

MANY VOICES

WORDS OF HOPE FOR PEOPLE RECOVERING FROM TRAUMA & DISSOCIATION

Vol VII, No.1

February 1995

ISSN1042-2277

In This Issue:

Learning about "Good Therapy"
Is your therapist right for you?
Dealing with Therapy Stress
...and much more!

On Recovery

There are moments
when the pain's hot
breath scorches my soul
steals my sanity
plunges me into
suffocating blackness.

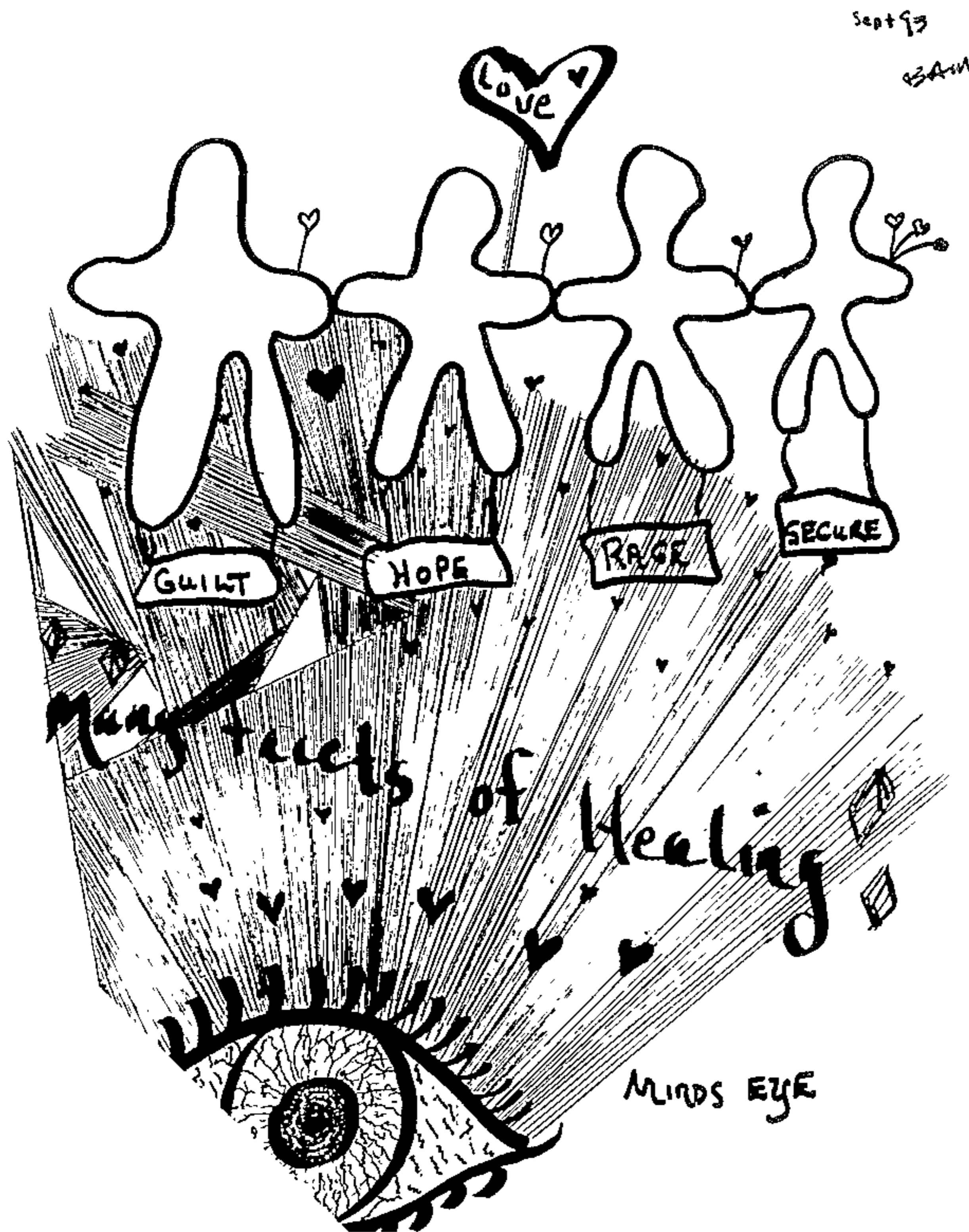
But those moments
used to be
hours
days
weeks
months.

Now there are windows
of time and space
which open and close
by my control.

Windows which hold
promise
hope
possibility.
What a miraculous thing
to shed the weight
from the chest
to feel the breath move.

And with each exhalation
I blow the ancient demons
farther and farther away
across the meadow
toward the horizon
of my world.

By CE



The Master of Resistance

By Diana Z.

I am the master of resistance. I know all the tools of the trade. My long suits have been running and confusion. Keeping my therapist confused and off-balance kept me protected from too much exposure and from the risk of letting her inside and then being stabbed at. I expected to be attacked. That was what I had been taught. She is a woman, *just like my mom*. Sitting in a room alone with her was terrifying (the first two months, we did therapy with her office door open). But, I kept going back. I had a strong desire for some measure of peace from the fear, confusion, depression, shame and self-hatred that has plagued me my whole life; and to be free of the suffocating pain I've carried with me always. And right from the beginning, some part of me saw what I could not see; an ally, a calm steady presence that reached back as we reached forward. And because I wanted to get well more than I was afraid of being hurt, I kept on struggling and reaching.

But old ways die hard. Even after three-and-a-half years it's still a struggle to trust her motives and share what's happening in my head instead of censoring every word or just plain withholding it altogether. And when the pain from the past is worst, or especially when I'm faced with seeing that the loving behavior she exercises with me is a horribly painful contrast to my own mother's anger, resentment, apathy and abuse, I feel most resistant and driven to run. After all, if I believe that a strong woman could treat me with kindness or positive regard, then I have to see and own that my own mother did not love me or want me, and her behavior was as life-threatening and damaging as the facts show.

But, even with all my resistance, my therapist has been patient and continues to challenge that wall I have erected. I still withhold. I still dance around the pain. I can still barely look at her, especially her eyes. I still try to run. I still sometimes doubt her

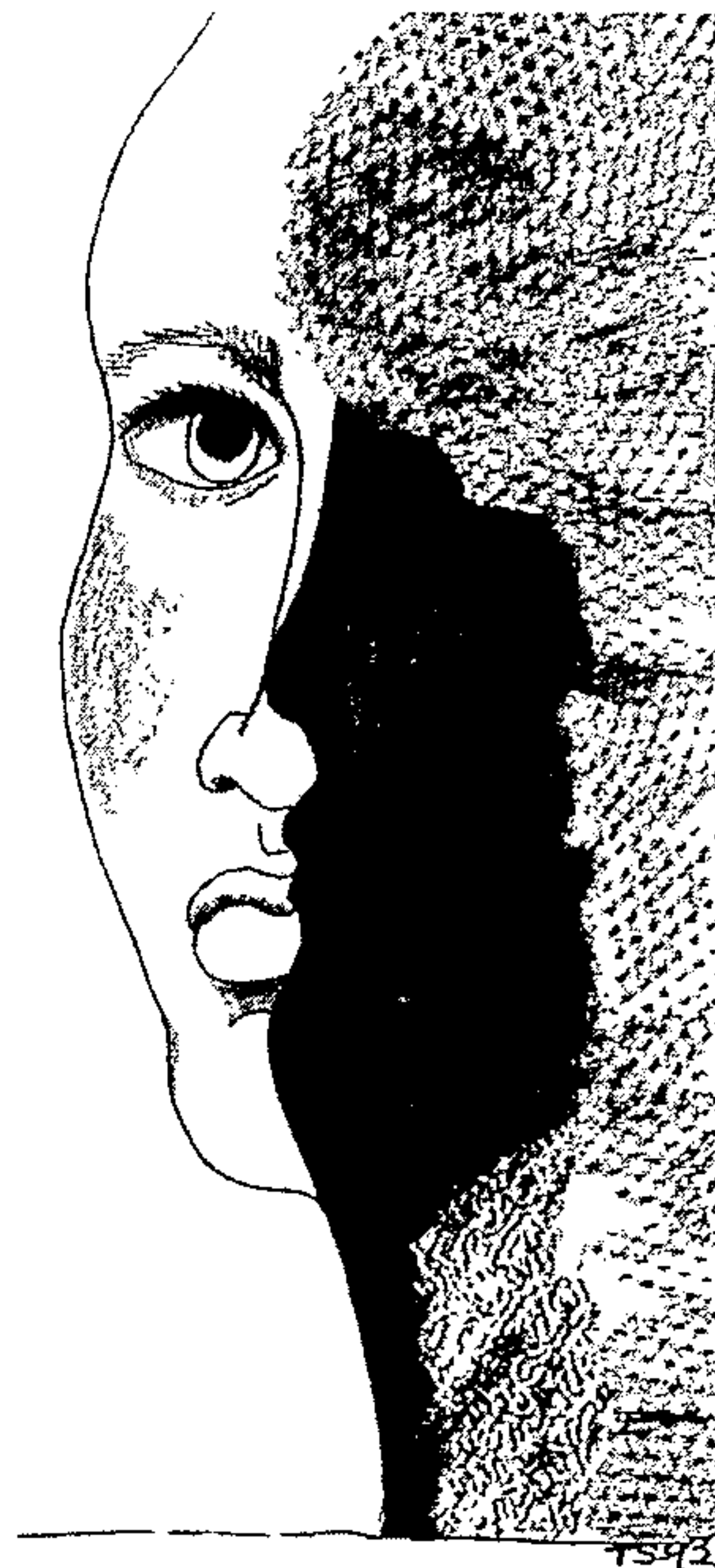
sincerity or that she is real and not still waiting to stab at me. I still wonder what her motive is and why she would waste her time on me. I still hear words come out of my mouth meant to lead her away from the truth so I can protect myself from the pain of so much hurt; not a lie, but careful wording meant to mislead. I still clamp my mouth shut, withholding whole conversations occurring in my head, afraid to speak them for fear of rejection. I still scribble out truths I have written, too afraid to trust her acceptance. I'm still, in some ways, waiting for her to abandon us.

