

MANY VOICES

WORDS OF HOPE FOR PEOPLE RECOVERING FROM TRAUMA & DISSOCIATION

Vol XXII, No.6

December 2010

ISSN1042-2277

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Anger Management, Soothing Yourself

... and More

Holistic Healing

Healing is a song so young/old
it is silently full of words
and raw sounds rising
from the deep

Healing is dream visits when
yesterday your legs are blue
from too much walking

Healing is remembering what
the mind boxes in and the soul
needs to grow so dark is melted
down in heat and light

Healing is using hands filled with
shame to form containers of earth
parts of trees things discarded

Healing is waking to see day
through tears reflecting
sun, moon, breath, heartbeat

Healing is tasting
bread, sand, water between toes
air on the tongue while speaking
silence, sensation and
howling dogs remembering wolf
saying no for the first time and
meaning it
saying anything in any way with
gesture, touch, paint, music, earth,
drum, absence, presence

Healing is salt in water that purifies
to amplify your soul doing it
your way your way
your way

By Living Earth

MV



Rage!

In L. Lee
August 23, 2010

Here I am writing; she is retreating to the background, allowing me to speak. I have waited decades to speak. This is an unbelievable task for her. At the age of one, on her first birthday to be exact, she went inside and stayed there for 40 years with no memories of her own. Should she be angry about this? One mind could not hold the physical and emotional pain inflicted on it so in God's infinite wisdom I was one of many who were magnificently created to hold these memories and feelings. Each time she steps back into her mind and allows one of us to come forward she is frightened of never returning. Is it appropriate for her to be angry about this? A better question is, should she be allowed to express the truth of this anger? In all of our therapeutic sessions we have never once felt it was appropriate to do so. Yet, we are told we have a right to be angry. Each time we have tried to trust that this is true, our behavior was deemed inappropriate. I am not saying I want to purge all of my feelings in an out of control manner. I want the freedom to express the truth about what I hold.

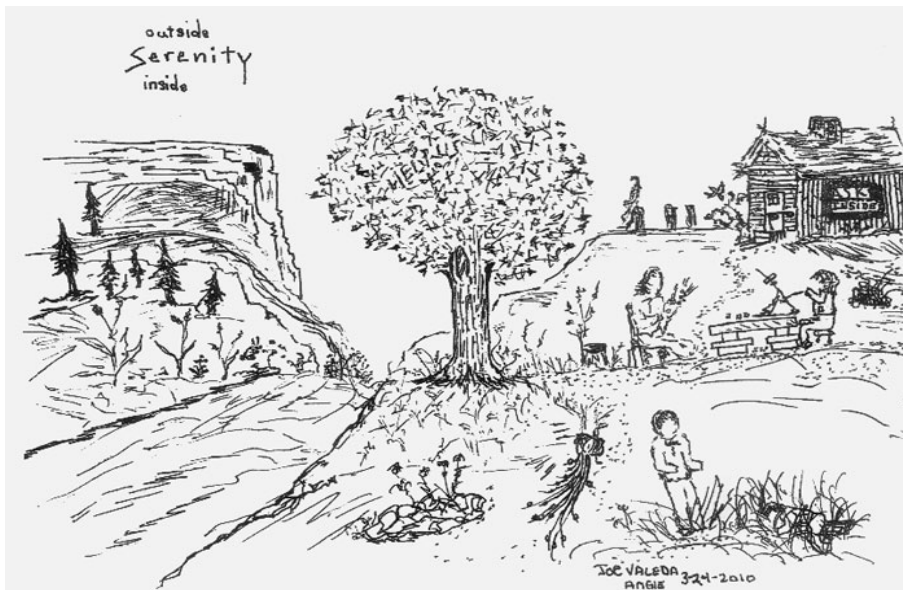
My name is Rage. I feel like I am a mystical creation because I am feared by many. Within my expression people react negatively to everything

about me. People want me to go away. They say I am inappropriate and unnecessary. I've been called spoiled, selfish and totally inappropriate. I have been taken to therapy in hopes of making me go away. I've been told I've needed to heal from myself.

I say hogwash to this insanity. I know I'm nothing to fear. I couldn't be more thankful to be living in an inner family who is learning to embrace me, for I hold the emotion of the truth of the crimes committed against us as a child. Without me there is no healing. I have yet to come across one person who can replace my name in the face of such horrific abuse. In my opinion, I believe it is impossible for us to heal without safe, contained access to the emotion of rage. If a young child must secretly and silently hide the crimes committed against them, only to grow up and find out their emotions are inappropriate, where is the expression and the healing? If we were allowed to express our true emotions when our body was that of a one year old, what would be the acceptable behavior? Would we have been told our behavior was inappropriate? I think not, and yet it is!

I have always compared the rage I hold with fire. Fire can be a very scary thing for it can burn down buildings or entire forests. It can destroy lives. I have always believed I was the one to blame for the many losses we've had through our lives. Trying to learn how to squelch the fire inside of me has been my greatest struggle. This is no longer our goal. I have learned to embrace my beauty. My beauty lies in the emotion of my voice. So I ask. Should we be angry at the loss of her 40 years? The answer is a big resounding yes. Should we be allowed to shout this on a mountain? Absolutely! It is in the speaking we are free. I now see myself as a beautiful bond fire. I am sitting on the beach in the moonlight, encircled and embraced by my inner family. It is within my expressions I am safely contained, loved and respected by them. They are comforted and warmed by me. We sing and we laugh and the children roast marshmallows. We come together as a family where we will forever hold true to the promises we have made to each other. We will continue to speak and we will never let our fire go out.

MV



Thankful

Thankful today

as I sit

and

listen

to

grief

By Rhonda H.

MV

Trust

Trust travels down the road.
The bus is full of children.
The bus is a body that contain the children inside.

A car runs a red light crashes in front of the bus,
The driver of trust flies into the windshield,
The windshield cracks to many pieces
But holds together as one.

Trust continues down the road
This time someone else drives
Looking through a fractured window
The driver can not see her route too well.

Suddenly a loud crunch
The bus side swipes a 16 wheeler
Children fly all over,
Windows on the right side cracks
Into million pieces,
The children are battered and bruised

Trust continues on
Now shaken and confused
Someone else drives
It's one of the children

The wheels of the bus hit a curb
Trust tips on to its left side
Everyone inside is flung into the windows
Now cracked into billons of pieces

Someone comes along
Offers to put the bus up right
The bus now on its 4 wheels
Children battered and bruised,
hide under their seats
No one wants to drive
Trust seems broken

To repair trust the driver
Learns to become more aware,
Aware enough to put a adult in the driver seat
Aware the children need protection,
seatbelts will do
Aware everyone must work together
In order to see where we are going
Cooperation is a must
for everyone on the bus
Aware there will be accidents
no matter what we do
Aware it is good to be prepared.

By Joanna

MV

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—Lynn W., Executive Director/Editor



From Shame To Victory

By L. Lee

Back in 1980 I thought I had the perfect life. I was a wife, a mother of two beautiful children, and lived in a quaint little home, a fixer upper. I began working part-time (mother's hours) when my children started school. I was there in the morning to make them breakfast, get them dressed, and home at the end of the school day. Evenings were typical ones ie: dinner, baths, homework, a little television and off to bed. Life couldn't get any better.

And then I received a phone call. It was my father, calling from California. He said he was coming for a visit. The last time I saw him was in 1966; I was 13 years old when he left. One would think I would have been hesitant, or curious, or even angry. I was not; instead I was elated. I told him I couldn't wait to see him. He was finally going to meet his grandchildren. I began making lists of what I needed to do before he arrived. I shopped, I cleaned, and I prepared my children to meet their grandfather. In my mind this was going to be a glorious celebration.

During the visit we sat and talked for hours about the memories of my childhood. We drove around to all the places where I had grown up. He showed me where he worked and told me how he loved taking me there to show me off because he was so proud of me. I always knew I was daddy's little girl and it was so nice to have that feeling again. It was the one thing I had missed all those years he was gone.

I began to feel a little odd as the visit continued. One time in particular, as we were walking down the street of my childhood home, I began seeing pictures in my mind that made no sense to me. I saw a child being sexually abused by a man. I had no idea who this child was or what these pictures meant. As quickly as the pictures came they left and the feelings went with them. I continued to enjoy my trip down memory lane with my father and we had a wonderful time.

As the visit was coming to an end we began preparing to take him to the airport. I did not want him to leave. We drove to the airport in silence. We said our goodbyes and as I watched him board the plane, I tried to think about all of the future visits we would have now that he was back in my life. I had no idea that this visit would alter my perceptions and change the course of my life forever.

Weeks had passed since my father left and life went on as usual until one day while I was preparing dinner the same pictures I saw that day with my father flashed through my mind, only this time they were clearer. Once again I saw a young child being hurt. My heart started racing and I started to sob. All I could think was *No, it can't be*. This time I saw the face of the man; it was my father and the face of the little girl was me. In what seemed to me to be the very next minute two weeks had passed and I had no memory of them. This was the beginning of my journey of healing. It was the beginning of a long hard road struggling to recover the painful memories of my past.

Flashbacks, anger, pain, and memories hit me like a ton of bricks. I was angry and I struggled to stay in control. I was trying to maintain my marriage, my role as a mom, household chores, working part-time and managing a social life. It became completely overwhelming. On top of that I began to realize the wide spaces of lost time I was experiencing were not normal. I began to feel like I was a complete failure at managing my own life. I didn't have anyone to talk to and I knew I needed to find a good therapist... someone who could help me sort out all the confusion.

I began searching, and that too was a long and difficult process which also ended in failure. Ultimately my life was out of control. I was completely stressed and overwhelmed. I decided to admit myself into a women's program in a psych hospital. It was in this hospital I was misdiagnosed with Borderline

Personality Disorder. I was released from this hospital six weeks later to return to my life.

