

MANY VOICES

WORDS OF HOPE FOR PEOPLE WITH MPD OR A DISSOCIATIVE DISORDER

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SAFE SUPPORT!

Our theme this issue is a timely one for the holiday season, when many of us yearn for more stable social ties and companionship that goes beyond "rescuing" or caretaking. I think our contributors have done an excellent job in listing what it takes to get needed support... and how important it is to give back something in return.

With *MANY VOICES*, I'm acutely aware of how much you readers, writers and artists have contributed to my understanding and personal recovery. While I can't "give back" on a tangible scale (haven't won the lottery yet!) I do want to expand my range of sharing using the skills and opportunities at hand. One newborn attempt at this is *MANY VOICES/MULTIPLE CHOICES*, the resource guide which current subscribers should find this month in their envelope. I hope you like it. We'll try it again next year (or in six months, if demand warrants.)

And in late Spring of '93, we hope to have the first of our new book series available. Two projects are scheduled: *Mending Ourselves*, a book of prose, poetry and art from survivors recovering from severe trauma; and *Poems to Our Therapists*, poetry and artwork about the experience of therapy. You are all invited to submit original, unpublished material for these projects by March 15, 1993. Please include written permission with your submission, and a SASE for return of artwork only. Write to us for more detailed guidelines.

May your holiday season be a blessing, full of joy!

Lynn W.

Building a Safe Support System

By B.K. Robert

When I think of having a safe support system I think of two types of support systems. One is an external system that we all need so we don't have to deal with and relive the traumatic memories of our past all alone. It is also a system in which I and my alters can get support from, when our internal system is in crisis. The other support system I have is an internal support system. It is a system in which the alters help me and each other stay informed, safe and alive.

I have had a very difficult time trying to build a safe external support system I learned a long time ago that people can not be trusted I was taught this by the people I should have been able to trust to take care of me, love me and keep me safe, but it ended up that those were the very people who hurt me the most. In any support system, trust is a key ingredient Without trust there may be some semblance of a support system but it probably will not feel safe and, consequently, will not be used.

In my search for people I could trust and get support from, I made a lot of mistakes along the way.

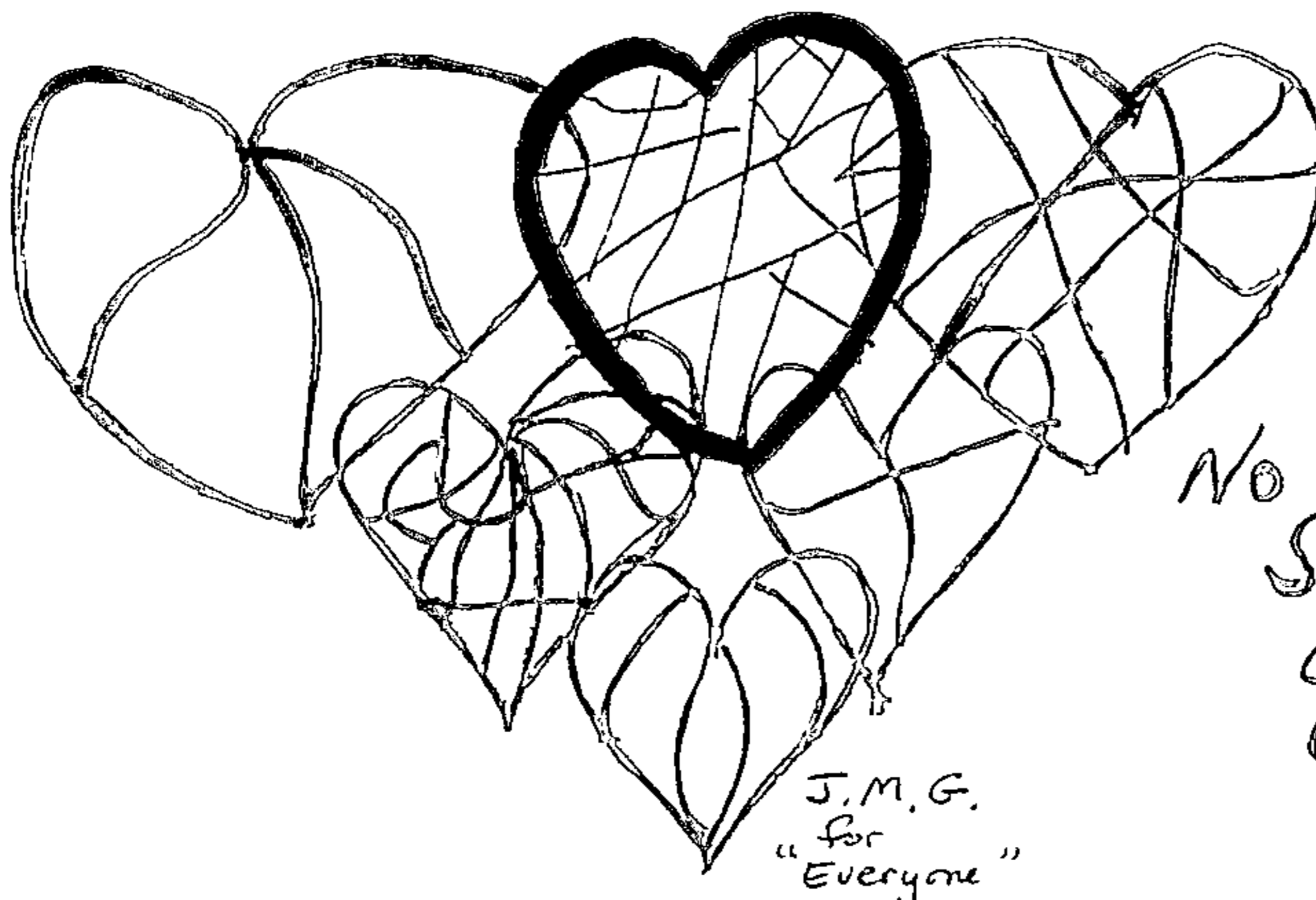
Initially I tended to gravitate toward the type of people I was most familiar with. These people turned out to be abusive, manipulative, demanding, and, in general, very harmful to me. Yet for some reason I expected I could feel safe and get support from them if only I tried hard enough or long enough. What I ended up with were people who minimized my memories and my pain, and used the threat of rejection or abandonment to manipulate my words and actions. Over time I realized I was recreating my childhood over and over again and eventually eliminated these types of people from my life.

I have developed friendships with a couple of "normal" people who are, in general, good, caring people. They do care about me but, because of the issues I am dealing with (incest, other forms of abuse and MPD), they are not able to provide me with consistent, safe support. My issues are, at times, so overwhelming my friends just can't or don't know how to deal with them. They either try to fix me or put me off for a more "convenient" time (as if there is any time that is better than any other for dealing with crap like

this). At times it feels as if they are avoiding me because of the possibility that some awful memory might come out. This has led to us having very few everyday kinds of interactions and, when we do, I am generally responsible for initiating them. It appears to me that, even when I find people who are relatively safe to include in my support system, they gradually fade from my life because my issues are just too much to deal with.

I have tried developing a support system with people I have met in support groups. I figured these people had to be safe because they could really understand and empathize with what happened to me as a child and what I am feeling now in reliving these horrendous memories. I found that they understand and can empathize, but the lessons we learned to protect ourselves and the mistrust we have of others is so deeply ingrained that we won't even allow ourselves to get close to those with similar pain. I have found these relationships abandoned almost before they have begun.

(cont'd on page 3)



J.M.G.
"for
Everyone"

No longer alone.
Supported by
others, who have
Others!

(Building cont'd)

There is one person in my life who is a constant in my limited support system. This person is my therapist. She is the only person that I and my alters (all 14 of us) really feel safe with. She has been challenged and tested by all of us and has proven over and over again that she is caring, non-judgmental and, above all, someone we can always count on. She treats us all fairly and with consistency. She never claims to have all of the answers and readily admits she, just like everyone else, is human and therefore, not perfect. We chose to trust her because she has made us feel, not just *think* but really *feel*, that she truly cares about us and our well-being.

With our therapist's help, we have built an internal support system. It is set up so that the alters have some responsibilities for themselves and each other. The older alters help protect and nurture the little ones. Each alter knows who to get attention or help from when they are feeling unsafe or sad. A couple of the alters are responsible for keeping me informed about what is going on in the internal system. This is necessary because I sometimes get wrapped up in my day-to-day life

or I become overly focused on memories and feelings, and lose track of what is going on with the others.