But there is good news. There have been times I have opened my mouth and let the horrid truth out and I have not been attacked or rejected. Every time I have let down the wall and spoken from my gut; exposed my underbelly and not been attacked; I've been given a small measure of redemption and hope. Every time I have allowed my tears and vulnerability to show and am always offered support instead of ridicule and shame, I am given a little more ammunition against the edict not to exist. Every time I dare look in her eyes and always find kindness and not the hatred I expect, I'm given back a small piece of my humanity. And in speaking the truth, exposing what I have always hidden, I have found I feel more real than I ever have. I am more alive, more connected, when I take the risk and speak my truth, no matter how frightening. And I find that my therapist is more human, less the potential monster, and more able to help and guide me. In trusting her with the horrible truth, I find that she is indeed trustworthy and accepting of me, and so the alliance can grow. And in turn, I have more chance of healing and becoming. I have more chance for redemption and truth and the hope that life still holds promise.

My persistent resistance has served a purpose. It has given me some assurance that my therapist probably isn't going to give up on me even

when I'm a royal pain in the butt. Since she has been patient enough to work through things so far, then maybe she won't abandon us. It has given me the distance I needed until I could do each piece of work. It did not mean I wasn't working. It meant I could not *yet*. Even now, it gives me the distance I need to wrestle with my own pain until I can speak the words and feel the feelings, for you see, I not only resist therapy. I resist those inside of me who carry the pain and whom I continue to struggle with accepting and embracing as mine. Stubbornness and resistance are part of who I am. Without them, I would not have survived my childhood. I suppose I also would not have survived without those inside, as well. But, for now...

MV



TS93

Input Wanted!

Once again, we're hoping to expand MV's usefulness. Toward this goal, if you are aware of medical doctors or attorneys in your area who are especially enlightened re: working with dissociative patients, please send me their names & addresses for a future resource list.

We are also looking for useful topics and writers for the Therapists' Page. The writer should be a professional practicing in the field, and while you don't have to be "famous," it helps if you have an established (positive) reputation in the area you wish to discuss. MV needs solid, common-sense information that those recovering and/or their therapists can apply. Layperson's language and style, please. And query before writing.

If you are scheduling events, please send the information *early*. We want to help get the word out, yet often receive info too late to publish it. Call me at 513/531-5415 if you have questions.

Finally, remember MV wants to help...but we don't always know how to reach those who can benefit from our information. If you know where flyers could be distributed (1-100+) or if you have access to appropriate mailing lists, small or large, we're interested. Names/addresses of specialized bookstores or those with large sections of feminist, self-help or New Age publications would be useful. In some cases we can pay for mailing lists or co-sponsor non-competitive mailings, (if the names are confidential). We really appreciate whatever you can do, write, or suggest to help MV help others! Thanks! -LW

MANY VOICES wishes to thank the following generous contributors for their help in supporting our work:

Angels:



THE CENTER FOR TRAUMA AND DISSOCIATION
4400 East Iliff Avenue
Denver, Colorado 80222
1-800-441-6921
Dr. Nancy Cole, Clinical Director

Advocates:



NATIONAL TREATMENT CENTER for TRAUMATIC & DISSOCIATIVE DISORDERS
Del Amo Hospital
23700 Camino Del Sol
Torrance, CA 90505
1-800-645-3305 or 310-530-1151
Walter C. Young, M.D., Medical Director

Friends:

CENTER FOR ABUSE RECOVERY & Empowerment
The Psychiatric Institute of Washington, D.C.
4228 Wisconsin Avenue N.W.
Washington, DC 20016
1-800-369-CARE
Joan A. Turkus, M.D., Medical Director

RENAISSANCE TREATMENT SERVICES for Dissociative Disorders
Green Oaks at Medical City Dallas
7808 Clodus Fields Drive
Dallas TX 75251
(214) 991-9504 Ext. 868
Rekha Pole, M.D., Medical Director

These organizations are not affiliated with nor have input to or control over the contents of this publication. MANY VOICES and its staff have no influence on their operations.

Conferences

Legacy of Trauma II, a professional training seminar for diagnosis and treatment of Dissociative Identity Disorder (MPD) featuring Colin Ross, M.D., will be held at Michigan State University Management Education Center in Troy, MI., March 10, 1995. Co-sponsored by SE Michigan Chapter of ISSD and Havenwyck Mental Health System. For more information, contact Daniel S. Pilon (810) 642-6610 or Leslie K. Pielack (810) 398-7496.

Ritualized Trauma, Mind Control and

Dissociation: An educational symposium for professionals and the public, will be held March 23-26, 1995 at the Omni Richardson Hotel in Richardson, Texas. Includes first annual meeting of the Society for the Investigation, Treatment, and Prevention of Ritual and Cult Abuse. For info, contact Pamela Perskin, Exec Dir. of SITPRCA, PO Box 835564, Richardson, TX 75083-5564. (214) 699-8599.

April MPD/Trauma Conferences include: **Apr. 1 - Albuquerque.** Fifth Annual SW Regional Conf. (505)

277-3905; **Apr. 13-14- Jackson, MS.** Miss. Conf. on Child Abuse & Neglect. (601) 969-1995; **Apr. 27-28- Akron, OH** 10th Akron Regional Conf. (216) 384-6525; **Apr. 27-29- Costa Mesa, CA** 8th Annual Western Clinical Conf. (714) 978-0895; **Apr. 29, Breaking the Silence (for Survivors & Therapists) Brentwood, CA.** (510) 634-4902.

The **Third Hope & Help Conference** for survivors of childhood sexual abuse will be held in Toronto in Nov. 1995. Call (800) 668-2665 for information.

When You're Sick of Therapy...

Therapy is very hard work as we all know. You should congratulate and celebrate the work you've done so far. Being tired of therapy comes with the territory. You need to pamper yourself before and after. Treat yourself within your budget limits even if it is only a soda and a candy bar. We always make sure that we have a little money to get the kids a treat for a job well done. We journal most evenings, except the night before therapy. That is our day of rest. We space out in front of the TV after we come home from a friend's house. Our dinner is something yummy like a messy peanut butter and fluff sandwich that the kids make. We try to relax and not worry about what therapy will involve. Let the kids play for awhile. Let them color pictures to show your therapist.

If you are really getting burned out, try having a non-therapy therapy session: take things that you want to show off — things you have made, written, toys the kids love, etc. Let your therapist know that you are simply tired and want to be there, but not work very hard. It is important that you go to keep your system from getting stressed. You also want to keep from too much change. This also works when you are having problems trusting your therapist. Everyone goes through that once in awhile.

I think that being tired, not trusting, etc., are phases that we all go through, depending on the difficulty of the therapy and who is doing the therapy. When you have a fresh new horrible memory it is easy to forget and let your trust levels slip a little. Face it...we once thought that to tell meant someone could die.

Resistance and denial are all a part of the whole process. In therapy, someone's secrets are going to be told, so be ready for a tug of war. If you know how and who it will be, pamper them the night before and reward them after. Heavens know that they deserve it!

We also have a team that makes sure that we get to therapy on time and that the people who need it get out to talk.

It's worked for five years.

I know that therapy can be very frustrating at times, but in the long run it is worth it if you have a good therapist. You'll discover your therapist's worth during therapy. He or she should take your interests to heart and fully encourage you, but listen when you have doubts. Also, listen to your kids. They see things that adults might not. It's important to include everyone in with their opinions about your therapist. They all have a right to their say, even if they are out-voted. By letting them voice it, you let them work it out with your therapist, and build a trust bond.

By Babbs



We all need to trust someone but often find it the most difficult thing to do. A child's basic instinct is to trust their parents and the betrayal by them is the most devastating break in relationships that they will ever have. This betrayal will be taken into all other relationships as they grow up, and as adults.

In a therapy relationship, great risks are taken when the person has to tell about their parent's betrayals. A lot of the memories don't even feel real. You ask yourself, "How can I tell anyone about this?" The need to tell and the need to stay silent are a huge conflict that pulls us apart. Feeling like a liar, we tell our therapists about the past and feel like something terrible will happen because we don't even trust ourselves. We need to learn to trust our basic instincts and our "others".

Often the hardest trust relationships are the ones within us. We have been fighting each other for many years and are told by our therapists that we need to talk to each other and work together. Friction and the need for control are very real issues. Learning to trust each other is often harder than learning to trust our therapists. When someone tells a secret, another feels betrayed. The only way past this is to

talk to each other, reach out to each other, and to try to find a common ground.

