

MANY VOICES

WORDS OF HOPE FOR PEOPLE RECOVERING FROM TRAUMA & DISSOCIATION

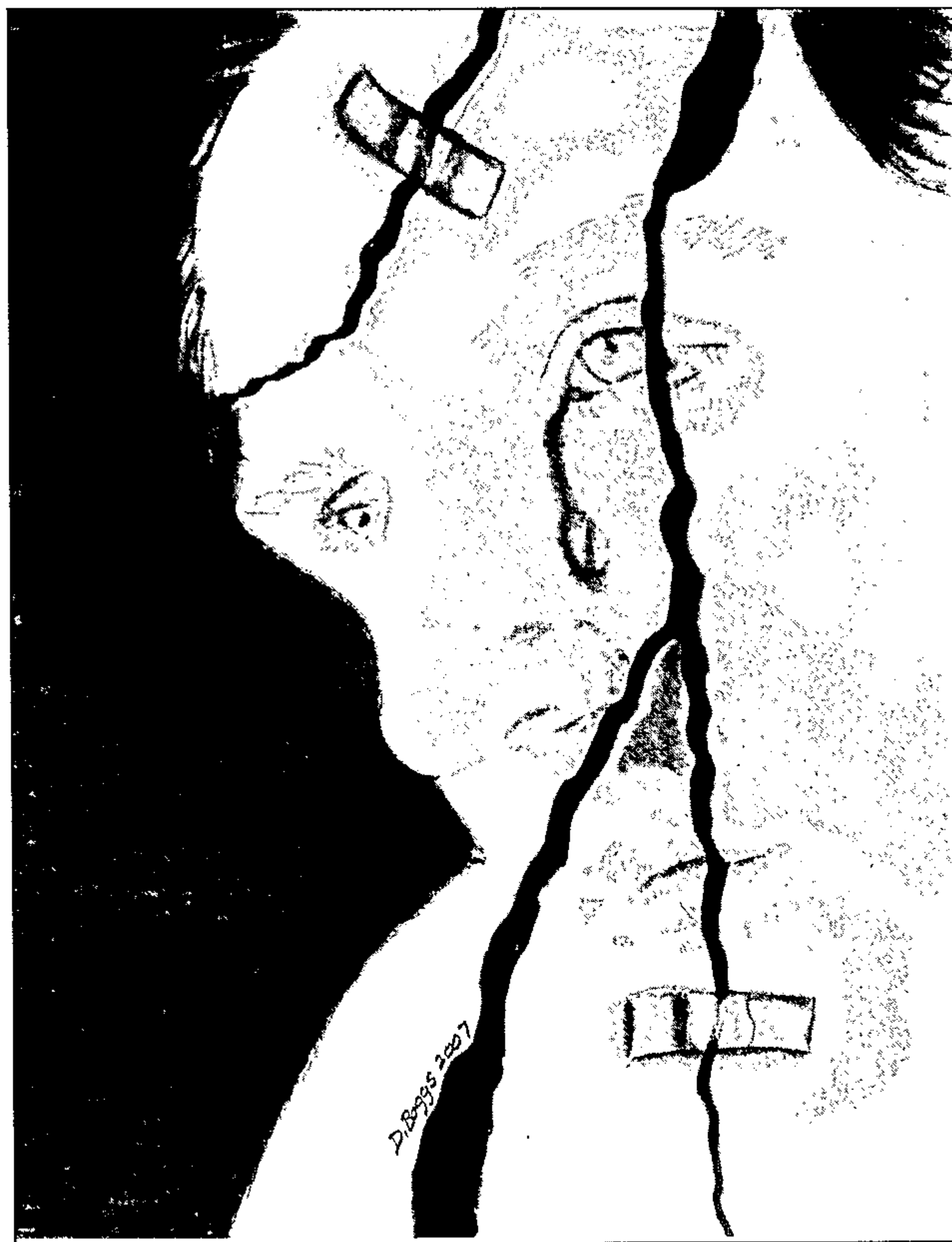
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Inside This Issue:

**Dissociation: Grounding Techniques
Understanding Your System
and more...**



I Was Young

I was young
I was growing and learning
I was open to all new things
then it began
I was being severely abused
I began to associate
pain with love
hurt with compassion
I began splitting into parts
simply because I alone
in time
would have disappeared
just died inside
I needed others
to help me—to join me
to take some of these ravenous
fatal acts being inflicted on me
away
and so my personality
multiplied
my newly found parts
unselfishly
took to themselves
some of the abuse
we all survived
and for them
I am forever thankful

By SJS

MV

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My World As A Village

By Dorothy Williams

I was diagnosed with D.I.D. about five years ago, when I was well into my 50's. I had never felt the need to see a psychiatrist before and actually my life seemed to be quite fine. Fine, that is, except for a few major glitches such as forgetting huge chunks of my life, living without a sense of smell, taste or touch and experiencing unexplainable serious health problems.

After the initial shock of realizing that I was a "multiple" wore off, I started to notice that there were many various inside "people", young, old, in between, who were vying for my inner attention. Furthermore, I came to realize that they had a definite system in which they organized themselves, or I guess, I organized them.

I found that if I paid close attention to them and to their system, life went along fairly smoothly thus making it easier (never "easy", but better than what it was) for me to recognize them all as individuals who make up the "whole me".

Although each alter is very different from one another in personality, temperament, and appearance, etc. they all have something important to share.

For me, they all live in the same small town that exists deep inside myself and they live, work, play and share their individual lives within this framework of the inner village that is me.

Ever since I can remember, I've been able to float up above myself and look down and see myself in my surroundings from an outside point of view. It's similar to the beautiful illustrations in "Peter Pan", where Peter and the Darling children fly out of their window high over London and look way down to the scene far below them. I'm not only like those children looking down from above but also like the scene below as well.

Except I'm no London - I'm more of a small country village.

My inside village consists of lots of

brightly painted small shops and offices, a cozy town hall where many meetings take place, a school for the children and many houses, each similar in style and design, but housing many different and unique characters. And there are lots of forests and gardens and open green spaces and we are situated close to the sea - that's very important to us.

I think I know most of the people who live in my village, although it isn't at all unusual for someone new to appear. We have, for example, three lawyers, two who are child protection lawyers, both males, happily married to each other; a retired prosecution attorney who has learned to relax and enjoy life without blame; two fashion consultants, both married to the retired attorney; several writers who are currently working together writing this article; an ancient gardener named Tillotson, to name a few - the list goes on. And, of course, we have many, many children.

For the most part life within my village resembles life in any close-knit small town. Usually we go about our day-to-day business in a routine way, knowing what our purpose is, what we can or can't do, when to speak up and be heard and when to let things rest. We try to show respect for the village "others" and let them have their say in matters of concern to them. Of course, life doesn't run smoothly all the time - some of us just don't get along with others at all and this can lead to major problems. In fact, sometimes, all Hell breaks loose! There have been internal fights, shouting and heckling, jealousies and nit picking - all those things that turn a normal world off-balance at the best of times and cause stress and heartache for all involved.

Times like this can be very rough for everyone concerned, especially "Me - the Overseer", the one who deals with outside people. These are the times we have to put everything

on hold, take deep breaths in and out, in and out, and practice the grounding techniques that have become rote to us. It can get very hectic, chaotic, incredibly tiring and horribly scary during these times. Thankfully though, in time things have always worked themselves out and life within my village has carried on.

Perhaps the most important aspect of life within my personal village is learning to care for my inner children.

There are many children here harboring feelings of deep rejection, hurt and sadness stemming from heinous violent crimes that they were subjected to in the past. Therefore, it's of the utmost importance for the adults to help these children feel safe, loved and cared for in the "here and now". As guardians, the adults know how important it is to nurture the village children; to let them run and feel the freedom around them and yet also to hold them close and hug and cuddle them when they need it.

As with any child, my inner children need to be heard and understood. They need to be able to shed their tears freely and to run and jump with joy. They also need plenty of sleep, structure, sunshine and the occasional ice cream cone.

The safety and structure of my inner system depends on the collaboration and teamwork that exists between the inner selves and the outer "me". Although it feels like there are many of us we all know that we only have one body and that body must be taken care of in a manner that respects my age and capabilities. Absolutely no cliff diving or motorcycle racing! We know we must eat properly, get lots of exercise and rest, take time for meditation, etc. It's also important for the inner villagers to know that there are times when it is inappropriate for them to interrupt me or to act of their own volition. After all, although at times we'd love to, it would probably be unsuitable for a 50ish year old woman

to tear around Wal-mart on one of those brand new shiny purple kid's bikes with the multi-colored tassels that make my eyes light up and say, "Wow!"