I realize that my support system is very thin but I have been working on expanding it. I am involved in an incest support group and have taken advantage, on occasion, of the local crisis intervention hot line. I have become actively involved in social issues that are important to me. I do volunteer work at various local social service agencies. And, I am back in college working on my masters degree. Through these various activities, I expect to eventually find people I can trust and who will become an integral part of my life and part of my support system.

I know building a safe support system takes time. There are no quick, easy ways to go about doing this nor are there any magic words or potions that will make it happen. I have not become who I am overnight, so I need to be patient and trust I will attain a good, strong, safe support system if we can just hold on and give it time. There are times I do not think we can make it but we have so far — I think that is why we are called survivors. MV

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Support Groups

A friend, Amy, writes:

Many of us in survivor support groups in Illinois have found an excellent outlet for a lot of the rage and anger we feel at having been threatened and silenced as children, through political involvement with Mother's Alliance for the Rights of Children, a political advocacy organization of mothers whose children have been placed in joint or permanent custody with a perpetrator (usually in divorce cases, but sometimes in foster care.) Since we are working through this channel as survivors, not mothers, we have (loosely) formed a joint coalition called Survivor's Alliance for the Rights of Children. I participated in the first annual March for the Children this past May in Washington — the first time in our country's history that a political demonstration has occurred at the nation's capitol on behalf of *any* sort of children's rights.

For many of us here, it has been a very effective way to direct much of the anger we feel over our past helplessness, as well as being very liberating in giving us a voice, whether that be talking about our own experiences in the political or public realm, or simply standing up for sexually abused children in general.

(Read more about this project, and the March for Children, in MANY VOICES/MULTIPLE CHOICES, our resource guide which accompanies this issue. You may also write to Amy at PO Box 267942, Chicago, IL 60626-7942.)



Therapists' Page

By Robert Benjamin, MD

Associate Medical Director and Clinical Consultant to the Dissociative Disorders Program at Northwestern Institute, Fort Washington, Pennsylvania. Currently involved in MPD/DD program development, outpatient services, and training. Dr. Benjamin has been active in the field since 1980. Professional member, ISSMPGD. Readers are welcome to write to him, c/o MANY VOICES, with comments or reactions to this column.

The following is a therapeutic story I use with my patients in the office. As you will see, it deals with the self-imposed isolation that many who have been victimized arrange for themselves as self protection, only to find that there are also disadvantages from being so efficiently cut off from the world by their defenses. Actually, I had used the story for many years in an effort to bridge the gap between me and the very withdrawn or fearful clients, and only comparatively recently did one of them supply an ending. She added the bird as visitor to her fortress world inside, denoting the therapist as the outsider who was both feared and hoped for. Indeed, this was a woman who had been disappointed and hurt by supposed helpers previously. So, in her fashion, I have left it unfinished and speculative. I hope it will be useful to you.

The Princess In The Tower

Once upon a time there was a princess who was very distrustful of people because of terrible wrongs which had been done to her. She vowed that she would use all of the resources of her kingdom to make herself absolutely safe from any further harm. First, she located a spot far away from any populated area beyond a great forest full of wild beasts. There, behind a great river, she found a tall hill surrounded by swamps. A moat was dug and stocked with man-eating crocodiles. Then a high wall was constructed, enclosing the summit of the hill. Great fortresses were built at each corner, with automatic machine guns set to fire and trained on the slopes of the hill to annihilate anyone so foolish as to try to approach, assuming of

course that anyone could survive the initial obstacles. Then within the walls an austere and foreboding castle was perched at the very top of the hill, and within it, a lofty tower in the center, rising as high as the clouds. The princess was very pleased with the project, and after thanking the workers for a job well done, had herself installed in the room at the very tip-top of the tower. She had enough supplies to last a lifetime, so dismissed her workmen. As she watched the last of them disappear through the forest, she noted with satisfaction that the stairs had been taken down behind them, and all of the bridges over the river and the moat were destroyed as well. With all of her defenses armed and at the ready, she finally felt secure and fully protected from any further harm. Now at long last she could be truly safe.

Days passed and then years as well. The princess marvelled at the effectiveness of her strong defenses. No one ever bothered her again. To be sure, many tried to approach her, but they were always intimidated and scared away by her impregnable stronghold. However, there was a slight problem; the princess noted to her dismay that her fortress was also a prison, for not only was she immune to attack by any enemies, she was also completely cutoff from any meaningful communication from others who she might have wished to be in touch with. Messengers from the court could only wave and gesture to her from the far edge of the forest, dodging wild beasts who came to chase them away. They would hurriedly try to deliver the news of the outside world before fleeing back from whence they came. And if the princess tried to shout a message back, it was invariably lost in the great expanse of distance from her spot on high,

with its intervening river and woods. And so the princess noted sadly that in her efforts to be completely safe, she had succeeded beyond her wildest nightmares in making herself absolutely alone.

In her loneliness, the princess could only gaze out of her tower window at the world below her and observe things from afar. She felt so different from everyone else, so cut off and a stranger to everyday life beyond her castle walls. How she wished for a friend to talk to who could understand her feelings, to whom she could tell her story. But how would anyone reach her? And even if they did, how could she trust that they would not hurt her again as she had been in the past, before she withdrew into her world of safety and isolation?

One day the princess heard, to her surprise, a rustling outside of her tower window. A bird had landed on the window sill and had perched there just out of her reach. Perhaps it had seen the advertisement she had so tentatively and fearfully posted on the outside of the shutters. Or then again, perhaps it had just been fortuitous that the bird had happened by at this time and this place. She approached it cautiously and observed it carefully. Could this creature be trusted? What would it want in return? Would it really listen to her or would she be disappointed again with those from the world outside of her self. Only time would tell, but maybe, just maybe, a way could be found to trust this new visitor to her world. Perhaps it would prove to be a true and faithful guide who would help her find a way to give up her formidable defenses and yet to remain relatively (but never absolutely) safe to return to the world beyond her self-protective fortress of isolation.

Therapy and Support

Coming Beside

Meeting you.
It didn't disperse the terrifying
darkness.
Not yet.
But it is less dark now.
Even tho I am often aware of the
terrible darkness,
I don't always feel it.

You knew the path,
I had never found it.
You took my hand
—sometimes you carried me—
and
together
we went to the path.
We started my journey.
And you continued yours.

Often I couldn't see the path.
Often I didn't recognize it.
Often I couldn't walk.
That's when you carried me.
Or we stopped and rested
until I was ready to go on.
We always decided to go or stay
by how I felt.
It took a long time
— but now I feel the path under
my feet.
I know it's there.
And I know you are there.
You never abandoned me.
Not once.
Semper fidelis.
Semper eadem.

By Charis

Society and Us

Silent Reaching
Turning In
Running
Scared
Afraid of Being
Hurt
Again
Silent Yearnings
to be
Heard
Accepted
Belonging
Together

By Hanna
for D & Associates

Fear of Falling

I reach out to catch you,
The agonizing freeze when I see
The child is going to fall,
But I am caught in slow motion.
Again and again
your children fall and hurt and cut
and abuse
and cry,
oh, so much crying.
I reach out to tell you,
You can catch your child,
You can comfort your child,
You must tell her over and over
24 hours a day:
It wasn't her fault,
she's not to blame,
she deserves to Be,
she deserves not to hurt.
I reach out to catch you,
but I can not
Unless you reach out for me.

By Debbie E.

dedicated to 3 precious women
with MPD.

Tiny Bit By Tiny Bit

Don't you know
my trust is such a fragile reed
bending in the roaring wind
of my past experience?

In spite of enormous odds
and contrary circumstances
It tries to grow ever so slowly
tiny bit by tiny bit

Can you possibly understand
how much I want to trust you?
With a tiny voice saying, "Go on;
it's okay"
But the rest of my being fights the
urge

You've given me no reason to
distrust you
Ever.
I can't even trust myself
how can I trust you or anyone
else?

My life has been a series
of hurts, disappointments, &
misplaced trust
And in spite of all that
the fragile reed struggles to grow,
tiny bit by tiny bit.

By Rebecca Ann

I Have A Special Friend

I didn't understand what was
happening to me.
All at once my life seemed to be
crashing in on all sides.
I tried to persevere through it
But it just got worse.