I had no aftercare plan in place and I found myself back in the same situation. I once again had no therapist, no support system and no one to talk to except this time I had a label and I was now considered mentally disabled. I was angry and I believed I had a right to be. I knew I wasn't disabled. I knew I would have to carry around this anger for the rest of my life unless I found a therapist who would hear me and understand me. I continued my search and once again I met with failure. My anger continued to build and become completely unmanageable. It was affecting every aspect of my life. My life continued to fall apart. My marriage was crumbling and my children were caught in the middle, struggling to make sense of their own worlds.

I realized I could not help them so I decided to leave and continue to try and get help for myself. I will never forget the day I walked out of my home for the last time. I left sobbing with my head hung in shame. I was filled with guilt. I felt like a failure as a mom. I never thought I would find the strength to live with this guilt. I knocked on my sister's door and she took me into her home. She helped me find the courage to sign myself into my second stay in a psych hospital. This time I was properly diagnosed with M.P.D. (Multiple Personality Disorder), now called, D.I.D. (Dissociative Identity Disorder). When the therapist in the hospital asked me if I heard voices in my head and I told her I did it helped release some of the anger I had been carrying. I was finally heard. Upon release from this hospital I resumed my search for a therapist who understood this diagnosis. I finally succeeded and I have been with her since 1993.

Slowly I began to accept this diagnosis and my life began making sense, but the guilt of failing my

children still haunted me. I continued to blame myself for being angry which caused me to bury my anger once again. I believed had I not been angry I would have my children in my life.

To date I am still filled with a great amount of anger, but my therapist hears me and understands me. She has helped me to understand that my anger was appropriate and in fact saved my life and she continues to acknowledge my strength and honors my anger. She helps me go to the deep dark vulnerable places I need to go in order to feel safe and protected and also continues to help me feel strong and capable.

In the process of writing this article I thought it would be a good idea to ask her what her thoughts were about ways I manage my anger. She said the following:

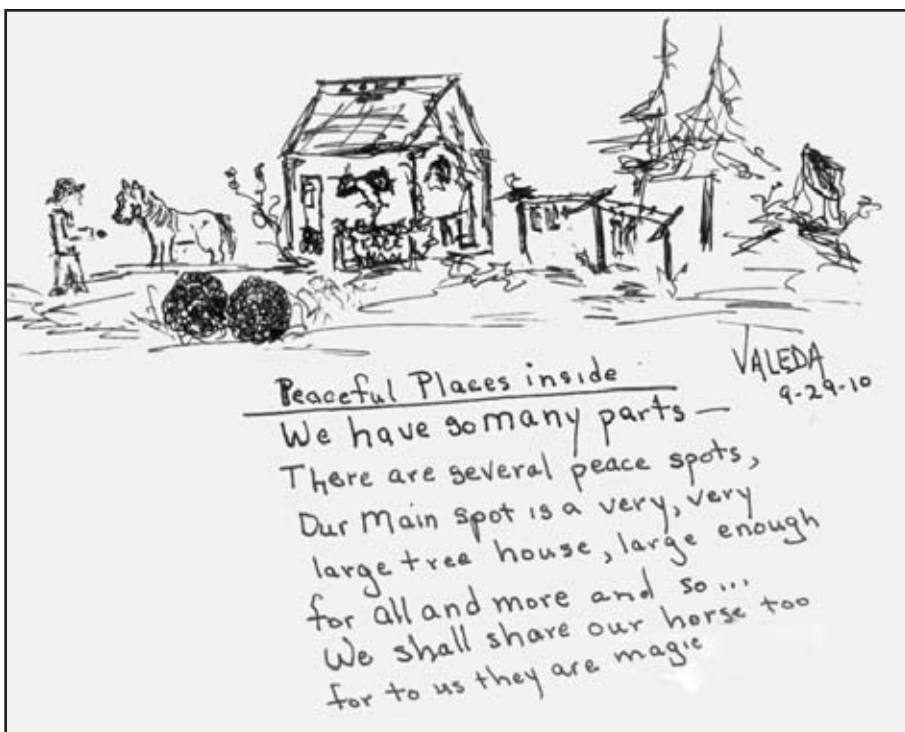
“There are many kinds of day to day things that you do to manage your anger. You breathe when your overwhelmed, you rest when you're tired, you write when you're trying to understand your life. But across the board the struggle for you has been in not being heard. Being heard helps you to do those day to day techniques for managing your anger and your life. Everything seems meaningless to you if you're not heard.”

The most effective way I manage

the anger inside of me is journaling. Through the years my journal has been my best friend. It is always there. It doesn't matter what I tell it and it handles my harshest rage. It never holds me responsible for being inappropriate or uncaring. It allows me to reach the deep places of loneliness, abandonment, and helps me feel safe. It never forgets what I say. As I sit at my kitchen table, pen in hand, and write, the words flow from my mind onto the page and my tears are allowed to fall. I am able to reach the hurt, buried deep beneath my anger. I am able to sit quietly and listen to those who live inside me. Little did I know then that my father's visit would be the greatest gift he ever gave us. The gift of tapping into our own anger. Today I can say I am we and together we are strong and we are capable.

The most powerful healing piece for us is the knowledge that everything seems meaningless if we are not heard. Listening to ourselves and acknowledging our own anger is the very thing that gave us courage and brought meaning to our life. Never in my wildest dreams did I ever think the one thing that caused me to hang my head in shame and guilt was the very thing that would help me hold my head up high.

MV



A Poem

This is what is going on,
 This is what is.
 Where am I going?
 Where have I been?
 It seems my life is a jumble of things,
 It seems that my life is a puzzle.
 How can I help when I can't grasp the problem?
 How can I heal when I can't grasp the problem?
 Is healing for real or only an illusion?
 Is healing for here or only for another place?
 I hear the cries of those who are hurting.
 I hear the pleas of those in pain.
 My heart reaches out and it aches to help,
 But how can I help when I can't grasp the problem?
 Is healing for real or only an illusion?
 I cry to the Creator of All and pray....
 Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
 What is Thy will? What is heaven?
 Are we to ask? Are we to know?
 What I think at times is that this might be hell.
 But then I hold an innocent baby, I watch a beautiful sunset, I hear a child's laugh, and I rub a soft kitten against my cheek....
 And I know this cannot be hell, hell is the end... this is a beginning.
 As painful as this life may be...
 This life is a beginning... a beginning of forever, where ever that ever might be.
 And I know...
 That what we do in this life will effect where we spend forever. Even if forever means we cease to exist.
 I do not want to leave this life with only regrets and pain left to others.
 I want to leave a legacy of love and forgiveness.
 And even if I do not totally grasp the problem,
 I know part of the solution is to follow this code.
 Do onto others as you would have them do onto you.
 Give love and you will get love...
 Give pain and you will reap pain...
 So where ever I have been and where ever I am going...
 No matter how jumbled my life may seem...
 I can still love...
 And that is a good thing...

By Multijudy

MV

Therapist's Page

By Oliver French, MD

Oliver French MD is a Board Certified Psychiatrist who has treated hundreds of people suffering from Dissociative Disorders since my training with Cornelia Wilbur, Jeffrey Brandsma, Arnold Ludwig and other pioneers in the field. He presented several papers at the annual meetings of the ISST-D and taught a course in Dissociation at Upstate Medical University in Syracuse for several years. For the past 15 years he has been working as a psychiatrist at three correctional facilities for adolescents in upstate New York.

Blacking Out

For the last several years I have been privileged to work almost exclusively with adolescent boys and girls in a correctional facility. Many, if not most, of these youths dissociate, and they present the problem in many different stages. There are gradations in the degree to which people dissociate. Working with adolescent boys and girls I have come to believe that dissociative disorder probably starts as dissociated rage, because in some this is the only dissociative symptom.

I believe that dissociated rage usually occurs in people whose bodies respond abnormally to strong emotions. For these people negative emotions, such as anxiety and depression, are so painful that they try to avoid the pain in every possible way. One way to avoid this pain is to transform every negative emotion into anger. When this anger builds, it becomes rage, and rage is so intolerably painful for people with this condition that they routinely black it out. Blacked out rage is a serious social problem, but no one knows how widespread it is, because mental health professionals do not routinely ask about it.

When people don't know what they are doing they have no control over their acts. I know of at least one case of murder that happened during a dissociated rage. A child was threatened by his father, a man who had previously injured the child when enraged. The child grabbed a gun to keep the father at bay, and as that child's acute fear turned into rage he blacked out. He pulled the trigger while blacked out and killed the father. When he came out of his blackout he saw that the father was dead, and realized he had shot him. Because

blacked out rage is not on the psychiatric or judicial horizon, he was never asked if he remembered pulling the trigger. I asked, and he didn't. It was too late. He had already been convicted of murder.

The problem with blacked-out rage is that, though much is known about the way it originates and its biology, the pieces have not been put together. So here's what I have been able to gather from the research.

Some newborn infants react to stress more intensely than most people. This is not necessarily a genetic trait. It can be due to hormones circulating in the blood stream of a mother who herself overreacts to stress. When stress in the mother creates an excess of these hormones, they cross into the fetus's blood stream and affect its brain. Evidence from laboratory animals also suggests that a similar brain change can occur in a baby whose mother leaves it alone much of the time. It seems likely that a baby or toddler left alone in a hospital for a period of time may develop the same problem.

