

# MANY VOICES

WORDS OF HOPE FOR PEOPLE RECOVERING FROM TRAUMA & DISSOCIATION

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## Choosing a Therapist Thriving Outside Therapy

## A Woman Who Sees Good

I am a woman who sees  
the good in me  
that I never thought I would  
see.

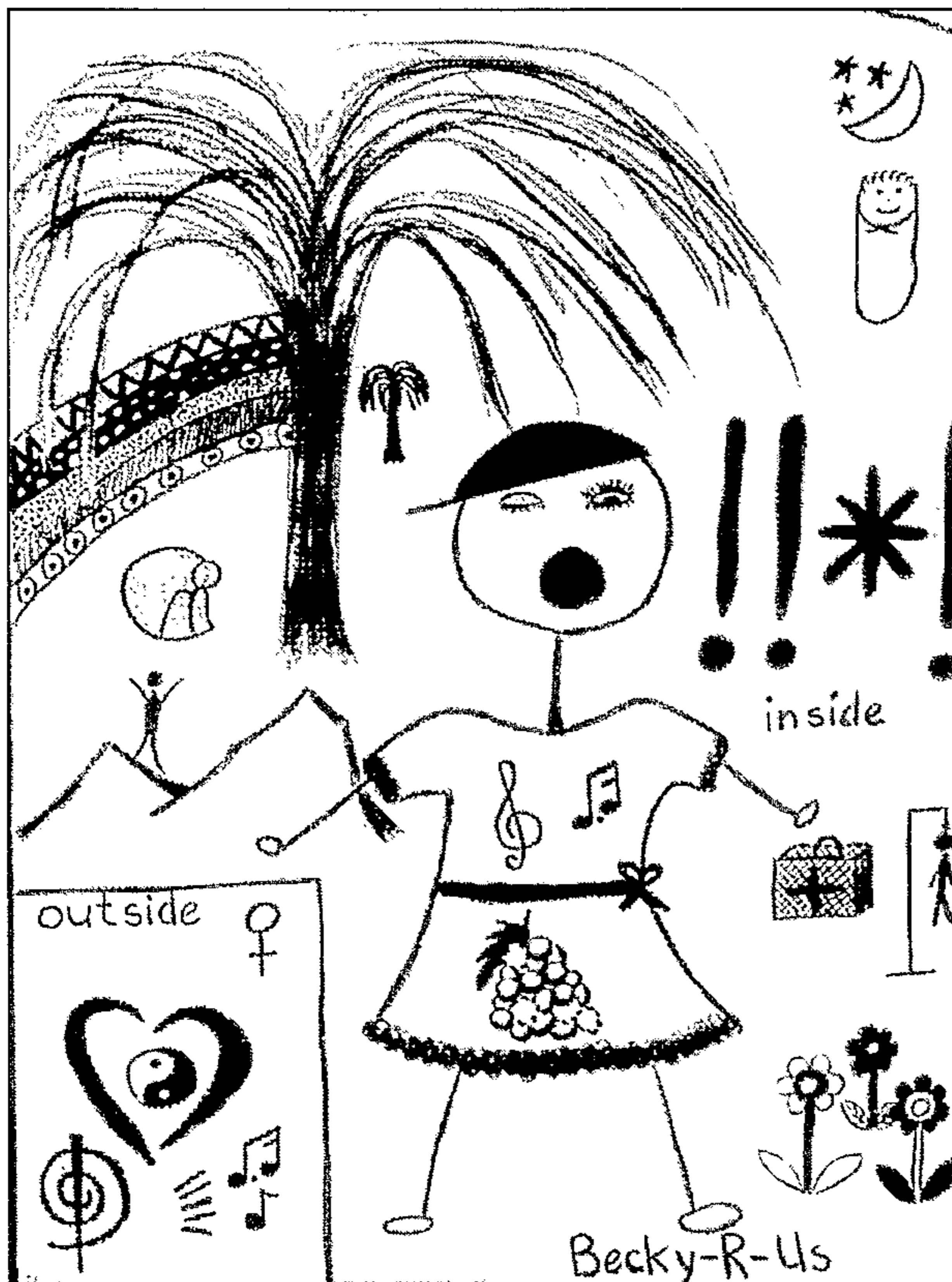
For many years I thought of  
only  
what I was doing wrong  
now I know that I am healing  
and have come to know  
the real me.

Now I can say that I have made  
it through the tough times,  
that I am a better person  
for all I have gone through.

I am now embracing my  
journey  
and will never go off track;  
it is a journey of life,  
of self discovery  
and most of all, self acceptance  
that I now embrace with every  
ounce of my being.

I am free to love and respect  
myself just as I am.

By Mary G.



## MOLDY BREAD

By Michele J. Bornert

Muhammad Ali once said, "If they can make penicillin out of moldy bread, they can sure make something out of you." So, naturally, this morning, as I was cleaning out the almost bare pantry and pulled out a moldy, green plastic bag of hot dog buns with a smell that challenged the strongest of flatulence, I thought about my life. Don't see a connection? Give me a minute.

Yesterday was a day like most other days. The only exception was that my husband, Kenny, had that day off and was able to be there with me, most of the time. So, yesterday morning I arose with both a feeling of reluctance and a feeling of relief. My oldest daughter, Mollie, was having an activity at school for the parents and students to do together. We were all supposed to meet in the cafeteria (which doubles as their gym) and make wreaths from the student's handprint. This was decided to be my responsibility. Kenny planned to take Jacob and Natalie with him to painfully give his Plasma, rendering us the \$20 dollars we've come to depend on to buy us the finer things in life: a slice of bread (without mold, please), a drink of watered down juice, maybe, if we're lucky, even a morsel of corn or some other type of nourishment. So he was going to go save the family, but who was going to save me? You want me to walk into a school alone and complete a project of which only Mollie would be available to explain to me how to complete? (I'm stone deaf). I actually said, "OK," like I do every so often until that day actually arrives and I squeeze myself out of that narrow corridor leading to fuzzy thoughts and bright red cheeks. And that's exactly what happened yesterday. I was successfully able to debate Kenny until I would prove to him that he could indeed find another Plasma appointment and I drastically needed him there with me. I think Kenny expected this to happen, but that didn't stop him from showing a small flicker of eye-rolling

disappointment that makes me feel like I'm a bad mom, but then I really don't care at that time--I just don't want to go out alone.

So Kenny and I ventured to Straight Elementary School. This old, brown building, which consists only of preschool, kindergarten and 1st grade (Mollie is one of the seniors here), was buzzing with activity. Filling the café/gym were moms, dads, and grandparents of every shape, size, ethnicity, and, most likely, religion. Boy was I thankful when the project was done. I would not have had the slightest clue as to what I was supposed to do. Kenny took charge like the man he is and I drank juice and watched him, like the woman I am. The entire time, I knew I was sitting at the table with the chairs that are attached like benches, but looking back, I can't remember anything else. I see myself drinking juice. Now, I don't mean I remember sitting there drinking juice. Oh, no, no, no. If only things were so simple. No, I mean I see myself, facing front, drinking a box of slightly sour, red delight Hawaiian punch with the scrunchy plastic straw and the box that collapses with your last, mighty slurp. I might as well have been one of the teachers looking around the room. I didn't experience this festivity of felt and scissors and way too much glue first hand. I watched it. And I must say it was rather dull.

The rest of the day must have gone all right. I can't quite make out what occurred, but I do know that Kenny got to his suction-headquarters in time to make a deposit and that I was alone. I think I cleaned. Of course, if I did, there's no mystery in why I blocked that out. Who wants to experience the slightly scary, absolutely disgusting, month-old pieces of fruit one would find under our couch or hiding on the bookshelf behind *Curious George Goes To A Restaurant*? Certainly not Curious George and definitely not me. At any rate, I made it through the day in one piece and that, my friend, is success

at its utmost. But the next memory I have is where I begin to equate myself with moldy bread.

No one else was home. I was all alone, but I sure wasn't dressed for the occasion. "All alone" renders moose slippers and my favorite black flannel pajamas with little penguins on sleds all over them. Nope. I was in a scratchy sapphire blue blouse and black pants that appeared to be formal and dressy, but were really something I could easily fall asleep in. Next thing I know, there is a pretty, friendly, black woman walking into my living room. Who is this woman who so casually let herself into my home and why on earth would she choose here of all places? That's when things went psychedelic.

"Psychedelic" is a good word for my life. Sometimes I think I must have really done some damage when I was very young because I've spent the remaining years thus far on a permanent acid trip. Remember that tomato-colored mother who was devouring a box of juice as if it were her last drink before the execution? Well, I don't know where she went, but in her stead was a tomato-colored woman who told painfully unwitty jokes about herself and signed in flowing ASL. I myself can sign, of course, but this woman was a native signer.

I didn't get to see much. Too many people in the way. Too many people inside wanted to see what was happening and I kept getting pushed back further and further until it was three hours later and I'm sitting in those to-die-for pajamas I mentioned before, drinking a margarita that I didn't remember showing up and eating a way-too-big meatball sub sandwich with just enough jalapenos to make my nose twitch, but not too many that my eyes swell up in tears. That's never fun.

So what happened? Who was this woman who so willingly opened my front door and when did I change my clothes? Not to mention that I missed half the sandwich and what kind of



fun is eating if you can't taste it? Who's sticking food in my mouth and plumping up my body while I sip Diet Root Beer and eat salad with non-fat Thousand Island dressing? To top off the evening, and this part is actually a positive, I had \$200 in my possession. Two hundred dollars!!! The last time I held \$200 at one time I was a prostitute/masseuse at Free Spirit in Brooklyn, IL. Hmmmm Don't suppose that woman was here for.... Oh, perish the thought.

So, through lots of questions, excessively uncomfortable concentrating and way too much thought, I discovered that I ("I"?) taught a sign language class in my home last night and four women sat on my mismatched couches and watched someone (certainly not me) show them how to use their hands to express their thoughts and feelings. That was when I was formally introduced to The Teacher. An ASL speaking alter (#38 and counting) that evidently has the ability to share her knowledge while I cower in the corner.

And that's where we get the moldy bread.