By Tonya



When you get tired of therapy, you just don't go. You let someone else go instead. That way, *somebody* gets to go and talk to your therapist. If you need to talk but don't want to go, you write it down and give it to somebody to give to your therapist. Just say you don't want to be out. If you are having a hard time trusting her, you can write it and say you are having a hard time trusting about it, and don't want to talk about it yet. It ain't resistance or denial, it's protecting yourself. You got to protect yourself until you can talk about it.

By A Kid



I sometimes run because I don't want to be honest. When I'm tired of working, I go to my special safe place in my head. I relax and breathe slow to create some kind of tranquility.

You know there are some things you can't trust, and some you can. I mean that I sensitize my feelings by saying what I think the therapist wants to hear. So, I kinda tell the truth but not all of it. It's a tool I use to protect myself from criticism or being vulnerable even though I know she won't hurt me. It's a defense technique I use. Trying to change involves constant awareness of what I am saying and questioning myself to see if I'm telling the whole truth or not.

By Karen & Co.



I have just begun my third year of therapy and I *am* sick of it! I often wonder, is there no end to this? I feel like I'll be in therapy for the rest of my

life because...still...I don't *talk*, I don't *trust*, I don't *feel*. The instant I begin to feel an emotion, such as fear or pain, I jump off the train and run like hell. When I am asked to come back to the feeling, I panic, I feel trapped, my head gets confused, and I cannot speak at all. Sometimes I cry, sometimes I actually get up and leave the session.

Then there is the issue of *trust*...poised above my head like a machete. In my dreams, he still violates me and betrays my trust. I am afraid.

I do not think that I am in "unhelpful therapy" because my therapist is honest, patient, boundaried, and experienced in working with people like me. Also, even though I'm not "well" yet, I have made progress overall.

When I'm feeling this tired of therapy, I think it is a combination of *resistance* and *fear*. These are some of the ways I get back on track:

- *Talk to my therapist about it
- *Stop journaling and have a few nightmares
- *Structure my writing with the aid of a healing workbook
- *Ask God to help me find the courage and strength to continue my journey
- *Take a two-to-three week *mental break* and do something different and fun for awhile. (Therapy is NOT fun!!!) (My therapist *hates it* when I do this.)
- *Call my therapist's voice mail and talk trash during his recording, then hang up without leaving a message
- *Re-read *The Road Less Traveled*.

By B/S

Therapists, hospitalizations, and numerous medications have been part of my life since 1976. Finally, in 1990, after being diagnosed as a multiple, my therapy turned a corner in a positive direction. The strange feelings and incidents began to make sense, and so many questions were answered. The diagnosis is a major relief!

While not tiring of the therapy sessions themselves, the issues and body memories are at times so intense, my therapist suggests a vacation from journaling, scouring the library for MPD literature, and dwelling on my issues. After being exhausted emotionally and/or physically, or being

"stuck", the vacation usually acts as a stimulus, freeing my thoughts and suppressed feelings. Both my doctors remind me that I need fun in my life. And it always helps to have a good laugh or two at ourselves.

Denial of my multiplicity no longer occurs. However, I do sometimes attempt to deny certain memories because of fear or pain. But the issues continue to surface. I am gently reminded that only in facing the past can I be free to celebrate today and tomorrow.

Fear is probably my greatest hurdle. I greatly misjudged my husband, believing I would lose him and my marriage with his knowing my diagnosis. On the contrary, he also is relieved to have an explanation for what we are together experiencing. It took two years for me to confide my diagnosis with long-term, close friends, fearing what I may have said or done in their presence. However, my friends remain solid in their support during difficult times, and the good times are as fun as always, with no examining looks or questions.

During the past nineteen years of therapy, the techniques and practices of only two of my therapists have been, I feel, unhelpful. In 1976, my first psychiatrist administered numerous electric shock treatments along with heavy medications. Being my first encounter with therapy of any kind, I had no prior knowledge on which to base what I now feel was severe and unnecessary treatment. Additionally, eighteen months ago, I was hospitalized in a facility which allowed no work on individual personalities or their memories. This treatment facility's philosophy felt counter-productive to my particular needs.

I am wiser now concerning my treatment requirements, and more assertive in communicating these needs and concerns to my therapist and physician. This communication is possible only when there is trust, honesty, and acceptance between us. The therapeutic relationship between patient/client and therapist is a building and learning experience, as it is in any relationship.

By Anne & Syl for the 14 of us

MV

Akka

worries
 problems
 concerns
 like pebbles
 stones
 pushed aside
 piled
 stacked away
 until they build
 form a wall
 shutting me off
 from light and
 sound
 locking me inside
 the prison
 of screaming

his hands are
 on my breast
 again
 pulling at the
 nipple like
 snatching up a marble
 i grow cold
 distant
 forced outside my self
 to float
 in the space
 that is the opposite
 to freedom

it's raining
 or
 i'm crying
 and it doesn't matter which
 no one hears
 no one sees
 i feel the water
 running cold
 across the stone
 of my face
 and the wall is complete
 finished solid
 i am the inhabitants
 of a walled
 city

By Lisa K

Therapists' Page

By E. Sue Blume, CSW DCSW

E. Sue Blume, CSW DCSW, is a member of ISSD and is the author of *Secret Survivors: Uncovering Incest and Its Aftereffects in Women*. From her office in Freeport, New York she provides therapy for women, consultation, case review, and professional training. She has generously provided us the opportunity to reprint the following article, ©1993.

How to be a Caring Friend to Someone in Pain

How do you help someone who is struggling with pain, including the pain of incest recovery? How do you avoid saying the "wrong" thing? How do you offer yourself in a way that creates a climate of openness, trust and safety? Here are some guidelines:

When your friend is in pain...

DON'T try to "fix it"; don't feel obligated to find a solution. You can't change her life; only she can — or should. Ultimately the issue isn't this particular problem, but her growth. Besides, when you jump into "action" mode, she won't get to do what she needs to do, which is to vent her feelings; only once this is done can she explore her choices.

DON'T try to talk her out of her pain, cheer her up, or minimize the problem. Never say "Don't —" (cry, be mad, be upset, etc.) You can't take her feelings away and if you sound like you are trying to do so she will feel as if she needs to defend her right to have them, (or she will feel as if she is bad for having them).

NEVER judge or criticize her or her feelings: "You're too sensitive." Painful feelings are a natural, healthy response when one has been hurt; they need to be identified, experienced, and expressed. It's not your job to agree or disagree with her feelings. They are never "right" or "wrong"; they are simply true.

AVOID such dismissing and useless responses as "It's in the past," and "You have to learn to let it go." Don't tell her "It happened for a reason," "It was meant to be," or "It was God's will." If (and only if) this is her belief system too, these statements have no place in the conversation until *after* the feelings have been expressed and resolved.

DON'T say "I know how you feel"

unless you can be sure you really, really do, which usually means unless you have experienced exactly the same thing — and even then, be really careful. DON'T say "It'll get better" or "I'm sure this will work out," unless you can prove it. DO say, "I believe in you and I believe you'll get through this," "Help me to understand," "Tell me what that was like for you." (And please, please use your own words! Statements throughout this article are examples only.)

DON'T give advice. Telling your friend what to do treats her as if she's incompetent (but you're not!) Besides, those are *your* answers; she must learn to find her own. If you have a problem with a choice she is making, it may be OK to tell her in a caring and nonjudgemental way that presents *your* feelings: "I hurt inside (get scared for you) when I see you returning to this abusive relationship."

Neither do you have the right to demand that she share your feelings about her situation or about a person who has hurt her — or the right to expect her to act in a certain way in response to her own feelings. For instance, *you* may be enraged at her father who molested her, but she may be scared to feel her anger. Or she may not be ready to give up the relationship, as you want her to. You can tell her what *you* feel — even that it's hard for you to go to her parents' house with her, and that you're not sure if you can any more. But if this is what she feels she must do, you must accept that — and hopefully find it within yourself to support *her* though not her decision.

NEVER question your friend's memories of childhood abuse. She does that enough already! If it is difficult for you to believe, to face, that such terrible things can happen in this

world, admit that this is *your* struggle. Offer to learn, and *do*. Recognize your own limits and biases, and try to overcome what you can. Never deny the other person's reality. Never. (This applies to other issues she may be wrestling with, such as homosexuality.)

DO ask "open ended" questions — questions that cannot be answered yes or no. Help your friend to *label* her feelings: "It sounds like you felt jealous." Sometimes saying (if it's true) "I would have been so —" (frustrated, crazed, overwhelmed) might give her permission to admit to feelings that she struggles to identify or admit to. *Careful* use of such statements as "That must have made you so —" may also be helpful. Your friend will develop a sense of mastery through the understanding of her experience. You can also tell her that (and how) you identify with her situation or feelings, but be careful to not switch the focus to your stuff.

DO offer acknowledgment of her situation: "Yeah, it's tough to..." or "It's painful when..."

DO ask her what she wants you to do. Just to listen? To give feedback? To remind her of her strengths? To tell her she's not crazy? To distract her? (While it is real necessary to learn to see the humor in life, make sure that's what *she* needs, rather than an outgrowth of your own discomfort.) Does she want you to hold her hand? To sit some distance away? To hug her? (NEVER use her need for comfort or physical affection as an opportunity for sexual contact.)