In these infants and toddlers the stress reaction is powerful, painful, frightening and prolonged. I believe that they learn to counter it with anger at this early age. Think temper tantrum. I also believe that this is the time when these children learn to black out the pain. What seems to happen is that the whole forebrain – the part neurologists call the executive brain, the part that makes decisions, exercises judgment and considers the consequences of actions – is cut off from the rest of the brain, which rages without those vital functions. In the laboratory removing the cerebral cortex, which includes the conscious part of the brain, of a cat can create a model for this state—the so-called thalamic cat, which shows exactly such uncontrolled and undirected

rage.

Putting together information from various sources I believe what occurs is this: People learn to control some of those blacked-out rages. They do this by using other parts of their brain to function, while isolating the raging part. They are still angry most of the time, but the rage is not conscious and does not turn into action. Instead they may have severe headaches. Some people hear this rage as an angry voice. These people appear to be very unemotional most of the time, but sometimes they become quite emotional. Because they isolate parts of their brains in this way—as can be shown by brain imaging—these people often don't know they are angry. They have developed what we call dissociative states, including at times Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID). Because their emotions change so often, they may be given the diagnosis of bipolar disorder.

Actually people with this condition are very anxious. Their anger is just a reaction to their constant fear. Often their anxiety expresses itself in other ways. They have panic attacks; they may have phobias; they have nightmares, and quite often they are anxiously compulsive. If they experience a disaster or abuse they are liable to develop post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), but in their case the condition does not begin with the trauma. Trauma feeds into their constant anxiety, aggravates it and shapes it.

Sylvan Tomkins, a psychologist at Princeton, found that emotions are tied to memories. Thus, if you are angry, you will remember all previous occasions when you were angry. Since in these highly emotional people anger covers up fear, frightening memories can recur with the anger. When I talk to the angry parts of dissociative people, they tell me that

they must withhold frightening memories from other alters, confirming Tomkins's observation.

Many professionals believe that treatment requires that a person suffering from PTSD face the trauma that provoked the condition. Since the underlying problem is panic, forcing a patient to confront a frightening experience will result in rage and dissociation. In my opinion the treatment must address the anxiety, so that the need to avoid memories falls away.

There are many effective treatments that address this need. For instance, we know that the hormones that are involved in the stress reaction include two called glucocorticosteroid and arginine vasopressin. Both these hormones can be reduced by deep massage, which requires no words at all! Unfortunately therapists who work with words are told not to touch their clients. However, massage therapy and other therapies, such as art therapy help people to recognize and face their anxiety.

Pharmaceutical companies are working hard to develop drugs that counter the excess of hormones, attacking the stress reaction where it starts. In the meantime the most effective drugs to control anger are those that control anxiety. Unfortunately there are no perfect drugs for this purpose. Drugs such as Valium make matters worse, for they may themselves cause blackouts, as

can self-medication with alcohol. When people who take these substances do black out, they release the same blacked-out rage they are trying to avoid. Anyone taking substances like alcohol or Valium cannot be treated with words or other medications. It is a lesson it took me a long time to learn.

The medications now in use that reduce anger to the point where it no longer results in blacked-out rages are in a class called antipsychotics. They work because they actually reduce anxiety, not because the person for whom they are prescribed is psychotic, i.e. out of touch with reality.

Of course, when a person blacks out he or she is indeed out of touch with reality. Since the FDA, and psychiatrists in general, don't know about these blackouts, the FDA has not approved the use of these drugs to treat rage. They are, however, highly effective.

Psychiatrists are also using medications that block adrenaline, the hormone that circulates in anger. These adrenaline blockers, an example of which is a drug called prazosin, are very effective, but because they can lower the blood pressure they are not used routinely.

Misunderstanding anxiety that has turned into blacked-out anger costs us millions. I work in a facility to which judges send delinquent teenagers. Many of these teenagers suffer from the condition I have

described. They are brought before the judge because of something they have done in a blacked out rage. The judge, and the mental health professionals who examine these kids, don't understand this condition. They don't know that hormones can shut off the executive part of the brain. Everyone assumes that people always know what they are doing. Over and over I have heard these teens tell me that they believed they knew what they were doing, but they actually relied on what others told them to fill in their own blanks.

Adults who continue to live with this stress reaction are just as likely to land in court, because it is blacked-out anger, freed from judgment and foresight, that leads to many cases of domestic violence, road rage, child abuse.

If mental health professionals and the courts were to recognize this condition, we would not have people incarcerated at high cost to the states, instead of being treated for their anxiety. We could put a dent in domestic violence without tearing families apart. Anger is a normal part of humanity, but it need not be as destructive as it so often is. By not recognizing the problem we punish those who suffer from it instead of helping them.

MV



Mirroring Our Childhood

By MySong

There are several reasons why we, as survivors of child abuse, seem to keep repeating the abuse in our lives by marrying abusive spouses, alcoholics, drugs addicts, and even unknowingly seeking abusive friends. Abuse is in low-income and high-income relationships. It has no economical or educational boundaries.

This article focuses on how to recognize an abusive relationship; whether it is physical abuse or emotional abuse, it is all abuse. It will also show you how to set good boundaries and the need and right we have for them. In the end, it will show you why, as survivors, we seek out abusive relationships without even realizing it. It is my hope that this article will help you get out of these types of relationships and learn to take care of yourself, love yourself and in the end stay safe.

PHYSICAL ABUSE

It seems physical abuse would be easy to recognize, but it has a hidden agenda which we frequently don't see. Of course, there are often real physical injuries such as broken bones, physical scars, etc. Just being pushed can end in an injury. Physical abuse is the use of physical force against someone in a way that injures or endangers that person. Physical assault and battery is a crime, whether it occurs inside or outside the family.

Ask yourself, does your partner have a bad or unpredictable temper, are you being physically hurt or is someone threatening to kill you or your children, or are they forcing you to have sex? These are all forms of physical abuse. If your partner injured you once, it is likely this person will continue to physically assault you. If you are involved in any kind of a relationship like this you are in danger. If you are being physically abused, call the police. Physical abuse can start in a very minor way and can escalate into your death or the death of your child. *GET OUT NOW!*

The cycle sometimes goes like this:

Abuse - They lash out with aggressive, violent behavior. It is designed to show you who is the boss and who is in control.

Guilt - Some, but not all feel guilty, but not over what they have done, but for fear of the consequences of it.

Excuses - They come up with all kinds of excuses for what they have done and blame you for their abusive behavior. They never take responsibility for their own actions.

Normal behavior - This is called the "honeymoon phase." They act as if nothing has happened and may turn on their charm; they may even buy you gifts, thus trying to keep you in the relationship. This gives you hope that they have really changed this time. They haven't.

Fantasy and planning - They think about what you have done wrong and literally fantasize about how they are going to make you pay for it, thus turning it into a reality.

Set-up (sometimes) - They literally set you up, creating a situation to put their plan into action as a means of justifying abusing you again.

Spur of the moment - Some abuse is not "set-up," but is a spur of the moment and impulsive action, so this cycle may change, depending on the abuser.

Because of this cycle, it makes it difficult to really come to terms with the fact that this is not ever going to end. We all want to believe we are loved and frequently stay in a relationship like this because we are afraid to be alone or feel we will never be loved again. Thus the cycle continues.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE

Emotional and verbal abuse can actually be the same thing. It is not only as damaging as physical abuse, but many studies have shown it has longer-lasting scars and is more difficult to heal from. It is any abuse that uses fear, humiliation, intimidation, guilt, coercion, constant berating, belittling, name calling, screaming or manipulation. It can be

anything from constant criticism to repeated disapproval or even just the constant refusal to ever be pleased with what you do. It can include name calling, accusing, blaming, threatening and ordering, control games, extreme jealousy, refusing to listen, emotional withholding, raging, sarcasm and infidelity. It is a system of brain-washing that wears down the person's self-confidence, sense of self-worth and trust in themselves as an individual. It can be in the form of domination to control your every action, not allowing you to have friends or visit family, controlling your money and making you account for every cent you spend or making fun of you in front of others. They may also use emotional blackmail by threatening to end the relationship, or invalidate or minimize your feelings. An alcoholic or drug addict can have very unpredictable responses so you constantly feel anxiety or frightened. You eventually lose your sense of self, your personal value; it invalidates who you are and destroys your very core. Your self-esteem becomes so low that you cling to the abuser. Frequently you blame yourself for the abuse, feel powerless, or feel you cannot make it on your own. Many times you feel that you are not only unlovable, but unworthy of love and have nowhere else to go. Probably the ultimate fear is being alone.

SETTING PERSONAL BOUNDARIES

A very simple way at looking at personal boundaries is just saying, "NO, you cannot do this, this is my space and you cannot do this to me." Boundaries tell someone what your limits are and they define your line. They are a way of protecting and taking care of yourself. It is your right to protect and defend yourself and actually your duty to take responsibility for how you will allow others to treat you. It is a way of owning your feelings and having a voice. You may not have had the right to have a voice when you were a child, but you can have one now. When you

set a boundary you let go of the outcome. It is not an easy thing to learn to do and can be quite difficult for an abuse survivor, but it is essential to learn to set them. It can give you a great deal of peace realizing that you can protect yourself at last. It is learning to love yourself and take care of yourself in a healthy way. When you set a boundary, it is telling someone you deserve and demand respect. We all have the right to be treated with respect and dignity.

It is not easy to start setting boundaries, especially when you are involved with an abusive person. You have to assert yourself and it can be terrifying to set boundaries with a person you fear will leave you or possibly physically hurt you. If you set a boundary with a physically abusive person and they threaten you, call the police immediately. If you never set a boundary, you will never know who you really are. You will never escape the enmeshment of a codependent relationship and learn to see yourself as a separate person. Setting a boundary is saying it is not OK to hit me, to talk to me that way, to try to control me or to treat me abusively. When you do not respect yourself, it is hard to realize that you don't deserve mistreatment. Setting boundaries teaches you to only allow people to treat you in a loving way and realizing you deserve that.