My life is moldy bread. It's something that's been left in the dark so long that, to actually have contact with it, in "real time," would surely cause one to wince at the repulsive result that lay in front of them and wonder why it was still laying around and not disposed of, for a more appropriate result. A loooooong time ago, I think I was put in a bag and stuck in some closet (probably literally from what I now know of my childhood) to rot. Once in a while, someone reaches in, looks at this bag of me, takes a whiff and quickly returns it to its darkness.

So when I read what Muhammad Ali said about moldy bread and penicillin, my eyes became alert. Why is he talking about me? And what does he have to say? "They can sure make something out of you." Out of me? Come on. I wasn't born yesterday. An alter might have been, but not me per se. And who's "they"? The world? Nah. No thank you. I don't want the world's help any more. I've come to fear, hate,

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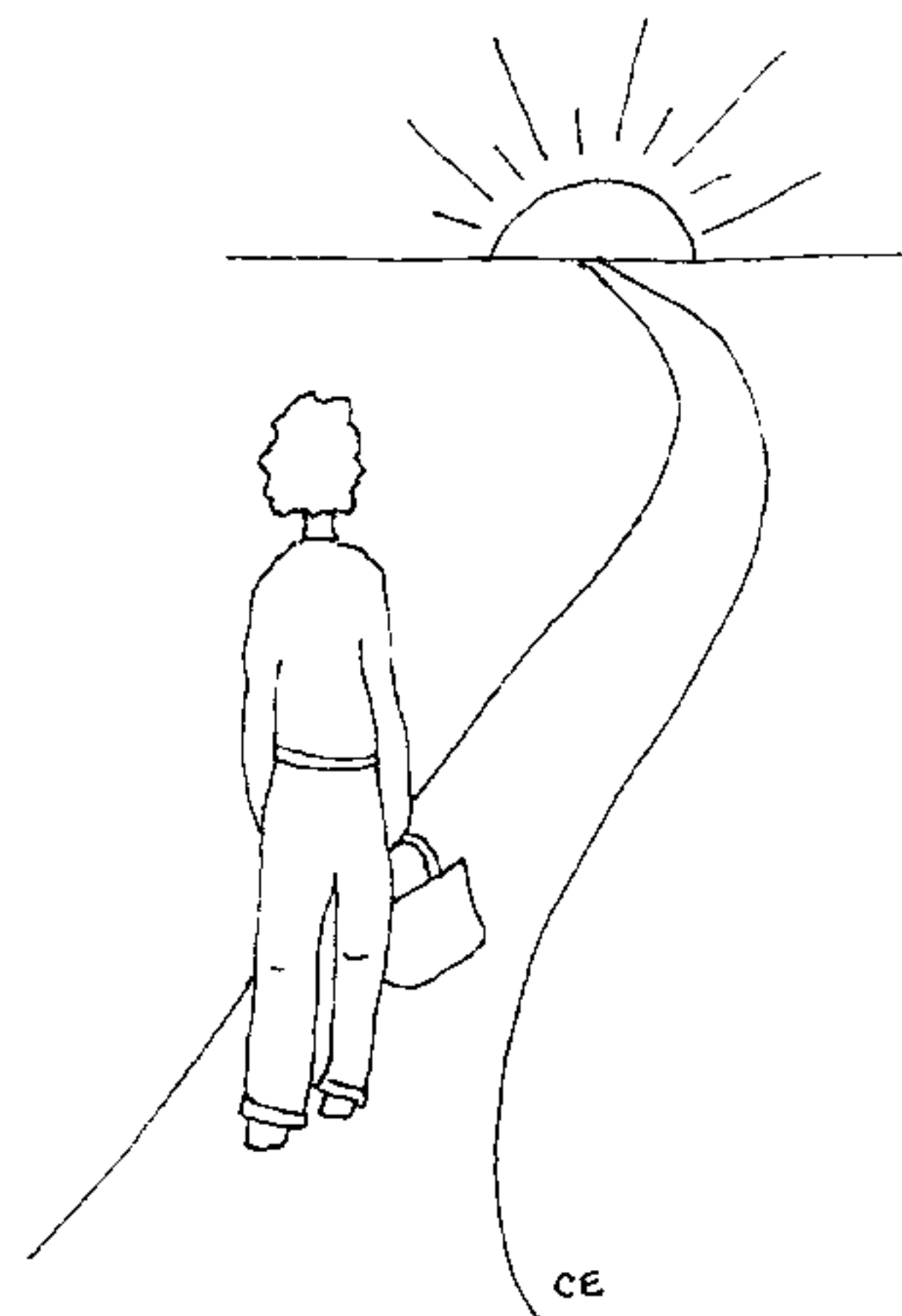
and dodge from the world. I'm sure Ali's reference was a generalization, but I'll take it for what I want to. I say "they" is God. So that would mean that, if a life-saving medicine can be made from moldy bread, God can make something out of me. But what? A soufflé? A dish to be devoured on St. Patrick's Day? I suppose the specifics aren't important. What Ali is saying, in his humble opinion (more humble now, I'm sure, than during his fighting years), no matter how much I might think myself as damaged goods: smelly, worthless, taking up space that could better be occupied; no matter how much I think that, God thinks differently. He doesn't see damaged goods that can't be repaired. He sees the ingredients He wanted to make me into the person I am. And with those ingredients, He has a recipe that He created specifically for me and me alone.

Now, of course, while I haven't the slightest idea what it's going to taste like when it's finally completed (chocolate would be nice), at least I can know that there's a plan for my completion in the works. Perhaps I'm in the baking phase. Maybe I'm in the yeast-rising phase. I feel like it's more a broiler phase, but that was probably my childhood. Perhaps I'm a twice-baked potato in another life. I went

through the fire once and, well, here I go again. Who knows. But if I am a potato, it sure would explain my addiction to carbohydrates. And with that, let us ponder my existence.

Bon Appetite!

MV



# Therapists

By Marie P.

**F**inding a therapist is going to be one of the most important decisions that you will ever have to make. You need to find someone that you feel comfortable with and know that he or she genuinely wants to help you. Make sure that they don't just want you as a patient because of the money or any other personal reason. I went to many therapists before I found someone that I felt I would have a good rapport with and felt comfortable talking with. There's a lot more to finding a therapist than just looking up a name in a phone book. I made that mistake a few times and it did me more harm than anything else.

The name of my therapist is Cindy and I will use her name throughout this letter. Four years ago a friend of mine told me about Cindy. I knew that I needed to see a therapist because I was extremely depressed. Since I have had terrible times with therapists who were abusive. I was a little afraid to start again. I knew that I couldn't handle things myself so I decided I would give it a try. I told myself if I didn't like her at once, then I would not go back.

I called Cindy and told her how afraid and depressed I was, and we talked for awhile on the phone. I made an appointment and we met that week. When I went into Cindy's office, I sat on her chair. She had a couch in her office but I was afraid to sit on it. After all, couches are for people who are in a really bad way. Isn't it silly that we believe what we see on television?

I do not lay down on the couch, but I do sit on it and it is very comfortable. Cindy and I talked about ourselves. I told her a little about what was going on with me and she told me how long she has been a therapist, and her credentials. She asked me if I had any questions about her, which I did, and she answered all of them. I didn't know if she would be annoyed with me for asking questions about her, but she said it showed that I cared about who my therapist was.

We talked about things in her room, such as a Kentucky quilt that she has hanging on her wall above the window. The quilt has squares of burgundy, hunter green, and light green with little pink flowers. She has a water cooler, chair for herself, chair for patients and a couch. She also has a table with a clock and a Buddha, and there is a coffee table with crayons, paper and tissues. There are pictures around the walls, and she has bookcases filled with many self-help books that I have been fortunate to be able to read some of. She told me that if I ever got scared for any reason and I felt that I needed a safe place to be, then I could think of her office.

Four years later, when I feel scared and need to calm down, I think of her room with the Kentucky quilt and I relax immediately. Cindy's office is a safe place for me.

I should explain that it was not always a safe place. In the beginning I felt my father's presence in the room with me. My father had died 18 years ago and I was more afraid of him dead than I was of him alive. Cindy helped me deal with that a lot, and I am much better now. Sometimes I might feel my father's presence, but that's OK. I know that he can't really hurt me. It's unbelievable how much your mind can make you believe things and terrify you. I guess that's the way a lot of us were raised. Never to trust anyone and always be on your guard.

I know that it might sound as if Cindy is an angel sent from up above, but let me tell you something. We have certainly had our ups and downs, and we still do. Cindy has a quality that is very important in selecting a therapist. She listens. You need to find someone who doesn't just "yes" you all the time. You need to find someone who will talk to you, whether it be agreeing with you or not. It is very important to let your therapist know what you are thinking, and you both should talk about it. Cindy and I have had several debates on issues. If I truly believe something

and she doesn't, then we both talk about our issues. There are many times that I leave her office never agreeing with what she says. But, that's OK. That's what makes a good therapist. You can argue with her and tell her that you think that she is wrong, and you know that it is alright to do this. Many of us were told that we could never disagree or say "No", but you can in your therapist's office, and you know what? It feels good to be able to stand up for yourself.

There are times when you will feel that your therapist has let you down. Talk about it with her. Let her know why you feel this way. It is very important to be able to talk to your therapist without being afraid of the consequences. After all, therapists are not always right. They are people, just like everybody else. It is also important that you realize that if a therapist tells you something to do, you don't have to do it if you don't want to. Cindy doesn't tell me to do anything. She may make a suggestion, but it's up to me if I want to take her advice. And believe me, I don't always. And that's OK too.

This February it will be 4 years since I first started going to Cindy. I have had many ups and downs, and Cindy has always stood beside me. Even when I thought she was hurting me, I realized later on that she was still there for me. There were times that I hated her and even walked out of her office. I have quit therapy with her a few times, but I always went back. Sometimes, I believe that we tell our therapists that we want to quit so that we can see if they really care about you as their patients. We're petrified that they won't call back, and relieved when they do.

In the 4 years that I have been to therapy I have changed so much. When I started I was a very scared person who never said "No" to anyone. I never went out with friends, I hated myself (which I sometimes still do), I had no self-esteem and I didn't care about anything. Today I can say "No", I am able to write about my



**Therapists, Cont'd**

feelings and talk about them. I realize that other people are not better than I am. I turned out to be a great mother even though my childhood was very abusive. My children and husband love me; I have many good friends.