The *only* time it's OK to disregard her wishes is if she is suicidal. Ask her if she has a plan (it only needs to be realistic in *her* eyes); is she "getting her affairs in order"? If she is in danger, do not agree with any request to keep secrets, and do whatever you can to

get her to professional help. To be a true friend, you may need to risk the loss of her approval.

To be a true friend, you must know your limits. This applies as well to a friend with a drug, alcohol, or eating problem, and other such self-destructive patterns. You need to quell your rescuer fantasies, if they are in operation, and urge that she seek some form of recovery assistance. If she is turning to you instead of taking responsibility for herself; if she talks over and over about the same complaints, but repeats the same patterns; if she vents but does not change, say, obsessing about a breakup, talking more about the other person's feelings than her own, then you may help most by saying to her, "This is more than I can help you with. Perhaps you need to take this to a —" (therapist, recovery group.) If talking to you helps her to return to the pattern that hurts her, then you are enabling the problem, not the remedy.

If you are a caretaker, with a great need to be needed, you must always ask yourself, "Whose needs...?" (am I meeting by what I say or do.) If you really are there for her needs, you will support her, even if what she wants to do is to be alone, or to turn to somebody else. Actually, she should always be encouraged to seek help wherever she can find it. Territoriality in relationships is self-serving, although it's OK to be human and face (though not necessarily share with her, at that moment) that you are jealous or feel rejected.

DO face your — and her — powerlessness. Not every situation can be corrected. Sometimes stuff happens, and mighty awful stuff at that. Life can seem — or be — very unfair. Things can happen that people don't deserve...over and over and over! Sometimes there are no "answers"...sometimes the process of working through a problem takes a really long time...Learning to deal with life as it is, is one of the greatest challenges we all have to face. All of us. Her turn may be now. Yours will come.

There are no perfect answers. You and she need to accept that sometimes the best thing to do is to make sympathetic noises. Or to say, "I'm so sorry." Or "My heart aches for you." Or "How awful for you." Or, simply, "I'm here."

Active Listening, Feedback, Unconditional Acceptance, and Empathy are the basics of helping. Active Listening is repeating back to the other person a paraphrase of what they've said - using your words, saying, "What I hear you saying is — ". It shows the other person they've been understood, and can focus the conversation. (It forces you to really listen, too.) Feedback is more active, involving the listener's perceptions and thoughts: "Are you aware that even though you say you're angry, you're smiling?" or, "I remember that you used the same words to describe your feelings about your mother."

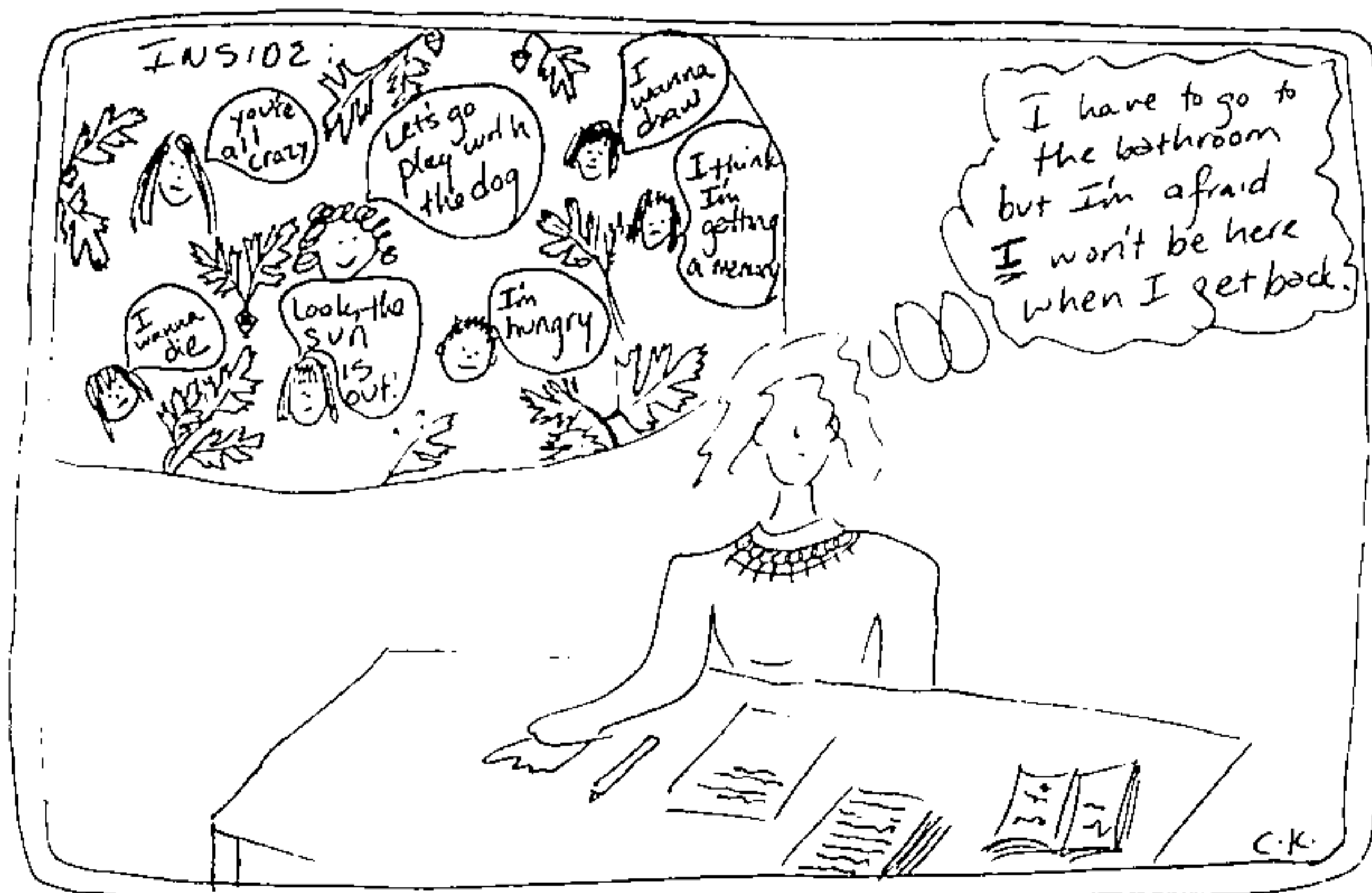
Unconditional Acceptance is an attitude. It does not mean, as many

people mistakenly think it does, not having your own mind, or agreeing with everything the other person says or does. What it means is that you do not confuse *person* with *behavior*: your reactions (and remember they are *your* reactions, rather than a truth about the rightness or wrongness of the other person's choices) are about a behavior; you must not use that to suggest that the person herself is "bad." If I accept you unconditionally, I can disagree with you, but I accept *you*, and treat you as a person of value.

Finally, Empathy, perhaps the most important skill necessary in *any* relationship, is the willingness and ability to see things from the other person's perspective, and to understand them through the meaning that they would have for that person, rather than imposing our own meaning on them. This process is valuable because it makes the other person feel truly heard — not just her words, but her experience. As a bonus, empathy builds closeness. It requires vigilant self-monitoring.

Love is a verb. It is how we treat someone. One of the most generous gifts of love we can give a friend, a partner, or a family member is to truly listen — without taking over, judging, blaming, or imposing our values or interpretations. Thus we meet the ultimate goal of empowering our loved one who is suffering, through the cradling of her pain.

MV



Good Therapy

In October 1991, I went to Employee Assistance for help sorting out and coping with my Dr. Jeckyl/Mr. Hyde boyfriend, being the new kid on an old job, overeating, and incest "issues", realizing my work and attendance at 12-step meetings were not enough. The counselor told me I needed professional help and I needed it really bad. I chose "Liz" out of available therapists in my area, by intuition.

I saw Liz as a warm, compassionate and open-minded woman. I remember her saying something about clinical depression, a chemical imbalance relating to traumatic abuse as well as self-induced drug and alcohol abuse. Meditation, regular exercise, and anti-depressants could help. She mentioned a treatment center for women who had been sexually abused as children. I told her I had no stamina for even ten minutes of exercise, I had at least ten "things" going on in my head all the time, so meditation was out. I wasn't going to take drugs, and I couldn't afford to go to treatment. We talked more and I found I trusted her. Two weeks later I found myself in outpatient treatment, on meds for depression and dissociation (news to me) and at the beginning of a long, hard, tortuous journey with Liz close by, many times closer than I was to myself. She promised the road would get better if I stuck to it. I didn't believe her, because for a long time it kept getting harder. But there was a trust...

She was there in person or by phone when and wherever I needed her. Kind. Gentle. Caring. Accepting. Nurturing. Encouraging. Her office, with her in it, became The One Safe Place for me/us. It was there my parts attached on an umbilical cord. My parts came and went freely. She worked miracles with her openness and energy. I found a safe haven for my vulnerability. I really needed that for I felt I had no skin. My youngest part I know of is a second trimester fetus that needed to be born into a safe place, as well as the others who needed a safe place to make themselves known and

begin healing.