I wanted to tell someone,
I wanted to cry,
I wanted to run away, but I knew I
shouldn't run.

I held it in the best I could
But it just got worse.

Even the everyday tasks became
difficult for me
It seemed the voices were
everywhere
I had to try to talk,
But I was scared.

I knew people were beginning to
notice the change in me
I thought I was going crazy.

I had to try
I had to know if I was going crazy
That's when I met my special
friend.

The first time we met he knew I
was scared
And he told me "I'm glad you're
here"
I didn't know if I would come back
But I did go back.

He didn't push me like so many
others did before
He became a special friend
To all of us; inside me.

I have begun to feel safe now
My friend and I are daring to look
inside.
And I am finding out I am not
crazy
I was abused.

I am not sure he really knows
How special his gift of friendship is
to me
I am growing stronger
And I want to tell him
THANK YOU!

By JLEE

Working—Then and Now

By Laura

THEN:

It's time to go to work, but we can't get mobilized. We panic at the thought of leaving the safe walls of the apartment. The street, the world, is open and unprotected. How can we go out there when we don't have a mother inside us?

We wrap the string around our arm as the drill sergeant pushes us out the door. (Sarah, our therapist, carries the other half of the string in her briefcase—always.)

We walk to work—three miles. If we take the train or the bus, someone might touch us accidentally. We go early, when there are fewer people on the street. We don't like to walk so close to people that we can smell them. Some men have a sweaty odor that triggers something inside us.

We hear someone whimpering and moaning. We realize that the sounds are coming from us. This is not a good morning. We are a mass of bruised flesh and soul. We have a pain in our chest. It is from needing a mother. It feels like we will die from it.

We call Sarah's machine from a pay phone. We know that she is not in her office this early, so we won't be making machine clicks in someone else's session. We hear an out of control child with bad grammar talking desperately to her machine. (On bad days, we sometimes call four or five times.)

We are two blocks away from work now. Somehow, the work cassette gets snapped in, and the work persona emerges. She doesn't know about the rest of us, or about MPD, or about Sarah. She starts organizing her thoughts for the meeting that she has to chair this morning. What statistics and reports does she have to get ready beforehand? How should she best handle the opposing viewpoints that she knows will be expressed in the meeting?

She is not a real person, like the rest of us are. She is an artificial grownup. She can design

computer systems and she can lead projects, but she cannot go to lunch or socialize with anyone. She is friendly on the outside — just friendly enough not to call attention to herself.

She knows the rules. You can't just walk into someone's office and ask for a file. You have to go in and say hi, how was your weekend. And maybe you have to look at photographs of their trip. After that, you can ask for the file. These protocols make her impatient, but she knows they are required.

No one at work knows that anything is wrong with her. They just think she is a bit of a workaholic—slightly odd, but nice, and very competent.

Most of the time, the work persona remains at work, and we don't switch. But sometimes, when our boss asks us to do something that doesn't make sense to us, or that seems unfair, Sharon comes and argues with him. She is 9, and she defends us by talking back angrily, and being defiant and sarcastic. Our boss gets angry in response, and he and Sharon have some pretty bad fights.

Once, we had a fight that lasted a few days, and we were terrified that we would lose our job. So we held an emergency internal conference. We tried to figure out what to do so that no one came at work who would be antagonistic toward our boss. We finally decided to send the Girl of the Dead Leaves to work. She is very depressed and hopeless, and she would never fight with anyone. All she does is what authority tells her to do. She is joyless and never smiles. She is not the perfect one to go to work, but at least she doesn't get into arguments.

So the Girl of the Dead Leaves went to work for a few days. We could hardly talk, and we couldn't work, but that didn't matter, because we stayed at our desk and were quiet. When things calmed down, the Girl of the Dead Leaves left, and the work persona came back

NOW:

We rarely get into those kinds of situations any more. We learned to go to the ladies' room as soon as Sharon comes. In the ladies' room, someone else usually comes who starts crying. We let her cry for a while, then we go back to our desk. Even if we can't get the work persona back right away, we don't act out or call negative attention to ourselves. We just sit quietly.

Although we are still separate inside, we are not as separate as we used to be. When we were more separated, we were much more efficient, because the OK ones didn't feel any of the bad things that the upset ones felt. Now that we are getting "better", and are starting to have leaks of feelings across boundaries, we are less competent. We sometimes long for the good old days when the ones who were upset were terribly upset, but the ones who were fine were super-fine. We functioned better at work when we had stronger divisions.

About 90% of the time, no matter who is here before we get to work, once we go through the revolving door and show our ID to the security guard, the work persona manages to arrive. On bad days, when we can't get her, we don't do any work. So when we have good days, we have to work harder to catch up. Fortunately, we have the kind of job where we are given a project and a deadline. No one checks on us each day to see how far we have gotten. If we lose a few days here and there, we just make them up by working extra hard on other days, or by taking work home.

We are beginning to be a little more comfortable with small talk. We are slowly discovering co-workers whom we think we might like to be friendly with.

And although it is still hard for us to leave the house, it is not nearly as hard as it used to be. We still walk, and we still take the string with us, but we don't make as many early morning phone calls to Sarah's machine.

Recovering

By Lynn D.

Our guest columnist, Lynn D., is employed in the business world. But for several years she has volunteered as a state-certified rape crisis counselor, support group facilitator and advocate for victims of sexual assault. Lynn is recovering from MPD and ritual abuse. The VOICES special interest groups and conferences she refers to are not part of MANY VOICES. They are services of V.O.I.C.E.S. Inc. a non-profit organization based in Chicago. See MANY VOICES/MULTIPLE CHOICES resource guide for more information on this valuable group. — LW

A support system is like a garden: it does not spring up from rock, and it does not flourish without some work.

A gardener plans out the garden, prepares the soil and carefully plants the seed or seedlings. Without maintenance, the garden will not be productive; the plants must be protected from weather, insects and blight. A gardener will even feed the plants. The better the preparation, the more bountiful the harvest.

Ideally, a support system is started before the time of need. With prior thought and maintenance, the support system will be strong and ready for use when and if a crisis occurs. A survivor's life-cycle of crisis and stability is not predictable, but if a support system has been established and maintained, it will be there when needed.

Naturally not everyone is going to plan ahead, or even know that they need to plan for crisis. Sometimes it takes a real crisis to allow a survivor to reach out for help. The trick is to then start building, post-crisis. . . restructuring or expanding support options into a system.

A good support system is unique to each individual. It is important to keep in mind that, at a given time, some part of the support system may not be available, so it is a good idea to have backups or lists to follow.

Trauma survivors benefit from many different kinds of support. It can be actively aiding or merely encouraging, lengthy maintenance or crisis intervention, caretaking or empowerment, to name a few. Support can be obtained reactively (during or immediately after a crisis) or proactively (as crisis prevention.)

An example of reactively obtained support: I went into

therapy with my current therapist because I was in deep despair over a relationship, and I called out for help without even knowing what that meant. As it turned out, this therapist became the basis for a support system which has grown and expanded over the years.

Proactive example: several friends went with me to my divorce hearing. I arranged to take the rest of the day off and be with someone. When I wanted very much to give blood (I had avoided this as a survivor of ritual abuse), I arranged to have my therapist speak with the internal holdout, a protector who stated that he would scratch the eyes out of anyone approaching with a needle. We have successfully given blood several times since then.

Another type of support is continuing support or nurturing: therapy, support groups, VOICES special interest groups, networking with other multiples, participation in various programs, sponsors, friends, church groups, family (natural or surrogate), roommates, conferences, lectures, volunteer work, art or music therapy, child things (dolls, stuffed animals, toys, crayons), play, pets, journals, workbooks, hotlines, newsletters, affirmations, books, tapes, biofeedback, massage, dance — anything that builds you up and/or tears down isolation.

Sometimes preparation of support for a specific crisis is enough to make that crisis less likely to occur. A woman at a session on suicide at one VOICES conference talked of preparing a "suicide prevention kit" containing lists of what to do if she felt suicidal: people to call, a blanket, a teddy bear, etc. The very fact that the kit existed had defused her anxiety about becoming acutely suicidal. The experts say that if you have a plan, you are

more likely to survive a crisis, e.g. a fire in your home, an earthquake. For me, knowing that I can call my therapist almost always means that I don't actually call. If I have a crisis when he is out of town, it is more of a problem, but I do have others I can call.