There will always be boundary breakers in our lives. They will constantly try to cross your boundaries and you have to remind them over and over what your boundary is and not allow them to cross it. If you let them cross it you are letting yourself be victimized again. It is important not to let another person continue the same pattern and it is just as important to enforce your boundaries. It takes courage and determination to set and keep boundaries, but it is always worth it. You deserve it. Sometimes you just have to let go of certain relationships in order to not let yourself be re-victimized.

We all have to make choices in our lives and we have the choice to allow another person to abuse us. It is really your own choice, even though you may not now see it clearly. It is

not an attempt to control another person, but taking control your life and deciding how you want to be treated. It is an important step in taking responsibility for your own life and yourself. It is an empowering tool that stops giving your power away to another human being and stops you from being a victim. Ultimately it keeps you safe and helps you know who you really are.

REPEATING CHILDHOOD PATTERNS

We, as survivors, are not aware that we actually may seek out abusive relationships, but frequently we do. As we emerge from our childhood abuse and do not deal with it, we actually feel comfortable in that type of environment. It is familiar to us. It is something we have lived with for probably a very long time and unfortunately what we are used to. It sounds strange, I know, but it is frequently true. Think about how long you spent in your childhood with an abusive person, possibly a very long time. It replicates the dysfunctional childhood we escaped from. It seems safe to us, but of course, it is not. It is merely familiar.

An abuser is an emotionally unavailable person; therefore we frequently seek out this type of person. It is not unusual for us to repeat this negative pattern over and over again until we deal with our abuse. It is a destructive lifestyle and will never get any better until we recognize what we are doing and deal with our past. What isn't resolved from our childhood comes back to confront us again and again within the pattern of our lives. Some people never change this and keep divorcing or leaving abusive relationships, just to seek another destructive one out. It is a self-defeating behavior that stole our lives when we were children and also ambushes us as adults.

Another thing we may do is seek out an abusive relationship in an attempt to "fix" that which is broken. We try to change that person in an attempt to somehow change the person that abused us. Of course, this never works, as we can only change ourselves. We frequently marry a person with the same characteristics as our abuser. Since we were not able

to fix our abuser, we attempt to fix this other person. Of course, this doesn't work either.

It is also an attempt to heal. We actually try to "undo our abuse." We try to re-live the abusive relationship in the hopes of getting it right this time. None of these things work.

The only way to heal is to deal with our abuse and walk through our own pain. It is not an easy task, nor do I suggest trying to do it alone. We need someone to help us walk this difficult journey of healing and sometimes it is a very long journey, indeed. But we are survivors and we can do it. The longest journey begins with a single step, but we can heal in the end and stop this cycle of abuse. **MV**

Stepping Stone Prayer

every day is yesterday
 passing us by
 another day wasted
 another chance for change
 ever ever forever more
 now is your chance
 one foot in one foot out
 around around drowning in doubt
 can you make it? the leap so far
 can you take it, can you see
 never ever ever after me
 every now and then a word
 for those who were, are never heard
 how dare you look
 how fair are we
 fairest fairest of the fair
 one step more, a step toward me
 a whisper a wind a word in the sand
 no, no more please
 we just cannot stand
 teeter and totter near and far
 cannot stand still
 trembling hands
 a world upturned over it's head
 tiny ones inside scared to speak
 will they ever ever meet
 cannot heal with strings yet undone
 be the fear fear the dear
 what we cannot touch
 won't reach us here
 if it's not real then it's not true
 our reality fights every day anew
 this fairly tale true enough
 and they thought brothers grimm
 were tough

By Kate Edwin

This is My Life

By Freda

I have nestled into a recliner, the darkened light bulb heating over my shoulder. My roomy shuffles through the edge of the room on her way from here to there. "I love you," I mumble from under a blanket I am tucking around my shoulders.

She stops, smiles softly. "I love you too, honey. You are such a wonderful person."

Tears fall before I know they have begun. I smile in return and turn my head away as she shuffles on. Startled by these tears I am wondering, asking, confused.

I want my Mommy to say those things, I hear a tiny voice say.

'But you know she never will,' I remind this small girl.

SHE can't say them! That is for My Mommy to say!

'But Mommy doesn't love any of us, kiddo. She doesn't love any one.'

She loves ME! She declares with the clarity of a three year old.

'She does not love herself. She does not love Daddy. She does not love any of us. She can't. She doesn't love herself, so she can't love any one else.'

Mommy, I Want My Mommy! she begins to whine.

'She is gone forever, kiddo. She left us, all of us. We are on our own now. I am your Mommy now.'

I don't KNOW YOU!

I hear hurt, anger, fear all rolled into four words. 'You should. I've been here for a long time now. I love you. I am the one who has taken care of you, protected you, argued for you,

colored with you.'

You don't play Dollies with me, she accuses me.

'No, that is Jewel, one of your older sisters, isn't it?'

Is she one of my Sisters?

'Yes she is.'

The child stares at me for a long time. Finally she demands, disbelieving me, *Where is she?*

I'm right there, honey. It's ok. This is the one who loves us now, waving her hand towards me.

My Mommy Loves ME!

Our Mommy is right here, Jewel says pointing to me. The Outside Mommy never loved us. But we have a new Mommy who loves us. You know her. Jewel is holding her hand out to the child. Come on Fearful, let me hold you, as she squats down to gather the small child into her arms. Settling into a rocking chair she snuggles the small child close to her.

Fearful has not taken her eyes off me. *She not my Mommy,* she declares clearly.

She is not the first mommy, no. But she is our Mommy now. She loves us. The other Mommy never loved any of us. She didn't even love Daddy.

Fearful swings her head around to Jewel, *Not Daddy?*

'Not even Daddy,' I put in.

Her head snaps back around to look at me again. She stares at me, trying to pull the truth from behind my eyes. She looks back at Jewel. *My Mommy Loves Me! She the Only one 'loved to say nice things to me,* glaring at Jewel.

We all say nice things, Jewel reminds her.

She CAN'T. Fearful declares pointing with her whole arm towards where my roomy has gone on with her day.

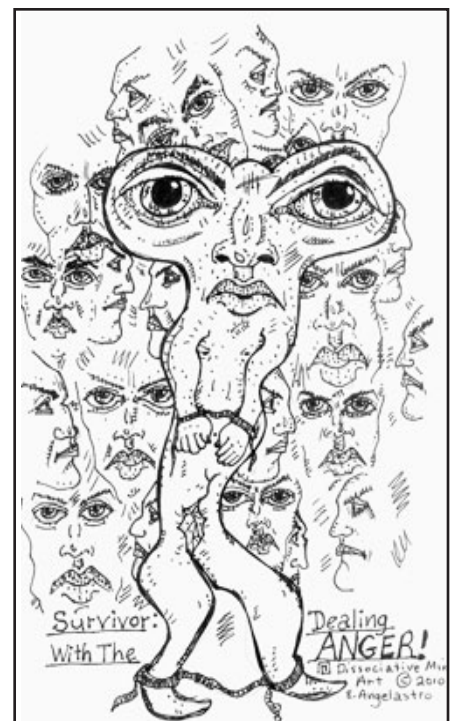
'She just did, honey. And it's ok. She loves us ...'

She Can't Love US! She Don't Know Us!

'She loves all of us, kiddo. It's ok. I love you, she loves me. We all love you.'

Fearful flops against Jewel, tears flowing. Jewel wraps her arms around the child and rocks her gently humming a quiet tune.

This is hard for all of us. No one has a 'happy ending' with this encounter. No one had gotten 'a deeper understanding.' All we have is another very sad kid who has to cope with giving up the dream of having her mother's love or even approval. As one of many this is not a new experience. But we do have safety. We do have love amongst many of us, and a hug for a child in tears. For now, it is enough. **MV**



Meditation - Affirmation

Breathe in and breathe out.
Breathe in calm and safety.
Breathe out tension and pain.
Breathe in calm and safety.
Breathe out tension and pain.
Keep breathing in and out.
You are safe and protected.

Ask inside for help.
Find your safe place.
Find your strengthening place.
You are a kind and loving person.
Breathe in and out.
You begin to relax and feel calm.
Know you are safe and free.

By Jenn J.

MV

I Been Thinkin'

By Nyla Blair

I been thinkin':
If J says one more time
about how, really
her dad meant well

I'm sayin':
You told me he
chased you and beat you
ongoing
when you were a small child

You told me 2 "perfectly good" men
asked you to marry
and you couldn't do it
'cause of what your daddy did.
and yet, I've not heard from you
about your anger towards him.

What I have to say
about this
is it parallels
my life in that

I do not "Do" anger
I'm just learning about anger.
I have a tendency
to forgive my father prematurely.
He made lots of money,
he & mom.
And I got it when they died.
He came over from Germany
and didn't even know English &
learned English
in the LIBRARY
and by LISTENING to people
and he spoke
with zero accent
I gotta lotta reasons
to respect my father

But he abused me
when he shoulda been
protecting me

and my mom was complicit
just like yours was.

And what I'm doing in my life is
healing.
I'm not interested in "coping."
I'm going for HEALING.

So when you excuse your father

and say HE had a hard life—
that fits right in with
my excuses for my father.

I'm determined not to go
AROUND
my anger
but THROUGH it.
I gotta FEEL it
before I can let it go.
I gotta know what I'm letting go of.

My dad, too,
was brought up wrong
and painfully
and with reasons
why he later abused me.

And I'll get to the place where
I forgive him.

But I'm not there yet.

My feelings of anger
are sealed off
& I gotta open that wound
& clean it out
so I can heal

So hearing your excuses for your
father
without having heard
your anger at your father

does not serve me
in my healing

You run your life any way
you want to
You're my friend
and it's not up to me to
"Psycholize" you or
try to figure you out
or judge you.