Anyhow, through intense sessions, working through and out of a "respect and boundary battlefield" relationship and into a relationship with myself, I found myself rescuing my parts from memories without calling Liz. I found myself setting and upholding healthy boundaries without first checking in with Liz. I found myself consulting Wisdom Part and Inner Guide (which Liz kept telling me about and even showed me during sessions) and telling her later. I started walking 3-5 days a week. I see and avoid "unhealthy-for-me" people. And I feel my home base and safe place protector is within myself (most of the time). I felt strength within myself and in relation to and with my parts. I had trust in myself, my decisions and actions.

So a few months ago I declared this to Liz. I verbally cut the umbilical cord. She was glad. We beheld a major therapeutic goal being met. We discussed having four more paid sessions. I decided I would use them to tie up loose ends and then move on out into the world, on my own.

Then I freaked. In another session, Liz told me, "You are the customer and I am a service provider," when it was pick-a-topic time. I felt objectified, shut out and unimportant, like when the big challenge was gone, so was her interest. After lots of journaling and some sessions where I brought up my freaking out about the obvious change in our relating, I realize the same warm, compassionate woman is sitting in the therapist's chair. The difference now is a woman who is comprised of many named and unnamed child parts (some are integrated, some are not), Wisdom and Spirit is sitting across from her, where in 1991 there were a lot of parts and confusion inside a female's struggling body. The distance I perceived her placing forced me to search for, find and reach for my True Higher Power for comfort, higher wisdom, grounding, and joy.

I still need Liz's guidance and help with processing some things. We are

in a sense "mapping" the last few years. And she is helping "us" to develop positive stress-coping abilities. Since I am present more than fifty percent of the time, and realize I/we perceive stress as often threatening, I feel I need different-than-textbook answers. Liz is still the only outside person I/we trust, so I am continuing therapy, but in a four-point team: God, Liz, my parts, and I. Healing, integration, and growth is constantly taking place. I have also begun Trauma Touch massages by another "miracle worker/coworker." That is hard because not all of me appreciates that T.T. is non-threatening.

I want to add that Many Voices has played a strong role in my accepting dissociation as a way of life (a manageable way of life) and maybe even my parts accepting me and my struggles. Liz encourages me to explore new avenues of growth, change, expanding and feeling whole. There's lots out there, and ways to do it safely. And Liz is the only person I remember making a promise that came true: I stuck with the work, and the road got better.

I believe that I will be on my own without consistent therapy visits someday, and probably in the near future. But not before I'm truly ready. Even then, Liz assures me that her door will always be open. And I have an idea that as I grow stronger and less dependent on her, she is able to shift her energy to someone else who now "really needs professional help and needs it really bad." Thanks Liz, All There Is, and All of me.

By Jerri, Wisdom & the Kids



Dear Dr. C.,

I feel my therapy is working. Patience is not one of my assets. I have felt what being "one" feels like and I love the feeling that goes with it. It however is not without some confusion. Thank you for your boundaries; they make me mad, they make me sad, they

make me cry, but they also make me stronger. Thank you for not allowing me to adopt you as my saviour because, even though I may throw a tantrum over it, I know only I can be my saviour. Our therapy has not been easy and it's not over yet! Thank you for being "just human", even though I want you to someday surprise me with a magic wand. Thanks,

By a part of T.



She is like a warm security blanket on a cold scary night. Like a newborn's first breath of air to start life. Her office is like home to us, a very safe place to be. Sitting on the floor next to her, or in the chair, it doesn't matter where we are as long as we are close.

She is always glad to see us, whether we're happy or whether we're sad. We don't have to pretend with her. We can always be ourselves. No matter what we say she never gets angry.

Sometimes she's like a mother to us, there to make the hurt go away, and sometimes she's a teacher teaching us what life can be like. Sometimes she's a doctor with her great wisdom and intelligence, but most of all, she is our best friend. Someone we can go to and share anything with. We work so hard in therapy, and have been for so long. With her help and guidance we will be whole one day, and live as one.

From Diane & the Pod to Dr. C.A.R.

Without therapy our world becomes smaller and smaller. We allow fewer connections, and feelings. Instead of growing intellectually, spiritually, and physically, we become more restricted, confined, rigid, and feelingless.

Without therapy, the years add age and thicker walls and we drift farther and farther from the memories, from ourselves, from others, from peace.

Without therapy the memories become so buried that we ourselves feel buried. Though we are alive we feel as though we are dead. Our protective shield, so life-saving long ago, has become a coffin that suffocates our potential adult self. It suffocates self-love, connectedness, self-understanding, and wholeness.

Therapy takes so much courage and strength, commitment and hope. It takes all of these to begin to break out of the coffin. Little by little, and bit by bit, while letting the sun in we also allow the memories to come in with it.

Unlike the caterpillar, we cannot break out of our coffin/cocoon without help. We need to learn how to depend, and trust another human being who can be our supporter, encourager, and guide.

I hear my doctor's voice trying to reach me when I'm buried deep within my coffin, my cocoon. She is calling to me, encouraging me to keep trying. She says once I allow the memories to come in that the sun will soon follow

and I will be able to fly out of the coffin. I will be able to see the world through different eyes, feel the world with a new, whole body, and touch the world with fearless loving arms.

As we chisel away at the coffin I feel myself growing and stretching. There is more room for me to expand my mind and body. I allow new ideas, behaviors and feelings to come in and this begins to feel good. I begin to have more energy. I use it to build up my strength to cut more and more holes in the coffin.

As I face the memories I know the parts that have been scattered and broken will begin to fuse together. Yet, they will keep their special abilities and uniqueness. As we grow into a whole self we will break out of the coffin and walk among the living in the sun.

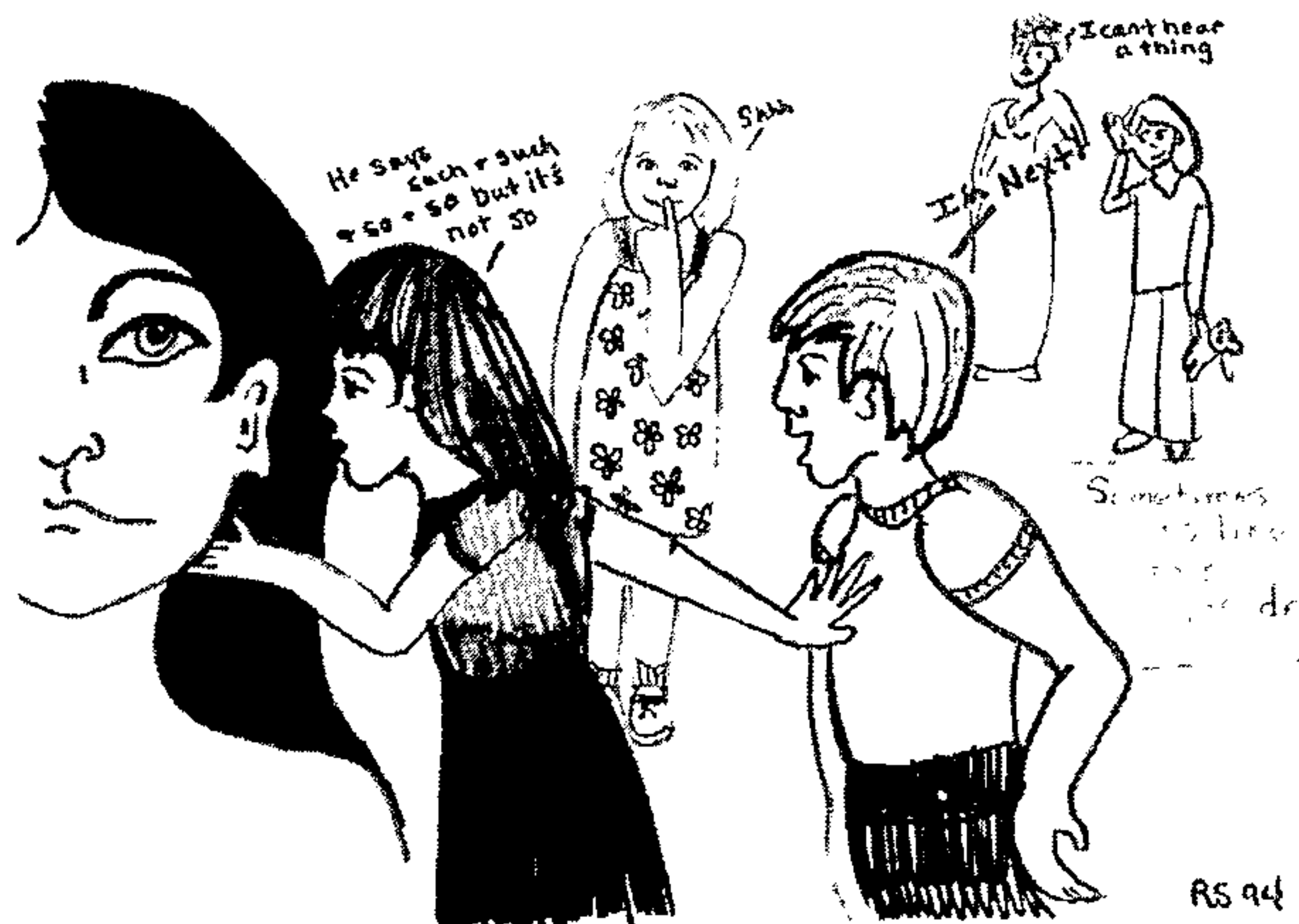
IT IS OUR TIME.