For me, one of the best ways of getting support was being able and available to *give* support. When I am on a hotline shift, or running a support group, or helping with training at our rape crisis agency, or being with a woman who is going through a rape exam, I often find that by modelling competence, I *become* more competent. The more I (sincerely) tell a rape or incest survivor "It wasn't your fault!", I can start to believe that it wasn't *my* fault. The more I advocate for others, the more I know how to advocate for myself.

For people with MPD it is important to extend the getting and giving of support inward, also. We've had an internal system for years; with compassion and communication this can become the beginning of our unique support system.

Most of the time, especially at the beginning, we have to reach out, take a chance, speak up in order to get support. Most of us have been isolated by circumstances in our past; that is hard to break through. But it rarely happens that someone just knows that we feel need, and what we need, and rides in on a white horse and scoops us up and makes it all better. So, it is important for survivors to take steps — small ones at first — toward support, away from isolation. Remember, everyone on this planet needs the support of others at times — not just survivors!

The Search for Safe Support

I am a member of a couple of 12-step programs. Before I was properly diagnosed MPD (after 13 years of therapy), I learned a bit about safe people and unsafe people through these 12-step meetings. By safe/unsafe I mean: people who I could share my thoughts, feelings, hopes and dreams with, versus those people who might judge me and "dis-acknowledge" me.

After I learned of my disorder, I wanted and needed to share this with the safest people I knew. One of the first people I spoke with was my 12-step sponsor (she is tops on my list of safe people). After I spoke with her, I took a short time and did some processing of this new information myself.

Then, once I had some drawings of my alters to share, I began to carefully and very gradually form what we now know as the "Inner Sanctum Committee". Through my recovery, I have gotten to know many, many people. The Inner Sanctum Committee (or ISC, as I sometimes refer to them) is made of the most precious, most loving, most caring people in my life. Membership has grown to eight. We have an annual meeting, where we sometimes play mini-golf, and though I can't recommend this committee approach for everyone, it has been a great help to me.

It was a great help to not only be able to show them each the drawings, but also to let them read *MANY VOICES*. It should be noted that the majority of the people I told about me/us said,

"Oh, Wow. It makes so much sense!" I have not had a negative "sharing experience" yet. And for now, the ISC membership is just fine, thank you.

Though it was hard work on my emotions to share about how it has been inside, and my understanding of MPD, the journey has been well worth the trip.

By Cheryl, Leslie & Co.



On the bulletin board above our phone hangs a list of telephone numbers that we consider safe — our support people. Each of these people have their own uniqueness and offer us help when we call.

For example, a few nights ago we watched a movie on child abuse. Needless to say there was an uproar amidst the system. We attempted to go to bed and to sleep, but the body sensations and images were frightening and getting alarmingly more vivid.

So we called one of the people on our safe list who has an excellent talent for imagery. (We figured it was not emergency enough to call our therapist, and it would be a few days before our next therapy session.) The only way to weaken the bad images was to create a new one that was safer and stronger. We called our friend and together worked on a stronger image. We imaged being trapped in a jet and the runway was full of mean rat people. We called to the radio tower where our friend was, asking for help. She sent out the rat exterminator to keep the rats away while we got into the radio tower where some of our other friends were.

As soon as all within sensed safety, the body relaxed and we were able to sleep for awhile.

This helps me see how important the list of support people is, and also how important that those in my system learn which person can help them with the different situations we get into.

The biggest lesson though is learning to trust others — got to have some trust to build a safe support system. At least for us, anyway.

By Bev and the others
that share the body



I am an abuse survivor, originally from what I thought was a nice Jewish family. I currently have 28 alters in my system — and finally at the age of 42, have found the excellent and competent therapeutic help I have been fervently seeking for the past 24 years.

The emotional torture I have experienced since at least age 4 has been unbearable. I have had many wonderful accomplishments in my life, but the "knife in the heart" pain was never acknowledged in any helpful way until I was recently diagnosed as a multiple.

Thank God for 12-step programs, which I entered at age 31, when I started to feel alive for the first time. These programs, along with my Higher Power and 7-1/2 years of sobriety, and the incredible fellowship, kept me alive as I continued my attempt to get professional help.

I am terrified at what I have seen other multiples go through in their attempts to get help. I have heard the most heart-wrenching invalidations, shaming of alters, and total degradation of this creative miracle by "mental health" professionals.

What I want to scream loud and clear is: there is hope, there is excellent help, and we as multiples/survivors and professionals must educate each other with ceaseless commitment, so no more multiples have to end up suicide statistics because they gave up hope of ever being heard!

Thank God that multiplicity is coming out of the closet. Write it, say it, learn it, shout it. Tell it to Oprah. This world will be a much better place because of multiples who didn't give up, and because of dedicated professionals who finally hear our cries!

By Jules & the Gems

(cont'd on page 9)

(Search cont'd)

I'm writing on behalf of some of "the kids": Elizabeth Margaret, EM, Betsy, Elizabeth, Punk, Little One, Helper. We're all part of Liz. We've been around for a very long time, and although Liz didn't know each of us by name and event, she knew us by what we all did to her present life — difficulty in trusting, fear of abandonment, terror of accidents and death — so many ways we complicated life for one we all loved.

Liz and her therapist have worked so hard to find each of us, talk us through our memories, and make sure we're safe. Some of us have even begun to integrate with her. Problems over, right? WRONG!

Now that Liz knows about us, she would like to be able to talk about finding us, helping us remember, and having us with her. Of course she can talk to her therapist and to the people in her therapy group (which isn't meeting right now), but beyond that... Liz is learning first-hand about the isolation that can come with having DD. She was just beginning to open up and trust a little, and now she's closing off again, thanks to off-hand remarks and careless actions. Some "normal" people have a very difficult time understanding and accepting someone who has DD.

Why do people think we're scary? We're part of Liz, and Liz isn't a scary person. Why do people say they care and then do things to make her feel they don't care? Why do people make Liz feel different because she knows about us and wants to talk about us? Why do people make Liz feel so sad about having us with her?

DD isn't contagious, and if you ask the right questions and do lots of listening, it isn't scary either.

How can we help people understand that Liz needs love and support, not silly questions and thoughtless comments?

We love Liz. We want other people to love her, too.

By Caring,
with help from the kids.



We were diagnosed with MPD three years ago and were still able to remain fairly functional in a job and safety-wise for awhile. However, approximately two years ago we were also diagnosed SRA (Satanic Ritual Abuse). Well, to say the least, that's when our system began breaking apart and going into total chaos.

At that time we were forced to quit our job. We became extremely suicidal, self-destructive and non-functional. As hard as we tried to remain out of the hospital (not always a good place for multiples) we were forced to be hospitalized a few times.

Then, lo and behold, our therapist came up with a new and innovative idea: a support team of "normal" people who would be able, willing and available to stay with us round the clock. A 24-hour care team!

Thank God I (Janice, the host) have an extremely sensitive and supportive husband who is with us when he's not working. We realize, unfortunately, that this is not the "norm", and thank the Lord everyday for putting him in our life.

However... what to do when he is at work? We were constantly self-destructive and also in danger of recontact by the occult. With a lot of encouragement, ideas and help from our therapist, we began to literally build a support team from the ground up. We were very fortunate to already have a solid base of "normal" friends who were fairly accepting of our multiplicity.

Basically, we began by making a lot of phone calls to these friends. We explained our situation and need and asked them to do three things: (1) Speak to our therapist for details and his initial screening; (2) Think and pray about their involvement; and (3) Let us know their fears and skepticism.

After this process was completed, we amazingly had quite a large group response! Many, because of time restraints, were not able to physically be with us, but willingly joined a prayer

support team who could be called during crisis times. We then had a "Team Meeting" with all members, us, and our therapist, to discuss logistics, scheduling, potential problems, questions etc.

That was approximately two years ago! Some of the faces have changed, and some of the commitment, but we still have a very solid support system who works with all our alters in good times and bad. We have update "Team Meetings" approximately once every four months to discuss progress and changes.

All we know is that support team has literally been a Godsend. It's helped to keep us out of the hospital; It's helped the system (and especially scared child alters) to feel respected and accepted; It's definitely helped in our healing process; It's raised people up who have a real heart for helping multiples.

Take a shot at it. You may find out that there could be "support system people" in your life, too!