All I know's what I hear from you.
I'm not even claiming
that what I hear
is actually what you said.

I'm just saying
it doesn't serve me
on MY path

to hear you excusing your dad
or minimizing what he did to you.

or to hear your reverence
for your mom
who didn't protect you.

So all this's got me thinking...
do I really
need to go through the anger?
Do I really HAVE anger?
Or is it just solid

unmitigated
cold
thorough
fear?

Well,
my 2 main top teacher/mentors
Judy & el Ralpho
both say yep
I need to feel the anger
and yes it's there

So...and my OWN sense of it
is that
gee it'd sure be convenient
if that weren't the case

but it looks like it is.

MV



By Kathy A.

Take Care!

By Susan Stocker, LPC

Susan Stocker's book, The Many Faces of PTSD, is reviewed in this issue.

I don't know about you, but I'm tired of articles which suggest bubble baths and candles as ways to take care of ourselves. I think we're all fairly certain that as pleasant as bubble baths and candles are, they are not the answer to better self-care. I want to suggest two options which I know offer more balm and more long-lasting effects: time alone in our own heads and positive self-talk.

Time alone in our own heads is one thing many of us have never had much of and/or have learned to fear. Actually, time spent meditating, sitting still, being in silence, and sitting or lying with a warm blanket over our feet is one of the most self-nourishing things we can do.

Probably you are thinking, "I don't know how to meditate." Yes, you do. You just don't realize that what you instinctively crave is actually meditation. Meditation is sitting still and thinking about absolutely nothing. Meditation is letting your mind run free. You may be imagining that if you let your mind run free, you'll end up in a panic attack. Truly, you won't. Simply let your mind go wherever it will, and as often as necessary say to yourself, "Breathe." The more anxious we are, the more shallow our breath. So, you take a deep breath from your tummy, and oxygen gets to your brain, and you just keep concentrating on breathing. Soon you're feeling stronger and more stable. Then you let your mind run free, and if you start feeling anxious, you start taking deep breaths. This is the cycle of meditation. The more you do it, the more time is spent on letting your mind run free and the less time is spent on needing to control your breathing. Breathing becomes normal and your "default" setting. In the beginning you may need to remind your self fifty times in five minutes to breathe. Later on you will need to remind yourself five times in fifty minutes to breathe.

Letting your mind run free is like letting a trapped or corralled horse run

free. It is a way to run off the pent-up tension. It is a way to stretch. It is a way to be who we are in our core, and a way to fall back in love with life.

Secondly, we are experts at self-criticism and self-condemnation. The negative chatter in our heads has got to quiet down so we can hear the divine, true words which tell us that we are each special and individual and meant to be heard on this earth so we can accomplish and understand and learn things which will serve us as spiritual beings. I don't know about you, but I awaken in the middle of the night and my heart is pounding and I revisit everything I've done during the day which might not have been perfect.

Recently, and I'm sixty-four and a therapist, I have started telling myself to quit it. There is a whole world out there willing to beat up on me. I don't have to do it. And I certainly don't have to do it in the middle of the night. "Go back to sleep, sleep in peace, and know that there has rarely been a moment in your life when you have not done the best you knew how to do." The Buddhists have a saying: "If you can look back on the last year of your life and not feel shame or guilt, you haven't grown."

Let's just keep growing and learning and stretching. And, please, let's make a pact with each other that we will start treating ourselves with the kindness and respect and grace with which we would unthinkingly and absolutely treat each other.

Time alone in our own heads and kind, tender self-talk . . . and while we're at it we could take a bubble bath by candle-light.

The sisterhood is strong!

MV

Daylight

Softly framed in my windowpane
the pale moon
God's silent sentinel of the night
still lingers.

Awaiting the "changing of the guard"
the moon tenderly watches over me
until at last the eager sun
climbs over my roof
and touches...burnishes with gold
my tree's bare branches!
Seeing that God has placed me now
in the care of the sun, the moon,
reassured,
dips out of sight.
And so it is that God's vigil
of Love for me
continues unbroken.

By Marguerite S.

MV



Letter to My Younger Self

By MJ

Dear Mar, I see you sitting alone in the park on a blanket. This is your favorite place to come and relax.

I know you like it there because when you leave you always feel refreshed. Sometimes you journal and sometimes you draw. Once in awhile you just gaze across the field at the summer wild flowers and watch the willow trees sway into the wind before you drift off into a blissful sleep. At times you dream of the old Giant Willow and how the tall branches and swaying leaves hid you from the dark shadow man with no face.

You always seem to bring your favorite blue bag with the number 87 printed on it. It's always packed full of more things than you could ever use in one day at the park. The items in your bag include: a special memory journal, colored pens, pencils, charcoal pencils, drawing tablets, your Ipod with all types of music as well as the many meds you might need if a journaling session brings back an unpleasant memory.

I know you feel like your journaling serves no purpose and sometimes makes you hurt worse inside. Often the entries remind you of a time when you were hurt as a child by the ones that should have protected you. Even though journaling is hard and the thoughts are unpleasant they are bringing healing to you. The colors you use are one of your tools to freedom. Each time you use red it seems to be for a hurtful memory and each time you use green you are writing about growth. Purple is for when you are angry and that's ok to write about too. Please keep writing until you feel peace inside. There are many other colors and in time you will know what each one stands for in

your pictures and writing.

Your choice of music is not usually slow or even comforting. A lot of times it is music that just plain makes you feel inside. Sometimes it's orchestra music and sometimes it's the hardest rock with the harshest lyrics. I would like to tell you that even though cutting brings you instant relief, that later on in life you will realize that there are more productive ways to handle your pain.

You need to know that you do not have to relive all of these bad things you have experienced as a child to live a productive life now. You do not have to feel the pain again and it does get better. Your drawings will someday be a gift to help another child that needs hope. Your colored journaling entries will be a shining spot in the darkness for children as well as hurting woman who have suffered sexual abuse. I want you to know now that it's ok to speak and be heard. It's ok to be strong and courageous. You are beautiful and you are special just the way you are. No one can ever take away your inner beauty or your unique talents and gifts.

Your "Old Willow Tree" stands firm today and still sways in the wind. Its branches hold all your secrets that you continue to tell them and they still sway slowly as the leaves sing a song of sadness as well as healing. Just as the leaves change colors through the seasons so will your journaling entries and your life experiences. Don't be afraid to accept new seasons and let people see the real you. One day all the pieces to your life puzzle will be complete. Then you will see there is safety beyond the branches of your Willow Tree.

*** *Love, Your Heart****

MV



Dealing with Anger – or Not

By Alicia F.

It took a lot of "trial and error" for me to come to an understanding that I wasn't the only person with anger conquering my life. I wasn't the only one abandoned and left alone. I wasn't the only one who'd been raped and left to live and tell about it with what voice that I had left. I wasn't the only 12 year old child out there who'd raised my siblings and had the spirit of a woman. My spirit was much too old for the little girl it was stuck with. Anger for all my shortcomings seemed to rule my entire world; leading it around by the threads that barely held it together.

Time and time again I've been dropped to my knees by the hard stuff that life tends to dish out. Do I deal with it? Well, I do now. I didn't used to, though. I learned when I was down on my knees in self-afflicting misery and anger, and had nowhere to look but up...there's a Higher Power. Wow!

No matter what you see religion as...we all have God and it turns out that He's up there listening. I had the answers all along to the anger, guilt and sadness that lived my life for me. All I had needed to do this whole time was look UP!

I finally realized it when I too looked up, after blowing up on a relative and finding myself literally screaming toward the sky. It started with the words "GOOD GRIEF!" But who was I screaming at?

That's when I knew I had been subconsciously screaming at a God. Imagine how dumb I felt, after all these years of lifestyle-crippling grief and anger. This deadly concoction could've killed me.

Now? I have a life to live, and it's not life living me instead. I have to purge myself of it, to be rid of it, and not allow anger purging me instead.

Say the things that make you angry out loud. Someone IS listening.

MV

The Magic Wand: It Does Exist!

By Kate Edwin

Chances are you have heard this phrase at least once from a professional in your time in treatment, "I wish I had a magic wand, but I don't." The common reaction is, well why the heck not, followed by a sinking in the pit of your stomach and sometimes with an anger chaser.

I have been in some form of mental health treatment for 10 years now. Only in the last 4 or so have I received the correct diagnosis. I have gone through over 3 dozen psychiatric medications, some more than once or twice, I have been through, CBT, psychoanalysis, counseling, the Trauma Model, inpatient, outpatient, intensive outpatient, partial and day treatment programs. I have been through who knows how many therapist, counselors, case workers, case managers, social workers, psychiatrists, psychologists, mental health techs, nurses, nurse practitioners, art therapists, occupational therapists and grief counselors. I also now hold a BA in Art and Psychology, and a certification as a Peer Support Specialist. Which one of these experiences stood out? None of them. Nothing "really" helped, nothing gave any sense of hope for the future, or of a skill that could actually be useful until I met a man who's favorite activity is teaching

people how to blow bubbles. This psychologist had years before I met him, found the key to living with struggles. That key? That thing I now fully and truly believe to BE that magic wand? *Mindfulness*.

With its roots in the earliest of ancient eastern cultures, mindfulness is about as far from "new" age as you can get. Sure it's been spiffed up and pared down to be used specifically with different diagnoses and situations, but all in all this is the only treatment that is 100% natural. And quite possibly the only thing in existence that is free of adverse effects and is impossible to overdose on. Mindfulness is at its very basic level, an awareness of being.

Mindfulness will NOT: cure an illness, fix your problems, stop your symptoms, tell you how to manage relationships, make things warm and fuzzy or make you happy.