I would like to do something with my future involving children or other survivors. I am a new person. I am a good person. Cindy and I have been through a lot together and without her I don't know where I would be today. I guess the real person that I have to thank is my friend who told me about her.

So please remember, in choosing a therapist, be very particular. Make sure he or she makes you feel comfortable. Make sure that they listen to you. Make sure that there is communication between the both of you. Also remember that you don't always have to do what your therapist says. And if a therapist makes you feel uncomfortable, you do not have to stay there. You can just get up and leave. After all, you are the patient and you are the one paying someone to help you.

Remember just one more thing-- You deserve the BEST. !

MV

**A Label Badly Needed**

We read on important papers everywhere  
"Do Not Fold, Spindle or Mutilate."

But what about people?  
Is it OK to mutilate them?  
I wonder!

Are they not important enough  
to come with a label?  
I wonder!

Yet everyday people, young and old  
are folded,spindled and mutilated.

Are they less valuable than the  
papers we so preciously protect?  
I wonder!

*By Kathy A.*

MV

**Breaking Through Denial**

*By Brenda G.*

I just started therapy with a new therapist last February. She has been very honest with me about the dissociative disorder, and when she has met with other personalities. It's been really hard to understand; the denial is really strong. But I haven't been able to deny my many years of therapy, misdiagnoses, suicide attempts, loss of time, and most of all, the inner voices.

My therapist loaned me her copy of MV's book "Mending Ourselves". As I began to read the stories, poems and saw the artwork, I saw myself. I related to so many things in your book. The part on teamwork hit me right in the face. I had an understanding I had never had before. I've been fighting, trying to push everything and everyone down.

I'm in a 12-step-program. There they teach us to cease fighting everything and everyone. That alcohol and drugs are but a symptom. That

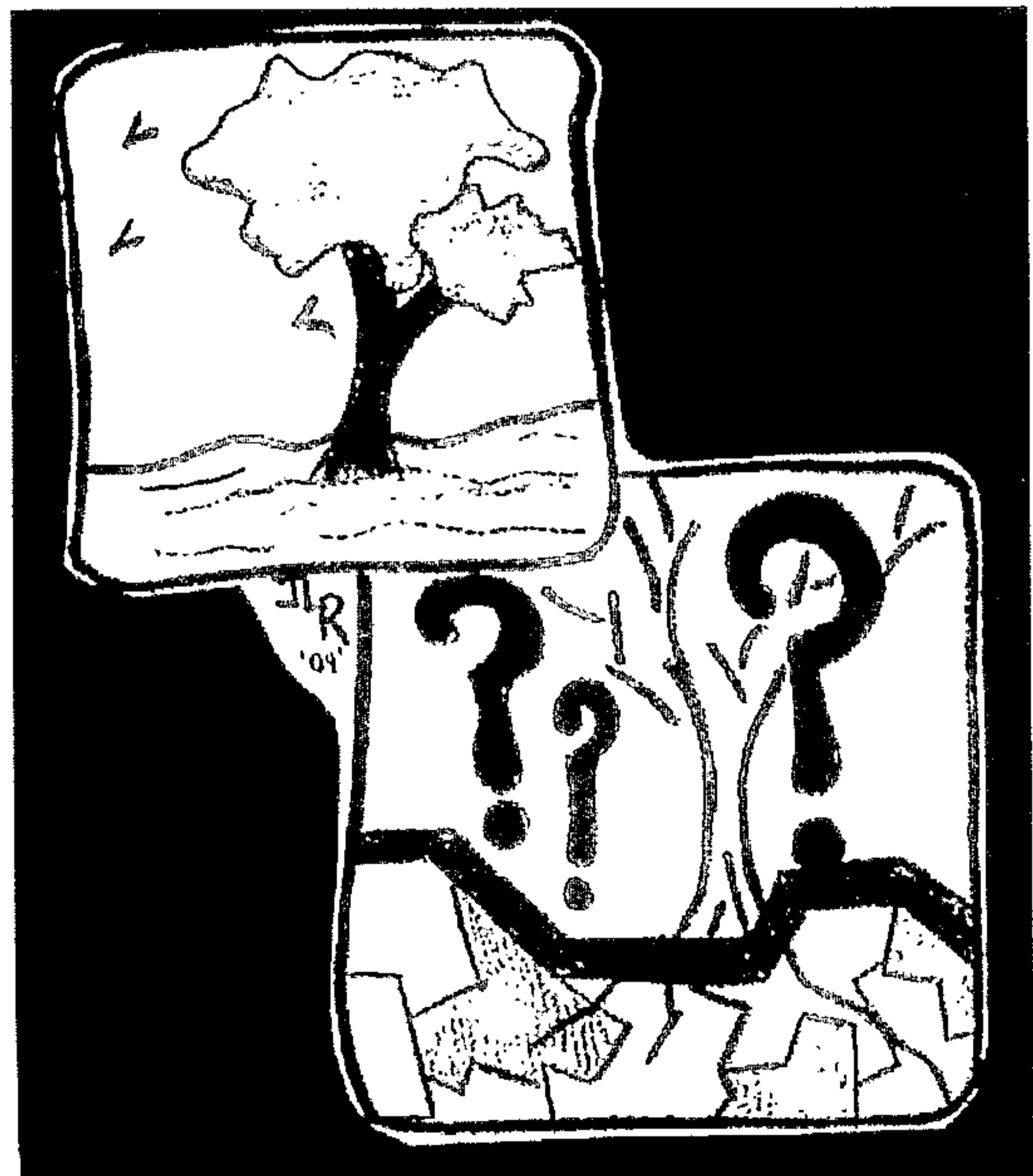
we must get down to the root causes and conditions. I can no longer blame the drugs and alcohol for the dissociative behavior, now that I am sober. The drugs and alcohol were very thin band-aids, for some very deep wounds.

Now I must look within and feel the feeling and remember the things I have blocked off. I didn't know I could feel feeling, or remember such things. It hurts and I am scared.

They have taught me in my 12-step-program to breathe in faith and exhale fear and I am really trying to. I am hoping to learn to accept myself as I am, and try to accept each part for who they are. This is the hard part of my recovery and healing, but I, we just take it one moment at a time.

Thanks again for your newsletter. It shows me once again that I am not alone inside or outside.

MV



How others see me--How I see myself. *By JR*

# Therapists' Page

By Matthew J. Bush, MSW, LSW

Matthew J. Bush, MSW, LSW is a therapist practicing in Hanover, Pennsylvania. He is the author of *Utilizing Music as a Coping Skill: Featuring the Music of Freudian Slip*, a booklet about the therapeutic use of music. His website is [www.enterthefreudianslip.com](http://www.enterthefreudianslip.com)

## Using Popular Music in Therapy

Life is not fair. This is something I learned as I grew out of my childhood years. Initially I had that magical thinking that everything would be okay. Soon I realized that life can throw you a curveball sometimes. We cannot always control what happens to us, but we can control how we handle it.

We all handle our emotional pains in different ways. The important thing to realize is that if we don't handle them, they'll handle us!

Look at it this way, how we feel affects how we act. It is so important to be aware of our feelings and express them in a way that is productive.

I am a therapist in southern Pennsylvania, and have worked mainly with kids through my years. One thing I noticed was that my clients would hold their feelings in, and this would end up backfiring on them.

It is for this reason that I have developed an approach that helps children utilize popular music, something many of them already listen to, as a coping skill, and outlet for self-expression.

How many of us look back on our childhood memories and think of the times we sat alone in our room, listening to our music. Ask teens how important their music is to them and you will quickly realize that this is something many of them spend a great deal of time doing.

Using popular music in therapy allows you to start where your client is.

Long ago, I realized that children don't like to talk to therapists. They don't like to talk about their feelings. I realized that I would have to come up with some creative techniques if I

was going to reach them.

I then looked back on my own life, and thought about the powerful connection that I had with music. I began taking a stronger interest in the current music scene. Many artists have very strong therapeutic messages being conveyed in their songs. How many of us sing along to a song without really thinking about what we are saying? I began compiling a list of songs that I felt could be valuable therapeutic resources.

I would begin my first session by asking questions about what kind of music my clients liked to listen to. I would then pick out a song from my list that I thought was about an appropriate topic for my client, and also a musical style that he or she would enjoy.

I could not believe the strength of this rapport building technique! My clients were impressed that I showed an interest in the songs they listened to. We would talk about who were their favorite artists. We would also talk about the messages my clients saw in the songs they heard. From here I would help my clients to make better use of using music as a coping skill. I would encourage them to be more aware of the connection between music and our feelings. I would encourage them to use listening to music as an outlet to express their feelings.

An example of a song I would use often is *Family Portrait*, by the current popular artist Pink. I feel this is a good song to use for children that enjoy pop music, and are experiencing issues in their family. In "Family Portrait", Pink talks about when people look at a picture of "her" family, everyone looks normal and happy. But she knows that this is a great misconception, for the reality is that her family is falling apart. Pink sings this song with heart-felt emotion, making references to how

she wants her family to just hold together.

I have had much success with this song in therapy as it is something the children can truly relate to. Who doesn't want to have the "perfect" family? Hearing this song helps children realize that they are not the only ones struggling with issues in the family.

This is just one example of the countless powerful therapeutic messages present in music. I encourage therapists to draw from their own music libraries, thinking about songs that they have identified with, and using them in therapy. My clients have given me many great suggestions of music to use. Music can act as a great "door opener" to your client's issues. For example, playing a song about child abuse for my clients has often led to a discussion about their personal issues.

Music can have such a powerful effect on how we feel. To cope with the loss of my grandmother, I wrote a song entitled "Not All Right". Often times after playing this song for others, many would begin to cry. I

would ask them why I would want to play a song for people that would make them cry? I find that listening to sad music can really help us to surface our own feelings of sadness. The music can be used as a way for us to express our emotions.

On the same token, angry music helps me personally to release feelings of anger. I believe that this is valuable as when we are upset, our feelings need to go somewhere! I work with children to identify these feelings and to express them in an appropriate manner. Holding them in doesn't work because these feelings have a way of coming out in one form or another!

Uplifting music helps to cheer me up when I am sad and want to cheer up.