By Janice & Co.



When I started therapy, I drew up a list of people who felt safe, but I didn't dare say much of anything to most of them. I kept the list in case I got in crisis, and postponed how I defined "crisis". Now I wish I talked when the memories were milder, because talking is a skill and an act of trust. My husband sometimes talked generally to these people, saying that child abuse memories affect me, and every one of those people have expressed warm loving care to my husband and me on an ongoing basis, though we hardly ever discussed what the memories or effects are. Some of my list includes some elderly people in our church. They are grateful it is now okay to discuss mental health, etc., as it is healing to them. A couple of my young alters have begun to send poems as thanks to these friends as our current stage of reaching out, till "I" can be open and speak.

By Dorothy & Children
of the Magma

Happy Holiday, At Last!

By Terry & Friends

Christmas for us has almost always been an unpleasant affair. Growing up in an abusive family, Christmas meant hurt in one way or another. I'm married now with three teenagers, and they help some with making Christmas better, but we lived with my family for ten years, so that put a damper on it. Then there's Plasticville where you go spend Christmas evening with the in-laws and put the plastic faces and smiles on. We never felt part of their family and even felt out of place in our own.

As the years have passed and we moved away from the parents we started to build new Christmasses, but it seemed something was missing or wrong. A lot of it has been our own doing, pushing people away; but a lot has been never really feeling like we belong anywhere.

Christmas '91 was really different. Last year we weren't able to live at our home, though we still saw and talked to our family frequently. We needed someone with us 24-hours a day so we lived with a loving, caring and totally accepting couple with no kids. At Christmas, we'd been here a year, so their families had gotten to know us pretty well. They have Christmas Eve together where they exchange gifts, eat, and just have a good time. Our options were to have a support team person stay

with us at home, or go with them and risk feeling uncomfortable with their families opening gifts and stuff. We decided to go with them. We were invited because nobody should be alone at Christmas.

It was the most wonderful time we have ever had with a group of people. They made us feel completely comfortable and accepted and wanted. Our friends' mother and father gave us a gift we will never forget. We had admired some tea cups at her house one day, and for our gift she gave us two plates, cups and saucers that she had — just because we admired it, and just because we're us! We didn't have to do anything or be anybody special — just us! Our friend's sister also gave us a gift — a sweatshirt she decorated.

We didn't expect anything from these people. We just enjoy being with them and experiencing what a family is supposed to be like. They're not perfect — whatever that is — but they do OK together.

This experience helped show us what we always thought was missing for us. Maybe this year we can remember it and make new memories, and not let the old ones get in the way. Maybe we can stop looking and just enjoy the family we already have.

These friends gave us something we will never forget, and I hope to cherish them forever. MV

A Quandary

I have a question for your readers.

I am a multiple, stuck in therapy, having few or no substantial memories to work with. Not even able to distinguish our own "names" even though we have them.

What I want to know is this: How does one deal with being sexually shut down? My husband of 4 years (my best friend of over 10 years) has just had an affair. There are lots of feelings of betrayal even though we are responsible for withholding sex, affection and even vocal "I love you's". Out of guilt and desperation I have told him to go out and sleep with someone else. Rather than say the words "I love you," I tell him I hate him — even though it's a lie.

He's always told me sex wasn't important, but I am. We've both agreed never to divorce — I need him, he loves me. But now I seem to have enough nerve to actually feel hurt and betrayed by something I might as well have planned in detail. He had his liaison with one of my friends while I was in a hospital recovering from one of my many suicide attempts.

Please tell me to quit feeling sorry for myself. I need to see it in print.

By Tammy's People

Note: The theme "working with sexuality" is scheduled for our October '93 issue. However, if you want to respond to Tammy's question, I will forward copies of your reply to her (minus name/address to protect anonymity), and, with your permission, consider your response and/or comments for the theme issue.—LW



we are
scared
but want
to try to
learn

SOCIETY

Little Painter
for D and others

More on 12 Step Groups

I am a 32 year old woman who spent 19 years in the mental health system. In December 1991 I was finally diagnosed as MPD.

I attended "regular" SIA meetings and they made me worse. I would have abreactions (they even called the police for that) and flashbacks there. I was not accepted. The people were afraid of me or they were afraid that they would damage me in some way if they helped me. There was no place for multiples to go and just talk without it being therapy-based and costing money.

I decided to run my own group of SIA for women multiples only. What a project it was! Churches want money. I called over 40 churches and they all wanted \$50 to \$75 a month for a group. Libraries were not allowed to have weekly meetings. I finally found a place after going before the board of trustees and giving my presentation.

With the help of a dear friend, the group has been running for four weeks. We talk about present situations, feelings, MPD stuff. We don't discuss memories or flashbacks because we are not a professional therapist.

It is simply a place to come once a week and be around other multiples. Here the multiplicity is accepted. All of you are welcomed here. You are no longer alone and you are not a freak or crazy. It gives women hope and support.

If there is no place to go and talk to others like us, start your own group. It really helps. The support and love of others is very helpful in recovery and I have new friends and phone numbers to call when I am having a crisis or need to talk to somebody. You really need a lot of support to get through this.

Every Wednesday I go to the group and I feel great when I get home. Today I have hope. Today I am no longer alone.

By Faith

Our system has found many advantages in 12-step meetings. Both our therapist and all of us in this body called Susie want us to take as much responsibility as possible for our recovery and independence. We go to therapy twice a week, with an occasional emergency session. We attend one church group for incest survivors (singles and multiples) and one group for MPs only. Both groups are facilitated by therapists.

The other main work we do towards our recovery is to attend 12-step meetings. They are the best bargain — zero donation if you can't afford it, and the average donation is \$1 for 1-1/2 hours of recovery/support. We go to open A.A. meetings, AlAnon, Overeaters Anon., Adult Child of Alcoholics, Survivors of Incest Anon and Incest Survivors Anon.

In AlAnon, we've learned a lot about boundaries, how to keep ourselves safe around dysfunctional people, and how to take responsibility for ourselves. In Overeaters Anon, our overeater and anorexic parts get help, and we have one child who is bulimic who may be finally taking note of what O.A. has to offer. ACA and open AA meetings we only attend occasionally. From SIA and ISA we get validation, incredible support, lots of love, help for our suicidal part, supportive literature, and the latest news re: incest survivorship. We openly discussed our MPD after we sensed the meetings were safe, and since then we've met other MP's. (There is a strong recommendation that people not share intimate details of memories.)

Each part (alter) has her favorite 12-step meeting. When we ran into overwhelming pain/dysfunction and suicidal ideation, we went to 90 meetings in 90 days, and the results were incredible. But it was extremely hard work. At the non-incest meetings, people know us as a single. But some of our close friends from these meetings and/or people we sponsor or those who sponsor us know us as a multiple. Some alters have been able to

learn better social skills. We get safe hugs (most important), we've learned how to reach out for help, and also to reach out and help others (numerous benefits from this.)

If we want people to reach out to us, we need to be putting ourselves out there. We can't just sit by the phone all day and wonder why no one calls us. These meetings are spiritual, they are not religious, and one can take or leave whatever they want from the meetings. We've been able to develop a different God/Higher Power than the abusive one from our childhood. He is gentle and loving, the greatest gift from our 12-step meetings.

But we would like to offer a word or two of warning to our fellow multiples who are planning to attend 12-step meetings: go gently at first; test the waters before you let it all hang out, and keep in mind that not all 12-step meetings are created equal. Humans are attending them and some have more character defects than others. Also, there are 13-steppers. . . people who go to meetings much as one would a bar, to pick someone up, or to target a needy and vulnerable person for an "easy" sexual relationship. But 13-steppers are few, in my experience.

By Susie, Lexi & Liz,
from Susie & Co.

Inner Safety

There are urgent calls, messages
sent with threats.

With muted angry sounds across
the land and along the coast

But I can hear the birds' songs
And the grasses' whispers
And the deep round animal
breaths

That cushion my heart and cradle
my soul

I can go to the place where there's
humming

Traveling in no-time

On the low sounds of the wind.

By Jutka

The MPD Blues

By T.L.E.

Well, My doctor he told me
I've got the M P and D
Now I'm confused
As to which one is me:

I've got the MPD Blues (Oh yeah)
I've got the MPD Blues.
I know that people know,
Cause I know that it shows.
I've got the MPD Blues.

