

# From a Whisper to a Roar

Interview Summary	
<b>Name:</b> Jenny- Anne Bishop OBE	<b>Date: 27.07.2019</b> <b>Age: 73</b>
<b>Key issues:</b> Trans woman. Catholic upbringing. Married with children. Transvestite. Drag Balls. Beaumont society. The Wednesday Group(TV/TS). Gender and Identity Clinic. John Randell. Diversity Role Models. Ageing – Trans and Dementia. Trans Advisory Board for Prisons. Unique. Parliamentary Advisory Committee. Diversity Steering Group North Wales Police. LGBT friendly church.	
<b>Narrative summary</b> <p>Jenny- Anne felt from a very early age that she should have been more like her sister, although she was assigned male at birth. She was brought up in a staunch Catholic family and was taken to a psychologist when she was caught dressing in her mother's clothes. He was quite enlightened, but Jenny- Anne's mother believed it to be wicked so Jenny-Anne was forced into stealing secret moments to be herself. She fell in love with a woman at University and was advised not to tell her and that 'it would all go away' once she was married. This didn't happen but when she told her wife, she took it incredibly well and helped Jenny- Anne with make-up and clothes. They had children and were married for many years during which Jenny- Anne did much to explore her identity, such as attending the Drag Ball scene in London and a move to Manchester with a very focused gay community. She went to the Beaumont society and attended their dinners, but was always searching for local networks and found the Wednesday group (where she met Stephen Whittle) in Manchester a lifeline.</p> <p>Eventually, as it became more and more apparent that Jenny-Anne would ultimately transition, her wife became depressed and Jenny- Anne bought another house in which to spend some time as herself and to keep this away from the children. She agreed a set of rules with her wife. Jenny- Anne was extremely successful in her career as her male persona, bringing in big contracts to the companies she worked for, but she recounts how the discovery of the real Jenny- Anne ultimately resulted in losing her job many times over, suffering discrimination, prejudice and huge loss of earnings and pension. She feels it was all worth it. She went to the Gender Identity clinic in the 1980 but didn't transition for another 28 years. Eventually the relationship with her wife broke down completely and she began on the pathway to transition. She recalls the unexpected, but incredible, sense of joy that surgery brought her. She had by now met her partner Ellen who was a huge support and encouraged her to retire, but she has used her retirement to become involved in a vast number of organisations to bring people together and to further the cause of trans understanding and trans rights.</p> <p>She has done a huge amount of work with the police – describing her first tentative steps into this world. She lobbies in parliament as part of the advisory committee, is on the board in several health institutions and has a particular interest in the support for trans people with dementia. She also speaks of the empowering influence of being welcomed into a LGBT friendly church where she now serves as an Elder.</p>	
	<b>Length of interview: 2 hrs 28mins</b>



Evelyn: So this is an interview for, From a Whisper to a Roar, an oral history project conducted by Opening Doors, London, and supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund. Today is the 27th of July, 2019, and I'm interviewing the delightful Jenny-Anne Bishop.

Jenny-Anne: Thank you, Evelyn. It's lovely that you've taken the trouble to come all the way to Rhyl and today it's not sunny Rhyl, it was yesterday.

- Evelyn: Lovely nevertheless. So could you start by telling me a little bit about your early life, and how you came to an understanding of who you really are?
- Jenny-Anne: Yes, that was quite difficult because I was born quite a long time ago in 1946, in what is now part of Greater London. I lived in Mitcham in Surrey, and I was born in Carshalton. Probably from around the age of three or four I had this feeling that I should have been more like my sister. I used to pray at night, because I came from a Catholic family, and in those days you all had to say your prayers before you went to bed. And I'd pray to God that in the morning I'd wake up and my body would be more like my sister, and my parents would say, "Oh, we had a girl not a boy."
- And then everything would be fine. But of course that didn't happen. I started experimenting with my mum and later with my sister's clothes, and I got caught one day when I was about six wearing some of my mum's clothes to school, because I was practicing to be the woman I knew I'd grow up to be.
- Jenny-Anne: My school, which was a church school, and therefore my church, and my parents, were all very upset by this. My mother thought I was very naughty and I got sent to see the school psychologist on the basis of being a naughty child. The psychologist, who bearing in mind it was 1952, was very liberated, and told my parents not to worry it was just the child exploring their identity and trying to figure out who they were. But my parents didn't like that, and my mum described it as wicked behaviour. It forced me to go very much into the closet and only experiment with being myself when there was nobody else around.
- Jenny-Anne: So throughout my childhood and my teenage years, I'd look for opportunities when there was nobody home, and I could be myself for a short while. Then I'd feel extremely guilty because I felt so much better being me. And being a Catholic, it was like, no, that's too much pleasure. It must be wrong.
- Evelyn: Absolutely.
- Jenny-Anne: And with my parents telling me it was wicked that just reinforced things. The very few things I managed to find out in books available was that people who were cross-dressers or, very much in those days, transvestites were in some way perverted and were treated rather like gay people. You were advised to have lots of cold showers.
- Evelyn: Like that's going to sort it out.
- Jenny-Anne: Exactly and do lots of sports so you resisted these behaviours. One of the things I did as a youngster was I tried to avoid showering and changing with everybody else, because to me, my body was wrong. Of course, to them it was how it should be. So I did things like cross country running because you could then adjust the pace, and arrive back on your own, shower on your own, and get changed back and nobody would see you.
- Evelyn: And these are the days when homosexuality was illegal.

Jenny-Anne: Yes. This was in the 1950's and very early into the '60s, because I went to university in 1964 before homosexuality was decriminalised. At university, although I was studying chemistry, I was doing industrial chemistry and management. So I had access to the social sciences library. I was able to look up some of the work that was being done by people like Kinsey, and to a degree, Masters and Johnson. It was like an eye opener: wow there's lots of people like me all around the world.

Jenny-Anne: I explored the possibility of transitioning only to be told no, people like you don't do that. People like you get married, have a family, and it all goes away.

Evelyn: So when you say you explored transitioning, in what way did you look into it at the time?

Jenny-Anne: I looked up what could and couldn't be done. I asked my tutor, and the medical officer, and it was all like, no, no, no, that's not something people like you do. Interestingly, I lived in digs on the outskirts of Islington, and in Upper Street in Islington was Pauline Cutler's shop. I don't know if you know Pauline Cutler?

Evelyn: Well, for the benefit of future listeners tell us all about her.

Jenny-Anne: Pauline Cutler was somebody who supplied all the drag artists. So you could go along to her wonderful shop and she had shoes in the right sizes, clothes, tights, prosthesis, wigs, anything you needed to present as female. You could acquire ... and in those days they weren't fantastically expensive.

Evelyn: So did you go out and about? Did you socialise?

Jenny-Anne: No, I didn't, because of the way my parents were, my church was, and also the people I asked at university. I was in a big class, the class I was in there were 70 people, and there were only six girls in the class. It was very much, you know, being gay or, we didn't have the word trans then. It was more cross-dresser or more often pervert. So, no, I didn't reveal that, but secretly at home occasionally when I was on my own, I would experiment.

Jenny-Anne: I remember my parents had central heating put in, and in those days they used to use hessian to make all the joints watertight. Rather like we use Teflon tape now to do that job. The builders were left a big mash of hessian that I made into a sort of wig, and hid under the floor boards in the loft.

One day somebody will discover that if they haven't already. So there was a bit of experimenting but I did find somebody and I think I genuinely fell in love with her, and we decided to get married when I left university. I hadn't told her because I'd also been advised, if you find somebody don't tell them because it will put them off, or it could do. And once you're married and settled down, it won't matter because you won't have this feeling anymore.

Evelyn: Yes, magically disappear.

Jenny-Anne: Absolutely, and of course they told gay and lesbian people exactly the same thing, as we were discussing earlier. You just haven't met the right person. If you settle down and get married it will cure you, magically.

Evelyn: So this is early '60's?

Jenny-Anne: This was ... I got married in 1969. So while I was at university, homosexuality was partially decriminalized, and of course being lesbian was never criminalized. It was frowned on, and they would find other ways for arresting women.

Evelyn: Absolutely.

Jenny-Anne: Lewd behaviour, I think was the term that was often used. And the one that I liked about the gay guys back in the '20's and '30's, they were arrested for being in charge of a powder puff, because they used rouge-

Evelyn: On their cheeks.

Jenny-Anne: ... on their cheeks to say, I'm available. They would raid the pubs and everybody would throw their compacts away. And the police would be scrambling under the tables to find them, and you'd come up in court the next morning. The charge was 'found in charge of a powder puff'.

Jenny-Anne: There was a wonderful story about one of the people who was arrested came up before this judge, and they dismissed the charge. This happened a few times, and the inspector in charge complained to the superintendent, who went to the chief constable, and said, "This judge isn't taking me seriously." And the chief constable said, "Leave it alone. He's a friend of the Home Secretary."

Evelyn: Close friend. Well it was all right in those days if you had money and status.

Jenny-Anne: Precisely. Of course, one of the Home Secretaries was caught out dressed and nothing happened. The police just told him to go home.

Jenny-Anne: Anyway, I digress. So I got married and of course it didn't go away. In fact, it got worse because I then felt I was living with another woman, but couldn't be myself. So very early in our relationship, I think within about three or four months of us getting our own house and setting up home together, I told my ex and she, initially, was very understanding. It was just like, "Oh." And her comment was, "Well, if that's what you want to do, I'll help you to do it properly."

Evelyn: That was very understanding, particularly for those days.

Jenny-Anne: Extremely, and she was very helpful with teaching me makeup. Her mum was a hair dresser, so she knew all about hair and wigs, and helped me get a suitable wig. She was an amazing dressmaker; she made her own wedding dress for instance. She would either adjust clothes so that they fitted me really well, or she would make me things. One of the things that was fantastic was that I'd look in the fashion

magazine and I'd see something, and I'd say, "Oh that's fantastic. I'd really like to have a dress, or an outfit like that." And she said, "Right, we'll go down the market, find the right material." And she'd just run it up.

Evelyn: Wow.

Jenny-Anne: So I had initially lots of clothes that were really designer one offs.

Evelyn: Where did you wear them?

Jenny-Anne: What happened was we were trying to find out about this, because we decided we needed to perhaps find other people, and she spotted in Cosmopolitan, in the newsagents, there was an article on cross-dressing. So she bought the magazine and we avidly read the article. At the end it had a link to the Beaumont Society, which had started in 1967. In those days, to be a member, you had to write to them, they then gave you a number, and you then had to have an interview to check that you were a suitable person to be a member. Because in those days, as they were very frightened that partners and wives would get upset. So you had to be a heterosexual transvestite to be a member. Nobody who was transsexual, or who was gay, was supposed to be a member.

I got interviewed by the regional organizer, who I sort of vaguely knew by then. She just came and sort of said hello. She said, "Oh yes, I know you Jenny, and that's fine. I'll approve your membership." And then you got a little S in front of your number to say you were sponsored. You could then correspond with other members via a Post Office box. Until you got to know the person you were not supposed to exchange your real address.

Evelyn: Goodness me. So for the benefit of future listeners, what were the aims of the Beaumont Society? What was it all about?

Jenny-Anne: It was about helping people to understand that cross-dressing was okay. It was to put you in touch with other people because they did have some early support groups in some locations. But more importantly they had an annual dinner, and they had had one or two weekends away where you could go away and be yourself for a whole weekend. They went to big hotels in places like Scarborough, and Western Super Mare, off season, when the hotel's really needed the trade, and were prepared to put up with all these strange people who came to stay.

Jenny-Anne: Also they had a primitive network of where there were groups of people who were prepared to meet up. They also have a library that you could borrow books from by post, and you could make contact with other members, and I made contact with one or two eventually, some of whom have been almost lifelong friends. Unfortunately most of them have died now, and one I've lost contact with.