I've tried to give a brief outline of how my inner village works. However, my system is much more complicated and intricate than what I'm able to describe in this short work. For example, each alter has his or her own vagaries which, of course, can lead to endless complications and difficulties within my system, although these alters bring me a great deal of happiness and joy as well.

Also, so much depends on the outer relationships we have with family and friends, etc. Life within my village is subject to change just like the weather; some days dry and sunny, some days stormy and wet. I guess the main thing is that for me it "works" and my life is fuller and richer for having met my inner selves. I'm happier and stronger now than I've ever been in my life.

MV

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We appreciate your support! —Lynn W., Editor

I Weep

I weep for the tears unshed;
for dreams undreamt
and lives half-led.

I weep for the fears unspoken
for trust betrayed,
and promises broken.

I weep for the burden of shame
assumed by those
who were not to blame.

I weep for the terrible cost;
for young lives twisted
and innocence lost.

I weep for the unvoiced screams
for the silent tears
and the awful dreams.

I weep for the unbounded fright
of children abused
and their cries in the night.

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MV



"To be honest, Doctor, I wasn't depressed before I came in here."

The Game of "Musical Therapists" and Therapist Abuse (NOT A GAME!)

By Bren of and for The AllWithin

Many years ago while still in my 20s, when my children were still in elementary school, something happened that caused my husband at the time to call the crisis line. That put me in touch with my first therapist. This is rather ironic to me because years before, when I was only 19, I had begged my husband to take me to a psychiatrist to figure out what was wrong with me only for him to tell me, "You don't need a psychiatrist, you're just crazy!"

That was the first time I attempted suicide. He didn't call a crisis line then, and I had taken a handful of sleeping pills with my month-old son in a Moses basket next to me napping. Makes you wonder what warrants a crisis in that man's mind.

But I digress. I don't even know what I did that caused him to call the crisis line at the time he did, but he put me on the line and the next thing you know I was in therapy for the first time in my life, in my mid-twenties.

I was glad to be in therapy. I had always known something was terribly wrong with me, but I didn't know what. The therapist I saw was the one that I actually had spoke to on the crisis line and it surprised me that he wore a pinstriped navy blue suit. In my mind this projected strength and authority, plus HE WAS A MAN! I did not know the difference between a L.C.S.W., M.F.C. or Ph.D. or what schooling it took to achieve these positions, or what kind of power each position carried. To me each one was a DOCTOR because they were taking care of me. The man I happened to be seeing was a LCSW. He had me call him "Dr. So-N-So," which I didn't know was unethical or maybe even against the law until just recently.

I don't remember much about the therapy itself. I do know that he did bio-feedback in a dark room. But instead of putting the strap-on mechanism on my forehead to measure my stress he said that I held

my stress in other parts of my body and strapped it to other parts of my body..hmmm. He bought me a vibrating pillow for my neck at my desk at work, but suggested that I sit on it, as he slightly grinned. He made me a pumpkin pie with cream cheese on the bottom for my birthday, with his own hands, and took me to his car to show me his new sound system. I lost time there. I lost time behind his desk.

I can't remember the things that happened. I do know that he gave me some off-the-wall sexual type diagnosis. I guess I was supposed to be proud of that diagnosis, because he said only 1 out of 10 women were this way. I had no idea what was going on. I didn't know until about 10 years later when my "system" was falling apart.

My marriage was on the Fritz and I sought help. This time I looked up a psychologist..YEAH, a PhD. Someone who had his doctorate. Plus, my medical doctor had put me on anti-depressants. I had no idea at the time that I would be with this therapist for a very long time.

I first saw him in 1989 and then came back to him when I had a complete nervous breakdown in 1991. I was diagnosed with MPD in 1992 and divorced from my husband of nearly 20 years in 1993. I also resigned from my job around that time after many years of employment.