Well, I got in my car
Just to drive to the store.
I wound up in Jersey,
Don't remember much more:

I've got the MPD Blues (Oh Yeah)
I've got the MPD Blues
Well I wish I'd get a cure,
'Cause I'm tired of the shore.
I've got the MPD Blues.

Well, my best friend he called me
By my rightful first name
But I just couldn't answer,
'Cause my name had been changed:

I've got the MPD Blues (Oh Yeah).
I've got the MPD Blues.
Well, nothing stays the same
Not even my name.
I've got the MPD Blues.

Well, I went to my closet
For my dress to decide,
But I just couldn't choose
Between lace and tie-dyed:

I've got the MPD Blues (Oh Yeah).
I've got the MPD Blues.
Well, it takes a lot of dough
To run a fashion show.
I've got the MPD Blues.

Well, I looked in the mirror
Just to straighten my hair.
But I couldn't connect with
Who was returning my stare:

I've got the MPD Blues (Oh Yeah).
I've got the MPD Blues.
Who needs a face lift
When the changes are so swift?
I've got the MPD Blues.

Well, I crawled into bed
With my wooly stuffed lamb
And then I realized
I wanted a real, live, warm man:

I've got the MPD Blues (Oh Yeah).
I've got the MPD Blues.
Stuffed animals are great,
But they make a lousy date.
I've got the MPD Blues.

Well, I guess that's the end
Of this ditty of mine.
I know it was stupid,
But it sure killed some time:

I've got the MPD Blues (Oh Yeah)
I've got the MPD Blues.
I write jokes, puns and rhymes
To keep from losing my mind(s).
I've got the MPD Blues.

All Right, Guys!

Notes From the Journey: Soul Winter

By Diane & Co.

As I've walked this journey to reclaim my life from the effects of severe childhood abuse it seems that I go through seasons, much as nature does. Autumn: reflection/taking stock of repairs to be made; winter: crisis/death of denial; spring: renewal of healing decisions/hope; summer: basking in awareness of growth. And, like nature, the cycles repeat — whether I want them to or not.

Everytime winter comes in my recovery I am slain. "Not again! I thought I was *past* this!" Despair. Frozen feelings. It seems like all I can see around me are barren branches and dull skies. A cold that settles in my bones. All I want to do is stay in bed and wait for it to end. "This is it. This is the winter that is so cold that it kills everything. Including me."

I forget that I've ever felt the summer's sun. I forget that I've faced soul winters before. I forget that spring follows the winter. I need supportive people to remind me of the other cycles. Of spring,

summer and autumn. I need them to hold my hand and help me see the unique blue of a winter sky. I need help to see the crystal lace icicles hanging from bridges and front porches. The sunlight diamonds in a patch of snow.

Even when winter is long and difficult, each day seems to break another record for lowest temperature, most precipitation, I have to take advantage of those incredibly clear, bright winter days between the storms. To go outside and feel and find the soul winter gifts. Or stay inside and "sit with the feelings." Winter's going to last as long as it lasts. I can work with it or against it. Soul winter will be there until spring comes.

When I'm in the midst of another soul winter it's difficult to accept that no one else can make spring arrive. All anyone can do is help me find the beauty in my winter. And remind me that winter passes with time, that spring is coming.

I always fight the winter. Everytime spring comes I convince myself that soul winter will never

come again. I have thirty years of nature trying to teach me her simple truths. Every winter is followed by a spring. Every winter has its own gifts to give to me. I only have today, no matter what the season. This too shall pass. The only thing in life that is certain is change.

When winter closes its icy grip around my soul, when its winds blow so hard that I can't hear supportive words to me, when it's a blizzard and I am blind on my journey — guided by a rope path — it helps to be reminded of spring. Because every, *every* soul winter, I forget all about spring. Today my reminder was a pot of daffodils. So simple. Outside it was snowing. The daffodils would not have survived, taken outside. But just for awhile, in this small space, I thought of spring. A moment between storms. Every winter is followed by spring. Somehow, having had that moment with the daffodils, it was easier to bundle back up to go outside in the storm. Soul winter gifts.

Family Support

My name is Leslie. I am a multiple. There are 15 other alters who protect "Little Betty" (our birth origin.) I am the host alter; a wife of 20 years to a supportive spouse, and the mother of two adopted children, Rebecca (age 12) and Eric (age 8).

There are many times I do not like being multiple and have even felt shame for having Multiple Personality Disorder. I am an incest/sexual abuse survivor and a survivor of satanic ritual abuse. I have been in therapy for about 3 years and have had five psychiatrists before the diagnosis was MPD. I have been hospitalized twice within a one-year period at a psychiatric facility for a total of eight weeks.

The main reason I am writing is because of my children, Rebecca and Eric. So many times I have felt they have been embarrassed or ashamed of me (us) because of the

MPD, all the switching to young alters, angry alters, alters who wanted no contact with them and would not relate or interact with them.

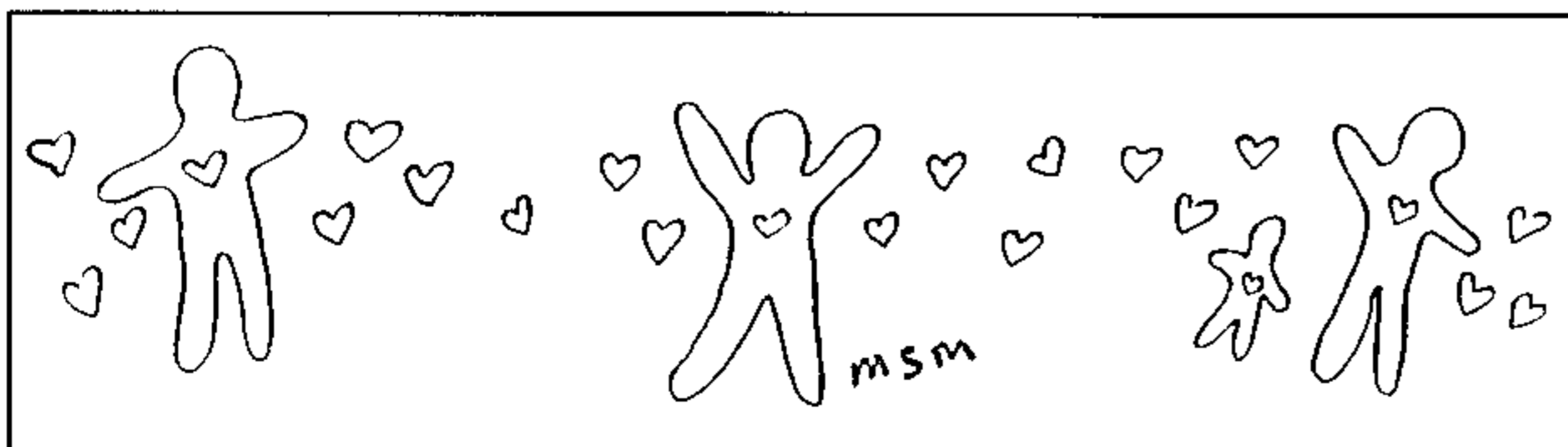
I was not so concerned about my son, Eric, because he is so outgoing, energetic, enthusiastic, and just kind of "takes things as they are". But I was deeply concerned about my daughter, Rebecca. She is quiet, shy, sensitive, kind of keeps things to herself. I was *certain* she was both embarrassed and ashamed of my (our) behaviors.

Imagine my joy, when I discovered a letter from her, hidden in my cigarette case, as I sat one morning at Hardees having coffee and a cigarette. As I read her letter, the tears rolled down my cheeks and I felt such joy and pride — and the shame was gone! Her letter is priceless to me and I would like to share it with all of you!

My Mom By Rebecca B.

My Mom is an MPD that is trying to recover. My favorite one is Lisa. She drinks, but not as much as she did. I still haven't got to meet Stuart, Monica and Evon. I've got to meet all 14 others. My Aunts and Uncles think she's crazy but she's not crazy. All the stuff that happened to all 17 people is true. It's not like she's making it all up. It's all true. And I'm helping her recover. My Mom has gotten better in the last year. It's like she's grown up so much. My Mom was in the hospital two times but she's grown up since then. I really love them all, and they all love me and my brother a lot. They take care of us so much I don't know how I can repay them or thank them enough. They are all so kind in their own way. But all different. That is really neat. I like all the people inside my Mom. But I think you are all my Mom. Even though I can't tell when they change people, so I just go with who you are. I can tell when Lisa is out because she has a loud voice. I understand a lot, which is enough for me to. My mind gets full. But I will never stop loving them.