Jenny-Anne: It meant I got a clue to where our first support group was. We lived in Camberley, and I worked for BP Sunbury, and we discovered there was a group in Walton-on-Thames, where I and my previous wife had been

in digs together just before we got married. It was like two streets away from where we'd been living.

Evelyn: You never know.

Jenny-Anne: No, and so I went along to the group and made friends with the group, and they were helpful in terms of linking people together. There were about five or six of us in that first group. But I made friends with somebody who I was friends with for about 30, 40 years and that's the person I've lost touch with now, who was in the same position as me.

They were married, were trans, although again we didn't have those words yet, who wanted to meet other people, and wanted to come out to their families. I got to know the person who actually worked for the BBC, and eventually transitioned at work, was one of the first people in the BBC. She made such a good transition that after a bit everybody forgot she was trans, and she just got on with being the technician she was.

Evelyn: So it's interesting the part that language plays, and not because when I've interviewed lesbians, they said, "When I was young, I didn't know the word lesbian."

Jenny-Anne: No.

Evelyn: So very difficult to articulate to yourself what's going on.

Jenny-Anne: Yes, exactly. we did use the old fashioned words because a lot of people thought all transvestites were gay. Of course, in your head you are the way your sexuality feels. So I at that point I hadn't transitioned, I was attracted to women. So to me I was heterosexual. Whereas now, my rationale is I've always being female and I've always been attracted to women. Therefore I'm lesbian-

Evelyn: Lesbian, of course.

Jenny-Anne: And I always have been, and if you want to define it more carefully, Elen and I say we're translesbian.

Evelyn: At the time did you feel a difference between the people who were cross-dressers, as we used to say, and yourself who was deep down on the path to transition?

Jenny-Anne: No, I didn't because I didn't understand the difference. As far as I was concerned, there were people who were sort of stuck in the cross-dressing bit, and others who'd been able to move on to transition. Because I had thought about transitioning at university, as I described earlier. My rationale, and we'll come onto that perhaps later, is I should have done that. Because by not transitioning, that set up false expectations for my wife, my children, the people I work with, my colleagues, my friends, all had a view of me that wasn't real. When they finally got to meet the real me, they felt I'd been lying, and cheating, and being unreasonable all those years.

Jenny-Anne: To an extent I can see that now, and I certainly should not have taken the advice of not informing my ex-wife before we got married. Because once we we're married it was a lot harder for her to say, "Oh I don't want to be with you anymore." Initially she actually enjoyed it, she thought it was all a big game and it was something that we'd get fed up with eventually and do something else. She came to one or two of the early groups I went to, and some of the parties I went to, and she was quite happy if I was going out for a special occasion to make me a new dress to go in. Occasionally she'd make matching outfits, and we both go dressed very similarly, and were called the twins.

Evelyn: So-

Jenny-Anne: I worked for BP, and because it was a very fixed time you were at work, and in those days you didn't work at home. Once you left the lab in the evening that was it. You didn't think about work until the next morning. So time wasn't taken up doing work up at home, and I was more interested in improving the home. Because we were newly married and we had our first child quite quickly, and a second less than a year later, because we figured out we wanted to have the children young, so we had years left to enjoy life after the children. And to enjoy our grandchildren, because we'd already started to see with our first child how tired it made my parents. I mean, we were thinking, no, we want to be young, and they were still reasonably young. But I'm quite proud of ... I was under 50 when my first grandchild was born. And my granddaughter now is 28.

Evelyn: Yes, that's quite an age. So, when the children came along, did that change your feelings at all as a parent?

Jenny-Anne: Yes. I felt very maternalistic, and I did an awful lot of the childcare and sometimes my ex would get fed up and I'd take over looking after the kids. I was very much in that era of the new dad, who did much more of the childcare and the house work. In fact my wife hated housework, so my way of working was always on a Saturday. I'd spend Saturday cleaning the house from top to bottom and getting everything in order. Then I'd have time for my hobbies, or for looking after the kids. And because we also had time in the evenings, and the house we were living in, had a double width garage.

Jenny-Anne: In those days I was very much into cars and I maintained my own car. I started doing work for other friends at work, and the guy who lived next door was an engineer with British Airways. So between us we set up a little car servicing and repair business in my double garage. That earned us a little bit of extra pocket money for the family to do things. And it helped finance ... I got a bigger car when our second child came along. We had quite a lot of fun doing that, and people at work trusted us. If anything was too difficult, where I worked, BP had a huge car fleet. And whenever a new design came out, some of the engineers would be sent on the factory training course. So they knew exactly how to fix almost anything on any vehicle, including all the foreign cars, and the American cars, because we operated globally.



Jenny-Anne: If I got stuck, for instance, we got stuck repairing a particular gear box, so I took it into work, and the guy said, "Oh that's easy peasy, give us the gearbox." And for 30 quid they overhauled the gear box for us.

Evelyn: So here you are with the young family, all those demands, everything else going on. Are you able to get out and about? Are you able to be Jenny-Anne?

Jenny-Anne: Yes. What I agreed quite early on with my ex, was that I'd would have, once in a while, reserved time to be me. To go either to the support group, or to go to an event. We started going to the weekends away, and then we discovered quite early the drag balls in London. That happened in the Porchester Hall in London, and also occasionally there were events at the old Alexandra Palace.

Evelyn: Really? So tell me about the drag balls.

Jenny-Anne: Well the drag balls were great fun. They were run mainly for the gay community, but in those days trans people were particularly allowed in the gay male venues, because we were sort of seen as just gay men. Because some of the gay guys liked dressing up,

Evelyn: Camp and a bit more.

Jenny-Anne: Exactly. And I really enjoyed going there because you could be completely yourself. We'd stay in a hotel in Earls Court that was trans friendly, and we'd go and we'd hit the shops on a Saturday morning. People would say to me, "Jenny-Anne, you can't go out looking like a model, shopping on Saturday mornings."

And I said, "Well I'm going to Harrods, I don't know about you." That was fun. I'm sure people knew, but they tolerated us, and we were spending money in their stores.

Evelyn: Absolutely. So paint me a picture of the drag balls as you walk in the door.

Jenny-Anne: Well, a very big space. Lots of tables, lots of noise from the music. People parading, not quite in the way we see it happen in the Pose series in New York, but along the same theme, and the same way of doing things. Very occasionally I'd go in the competitions.

Evelyn: So, what did you walk as?

Jenny-Anne: Well, I went as all sorts of things. I'd go as a model girl, a showgirl. I went once went as ... who did I do? One of the famous pop stars-

Evelyn: Because each of the walks would have a theme, wouldn't it?

Jenny-Anne: Yes.

Evelyn: So, one theme would be showgirl.

Jenny-Anne: Yes, they didn't tend to do that. You tended to go just as how you wanted to be, and I'd always be looking for a different dress, or a different way of presenting. There was one I went to and I got to, I think, second place, I never won. Then I went in for beauty contest, and

got third for that. Also I went in a beauty contest at Alexandra Palace and got third for that. So I was thinking, I'm not doing so badly, but I would always take lots of photos. I had lots of photos taken. And I would always be looking at the pictures and thinking, "God, you need to try a lot harder than this. You don't look that good." Now I look back at the pictures and I think, "Actually you didn't look bad at all."

Evelyn: I'm sure you were gorgeous, so did they have the balls at Alexandra Palace as well?

Jenny-Anne: Occasionally they had events which were more like competition events. They were generally in the afternoon rather than in the evening.

Evelyn: This is in the '70's?

Jenny-Anne: This is sort of late-ish '70's to early '80's. By then we'd moved up North to living in Crewe, because the company I worked for had its offices near Stockport. I, by then, had a sales territory for the [inaudible 00:28:41]Scientific Instrument company I was working for. My Sales area covered the Midlands and Northwest England, and parts of Northeast England. So it was a huge territory, it ran from the Lake District to Bridlington in the North-

Evelyn: Goodness me.

Jenny-Anne: ... and from Bristol to East Anglia in the South, so huge area. And it included Wales, and Ireland. So I got lots of opportunities to travel, and my wife at the time used to pack an extra suitcase so I could go away and be me. And I'd often seek out people I knew in other cities, and either go and stay with them, or meet them in the evening for a night out together. So I got quite a few opportunities to be me.

Evelyn: How was this scene across the rest of the country in comparison to London in terms of socially being able to meet up in a gay friendly, trans friendly place?

Jenny-Anne: Well, a, there wasn't the information available like there is now. There wasn't the internet for instance.

Evelyn: No internet at all.

Jenny-Anne: And there were very few magazines, although sometimes you can find stuff in the Beaumont Society Magazine-

Jenny-Anne: ... and sometimes you could find stuff in the small ads in some of the magazines that ran. But most of them were more sexual than social. So it's nearly always people looking for hookups, which wasn't my scene. I was looking for friends.

Jenny-Anne: Now, if something happened with a friend in the end, well, that's life. But I was not looking for sexual partners in any way, because I was quite happy with my marriage and the sexual life I had with my then partner.

Jenny-Anne: But there were areas, and what we discovered and part of the reason why I moved to the north west was that we found Manchester was a very liberated city. And in some ways the gay community was much

better focused than it was in London. I always found London very difficult. To find the right places, you needed to know the right people.

Evelyn: And it's geographically so-

Jenny-Anne: So spread-

Evelyn: Spread out, whereas Manchester is a very tight-

Jenny-Anne: Tight city.

Evelyn: Little-

Jenny-Anne: Exactly-

Evelyn: City with a-

Jenny-Anne: And what I found was the group I belonged to in Walton-on-Thames had some contacts in London, which is how I got to the drag balls.

Jenny-Anne: But they really didn't have a grip on what was going across London. Nor to an extent did the Beaumont, that I was still a member of and occasionally went to their dinners in London. Nobody told me about some of the groups that were going on. And it was only after I'd moved to the northwest and got into better networks that I discovered there were groups in London I could have gone to.

Evelyn: So the Beaumont Society feels very kind of formal and-

Jenny-Anne: Oh, it was-

Evelyn: Nice dinners. Very-

Jenny-Anne: And very, very secretive.

Evelyn: Yeah, yeah.

Jenny-Anne: And it was really quite hard to find local information.

Jenny-Anne: And when we moved to Crewe, my friend from the Beeb decided they were going to move from London to Manchester because they came and stayed with us and they liked the northwest. And they bought a house in Macclesfield and were transferred to the BBC on Oxford Road in Manchester.

Jenny-Anne: And within a week of them moving, my friend rang me up and said, "You know what, Jenny-Anne? There's a group down Oxford Road we can go to." And I was very excited. And the group met every Wednesday and was called The Wednesday Group. So nobody knew what it was about. Internally, it was called the TV/TS Group.

Evelyn: Which stood for?

Jenny-Anne: Transvestite and Transsexual.

Evelyn: Yeah.

Jenny-Anne: So I was thinking that sounds a bit more like it. And it was a group that was partly founded by Stephen Whittle and by Carol Steele.

Evelyn: And if you ... Explain Stephen Whittle.

Jenny-Anne: Stephen Whittle was one of the first trans men I got to know, although in those days, Stephen hadn't transitioned, was on the cusp of doing so.

Jenny-Anne: And now of course Stephen is the Professor of Equalities at Manchester Metropolitan. And he's probably the best person in the world on the legal rights of trans people and has been part of some of the international bodies that have set up rights. The Yogyakarta principles, for instance, Stephen helped write.

Jenny-Anne: And he's been involved with some of the work the UN has done. He was the main architect of the Gender Recognition Act. He consulted on the Equalities Act as, indeed, our groups do. And I still see him in all sorts of government meetings where we're doing consultation.

Jenny-Anne: And Stephen's been, too, a lifelong friend. And he's one of the people who I will always go to if I run out of knowledge on legal affairs. Stephen's the first person I write to.