We will no longer be the walking wounded, the walking dead. We will be complete within ourselves. We will have outgrown our coffin, our cocoon. We will spread our wings and feel our freedom. We will keep the memories but they will no longer suffocate us with fear and confine us within their narrow boundaries.

And in our triumph, as we step out of the coffin, we will be able to hug Dr. H. and say, "Thank you for our freedom!"

By me, Bonnie Blue

MV



What Do You Do When You're Tired of Therapy?

By What's Her Face, et al

Make sure your entire Us-Person (what we call our whole being) is tired of therapy. We worked with a wonderful therapist for about seven months before a move to another state. Although our next therapist had been recommended, we were not able to work well with him as our views on therapy differed too much. We do not want to be touched in any way, and he insisted we would know we were improving when we would be able to give him a hug. If he wanted to talk to a particular I-P (internal part of our Us-Person) and they didn't want to talk to him, he'd lean towards us, stare into our eyes, and say, "I know you're in there." He became agitated when this didn't cause the switch he wanted. Annie, our assertive I-P, stood firm and stayed out so we would all feel safe. After two months of giving him the benefit of the doubt, we knew we were in unhelpful therapy. It just never felt right, so we ended it. Annie got another recommendation, as she knew we needed to continue treatment. Although cautious, we gave our new therapist an opportunity to prove himself. He passed all the tests with flying colors, and we've been working successfully with him twice a week for over a year.

This doesn't mean everyone is happy being in therapy. We have one I-P, Robyn, that insists she trusts no one, and has tried to cancel our appointments and quit therapy. (Unless Annie tells our therapist we need to cancel an appointment or are not coming back, all appointments stay booked.) Robyn stopped trying when she realized she couldn't succeed. She is resistant to therapy because she feels the threats made by her abuser can still somehow be carried out, although her abuser died five years ago. She still believes our Us-Person can only remain safe if everyone continues to be silent about the past. Robyn had attempted suicide when we were younger, and had severe problems with self-destructive behaviors. There has been

tremendous improvement in this area, and we feel it's due to our therapist's gentle approach and the respect he shows us all. We feel she wants to trust him, but isn't ready to take that step. She's also made an agreement not to attempt suicide again. Agreements are important and taken very seriously. Although she refuses to talk to our therapist face to face, she will communicate by writing what's on her mind, and we see that as progress.

Another I-P, Penelope, suffers from deep depressions. Medications cause problems for others of us, and the past attempts to ease her depression in this way did more harm than good. Frequently she expresses her desire to quit therapy because she doesn't believe any of this could have happened. (That good old denial monster.) Sometimes she sees no point in continuing because she doesn't feel she's doing much to help herself. But internally we know how much she's improved. She understands many of us share this one body, and that we are working hard to open the lines of communication and increase our awareness of each other.

Before making a decision to terminate therapy, explore the relationship. Is there internal agreement that things just don't feel right? This would indicate an unhelpful therapeutic relationship. Are certain I-P's tired of therapy, or is this the consensus? Problems with trust, resistance, denial, etc., may be experienced by different I-P's at the same time, as is the case with our Us-Person. We know this does not mean we should end therapy. But at times it may be important to let the soup simmer on the stove a bit without too much stirring. Our therapist's recent three week (and much needed) vacation afforded us the opportunity to step back and see our progress. By no means did therapy stop during those three weeks, as it's a twenty-four-hours-a-day, seven-days-a-week, way of life. At times it may be important to reduce the frequency of sessions or take a

short break with a return appointment scheduled at the end of an agreed-upon time. I would say two or three weeks, at the most. I feel this would be helpful if there is confusion as to the best way to proceed.

Have faith in yourself that you'll make the right decision. If the relationship feels right and other obstacles are causing problems, a short break can often do wonders. This will also give your therapist time to step back and get a better perspective. When you meet again, you will know whether a longer break is needed. Always setting up a return appointment, even if it's one or two months away, may alleviate the anxiety of deciding whether or not to return.

We are thankful to have found such a compassionate therapist. Luckily, our first experience was good and we had some frame of reference to guide us after our move. Although therapy isn't always the most pleasant way to spend an hour, you shouldn't dread going without questioning why.

MV



My name is Judy and I'm 38 years old. I'm "multiple" and have been in therapy for about 4 years. I'm neither a writer nor a poet but I would really like for you to print this as it represents a small but strong change in my way of thinking.

The "voices" were, and are, those my therapists Shirley and Debbie. I like to think of them as my guides out of the darkness. More importantly, they don't try to guide me to their light, only to my own light.

Since I was young I've been obsessed with dying as the only way to get away from all the pain. I associated "walking toward the light" as a thing only of death. I am coming to believe that the light is something of life.

I don't wake up everyday feeling happy, joyous and free. There are days that I hate my therapists' guts and fall back into those suicidal ruts. But now there are moments of hope, and that's a monumental change.

My mother died during childbirth
And entered into her darkness
I died shortly thereafter
And joined her there
We stood there together in her
darkness
for many many years

One day voices started talking to me
They described a thing called light
They said this darkness was of my
mother's
And not of mine

As I looked about myself
in this place
I realized that my mother had
stepped backwards —

further into her darkness
And I had ever-so-slightly
moved forward

The total black of the darkness
has turned to gray
I look forward to ever lighter
shades of gray
I imagine the grays
turning into blues
And the blues turning
into shades of light

I am still in her darkness
But I have come to believe
in the promise of freedom
that my light can bring

MV

Information

Call to Survivor Artists. An exhibit will be held March 17-June 11, 1995 at the Urban Art Retreat in Chicago. Entries (slides, intro letter and SASE) to be received by Feb. 17, 1995. Send to Survivors c/o Urban Art Retreat, 3712 N. Broadway #700, Chicago, IL 60613. There is a small (\$10) fee to enter the exhibit if your art is accepted.

Boston. Monthly drop-in art group, for healing through art. No fee, donations accepted. Call Malcolm at The Healing and Arts Studio, 731 Harrison Ave., Boston, MA 02118. (617) 859-9561.

Secondary Survival is a self-care newsjournal for professionals providing services to severe trauma populations. Intended as supportive networking for the risks of secondary post-traumatic stress, vicarious trauma and/or burnout. Write to *Secondary Survival* c/o WCC, PO Box 16771, St. Louis, MO 63105, or call (314) 727-5521.

Tapes available from second **Hope & Help Conference** held in Toronto last April. VCR, keynote address by Rokelle Lerner, \$29.95 plus tax. (800) 668-2665. For audio tape price and subject list, call Audio Archives International Inc. in Ontario at (905) 889-6555, Ext.22.

A newsletter is starting for survivors of Masonic Satanic Ritual Abuse. Send inquiries, articles, personal accounts to S.M.A.R.T., PO Box 60577, Florence, MA 01060.

Legal Guides for Canadians available. Sexual Assault: A Guide to the Criminal System. Also info packages on Disclosure, Bill C-49 (the new Rape Law), Criminal Harassment & Stalking, and False Memory Syndrome — a partial list of resources available from **METRAC (Metro Action Committee on Public Violence Against Women and Children)**. Contact them at 158 Spadina Road, Toronto ONT M5R 2T8, Canada. Or call (416) 392-3135.

Write or call for new flyer of music tapes by Dr. Joyce Handler, expressing themes of growth, healing and recovery. HealingArt, 715 North Mountain Ave., Suite G, Upland, CA 91786. (909) 980-5247.

Survivor Ad Too Late for MVMC:

Purpleheart jewelry for survivors of sexual abuse is available from **Heartfelt Creations by Nancy**. Various designs: amethyst hearts, sterling silver or gold filled elements. Write to Heartfelt Creations at 25935 Detroit Rd., #286, Westlake, OH 44145.

My poem, "The Mirror" symbolizes my experience with a therapist who betrayed me (us). Coming to terms with what happened has been a healing process of which this poem is a part. The therapist I write about here broke ethical boundaries by "adopting" us and inviting us to move into her house. It ended in tragedy. As I (we) heal, we hope to stress to others that boundaries are crucial in the therapeutic relationships. — K.M.H.

The Mirror

In the mirror, I trust
my soul opens slowly to the incision
of the surgeon
pain and anxiety anticipate balance
the image is my venture, by nature
unbound
the parameter belongs to the mirror,
parenting my reach.

I move to the side,
my image unclear
the mirror clouds, lines disappear
the reflection is lost
the vision transformed
anguish concealed,
displaced by blush and rouge
elation prevails, masking the fear

The mirror defogs
a double image appears
identity lost in the struggle of
reparation
my image dwindles,
leaving a stream of mascara that once
mimicked hope
the surgeon leaves the room
left to bleed, I must stitch my own
wound.

The mirror stares back,
dark and empty
pieces of glass shattered...
jagged and seditious
in this mirror, trust has perished.

By K.M.H.

When Therapy Goes Wrong

One and a half years ago, I filed a lawsuit against my former therapist. Just this month, I finally won my case. To tell the truth, I really didn't think I was going to win. I filed because I thought it was the right thing to do. As a multiple with a long history of abuse, I have come to expect that I will be abused and the abuser will get away with it, so I will be a victim again. But not this time. I fought for myself and my dignity, and she will have to pay me my therapy costs plus damages.

