

MANY VOICES

WORDS OF HOPE FOR PEOPLE WITH MPD OR A DISSOCIATIVE DISORDER

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*I would like to dedicate this poem to all
of the many who read and/or
contribute to M.V.:*

our messages pass on roads we
will never know
in ways we will never understand
we reach each other
through the mist of despair
we give birth to hope

S.P., 1991



Artworks '90

Themes for 1992

Thank you, MV readers, for your wonderful ideas for themes in the coming year. We save everything that isn't used, so if you don't see your idea this time, you may see it in the future! — LW

February 1992

The role of hospitals in treatment of dissociative disorders: professional and client opinions. (ALL INPUT WELCOME.) Who benefits and why. Selecting a facility. When outpatient treatment is preferred. ART: Cartoons about hospitals (funny or ironic). DEADLINE for submissions: December 1, 1991

April 1992

Finding an effective therapist. Innovative ways to budget for therapy and other essentials (food/shelter/stuffed animals.) ART: Draw your strong, wise self. DEADLINE for submissions: February 1, 1992.

June 1992

People, parts, fragments, ego states. . . What is your concept of self? How do you deal with differences between your "outside" (physical) self and internal (psychic) structures (different genders, animal alters, etc.) ART: Exotic alters and their purpose. DEADLINE for submissions: April 1, 1992

August 1992

Memories: are they all real? Does it matter? Retrieving and processing memories safely. ART: Draw memory-containment or pacing images that reduce overloading your system. DEADLINE for submissions: June 1, 1992

October 1992

Employment and dissociative disorders. Keeping a job or getting one while in therapy. Strategies to improve selves-control. ART: New Fall Styles in defensive barriers for the workplace DEADLINE for submissions: August 1, 1992.

December 1992

How to build a safe support system, with peers or "normals" or both. Info list of support groups/resources. ART: Draw your connections with society, as they are or will become, with healing. DEADLINE for submissions: October 1, 1992

Healing Update

By Anonymous ISH

In the June '91 issue of MV, I shared about an alter who acted out and got us in trouble by shoplifting (page 7.) As this month's emphasis is on the needs of teens and adult alters, I felt an update was in order.

After working very hard with our therapist, we finally found the alter doing the shoplifting. We call her Jane and she is 14 years old. She was created during an incident when our sister was 14 and caught shoplifting. Of course, during that time our parents spent a lot of time and attention on our sister — both positive and negative — but it took much attention away from us (Jane in particular). As months went by, Jane began to feel this as a lack of "love", and slowly assumed that the only way to get it back was to take things from stores. Inside "protectors" built on this and gave Jane a feeling of well-being when she did steal things. She thought she was doing the right thing to get "love" and never considered it stealing.

Since discovering Jane and her problems, our therapist has been working diligently with her on the bad memories, as well as the moral and legal aspects of what she was doing. We have enlisted the aid of our parents, who are trying not only to teach her about

the necessity of paying for things in stores, but are following up with positive reinforcement when she does right. She gets a lot of hugs now, which she says are much better than the good feelings she gets from the inside voices. Little by little, she is fighting the inside voices and believing more in the right way to shop.

As it turned out, Jane came out not as a function of resistance or acting out, but as a need for love. Unfortunately, parts of the system skewed her knowledge of how to get love, and left her with a meaningless form of satisfaction.

Now she blossoms with each planned trip to the store, knowing exactly what she will get and how much to spend. She still has trouble with the voices inside, but with every success becomes a little stronger. Her parents continue to monitor the shopping sprees, but after each one they love and hug her to let her know she did right.

With our court date coming up, the system is still in a lot of turmoil about the consequences (they should not be too bad, as this is a first offense). But the key of knowing Jane's needs and working with them gives everyone confidence that this will never happen again.

MV



This is Sheila holding one of the very small ones.

This small one needs lots of love. Sheila watches over the little one, allowing her to feel her warmth and heartbeat.

By Joanna D.

Wait!

By Wendy

Suicide seemed the only way for me...the only true cure for MPD. The memories came too fast and they were too incomplete, like walking into a horror movie with no beginning and no end. Nothing made any sense, just flashes of terror-filled scenes, extreme body pains and severe depression. I had a very suicidal alter who would overdose me while I was sleeping. It got so bad that I actually got used to waking up in the morning and finding empty bottles of pills all over the place.

My therapist kept encouraging me towards integration, but to do that meant taking responsibility for all those memories and feelings that brought about suicidal urges. I was between a rock and a hard place. I didn't want to remember, and I sure as hell didn't want to feel! I didn't want to die, yet, I didn't want to live — and the time in between had become a living nightmare.

I tried hospitals, but their programs didn't work for me. I'm too much of a rebel (and so are most of my alters). A structured environment created havoc in my system. We had our own structure and tended to see hospitals as a threat rather than a help. So I came to feel that death was my only viable option.

During this time, my therapist and I talked a lot about dying. The act, the effect on my family and friends, how I wanted to be buried, my funeral, and all the possibilities of an afterlife.

A lot of my sessions became quite ghoulish, but Barbra (my suicidal alter) seemed to get some relief discussing all the aspects of death. We even drew up a will. Everything was ready. I only had to wait for Barbra to be successful and that's what I did...wait.

Each day came and went and I waited. There was comfort in this...in knowing that if all else failed I still had Barbra's option.

No one could take that away.

Then one morning I woke up and noticed that the ever-present empty pill bottles were missing. As sleep passed and my waking senses took over, I noticed a deep depression stirring inside. It was Barbra. Always in the past, I'd fight against her. God, I hated her depressions! But this time I chose not to fight. I accepted her depression as mine. We shared our feelings. After two days, Barbra spoke to me, which was something she never did in the past. "Death is no longer an option," she said, and then there was silence.

The depression ended and I survived it. I assumed that Barbra was simply resting, but after two months passed I began to suspect something else had happened — something bigger. I began to realize that by sharing Barbra's pain I had accomplished her peace, and she had quietly integrated. For Barbra, what was needed was an outlet for her misery. After that, others came to integrate, and now I'm making plans for all my tomorrows.

It's funny. I had expected fireworks, noise, deep insights and orgasmic feelings when we began to integrate. That didn't happen. It was and is a very quiet and very personal thing.

Having MPD is like being hungry. Integrating is like becoming less hungry...only in small steps.

I don't know all the memories and I may never know them all. Recently I integrated three frightened children who I never knew and still don't really know. How they came to be is less important. What counted was, when they came to me I welcomed them; and now they are at peace.

I have hope, now, and so can you. Please — before you cut, before you burn, before you overdose, try ONE MORE THING. Wait. Hold on for one more day.

This issue is made possible in part by a contribution from:

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Make Some Noise

I'm not keeping quiet anymore!
 I'm gonna make some noise.

I'm gonna tell a story like many
 haven't heard.

I'm gonna sing a song about
 pain so loud
 the neighborhood will quake.
 And maybe it should.

Somebody ought to wake these
 people up.

Shake these people up.

Let them know the house on the corner

with the manicured lawn
is a home to insanity.

Oh yes, I'm gonna make some noise.

I'm gonna be so open that
sunlight will shine through.

I'm gonna be so honest that
mirrors will crack
And maybe they should.

It's my turn to take them down.
Break them down.

Because the reflection of the
good little girl

with the happy average family
is a lie.

I survived the sorrow and
I'm going through the pain.