So why have I come to the conclusion that mindfulness is this big magical dream come true if it won't fix anything or make it better? Because of the next list, what mindfulness CAN do: get you through any crisis, let you experience any emotion no matter how intense and come out ok on the other side, decrease the length of time an emotion lasts, help you focus on things other than triggers or problems, help you see what *is* rather

than what you feel or think how things are, lets you experience negative situations and be OK, and it can stop those rambling, repeating tapes in your head. It can make trauma and all it's effects bearable.

I adamantly believe Mindfulness can help any one of the six and a half billion people on this planet get through absolutely anything and come out the other side. Of course it can't cure cancer or stop an earthquake, but it can prevent people from having negative effects from those events and be able to like their life in spite of it.

Isn't that what we all really want? Be honest, don't you just want to live your life? Being free to do what you wish, no matter how other people think you should be doing it?

Sure, you will, after all, still have to do the very hard work of healing trauma. And Mindfulness doesn't come to you overnight either; it takes effort and practice, dedication and time.

But with Mindfulness, you can recover more quickly from a therapy session or a flashback, deal with switching and memory troubles with more ease and be able to appreciate the everyday, little things that can bring a smile to your face and peace to your soul.

MV



Artist's Statement

...and one night in a dream, I came across a landscape. On the foreground I saw a flower. I thought it was for me. As I approached this flower, I knew it was just for me to hold. It was shown to me to pass along to others, to help them and show them that I care.

Art & Wording by Ellen A.
© 2010 Dissociative Mind Art

MV

Processing Anger and Rage

By Alison & Co

Before I went for treatment this past summer, I would have told you that I didn't get angry (except at myself of course).

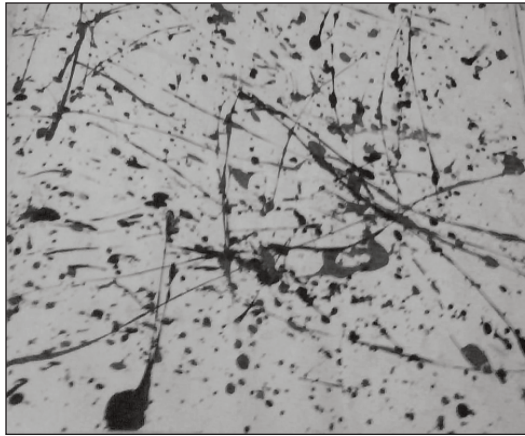
But when I went to River Oaks I had to deal with the memories related to my abuse and after sharing with one of my therapists, he gave me a homework assignment to write an anger letter to my family and the cult who were responsible for this act. At the time I said "...but I'm not angry, and if I get angry then that makes me no better than my family." (ie. my abusers.)

He explained to me the difference between anger and rage and that what my family did was criminal and were acts of rage not anger. He went on to reiterate the fact the anger is an emotion, and like all other emotions they aren't good or bad or right or wrong. And that getting angry is part of a healthy range of emotions, when expressed in constructive ways.

So I took a chance and did my homework assignment and wrote the anger letter to my family and the cult, which felt amazing, but at the same time

like I was breaking all the rules I was raised with.

The next day when I went back for my session, he asked me to read the letter to him and it felt really good to finally get it



out. And guess what—no one got hurt!

After that my Dr. suggested that I do something with it in Psychodrama and so I read it to the group, but it wasn't really all that helpful to tell you the truth. So I thought about a way that I could get the anger out of my body in a non-violent way and came up with the idea (with the help

of my therapist) of throwing couch balls at a cloth while making anger statements, (again as part of psychodrama.)

This time I started out being terrified and ended up really getting into it and got my whole body into it, and let me tell you I slept better that night than I ever have in my life. Plus I wasn't in any physical pain that night, (which is huge for me). It was amazing how true it is that we do store emotions in our bodies.

The other thing I found incredibly helpful was splatter painting. Now you're talking to someone who had never done art before going to treatment and I did this medium the most while I was in New Orleans, and I continued it upon returning back to Canada.

I have two pieces that represent anger for me and once again it felt amazing for me just to have the freedom and know that I am safe and not going to get hurt or be judged by splattering paint on a piece of paper or canvas. I would encourage everybody to give this a try.

MV

BOOKS

Ordinary Recovery: Mindfulness, Addiction, and the Path of Lifelong Sobriety.

By William Alexander. ©1997, 2010. Published by Shambala Publications, www.shambala.com. 149 pgs includes resources. \$15.95. Paperback.

"Stop. Breathe. Look deeply. Express gratitude. Tell someone." Those are the basics, writes William Alexander, who teaches meditation and leads workshops at the Hazelden Foundation in Minnesota. This book is a revised version of his earlier book, "Cool Water." Essentially, he blends Buddhism and addiction recovery, with personal suggestions to guide individuals toward their own inner light. One such suggestion is to build a personal "cathedral," perhaps with a candle, incense, photos of loved ones, or the Higher Power of your personal beliefs. Alexander quotes Thomas Merton and Zen Buddhist philosophy liberally, as he also describes his own difficult journey of recovery through the embrace of a spiritual outlook. He does not accept the

sometimes-judgmental approach of AA, which identifies the addicted person as "sick" i.e., "wrong or bad." Also he suggests that AA is both selfless and selfish at the same time...as we all may be, in recovery. "In serving you, I serve myself," he writes. "In serving myself, I serve you. It is neither selfish nor selfless. It is a whole new way of being..."

Many Faces of PTSD: Does Post Traumatic Stress Disorder Have a Grip on Your Life?

By Susan Rau Stocker, LPC. © 2010. Published by Holy Macro! Books, PO Box 82, Uniontown, OH. www.susanstocker.com 122 pgs. \$12.95. Paperback.

Susan Stocker tells the stories of twelve different PTSD cases in an intimate, personal style. Short on theory, long on human interest, through each example she describes her own evolution as a therapist dealing with trauma-damaged clients. What she herself learns about PTSD, she passes along to her readers. Short, pithy quotations punctuate the chapters with

sound advice for others who either have PTSD themselves, or love someone who does.

For example: "I may feel like I'm in crisis. I am, in fact, simply experiencing my emotions. I have no need to fear my own emotional makeup," and "When you shut people out so they can't hurt you, no one can help you, either."

Her strongest admonition is to not judge or compare oneself with others. Stocker explains that individuals are affected by trauma impact on brain and body in very different ways. While one person may remain resilient despite severe trauma, another may become very fragile. This doesn't mean the fragile person is bad, or weak. Each person is born with a specific chemistry. Some react to a similar environment one way, some another.

This is not a book of "success stories." It's a book of realities, for both Susan and her clients—an interesting look at a complex topic.

MV

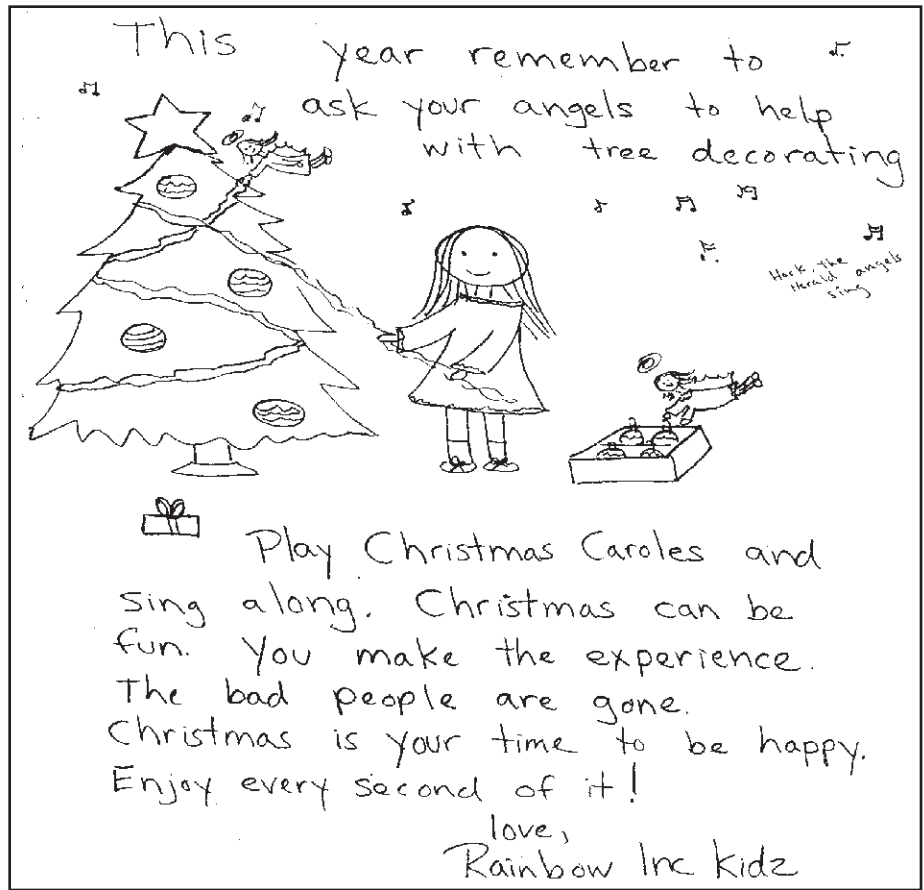
THANKS EVERYONE for helping keep MV useful for all who have suffered trauma and past abuse. It is **YOUR** words and artwork that make MV such a great tool for recovery. Please keep up the good work! Art, poetry, articles, comments...we love it all! *Blessings & Good Holidays to you from Lynn W. & MV.*

FEBRUARY 2011

Taking care of business. Financial trauma. Budgeting. Learning to save. Affordable treats. **ARTWORK:** Comforting yourself **DEADLINE:** December 15, 2010

APRIL 2011

Your talents, pets, & pleasures. Humor. Building on your strengths. **ARTWORK:** Cartoons & Creative freedom. **DEADLINE:** February 10, 2011



Share with us!

