

PARTICIPANT: You mean, that's not true.

[LAUGHTER]

Gee, that's a surprise!

JIMMY: We do have taste. Yes, we do, baby.

PARTICIPANT: I'd like to ask about committed relationships. How-- if you find a partner with whom you are serious, I'm sure the question must come up. How do you form a committed relationship and stay with that one person of one gender?

AUDIENCE: Well, it's the same way that a heterosexual person does or a homosexual person does. If you find somebody and you love somebody and you want to spend the rest of your life with that person, you do. And just because a person is-- man is married to a woman, monogamous and faithful doesn't mean he stops being heterosexual, just means he stops sleeping with other women, and just because a bisexual person gets into a committed relationship with one person, doesn't mean that person stops being bisexual they just stop sleeping with other people.

PARTICIPANT: And that it's not always necessary that we stop sleeping with other people, there are some of us that have very committed relationships, we just don't make the commitment to monogamy. We make a commitment to the person. And one of the most beautiful things about that is that there's not all the games that go on in committed, monogamous relationships.

JIMMY: Yes, when you are open to that

PARTICIPANT: It's not a not a--

JIMMY: Yes.

PARTICIPANT: --Screen. It's like that person's coming to me because I like me, because I love me, and I keep coming back even though they have all the choices in the world to choose from, it's a big charge to know that they keep coming back to me because of who I am.

JIMMY: And personally, I think that is a whole lot more-- that makes me feel a lot more special than the person who--

PARTICIPANT: --Comes back because of the commitment or duty.

JIMMY: Yes, because of duty. Yes, because that's the only option. Because this is a monogamous relationship and there's no other out. No, I like the idea of if you love him set him free, and if they come back, hey.

PARTICIPANT: It's an open free choice.

JIMMY: All the time.

PARTICIPANT: All the time.

JIMMY: Special every day. OK, let's go to another piece of music real quick. And this is by a straight group but it's something about what we've been talking about here.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

BETSY: This Betst-- Bet-- Betsy-- at the ranch. I'm over it chances, we're having an excellent time over here on a Wednesday night. We are talking to KPFT Houston. Come out and visit us at the ranch, or if that is not close enough come to chances on Westheimer.

BROADCASTER: You listen to?

BETSY: And I listen to KPFT Houston. *After hours.*

[MUSIC PLAYING]

BROADCASTER: I'd like to talk about a subject that is acknowledged in the transgender community, but not discussed. Several months ago, I attended a meeting of transgender people at a well-known gender clinic in Galveston. At that meeting, the subject of suicide came up, and the moderator asked anyone who had actually attempted suicide to raise their hands. Of the 60 people in that room, no less than 50 people had attempted suicide. In fact, several people had attempted it more than once.

Now I'd like to think our gay, lesbian, and bisexual audience would be able to understand how taking on the world with its discriminatory attitude and rejection would lead to suicidal tendencies. For those people who do not understand however, I want to relate the story of Filisa Vistima, a transsexual who is 22 years old when she killed herself on March 6th, 1993. These entries are from her personal diary.

It was her wish the diary be made public with the hope it might help other transgender people who are experiencing what she felt. At the end of her story, have a pen and paper handy. I'll be giving out phone numbers and addresses where help is available for anyone feeling as she did.

November 1992. Sometimes when I am walking outside on a clear night, I will look up and try to find my home among the stars. I must try to do something outside my bedroom, I am becoming depressed, suicidal even. I have a steady stream of thoughts about utter hopelessness, thoughts of where I kill myself and how, and they will not go away.

Maybe if I did get a job, it would only make me suffer longer. I don't like to see living things suffer. I wanted to do so many things. I wanted to help people.

I had recently thought I could become a role model for girls who want to become a mathematician or scientist. It's hard to accept I have no place in this world.

9 December, 1992. My sexual orientation is a subject I have been questioning since last month. I was tempted to submit a posting to a gay computer network stating that I am no longer a lesbian and that I am better described in relation to my affectional desires.

I found a term to describe me while reading through a newspaper I got at college. The article used the term "affectional orientation" My affection orientation is definitely toward women. My sexual orientation is theoretically bisexual. My affectional drive, if there is such a thing is about 10 times stronger than my sex drive.

I also I really don't know where affection ends and sex begins. What is sex? Also I believe it is overly simplistic to identify someone based solely on whom they sleep with.

21 December, 1992. I was doing volunteer work today, even under casual conversation, I feel uncomfortable and unstable. I cower under scrutiny. My affectional and sexual desires have become blurred. I have them both, I believe I don't usually have them in public. Sometimes I would feel attracted to someone if I could gather something from their body language.