My recovery progresses
My healing is in the works
and while I'm on this journey
I'm gonna make some noise!

By Kell — R.

Therapists' Page

By E. Sue Blume, CSW

Ms. Blume is the author of *Secret Survivors — Uncovering Incest and Its Aftereffects in Women*, from which parts of this article are adapted. Also, Ms. Blume developed the *Incest Survivor's Aftereffects Checklist*®, used by self-help groups and professionals to assist in identifying those who have blocked memories of their abuse. In addition to writing and lectures on this and other topics Ms. Blume maintains a private psychotherapy practice on Long Island, New York.

(Due to the high percentage of women among the total number of incest victims, the pronoun 'her' will be used throughout this article. However, the opinions and principles that follow apply equally to incested men who are considering confrontation of abusers.)

The crime of incest involves at least two people: the victim and one or more abusers. This crime often remains hidden for years: hidden within the family, hidden from society, even hidden from the victim's own consciousness through the processes of repression and dissociation of memory. During this prolonged period of secrecy, the incest crime burrows away at the survivor's self-esteem, distorts her perception of the world, freezes her emotions and worse. The secrecy surrounding incest creates a "white noise" in memory that may transform the whole of childhood and adolescence into a vague mist or out-and-out fantasy. The incest victim is robbed of her natural growth process, her innocence, forever.

So it is understandable that an adult client, emerging into full awareness of incest in her past, cries out for justice. Early in her recovery she may be driven by an urge to confront her abuser(s) directly, and sometimes most aggressively.

If this sounds like you — if you are new or fragile in your incest recovery yet want to confront your perpetrator in person — I suggest you think again.

You'll find therapists who disagree with the cautious approach to confrontation. In my mind, they're not realistic. To encourage or insist that a victim meet face-to-face with her abuser before she has retrieved most memories or gained personal strength is simply asking for a therapy-disaster.

Though all incest survivors are at risk in a premature confrontation, those who developed multiple personality or a related dissociative disorder are especially vulnerable. For people who dissociate, the very thought of confrontation may be accompanied by radical shifts from alter to alter, some of whom welcome the challenge while others are terrified. Confrontation in such cases is apt to bring on mass inner conflict and confusion, self-destructive behavior, or suicide.

I strongly urge you to never allow yourself to be forced into therapy with a perpetrator while you retain any fear or sense of power imbalance. (Don't let this happen to your children, either.) Forcing victims into therapy with their victimizers is nothing more than therapeutically-supervised abuse. The goal of treatment for an incest survivor, child or adult, is the recovery of the *victim*.

For similar reasons, unless you are personally ready, don't feel obligated to accompany a sibling who wants to confront an abuser. You must protect yourself. If you dissociate, that means protecting your system's weakest member.

However, when properly timed and executed, a confrontation with your abuser may be very beneficial. It can be an opportunity to face him with the consequences of his acts, to vent the rage and pain that you, a child, were forced to endure in silence. It can be a forum for you, as adult, to declare to the abuser "I will not protect you anymore! I know what you did, and you had no right!"

How do you know when it is time to confront? Your system will tell you. Your *whole* system. I am convinced it is wise for dissociative survivors to direct their energy into healing and strengthening internal cooperation before attempting to meet abusers face-to-face.

Your system needs to be strong enough to endure whatever denial, mocking laughter, anger or blame your perpetrator may use as defense.

For some survivors, confrontation may be appropriate in mid-therapy, after most of the memories are retrieved along with some measure of personal power. For others, confrontation may *never* be appropriate . . . and that is *not* to be considered a "flaw".

Sometimes a client wants to rush a confrontation because the perpetrator is dying. This calls for careful assessment. On the one hand, this may be the "last chance" to lay the secrets out on the table, to say what is on your mind. You may even be able to view the confrontation as offering the abuser an opportunity to "go out right", while serving your needs.

But at the same time, be aware that you may face split loyalties, if not within yourself, then probably with other family members. You will be seen as a trouble-maker. Instead of the incest being the problem, *you* become the problem, and others may wonder why you are "adding to his pain," if your abuser is dying.

(continued on page 5)

(Therapists' Page, cont'd)

This is a difficult situation for an incest survivor, who is usually raised to be a "caretaker" concerned about others, not herself. It is appropriate to confront a dying abuser, but only if it is healing for *you*. Make your decision to confront with full awareness of the added complexity of the situation.

What if you decide that a direct confrontation is not in your best interest right now? Or what if your abuser is dead? Must you relinquish the personal power that comes from a clean airing of the crimes against you?

Not at all. There are many ways to confront without the abuser being present. You can write letters (mailed or unmailed.) Your therapist can help you with role playing, monologues, or guided imagery. In these symbolic confrontations, the dissociative person has a distinct advantage over so-called "unities". Your capacity for vivid imagining, which helped you endure trauma of the past, now helps you experience genuine relief and empowerment without a face-to-face confrontation.

If you are not sure whether you want to engage in any confrontational experience, with or without the abuser at hand, don't worry about it. Work on other issues. Your system may take care of its needs in dreams. Again, people with dissociation seem to

have more-than-usual abilities to work through memories and other experiences while sleeping.

If you do decide to confront directly, be clear about your expectations. Don't do it for some hoped-for response from the perpetrator. Most abusers aren't capable of responding in a genuine, healing way.

Instead, plan the confrontation as a validation for your inner children. . . to know that someone, some strong adult, is now able to stand up for them and protect them.

The following guidelines may be useful in considering a direct confrontation:

1. Do it only because you want to, when you want to. Only you can decide when you're ready. And there is no shame in not doing it; after all, whose life is it, anyway?

2. Do it from a position of strength. Generally you do not get a heartfelt acknowledgement and apology from the abuser. Most likely he does what he has always done — protect himself. You may be challenged, blamed, laughed at, told you're crazy. He may rage at you or respond with such earnest bewilderment that you (again) doubt your own experience.

3. Do it to honor your own feelings.

4. Although recall of details is not necessary for healing, it helps in confrontation, especially if your belief in yourself wavers. It helps to be able to say "I know what you did!" so convincingly that the

accused dare not argue.

5. Do not let him apologize too quickly, too easily. Fast apologies shorten a process that is awkward for him; they end *his* pain. If he is concerned with your feelings, hard as it might be for him, he accepts your right to complain; he listens, cares, and feels his own pain at what he did to you. *Then* he apologizes for what he did. This may take time and may require therapeutic guidance, but he should at least try.

6. If there are other sexually abused children in the family, it might strengthen your position if the siblings confront him together. However, no sibling should be pressured into anything.

7. Thoroughly review your expectations and all the possible outcomes. The more prepared you are, the stronger you will be before, during and after any confrontation.