Prose, poetry and art are accepted on upcoming issue themes, (and even on NON-themes, if it's really great.) DO send humor, cartoons, good ideas, and whatever is useful to you. Please limit prose to about 4 typed double-spaced pages. Line drawings (black on white) are best. We can't possibly print everything. Some pieces will be condensed, but we'll print as much as we can. Please enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope for return of your originals and a note giving us permission to publish and/or edit or excerpt your work.

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RESOURCE GUIDE FOR TRAUMA & DD TREATMENT, EDUCATION, & SUPPORT**

These selected hospitals are especially interested in serving Many Voices' readers:

EAST

**SHEPPARD-PRATT HEALTH SYSTEM
TRAUMA DISORDERS PROGRAM**
6501 N. Charles St.
Baltimore, MD 21285
Inpatient & Day Hospital
Intake: James A. Pitt (410) 938-3584
Richard J. Loewenstein M.D., Dir

**THE CENTER POSTRAUMATIC
DISORDERS PROGRAM**
The Psychiatric Institute of Washington
4228 Wisconsin Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20016
Inpatient and The Day Center
Contact Admissions: (800)369-2273 or
(202) 885-5610.

SOUTH

**THE NEW ORLEANS INSTITUTE at
RIVER OAKS PSYCHIATRIC HOSP**
1525 River Oaks Road W.
New Orleans, LA 70123
(800) 366-1740 or (504) 734-1740
Inpatient specialty unit.
Martha Bujanda, Director of Intake

MIDWEST

**NATIONAL CENTER FOR TRAUMA-
BASED DISORDERS at TWO RIVERS
PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL**
5121 Raytown Rd.
Kansas City, MO 64133
Inpatient & Partial Hospital Services.
Contact: Admissions (800) 225-8577 or
(816) 382-6300

SOUTHWEST

**ROSS INSTITUTE at TIMBERLAWN
MENTAL HEALTH SYSTEM**
4600 Samuell Blvd. Dallas, TX 75228.
(800) 426-4944 or (214) 381-7181
Inpatient, partial, outpatient, &
Dissociative Day Hospital
Colin A. Ross, M.D., Med. Director
Kristi Lewis, Clinical Outreach
Coordinator

WEST

**ROSS INSTITUTE at THE NATIONAL
TREATMENT CENTER at
DEL AMO HOSPITAL**
23700 Camino Del Sol
Torrance, CA 90505
(800) 533-5266
Inpatient & Partial Hospitalization
Colin A. Ross, M.D., Program Director
Francis Galura, Intake (310) 784-2289

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with MV Support groups,
resources, new helpful organizations,
Free classifieds for survivors.
Call Lynn at 513-751-8020 or email
LynnW@manyvoicespress.org

CONFERENCES

NOVEMBER 19-20, 2010

Sarasota, FL
Two Day Workshop. Secret
Lives: Quest for Authenticity. Healing
from Trauma, Compulsivity, and Eating
Disorders. Sponsored by New Orleans
Institute at River Oaks. Call (800) 598-
2040 or visit
www.riveroakshospital.com

DECEMBER 3, 2010

Charleston, SC
One Day Workshop. Secret
Lives: Quest for Authenticity. Healing
from Trauma, Compulsivity, and Eating
Disorders. Sponsored by New Orleans
Institute at River Oaks. Call (800) 598-
2040 or visit
www.riveroakshospital.com

DECEMBER 8, 2010

New Orleans, LA
Breakfast meeting. TBA. Sponsored by

New Orleans Institute at River Oaks.
Call (800) 598-2040 or visit
www.riveroakshospital.com

JANUARY 18, 2011

Ypsilanti, MI 48197
Trauma and Chemical Use and
Addiction. 1-1/2 hour free seminar
sponsored by Dawn Farm, a non-profit
community of programs on chemical
dependency. Presented by Tana Bridge,
PhD, LMSW, MSW, the program
director of the School of Social Work at
Eastern Michigan University.
The seminar will be held from 7:30 PM
to 9 PM in the St. Joseph Mercy
Hospital Education Center. It will cover
the relationship between chemical use,
addiction, and trauma, including
information on how to aid those
struggling with trauma and chemical
dependency. All interested persons may
attend. Registration is not required, but

1.5 hours of free CE is approved for
addiction professionals. For more
information, contact Matt Statman,
BSW Education Series Coordinator at
734-485-8725 or email
info@dawnfarm.org.

JANUARY 28-29, 2011

New Orleans, LA
Preferred Provider Conference.
Trauma/Compulsivity/Eating Disorders.
Sponsored by The New Orleans
Institute and The Eating Disorders
Center at River Oaks Hospital. For
details, visit www.riveroakshospital.com
or call 1-800-598-2040.

JANUARY 31-FEBRUARY 3, 2011

Clearwater Beach, FL
32nd Annual Training Institute for
Behavioral Health and Addictive
Disorders. Presented by US Journal
Training Inc. and the Institute for
More inside...

CONFERENCES

Integral Development. Co-sponsored by Hazelden, The Refuge, Amen Clinics, and others. Register online at www.usjt.com or phone 1-800-441-5569.

FEBRUARY 5-6, 2011

Lake Buena Vista, FL
Healing Together Conference
Educational & Support conference for survivors, supporters of those with DID.

Interested mental health professionals are welcome. Request for Proposals & Scholarship forms available. Contact http://www.aninfinitemind.com/healing_together.h SAVE THE DATES!

FEBRUARY 18, 2011

Pensacola Beach, FL
One day workshop: Embracing Life Through Acceptance & Commitment: Healing from Eating Disorders, Trauma-

Based Disorders & Compulsivity. Sponsored by The New Orleans Institute and The Eating Disorders Center at River Oaks Hospital. For details, visit www.riveroakshospital.com or call 1-800-598-2040.

MARCH 10-12, 2011

Las Vegas, NV
17th Las Vegas Conference on Counseling Skills. Ethics Workshop, March 9. Sponsored by US Journal Training Inc. and The Institute for Integral Development. For details, visit www.usjt.com.

MARCH 18, 2011

Richmond, VA
One day workshop: Embracing Life Through Acceptance & Commitment: Healing from Eating Disorders, Trauma-Based Disorders & Compulsivity. Sponsored by The New Orleans

Institute and The Eating Disorders Center at River Oaks Hospital. For details, visit www.riveroakshospital.com or call 1-800-598-2040.

MARCH 31-APRIL 2, 2011

Las Vegas, NV
9th National Conference on Adolescents/Young Adults. (Ethics Workshop, March 30.) Sponsored by US Journal Training Inc. and The Institute for Integral Development. For details, visit www.usjt.com.

APRIL 15, 2011

Santa Fe, NM
One day workshop: Embracing Life Through Acceptance & Commitment: Healing from Eating Disorders, Trauma-Based Disorders & Compulsivity. Sponsored by The New Orleans Institute and The Eating Disorders

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- music therapy
- art therapy



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CONFERENCES

Center at River Oaks Hospital. For details, visit www.riveroakshospital.com or call 1-800-598-2040.

MAY 2-5, 2011

Santa Fe, NM
25th National Conference on The Self & The Family. Sponsored by US Journal Training Inc. and The Institute for Integral Development. For details, visit www.usjt.com/.

MAY 13, 2011

Houston, TX
One day workshop: Embracing Life Through Acceptance & Commitment: Healing from Eating Disorders, Trauma-Based Disorders & Compulsivity. Sponsored by The New Orleans Institute and The Eating Disorders Center at River Oaks Hospital. For details, visit www.riveroakshospital.com or call 1-800-598-2040.

JUNE 1-3, 2011

Seattle, WA
24th Annual Northwest Conference on Behavioral Health & Addictive Disorders. Sponsored by US Journal Training Inc. and The Institute for Integral Development. For details, visit the www.riveroakshospital.com.

JUNE 2, 2011

New Orleans, LA
Breakfast meeting. To Be Announced. Focus: Eating Disorders. Sponsored by The New Orleans Institute and The Eating Disorders Center at River Oaks Hospital. For details, visit www.riveroakshospital.com or call 1-800-598-2040.

JUNE 11, 2011

Denver, CO
One day workshop: Embracing Life Through Acceptance & Commitment:

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CONFERENCES

Healing from Eating Disorders, Trauma-Based Disorders & Compulsivity. Sponsored by The New Orleans Institute and The Eating Disorders Center at River Oaks Hospital. For details, visit www.riveroakshospital.com or call 1-800-598-2040.

JUNE 16-18, 2011

Newport Beach, CA
2nd Western Conference on Behavioral Health & Addictive Disorders. Sponsored by US Journal Training Inc. and The Institute for Integral Development. For details, visit www.usjt.com.

JULY 8, 2011

Jackson, MS
One day workshop: Embracing Life Through Acceptance & Commitment: Healing from Eating Disorders, Trauma-Based Disorders & Compulsivity. Sponsored by The New Orleans

Institute and The Eating Disorders Center at River Oaks Hospital. For details, visit www.riveroakshospital.com or call 1-800-598-2040.

AUGUST 5-7, 2011

Windsor Locks, CT
The annual S.M.A.R.T. conference to help survivors of severe child abuse (ritual abuse) and torture will be held at the DoubleTree Hotel near Bradley International Airport, 16 Ella Grasso Turnpike, Windsor Locks, CT 06096 (between Hartford, CT and Springfield, MA). Pre-registration is preferred. For information write S.M.A.R.T., P.O. Box 1295, Easthampton, MA 01027-1295 E-mail smartnews@aol.com : Details at <http://ritualabuse.us/smart-conference/>

SEPTEMBER 9, 2011

Cincinnati, OH
One day workshop: Embracing Life Through Acceptance & Commitment:

Healing from Eating Disorders, Trauma-Based Disorders & Compulsivity. Sponsored by The New Orleans Institute and The Eating Disorders Center at River Oaks Hospital. For details, visit www.riveroakshospital.com or call 1-800-598-2040.

