

Identity – Gender Change

From the moment of conception, when a foetus is growing, and after birth, genetic and hormonal interactions, are a major factor in the development of gender identity. This biology determines the structure of the brain as male or female.

Infrequently, gender identity develops within the brain in a manner that is at odds with the male or female characteristics of the rest of the body.

Some people may be more affected than others by this process, and whereas for some, they can happily live with this discord, others experience emotional unrest and distress by “being born with the wrong body”.

TRANSGENDER includes a broad range of people who all experience a typical gender identity development but the way they express their gender roles may vary widely. Some need to express an alternative gender role only occasionally. However, a relatively small number of others (about 1 in 7,000 within the general population) experience transsexualism, which is the overwhelming need to transition so as to live permanently in the role that conforms to their innate gender identities.

For individuals experiencing confusion over their gender, there is a need for much soul searching, support, advice and counselling, so that all of the issues are thoroughly explored. There are sex change operations available, which can dramatically increase the wellbeing of individuals, but these need careful consideration, as they can unleash many emotive responses.

For more information, there are a range of resources on the internet, including www.gendertrust.com which is a UK charity offering help with gender identity issues.