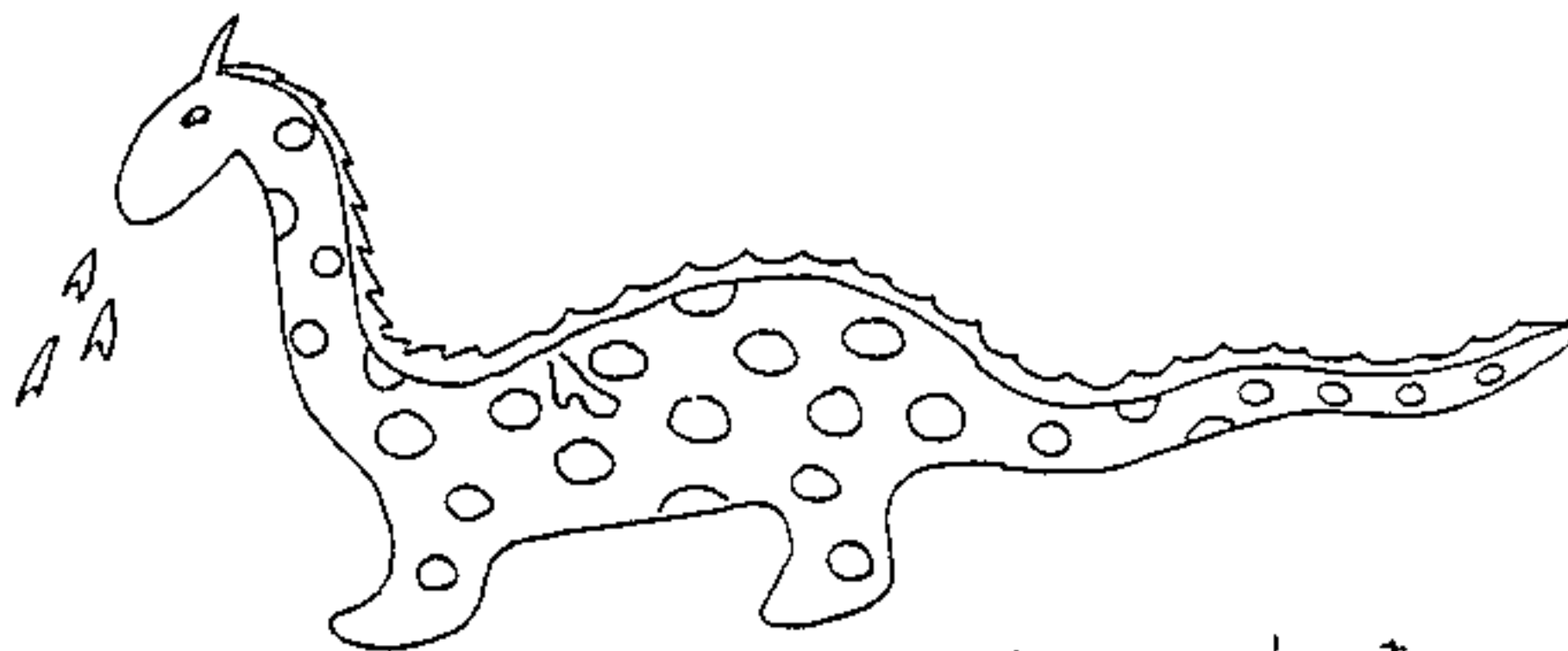
8. Most of all, get the emotional support you need, both for preparing for the confrontation and for when it's over. Let people know when you're doing the confrontation and line up some supports for right after, if you should want to talk then.

9. If you believe you were ritually abused, I recommend you do *not* confront your perpetrator(s) directly.

10. Do it for you. I know I said it before. It bears repeating. Do it for *you*.

MV

(Secret Survivors by E. Sue Blume is published in hardback by John Wiley & Sons, New York, - 1990, \$19.95. It is also available in a Ballantine paperback edition for \$4.95. Ms. Blume says, "If you don't see it, ask for it at your bookstore. Then write to me, and I'll tell my publisher." She will also mail you a complimentary copy of The Incest Aftereffects Checklist €, upon request. Just send a legal-sized, self-addressed stamped envelope to E. Sue Blume, P.O. Box 7167, Garden City, NY 11530. And tell her you learned about it in MANY VOICES. —LW)



This is P.D. the Friendly Dragon when we have to remember scary stuff she helps Irene keep us safe. Her polka dots are pretty colors. Jesse and Noah - age 7

Mama

Mama won't you dare
to love me
Mama won't you care
to love me
Mama can't you bear
to love me
Why is it so hard?

By Gayle R.

If adults, teens, and kids seem to live in "separate worlds" on the outside, no wonder we have confusion and conflict when all ages maintain separate territories inside. Here are some examples of folks who are in different stages of communicating with their inside teens. Some of the methods work pretty smoothly, others sound a bit rough. Most of us realize that when families (or internal systems) listen to each other, and respect each other life is more peaceful. That's easy to say . . . but it takes lots of practice to do it right. Personally, I try to take it one day at a time. —LW

Scoping Out the Inner-Teen Scene

I have an alter named Alice who now says she is 14 years old. There are only two things she wants: to own a bicycle and to play baseball. Owning a bicycle doesn't seem like such a hard thing to do. But I also have younger alters who were told they could never have a bicycle because they would get hurt riding a bicycle, and they still believe that! Everytime I attempt to buy a bicycle for Alice there is a terrible battle and, even though it isn't fair, Alice always loses out.

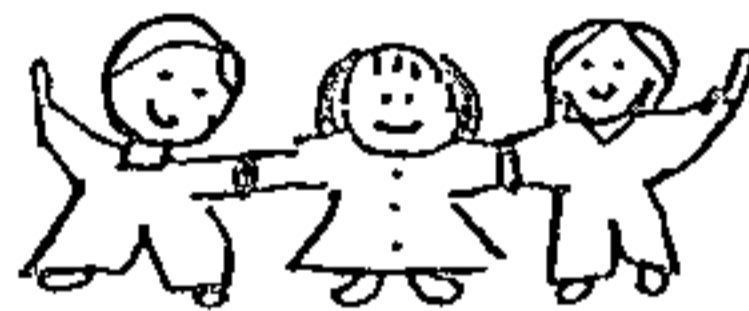
A few weeks ago my therapist brought an exercise bicycle into her office for another client. Alice couldn't resist. She sat on it with her eyes closed and felt the sun and wind on her face as she pedalled away. I had hoped it might satisfy her but it only convinced her all the more that she can ride like the wind. The little ones saw her and they said, "Look at that fool. She thinks it's a real bicycle." They knew it wasn't and their fears weren't dispelled one bit. Somehow we still have to deal with a bicycle for Alice.

Baseball is a bigger problem. My office has a women's softball team. They are the champs of their league and surely don't need a 53-year-old woman who has never played baseball on their team. I have been going to professional baseball games in the hope that Alice could get what she needs vicariously. She likes that but it really isn't enough. The little ones like to go too. They eat cotton candy and watch the big men getting hit with balls and falling down. To them it is obvious that baseball is too hard and far too dangerous. Alice sees that too but she thinks she could play better than those men and would never get hurt.

During the last game we attended my poor husband, who wasn't aware that he was sitting next to Alice, asked what I wanted for my birthday. Alice told him a baseball glove would do just fine. He was surprised and said that would be easy to get, but the birthday isn't here yet and I don't know whether that really will be his gift.

It is hard to keep all the alters happy and getting the experiences they need. The young ones just want to be held and protected until they learn to trust, but Alice needs adventure. Before I was in therapy the conflict tore me apart. It is a lot easier now that I understand. In fact, sometimes it is kind of amusing.

By Dottie P.



One of my teenagers is a stuck-up little brat and a lot of times she likes to take the credit cards and go on a shopping spree. I have a hard time trying to keep her out of the stores. She's gone out and bought things that she didn't even want. She's taken the clothes that she bought and sold them to someone else cheaper, or brought them home and hung them in the closet and when some of her friends come by, she bragged about them.