It all started in 1988. I didn't know I was multiple but I knew I needed help because I had spent three months of the last year in psychiatric hospitals because of severe depression, with many suicidal actions that were very serious. I didn't know what therapy was supposed to be. I interviewed lots of therapists looking for some kind of magic fit. Then I found this woman who hugged me close and held me like a child from the very first session. It felt so good. Now I know that my little ones inside were just so hungry for comfort and love, that they were looking for the Mom we never had. She seemed to be a dream come true.

I spent three years with this therapist. My little ones craved her touch but it never seemed to be enough. I do have adult alters and they got angry. Why weren't we getting better? After three years of therapy, I had gone from three sessions per week to five sessions per week. I was so dependent on her! Only when she touched me and kissed me did that ache in my heart go away for a few seconds. But my adult alters finally laid down the law with the little ones. The feelings of my little ones are OK. It's necessary to feel those feelings. But little ones do not get to make the decisions. My adults do. And my adults were convinced that she (the therapist) did not know what she was doing, that we were too dependent, and that we were supposed to be paying her for therapy when, in reality, we were paying her for love.

In the end, I left. It was a horrible ending. The adults screamed at her angrily. The little ones cried and cried. It hurt inside in a deep, painful way. I still feel the pain. My therapist sobbed and blamed me for being borderline and not taking responsibility. I left anyway. I thought it was my fault, but I didn't know what else to do.

Six months later I finally found a new therapist, and memories began coming back. Dissociation is what I do so well. I didn't remember some of the things that had happened in sessions with my old therapist. I had forgotten how I took my clothes off in her office, how she threw water in my face and slapped me when she was angry, how she broke my confidentiality with other clients, how she came to my house when I had only a skimpy nightgown on, how she took me to her house and into her bedroom, and she had only her nightgown on... The list goes on.

To sum it up, she had no boundaries. My new therapist would never touch me without asking. And even if I asked her to touch me, she talks about how we will touch and why I want it before we touch. She does everything in my therapeutic best interest. If touch is not therapeutic for me, then she doesn't do it.

And now I want to spread the word: If my old therapist sounds like your therapist, please stop seeing him or her. It is not resistance. It's bad therapy. And, if you are a therapist who is doing this, get help now. You're hurting people. The most important thing about therapy that my new therapist told me is that I am paying her to keep her stuff out of it. That way, whatever reactions I have to her are transference and gives me the chance to look at it. What resistance feels like in good therapy is when my alters who don't want to be in therapy get cranky and don't want to go. Once we let them cancel an appointment. Then we asked them if they felt better. No. So now, they go. They agree to talk to my new therapist. She doesn't yell at them or take us out in her car, or eat, or talk

about us in front of my kids in therapy. It doesn't fill the horrible hole that my little ones thought the old therapist could do. But now we know that no one else can fill it. We have to grieve the loss and find new ways to fill the hole ourselves. It hurts. I cry a lot. But my new therapist really loves me because she lets me feel my pain and helps me find new ways to take care of myself.

A word about filing a lawsuit — This was one of the hardest things I've ever done. I had to face this woman and her attorney and hear them say unpleasant things about me. Since my old therapist acted just like my mother, it felt like I was taking my mother to court. I'm still reeling from the aftershocks.

Even though I first took her to court to get my money back, the process of compiling the evidence became healing in and of itself. There were long grueling hours with my lawyer, and sometimes I'd get so tired that only little ones would come out. We'd have to stop and take a break. And I met up with a lot of anger at our court system. Some of my multiple friends can't press charges because the statute of limitations has run out. In other cases, it's bad therapy but no malpractice can be proven. In the eyes of the law, there is a difference between bad therapy and malpractice. And worst of all, as the last phase of my case took shape, one of the lawyers put it to me very succinctly. He said that this proceeding is not about the truth, but about which side can convince the jury.

I want to tell you I'm glad I took this action. I'm not a victim. If I had said nothing, then one more person would have taken advantage of me. We've been taught to be silent. If I let someone hurt me and say nothing, then I feel like I am tacitly agreeing that what they did was OK. Not this time. This time, there is victory and renewed dignity for me.

November 1994

By Four Dragons

This issue, we are using two helpful reader responses to fill the "Recovering" column, in Rita's absence. They are replying to W/S & Gang who asked in the Dec. '94 issue: "What can one do with 'non-survival' time," (i.e., when therapy has moved forward enough that one has time to consider things other than "just-surviving".)

Recovering

When I found myself with some time on my hands (also after about two years in therapy) that wasn't filled with "just" staying alive, it was my first glimpse of what life might be like for the "other half," those who don't have conditions like ours. Like W/S, I was at a loss. What do "those people" do with all that time?

It seemed logical to go exploring and find out. The first answer I found was, of course, "Get a job!" (I've been self-employed or a full-time volunteer for most of my adult life.) So I got a part-time job, as a receptionist/assistant for a physician in private practice. That lasted about four months, until it dawned on me that I couldn't handle that much contact with people's bodies! (But that's a different story.)

Then I explored the matter with my therapist and my pastor and came to the conclusion that it was time to follow the leading of my inner parts. That was an impulse which I had tended to resist because it meant "we" were always starting new projects but seemingly never finishing anything. In my perfectionism, I believed it was wrong to work on a variety of tasks at one time. I believed the only "okay" way to function was to start something and work straight through until it was finished, whether that project was baking cookies or writing a book.

My helpers encouraged me to "just go for it." The important thing was that everyone inside get a chance to be productive and creative outside, to experience external safety and a measure of success in their own right.

We laid down a few ground rules. First, all activities had to provide for everyone's safety, including anonymity for all parts who desired it. Activities could not be financially draining — a biggie, because I have parts who are compulsive overeaters, binge shoppers, and travelers. Finally, after a couple of terrible experiences, we added the rule that we could not become enmeshed in other people's lives, because we have — so I

discovered — a huge "rescuer complex." (I got involved in "rescuing" another multiple, to the point that I made myself so sick I needed surgery and a lengthy recovery period.)

From my point of view, life became rather chaotic after that. Other people had to point out my creative successes to me. I started drawing and painting, writing articles and a book manuscript, assembling a training course for lay leaders of my church about incest and child abuse, networking at the area-wide level of my denomination on the same subject, composing and performing music for the first time in many years, and a variety of other creative pursuits.

Some successes were very surprising. My beaded jewelry, for example, sold well at local craft shows. I've gotten great editorial feedback on my poetry and am making progress on a book of poems.

Many other ideas, however, got stuck in their infancy, and that really upset me at first. But slowly I started to accept the fact that creativity and energy come in spurts, and everything still gets interrupted by my most important — but painful — work, which is therapy. What matters is that I as a *whole person* am moving forward and becoming more able to communicate and interact in the external world. That's especially important, because a major part of our healing from the past is beginning to come out of our secret inside world and into the world around us, to learn that *now* is safe and okay, because *we make it that way*.

As for those good ideas we haven't yet been able to develop further, I've finally developed a file system that works. So now I can clean off my desk from time to time, file piles of notes, articles, poems, etc., in their respective folders, and everything stays intact for the next attempt.

I have one concrete suggestion: try to balance everyone's "out" time with restful, restorative time "inside." I like

to use artwork, imagery created with my therapist's assistance, and tapes of healing music and messages — my favorites are by Dr. Bernie Siegel, Steve Halpern, David Lanz, and Yanni — to facilitate the inner work. Hope this helps.

By Elizabeth J. Neiderer

I've been in therapy for MPD for just over three years. The first two-and-a-half years in therapy was taken up by surviving, period! Our suicidal impulses were in overdrive trying to protect our system from the shock of it all, the truth, remembering, etc. Just surviving, just staying alive, was our full-time job. It took some time for the idea of being able to live through therapy and my memories/experiences. When I found myself thinking less and less about how to survive from moment-to-moment, I didn't quite know what to do with myself, either. I started with little things, like being able to go for a walk and enjoy it rather than be constantly vigilant to avoid walking into traffic. I'd clean my apartment without thinking, "Why bother. I won't be around tomorrow to appreciate it!" I could plan ahead for things like getting together with a friend, knowing I'd be able to follow through. I started with really small things that most singletons take for granted. No matter how "trivial" it may have been, I always remembered to appreciate the fact that the "why bother" thoughts weren't there. They still pop up from time to time, but I'm actually making plans to go back to school now.

Take your time and you'll find ways to fill and hopefully enjoy your non-survival time. Nothing is too small to start with. (I had the habit of comparing what I could do with what others were doing — very self-defeating!) So I just kept saying, "everything starts one step at a time." Sometimes I would just sit back and enjoy the fact that I wasn't wrestling with the survival issue! Good luck!

By Robin, et al

Letters of Frustration

My last visit to my psychiatrist was horrible! I did everything "wrong" that you could think of. The only thing I didn't do was get up and slug him one. I knew that if he used one more sentence of psychological jargon, I would scream. I ended the session by walking out on him. This is the second time in the past month I've done this!

I don't know what is going on. I feel very much anger, and I don't know why. It seems that no one can help me. Even he has called me a difficult patient (*that went over big!*) Am I "resisting"? Am I "unhelpful"? I didn't think so. I've been in therapy for about eight years now. I don't want to stay this way forever. I feel I've cheated my family and myself of these eight years. With all the money we have spent on me, we could have solved the national debt! What is going on with me?