A woman, somewhat like me perhaps shy, scared, alone, vulnerable. I want to touch her and fall asleep in her arms. I can't imagine even getting enough affection. My own insecurities closed me in when I am in public. In private, all my unfulfilled desires are pulling me in all different directions. I am likely to do something irrational and impulsive soon.

30 December, 1992. I went with a friend to the Chicken Soup Brigade thrift store. On the way back, I met a dog. When I first saw her, she was barking at me, but then I saw her wagging her tail. She was Golden Retriever locked behind a fence. When I got very close to her, she put her body against the fence so her fur would stick through the gate, she wanted to be petted. She seemed starved for affection just like me.

As I was petting her, I saw a lock of my hair fall into view and noticed her fur and my hair were the same color. I wanted to free her from behind the fence and keep her for myself. We could be two lonely animals content with one another.

When I stopped petting her and took my hand away from the fence, she barked and turned around so I would stay and pet the opposite side of her. I eventually did need to leave my new friend even when she barked for me to stay.

5 January, 1993. I am encountering old desires of mine such as swimming, but the comments X has made to me such as your hands are too large, you are shaped like a boy has made me very self-conscious. I wish I was anatomically normal so I could go swimming.

If I were normal, I would no longer have any reason to hide behind my clothes other than to hide my modesty. I could go swimming without clothes on. I would love to do that so much, but no, I'm a mutant Frankenstein's Monster. I hate myself, the physical self. I remember having these feelings when I was a child, hitting my thighs with my hands so I would cry. Well, I'm crying now.

I am reminded of a sentence in my masculine feminine book stating-- "In Freud's logic, those who struggle to become what they are not must be inferior to that to which they aspire". It refers to Freud's theories about women who he believes are really castrated males, and who aspire to become phallic males. In my case, there is little difference in the logic. I must say that I feel inferior to real women, and I may never be able to resolve that conflict

5 February, 1993. I need a plan, otherwise I will go mad. If I no longer receive public assistance, I could just remain here until I get evicted. This isolation is making me frustrated.

Outside is boring gray concrete, gray asphalt roads, and gray buildings. It is a visually deficient landscape. I would like to volunteer at an organization which helps the emotional needs of children or children of HIV positive parents. I must be able to dedicate my time to a child for at least a year, and I don't know if I will be in Seattle for a year. I don't know anything.

Damn it, I no longer feel part of any community, I have no home. Maybe in this life I was not destined to live long, I am too different, I can't adapt, I have no future. What is keeping me from killing myself? My relations with people have grown so distant. No one I care about will miss me.

How can I continue to live based on an assumption I will someday be able to contribute to this society. I should have the right to be selfish. My grief and unhappiness have been too great. I probably was supposed to kill myself when I was 16. Do I not have the right to decide when my suffering is too great? And therefore diary ends.

The program this morning is just one small piece of a huge event called "National Coming Out Day." Does this suggest that every transgendered person, regardless of their personal, financial, or emotional status should suddenly come out to their family, friends, and coworkers? No it doesn't. It means that like me, you may relate to the story of Filisa Vistima on a very personal level.

Perhaps like me or the 50 other transgender people in the clinic that day, you may have attempted suicide perhaps more than once. Maybe you've only thought about it. Possibly you feel, as Filisa did, that you were a freak of nature, or you feel alone vulnerable and scared.

National Coming Out Day can have meaning to you. However, there are groups of people aching for the chance to help you. They often have small settings where you can meet other people like yourself with no more than two or three people at a time being involved. You Can and should come out in the sense of accepting that help.

Listen, when I was a child, I used to lay in bed at night and pray that God would fix me. I really thought a bolt of lightning would come out of the sky and I would magically be transformed into a beautiful woman. Well, now we're adults and we know things don't work that way, but good things can and do happen if you allow them to happen.

I'm going to give you the names of some organizations and their phone numbers. If you are driving home from one of the bars and you can't copy this information, call us here at station when you get home, we will have this information available.

This evening, I spoke at the Gulf Coast, Transgender Community. That's GS, TC for short. They can be reached at box 6643, Houston 77266. Their voicemail is 713-780-4282. This group is open to anyone. It does not matter whether you are gay, straight, bisexual or unsure. I advise you to please give them a call.

There is the Texas Association for transsexual support, they are working diligently and putting together a program of professionals to provide help. Their phone mail is 713-827-5913, they are also at Houston.