Jenny-Anne: And anyway, Stephen had gone to the Chaplaincy of the university, who said, "Yes, we could have a room." And that was where we met on Oxford Road in the university right near what was then the Royal ... Was the Northern School of Music. Became the Royal Northern College of Music eventually.

Jenny-Anne: I started going there every Wednesday. And my wife was so supportive that, if I was far away, she'd ring me up even if I was in with a customer, and said, "Don't forget it's Wednesday night. It's your night to go to a group."

Because she recognised that if I had my group outing every week, I was much easier to live with, because I wasn't all wound up about not being me.

Jenny-Anne: And my colleagues at work would say, "If I had a night out with Jenny-Anne, I'd work better the next day." And they'd say things like "You're supercharged today, Jenny-Anne. What are you on?"

Jenny-Anne: And of course they didn't call me Jenny-Anne then.

Evelyn: No, no.

Jenny-Anne: But it really showed in my performance. And after a bit, my wife came to me and said, "I'm really concerned you travel so much." And I'd also started to do some work in Ireland and occasionally I was sent to Europe, and I was starting to fly around as well. And she said to me, "What happens if you're killed in a car accident or a plane crash? How do you want me to bury you?"

Evelyn: Oh.

Jenny-Anne: Bit morbid, that. And without thinking, I said, "Well, as Jenny-Anne, of course, because that's who I am." And she then realised that it was a bit more than just cross-dressing.

Jenny-Anne: And although I reassured her and said, "Look, while we're still married and we're bringing up the kids and all that stuff, I won't transition. I won't have surgery. And I certainly won't start on the hormones."

Jenny-Anne: But she got quite depressed at that point and was treated for depression. And we agreed that I would get rid of Jenny-Anne out of the house. And we bought a little house in Crewe, where we lived. And the company I worked for, by then the headquarters have moved to southern Ireland, to Shannon, and I used to get my bonuses in cash.

Jenny-Anne: They'd work out at the factory what you were owed for your sales for the last quarter. The sales manager would call a meeting and literally give you an envelope stuffed with cash. "So there you go, that's your bonus."

Jenny-Anne: And I put my money aside and I got my dad, who was an accountant, to register me as self-employed. And he helped me work out how to be most tax-efficient. And we looked at this little house, which had been unoccupied for about 18 months.

Jenny-Anne: The roof leaked slightly. It was dirty, but sound. And the garden was a total mess. And it was up, I think, for £2,200.

Evelyn: Oh, my days. When was this?

Jenny-Anne: 1975.

Evelyn: Gosh, yeah.

Jenny-Anne: And I said to my ex, "I'm gonna offer them £1,750, because I think they want to get rid of it." And she said to me, "Don't be silly. You can't buy houses for that sort of money."

Evelyn: That sort of money-

Jenny-Anne: Having not so long previously paid £12,500 for a house.

Evelyn: Yes, yes.

Jenny-Anne: Which in those days bought us a really nice four-bedroom detached house in a private road-

Evelyn: Yeah, of course.

Jenny-Anne: Anyway, I made the offer and they accepted. Then she was flabbergasted.

Jenny-Anne: And by then I'd found a local friend. And the two families shared the house and we did a lot between us. And when I sold it, not many years later, we got over £5,000 for it, so it was a good investment.

Jenny-Anne: What we did was we moved Jenny-Anne to the little house in Crewe. In the meantime, I'd been sent to America to do some training on a new product range. And I came back and everything to do with my female side had gone from home.

Evelyn: How did that feel?

Jenny-Anne: That felt awful. And I made the mistake of my life. Really made a mistake. Because as my partner said to me, "You're a bit upset about this, aren't you?" And I said, "Yes. I feel like Jenny-Anne's been thrown out."

Evelyn: Hmm.

Jenny-Anne: And that wasn't the right thing to say, particularly as we hadn't been together for about two weeks.

Evelyn: So how did you think she felt?

Jenny-Anne: Well, again, she felt very upset about that. And we agreed that I would go to the little house. I'd get changed there, go off to the group. Or I go off for a weekend, I come back to the little house, get changed there, and come back as my other self so that nobody would see me. And particularly as the kids were growing up, they wouldn't see me.

Evelyn: So do you think the kids really had no understanding somewhere or consciousness-

Jenny-Anne: Oh, the kids knew. The kids absolutely knew. Because although we'd agreed, once they started to grow up, they wouldn't see Jenny-Anne, there was one evening when I got ready to go to the group and we had a way of working that I go in the bedroom, lock the door, get ready, and then my wife would tell me when the kids weren't around so I could nip downstairs, get in the car that was parked on the drive, and drive away.

Jenny-Anne: But I think she got fed up and engineered it when the kids were actually playing in the front garden. So the kids saw me and asked her what it was all about, and she was reticent to tell them. And that was about the time that we bought the house and moved there briefly.

Jenny-Anne: And that-

Evelyn: Did they-

Jenny-Anne: That worked for a while.

Evelyn: The kids never raised it with you?

Jenny-Anne: No. And she told most of the neighbours so most of the neighbours knew.

Jenny-Anne: And I then was coming back from the group one night, and I got stopped in a routine roadblock where they were looking for stolen cars. And I wasn't particularly concerned. I thought, "Yeah, could be my car being stolen." And the guy who came to talk to me was really cross that I was trans. You know, he's quite obnoxious about it. And he said to me,

"Are you allowed to drive this company vehicle?" Because it was a company car. "Dressed like that?"

Evelyn: Man.

Jenny-Anne: And I said, "Well, it's for work and it's also part of my salary. So it's for my leisure time too. And it doesn't matter, providing I'm not breaking any rules or laws, how I drive the car. And besides which, cross-dressing isn't illegal." "Well, I'm going to investigate that, he said." And he rang up my company the next day and said to them, "This person was stopped last night driving this company vehicle dressed as a woman. Is that allowed?"

Evelyn: And what was their response?

Jenny-Anne: Their response was "Well, it's not illegal, but we don't really want it."

Jenny-Anne: And I started getting little notes at work. Some said, "Time you saw the trick cyclist," as if I couldn't spell psychiatrist as a scientist. Or it said, "Would be a good idea to look for another job."

Evelyn: So that-

Jenny-Anne: And I also found that my line manager started countermanding all the work I was doing, because by that time I'd become a bit more senior and I had distributors who worked for me.

Jenny-Anne: And I'd started to work with some of our European people and the Americans who'd taken over our company have made me sales director for a product line in Europe, which pissed off my boss no end. Because he was senior sales manager and he wasn't sales director. And here was somebody who was a sales manager with the title of sales director as well. And it was even grander. It was Sales Director, Europe.

Evelyn: So that-

Jenny-Anne: So-

Evelyn: That kind of begs the question, what has been the impact over time of your trans ... Being a trans, on your profession?

Jenny-Anne: Well, it had a huge impact, because I did start looking for another job, particularly when my line manager started mashing up.

Jenny-Anne: I'd write letters for the secretary to send out saying, "This is what we've agreed. This is how we're going to operate the agency. Here's your contract."

And my line manager would change it without telling me. And the distributor would ring me out and say, "I thought we agreed this. Why's the contract different?" I'd say, "Yeah, we did agree that. Send me the copy because that's not what I wrote." And I'd get it back and then I'd go in and have a furious row with the boss about why things have been changed.

Jenny-Anne: And the performance from the agent would drop because they didn't feel they could trust me anymore. And I thought it's time I got another job.

Jenny-Anne: And I looked around, and one of the companies we worked with were looking for a sales manager, who, the job spec said, potentially promoted to sales director if it works out. And I got on quite well with them. And they asked me would I like to have a go at the job. And I said, "Yeah, I think I might."

Jenny-Anne: I did an interview and I told the managing director, confidentially, that I was trans in my private life. I described it as female impersonation, you know, and I liked to ... I mean, going around the clubs being me. And he assumed it was like a side profession.

Evelyn: Like a drag queen thing.

Jenny-Anne: Yeah. And I started work and I quite liked the company. But his wife, who was the company secretary, had obviously been told, because she took a dislike to me from the first day. And after six months, I was told that I hadn't worked out, my performance wasn't good enough, and they weren't going to take me on permanently.

Jenny-Anne: And I'd moved my family. And I just got them the biggest order they've ever had. I'd worked- admittedly the MD had given me the contact - but I've worked with a big company in Germany called Pierburg, who makes the carburetors, a huge amount of the automotive industry uses. And I sold them 25 sets of instrumentation for their engine-testing cells. And the company had never sold more than a couple of these instruments sets and each set was like £25,000.

Evelyn: Wow.

Jenny-Anne: So that was a huge order and the boss said, "No, that was my contact. And I did all the work for that."

Evelyn: So there's two companies with transphobia-

Jenny-Anne: Basically.

Evelyn: Both of them. Yeah.

Jenny-Anne: I then got a job with a small company in South Wales, where I was more or less allowed to run my own show. I was doing a particular line of instrumentation and they let me get on with that.

Jenny-Anne: And that worked reasonably well, but because they were a small company, the salary wasn't very good and the bonuses weren't great. And I looked for another job, which I got, it was about two years, I think, I was with the company in South Wales.

Jenny-Anne: And I got a job with a company in Hemel Hempstead, which was closer to home. And it was like a dream job being product specialist, going all over this side of the world because we sold the products for the whole of Europe, Africa, most of Asia, right out as far as India. And then the Americans took over the other side of the world. And that was just a fantastic job.



Jenny-Anne: And I got a raise from being product specialist to product manager. And then I became international sales manager with a budget of 12 million.

Evelyn: Wow.

Jenny-Anne: And I had a lovely little team of two sales people in the UK, my export sales manager, and a secretary. And we were doing this huge turnover. Remember that's late '80s, early '90s, and that was a lot of money then. The whole company only turned over about 50 million. So it was a big part of the company's revenue.

Evelyn: So what's happening with Jenny-Anne in these busy, busy days?

Jenny-Anne: Well, by then we'd moved house again to be nearer to the company. And also in between I'd been on a trans weekend, I came back, and my wife and the kids are gone. No notice, no discussion. On a little note, just saying, "I'm sorry, I can't do this anymore. Goodbye."

Evelyn: So do you think she just ... The realisation of the depths of your need-

Jenny-Anne: Yes-

Evelyn: And-

Jenny-Anne: Exactly-

Evelyn: Your journey had settled into her.

Jenny-Anne: Yes. It had settled into her that actually one day I would transition.

Jenny-Anne: Now, as I said earlier, I had promised her I wouldn't. And I didn't until after our marriage ended. So I put it back for at least 30 years. And it took me about nine months to get my family back.

Jenny-Anne: And in the meantime I'd agreed I'd go and see a gender specialist. And as usual, my parents stepped in and said, "You better go and see the family doctor." And I went to see my family doctor. And he was like, "I haven't got a clue what to do with you." And I said, "Well, I know exactly what you need to do. You need to refer me to the gender identity clinic, and this is who you need to write to." And they came back and said, "Well, there's a bit of a waiting list, but if you like to pay for a private appointment ..." And my dad said, "Oh, I'll pay for that." Because they were keen to get this issue resolved.

Jenny-Anne: And I went to see the infamous John Randell.

Evelyn: Aha. So whenabouts was this?

Jenny-Anne: And that was 1980.

Evelyn: 1980. So tell us about John Randell.

Jenny-Anne: Well, John Randell was really, in a way, strange, because as part of the appointment, he said to me, in his letter he said, "I assume you're coming in your male guise. Please bring some photographs of what you look like as your female persona." And I thought that was a wee bit

strange, because I was going to try and put a lid on it. Not to transition, but to go backwards, if anything.

Jenny-Anne: And that was my focus when I went to the appointment. And he said to me, "Well, you won't do it." And I said, "Well, can you not give me something?" And he said, "Well, I could give you electrical shock treatment, or I could give you aversion therapy, but six months later you will be back asking me to do it again, because it won't cure you." Which was exactly right.