I've even stopped weekly therapy sessions with my MSW — a really delightful lady! I told her I need time "to chill". Neither the doctor nor the therapist has called. I have no idea even if I still have their services.

It seems if I call for help — which I don't do often — I never get it. (I have this thing about calling for help. I don't do it 'til the 11th hour.) Maybe I *am* a difficult patient. I've always been difficult my whole life — why stop now? I know he means I'm difficult to treat because I don't respond well to meds, but he makes me feel like I'm the one at fault here. I really thought the doctor was supposed to figure out why I was so angry and depressed (and suicidal). Where am I going wrong? I try talking, but it's like talking into a vacuum. Somehow, somehow, we are not connecting. I've gone to this doctor for about three years now. I *do* like him — or is he a comfortable habit? Am I seeking a "quick fix" for a severe problem? Or are my perceptions right that it's time to move on to another doctor? I really *don't* want to do that. I don't like having to start from scratch. That means bringing up old issues, starting new trusts. I just can't seem to get my act together.

Part of me says to call up and

apologize to this doctor. Another part says I have a right to be angry. My treatment has stalemated. I'm not getting the help I need.

I don't know what to do or where to turn. I'm so confused — at myself and at other people. MPD stinks. I hate it and I hate the people who left me this legacy. My biggest fear is that, somehow, I've passed it on to my kids. My daughter shows signs of the disorder frequently. It tears me up inside thinking I may have passed this gene to her. (I've read some studies that said MPD could be linked to a gene malfunction.) All of my kids have either ADD or ADHD and are on medication. Doctors say that is inherited. Well, if that's so, that explains some of the child abuse I received! Scary thought!

I know I've dumped a lot of garbage, but I thought that maybe you out there understand what I'm talking about. I need some direction from somewhere. I'm kind of in a limbo...I don't know what is "right" anymore...I need help. It's the eleventh hour again...

By Kathy

We have been trying to secure a medical doctor who is at least somewhat knowledgeable of multiplicity to work with our physical medical problems (some of which are very painful and distressing body memories or the result of hysterical conversion) as well as the precautions needed for prescribing medications.

We are not only hitting "dead ends" in our endeavors, but we have also experienced abuse from the doctors we sought treatment from. The medical internist we had been going to for five years before the diagnosis of multiplicity was made treated our diagnosis with callousness and indifference. We had experienced a reaction to a medication that most times we can take. However, this particular time one of the little ones had accidentally taken the medicine and got overdosed. When we called him, his response was that we experienced the reaction due to a fear

of taking medicines. I guess this would be plausible if we actually feared taking medication. The truth is we are only conservative with medications. We discontinued our care with him immediately.

In the interim we have been seen in various emergency/treatment centers and our last visit resulted in the doctor and the nurse who accompanied him, laughing as they read the information of the multiplicity diagnosis right in front of us, and then examining us without closing the curtain.

We who are the caretakers cannot put our little ones in situations such as this any longer. Yet our medical problems (asthma, high blood pressure, and at times debilitating fatigue) require medical monitoring and care.

I have looked for referrals locally to no avail. Does anyone have referrals in Rhode Island (preferably), southern Massachusetts, or southern Connecticut? Any information would be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Kendra



I am using the topic "therapeutic dance" in a literal way. This poem was written to describe the therapeutic benefits of the dance classes I finally became able to take.— LJ

Dance Class

And in that moment
 Reclining back
 With 40 or 50 other
 Dancers and dancing souls
 Buoyed by powerful
 Transcendent music
 Stretch one leg
 Then the other
 The legs rise and fall as one leg
 Our individual boundaries
 Dissolve away
 We are joined together
 With the music
 And the polished floor
 That supports us underneath
 And our reflections in the mirror



From *Dancer and Jasmine*
 through Kim, for Lori

Watching
 Urging each leg a little higher
 Each form to be a little more perfect
 Until all minds
 Are united in one purpose
 One flow, one rhythm
 As an individual wave
 Is drawn back
 To become the ocean again
 And in such moments
 I can almost feel
 What Eternity might be
 I can almost feel
 What it might be like
 To be whole.

Books

Sixteen Voices:

By 16 poets who are Survivors of Incest & Sexual Abuse

© 1994 by Mariposa Printing & Publishing Inc., 922 Baca St., Santa Fe, NM 87501. (505) 988-5582. 80 pgs. Softbound. \$12 plus \$1.50 shipping.

This is one of the most beautiful books of poetry I've read, or seen. It can't really be termed "survivor poetry". Rather, it is *poetry*, that happens to be written by people who are survivors. Many of the pieces were previously published in literary magazines, and the quality is outstanding. The poets: Barbara Hendryson, Judith Chalmer, Melinda K. Burgess, Jacqueline A. Hartwich, Ceil Malek, Gigi Marino, Joe Mowrey, Donna Longenecker, Sydney J. Thompson, H.Emilia Paredes, Peter E. Murphy, Kristin Bock, Michelle Paulsen, Melanie Richards, Mary C. McCarthy, Judith Werner. I can't adequately describe these poems without quoting them — and then I couldn't choose which ones! My best advice is simply, buy the book and read it, cover to cover. It's a treasure.

Through a Glass Darkly: Poems and Illustrations

By Janice Braud. © 1994. Published by Counterpoint Publishing Co., 6318 Craigway Rd., Spring, TX. 77389. (713) 376-7613. 64 pg. Softbound. \$8.50.

A fine collection of poems (most previously published) by a gifted writer, "telling the story" of her healing from MPD (she is now integrated) and the role of poetry in this process. Several of the poems are written to describe, in loving ways, the alters that formed her were her original team for survival. Others define the role of her therapist, and of her kind and patient husband, who support her urge for wholeness. Throughout, it is a gentle yet inspiring book, for all of us who struggle to unify ourselves. — LW

Other recently announced publications include the following:

The long-awaited (less expensive) paperback edition of Stephen E. Braude's fascinating work, *First Person Plural: Multiple Personality and the Philosophy of Mind, revised edition*, has been released by Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc. 4720 Boston Way,

Lanham, MD 20706. Includes updated discussions on "false memories" and the renaming of the diagnosis from MPD to DID. \$22.95. Call (800) 462-6420 to order.

Understanding Self-Injury, a workbook for adults, by Kristy Trautman BS, & Robin Connors, PhD. Vital information for people who want to stop hurting themselves. \$10 plus \$1 shipping. Make checks payable to PAAR, 81 South 19th St. Pittsburgh, PA 15203.

Hiding Behind A Smile: Disguising Our Deepest Feelings, is a book of poetry by Yvonne Elizabeth. Describes the terror of alcoholism and sexual abuse seen through the eyes of a child, as well as the process of healing. \$11.95 plus \$2.50 shipping. Two Hearts Publications, PO Box 410239, San Francisco, CA 94141-0239.

Surviving the Holidays and Other Stressful Times, is a booklet-form, step-by-step guide for reducing discomfort. \$4 each from B.E.A.M., PO Box 20428, Louisville, KY 40250-0428. Also available at the same address, for \$3, is a questionnaire to use when interviewing a new therapist, or to explore with your current one.

We hope to review some of these in the future.

THANK YOU !

For all your wonderful writing and art. Keep up the good work!

We are in special need for cover art (vertical or square preferred) and HUMOR. Cartoons are great, and we also like humorous essays, ideas, games, whatever. Something to make this process a little less tense. Also short poems and fillers. And of course, keep writing for topics/non-topics. YOUR healing helps others heal!

—LW



April 1995

The wide continuum of dissociation...What are your most troublesome dissociative symptoms, and what are you doing to solve them? ART: Your internal communication system. DEADLINE: Feb. 1, 1995.

June 1995

Triggers and abreactions. How you cope with sudden memories and keep flashbacks contained. Memory and doubt. ART: Draw the release & resolution of a difficult memory. DEADLINE: April 1, 1995.

October 1995

Grief and loss. How to ask for help and preserve hope. Can you help friends who are suicidal without being a "rescuer"? ART: Draw something you hope for. DEADLINE: August 1, 1994.

August 1995

Getting to know your body. Physical awareness and healing techniques. Encouraging healthy sleep patterns. ART: Draw yourself physically connected and strong. DEADLINE: June 1, 1995.

December 1995

Is wholeness worth it? Post-integration reports. (Partial-integration comments included.) ART: Treating your self(ves) with love. DEADLINE: October 1, 1994.

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.

Subscriptions for a year (six issues) of *MANY VOICES*: \$36 in the U.S., \$42US in Canada, \$48US elsewhere. Enclose the form below (or a copy) with your check, and mail to *MANY VOICES*, P.O. Box 2639, Cincinnati, OH 45201-2639.

MANY VOICES

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/ZIP _____

Please check one:

I am a client Professional/therapist Relative/friend

Subscription type: New Renewal Gift

Start sub: Feb '89__ Feb '90__ Feb '91__ Feb '92__ Feb '93__ Feb '94__ Feb '95__

ORDER NOW! Resource Guide - Many Voices/Multiple Choices #3. \$8__
(while supplies last).

Other _____

1 year: \$36 in U.S.;\$42US in Canada; Elsewhere,\$48 in U.S. currency drawn on a U.S.bank. Make check payable & send with this form to *MANY VOICES*, P.O. Box 2639, Cincinnati, OH 45201-2639.