Finally, there is the Montrose Counseling Center, they are still at 701 Richmond in Houston, and there are a number is 713-529-0037, they are transgender and bisexual friendly. You may feel like you are only one voice right now, but I assure you there is a growing chorus of transgender people who are only now finding the power of their collective voices. Come out and join that chorus in the way that's best for you. But please, do come out, we need you.

BARRY Just one voice sing--

MANILOW:

[MUSIC PLAYING]

JIMMY: One voice, Barry Manilow. You're listening to *After Hours*, a continuing tradition on KPFT Houston 90.1 FM. This is our coming out show. Stay tuned. We've got the QMZ coming up, we've got information on activities happening on the National Coming Out Day, October 11th. But for all of you inside whatever closet you happen to be in, this is for you.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

[APPLAUSE]

[MUSIC PLAYING]

Mmmh, Bette Midler, "I shall be released". You can't always get what you want, but you get what you need, and I shall be released from that damn closet.

[LAUGHTER]

Whatever it happens to be, gay, straight, bisexual or even if you're transgendered or even if you're an actor and you're afraid your neighbors are going to find out. That happened to someone here at KPFT came out of the closet as an actor of all things. So there's all kinds of closets people put themselves into, and I want to stress that you put yourself into it. And when you're ready to come out, it's time to come out.

Sometimes you may be too young to come out of the closet because you have to depend on parents or guardians for your well-being and you can't afford to come out yet, or because of your job or because of whatever reason. We said that in the very beginning of the show. When you're ready to come out-- maybe just coming out to that mirror, that's really the most important one, the mirror.

PARTICIPANT: The hardest person to come out to is yourself.

JIMMY: Mm-hmm.

PARTICIPANT: How many people do we all know who we know are gay or lesbian or bisexual, transgender and cannot admit it to themselves? So the first step of the coming out process is to admit to yourself what you are and deal with it.

JIMMY: And the time to do this is like any time, but more specifically, October 11th each and every year is National Coming Out Day from getting out of that damn closet, whatever it is. And we've got some stuff going on in this city, don't we?

[LAUGHTER]

I'm trying to think and do things at the same time.

PARTICIPANT: Does it seem more low key to you this year than usual?

JIMMY: Yes, quite.

PARTICIPANT: It does seem like for a city of this size-- it that has been a very quiet national-- is it everyone in Houston is out of the closet, is that what it is?

JIMMY: Yeah, right. Yeah, right. No, it's what we've got happening is celebration at UFH. Now this is what happened last year, that's the only celebration I know of. I think that the year before that or the year before that there was a great, great thing going on at diverse works. But now we've got whatever is going on at UFH and it's Put On by GLOBAL. The Gay, Lesbian, Or Bisexual Alliance.

Well, we got the bisexuals in there, we're going to have to work on the transgendered folks. Get them in that group.

PARTICIPANT: It's funny. I've going out and talk to people at UFH, and they will look me straight in the eye say, well, we don't have any transgendered people on this campus,

[LAUGHTER]

Which kind of amazes me, because I know about 30 of them are sexual.

JIMMY: Yeah, exactly. So global is sponsoring whatever is going on out there, National Coming Out Day rally. The event will include speakers and performers from Houston's community who will present speeches, small demonstrations-- and where's it going to be?

AUDIENCE: On satellite Hill at University of Houston.

JIMMY: Where's that?

AUDIENCE: Well, I'm not quite sure exactly but--

PARTICIPANT: Exactly, underground satellite.

JIMMY: It's where?

PARTICIPANT: It's the underground satellite. It's right in the center of campus.

JIMMY: Oh, OK. [INAUDIBLE] I know last year I went. I got up incredibly early for me because I normally get up at the crack of noon, but I did get up early enough to make it. And I just kind of went out there and I saw a whole bunch of other people that were parking and so I parked, and I just kind of followed the sheep and I ended up wherever it was. I was there, it's not that difficult even if you don't know your way around.

So who did they have-- did they mention who's going to be there?

JIM: Well, I just have one question.

JIMMY: Oh, Jim, yes, what?

JIM: Yeah, now that I discovered this mic is on in here. You, you are sneaky little thing.

JIMMY: Yes, I am.

JIM: Anyhoo, how out is out? You know what I mean?