Now, I'm one of the older adults and it's hard for me to balance all the teenagers. I need to ask for outside help. Sometimes I let a person I trust, who is responsible, hold my credit cards. The teenagers get angry with me for taking over the responsibilities and begin to make my body hurt. There are times when they hurt me so I'll let them have their way.

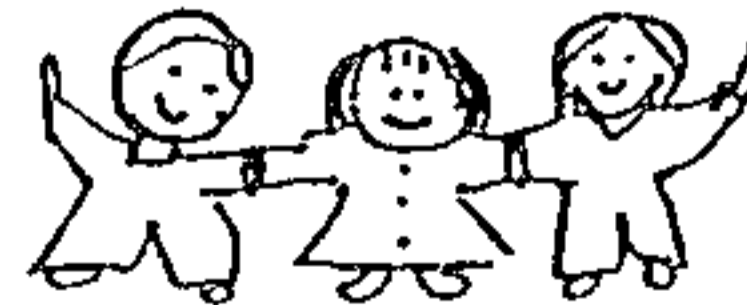
A big part of the learning for us is teaching them to be honest with each other, and teaching them how to work through their problems. This is not easy. It's like taking one baby-step at a time. Some of the teenagers and adults point their fingers at each other, but I have to teach them to own their own stuff. Also we are learning how to respect each others' boundaries.

Most of all, we are learning how to take care of our responsibilities. For years we've been running as if we were lost. Well, maybe a lot of us were, but now we are being found and that's like being born all over again. We are learning to live an appropriate and healthy life. Most every person has a little bit of animal in us, so we need to be open to each other's feelings, and respect that.

It is very important for me to learn to be honest with my teenagers and adults that are inside me, one by one, as well as learn to be honest with myself.

I see myself standing in the back of the teenagers at times and I do the same thing to them that Jehovah God did to me. He put his finger in my back in 1984, then pushed me to the city I'm in now. So I take my finger and poke them in the back, just to remind them I'm there. That goes for the adults inside of me, too.

By Avon T.



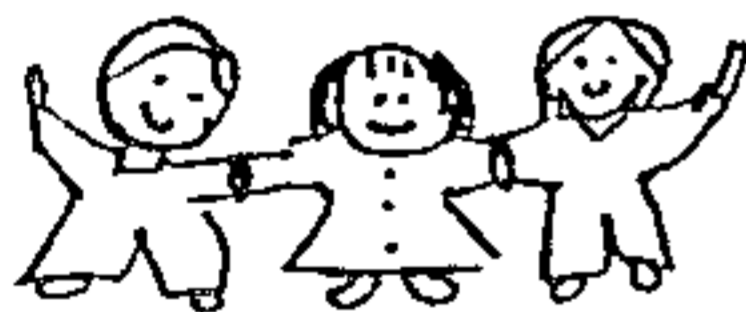
My name is Genovine and I'm sixteen years old. I've always wanted to be a High Priestess in a cult — I thought that would make me real important. I learned how to control demons and make them
(continued on page 7)

(Teens, cont'd)

do things to other people, and I know how to use lots of power against people. I think I thought if I did all that then someone would love me. I was wrong. The people in the cult only used me more and more to do really ugly things and it made me feel really bad.

So I decided to start helping her therapist. I knew life could never be good for me, because of everything I had done, but I wanted to help the other little girls if I could. I thought that maybe it would make a difference. I started telling him things I remembered. I can tell when the demons are harassing the little girls and then he can pray to stop them. Sometimes they talk to me and promise to give me all the power I could ever want, but I know they only want me to not talk. Now they know that won't work, so they threaten to hurt me all the time. Once, they put an arrow through me and I had to get our outside person to help get it out. I want to keep helping our therapist. I think that if everyone works with him, things can get better. Maybe I can hope that for me. Maybe my life can be better too.

By Genovine



For the Teens, By the Teens.

Our people try to be very patient with us, even when we don't deserve it. Most of the internal teens are very angry, remembering the pain of our own times. The big guys will sit us through the crisis to be sure we are OK and not a threat to the rest of the people, by being suicidal. They respect our privacy, for we try to remain hidden most of the time, only pushing us if we pose a threat. We are also given free run of the house. We have to earn the privilege of being able to go out on our own by acting responsibly. Right now, I personally am under house arrest for acting out, losing my temper in public and, well, making bold threats about a person I was angry at. If I slip out by accident they firmly

pull me back in as quickly as possible, which is usually fast because there are more of them than us. They get mad at us at times for acting stupidly, but once we can prove to them we can control ourselves we are invited into one of the working groups and given something that we can do, a job suitable for a teenaged person. . . stuff like we would be doing if the body was still teenaged.

By Sally B., age 16



It's always game time at my house. The rebellious teens are interested in discovering sexuality. The children fear closures and betrayal. My adults have their hands full.

Presently facing the masses is the need for safety at all costs. However, my sexy one places the children in jeopardy, only to leave them helpless in uncomfortable, downright dangerous situations. . .

Reasoning with a teenager is next to impossible. Especially when she is awakening sexually. It is familiar territory, yet the games damage the children's trust. The teens selfishly demand attention, not fully aware when they play the game. They leave at a convenient time when safety for *them* is paramount.

They leave the closed ones to handle the pain, the act, the betrayal. The shame. Then the nothingness creeps in and the pain feelings are deadened. This is frustrating for our partners, especially when they don't understand why we weep. But I, we, were trained to please. At the expense of ourselves.

- Solution: 1) Get rid of partner. 2) Get rid of situations that could possibly be maneuvered into sex. 3) Drink lots. 4) Have spouse/partner get help in understanding. 5) Evaluate the situation. Is this an abuse/use relationship?

I pick #'s 2, 4 and 5. However, #4 is not under your control.

My goal is to protect the children so they can grow up. I've found that communication, internally and externally, helps a lot. I speak to the sexy one, to all my people, out loud. . . so they all can hear that we have a problem to solve. We bargain among ourselves, set boundaries like "what is too far?" We teach them to say "No!"

It's slow going, however at the very least, it's GOING.

By CAT

Humor at the Picnic

I had a funny thing happen to me right after I told my family that I had MPD. They did not want to hear about it and it was never spoken of in front of me.

One day all of my family got together for a family meeting. My six-year-old niece was playing with an old wig and makeup. She was "all dressed up." It came time for our usual picture to be taken. Lindsey came over to me and put the wig on my head. Of course I looked very funny. She insisted that I wear the wig for one picture, so I did.

After the picture-taking was over it was time to leave. Lindsey asked me if she could spend the night with me. I told her that I couldn't let her because I had a doctor's appointment the next day. She said, "Here. I will loan you my wig so when you go to the doctor tomorrow, the doctor will look at you and say 'Just who do I have in my office today?'"

Little did she know that this is what he says almost everytime I go to his office! All my family looked at each other and were unsure what to do. I looked at Lindsey and my family and burst out laughing. This small child had the courage to say something that everyone else had always wondered about. The ice had been broken, and now my family is free to talk about the MPD. Thank you, Lindsey!

By Betty D.

On Being a Teenage Mutant Ninja MPD

By Peter S.

Least that's what my brother Tommy calls it. He thinks that's pretty funny. But then Tommy thinks most things are pretty funny. And I'm glad he does 'cause I tend to take things and myself far too seriously. I'm 13 and so is my brother Tommy. We are part of a "Band" which includes 12 members with Susan the core. Our ages range from 4 to 33 (Susan's age). It can be pretty chaotic at times. But I think it's gettin' better.

