I Did It

Grace
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its about time i reflected

I may take this down in the future. This is mostly for me to be able to reflect. It might meander a bit. Also, I am not the best writer, so I decided that it would probably be the best route for me to take to be as direct as possible when writing this.

About four and a half years ago, during the start of lockdown, I found myself on Reddit. Regretful, I know, but I didn't have a lot else going on in my life at the time so I ended up on there a lot. I don't remember what prompted it, but I ended up on some LGBT Subreddits. Throughout middle school, I had always thought that I was "like probably gay or something idk," but really never thought about it. I had a like one(?) crush on a girl so probably straight. Eventually, I found myself on r/egg_irl and ... oh. oh no. I felt like I was relating to the memes a little too hard. Before this point, I didn't really know what "being trans" meant and just thought it was cross-dressing.

That night, I took an eyebrow razor and very carefully shaved my legs, only cutting myself 3 times. It felt like something I had never felt before. It was an incredible feeling.

Over the next year, I started to grow my hair out (it was about 2 inches long when this started) but that's about all I did physically. I mostly spent time reading and watching about gender identity. Eventually, after this I got a single bracelet and ill-fitting skirt which I would wear when I was home alone.

For the first three years of this, I was pretty nebulous on my identity. It's hard to be sure of something that you can't even describe. A big mental thing for me was that I wanted to go buy clothes. I would always tell myself that I was going to do it and I never did because I got too scared. Scared to be perceived. Even at this point a lot of my friends didn't know because I was terrified to tell them. I am almost incapable of being vulnerable and every step forward was going to require that. Every time a chance to progress came up, my mind would say yes but my gut would say no and that no was very powerful. Fear was my biggest blocker.

During my senior year of high school, I was pretty confident that I was trans, but I never made many steps forward. Now is probably as good of a time as any to mention that I have anxiety and get panic attacks. Throughout this time, I had panic attacks and just general stress about gender, but that year was a lot more. Probably from that being mixed with the stress of college applications, capstone projects, and a hell of a course load. However, I felt hollow throughout most of this year. I was surviving day by day.

Eventually, I got to the summer. I had always thought that I was going to transition over the summer and go to college as a girl. Summer came and went, and I had never even started. Even my goal of buying clothes failed.

I got to college and the first few weeks were interesting. Overall, I was happy. The freedom was intoxicating and I was having a good time with clubs. However, I also felt deeply lonely. No one knew and I didn't know how to tell them.

One night I met someone and we started talking. She was trans and eventually asked if I was trans. I guess it was the vibes I gave off. Gut reaction was to say no. The fear to be vulnerable is a powerful one and it can be hard to fight. I mustered the courage to kinda mumble out a half answer. This wasn't easy. It felt like every part of my body was fighting against me.

...But I did it.

I am so happy I did. I eventually actually told her that night. She would go on to very much help support me through this.

Riding off of this high, a few days later, I went to Goodwill. God, there was a pit in my stomach when I got there and I wasn't able to start looking at clothes. I had to go walk around looking at pans or whatever. Eventually I started to go through some of the clothes. That entire time I was fighting against myself to stay there and keep looking. I left after a very short time with only a couple items.

...But I did it.

This thing that I have wanted to do for several years, and I finally did it. Wearing the long black cardigan that I got around my dorm was a feeling only comparable to the first time I shaved my legs.

I was riding high for a while, but probably about a month or so passed and I fell into a rut. I stopped making forward process because the only steps left for me to do do required me to be vulnerable. I needed to actually come out and tell people about me. So I did what I did for four years: Nothing. Too afraid to act. Eventually I started having a panic attack so I went to the local park and just started talking.

This is edited down audio from when I was having that panic attack. It may be hard to listen to.

Listen to the audio recording.

I know it's a bit silly to say this, but this is when I realized that transition is ... well just that, a transition, a process. That sentence is a bit "well yeah, no shit" but it really did reframe a lot for me. My plan to go into summer as a boy and come out as a girl was never going to work because it never acknowledged that things were going to go wrong. I wanted to snap my fingers and magically become a perfect girl. That wasn't going to happen. I needed to be vulnerable, not just to myself but to the world.

So, I did it.

I'll try to make this part brief. I came out to all of my friends. I moved from an all male dorm to Gender Inclusive Housing. I got a lot of clothes that I absolutely love wearing. I changed my name in the schools system. I announced that I was going by Grace on discord and started introducing myself that way too.

These changes are amazing and I am the happiest I have ever been. My life 3 months ago feels like it was 3 years ago. I guess it makes sense considering the amount of progress I made in that time is orders of magnitude higher than the progress I made in the last few years before that. It took me 4 years to get to this point and it's only the starting line. I don't pass as female at all, when I say my name to people they often ask me to repeat it, I can definitely tell that some people treat me differently. Despite all of this, I am so much happier. I enjoy getting ready in the morning, I have such a good time hanging out with friends now, I smile when I see my reflection. I still have such a long way to go, but even here, I am just happy. I am glad I did it.