. Often used synonymously with Crossdresser

Points to Consider . . .

1. Sexual Identity and Gender Identity are different issues. A gay man may or may not be masculine. Being a Lesbian does not dictate a woman's femininity. Similarly, transgendered persons may be gay, straight, or bisexual.
2. There are Transgendered Men (born female) and Transgendered Women (born male).
3. While some TG persons go on to transition or have GRS (Gender Reassignment Surgery), many do not.
4. If a person is clearly presenting themselves in a specific gender role, it is polite to refer to them in that way. Even if you can "tell" an individual is transgendered, it is insulting to refer to them by their former or birth gender.
5. It is not considered polite to ask a transgendered person (or any person, for that matter) about genitalia, surgery, hormones, or sexual preferences, unless they invite such questions.
6. Do not make assumptions! Each transgendered person is unique and may have a very different story from other transgendered persons that you have met.
7. Remember that many TG persons are not "out" and may suffer severe repercussions if they are identified as TG. Never "out" a TG person in public. Always assume a TG person is trying to live their life without people knowing they are TG.

The Transgendered Spectrum

Cross-Dresser

Minimal Physical Changes
"Dressing Up"
Part-Time / Hobby
Retain Birth Gender Identity
May be Closeted / Disconnected from
Transgendered Community



Transgendered

Some Physical Changes
Hormones
Electrolysis
Surgery
Part-time in Each Gender
Androgyny
Gender Blur
Might be a "Stage" en-route to
Transsexualism



Transsexual

Living Full Time
Gender Role Transition
Genital Reassignment Surgery Possible
May be Stealth / Disconnected from
Transgendered Community

Transgenderism: The Basics

"Transgenderism" can be confusing.

There are a number of reasons for this.

1. There are many types of transgendered persons.
2. Transgendered persons often seek to be discreet and private. You may never be aware that a person you have known for several years is transgendered.
3. Transgendered persons are often unsure about their own direction and definitions. It may take many years to find one's right "place" on the transgendered spectrum.
4. The social and cultural acceptance of transgendered persons is constantly changing. As a result, many TG persons who may have stayed in the closet are now coming out and seeking community.

This brochure can't answer every question you might have - but it's a place to start!

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