Problems? Yea I got 'em. A lot of times I feel trapped. I sometimes wish we were all each one real separated (in different bodies.) I don't take to wearin' dresses and makeup. I hate goin' on dates with guys. I'm not gayyak now. I complain it's not fair I can't date girls. Nowadays I'd be old enough too. But then I feel guilty. All this whinin' and complainin' isn't fair to Susan. We are supposed to be helpin' her.

The other personalities look up to me a lot. They call me a Knight in Shiny Armor. Truth is I'm not. I get afraid..sad. even. Angry (I tend

to have a lot of emotions — Type-A, I guess.) But I have gotten better. Both of these things used to really get to me and I'd get suicidal mostly. But now I can work on these things more rationally.

Why? Well mainly 'cause I am not alone and I can finally see that. My Higher Power (I choose to call God) is changing me. We have a therapist who talks to each of us equally without any kind of judgement-stuff (least that I can see). We go to lots of AA meetings; I share sometimes. Not so much about incest or MPD but just about daily stuff. Caretaking, Anger, Pain and whatnot. It's great not to be "terminally unique" anymore. And ya know when I listen I can see there are lots of folks out there who ain't MPD or incest folks but understand fear, anger and pain too.

I do service work and get out of myself when I feel down. I help the younger personalities just by bein' there.

No, a Knight in Shiny Armor I ain't but I can try to be a friend.

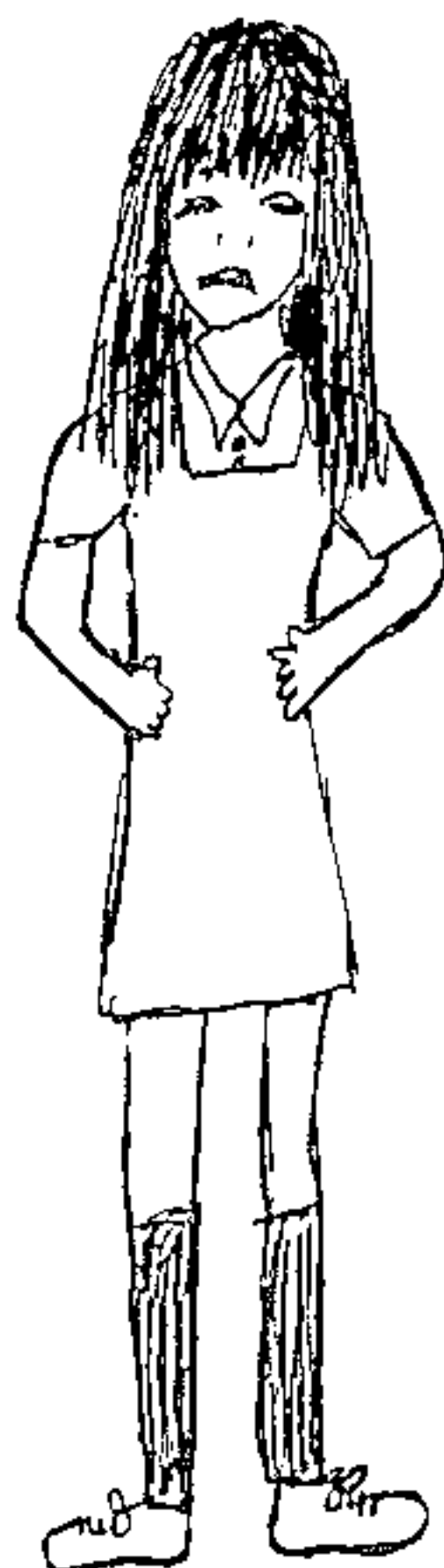
We sing together on tapes. I lose myself in music and it gives me a better purpose to focus on.

The Band tells me I'm important. They say they need me; I sure as heck need them. I certainly have not arrived yet. I got a ways to go. But when I get off the beam someone in the Band helps me stop and think, then get back on track. Barbara will say somethin' like "What are people going to say, Peter, honestly?" Israel might remind me to pray and listen to God's will. And lately it's Tommy. Yea, he is pretty cool. "What's that on your face, Pete? Peach fuzz? Tryin' to grow a beard on me, huh?" Then if I stop and get too down about it he says "Chill out bro. Lighten up Dude, and quit tryin' to fight all those battles by yourself" or he'll say "Here he comes...the Teenage Mutant Ninja MPD at it again. Go get 'em Pete!"

I gotta laugh. I must look pretty ridiculous.

Thanks Tommy. I love ya, Man.

MV



One of our inner helpers



The comfortor



RESOURCES ETC.

Barbara Cherry, MA, CADAC, will conduct a workshop on dissociation August 22 thru 25 at Gentle Way, 2121 Sage Rd. #175, Houston TX 77056. Call 713/961-0336 for reservations.

A pastoral village in southern Quebec, Canada, is the site of healing weekend retreats conducted by Rosemary Sullivan, incest survivor and psychotherapist. The sessions at Pigeon Hill Peacemaking Centre use psychosynthesis techniques to teach new skills and help survivors reclaim a healthy life. For women: Sept. 20-22; Oct. 4-6; Nov. 1-3. For men: Nov. 8-10. Call 514/248-2524 for information. Or write to Pigeon Hill Bruideen Peacemaking Centre, St. Armand, Quebec, Canada J0J 1T0.

There is a new address for **THE CUTTING EDGE**, a publication for women living with self-inflicted violence. For subscription info, write to P.O. Box 20819, Cleveland, OH 44120.

A 12-page booklet, *The Spiritual Dimensions of Ritualistic Abuse (Innocence Twisted into Guilt)* is available at \$1 each from Wayne A. Van Kampen, Bethesda PsychHealth Institute, 4400 East Iliff Ave., Denver, CO 80222. Discounts offered for quantity orders.

Phoenix, a Center for Men, in Long Beach, California, offers numerous lectures, conferences and video presentations for men who are engaged in healing mind and body. Write to this organization at 3620 Long Beach Blvd. Suite C, Long Beach CA 90807, or call 213/595-0328 for an upcoming schedule.

To receive subscription information on *Trauma & Recovery Newsletter*, please contact Barbara Lohmier, Dept. of Psychiatry, Akron General Medical Center, 400 Wabash Ave., Akron, OH 44307, or call 216/384-6525.

Q: How is an alter like a potato chip?

A: I bet you can't have just one!

By L.

Recovering

By Rita M.

Q: All I've known for 23 years is fear, pain and discouragement. How can I hope to get better?

A: To start with, perhaps you could work with your therapist about the "all or nothing" thinking. You're not alone in this. It's a typical perceptual distortion among abuse victims. I acknowledge that this is your *feeling*, but there have been positive things in your life, no matter how small. Look for them. Gather them around you like a cloak of warmth. The *best* of who we are we also can attribute (in some way) to the family we came from. Even our survival skills (things we often think we should throw away) are things to cherish. . . . because they helped us survive creatively. I often have clients tell me that "I'm doing it again. . ." referring to old dysfunctional behaviors. I tell them that they *need* these behaviors, just not all the time. These old instincts help you know who to trust, who not to trust, etc. They are still useful. You have more strength than you realize, or you wouldn't be here.

Lots of times, clients seem to have the idea that they will proceed directly through therapy

with no hitches. What I've experienced is that therapy is a process, and it goes as it goes. Sometimes feeling stuck is part of the process. Sometimes being numb is part of the process. The frustration you feel may actually be a pause so that you can grow and get stronger for the next push forward.