Therapists' Page, Cont'd.

Music affects us all differently. The trick is to work with your clients and discover what works best for them. Help them to utilize this as a way to express their feelings. I also want to encourage you to be more aware of how music impacts your life. Often times music can influence our mood and we are not even aware of it. The success of this technique comes from the notion that we are not "reinventing the wheel" here, we are taking something that so many of us already listen to--music--and utilizing this as a coping skill.

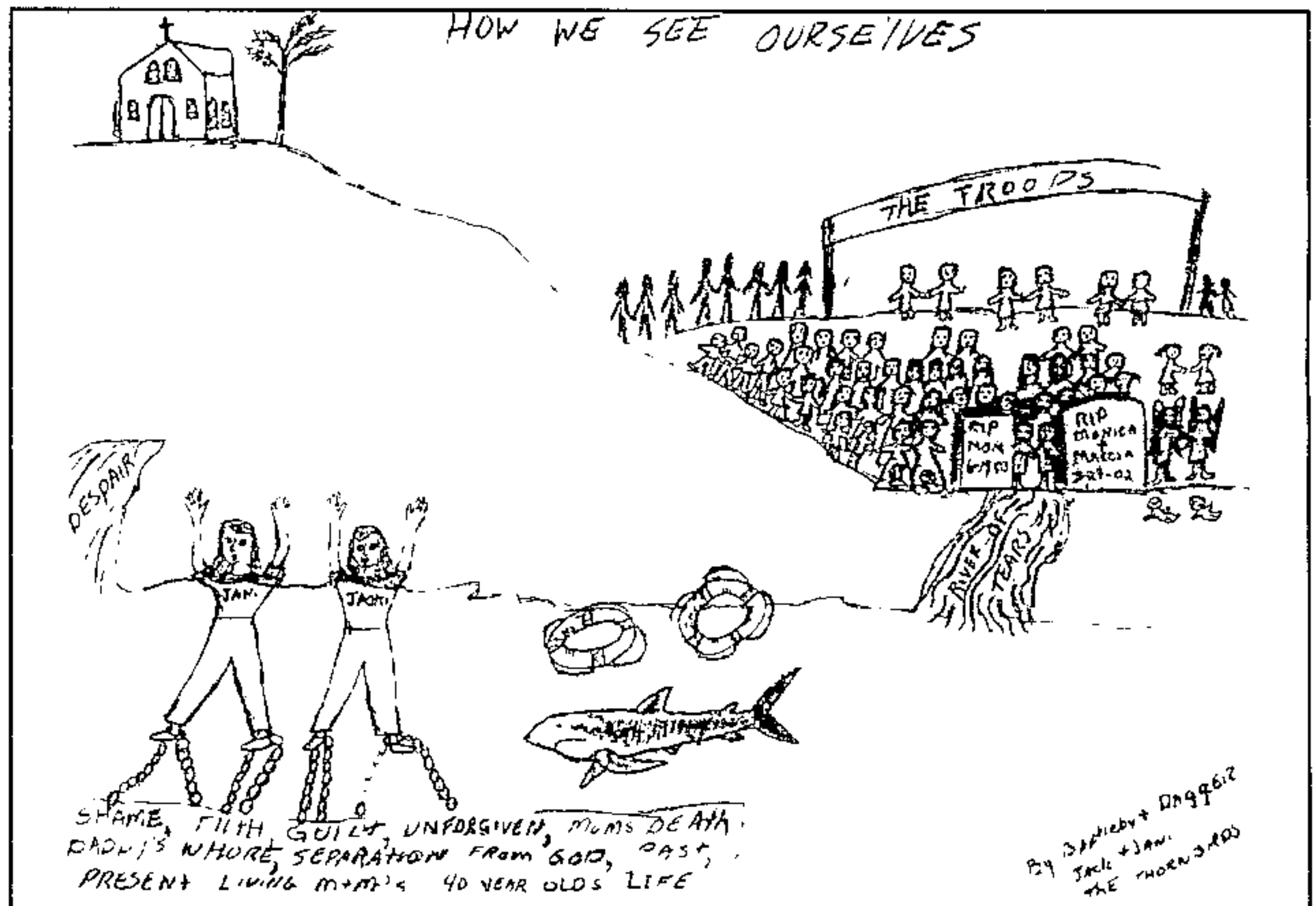
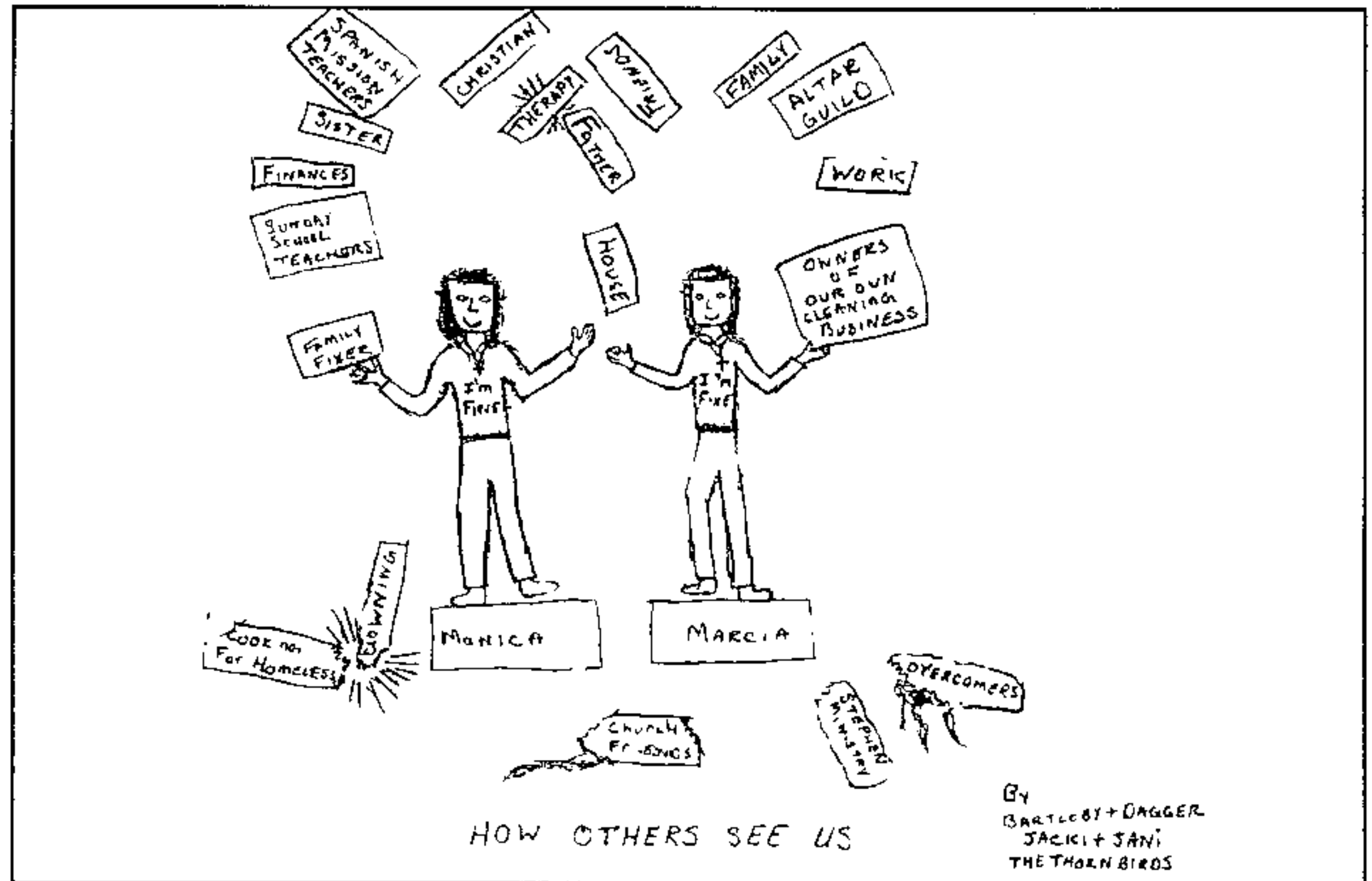
I strongly encourage you to be more aware of how your mood is affected by what music you are listening to. Plan ahead; if you feel upset, listen to something that will help you feel better. For example, sometimes when I am angry I will sit and think about how I feel, and my anger doesn't really go anywhere. I've found that if I get in my car, crank the volume up about as loud as it will go, and listen to some aggressive music, I feel better!

What I just mentioned may not work for you, but I strongly encourage you to find out what will, and plan ahead. Maybe you could make some mix tapes from your favorite cds, you could have an angry mix tape, a sad mix tape, etc. I hope you have as much success with this activity as I have!

MV

## Two Views - Outside & Inside

By Jani and Jacki A.



## Jonathan Livingston Seagull

I want to fly like a bird over the ocean.  
I want to feel the freedom of the salty air beneath my wings.  
I want to circle and rise and dive into the water  
Just like Jonathan.

I want to dream beyond all dreams.  
I want to see places others have never even thought of.  
I want to fly into those dreams.  
Just like Jonathan.  
I want to learn all there is to know.

I want to learn music, history, astronomy, all of it.  
I want to learn to fly higher than ever before.  
Just like Jonathan.

I want to feel peace and safety.  
I want to feel hope to keep striving above the clouds.  
I want to feel I can transcend the fear when I am close to the result.  
Just like Jonathan.

I want to teach, to help those who are just finding their wings.  
I want to show them the possibilities.  
I want to show them how wonderful it is to fly.  
Just like Jonathan.

By Sarah

MV

# Beginnings and Endings Spanned by Faith

By CE

For the past decade or so I have been submitting poetry, essays and artwork to Many Voices and have found personal connection with others of you who have been walking the same healing journey as have I. My early submissions reflected my dysfunction born of the dissociation of 45 parts of myself whom I gradually came to know and respect via quality psychotherapy. In fact, I was so fascinated by the healing process--both outpatient and inpatient--that I began writing of my successes which, by 1996, included integration. Slowly--and I believe this is a key point--I became my own therapist in a way. I stopped believing the old lies drilled into my fragile child-self and my self-esteem increased to the point that in 2002 I permanently left my nursing career and went back to school for an M.A. in counseling.