Your friend,
Rebecca



Breaking Up Is Hard To Do

Some time before
THE REALIZATION OF
MULTIPLICITY

set in,
there was a man in my life.
He was eagerly received...
a long awaited "Significant Other"
who seemed to be different from
the rest.

The Childlike Ones rejoiced...
They could laugh again and play
again.
What fun!

The Sexy One strutted her stuff
and teased
and flirted.
What fun!

But the Others!
The ones who hate men...
who fear men
who have been CONTROLLED
by men...
who have been FORCED by
men...
who have been HUMILIATED by
men...

were put on alert,
antenna up,
ever vigilant.
And they saw, and they came out,
and they conquered.

He is gone now,
forced from my life by those
who are not ready...
who still fear...
who do not trust..
who hate and despise HIM
(because he is MAN)
and ME (for wanting him.)

The Angry Ones gloat and flex
their muscles
and say "Good Riddance,
and the Naive Ones cry
and feel the longing and the pain.

Some day we will all see a man as
a possibility
and not as an enemy.
Some day we will find a man who
is acceptable to
ALL OF US.
Some day we will find a man who
loves
ALL OF US.
not just the good ones.

By Ann and her Others

Leaving Abuse Behind

By Barb

For some time I've been struggling with the need to cut ties with my abusive family. Recently I saw my therapist and talked about my seeming inability to leave. One of my Others was real upset: cried, got hysterical, felt trapped, felt like no one was helping us get away.

Well, I woke up this morning and started thinking, "Wait a minute! We *have* started to get away!" And I tried to remember just where I come from, and that I really have made a lot of progress for me — not compared to other people, but for me. It's taken years and I'm still not clear of the hell house (family of origin.) But I'm making progress. My list includes:

- 1) We went into therapy and stayed in therapy.
- 2) We don't live in the same house. We have our own apartment.
- 3) We finished college and got accepted for grad school.
- 4) We do volunteer work.
- 5) We're joining a church.

Let me explain more about the apartment. It is subsidized, and this is a *great* idea. Best thing I ever did.

HUD has local (regional) offices. All you do is call them up and ask them to send you a list of Section 8 housing in your area. They send you a list (sometimes they don't send it, so you have to call again.) You call buildings on the list and ask if they have any openings. They'll probably say "no". Ask if you can be put on the waiting list.

That might be closed, but just say "Do you know when it will be open again?" They'll probably say "It varies." Just cheerfully say "Well, OK. I'll just check back in three to six months. Thank you!" *Make sure to check back!*

It is a long, arduous process, but worth the wait. Some subsidized housing is crummy. Avoid it. I live in a large city, and *many* of the luxury highrises are 20% subsidized Section 8. You may not find these places on your HUD list. Look them up in the phone book, call them up and ask if they have Section 8 housing. Most won't... but a few will.

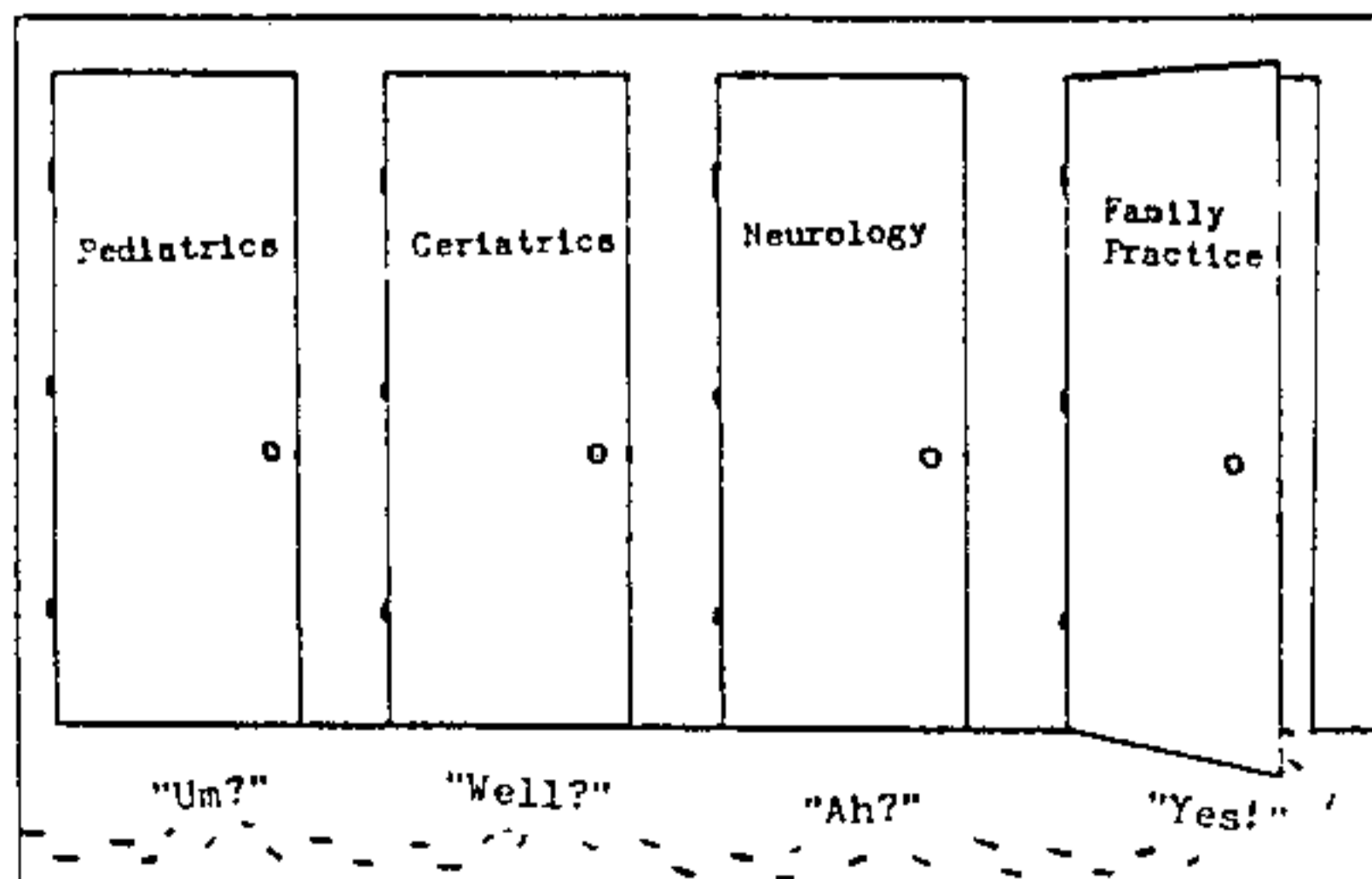
Section 8 is a federal housing program for elderly/disabled people as well as poor. A single individual can make \$16,000 per year to qualify, where I live.

Remember to check back every three to six months to get on the waiting lists. Just because 500 people are ahead of you on the waiting list doesn't mean 500 people have to live in that apartment. Some will be passed over because they can't break their current lease, they found other housing, other things. I had to wait a year, but it was worth it!

Once you're on the waiting list check back every five to six months. It's a little annoying, but the manager at my building said, when she finally called me, that she called because she knew I was anxious to get in!

I hope this helps.

MV



A multiple finally selects a physician.

By: Dee Realization

Please... Be Gentle!

My therapist has worked long and hard with the "us" that makes up this body "we" live in. A lot of times she, like "us", gets frustrated and yes, somewhat angry, because of the things that happened to cause us to be a multiple. I asked her, as I was screaming out in fear, "You work with multiples and say it's hard... have you ever wondered how hard it is to be one?"

To those who reach out and touch a multiple I'd like to say, "Be gentle... the pain you see and hear of is only a small fraction of the pain "we" feel. The journey into our nightmare has only just begun and we're frightened — frightened of the next second, minute, hour or day. Be there when you can — for the nightmare is full of memories we'd like to forget, but can't. Just be gentle and we'll keep struggling to uncover the entire puzzle. Please be gentle."

By Lee B.

For Deena

We sent out someone in denial, when denial would have compromised our safety. She countered with someone who would point out our denial instead of making us happy.