Jenny-Anne: And he looked at my pictures and he said, "Well, you make a very nice woman. Shall I write you a prescription for hormones?"

Evelyn: Wow.

Jenny-Anne: And in those days they did that partly to see how serious you were, because if you took them, that was a level of seriousness. But if you start with it, because people who weren't really wanting to transition or it wasn't right for them wouldn't like the effect, because it basically probably makes you impotent. And it takes away all your sex drive, gives you a lot of time back.

Jenny-Anne: And I said, "No, no, no. I don't want hormones. I'm trying to go the other way." And most of the appointment was spent saying, "Look, that's silly. You're probably likely to transition at some time."

Jenny-Anne: And as I was about to go, he said to me, "Here's your script. Don't forget your script for your hormones." And I said, "No, I don't want that." And he looked me in the eye and he said, "You'll be back to see me again."

Jenny-Anne: And he was right. But it was 28 years before I went back.

Evelyn: 28 years.

Jenny-Anne: And when I got home, my mum said to me, "What did the doctor have to say?" And I said, "The doctor said I'm probably transsexual and that one day I will transition." And my mum said, "No, you're lying. He would have told you it's wicked and you mustn't do it." And I said to her, "Oh, mum, I'm sorry, but this is one we're going to have to agree to disagree on, because I know what the doctor said. And no, I'm not going to do that because I want my family back, and I'm going to try really hard to resist it."

Jenny-Anne: And I spoke to my ex. And she said, "Well, seeing as you've explained this to everybody, including our friends ..." Because our friends were asking me, "What's happening to your family?" And I explained. Most of them were quite surprised and were like, "Oh, that's a pity."

Jenny-Anne: And the person who was most supportive was one of my trans friends. Because I was totally devastated when I came home, and one of my friends came and stayed for a week to support me. But not from my family or the straight community, it was from the trans community.

Evelyn: That's why community is so important.

Jenny-Anne: Extremely important. And it's why we do a lot of the work we do with the support groups and this community house to support that.

Jenny-Anne: Anyway, we got to talk, because she said, "You've had the courage to tell our friends. We should talk." And we decided that we would move house. I would again buy a house for Jenny-Anne, and I would have reserve time. And we wrote the rules. That once a week I could go to the support group. Once a month I could have a Saturday night out as Jenny-Anne and go to the clubs, because I loved dancing in the disco. And thirdly, once a quarter I could have a weekend away, either with trans friends or with one of the organized weekends.

Jenny-Anne: And I tried very hard over the years not to use my full allocation, so that I was trying to show her that I was trying to play my part and resist. And that kept our marriage going for another 21 years. So-

Evelyn: How-

Jenny-Anne: That worked to the strategy, because every time I felt "I wish I could be me," my sensible head would say, "Well, you're going out on Wednesday night. What are you going to wear?" And I'd start planning it. And it starts then, you thinking about being yourself. Or next weekend you're having a whole weekend away and you haven't planned all your outfits yet. How are you going to get everything in order and that... your mind to go off on that. And that worked as a-

Evelyn: That's your coping strategy.

Jenny-Anne: As a coping strategy for, in the end, almost 40 years.

Jenny-Anne: Because when my marriage did break down, I and my sister were looking after our parents, who were in the last stages of life.

Jenny-Anne: My father died from, in the end, very bad cancer. He had prostate cancer and he had lung cancer. And eventually the cancer got into his bones, and he suffered a lot in the end of his life.

Jenny-Anne: And my mum got arthritis of the brain, which was very painful.

Evelyn: Gosh.

Jenny-Anne: And eventually she couldn't read for long. She couldn't watch the television for long without getting blinding headaches. So we got her lots of talking books.

Jenny-Anne: And she loved listening to Classic FM. So she had little radios and cassette players everywhere.

Jenny-Anne: And we'd go and read to her and we organised for care at home. And I just didn't feel I could load on them transitioning as well.

Jenny-Anne: But as I said to you last night, soon as it got to a stage ... My dad died first in 1996, and then my mum died in 2005. And in early 2005, it looked like she would die in the next year or so. So I went to the GP, knowing it would take time to get on the medical pathway. And in fact by the time she died, I was starting to get appointments but with the wrong people.

Jenny-Anne: But going back to what you were saying about what it cost. Well, eventually the dream job I had selling all over, part of the world, traveling and having time abroad as Jenny-Anne. Because one of the things I do is I'd explore the trans communities in all sorts of cities, hook up with people, buy clothes ... You know, just have a great time.

Jenny-Anne: And I'd worked out a way of working. Because in those days, if you travelled by air and stayed away for a weekend, the airfare was like half price. And I always thought it was a great pity that I'd fly out on a Monday, waste most of Monday traveling, fly back on a Friday and waste at least half a day flying back home. And because we were busy all week, I wouldn't see anything of the place I've been to. It was either the company offices, or the labs of the customers, or the conferences I went to to speak at, or the universities where I went to give seminars. It's always focused on the business. So I agreed with the company that they would pay for hotel at the weekend.

Jenny-Anne: ... company, that they would pay for hotel at the weekend if I travelled out Sunday afternoon. So, I had all Monday working and travelled back home on the Sunday evening so I had all Friday working as well.

Jenny-Anne: So, they'd get a whole week's work out of me and I'd get a weekend away where I was staying. And it also meant I made friends with the distributors.

And very often the person I worked most closely with would take me out at the weekend and show me the country. And if I happened to mention to them I was really interested in railways, they'd often find somebody in the company who had a similar interest and they'd take me to see the local railways.

Jenny-Anne: So, I had a great job. I really enjoyed the science, and we did real science with the universities. I had to really understand the technologies and I became like an expert. And I've got a wonderful book that a couple of my university colleagues wrote on the principles of one area of [inaudible 01:01:18] Ion-Trap mass spectrometry. That was my specialty. And one of the two professors wrote in the front cover, "To ... " using my old name, " ... the person who sold Ion Traps to the masses."

Evelyn: Excellent. So, doing all this traveling, all this exploring. I'm wondering, how was it within the wider LGBTQ community?

Jenny-Anne: Well, actually it wasn't-

Evelyn: Was there acceptance? Was there tensions?

Jenny-Anne: It wasn't too bad because I was always finding places where I was welcome. In some of the cities I went to, I sought out the street girls to get to know them and to broaden my understanding of trans. So, in Rome I met the people who stand on the street corners. I went to a wedding in Brazil and we went to Sao Paolo and to Rio and met the street girls, and they were great fun, really nice.

Evelyn: And there were trans street girls?

Jenny-Anne: Yeah.

Evelyn: Yeah.

Jenny-Anne: Yeah.

Evelyn: Excellent.

Jenny-Anne: And of course in Brazil it's much, much more open. You can buy magazines on trans people from every newsstand. You can even buy videos from the local newsstand. Some of them are a bit pornographic, but it gives you a sense of the way the community works there. But on the other hand, they have the highest rates of murder of trans people. Because it's so open, they're more likely to get attacked which is really sad.

Jenny-Anne: Meantime, at home, somebody discovered my private life and I lost my job again. And I'd risen to be on a really good salary as International Sales Manager. In the early 90s I was earning over 40,000 a year. I had a nice BMW as a company car, an expense account etc.. I had built up so much in bonuses that I had nearly £40,000 of investment in the company. We had a nice home, my family had a good lifestyle. Everything was where I wanted it to be. I had this dream job I really enjoyed. My sales team performed exceptionally well.

Evelyn: And then transphobia swept in and swept it all away.

Jenny-Anne: Exactly. And I was made redundant.

Evelyn: In inverted commas.

Jenny-Anne: And the next month my export sales manager was doing my job. On the day I was made redundant, several of the other senior managers came to me and said, "If they've made you redundant, nobody's job is safe." Because they recognised my team worked really well. And I enjoyed working with the people.

Jenny-Anne: I understood the science so I could talk properly with them and enjoy the work they were doing. And I used to get called down to the shop floor by the guys who made the instruments and they'd say to me, "We've built this instrument, it passes the specs, but it just doesn't feel right. Can you have a look at it?" And I'd run it and I'd say, "Yeah, something wrong with that. It's not quite right." And we'd eventually between us find out.

Jenny-Anne: And our company in England got a reputation for building much better instruments than the main manufacturing plant in California. And we even got to the point where some of the original equipment manufacturers were buying from the California plant and we were competing in Europe with them selling the British manufactured product. And ours would nearly always perform better.

Evelyn: So-

Jenny-Anne: So we had this great reputation for good instruments, good installations, people who knew, people who could do the applications work for the customers.

Jenny-Anne: Because part of my work was to go and look at what the Analytical Chemistry problem was, take it back to the apps lab and we'd work out a way of doing the analysis, then go back, show them how it worked or bring them into the lab and showed them it working. We then produced quotations and tenders for them if needed. They'd buy the instrumentation.

Jenny-Anne: I'd go along with the installing engineer as the apps chemist and teach them how to do it. And if it didn't work it was down to me and I'd say to the customer, "The buck stops here. If this doesn't work, you can rely on me to fix it or give you your money back."

Evelyn: So, you've lost several jobs through transphobia?

Jenny-Anne: Yes. And when I lost that one, nobody wanted to employ me because it was starting a bit to be known in this narrow area of the industry. And I ended up getting a job selling space for a warehousing company, which to her credit was through a friend of my wife's at the time. And I went to having this job that was about a quarter of the salary I'd been earning, bonuses were 1% of turnover. And they didn't have a very big turnover so they weren't particularly good. And the boss was always very reticent to pay the bonuses.

Jenny-Anne: But the thing that was attractive for me was it was a company selling warehousing space to the fashion industry. And I spent a good part of my life visiting the designers, going to the fashion shows and the fashion exhibitions, to try and persuade them to use our warehousing and distribution for their products. Because we had bonded warehousing so they could import stuff and not pay the duty until it was actually sold to the boutiques and the chain stores they were selling to, so we had that advantage.

Jenny-Anne: But my boss was so mean that he wouldn't let me go into London early in the morning because the train fares were more expensive. But the problem was most of the designers and the owners would work from about 7:00 till 12:00 and then go and play golf. So, unless you were on the golf circuit or you went to see them in the morning, you couldn't do business with them.

Jenny-Anne: And in the end I ended up paying the more expensive train fare myself because I wanted the business.

And I also shifted some of our business because I saw immediately part of the problem was the fashion industry is very seasonal. So, for part of the year we'd be furiously busy when they introduced the spring and then later the winter - autumn collections, and the rest of the time we'd hardly have any work and have to lay off people.

Jenny-Anne: And I said, "This is really inefficient." So, I went off in two directions. I started us doing work wear. So, what we did was we stored all the uniforms and work wear for big companies like Marks & Spencer's, like one of the airlines and so on. And then whenever they got a new employee, we'd send them their uniform.

Evelyn: Excellent. And so did you stay with that company for long?

Jenny-Anne: And I also got into non-perishable food stuffs.

Evelyn: Oh.

Jenny-Anne: Because again we could store that and again it was something else. And we got into doing also goodie bags for the supermarkets. People like Tesco's would send us about four big 40-foot containers of different products and we'd make up 25,000 carriers with goodies in and then they'd give those out in the supermarkets to tempt people to try other products.

Jenny-Anne: And that was all great fun doing that and, if necessary, I'd go on the shop floor and fill the goodie bags along with everybody else. But the wages were awful, they really were. And I could see that because the guy who ran it wasn't very good at looking forward and doing different things, this was likely to flounder in the long run. Although we did get a little bit better.

Jenny-Anne: And in the meantime, I was struggling a bit because the salary was so low and I looked for another job in science. And I had time not to take the first job that was offered, which I didn't. And eventually I got a job near Manchester with a company again selling high-value instrumentation. And they'd know I'd worked in mass spec which is very expensive stuff. Our most expensive instrument cost over two million. Just for one instrument. We didn't sell many of those.

