

Beat: Vips

Olympic gold medalist Bruce Jenner comes out as transgender woman

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USPA News - Former Olympic gold medalist and reality television star Bruce Jenner on Friday came out as a transgender woman, telling ABC's Diane Sawyer in an exclusive interview that he had struggled with gender identity for decades. "For all intents and purposes, I am a woman," said Jenner, who won gold in the decathlon at the 1976 Summer Olympics.

"People look at me differently, they see you as this macho male, but my heart and my soul, and everything that I do in life, it is part of me, that female side is part of me. That's who I am." Jenner, who is well known for being on the reality TV show 'Keeping Up with the Kardashians,' added: "I was not genetically born (as a woman). As of now, I have all the male parts, and all that kind of stuff, so, in a lot of ways we're different, but we still identify as female. And that's very hard for Bruce Jenner to say, because, why? I don't want to disappoint people." It began when he was about 8 or 9 years old, when he felt the urge to try on a dress, which, upon trying, "just made me feel good," he said. Jenner added that he first came out as a transgender woman to his first wife, Chrystie Scott, in around 1973. "I didn't go heavily into it back then. ... I said these are my issues, this is what I deal with, I do a little cross-dressing, I do a little of this, a little of that, you know, it's gonna be fine, we'll work all of this stuff out," he recounted. The former athlete also revealed taking female hormones in the 1980s for nearly five years, which caused his fear and frustration to subside. He further underwent surgery on his nose and hours of painful electrolysis to remove his beard and the hair on his chest. But Jenner said he is not gay, despite self-identifying as a woman and having been married to three women in the past. "No, I'm not gay. I'm, as far as I know, heterosexual. I've never been with a guy, I've always been married, raising kids." When asked whether that makes him a lesbian, he said: "You're going back to the sex thing, and it's apples and oranges." Jenner also rejected any suggestion that his coming-out as transgender is a publicity stunt, saying that he hopes to be able to do good and raise awareness. "What I'm doing, is going to do some good, and we're going to change the world," he said. "I really, firmly believe that, that we're going to make a difference in the world with what we're doing. And, if the whole Kardashian show and reality television can be that foothold into that world, to be able to go out there and really do something good, I'm all for it. I've got no problem with that." Jenner's first two wives both released statements to ABC News in which they expressed their support for their ex-husband. His third wife, Kris Jenner, refused to comment for ABC's report. "Someone who has lived 65 years of his life as the wrong gender has every right to live the last quarter of his life as his authentic self. I support him and so hope the world can too. I pray for his happiness for the rest of his journey," Chrystie Scott said.

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