Don't judge yourself harshly for "not doing it right". Give yourself a break! This is hard stuff to do. I realize that feeling depressed is really miserable, but it'll pass. *Feelings are just feelings*. They come, they go. When it gets really bad. . . tell yourself, "This too shall pass." And it will.

Q: Why is night time such a hard time for people with MPD?

A: Typically, the abuse that brings on MPD takes place at night (not always, but commonly.) It makes sense that as children, people who develop MPD would come to associate night time with getting hurt, and become very anxious as night gets closer. Many people with MPD are so anxious that they are unable to sleep at night and suffer terribly during that time. Hopefully, as you complete work in therapy, this should subside. MV

Rita M. is a Licensed Independent Social Worker and Certified Alcoholism Counselor (LISW,CAC), and is also a recovering MPD client. She functions at a very high level (after much therapy) and is "integrated". MANY VOICES is pleased to have her help us provide the special viewpoint of a recovering, knowledgeable, MPD client/therapist. Readers may send questions to Rita, C/O MANY VOICES. We'll use as many as possible. —LW

Restaurants Revisited

My first look at *Many Voices* was when our therapist showed me "Order Anything With Mushrooms" (Aug.'89), which gave me a whole new perspective on why we were spontaneously saying "Yuck!" loudly to the person in the cafeteria line in front of us who ordered stewed okra. Alas, the kids still rule at restaurants; last night we found ourselves making Flying Chicken Wings with the hands and clucking at the girl who took our order at

McDonald's. Fortunately, my companion thinks multiplicity is absolutely marvelous and really neat!

Sincerely, Ellen & the Gang

I went into a restaurant ahead of my friends and asked for a table for four. The waiter grabbed four menus, showed me to a large booth, set the menus for four places. He turned to me, smiling. "Enjoy yourselves," he said.

By Kimberly & The Cast

My Inner Teenager

By Betty S.

For some time I had been aware of an inner teenager, mostly when she was telling her story, her fears, her hell. Then last summer all of a sudden it seemed imperative that I make another doll.

(I had previously made several dolls, including three different clown dolls, each with hard, unyielding wooden bodies — the clothes in primary colors. My fourth doll was a soft one, still primary color, still clown-style clothing. This face was not clown-like, but still sort of a mask. Doll #5 was a soft little-girl doll, still clown-style clothes. She is two-faced: one side wears red prison stripes and is crying huge tears; the other side is wearing a red print with teddy bears and hearts. She has a happy smile on her face.)

And now came the compulsion to make another soft doll. The clothes are the same clown style, but the sleeves are lavender and turquoise flower print, the body and legs a pink and turquoise madras plaid. Definitely more teenage colors. And a pony tail complete with one of those cloth-elastic bands popular with teens. I had a blouse in each of those two materials, and my solid turquoise skirt yielded leftovers for the feet/shoes. I was really getting away

from my standard beige/brown monotone garb! Margie was asserting herself!

More followed. Turquoise corduroy slacks. Teal blue slacks and vest. I was making progress. And then one day Margie didn't want to be referred to as "a part of me" anymore. She just wanted to BE. I had a couple of really bad days. What do you do? How does a teenager act? How will this affect me? My life? Those around me? *Scarey!!*

Sunday morning. Didn't want to go to church. Nothing to wear. All church clothes beige, brown, off-white. I cried. I found something green and old that would do for the day. And then I remembered — I had purchased some teal-blue poly knit material for a suit a couple of years before. Just never got around to sew it. It has since been cut and the sewing begun. I am listening to Margie. (I suppose she picked out the cloth before I was even aware of her!)

One day I looked in the mirror when I was wearing bright green. My face looked all washed out. (I don't wear makeup.) Margie was ready to add lots of color to the face, too. I found this very upsetting. I just wasn't ready for lots of makeup, especially inexpertly applied.

My therapist helped. He said I

had to remember the 4 C's: Communication, Cooperation, Compassion and Consideration. So we are trying to apply that. Depending on where I'm going, what I'm doing, how I feel, I may wear my old browns or my new turquoise. . .

One day I felt great going to my therapist wearing my new turquoise slacks and vest. But the moment I sat down I started crying — I had worn the wrong clothes and taken the wrong teddy bear! (Anyone else have problems like this?) Well, the way we solved it was for the inner teenager to hold the inner four-year-old on her lap, and they shared the teddy bear. And it worked out. The four year old was able to open up and share more that day because of the comforting by the teenager. I hope it continues that way.

Recently I got a purple heart survivor pin for my four-year-old, along with a Certificate for bravery. (See Resources this month.) She really likes this and thinks it will help her tell the remainder of her story, which is very hard to tell.

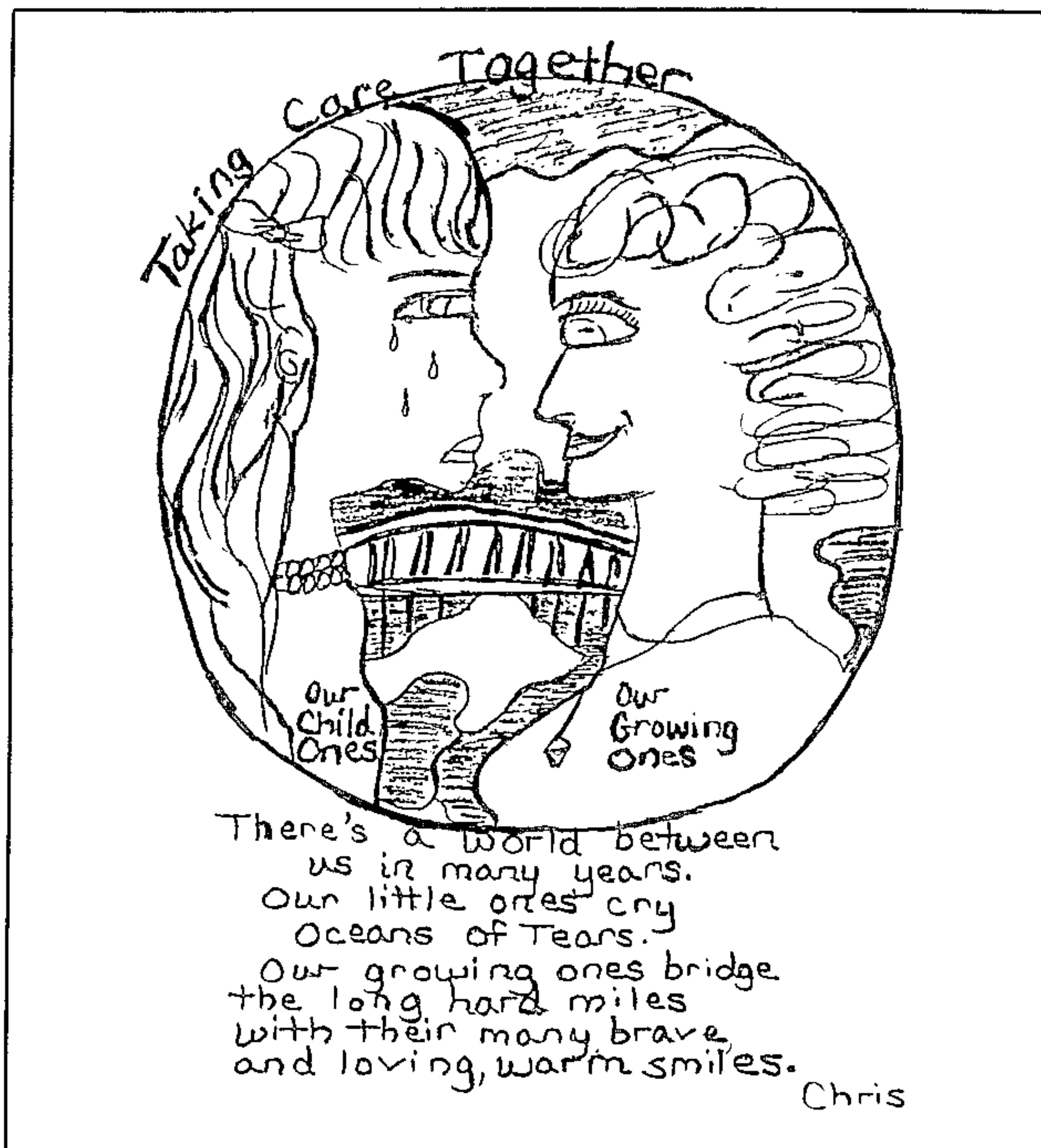
Even more recently my inner teenager announced she didn't want to be called Margie anymore. Do you suppose maybe she has integrated? Or maybe taken a vacation? Trust the process. Time will tell.