SEPTEMBER 22-24, 2011

Las Vegas, NV
18th Las Vegas Conference on Counseling Skills. (Ethics Workshop, Sept 21.) Sponsored by US Journal Training Inc. and The Institute for Integral Development. For details, visit www.usjt.com.

OCTOBER 21, 2011

Coral Gables, FL
One day workshop: Embracing Life Through Acceptance & Commitment: Healing from Eating Disorders, Trauma-Based Disorders & Compulsivity. Sponsored by The New Orleans



Del Amo Hospital is located in the "South Bay" area of Los Angeles, CA. The trauma Recovery Program at Del Amo specializes in the "Trauma Model" of treatment. This model utilizes cognitive therapies to guide the client towards self-awareness and trauma resolution. The Trauma Recovery Program is designed as a highly-structured Inpatient Program which can be stepped down to a Partial Hospitalization Program.

- Individual and Group Therapies
- Dialectical Behavioral Treatment (DBT)
- Cognitive Restructuring
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- Relapse Prevention
- Therapeutic Recreation
- Concurrent Addictions Group
- Long-Term Recovery Plan

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CONFERENCES

Institute and The Eating Disorders Center at River Oaks Hospital. For details, visit www.riveroakshospital.com or call 1-800-598-2040.

OCTOBER 26-27, 2011

Stony Brook, NY
Twentieth Anniversary SASS Art Show. A Path to Healing from Sexual Abuse and Family Violence. Held at SUNY Stony Brook.
Information at <http://sass.fegs.org>

NOVEMBER 3-5, 2011

Baltimore, MD
ISTSS 27th Annual Meeting
Pre-Meeting Institutes Nov. 2
For details see www.istss.org

NOVEMBER 6-8, 2011

Montreal, QB Canada
ISSTD 2011: 28th Annual International Conference. Complex Trauma and Dissociation Across the Life Span. Core Competencies in Training and Research. Pre-conference dates: November 4-5. Hilton Bonaventure Hotel. Highly recommended. For details, visit www.isst-d.org

NOVEMBER 18, 2011

Savannah, GA
One day workshop: Embracing Life Through Acceptance & Commitment: Healing from Eating Disorders, Trauma-Based Disorders & Compulsivity. Sponsored by The New Orleans Institute and The Eating Disorders Center at River Oaks Hospital. For details, visit www.riveroakshospital.com or call 1-800-598-2040.

DECEMBER 2, 2011

Asheville, NC
One day workshop: Embracing Life Through Acceptance & Commitment: Healing from Eating Disorders, Trauma-Based Disorders & Compulsivity. Sponsored by The New Orleans Institute and The Eating Disorders Center at River Oaks Hospital. For

details, visit www.riveroakshospital.com or call 1-800-598-2040.

DECEMBER 7, 2011

New Orleans, LA
Breakfast meeting. To Be Announced.

Trauma Recovery/Compulsive Behaviors. Sponsored by The New Orleans Institute and The Eating Disorders Center at River Oaks Hospital. For details, visit www.riveroakshospital.com

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RESOURCES

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Visit Many Voices' new fundraising site at www.cafepress.com/ManyVoices. We're trying to put up new images and products as fast as possible!

Dr. Louis Birner, author of "Be

Creative, Not Depressed" has launched his new blog at <http://www.louisbirnerphdpsychologist.com>. Read his encouraging approach toward healing, and order his book via Paypal.

The Awareness Center, led by Vicki

Polin, serves the Jewish community affected by Sexual Abuse, via The International Jewish Coalition Against

Sexual Abuse/Assault. The Center is relocating to Chicagoland. Visit their extensive website, www.theawarenesscenter.org

The ISSTD's 27th Annual

Conference in Atlanta this past October drew over 450 therapists from around the world serving a wide range of missions related to trauma and dissociation. ISSTD is the premier professional organization for treatment of dissociative disorders and complex trauma. Therapists, please support this organization and your own interests by joining or donating. Visit the website at <http://www.isstd-d.org> for training, current information, and future conference plans.

A frequent MV artist and contributor, JoEllen Smith, has a new

blog dedicated to her recovery facilitated by her Christian faith. Visit <http://www.cocooncreationsonline.net/> to witness her artwork and writing.

MANY VOICES continues to seek volunteers to research trauma topics on the web, and/or edit or write descriptions of valuable resource URLs and Books on these trauma topics. We're making progress! Contact Lynn, at LynnW@manyvoicespress.org for more explanation.

Announcing a new book for men by Robert W. Dyches, PhD, "An End to Silence: Help for Men Who Have Been Sexually Assaulted." 144 page paperback. \$16.95 plus \$3.99 shipping. Published by Life With Options, PO Box 69, Berryville, AR 72616. Make checks payable to Life With Options.

TRAILBLAZER PROGRAM

The Timberlawn Trauma Program, under the direction of internationally renowned clinician, researcher and author Colin A. Ross M.D., focuses on the effects of trauma and unresolved attachment issues. The treatment goal is to help individuals improve their adult functioning by helping them stabilize and continue their recovery with new tools learned in the hospital setting.

SIGNS OF UNRESOLVED TRAUMA

- Suicidal ideation
- A pattern of out-of-control and self-injurious behavior
- Self destructive addictions such as self mutilation, eating disorders and sexual addiction
- Intrusive thoughts, images, feelings and nightmares
- Flashbacks
- Extensive comorbidity/multiple diagnoses
- Inability to tolerate feelings or conflicts
- Intense self-blame and feeling unworthy
- Staying stuck in the victim or perpetrator roles
- Disorganized attachment patterns
- Black and white thinking and other cognitive distortions
- Pathological dissociation



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RESOURCES

Survivorship, a longstanding organization for people recovering from ritual abuse and mind control, features a series of events and workshops online. Check the website www.survivorship.org/events.html for the latest information.

Dauna Cole's book "A Shattered Mind", her story of recovery from abuse, was reviewed in the August 2010 MV. A few copies are available as a fundraiser through MV for \$12. When those are gone, order for \$12.99 through Tate Publishing: <http://www.tatepublishing.com>

Activist Mike Skinner recently appeared on an Oprah Winfrey program featuring male survivors of abuse. See his website promoting his activities in public speaking and music presentation on healing for trauma,

abuse, and mental health at www.mskinnermusic.com and also www.survivingspirit.com

Thanks to all of you who send in great resources to share with MVs readers. Therapist Ruth Schofield, LMFT of Newtown, CT says her trauma clients have received great value from the CDs and books by Belleruth Naparstak. She is a pioneer in guided imagery, and has numerous CDs available throughout the internet. You can find her work most easily at <http://www.healthjourneys.com>

CD's from the 2010 S.M.A.R.T. conference on ritual abuse, secret societies and mind control are available for purchase, individually or as a group. CDs are approximately 60 minutes long and cost \$12 each. Ask questions or receive detailed content and payment

information from smartnews@aol.com or visit <http://ritualabuse.us/smart-conference/>

Becky-R-U's says: "I would like to share the success I've had using "SoundSleep for Babies: Advanced Womb Simulation CD." It's the only thing that helps my youngest ones, newborns, sleep. The CDs are available widely on the internet at sites like <http://www.babysleepsystem.com/>

William B Tollefson, PhD offers outpatient Life Coaching via phone and Skype for people who are dealing with the aftereffects of trauma and dissociation. For details on his services and materials, see Dr. Tollefson's website <http://www.drilltollefson.com/>

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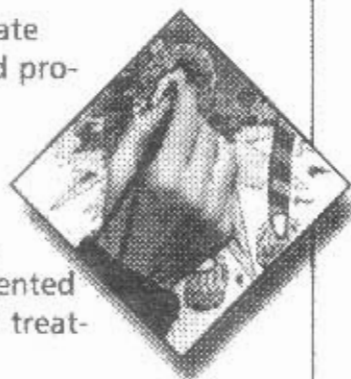
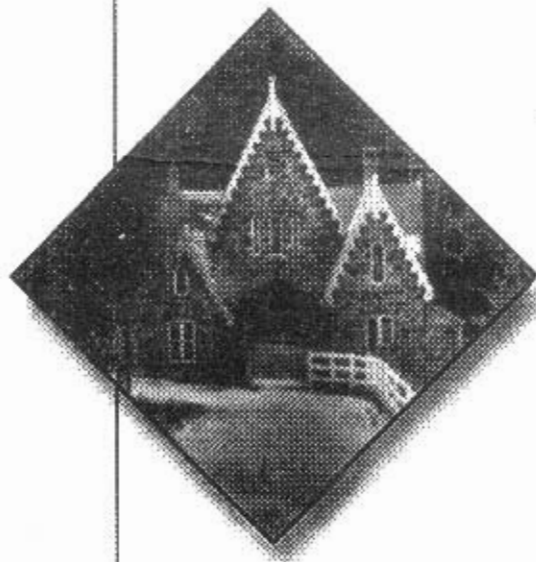
BRIDGES TO RECOVERY is a premier *residential treatment program* designed for people suffering from *psychiatric disorders* who are seeking in depth psychotherapy and an alternative to a hospital environment for their primary and extended care.

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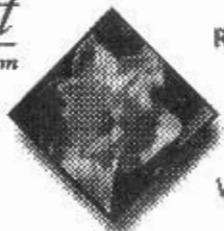


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