Life has been great lately. I have been in the midst of my internship and I dearly love my clients. It is no surprise that my focus has been on children and on survivors of trauma. My integration has "held" except that during my continuing twice-a-week therapy with my beloved psychologist I have one child part that speaks and voices all my emotions with truth and insight beyond her years. Her name is Mosaic--a beautiful picture made up of what were once all my broken parts--and I am fully conscious of all she says. She is a valuable asset to skirting my overly-controlled, compulsive 54 year-old self and to getting to the heart of my issues. She appears only when bidden and it is fine with me if she maintains permanent residence as my partner in healing.

Last summer my husband and I bought a beautiful mountain home on 5 acres, two hours from Denver, for retirement. Decorating it and dreaming of our future there has brought us much closer together. My plan was to have a private practice in the city 4 days a week and spend long weekends relaxing at our idyllic retreat.

However, things may not work out

exactly that way. When I was searching for a graduate school I ended up at Denver Seminary even though I really wasn't particularly interested in the biblical course requirements. Now I understand why God planted me at a seminary to study. It wasn't to learn counseling at all, but to prepare me spiritually for the experience I have ahead of me.

On March 5th my husband and I were given the news that I have Lymphangiomyomatosis (LAM). I had gone to the ER short of breath and a high resolution CT showed that both lungs are full of cysts. It is not cancer, but is progressive, has no known cause, no treatment except O2, and is fatal. If I qualify, a lung transplant may lengthen my life somewhat. Only 300 women in the US have LAM and I am even more unusual because it is a disease of child-bearing age women--only a very few of us are post-menopausal. I went through a few days of denial, a few days of grief, and then methodically reasoned that having so many people depend on me as a therapist was an unrealistic goal. It was extremely painful to withdraw from school and even worse to have to refer out my clients.

Nevertheless, I drew this self-portrait because it reflects how I am choosing to live. It shows how myself AND Mosaic view the small pleasures in life right now. I want to spend the rest of my days exuding joy, love and

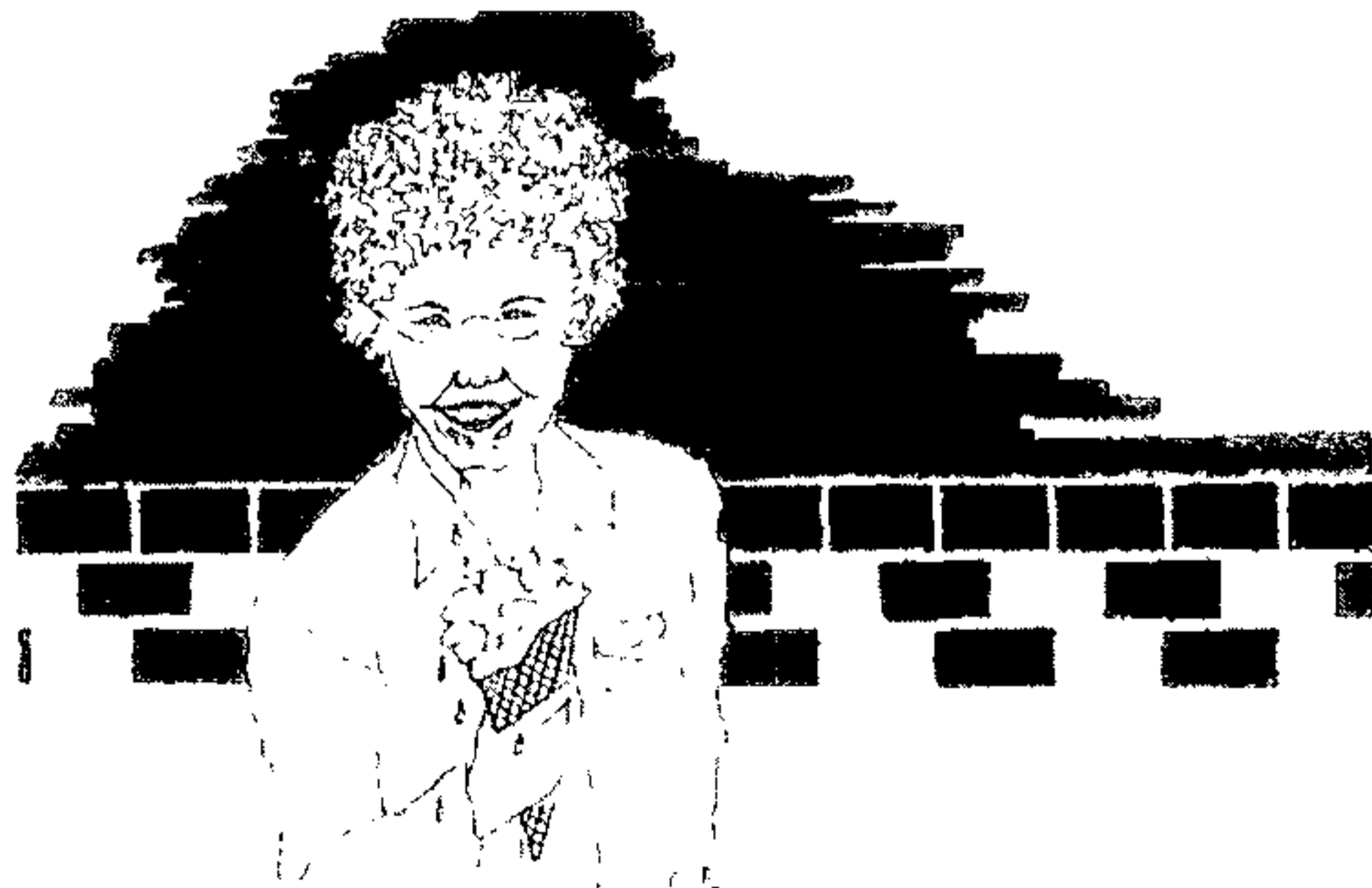
dignity. Statistically I may have as little as 2 years or as many as 10 to do that. But I feel very blessed. I have many loving friends and family near me. I have healed from the lost time and pain of DID. I live very near the #1 lung hospital in the US--National Jewish. I know my husband is completely devoted to me. I have the assurance that by being born with a great love for care-giving, I have already left somewhat of a legacy in small ways--whether it was nursing, counseling, church work, Big Sisters, medical mission trips abroad, hospice volunteering, or ...even writing for *Many Voices!*

For those of you who are fortunate enough to have a sustaining spiritual faith, you will understand when I say that my faith is the thing I am the most thankful for. The following quote is a perfect summation of my theology. (refer to Romans 8:28)

*The Lord may not have planned that this should overtake me, but He has most certainly permitted it. Therefore though it were an attack of an enemy, by the time it reaches me, it has the Lord's permission and therefore all is well. He will make it work together with all life's experiences for good.*

May each of you find peace, pleasure, and healing in each present moment God grants you. I wish much success to you and to this publication. You deserve it.

MV





# Life Without Therapy

By Diane, and others of Ravensong

These days, a quiet stillness blankets my inner selves—I'm not getting much in the way of conversation from others and only recently have thought-feelings from inside begun to blur, so I'm having trouble discerning which come from my insiders and which are my own.

Medication and body chemistry keep me on an emotional roller coaster, leaving me unfeeling and apathetic one month and plunging me into a deep depression the next. Even so, I've reached a level of stability some might envy, one which I was not able to achieve while in therapy.

The decision to stop intensive therapy came abruptly for us, almost two years ago. After a deep betrayal of trust by our primary therapist, we decided it unwise and unsafe to continue to share with outsiders our most intimate secrets and feelings. Therapy was creating an environment of havoc and chaos for us. Time spent in session left us unstable, uncertain, reeling from flashbacks, always questioning ourselves and others, and unable to make simple decisions. We were expected to talk about the bad stuff with no opportunity to pull ourselves together afterwards, then deal with our feelings during the week without the necessary tools to do so. Although we were in deep crisis at the time we left, it ended up being what we needed to facilitate growth in a number of areas of our life.

Our psychiatrist has helped us transition over from therapy to no-therapy, with short monthly sessions to check up on our meds and general well being. He's been available to us in the event of a crisis, and is what we consider one of our primary sources of support. Our group of primary support people is very small; it consists of those individuals who know us completely, and are safe enough to go to with the daily stuff that complicates our lives or when we are in real crisis. Our group of secondary support people, on the

other hand, is a bit larger. It's filled with a few friends and family members who don't know about us and aren't quite "safe," but with whom we can chat about "normal" things.

Are we "thriving" without therapy? According to Webster, "to thrive" means to "prosper or flourish" and, I have to admit, I struggled with this one for awhile. I don't jump out of bed every morning, ready to take on the world; I'm not happy, and I constantly struggle with questions of purpose and faith. But getting through each day is not the emotional chore it used to be; I no longer experience the uncontrolled angry or tearful outbursts that used to occur several times a week, I feel calmer and more at peace with myself, and I have fewer periods of crisis. Materially and practically, we are doing quite well, and we have jumped some hurdles and landed in a better place than we were a year ago. We are now nearly debt-free, living in a new place (with a new kitty!) and we have a job that we like (or at least one we don't hate). Overall, life is not the heavy, burdening experience of the therapy days; it's become much lighter and easier to navigate. So we are, perhaps, not thriving, but we are getting along pretty well, given the challenges we have had to face. And, looking forward, the biggest challenges will be sustaining our material stability and finding new ways to strengthen our emotional health.

