

The term gender dysphoria in recent years has replaced the term transsexualism. Gender dysphoria is a disorder classifying a person as someone who persistently believes they were born into the wrong sex and should be living as the sex they think and feel that they are. Someone who persistently and consistently thinks and feels this way are vulnerable to distress and impairment of normal function in their life due to the persistent thinking. The DSM-5 defines this as a person who has these persistent feelings for 6 months or more. I mentioned in a discussion post that this was the case of a little boy named Kai Shappley who since three years old always knew he was a girl. The little boy prayed to Jesus to be taken home to heaven if he could not live life this way.

The biological causes of gender dysphoria are believed to be genetic and irregularities of brain functioning. The disorder tends to run in families and is commonly seen in twin studies. People with siblings who have the disorder are more likely to have it themselves as opposed to those with siblings that do not have the disorder. Studies of the brain indicate that those who have the disorder have increased blood flow in the insula areas of the brain and decreased blood flow in the anterior cingulate cortex. These are the parts of the brain that define human sexuality and awareness. Also, dissections of the brains of men who became women showed that an area of the hypothalamus was the same size as a natural woman's. The argument can be said that the man thought he was a woman because he had the brain of a woman.

Back in the late 1990's a psychiatrist friend of mine explained to me that a person who wanted to have gender reassignment surgery in the state of Nevada was required to be in therapy for 6 months before making a final decision. It is common for some to regret the surgery later and become a suicide statistic. Many with the disorder are in therapy but others seek solutions of hormone injections to become more male or female, facial surgery to remove facial hair, plastic surgery and as mentioned above sex-change surgery to change genitalia.