JIMMY: It's out is a process pretty much. You kind of have to come out to the mirror first, and then maybe a friend and then it's just-- it can go on for years and sometimes it never ends. There are some of the most politically active people in the world who are gay or lesbian, and I can only speak from that experience here, I'm not I'm not shutting anybody else off, still cannot come out to their grandmothers or grandfathers or some aunts or uncle it's--

JIM: Well, with me OK, if anyone asked me--

JIMMY: Ask you what?

JIM: Ask me if I'm bisexual, if I'm gay, if I'm anything, mostly bisexual, OK, I am. And I will tell them that I am, but otherwise I feel what is their business. I just don't understand--

JIMMY: Oh, what you're saying like, why do I have to make a big deal about it?

JIM: Right. It's--

JIMMY: Well, sometimes I think we have to make a big deal about it until we don't have to make a big deal about it, until it really doesn't matter. But we have to stand up and say we're here-- until people realize oh, OK these folks are a part of society.

PARTICIPANT 1: Not only are we a part of society, but you look normal. You know that? I mean, you don't do. You don't have three eyes or-- and you don't have an extra set of ears or anything, and you know it's amazing there are still a lot of people in this world who don't know that about gay people, don't know that about bisexual or transgender people, you're normal. And I think we're going to have to keep coming out until we get it through people's heads that we are normal.

PARTICIPANT 2: I think the other reason to come out is because for people that are in the closet, the closet is a very isolated place. It can be a very lonely place. And I went years being bisexual and nobody knew and I thought I was the only one, and that is a very scary feeling. And it is so wonderful to find that there's people out there that share something in common with me, and that I can be a part of this movement.

JIMMY: I think, yeah, coming out as a gay man that was kind of the feeling of feeling of belonging that hey, there are other people here who have similar backgrounds or who have-- we share the same feelings because I don't share a lot of things with straight men. There's a lot of me that I can never share with a straight friend. But I have this kind of background that I can share with a gay man and it's got to be the same in the bisexual community and the transgender community.

PARTICIPANT: I think the other sense of coming out is that we can join the family of choice.

JIMMY: Ta tataa.

PARTICIPANT: We can be a part of people who are very close to us and a part of who we are.

JIMMY: OK.

PARTICIPANT: One of the best descriptions I ever heard of the coming out process was from a dear friend of mine in College Station by the name of Tom Johnson, who once described the coming out process as being-- like being on a train. It didn't matter whether you were in the caboose or if you were the engineer, what did matter is that the train continued to move forward, and I've always liked that as the ultimate definition of what the coming out process really is.

JIMMY: OK. OK, so let's talk this up again on Tuesday, October the 11th now where are we going to-- all going to be--

AUDIENCE: Satellite Hill University of Houston.

JIMMY: OK. Coming Out Day. Coming out-- National Coming Out Day. There's something else going on to that night.

AUDIENCE: *The Triangle Ball* is also that evening, 8 PM to midnight.

JIMMY: Mmh-mmh, And that's--

AUDIENCE: That's it. That's also at University of Houston. I don't know how to say the name, what-- Overholser-- Overholser Hall Ballroom.

JIMMY: Oh, OK.

AUDIENCE: And once again, I'm not quite sure where that is, but I think there will be-- well, a lot of people headed that direction and banners, flyers, posters something like that will be up at University of Houston. So I don't think it'll be too hard to miss.

JIMMY: Not at all. Sounds great. I'm going to do my best to get my lazy butt out of bed.

[LAUGHTER]

PARTICIPANT: At the crack of noon.

JIMMY: At the crack-- Yeah, before the crack of noon because it starts at 11, right?

AUDIENCE: 11:30 to 1:00.

JIMMY: OK. And I know I was there last year and it was a whole lot of fun, and a nice feeling of empowerment and belonging. Sort of like, yeah, hey, I belong here. OK?

JIM: OK, and everybody is still nodding their heads.

JIMMY: And everybody's nodding. Yes. OK, we're going to go to the QMZ right now, and we'll be back in just a few minutes. And by the way, if you want to hear your favorite gay, lesbian, bisexual trans-- if you want to hear your favorite queer music--

AUDIENCE: There we go.

[LAUGHTER]

JIMMY: Give us a call at 5265738 and we'll play it because we're starting out the QMZ with a request. So here goes

[MUSIC PLAYING]

Yes, it's the QMZ with Jimmy. QMZ the Queer Music Zone where we feature music by gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered artists only. And we're starting out tonight with a request, and this is for Daniel, and it's one of the most requested songs in the last several months. It's by Pansy Division, it's on their new CD, "Deflowered," and it's called "Kissed".

Like, "I really want to kiss you man."

[MUSIC PLAYING]