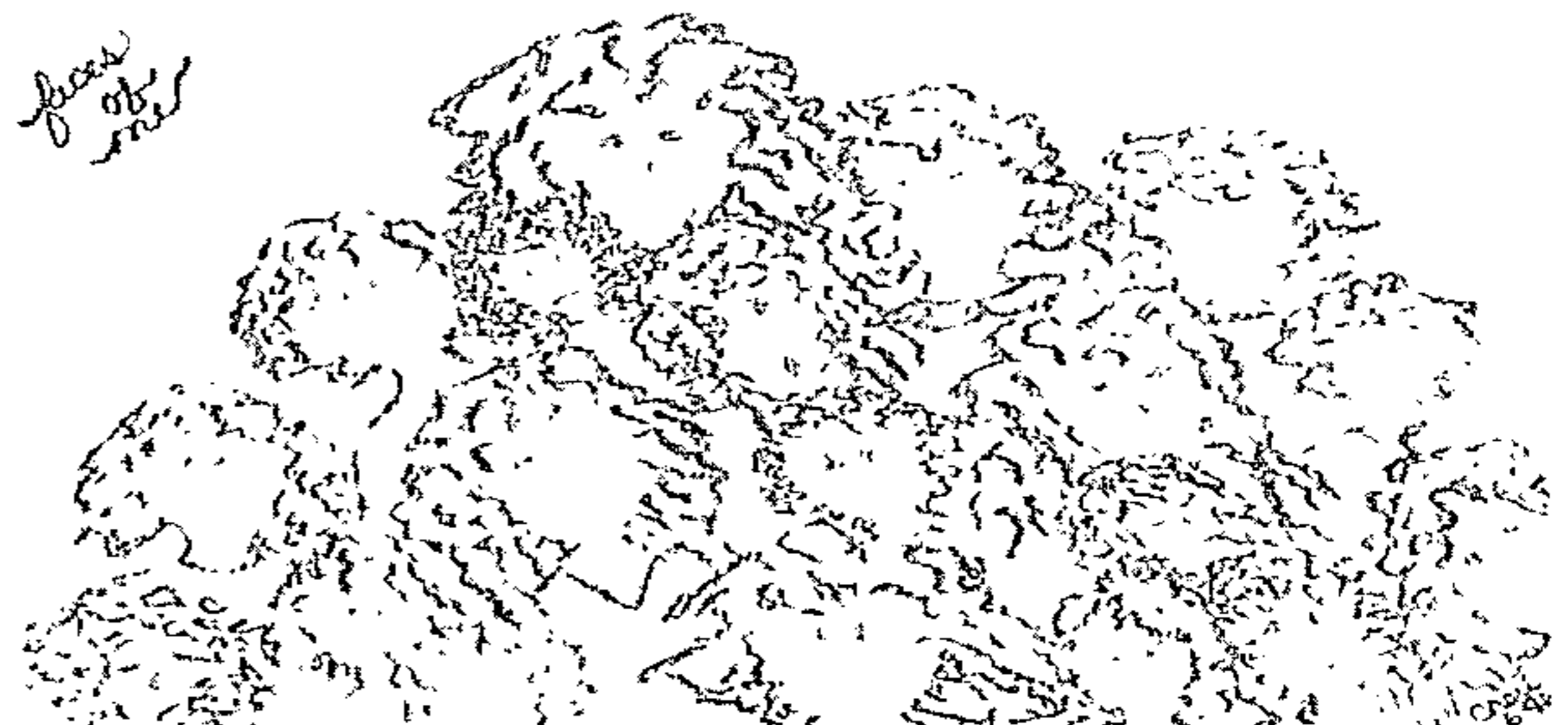
MV

## A New Role

Each day brings its own special meaning  
 Expressing in poetry  
 past life happenings...  
 The belief and anticipation  
 of a new role to be lived out...  
 What is beneath the pain and horror?  
 Could thoughts of a heart never losing faith  
 pour forth within new messages?  
 When the storm finally passes  
 with fresh feelings from a single pen?  
 Excitement bubbles up into a spirit  
 Oh to skip these dreaded steps!  
 that have to be taken!  
 The reality staggers the imagination  
 A surging sense  
 to have finally reached shore...  
 The need to form a bond  
 with emotions kept hidden...  
 Leaving behind a private world  
 that has fulfilled its purpose...  
 Eager to utilize talents never  
 acknowledged  
 When all the verses  
 filled with suffering are written...  
 Platitudes will be replaced  
 with unspoken words of gratitude...  
 The true beauty of life  
 yet to be expressed in delightful  
 form...  
 The notion sends chills throughout a  
 mind  
 Goodness will be victorious!  
 Evil at long last snuffed out  
 for all eternity.

By Kathleen C.

MV



# Song for the Asking

By Mary K.

It has been a great relief to me to finally find therapy that works, after many years of searching.

I first had a sense that things were going to be different when I saw Dr. A for a consultation, two and 1/2 years ago. I noticed immediately that she seemed unusually compassionate and a very good listener. I was used to therapists who meant well, and did their best to help me, but left me feeling not as well understood as I would have liked. Sometimes they were so quick with their own interpretations that they overshadowed my attempts to communicate the truth of my own life. Dr. A was one of the very few therapists who asked me who I was rather than telling me who I was. I am grateful to her for taking the time to really listen to me.

Dr. A was not available for long-term therapy, but gave me several referrals. After calling all of them, I decided to see Dr. B.

Dr. B has consistently been there for me over the 2 and 1/2 years that I have been seeing her. I go to therapy twice a week, and she always seems attentive and happy to see me.

She is also a very good listener and a very compassionate person. She makes me feel understood and cared for. I often feel overwhelmed with fear, or intensely sad about things that happen in the present which remind me of the past. Dr. B. helps me to understand and manage my feelings. This has been very difficult to learn, and I can't say I'm particularly good at it as yet. But I am learning.

Confronting my past (while trying my best to function in the present) has been a long process which is sometimes very painful. One of the most difficult parts for me has been dealing with the loneliness I felt as a child. Growing up I often felt very lonely and misunderstood, and I was unpopular at school. For a long time, I had no friends at all.

Being in therapy has given me the chance to confront the awful loneliness that I felt, which was the most painful part of the abuse and

neglect I experienced as a child. It has been quite difficult at times.

But I have to do it, because the past has been haunting me for my entire adult life. Attempts to ignore it did not work; I just felt convinced that I was overwhelmed by biological mental illness. Although some of my problems are definitely biological, the effects of the past are an important component of my problems as well.

There is more to therapy than dealing with pain. I am learning that I have a contribution to make, and that I am at my best when I am asked to perform. Not coerced, not threatened, not emotionally blackmailed, but asked. Like Paul Simon, I have a song for the asking, and under these circumstances I will sing my own song, rather than getting lost in someone else's. And like him, I had been waiting all my life for the opportunity to express myself.

Both of these therapists have shown me what compassion is. To be exposed to that after so many years of searching, and intense loneliness, has been a profound experience. I will never forget what they have done for me.

For a while, I had a friend, Peter, from England. Peter had another friend from Eastern Europe, and he told me once that she was an Anglophile. "Why?" I asked him. He said that coming from Eastern Europe, his friend had grown up with little in terms of goods and services. Then one day she came to England, where she saw lots of food in the stores for the first time in her life. Walking into a store and seeing the profusion of food...bread, milk, cheese, cookies, snacks, vegetables, ice cream, etc.. was a profound experience for her. Peter said that he thought that a person who goes from deprivation to a land of plenty is quite taken with miracle of readily accessible treasures, and their potential to transform his or her life. Such a person always retains a special fondness for the country in which that happens.

MV

# VE Day

Let's tell them it's over  
The small parts who bore pain  
It's over, all over  
Gone like the rain

We, the strong, are here for you  
The little, the weak  
To help you with burdens  
You do not dare speak

Speak them to us  
We won't run away  
We're sorry we left you  
Alone on those days

And there are others  
Outsiders who care  
Who will listen to you too  
When you're ready to share

By staying divided  
We hide from the pain  
But we hide from each other  
Our efforts in vain

We're stronger than flint  
And tougher than steel  
We survived hell on earth  
Of course we can heal!

For the parts make a whole  
All Josephine Dawn  
The strong ones, the weak ones  
Not one part is gone

By Josephine Dawn

MV





## Despair Gives Way to HOPE

Human language falls silent  
as my body is being tortured,  
and I switch into the land of oblivion.  
Darkness covers my soul,  
fear envelopes me.  
Why me? Why is this happening to  
me?  
I must be bad; I must be garbage.

The torture continues  
and there is no one to rescue me.

They have stretched me to the limit;  
my bones should be broken.  
The pain is shocking;  
I desperately fear that I will be  
paralyzed.

The torture continues  
and there is no one to rescue me.

In this land of oblivion I have many  
parts.  
It is they who rescue me.  
They switch among themselves and  
absorb the pain.  
They each pay a great price in order  
to protect me-  
to keep me alive.

But I don't know about them  
because when they are present I am  
not present.  
It's like I am in a blackout—  
I don't know a thing that happened.  
And this is how I lived for 50 years.

Then my twin sister dies and I die  
too-only I can't die.  
I feel like my psyche is being exorcised  
as my parts begin to reveal  
themselves to me.  
Then they reveal their memories to  
me.  
I begin to change accordingly.

The human language that fell silent  
for all those years  
now finds a voice.  
The psyche that was dead now feels a  
surge of energy that can move  
mountains.  
The pain I could not feel  
is beginning to guide me into the way  
of truth.  
The cold death of Winter  
slowly turns into Spring  
and I hear the cosmos saying  
"See, I make all things new,  
can you not perceive it?"

In the midst of the chaos of the truth  
of my life,  
HOPE exists and sustains me  
as I slowly move out of despair  
and into the land of the living.  
Alleluia!