Evelyn: I bet.

Jenny-Anne: Our average sale was about 2/300,000. And they took me on and I got a nice new car, I got twice the salary straightaway, and a much better bonus scheme. But I had to move to the northwest.

Jenny-Anne: And because my ex didn't want to move I ended up buying the little house that I've still got in Northwich out of the redundancy money from the previous company. Because when I got made redundant, because I'd been such a high-level performer I got over 30,000 in redundancy. And I got 35,000 for selling my shares in the company because I wasn't allowed to keep them now I was no longer an employee.

Jenny-Anne: And they were really naughty. They forgot to tell me that, deliberately, and then somebody in the company rang me up and said, "Hey, don't forget to claim your shares and sell them, otherwise you lose them." And I had three months to do that. So, I found a broker who'd buy the shares for me and sell them on and I got 35,000 out of that. So, I got over 60K in redundancy.

Jenny-Anne: And when I challenged the company, because it wasn't real redundancy, the lawyer said to me, "The problem is, if you win this, the tribunal will either make the company take you back, and as you've got a job with another company do you really want to work for a company that doesn't want you?"

Evelyn: Want you, yeah.

Jenny-Anne: "And secondly, if they order that they pay you compensation, you've already been awarded far more than they'd give you." And I said, "Oh, that's a pity, but I do think they need to be taught a lesson." And I said, "Look, this is being paid for on my house insurance. How about we push this right to the end and then withdraw on the morning of the

hearing?" "Oh," he said, "That's a good idea. That works for me because I get paid."

Evelyn: Paid.

Jenny-Anne: "I don't have to work very hard, but I can make them work really hard. And then on the final morning we'll say, 'Okay, you've had your lesson. We're giving up now.'" But what also happened was both the MD and the sales director, who I reported to, were retired early for mismanagement.

Jenny-Anne: Because the year I left the sales went down to eight million and the next year they were only two million. Because what happened was my sales team, the two guys in the UK left quite quickly, the guy who'd taken over from me had a nervous breakdown because he couldn't cope with the pressure of the job. And our secretary, who was the glue in the team, left. And in fact-

Evelyn: So, it all went to pieces.

Jenny-Anne: ... on the morning I got made redundant, my secretary was more upset than I was and I ended up comforting her. Anyway, we moved on and I got this new job. My ex wouldn't move and that's when things started to really go wrong. And my ex told the kids not to come and see me where I was living because I'd be dressed all the time, which was nonsense. I couldn't because I still hadn't transitioned at work. And I worked for that next company for 10 years before they found out, when they took over one of the previous companies I'd worked for.

Evelyn: Oh right, yeah.

Jenny-Anne: It couldn't go more wrong than that and I lost my job yet again. But by then my marriage had ended and I'd started to see Elen by then. So, things were stabilising. And because the little house in Northwich cost a lot less to run I wasn't strapped so much for money, although I was still having to pay my ex an allowance as part of the fiscal settlement. And the company then told any prospective employer I applied to, "Don't employ this person, they're trans." Eventually-

Evelyn: And what year are we now?

Jenny-Anne: This was 2005.

Evelyn: So it's-

Jenny-Anne: So it was around the time, A, my mum was dying, and B, I decided to get on the pathway so it was a traumatic time. And I strung out the redundancy for an extra six months, because I knew the employment law quite well and they hadn't done things by the book. And I also pleaded I needed time because mum was dying.

Evelyn: It's also before the Equality Act, but after the Sex Discrimination Act had the Gender Reassignment Regulations added.



Jenny-Anne: Oh it was.

Evelyn: Yes.

Jenny-Anne: Exactly.

Evelyn: That was '99?

Jenny-Anne: Of course, they didn't admit the real reason. But they couldn't show me a good rationale as to why I needed to be made redundant. Because my sales figures, and I remember I'd had to go back down to be a product manager, I was turning over I think something like between 700,000 and 800,000 a year. But I had a 30% margin on my business. So, I was earning the company £2 or 300,000 a year and they were trying to make me redundant.

Evelyn: Crazy.

Jenny-Anne: Oh, totally crazy. And I'd got them some really prestigious projects. We had a project with British Nuclear Fuels at Sellafield which we made £100,000 profit on that one project.

Evelyn: Wow. But in your personal life, you'd met the lovely Elen.

Jenny-Anne: I had. Because I'd moved to the northwest, by then, quite a long time ago, 10 years previously, I'd got even more into the groups in the northwest. And I'd started to help by that point, Unique had been formed in 2002, and I went to the first meeting to support them and got put on the committee.

Evelyn: Explain Unique.

Jenny-Anne: Well, two of my friends, Jane and Barbara, Barbara used to live in Stockport and was a friend from what had by then become Northern Concord, the TVTS group had morphed through years. And we used to go to Northern Concord and Barbara was often on the door.

Jenny-Anne: And she also introduced me to the church I now go to, which I'll talk about in a minute. And Barbara wanted to have surgery. She had transitioned and was living full-time, or nearly full-time. For some bits of her family she still presented as the other person.

Jenny-Anne: And she used to invite me round for tea and we had quite a nice friendship.

And eventually she met Jane from north Wales and decided because she'd now retired she'd come and live in north Wales because she'd heard the local hospital did the surgery.

Evelyn: Aha.

Jenny-Anne: And indeed our local hospital near Rhyl, Glan Clwyd, had Christine Evans, somebody who did the gender reassignment surgery from about 1996 to about 2003.

Jenny-Anne: And both Jane and Barbara had their surgery locally and I went to see them while they were in the hospital. And when they came out there was no group to support them. So, they decided they'd start a group and they got a little bit of Millennium funding because it was 2002 now. And I went to the first meeting, mostly to support Barbara because I didn't know Jane so well at that point.

Jenny-Anne: But I thought I'd go along and support them and I took time off work to go and do it. And they said, "Oh, we need you on the committee." And there was somebody from the police there. And I was starting to get a little bit of trouble at work about my identity... They started I think getting suspicious. And I wanted to talk to them about what the law was and what they could or couldn't do, because by then the gender reassignment regulations had come in on the Sex Discrimination Act.

Evelyn: That was 2004?

Jenny-Anne: No, that was 1999.

Evelyn: 1999, yeah.

Jenny-Anne: It was before Gender Recognition Act 2004. And I'd lost the dream job in I think it was '93 so that protection wasn't there. In fact, employers used the SDA as a way of getting rid of trans people by claiming that they treated trans men and trans women equally badly. And that actually held up in tribunal and in court.

Jenny-Anne: And it was only when a good friend of mine took Cornwall Council to the European Court of Human Rights for dismissing her when she transitioned at work in an educational job, which wasn't pupil facing, it was simply organising education. And she's now an Emeritus professor in the deanery of London University for NHS England. So, a really senior person now.

Jenny-Anne: And she's one of the people who founded the Parliamentary Forum on Gender Identity. She took Cornwall Council to the European Court and they said, "This is a nonsense. This is a human rights issue," and eventually forced the British government to add the gender reassignment regulations to the Sex Discrimination Act which then protected trans people at work and in Education.

Jenny-Anne: So, an employer could no longer say, "You're trans. I get to fire you." They had to dream up some other excuse. And it really was dreaming it up. Anyway, I went along to that meeting. I wanted to talk to the police. And the person there said, "No, no, I want to talk to you because we're just starting this trans awareness program for north Wales police." Because they'd really taken on board the Stephen Lawrence report which said the police were institutionally racist.

Evelyn: Racist, yeah.

Jenny-Anne: And they also, the police were like, "We need to really take on diversity," and being LGBT was one of the strands they wanted to have a go at. And I got interviewed in the police headquarters by the deputy chief constable.

Evelyn: Ooh-er.

Jenny-Anne: And it was about the first time I'd ever been to a meeting like that as Jenny-Anne. And I remember going in the car to police headquarters. There were all these police cars and smartly uniformed people everywhere and I very nervously parked my car in the back and a friendly officer said to me, "Oh, go over there, madam, and ring the bell and they'll attend to you."

Evelyn: Aw.

Jenny-Anne: And I was like, "Oh, perhaps I can do this."

Evelyn: Do this, yeah.

Jenny-Anne: I walked up to the front door and a guy was just coming out. He saluted me and said, "Madam, press the buzzer there and they'll attend to you."

Evelyn: Aw.

Jenny-Anne: And I pressed the buzzer and they said, "Oh hello, who are you?" and I said, "Oh, I'm Jenny-Anne. I'm here for Roxana Nugent."

Oh, they said, "Oh yes, Jenny-Anne. We're expecting you. Come on in," and they were all very friendly. And Roxana, who was the training manager, appeared and she said, "Come on, let's go and have a cup of tea first."

Jenny-Anne: And we went to the canteen, which was very busy, and she said to me, "Will you be all right if I go and get the tea? Because I've noticed some of the guys looking at you." And I said to her, all big and bold, "Do you think they fancy me?" And she laughed and she said, "You'll be all right. You sit here and wait for me." And not only did we have an interview with the deputy chief but we then had lunch in the chief constable's dining room.

Evelyn: Ooh.

Jenny-Anne: And I thought, "Wow. These people really are for getting on top of trans."

Evelyn: It's those little touches that mean so much.

Jenny-Anne: Absolutely. And I went to the first meeting where they introduced the new trans training, and my job was basically to tell my story and to give them an idea of how to deal with trans people and to work with them in a reasonable way. And again the deputy chief was there and he said to all these senior officers, "Everybody is going to do this training because we all need to do it, and I'm first in the classroom."

Evelyn: Aw.

Jenny-Anne: You know, saying, "This has come from the top and we take this seriously and-

Evelyn: Lead by example.

Jenny-Anne: ... I am going to lead by example." And it really worked well and we've been doing that training now for, what, **18** years. And Elen and I still go in and do the new recruits for their trans awareness, but it's much more relaxed and most of the people have a much higher level of knowledge and ask really important and difficult questions which is great. And we've even had, in some of the sessions, some of the officers coming out as either trans themselves or having family members who are trans.

Evelyn: Excellent.

Jenny-Anne: Which is great. And most of the other people are like, "Oh wow, that's really brave. Thank you for telling us." Not, "Oh my God, I don't like that." So, it's turned completely. And we find the police in north Wales are really good to work with.

Jenny-Anne: Quite often the equalities and diversity manager will ring me and say, "We've had this case, Jenny-Anne, and this is what we're thinking of doing. What do you think?" And they nearly always get it right. Or I can give them a little bit of advice on how to perhaps do things better.

Jenny-Anne: And if we have problems in the community they always come and help us, very often by simply reminding people of what the law says. Which is like a big hint, like: "If you don't, then action might be taken."

Evelyn: Yes of course, it works both sides.

Jenny-Anne: It does. And I think one of the best ones they ever did was we were having a bit of trouble years back with some of the pubs, either refusing to serve trans people or controlling which toilet they could use.

Jenny-Anne: And one of the diversity officers simply got lots of the club owners and the publicans together and said, "Look, we need to remind you of what the Equality Act says, and this is the way you should behave and this is what should be done under the Equalities Act. And please remember that when your license comes up for renewal, we have to write a report for the licensing authority." And they said no more and there were no more problems.

Evelyn: Yeah.

Jenny-Anne: Basically the iron hand in the velvet glove.

Evelyn: We're getting towards the point when you're stepping down from the world of work, are we?

Jenny-Anne: Yes. Having had the companies put off employers, one employer, who I worked with as a distributor so I knew the people quite well, said, "Look, we need a product manager for the product line we distribute for you. Would you like to work for us? We know you're trans. All we're interested in is can you do the job."

Jenny-Anne: So, I went for interview and they were reasonably happy about it.

