

Dear Bruce Jenner: Please Consider Your Children's Emotional Well-Being

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By Denise Shick – *BarbWire guest contributor*

Dear Mr. Jenner,

America is watching intently as you seek to transition from man to woman. So are your daughters. As a daughter who watched her own father make the same choice, I plead with you to reconsider. My father's revelation to me that he wanted to become a woman sent my life into a tailspin.

As I read an article titled "Kylie Jenner ignores Bruce Jenner," reportedly humiliated by his transition, I sensed that your daughters are about to enter a time of loss, anger and humiliation much like the tailspin I endured. And, had it not been for the persistent love of God and a good man who became my husband, I suspect I'd still be in that descent—or dead.

Please hear my heart when I try to express how difficult this must be for your daughters. They are losing a father. No matter how they might try to cover up the grief they are feeling, it's there. It isn't enough to tell them you're still there for them, just in a different body. Memories will be all that your daughters retain of their father—and that's not enough.

Sure, times have changed. When I was a child, our culture condemned the very idea of one seeking to change his or her gender. Today's culture is much more open to encourage individuals to pursue virtually any desire or fantasy the individual thinks will make him or her happy. But that's not the point, Mr. Jenner. Here's the point: What's really more important, your personal happiness or your daughters? Your happiness—fleeting as it will be—will come at the cost of your children's emotional well-being.

Yes, our culture now says family members and friends need to learn to adjust to the needs (in truth they're really just desires) of the one seeking the transition. Perhaps those resistant loved ones need counseling to help them cope with the change. But why must they change? Why must children seek counseling to make them accept a parent's transitioning that erases that parent's true identity to them? Parents are supposed to be the ones who sacrifice for the sake of their children. It should not be the other way around.

Another article suggests your goal is to look like your step-daughter Khloe. My father wanted to look like me, and that realization disgusted me; it nearly ruined me. I could not be comfortable in my own skin. It made me want to radically alter my appearance. Mr. Jenner, please consider how this admission might be affecting Khloe.

Mr. Jenner, you've acknowledged that you expect your family members to cry over your transition. In your much-publicized interview you said of your daughters Kendall and Kylie, "I can't let myself hurt them." But that's exactly what you are doing by placing your desire to be a woman ahead of their need of a real father.

Like you, my father believed becoming a woman would finally give him the peace and fulfillment he'd long desired. It did not. It left him empty and, in the closing weeks of his life, full of regrets.

I share these thoughts not to cause you anger or frustration, but because I understand the impact your choices as a

father will have on your daughters, and on you as well. Your daughters need their father. I promise you, deep down, they want and need a mother and a father. Please, Mr. Jenner, be their father.

Denise Shick is the author of [My Daddy's Secret](#) and [Understanding Gender Confusion: A Faith Based Perspective](#) .
