
LIFE STORY – WITNES BOOYSEN

My name is Witnes Booysen and I am 34 years old. I was born in Lutzville, near Vredendal, but now live and work in Cape Town as Outreach Co-ordinator at Gender Dynamix. I am a qualified community development worker and have filled a number of community work positions before coming to work for Gender Dynamix. I love spiritual dancing and am also a netball player

I was about four years old when I first realised I wanted to be different to what my genitals were telling me to be. But it was only in 2006 when I found out about transgender and what it is through Triangle Project. It was the first time I learnt the difference between being an effeminate gay and a transgender. However I came out to my parents in 2000 as gay, but now I dress and live fully as a woman. I describe myself as a woman and not as MSM (men having sex with men). I present as a woman and do not disclose. Sometimes when people ask me, I tell them but do not say anything upfront.

My family were very supportive, and neither were they surprised. My mother suggested Cape Town because, she said, Cape Townians were more open-minded and tolerant. Sometimes when they slip up with pronouns I will correct them or they would correct themselves.

I am heterosexual but am not involved in a relationship at the moment. I broke up with my boyfriend about six months ago after a relationship of a year and three months.

I have started the transitioning process and hopefully by January I am hoping to do a full transition. I regret not going earlier, but the place I come from, even the medical people did not know about trans and could not help me.

Being trans is who you are and has nothing to do with who you want to sleep with.

I believe in equal rights for women, especially transgender women and am an activist for this cause.