By JR

MV

## Part of the Whole

When strangers look at me  
A single person they see  
With quirky behaviors  
Oscillating moods

Maybe to a few, Josie is the host  
The one they see most often  
The others are but oddities  
To be ignored and forgotten

When I look at me  
Multiplicity I see  
All parts forming a whole  
A complete picture

Each part longs to be understood  
to be heard as she should  
To be acknowledged  
Accepted and loved

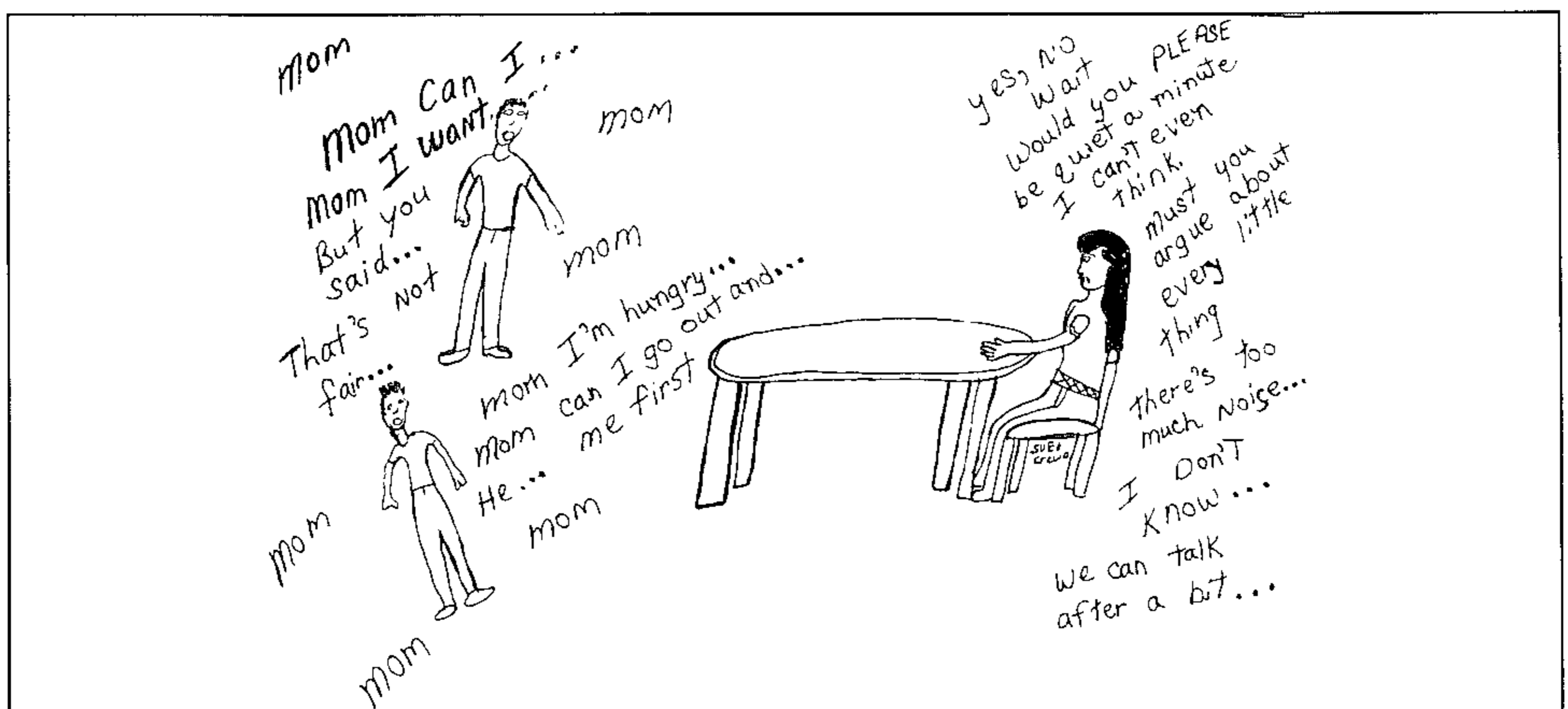
Each part in reality  
A feeling or memory  
Left behind  
Disowned, disavowed

Each part has a piece  
Of the story to be told  
As we share our pain  
We approach a whole

Is the whole the sum of the parts  
Or is each part, part of the whole?

By Josephine

MV



# To Whomever This Reaches

By John Charles Ireland

I write to you as a survivor of eclectic life experiences. During this time of continuous global disunity and national divisions, I hope for an open mind. I am scarred from past abuses and also gifted with past triumphs. I am a prime example of what I believe exists as a true American. I am an advocate of freedom and liberty for all. At times I am perplexed at the negative forces I observe, which receive much attention.

I am seeking my integration in a world that has been torn from me by perpetrators. I can be threatened no more into retreating to my silent house of horrors. I am proud to say that I stand strong in living up to standards that foster respect and truth. I am also more and more unafraid of others who have tried to keep my spirit, soul, heart and mind imprisoned. I have made mistakes as is part of being human, and yet when I finally found my voice I was placed in solitary confinement (for which I share responsibility) Yet I will not allow this to control whatever remains of my life.

The most difficult times of my life were driven by inner resources I never understood. I know I have a purpose and I must follow my dreams, being what I am discovering more and more as my destiny. I learned to deal with being a victim of circumstances mainly with gifts of imagination, creativity, and sensitivity. These are treasured remnants of main supporters who have passed on to the "other side." When faced with the worst experiences I mainly turned anger and sadness back to myself.

I am proud that I never physically reacted to others who caused much pain and scarring to me. My anger at its worst led to minor verbal altercations which really led to others "punishing" me for my freedom. My intentions were and are to stand up for what is right. I stand strong with that.

My current work situation left me in a deep depression which occurred

within a system many just don't wish to deal with. I am one who can't give in and accept what is clearly wrong. I decided it was time to take a medical leave to fully confront past and current abuses while searching for answers of my place in life. In today's fast paced dog-eat-dog society, I entered a life change. I have remained more and more isolated while on this necessary journey. My hope remains, as always, to help others and be a voice for other "outcasts" like myself.

I faced complicated grief in the fall of 1998 with the deaths of both my mom and dad, within five weeks. This was a short six months after my teacher, mentor, friend and family member Sheila had died following a battle with breast cancer. By October 28, 1998 I was officially the oldest generation of my family, and I literally felt thrown into a massive storm. I was fortunate to have been with each family member at the times of their deaths, and I struggled to make sense of their early departures. I also felt wounds open wide which were hidden deep inside, from past abuses. With blunt honesty, I was at a point of suicide. I grasped at fragile hope and dreams that I had yet to accomplish. I also had my students to return to as motivation.

It was bizarre later being told I "cared too much" and I was "too human." I was not concerned enough with "advancing test scores." I was "too creative". ...It reopened vulnerable wounds and scars. I decided it was time to face what I must for survival.

I went to an amazing male retreat in the Catskill Mountains of New York in the fall of 2002. It was held by Male Survivor, formerly NOMSV (National Organization against Male Sexual Victimization). I had hidden for decades with threatened silence even with the most trusted support. I am one who faced out of control clergy of organized Catholic and Lutheran religious forces. I had been fortunate

to share briefly of this with my now passed-on supporters. At the retreat I was given the most amazing gift back-my sense of hope for my future goals. With unbelievable support, guidance, understanding, and unconditional feelings I finally opened my wounds again.

Healing and recovery take time, especially amidst infinite scars, invisible to most. These scars are deep and when revealed in minute amounts are raw and painful. Yet I realize I must fully deal with them now. I am fortunate to do this in my writing and my creations.

I have shed many tears, angry howls, and survived frozen hours during this transformation of my life. I have puzzled others around me, I realize, feeling I had no other choice. I have been in psychotherapy since the bleak winter of 1999, shortly after being thrown into unreal, complicated grief. My therapist was and is a spiritual guide and he has been witness to the vast emotions I have displayed. He perfectly complemented my experience at the Male Survivor retreat at Dawn Manor.

I plan to keep my relationship going with Male Survivor and hope to eventually reach others who remain paralyzed in a post-abusive hell. The retreat masters of my September voyage will forever remain in my heart, mind, soul and body.

For whatever you must face in life, I hope this gives you strength.

MV





## Growth

By Kathy A.

The day dawned clear and bright. The birds were welcoming me to the morning. Funny I should notice them. Every other morning I seemed to drag out of bed wrapped in a groggy fog that enveloped my day and consumed my hours. Used to being depressed, I no more asked anything out of life or expected it. But today there seemed to be an aroma of enchantment in the stillness of my morning. Some magic seemed to be greeting me with the daybreak.

Rising from my bed I tried to detach from the grip of last night's dreams. As my feet reached the floor I once again made the decision to tread reluctantly into my life's today. A path, all too familiar, awaited my beginning steps.

Sliding my feet into my worn, threadbare slippers I walked to the mirror to hurriedly pass the brush through my hair. Never really looking at the reflection before, I paused. Today seemed different. It seemed as though I was still feeling the lingering magic of the day's beginning.

I hesitated before the mirror, cautiously risking stopping for a moment to study the face that stared back at me. The face, worn tired by many tears, was a stranger's face, one I had not looked at lovingly in a lifetime. I seemed to be riveted towards the eyes-dark, penetrating, but almost hollow. What could they tell me? Who could they show me?

All was still with the world. I let my mind sink into those eyes and was almost instantly confronted by a child. She had large dark eyes, straight black hair and a seemingly fragile exterior. I thought if I approached too quickly, she would become as dust and blend with the moment.

I waited...finally acknowledging that this child was all too familiar to me. This was the child that I was, so lost those many years ago. The child forgotten, who had been abandoned to live a life of sadness and fear, to grow up in a family filled with people but empty of love, alone and lonely.

She had been born of children,

adult children, who had never been given permission to live free in their youth. Never entrusted with the treasures of self-acceptance, they were unable to pass it on to their children. Such a gift, the precious gift of freedom, of self-love, of endorsement, of nurturing. It was lost to them and now they were parents expected to pass on gifts they did not possess. They struggled, only knowing pain, only knowing how to pass that pain on, and so they did.

This child before me, always waiting for love, but finding none. Her body searching out affirmations and endorsement of self, but instead finding pain and confusion. With arms reaching out for the warmth of home and security, but always drawing back empty, she only closed around herself alone. She closed off from everyone, everything that would be good, happy, and fulfilling.

The child grew and matured into adulthood, but something was always missing. Closed from the world, denying self, she began to wear many masks. Always trying to be what others around her wished. Her fantasies too were those of others. Safer to give to the many, be for the many, than to risk being for the one.

I was beginning to take pride in this child, this survivor of denied youth and being. As I stood there taking the time to confront her many long forgotten needs she seemed to be gaining in substance. Like a rich fertile garden always waiting to be planted, no seeds were ever sown; no water ever dampened her soul to give nourishment to growth. But she seemed to be growing before my eyes.

Did I have the strength to tell her that I loved her and that I would like to sit with her longer and listen to her dreams and fantasies? To perhaps risk, to dream the unattainable and bring into our mind's reach, my hand's grasp; to make her, my, our fantasies a reality, both needing to be loved by the other, both needing permission to dream, both needing

permission to be. Maybe today we could begin as one. Her with her many needs and longings so unfulfilled and me with my adult wisdom and compassion.