We sent out someone we knew opposed her opinion, and she spoke her truth rather than agreeing with us.

We sent out someone sad, and she listened to us without tapping her foot waiting for us to switch.

We sent out someone angry, and she sent out a protector who could listen while protecting her own people.

She proved herself compassionate and caring while still able to take care of herself.

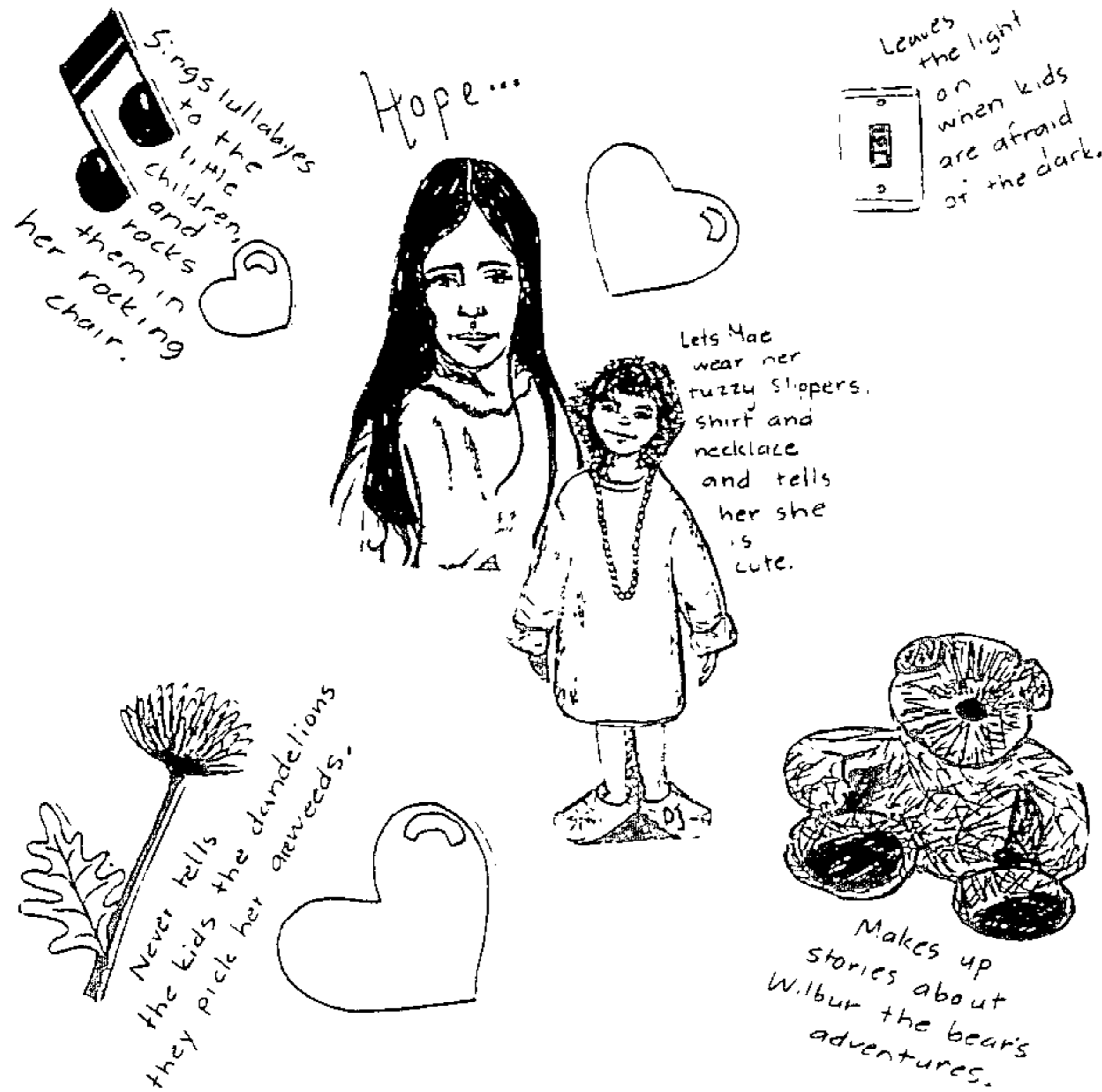
So after much testing, we took the biggest risk and sent out someone who could trust and love her, and she scooped us all up in her heart.

Thank you, Deena.

By The Kids

How an Inner Adult helps Inner Children

Resources



Residential weekend workshop/retreats utilizing psychosynthesis for healing will be held Dec. 11-13, New Years Eve, Jan. 22-24 1993, Feb. 19-21 and other dates. Write to Rosemary Sullivan, Pigeon Hill Bruideen/Peacemaking Centre, St. Armand, Quebec J0J 1T0 Canada, or call (514) 248-2524.

Button & Dietz Inc. offer workshops for partners where one or both persons have a history of childhood sexual abuse. Schedule includes Jan. 29-31 1993 at Salado, TX and March 19-21 at Ilwaco, WA. Call for more information: 1-800-876-4244 (444-9822 in Austin TX area).

Marj Elder, author of *Into the Silence: Healing the Wounds of Abuse* wants poems and anecdotal information about adult survivors' experiences with the therapeutic community, the police, and other provider systems. You may include concerns, specific incidents, and action taken re: unsatisfactory experiences. To share, or for possible interview, write to Marj Elder, c/o White Oak Publications, PO Box 567, Victor, NY 14564.

Books

Cat in the Mirror

By Mary Stolz © 1978
Published by Dell Publishing Co.,
New York
\$1.25 paperback.

Sometimes things just come to me when I need something. This time it was a book, and I thought someone else might like it too. *Cat in the Mirror* is the story of two girls, Erin and Irun. One lives now in New York City, and one belongs in ancient Egypt, 3,000 years ago. One is fascinated by things of the past, and the other haunted by a voice from the future.

It's hard to tell what the book is about without telling too much. Erin in New York and Irun in Egypt have very similar lives, and there's a theory about time that explains the whole thing.

If you can't find *Cat In the Mirror* in your bookstore, it should be available in the children's department of your library (grades 5 and up).

By Patty

What We May Be

By Piero Ferrucci © 1982
Published by Jeremy P. Tarcher Inc.,
Los Angeles
250 pgs. \$9.95 paperback

This is one of the more accessible books about Psychosynthesis, a psychological concept for "normals" that involves defining "subpersonalities" and integrating them into a unified whole.

To me, Psychosynthesis seems to deal with internal variety of mood, thought, and behavior in a

very accepting and positive way. There are many clues in books like this one (and others based on this concept) that suggest ways of enhancing communication and acceptance among inner parts. Numerous exercises and experiments are offered to help create harmony between inner states and the outer world.

MPD/DD experts say that the experience of dissociation is on a continuum, ranging from mild to severe separation. My guess is that Psychosynthesis describes and deals with mild to moderate dissociation. As one diagnosed DD-NOS, I find reading about and exploring this approach to healing has been helpful to me.

By Lynn W.

THANK YOU!

...for sharing your recovery experience through writing and art in *MANY VOICES*. We're especially short of reproducible black and white art, and humor, but everything you send is important to us! Create and heal; MV wouldn't exist without you!



February 1993

Overcoming fears: of rejection, making mistakes, telling, feeling, fear of change. ART: Draw you (or your system) challenging a fear. DEADLINE: December 1, 1992.

April 1993

Physical health: caring for your body; correcting body image; avoiding self-destructive tendencies. ART: draw your healthy self(ves). DEADLINE: February 1, 1993.

June 1993

Diagnostic labels: PTSD, MPD, DD-NOS, "Ego States", etc. How you relate to the diagnosis, what it means to you in treatment, etc. ART: Draw something positive you learned about yourself or system in therapy. DEADLINE: April 1, 1993.

August 1993

Having fun, staying grounded. What works? ART: Draw yourself involved in the activity you'd most like to try. DEADLINE: June 1, 1993.

October 1993

Working with love and sexuality. Limiting sexual acting-out. Enjoying appropriate sex. What you want from your partner and what you can give. ART: Draw a gift for someone you love (inside or out). DEADLINE: August 1, 1993.

December 1993

Discovering healthy spirituality. How do you express it? ART: Draw your concept of spirit or, (if you have none) what's most meaningful to you. DEADLINE: October 1, 1993.

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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