Sprinkles of Light into Sylvia's Despair

She said
the tears come from
an Ancient place, and
She said
the Tears make her dizzy
with sadness
Chattering Coldness, and
She said
the Tears scream
demanding from her
Belief
Warm Honoring
of what was
what is, and
what will come.

By Dylan





Don't Tell Me I'm Courageous

Please don't tell me I'm "courageous".

When all I've done was instinct.
Please don't wish me well on "my journey."

When it's a road I'd rather not taken.

Tell me, instead, if I make you smile.

That you want to spend time with me.

Tell me, please, that I'm worth your patience;

Hold my hand and walk with me.

Let me know, whenever you can,

That we both struggle together
To just get through another day;

That our tears are made of gold.

And if you cannot find the words

That mean what you want to say.

Don't voice your love with empty cliches —

I can hear you in a warm embrace.

By A.M.S., April '91

A Different Kind of Summer

By Joni

Summers have been a hard time for me, and writing about a different kind of summer and rereading it often has helped me experience summer a little differently. I thought maybe someone else might find what I wrote helpful, or inspire them to write something of their own.

This is summer. The experiences and trauma of childhood summers are of another time. And, although the memories make them fresh and vivid in my mind, they are but an echo of the past. It is over. Living the horror is no longer part of my life. The *now* summer is a time of light and warmth, of gentle breezes and delicious smells; of purple, white and yellow flowers, green grass, and shady trees. It is a growing time, a stretching time; a gentle, unhurried, forgiving time. The warm gentle air feels safe and nurturing. Summer is truly a gift from God and its beauty and miracles reach within me, awakening my soul to the gifts of this summer season. I am not chained to or controlled by people and circumstances of the past. I

am free to experience this season, and all of life, in a new and different way. I feel calm, strong and unafraid.

I am learning to understand myself, my past, and the potential that is within me. I am beginning to accept myself for who I am and where I've been. I am learning to forgive myself for past and present mistakes and wrong-doings. I am realizing that I can be powerful and that I have gifts to share.

I want to remember this summer season as a time of light and hope, of growing and being. The memories of the past are only memories. They are part of me and who I am, but they do not control me and I no longer need to live in terror, isolation, pain, and loneliness. I can face the past, give words to the past, and release

myself from the past and its power. I can begin to grow in the present. I can begin to fill the holes in my life. I can accept and embrace all of the parts within myself, honor them, listen to them, and together we can heal and become one. I can begin to discover my strengths and work toward fulfilling my potential.

In this summer season, may I grow in wisdom and understanding. May I always have those who love me close by. May I find peace, happiness, joy and laughter. May I learn to love and trust myself so that I can love and trust others. And, may I help to bring peace, love and joy into the world.

Happy Summer!

Not All There

By Noni

the minutes, they're unmanageable
the hours, so —

what was I saying?
I carry my own baton in this race —
the cold self passing to
the caring self.
the angry self passing to
the efficient self,
the frightened self passing
to
the social self.
the woman-self passing to —

what was I saying?
minutes, they're unmanageable
the hours, so heuristic
the days, they are —

what was I saying?
don't ask the cold self if she loves
you
or the caring self what the cold
self did
don't ask the angry self to be a
friend
or the efficient self what the angry
self did
don't ask the frightened self to
speak to you
or the social self what the
frightened self did
don't ask the passionate self to —

what was I saying?
minutes, just unmanageable
hours, so heuristic
the days, they are dissociated
and the weeks are —

what was I saying?
will I stay the same —
from the time I order a meal
until the time I eat it?
from the time I buy a shirt
until the time I wear it?
from the time I go on vacation
until the photographs
come back?
from the time I fall asleep
until the time that I wake
up?
from the time you first embrace
me
until the time you —

what was I saying?
minutes, just unmanageable
hours, so heuristic
the days, they are dissociated
and the weeks are even worse
the months will be —

will I remember
what I've told you?
what I've learned?
how old I am?
will I remember
what I've done?
who I've known?
where I've been?
will I remember
what you've —

what was I saying?
minutes, just unmanageable
hours, so heuristic
the days, they are dissociated
and the weeks are even worse
the months will be mercurial
as the years succumb to —

what was I saying?
I tell you I don't eat cheese,
or insist that I must have it
I show you I am shy and modest
or pose nude for your camera's eye
I act toward you like Mata Hari
or scream if you even touch me
when you confront me, I —

what was I saying?
minutes, just unmanageable
hours, so heuristic
the days, they are dissociated
and the weeks are even worse
the months will be mercurial
as the years succumb to yesterday
and the life itself —

what was I saying?
I remember almost nothing
I act in ways to hurt myself
I speak of being separate
I write of my confusion
I read of being traumatized
I dream I'm being tortured
I know I am —

what was I saying?
minutes, just unmanageable
hours, so heuristic
the days they are dissociated
and the weeks are even worse
the months will be mercurial
as the years succumb to yesterday
and the life itself —

what was I saying?
ah, yes —
the life itself
is mine

The Mirror

A look into the mirror
and who will you see?
A mirror behind and a mirror in
front
one tries to see all the reflections,
but there are so many,
and some so far away,
some are hiding,
some so sad you want so bad to
help.
some with such angry distant eyes,
so distrustful,
questioning, puzzled, fearful, why?
a haunting laugh, you turn to
look

— that someone's gone.
Look again into the mirror,
and who is there, and who is here,
look so deeply into those hurting
eyes
makes you want to reach in and
hold them tight,
try somehow to make it all right;
your hand reaches out and hits the
glass —
they're gone.
it's but a mirror in front and a
mirror in back.

— By P.C.



Great Ideas from Survivors

Multiple Personality Gift: A workbook for you and your inside family, was created by Jacklyn M. Pia to help people with dissociation feel more confident, creatively balanced and in control. It is available for \$14.35 (includes postage and handling) from Real Active Survivor Inc., P.O.Box 1894, Canyon Country, CA 91386-0894.