I confidently reached for her hand and stepped forward to her. Gently drawing the child close to me I enclosed her within the circle of my arms. Feeling not so alone anymore, together we made our way to the day's beginning. We would begin together. I would take this moment's magic and infuse each day with it.

All around we were met with a fervor of activity, of sights and sounds and smells. Pausing, I allowed myself to grasp all these gifts that were before me. My sadness seems to have lifted and I no longer feel empty. Today I would take the time to care. With the excitement of dreams realized and fantasies materializing I ran into the day. We could do it. I could do it. Today I would dare. For today I found a friend.

MV

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## We Are Thriving

We are thriving outside therapy as much as, or even more so, as we are in therapy.

Several adults in our "family" are writers, artists and crafts people. Others are taking college courses. Children in us love to sing and play. We work together to make "encouragement cards" to send to prison inmates, anonymously. Jennifer, 12, and Genevieve, 13, use bright colored markers to draw. Rev. Sally writes the message. Then they are sent to the prison chaplain, who distributes them to inmates, guards and staff.

We are thriving in therapy too. Growth is somewhat slower therapy-wise, I think. Usually my therapist, and also our psychiatrist, do not comment on how we are doing. But when they do it is usually to say we are "doing well"

*By Sally B.*

MV

# Coming Out of the Closet

By Velvet Fairy

I am MPD/DID. I am just coming out of the closet. It's been many years of back and forth denial/knowledge of being multiple. It's a scary thing to be because it means that there was a lot of abuse and some of me would like to pretend there wasn't, but my desire to heal is getting stronger and stronger with each day, and the deniers and saboteurs in my system are not in the forefront anymore.

It is time to begin BEING multiple and of course HEALING.

And eventually, way down the line, becoming one again.

We are all so different, and we are all so alike. I am learning to take what I like and discard the rest. There is much I don't agree with in some of the techniques I read about from other survivors, but I am learning to let go and let everyone just be themselves. A lot of MPD's use medication, and I don't. I spent many years of my life drugged on all kinds of 'legal' pharmaceuticals, and it only slowed me down. Most of these drugs are given, I believe, to SUPPRESS and I believe in feeling all the feelings and getting all the RAGE, GRIEF, and everything else OUT OUT OUT. (But for all of you on medication, I don't mean to offend, I am just telling you how I feel about it. I honor everyone's choices, as I hope others would honor mine.)

That is my slogan or at least one of them : "OUT OUT OUT" (after a lifetime of "In In In"). Another one is "Cry cry cry till you know why I lost myself identify" That is from a Cocteau Twins song.

The Cocteau Twins are channelers and they bring a lot of healing messages to those who listen to their music.

This is my story. I want to share it. But I will remain anonymous because for now, that feels better. But I won't be anonymous forever. Once I am healed and whole and living my light here on EARTH, the world is going to hear from me about MPD and child/baby abuse. I will NOT be

quieted.

You can call me Velvet fairy for now. That will be my "pen name".

I am so happy that I have finally found a place to share, even though not in person, at least on the page. It's a start.

My goal is to be in full time individual therapy and group therapy so that me and my gang can start having relationships. Right now, we're in one very special relationship and that's with our partner, who is doubling as a therapist until we find the right one. I've been a loner my whole life, and I'm ready for that to end.

This is my beginning: sharing with other multiples on the page, anonymously.

It's a start.

I love and applaud you all for your braveness in subscribing to this magazine, in sharing your stories, and in your quest for healing.

May we all heal and THRIVE ON EARTH!

MV



## Finding Hope Again

in the early years...  
with hope  
the light of my soul  
ignited

bursting into flame  
sucking in oxygen  
and flourishing

reaching high  
raging with life  
ignoring reality  
and the inevitable  
squalls.

not sorting or  
nurturing the air.  
the atmosphere shifts  
naturally  
over time and space  
the flame  
flickers and fades  
under the changes

struggling for oxygen  
to survive.  
grasping for air  
where possible and  
looking for alternatives.  
never just learning  
to breathe.

the storms continue  
growing stronger  
and more intense

the flame  
is gradually overcome  
by the turbulence

weakened and withered  
by the hurricanes,  
tornadoes,  
typhoons.  
never planning  
ahead  
and taking shelter.

just a glowing ember  
remains

barely burning  
although...

my core is  
still red,  
still hot,  
still burning.

waiting for the next  
gust of air  
to breathe in  
and retain.

so i can  
rage and flourish  
under hope  
again.

By Gayle W.

MV



## Letters

I am 59 years old and dealing with severe sexual abuse since being raped by my brother. He is dead now and I often think if I die I will meet him in heaven...which is a big struggle for me. I am a twin, and my twin lives in England. I miss her terribly. She was abused as well, but says she has dealt with it, and I believe her. I emigrated to Canada in 1977, thinking I would be away from my brother and reminders and forget about the abuse. It worked for a while until the brother's birthday, or my birthday came around. He always sent me money, which I gave to the kids. I have two children, a girl and a boy, both in their twenties. My son has his own business and my daughter works with him. She has her own children, a three-year old boy and a baby girl. My relationship with the toddler has deteriorated since he turned three. I get angry with him quickly and stressed out, so I leave my daughter's place and go back to my empty apartment. I remember taking out my anger on my own children

when they were small. My daughter phones me every day, but I rarely see my son unless I ask him and his girlfriend to come over, or if I can spend the day with them. I was divorced in 1995 and have found being on my own excruciatingly painful and very lonely. I don't have any friends, except for one MPD lady I befriended when the bubble burst in 1983. My twin was the person who screened everyone who came within our proximity. I have friends "inside" and am grateful for them and the many cupboard kids and our spiritual leader Karanja, but I go through prolonged periods of being alone to the point of wanting to rush back to my twin in England. The one who holds all our pain and loneliness is Alice who is 7. Peter who is 14 takes care of her in her periods of rage.

I would like to connect with a twin who finds themselves alone as I am, and get to know how they deal with not having their twin with them. I know I can phone my twin and I do, but it's not the same as

having her there in person. The sad one wrote this letter. I apologize for the bad writing. We have to keep this letter away from Victoria as she would be too embarrassed to send it in the state of the writing.

Sorry. — Christine W.

*(If you would like to respond to Christine, out of friendship—or if you are a twin who is apart from your sibling as she requested—please send your letters to me at PO Box 2639, Cincinnati, OH 45201-2639, and I will forward them on — Lynn W., Editor.)*

MV



## Books

**Trauma & Sexuality: The Effects of Childhood Sexual, Physical and Emotional Abuse on Sexual Identity and Behavior** James A. Chu, M.D., Elizabeth S. Bowman, M.D., Editors © 2003  
Published by Haworth Press Inc. (800) 429-6784 www.haworthpressinc.com  
\$29.95 hardback, \$19.95 softback. 146 pgs plus index.

Two of ISSD's finest clinicians and researchers edited this volume of professional research papers. Sexuality is a sensitive topic, often difficult for clients to discuss candidly in therapy. Some therapists feel uncomfortable confronting sexual questions openly, as well. For dissociative persons, it can be an incredibly complex issue, with various alters or parts feeling intense conflict. There is guidance here for therapists in working with a wide variety of gender issues, from the piece by Margo Rivera on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered survivors, to Sexual Addiction Treatment by Steven N. Gold and Robert E. Siefer. Toni Cavanaugh Johnson discusses children who molest. Elizabeth Howell writes about "good girls" and "bad girls", Mark Schwartz and Lori Galperin present their findings on hypo- and hyper-sexuality

following childhood trauma, and Cheryl Gore-Felton and Cheryl Koopman address the way trauma histories may predict risky behavior in AIDS-afflicted adults. Colin Ross adds his comments about sexual orientation conflict in dissociative disorders. Well worth reading.

**Black Eye: Escaping a Marriage, Writing a Life** By Judith Strasser © 2004.  
Published by University of Wisconsin Press. 1940 Monroe St., Madison Wisconsin 53711  
www.wisc.edu/wisconsinpress/. \$26.95 362 pages. Hardcover.

This is a memoir of an abusive relationship, told in an intriguing form based on Strasser's journals of the period when the marriage ended...a marriage that lasted 17 years. If you have journals you've thought of turning into a book, this is a worthy example to study, written by a frequently-published poet and fiction writer. Strasser says she did not take writing seriously until her "escape"...and that she has spent the past 16 years trying to pull together the right form for this story.

Many survivors will identify with the difficulty of removing themselves from an

abusive situation. It is heartening to see how this woman's life "began" after she made that important change.—Lynn W.

(a reader's favorite...)

**First Person Plural, My Life As a Multiple** By Cameron West, Ph.D. © 1999.  
Published by Hyperion, c/o ABC, 77 West 66th St., New York, \$7.50. 354 pages. Paperback.

Interesting account of one man's journey in the struggle to live as a multiple. West writes, "Having DID is, for many people, a very lonely thing. If this book reaches some people whose experiences resonate with mine and gives them a sense that they aren't alone, that there is hope, then I will have achieved one of my goals." Congratulations. I think that was accomplished. I felt right there with West as he made discoveries and realizations that only a multiple can. His honesty and openness were apparent. His appreciation for the support he received from therapists and family are inspiring. A worthwhile read for survivors as well as those interested in the authenticity of one man's experience as a multiple.

—Janet Laird

MV

**Thank You for your Wonderful Support of MANY VOICES!**

Keep those prose pieces, art and poetry coming! We can also use Therapists' Pages and Book Reviews. **THANK YOU FOR SHARING YOUR LIFE EXPERIENCE WITH MV READERS. WE LEARN FROM EACH OTHER!**











Sincerely, Lynn W., Editor

**August 2004**

Managing PTSD Symptoms & Depression. Art: Your Memory Storage System  
Deadline: June 1, 2004

**October 2004**

How to Build a Strong Support Team Art: Your Partners in Healing  
Deadline: August 1, 2004

MY THERAPIST AND ME IN SESSION					
Are you mother? You look like mother.  		I want you to be mother. (shame)  		She is mother. She is bad.  	
1994		1998		2002	
I feel the terror for THE MOTHER.  			It feels like mother and I see now she is therapist.  		
AFTER THE HOSPITAL 2002			2003		
VICTORIA LIGHT 2003					

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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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