And in the two years I worked for them I increased their sales over tenfold, so yes I could do the job, and I generated so much work they had to employ somebody else. But they turned out to be-

Jenny-Anne: But they turned out to be transphobic and wouldn't work with me and they were also misogynistic.

Jenny-Anne: Because I remember one morning I rang them up and said, look, I've got a customer who needs one of the demonstration sets of equipment. You're in the area, would you mind taking them along the kit so they can try it out.

Jenny-Anne: And they said to me, Oh no, I'm not doing that. That's a woman running the lab and they'll never buy this sort of stuff.

Evelyn: Shocking.

Jenny-Anne: And I said, well, I think I know better. Please take it. No, I'm not going to do that. So I took the kit along.

Jenny-Anne: They had it for a couple of weeks and I knew because I'd done my homework, that the standardised tests they were doing for the automotive industry, and they had another company in Germany.

Jenny-Anne: In Germany, they used their equipment to do these tests. So, I'm on to a winner here and I went along and I was very friendly with them.

Jenny-Anne: They liked the care that I gave them and I made them a good deal if they bought the demo kit. So I didn't have to take it out and they said, yes, we like this and can you also write us a quote for our South African company because we need some kit out there as well.

Jenny-Anne: So I got two orders out of it, which my so-called colleague had written off completely just because it was a woman running it.

Evelyn: It was a woman running it, yes. So things go wrong there then.

Jenny-Anne: Yes, I was getting reasonably close to retirement and I had sort of suggested that I might do slightly less work.

Jenny-Anne: Especially as we got a new person and I was 62 at the time and they said, well, we think because of what's happened, you should just retire and we'll just use you as a consultant.

Jenny-Anne: So they retired me and never used me as a consultant. And I was going to fight that because I thought that it was wrong, especially as I'd written their diversity policies.

Jenny-Anne: Which had helped them get orders in some of the universities who look at how good you are at diversity. Because one of the ways of improving diversity is to look at what your supply chain does as well.

Jenny-Anne: Because you're using public money. So you can under the Equalities Act I insist I have equal or better equality's policies.

Jenny-Anne: Ours was so good, the university just said, oh yeah, that's fine and ticked it off instantly. So that was a bit ironic.

Jenny-Anne: I was going to take action against them. And that's the point at which Elen said: "oh Jenny-Anne you've worked so hard.

Jenny-Anne: Just give an up and come and be a kept woman." And she did help me through the next three years till I got my pension.

Jenny-Anne: Because I didn't get either my occupational or my national insurance pension until I was 65, because at that point I hadn't got gender recognition.

Jenny-Anne: And I didn't get it, although I started working on it until the day I was 65. So I never got it early. Although according to the European law, I should have been paid it from the time when I had my surgery, which was six months earlier.

Jenny-Anne: So they still owed me six months pension.

Evelyn: So you started the hormone treatments at the age of 59?

Jenny-Anne: 59 well, actually slightly earlier because what happened was once I got involved with Unique, which became the transgender network in North Wales.

Jenny-Anne: My two friends who ran it used to give me the ends of their oestrogen treatment. So when they got their new oestrogel or pump pack, they'd give me the previous one that wasn't quite empty.

Jenny-Anne: Because you get enough oestrogen for 40 days and you get a new pump every month. So there's 10 days left basically.

Jenny-Anne: But being a chemist, and I did quite a bit of pharmaceutical chemistry in my professional life as we worked with a number of pharmaceutical companies on developing their applications work.

Jenny-Anne: And some of the work was to do with the clinical trials they were doing, I was very aware of side effects.

Jenny-Anne: So I started off on a very low level of oestrogen, like a quarter of what you normally apply, because I wanted to make sure that there were no side effects.

Jenny-Anne: And it was enough to make me feel better, but not enough to really cause much in the way of body changes. And so I started on an oestrogen around 2000 / 2001.

Jenny-Anne: So when I went to the clinic in 2008 because it took that long from going to see the GP to get into the clinic, I'd already been on hormones for seven or eight years.

Evelyn: Gosh.

Jenny-Anne: And when I lost that last job, I went from being on a decent salary, to being on less than 8,000 a year. And Elen helped out.

Jenny-Anne: And then we got the money to buy this house. So that was very helpful. And I paid Elen back. But I went to the clinic in March, 2008 just at the point I was about to lose my job.

Jenny-Anne: But I had said I'd do one last tour in Ireland for them with the mobile lab. And I went to the clinic and then flew to Belfast as Jenny-Anne. That was the first time I'd used my passport and gone out of the country as Jenny-Anne.

Evelyn: And what did the passport officials think about that?

Jenny-Anne: Well they were "oh okay". I was really surprised they didn't stop me. Because I had got my case with me so I could've gone to the loo and changed.

Jenny-Anne: But I didn't want to.

Evelyn: No, of course not.

Jenny-Anne: And I was determined to go as Jenny-Anne and for my first appointment in the clinic, because I didn't want them in any doubt about my intentions.

Evelyn: Is that the clinic in London?

Jenny-Anne: Yes. I went to the London clinic because my referral was from Cheshire anyway. And when I moved to Wales, I deliberately did not move my GP registration.

Jenny-Anne: Because I wanted to stay on the pathway in England. Because I was already aware of how bad it was in Wales. If I moved to Wales, I'm going to put it back like 10 years.

Evelyn: And did you see John Randall again?

Jenny-Anne: No, by then John had died and it was James Barrett was running the clinic, but I didn't see James. I'm glad because I'd already had one or two run ins in the work we did with the NHS and James.

Jenny-Anne: So I saw Andrew Davis who in those days when they came and got you from the waiting room, if you hadn't done the legal document to change your name, they called you by your old name.

Jenny-Anne: So there I was sitting there as Jenny-Anne and this guy comes out and calls out on my old name. And I'm thinking, do I ignore this because that's not me or do I want my treatments?

Jenny-Anne: So when he called it the second time, I said, okay, that's me, but I really wish you wouldn't. And he took me along to the consulting room and he said, well I'm sorry, but that's the thing we have to do.

Jenny-Anne: Make sure your name is changed for next time and from now on, unless you don't do it we'll use your proper name.

Jenny-Anne: And so in that first appointment I was Jenny-Anne. And by the time I went next time, they had my change of name document.

Jenny-Anne: I made sure everything was changed and Andrew was great because at the end of each appointment he'd just say to me, right Jenny-Anne, what do you want us to do?

Jenny-Anne: And I was like, well can I have my hormones and he was : "no, because we need to do two blood tests and you need to see two people."

Jenny-Anne: But I'm sure once we've done that, and he asked me, are you taking hormones?

And I said yes, as a chemist I am. And this is what I've done. "Oh," he said "actually that sounds quite sensible. Why don't you go on doing that? And eventually we'll take it over."

Jenny-Anne: So I was quite surprised, because I expected them to say, no you've got to come off it so we can do the baseline bloodtests.

Jenny-Anne: But I think my level was so low it didn't really matter. And on the second appointment they did give me my hormones. And not only did they give me the hormones, they gave me the androgen blocker as well.

Jenny-Anne: And they gave me Finasteride, which is a mild anti androgen. It's used for prostate cancer. So I sort of wanted it because of my dad's history of prostate cancer.

Jenny-Anne: But I'd also found out it has to, for me and for other trans people, really good side effects. It gives you Gynecomastia, breast development in men and it also knocks out the dihydrotestosterone, that destroys the hair follicles.

Jenny-Anne: So it stops you getting male pattern baldness and it stops you losing your hair. And as you can see I've still got a good head of hair-

Evelyn: Very good head of hair.

Jenny-Anne: ... 73 so that really worked for me. And I'm still on Finasteride, because I don't want to lose my hair. The downside is that it suppresses your testosterone so low that it affects other metabolic function.

Jenny-Anne: So for instance I'm always feeling cold even when it's hot which is why I wear a scarf a lot of the time. Because my chest gets really cold.

Jenny-Anne: And then I just sneeze all the time, and it also it doesn't suppress the tremor that's inherent in my family.

Jenny-Anne: Which normally runs only in the female line. But since I've been on oestrogen I've developed it and my mom had it, my grandma had it and you can see it in their writing in their old age as well. And mine is just as bad.

Evelyn: So you're on the pathway.

Jenny-Anne: Yes.

Evelyn: When did you have your surgery?



Jenny-Anne: I got my surgery in 2010 so relatively quickly. I started in the clinic in March, 2008. And I had my surgery in October, 2010.

Jenny-Anne: I could have had it in September but we were due to go on holiday, so I put it off.

Evelyn: So how did you feel when your body matched you?

Jenny-Anne: Well that was really interesting because once I got on to hormones properly and I had at that point transitioned, because once I lost my job again, it was like what's the point?

Jenny-Anne: There's no reason why I shouldn't transition now. And I woke up one morning in late 2007, because I finally had to go in 2008 and I said to Elen apart from going to work, I'm not going to be that other person that anymore. And she said to me, "okay dear."

Jenny-Anne: And that was the end of it. And I transitioned then and the final days at work as well. So the boss had to come and meet me as Jenny-Anne and they were okay about that.

Jenny-Anne: But I did do that Irish trip as the other person, but it was the last time I worked as that other person. And then once I'd settle down at the clinic, surgery didn't seem so important anymore.

Jenny-Anne: It was like, yeah, okay, when it comes, it comes. And I've been at the clinic about a year and about six months on hormones.

Jenny-Anne: And my clinician said to me, he said, right Jenny-Anne, do you think you're ready for your surgery? And I was like, "oh, oh yeah, I suppose so yeah, why don't we investigate that?"

Jenny-Anne: And he said, "well, it'll take another year because you need to get a second referral and it'll take you a year to get that appointment."

Jenny-Anne: And he was right and I didn't get the appointment and until February the next year, so just under a year. And I saw Penny Lenahan, who within 10 minutes said to me, well, I'm going to refer you it's dead obvious you're on the right track.

Jenny-Anne: What should talk about for the rest of hour? And we talked about the community and what she wanted to do in the future.

Jenny-Anne: And I then got my funding reasonably quickly because it was a new financial year in April. And as soon as I got my funding, I chased the secretary for the surgeon, I made an appointment to see the surgeon.

Jenny-Anne: And the surgeon did very little and then he had quick physical inspection, he said, yeah, plenty of material to do what I need to do.

Jenny-Anne: You don't need any hair removal. I just need to check you understand what you're doing. We had talked about that and he said, okay, that's fine.

Jenny-Anne: Take this letter to the hospital. And I thought it was, I had to go in and see somebody else now, but it was actually to Admissions and they

opened the letter and they said, right, when do you want the surgery? We've got appointments in September.

Jenny-Anne: And I said, what date? And I said, no, no, I'm on holiday then can we go a bit later? And they booked me October.

Jenny-Anne: So I went away on the same day with my surgery booked. I rang Elen and I said, I don't believe what's happened today.

Jenny-Anne: And even then I didn't get excited. I was like, oh good, I can plan for that now. And like in the weeks, just before surgery, all my friends were saying, aren't you excited Jenny-Anne?

Jenny-Anne: Why are you not telling us all the time" I'm having my surgery, I'm having my surgery." And I said, well, to be honest, I'm having it not because I think it will make a huge change to me, but it will make my body congruent.

Jenny-Anne: So if I need intimate personal care and I am getting older, people won't laugh at me because my body will match my identity.

Jenny-Anne: And it'll mean I don't have to take the anti androgen anymore and it'll make it easier to get gender recognition.

Jenny-Anne: So there are lots of positives, but I'm not that excited. Well, when I did go to hospital, I was reasonably excited on the day I went.

Jenny-Anne: I had surgery, the next day when I woke up, it hit me like a brick wall. I woke up in this incredible state of euphoria and I sort of felt down my body and was like, yeah, it's gone.

Jenny-Anne: And it was like, oh wow, this is amazing. And I was just so happy. And I still have some of that euphoria, which is now, oh what, nine years later almost.

