

# King

transgender woman, 63, Quezon City,  
currently not employed outside the home

**A simple life is much  
happier if there is  
work and savings.**



## **Growing Up Trans And With A Disability**

I lived in Quezon City with my family my whole life. I am the fourth child in a brood of ten. At five years old, I was fond of playing games with girls. At seven years old, I was wearing my sister's dresses so I knew then that I was a transgender person. I am very thankful that my family accepted me as I am.

I have a disability, having been afflicted with polio when I was young. I did not finish high school due to my physical disability. The walk to school was long, I found it difficult to wear shoes, I could not go to school wearing slippers, and I always felt dizzy during classes.

At age 16, I dropped out in my fourth year of high school when my mother decided not to send me to school anymore. She asked me to help her sell dry goods at her small market stall. People in the community praised me for being a big help to my mother with her business and household chores.



## Work And Family Life

In the late 1980's, when I was in my early 30s, I landed a job as an assistant cook at a fast food eatery in Quezon City. My gay best friend who was the cook offered me the job. After a three-year stint in the eatery, my mother asked me to stop working so I could attend to chores at home and cook for the family (in the Philippines). She was already living with my older sister in the United States. My three siblings had families of their own. So, I took the role of caregiver for my five younger siblings, two of them in high school and two in elementary school. I prepared their food, did marketing, and cleaned the house. In the 1990's, my gay best friend set up an eatery and catering business, and he employed me. This was my source of income for eight years until my best friend died. I fell into a deep depression and stopped working for about 20 years. Three years before the COVID-19 pandemic, when I was 57, my cousin hired me as a cook at another eatery and I worked there for three years.



## Intimate Relationship

In 2000, I met a guy and he eventually lived with me and my family for 16 years. They accepted us as a couple. But we had to part ways in 2016 when I learned that he got a woman pregnant. I never had a relationship after that.

## Reflections On Growing Older

When I look back to my younger days, I was happy because I had work and income, but now I am a bit sad because I do not have employment or income. I am now a senior citizen but I do not receive support from the government as a senior citizen. During the COVID-19 pandemic, I lost my job when the eatery closed and I found it difficult to pay for my daily expenses. I did not receive government aid as a senior citizen or a person with a disability. I only received emergency aid given to people affected by the pandemic.



I was not able to save money because almost all my earnings went to buy food for my family. I was a huge help to my family then. I allotted just enough money for my transportation, going to and from my work.

I am busy now taking care of my 84-year-old mother after she returned to the Philippines from the US. Although my mother receives her pension which we rely on to support both our daily needs, this will not be reliable in the future. I have difficulty walking because of my disability and I have cardiovascular disease and hypertension. I am worried about my health especially since I do not have money to buy my maintenance medicines.

I do not have a smart cellphone, Facebook, finance accounts with GCash/Cebuana, or a bank account. I joined a senior citizen group but I am not a member of any LGBTI group. I am very thankful for this project (with EnGendeRights and Outright International) because I was able to connect with LGBTI organizations and the Quezon City Social Services Development Department.

### Message For LGBTI Youth

As I look back on my youth, I wish I started saving money when I was young. It is difficult to grow old with no savings. My advice to young people is to study well so that you have a good future.