Wonderful hand-painted t-shirts with a (discreet) MPD theme are available for \$30 plus postage and handling from Katie S., P.O. Box 8241, Bellflower CA 90706. Several design variations are offered, involving faces, balloons, hearts and more. Write to Katie for complete info. (I bought one, and it's *beautiful!*)

A Purple Heart Survivor Badge with notarized Certificate of Survival are available from VT-ISEE (Incest Survivors Enlightened and Empowered). Cost is \$3. Specify name for certificate (or leave blank.) Order from VT-ISSE, 24 Jonzetta Court, Milton, VT 05468.



T-SHIRT DESIGN
BY KATIE S.

Books

Multiple Personality Disorder from the Inside Out,

edited by Barry M. Cohen, Esther Giller, Lynn W. 1991 by The Sidran Press 211 Southway, Baltimore, MD 21218. 245 pgs. \$14.95 paperback.

No, we are *not* going to be modest! This is the best book I've seen written by people who live with MPD. . . 146 different contributors, mostly *MANY VOICES* readers! And you folks did a terrific job. There was so much wonderful stuff submitted that making final selections was very difficult. We did some tightening up in grammar and phrasing, and shortened pieces here and there, but for the most part, this is *your* book, and your contribution is enormous. Who else can tell it like it is, but the folks who *live* with MPD daily? There's a lot of honest experience in this book. Creativity and determination shine through even the most painful sections.

Admittedly, it's not *perfect*. If I had the chance, I'd change the chapter headings and layout. But I'm nitpicky. The content is

excellent. The presentation is quite readable. And the major congratulations for this effort belongs to YOU! THANKS! — LW

Self-Parenting: The Complete Guide to Your Inner Conversations. Learn to love, support and nurture your inner child.

© 1987 by John K. Pollard III. 250 pgs. Published by Generic Human Studies Publishing, Malibu CA. \$9.95 Paperback.

My counselor mentioned this book to me. I am finding it very helpful. It is easy reading. It suggests exercises to help the Inner Parent and the Inner Child to know and understand each other better. It seems helpful even if there are several "inner children". It helps me take care of those Inner Ones better. The Inner Ones like it too because they get to express their feelings and their likes and dislikes and be listened to. This is important to their healing process. They were not listened to for over

50 years and they are very glad to be listened to now. — Betty S.

Secret Feelings and Thoughts

© 1990 written by Rosemary Narimanian, illustrated by Susan Korzeniewski. Published by Healing Hearts Series, Inc. 3680 Frankford Ave. Philadelphia, PA 19134. \$10 plus \$2 shipping/handling. Paperback.

This book was the best seller at the National Juvenile Sex Offender Conference in Albany, NY, immediately following its publication. Healing Hearts donates a portion of the proceeds from every book to victim recovery groups.

This book is appropriate for child, teen, and adult survivors, as well as parents and therapists. It is a story of male sibling incest, and covers such concerns as power and control, homosexuality, AIDS, dissociation, flashbacks, grounding, etc. Ms. Narimanian herself is a survivor. In her opening letter to children and teens, she offers hope and a belief in the miracle of recovery.

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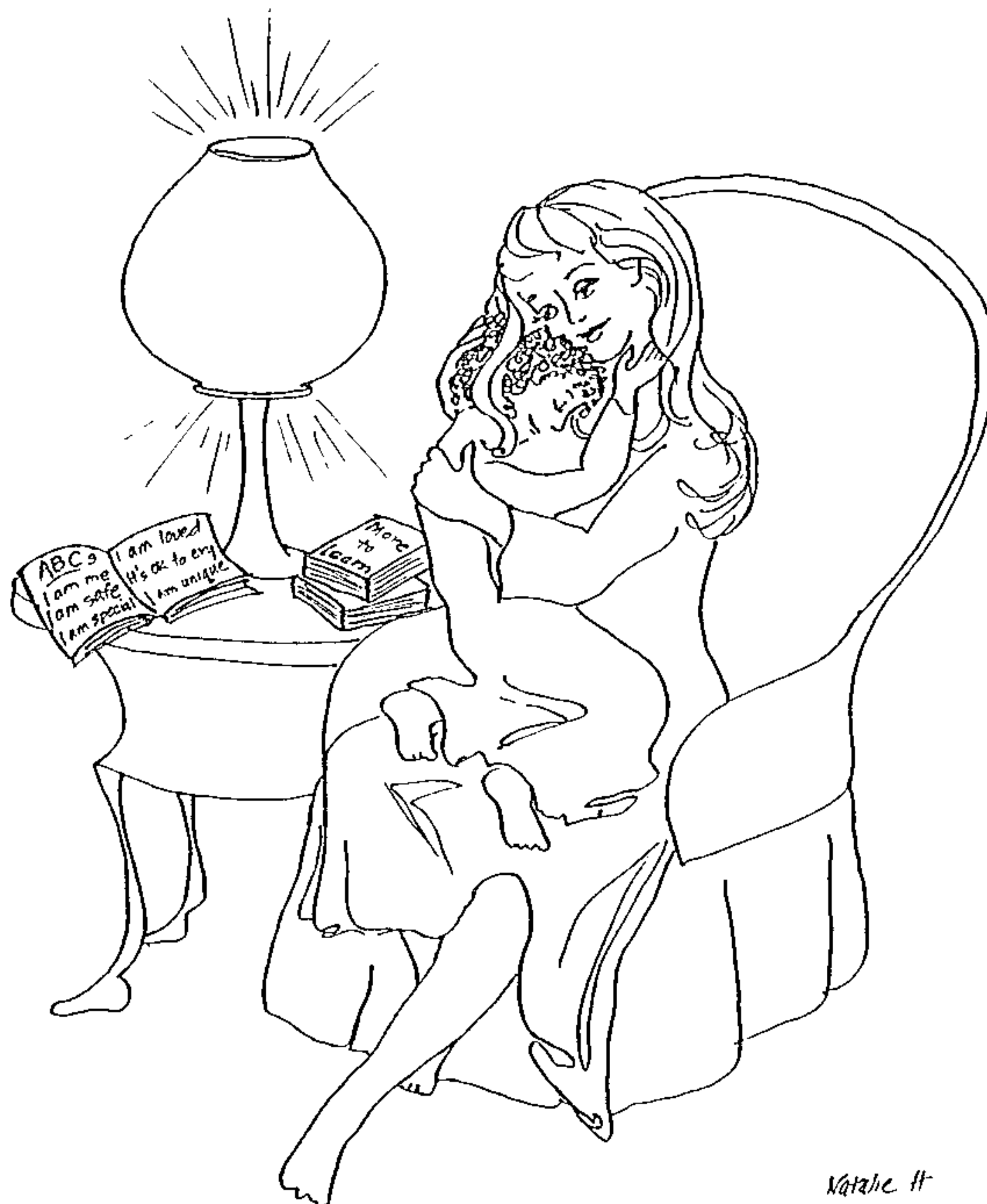
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October 1991

The stages of therapy you have experienced. What you see as progress. What is your most stubborn problem. How you are working on it in therapy ART. Draw your special comforts. DEADLINE for submissions: August 1, 1991.

December 1991

Transforming the holidays into happy (or at least tolerable) days. What you do to protect yourself from memory triggers on 'special days. New "traditions" created for healing. ART: draw a picture of yourself and your best friend. DEADLINE for submissions: October 1, 1991.



Natalie H

"An Inner Adult helping an Inner Child"

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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