Jenny-Anne: And it's still there. It's just incredible. So don't believe people when they say it didn't have much effect. It does. I'm really glad I had it.

Evelyn: After all those years.

Jenny-Anne: After all those years and then of course thought I should have had this as a young person. It would have made such a difference.

Jenny-Anne: But then I think again and I think, well I would have missed having my children, I would have missed all those friends and colleagues.

Jenny-Anne: All the work I did over the years and I'm proud of the stuff I did because it did help people and some of it was really useful to helping people with health care.

Evelyn: So what do you think that your journey has given you in terms of insights and understandings that you might not have had had you been born physically female?

Jenny-Anne: I think the big insight it gives you is to value people for who they are and the biggest gift you can give to anybody is to just accept them for who they really are.

Jenny-Anne: And not try to make them the person you want them to be or trying to fit them into stereo types, because everybody has elements of both genders.

Jenny-Anne: Everybody is a mix and apart from one very rare genetic variation, nobody is a hundred percent male or female. And everybody should have the opportunity to express the other bits of their identity and their character.

Jenny-Anne: And by doing that you make them much happier, more efficient and much more useful people because they can explore ideas that maybe if they had to be that stereotype would be denigrated.

Jenny-Anne: And I say that when we do the DRM work with the young people...

Evelyn: DRM?

Jenny-Anne: Divert, sorry, Diversity Role Models. And sadly we have to do it in England because DRM isn't supported by the Welsh government.

Jenny-Anne: Which is really sad. We keep trying and hopefully it will eventually be in Wales, but Estyn, who are they? School Inspectorate in Wales, is awful at diversity and accepting LGBT.

Jenny-Anne: Whereas Ofsted the School Inspectorate in England are much better for it where you get points extra for being good at diversity. I say to the young people, if somebody comes out to you as LGB or T or one of the other plus bits.

Jenny-Anne: Firstly say to them, thank you for having the confidence to tell me because that took real courage to tell me.

Jenny-Anne: And secondly support them as the person they are. That's the biggest gift you can give them is to support them as who they really are.

Evelyn: So diversity role models is only one of the many, many organizations you've been really active in since you've retired.

Jenny-Anne: Yes.

Evelyn: We have a list?

Jenny-Anne: Yeah, which is much too long. And I sometimes wonder if by, as it were, spreading thinly, I'm not as efficient in some things as I could be.

Jenny-Anne: But I just see there is so much work to be done in so many different areas. And we continually as a group here in North Wales and that group that you'll get to meet this afternoon in Manchester Trans Forum, we get contacted by so many different people needing support and so many organisations seeking help and support.

Jenny-Anne: That there is just, it's almost endless work to be done. It's just when you think you sorted one area out, it then uncovers another.

Jenny-Anne: I know one of the things I'm very interested in is older people who are trans and get dementia and forget they've transitioned.

Jenny-Anne: And how do you support them? Or somebody who's outed by their partner, who's got dementia?

Evelyn: So there's a whole area around older?

Jenny-Anne: Yes.

Evelyn: Trans people and around the youngsters?

Jenny-Anne: Yes, absolutely around the young people there's all this area around parts of society trying to block the young people getting their treatments.

Jenny-Anne: And they don't seem to think about the consequences of not treating. Amongst our young people, one in two will have attempted suicide or committed extensive self harming.

Jenny-Anne: If we can stop that happening, surely that's really good because that person while they're in that phase are not concentrating on growing up, they're not doing their schoolwork properly.

Jenny-Anne: They're missing opportunities to go to college, university or other careers and they're being funneled into being members of society that needs supporting rather than members of society who contribute to it.

Evelyn: And so you're part of the parliamentary committee?

Jenny-Anne: I'm part of the parliamentary forum on gender identity and we lobby the government and other organizations to change the law and to be more inclusive.

Jenny-Anne: And one of the little stories I like to tell about that, that I was really pleased with, maybe about five, six years ago, one of our members drew our attention to a group in London called Hiking Dykes.

Jenny-Anne: So you can imagine what they do. And they like riding their motorbikes as well. And they'd written an exclusion on their website saying something like, we don't accept trans people in the group.

Jenny-Anne: So we got our chair. You've also met Liz Barker to write on the official House of Lords paper to the group pointing out that this breached the Equalities Act.

Jenny-Anne: But let me tell you, they couldn't change their website fast enough. And you may know who led the pride parade this year on their motorbikes with signs supporting Trans People.

Evelyn: You got Hiking Dykes are out there.

Jenny-Anne: Exactly. And they supported it, which was wonderful. I saw that and I felt, oh, that's just so wonderful.

Evelyn: It makes such a difference when there's a support from within the wider community.

Jenny-Anne: Absolutely. And from just that little seed of saying to them and making them think about what they were doing. And on the other hand, the

other thing that's really good with the parliamentary forum is we quite often get senior civil servants to come along and talk about changing regulations or laws.

Jenny-Anne: And we have the opportunity that if things don't work out to get, Liz to ask awkward questions in the House.

Jenny-Anne: And the privilege the House of Lords has, it can demand a government spokesperson to come and reply to the question and although they don't have to, etiquette says they send somebody.

Jenny-Anne: And the civil servant knows, that if that gets asked and the minister gets it in the neck, guess who going to get jumped on next?

Evelyn: Well, of course.

Jenny-Anne: So they tend to say, please don't ask the question, can we sort it out amongst ourselves?

Evelyn: So things get resolved.

Jenny-Anne: Yes.

Evelyn: Thinking of the pride this year in 2019 it was a very different story to last year 2018 where there were some lesbians who were well, demonstrating against their 'trans sisters' as they shouldn't be.

Jenny-Anne: Yes.

Evelyn: How did that make you feel?

Jenny-Anne: I was pretty disappointed. I think it's very sad, but that part of the community has taken on this idea that trans women are still men wanting to take power and to attack women.

Jenny-Anne: Without understanding that trans women have the same ethos and the same goals and discrimination as cis women and that no, I didn't have male privilege when I had to play that role. I always felt, I was the outsider.

Jenny-Anne: But I did find by adopting a character that was more understanding, was more wanting to resolve problems rather than being confrontational.

Jenny-Anne: I actually got on much better. And particularly my female customers liked me.

Jenny-Anne: And no, I don't expect to go into a woman's space and dominate her. Nor am I interested in attacking women. And if they'd done their homework, they would know an awful lot of trans women actually end up asexual because you take so much testosterone blocker.

Jenny-Anne: I have almost no interest in sex now, and as I said earlier, the upside is I've gained an awful lot of time when I'm not thinking about it.

Jenny-Anne: It was actually one of the things we discussed before I had my surgery. Because they was going to change the dynamic in our physical relationship.

Jenny-Anne: And Ellen was really good. She said to me, look, I can see how much you need this. Yes, it will change things, but we'll cope.

Jenny-Anne: And we have.

Evelyn: Absolutely.

Jenny-Anne: So yes, I'm very sad and it's sad, but the people don't look at real evidence. The problems they talk about, are solutions looking for non-existent problem.. It's rather like, as one person said in America, it's like space bestiality. It sounds awful, but in practice it doesn't happen.

Jenny-Anne: And if you look at the evidence, the incidence of trans-women attacking women is extremely low. It's much lower than the incidence of cis women attacking other cis women

Jenny-Anne: So when they did a survey, two friends, forensic psychiatrists, did a survey around the world of the impact on bathrooms of trans women over, something approaching 20 years, they could find less than 10 incidents. And when they looked at them, there were only two real incidents. There were almost no incidents where men dressed up and tried to use the legislation that didn't apply to them.

Evelyn: Yeah, that's always-

Jenny-Anne: But didn't actually do anything other than going in the wrong space. And the few incidents I know of that happening in prison, like in the last 10 years, because I work on the advisory board for prison and probation. The statistics I know are again, way less than 10 attacks have happened in the last 10 years of trans women attacking cis women in the female estate.

Jenny-Anne: Whereas, in a single year in the female estates, there are over 500 attacks of women on women. No, nearly 800 attacks of women on women and there are over 500 attacks of female and male prison officers attacking women. And of those, 80 in the last year for statistics resulted in the women being hospitalized in a local NHS hospital, not in the prison hospital even.

Evelyn: So serious attacks.

Jenny-Anne: So where is the real problem? They don't talk about that, nor do they talk about the trans men, most of whom live in the female prison because they're frightened of living in the male prison because, obviously, somebody who's essentially still female bodied, being put in a male prison. You can imagine what's going to happen.

Evelyn: Mm-hmm (affirmative). Scary.

Jenny-Anne: It is. And all these men who line up to support women in excluding Trans Women are men who are, in my opinion, worried by trans women because they have something in their personality that means this challenges their identity or sexuality and they are frightened by it.

Evelyn: So you are involved in role diversity model for the youngsters. You're involved in looking at the older LGBT, particular trans-

Jenny-Anne: Yes, we do research on health and social care, particularly for trans, but then I also get involved in some of the LGBT research and I'm part of the academic network that started like that. So I often get asked to go and speak at conferences and seminars in the universities where I learn an awful lot myself because I'm always learning. You never get to a point when you know it all, you can't, because there's always new stuff to learn, and some old stuff I haven't learned!

Evelyn: And you're involved in prisons?

Jenny-Anne: Yes, I'm on Trans Advisory Board for the Prison & probation service and we also visit people in prison and when you train prison officers and we help to write instructions and guidance and we look at how it's working out and change the guidance accordingly and this week a new Framework is released with changes for the more revolutionary one that was introduced in 2016 by running it and real learning from it, we've updated it now and I had a very small hand.

Evelyn: And you run Unique and TransForum.

Jenny-Anne: Unique, TransForum, & TSMU. We also run the Trans Positive Group in Crewe for Body Positive, although somebody from TransForum is taking that over now for me, and they ran the last meeting very successfully and I also do the Admin for TSM group in Cardiff, which is the support group there, which I only get to occasionally if I'm in Cardiff, if on the night we have it.

Evelyn: I can't imagine. Lolling around, that's laziness Jenny-Anne.

Jenny-Anne: And I'm on the Diversity Steering Group for North Wales Police and the scrutiny panel for the CPS and Flintshire council and on the Trans forum for the police and I'm on the Gender and Sexuality Panel and also the Equalities panel for the Countess Hospital and for the Betsi Cadwaldr local health board. And I'm on the Independent Advisory Group for the British Transport Police (BTP).

Jenny-Anne: And just in case that doesn't keep me busy enough, I'm an elder in the church I belonged to where we have an LGBT+ congregation and quite regularly I lead service or celebrate communion.

Evelyn: Wow. I don't know what you do with your time, really. Sitting around.

Jenny-Anne: I still try to find time for my hobby, which is railways, as you know and also we love visiting the Welsh countryside.

Evelyn: Fantastic. So over time, looking back, there's been shifting legislation. Obviously there's still a way to go.

Jenny-Anne: Yes.

Evelyn: Do you feel that attitudes have really shifted? Do you feel that trans women are being heard?

Jenny-Anne: I think for the whole LGBT community and of course being trans gets included in things like civil partnerships, the Equalities Act, same sex marriage, all these things impinge on the trans community too. Things have definitely got better from when I was first out in the 1970s and for all of us, but there is still a way to go and we still have a society that includes people where it's very hard to change that hardened attitudes against LGBT+ and particularly for trans people, because we are still seen by some people as being deceptive.

Jenny-Anne: I present as a woman and this minority still see me as basically male and that I'm trying to cheat or deceive them about who I am. And there are still Trans and gay people, particularly some from my generation and older, who don't understand that being gay has been completely decriminalised now and they still think there's some difficulties. They won't report hate crimes to the police because they feel it'll implicate them in something illegal.

Evelyn: And do you feel that attitudes towards trans people are kind of lagging behind a little bit in terms of the change of attitudes towards wider community?

Jenny-Anne: Yeah. When we first started doing awareness training back around 2000, we used to say we were about 10 years behind. I think maybe that gap's narrowed a little bit, but the pendulum for the whole of LGBT+ population has swung back a bit, particularly in the last year since have Putin and Trump and now Johnson have been in charge. I'm very pleased the previous conservative government was much more LGBT+ and particularly trans friendly than we expected it to be.

I would never have thought back in 2010 that the conservatives would actually get same sex marriage on the statute book.

Jenny-Anne: So all credit to them for doing that and for doing the largest LGBT+ survey ever. And also the largest trans survey ever on the consultation on the GRA.

Evelyn: The Gender Recognition Act.

Jenny-Anne: Gender Recognition Act, yes, on the review from the original Act from 2004.

But I do think at the moment because of all the fuss that's being made about it, and it's stupid because as trans people, we've had self-identification since the original Equalities Act in 2006, when you had to be on a medical program to be supported. And since 2010, when you didn't need that medical support in Transitioning to qualify for the protected characteristic of Gender Reassignment

Jenny-Anne: And has the world caved in? No. Has the rate of assault by trans people on cis people increased? No. If anything, it's gone down, but the number of attacks on trans people has gone up dramatically because hate crime reporting that's increased. Much of that increase is real extra crimes and some is just people reporting who wouldn't have done so before.

Jenny-Anne: So things are better, but we still have a long way to go and I'm very concerned about the way things are swinging back at the moment because people whose way of working doesn't rely on evidence are



swinging public opinion by making trans and some LGB+ people into villains when we're not.

Evelyn: So when you were thinking of me pottering up on the train to Rhyl yesterday, were there any issues or things that you thought you might like to talk about that we haven't touched on?

Jenny-Anne: I think there's a couple of things. One is you asked me and I didn't answer - what it costs me to be me. In terms of financial cost, I reckon it's cost me quarter of a million because I lost my job, I lost seniority, and I lost pension. So my pension's about a quarter of what it should be and I want to emphasise I'm not complaining. I'm just saying that's reality.

Evelyn: State of affairs, yeah.

Jenny-Anne: It cost my family because I couldn't provide for them as well as I wanted to. It cost my friends because I lost friendships over it, it cost my family because eventually half my family doesn't talk to me and my ex and my children didn't ask to be with a transgender person. I think it's sad that they can't come to terms with who I am, but that wasn't their fault. It cost me my home, it cost me most of my possessions, it cost me many friends and colleagues.

Jenny-Anne: I'm sad, but I'm not cross about that because I am so much happier being me. My life is so much richer, far richer than the money I've lost. I have more friends than I could ever cope with and I feel my life is worth something now. I wouldn't say it was worthless before, but it just wasn't in the right phase. It's so much more ... it's like changing from living in monochrome to living in glorious technicolour, you know, it's almost over the top. It's like life can't be this good. But it is. And I think it makes me more useful as a citizen as well because I'm able to give so much more back to the community too.

Evelyn: Well, it's evident you're doing so much.

Jenny-Anne: Yes, but I feel that's if you like, it's almost a payback for me being able to be me.

Jenny-Anne: The other thing I would like to just say something about is my faith, because I struggled with that for all the years, between being a Catholic and being trans and I had great difficulty in talking to God about it. Initially I struggled to go to church as Jenny-Anne because that was almost like cheating. And it was only when my friend Barbara who knew that I was trans and had a faith, invited me to go to a group called Sibyls, which is the Christian trans group. And I ended up being the Chair for a while.

Evelyn: Surprise, surprise.

Jenny-Anne: So that really helped me and the first meeting I went to, I remember meeting the person who ran the group because in those days we didn't have a committee.

It was an autocracy really, and the person who ran it, Jay Walmsley was really good. And I met Jay and I said to her, "I'm not sure I should be here because I'm just a cross dresser, not like most of these people

who've transitioned." And she looked me in the eye and she said to me, "Jenny-Anne, who are you trying to kid?"

Evelyn: And she was right.

Jenny-Anne: And she was completely right, of course.

Evelyn: Another community that's welcomed you in-

Jenny-Anne: Completely! And then I was with Barbara one Saturday because we used to visit each other. It was a long before I knew Elen and we didn't have a physical relationship, but we had a close friendship. And when Barbara was struggling with the local kids being obnoxious, she'd come and stay with me for a few days. And she said to me one day, "Jenny-Anne, you ought to come to my church. It's an LGBT church." And I said, "Oh, that sounds interesting. Can I go as Jenny-Anne?" And she was like, "Don't be stupid Jenny-Anne, it's an LGBT church. What are you thinking of?" So anyway, we went one Sunday and it was at the chaplaincy at the university and I felt, "Oh, I've been here before" and we went up, you got big steps getting to the entrance and the pastor Andy was standing at the door and he said, "Oh, Hello Barbara, who have you brought along?"

Jenny-Anne: And he said to me, "Hello, who are you?" And I said, "I'm Jenny-Anne." And he said, "Oh, you're very welcome Jenny-Anne, go along in and get settled down. There's lots of people, I'm sure they'll talk to you." And from that moment I was just Jenny-Anne, another woman in the church.

Jenny-Anne: And then after we'd had our service, we went down to have tea and coffee in the social room and the social room was the room that we used for the Trans Group 20- 25 years earlier. And it was like, "Goodness, this is déjà vu."

Evelyn: Yeah, full circle.

Jenny-Anne: And they hadn't redecorated it. It was exactly the same room. And then we had the little Trans Awareness Day at church and I told my story. I started going on church outings and eventually Andy made me the organizer for social events and we went on visits to other churches, to other services.

We had church dinners where you went to somebody else's house and they organised a dinner where you'd pay a fiver, that went into church funds.

Jenny-Anne: And Barbara and I started going and we always dressed very smartly and the women started saying, "Goodness, we're going to have to up our game. You're easily the smartest women here." And I got known as the smart lady from Cheshire.

Evelyn: Proper Order.

Jenny-Anne: Absolutely. And then Andy asked me to start doing readings and I started reading a lesson and he said, "Would you like to do the prayers?" And I thought, "Well, I don't know about that." And then he said to me in about 2002 or 2003, I'd been going to church three or four

years then, he said, "Next elections, you should put yourself up to be on the board of directors of the church." And I looked at him, I said, "Aw, Andy, I don't think I'm good enough to do that."

Jenny-Anne: And he said to me, "Jenny-Anne, do you think I would have asked you if I didn't think you were good?"

Evelyn: You were good enough.

Jenny-Anne: "Now go away and think about it." So I put myself up for election and you have to do a little election statement, which I wrote, and I felt, no, I'm not gonna make this. And everybody voted, bar one person, for me.

Evelyn: Of course.

Jenny-Anne: And that was me because I didn't think I should vote for myself. And Andy said, "Jenny-Anne, of course you should vote for yourself" And I've been on the church board ever since and that helped me dramatically because it meant I was out in public a lot more as Jenny-Anne. Also I'd got the strength of the church group around me. So if anybody challenged me, they had to challenge the whole group. So very little happened.

Jenny-Anne: And the other churches accepted me as who I was and it gave that confidence to me to be out and about just as me. And it took away that need I previously had of whenever I went anywhere new, I'd first go and explore as the other person, find out the lay of the land, made sure I didn't need to interact with people who weren't friendly when I went. From having got to the church, and going with the church, I now just go and do whatever I want, just like anybody else.

Evelyn: Yeah.

Jenny-Anne: And face any challenges.

Evelyn: So finally, because it's nearly lunchtime and the lovely Elen will be in the kitchen and twiddling her thumbs thinking where and when are they going to appear? So thinking back to that other person, what would you say to him now after all your years of experience?

Jenny-Anne: I'd say don't be afraid to be who you are because yes, it's tough to come out and it's tough to face the world, but there is support out there, and believe me, it will cost you a lot less to do it now and it will be less tough than doing it later because I remember that fateful evening I first went to the support group and I got ready, and I went downstairs, and as I was locking the back door to go out and get in my car, I thought, "I can't do this. This is too hard." My sensible scientist head came on and said, "Well Jenny-Anne, yup, you can not do it this evening, but next week it will be 10 times harder."

Jenny-Anne: And I was lucky it was dark, so none of the neighbours saw me. I walked up the pathway, got in the car, drove to Manchester, parked the car behind the place where the group was. I very nervously went up to door and rang the bell and somebody flung the door open, who was obviously trans, and said, "Oh hello, who are you?" And I said, "Oh, I'm Jenny-Anne."

Jenny-Anne: "Oh," she said, "Come in and have a cup of tea." And that was that, I was part of the group.

Evelyn: Yeah.

Jenny-Anne: And I sat down and I thought, "That was easy. It's a good thing you decided to go." And it was another step that just said, "If you take this into your own hands, it becomes empowering and if you can get to that point where you think I am me and I deserve to be here, why should anybody else tell me who I am or I am not? I am me." But that does take support and I more than acknowledge all the help and support I've had over the years. It's partly why I do the work I do, to give back something for all the support I got.

Jenny-Anne: And I would definitely say to that young person, get the help you need and do it now. Don't be afraid because you'll find that most of the fear is your own internalised fear.

In real life it's not nearly as bad as you think it's going to be and the more confident you are, the more you smile and engage with people, the more they'll engage and support you or won't challenge you because they know, because of the way you've acted, you're not an easy person to challenge. And it's very hard for somebody to be nasty to you when you're being nice to them. And sometimes, it doesn't happen often now, but in the past I've occasionally spotted a situation developing. So for instance, I went and did some awareness training from a housing association in a subsection of Manchester, and to get back home, I needed to go to the tram station, jump on the tram back into Manchester, and then get the train home.

Jenny-Anne: And as I was waiting on the platform, there was a young-ish guy there who I could see was looking at me, and I was thinking "You're just working your way up."

Evelyn: Working up the courage.

Jenny-Anne: So I walked over to him and said, "Excuse me, am I on the right platform for the Manchester tram?" And he was like, "Oh, oh, oh, y-yes, yes." And I could see he thought, "Hmm, I'm not goanna mess with this one. Either she's not trans because a trans woman wouldn't have done that, or she's a very strong person."

Jenny-Anne: And nothing happened. I got on the tram, smiled at the guy as I got off, and that was that. But it is finding that courage. People say to me sometimes they think I'm very brave. I don't think so because it's something that drives you to be you.

Evelyn: And it's been a real privilege to hear your story and you come across as someone with enormous courage and warmth and someone who's very giving into the community, so it's been a real privilege to hear your story today.

Jenny-Anne: Yes, and some of that, given, is from my Catholic background which I completely acknowledge because my parents sent me to a Christian brothers school who tried to beat the female side out of me. Well, they nearly succeeded, didn't they? But what they did succeed in doing was giving me a really good education and when we moved to a different

place and I went to a different school, I found far from being the clown at the bottom of the class. I was nearly at the top of the class, and by working a bit harder, I was able to get reasonable exam results, which got me into the 6<sup>th</sup> Form and then finally I got into to university.

Which if I hadn't had that Catholic upbringing, I don't think I ever would have made it.

Jenny-Anne: And that Catholic upbringing says that you always look after other people first. You know, your needs come second. I think in a lot of cases that's right, but not if your trans. You need to put yourself first to be the person and that was my real big mistake, not being me because it hurt other people. What I didn't understand was not being me was hurting them even more later on when I was me.

Evelyn: Mm-hmm (Affirmative). But since you've become yourself, you've then been in a position to give back to so many others and I think there must be many, many in the trans and wider LGBT+ community who have a lot of reason to be very, very grateful as I am today for this lovely interview.

Jenny-Anne: Thank you.

Evelyn: So thank you very much, Jenny-Anne.

Jenny-Anne: Thank you, Evelyn. It's a pleasure to work with you.