This therapist was very good to me and my system. He was the one who helped Us figure out that the former therapist abused Us. Yes, he sexually abused Us and I, myself, had no idea that this had happened. But my insiders did. With the help of this therapist WE filled out all of the appropriate forms to all of the right organizations and psychiatric and medical associations to turn the first therapist in for his abuses--only to find out that he had already had his licenses to practice in the state of

California taken away. Along with that information I was sent the reports of six other women who had turned him in. I could not believe the things he had done to them. I still do not remember all he did to me and I really don't want to go there. I was told my only recourse was to take him to civil court for damages. But I was in no shape to go to court at that time.

You would think that the nice PhD I was with would be my saving grace. I know I did. WE all grew to totally trust him. He got to know ALL of Us. When I lived alone and the only insurance coverage I had was MediCal/Medicare because I was now on disability he agreed to write off my co-pays and accept my Medicare payments as payment in full. We got into some really intense stuff. I was very suicidal at times and in and out of psych hospitals or county facilities in crisis much of the time. I even went for two planned stays at Del Amo Hospital in Torrance, CA, which specializes in working with Dissociative Disorders, RA and SRA.

The second time I went, when it was time for discharge planning, he agreed to the plan on the phone. But when We got back the first thing he hit Us with was finances, money. He wouldn't even talk about Our work We had done at Del Amo until We agreed to pay him "IN FULL" for whatever Medicare denied as unnecessary.

But I used to be employed by a well known insurance company that worked with Medicare and knew about payments. The only reason they would deny something as unnecessary is if he would not back it up with notes proving the necessity. I signed his document that he was requiring me to sign, but I also wrote on it that I expected him to write notes to Medicare to indicate necessity.

In 1996 I remarried. This therapist did not want me to be with the man I married. I asked him to let me have

him in one of my sessions and he refused. My fiance was going to be part of my life and it is my session. I pointed this out, but the therapist still refused.

By this time he seemed angry with me at every session. He was saying that WE were resistant. But it was him. He never ever went back to the work WE did at Del Amo. It was Our SRA work. WE had dug up and worked on so much and now WE had to bury it deep. WE moved 50 miles away and still drove to Our appointments. WE were still being told WE were resistant.

I think WE were only resistant to the way he had changed. Money was more important than Our well being. The 50 mile trip one-way became too dangerous and WE told him WE had to look for a new therapist in the city (WE lived in the mountains before).

WE found a therapist just to fill the gap until WE could find one that maybe knew what he or she was doing. In the mean time WE received an \$800 billing from our former therapist that WE had seen from 1989-1997. We were really upset about the billing and wrote back to prove that WE did not owe him.

In reply he sent Us a bill covering the entire time WE were on MediCal/Medicare, billing Us for the \$800 plus all of the co-pays that he had written off during all of those years. The bill was in the thousands of dollars. I was so shocked and so hurt. My system went into a deep depression. The "littles" missed him so much and I had hoped to keep in touch with him. But he was threatening to sue me.

I wrote to Medicare as he was a Medicare-approved practitioner and I felt as though he was being abusive. I had kept copies of all of his letters and billings. I sent him carbon copies of everything and told him it was in Medicare's hands now and I would abide by whatever they said. Guess what!! I won!! They said in some cases therapists can choose to write off co-pay as long as they don't make it a common practice and since he had done this, he could not come back and bill me at this late date. In fact in the final outcome, he owed

them \$40.00.

I decided to try a Baptist Minister who had learned a lot about D.I.D. I had tried all the secular stuff and I felt like my trust had been stepped on and stomped in the ground. This guy was younger and seemed hip and understanding. He was open minded. I needed to try to reach for the Higher Power (I know now that doesn't necessarily mean it has to be through a specific religion or church.)

Anyway, this also ended up terribly. I put my trust in him. We had counseling at the church in the afternoons twice a week. He was great. But I found out that he shared my story with a couple of other women in the church and before you knew it had about four multiples in a small church. Now what do you think are the chances of that? Sounds a little fishy to me.

That's not the end of it. The end of it is, he had me reading books on Deliverance and such. One night he and his wife came over to my house. He had been in touch with my husband, too. My husband would do anything to help me if I asked him to, so he went along with it. The minister performed an exorcism on me with my husband and the minister's wife holding me down. It was terrible and frightening.

Therapists later down the line said that it was re-traumatization. I agree totally. I found out that he shared all of this with people in the congregation. My trust was gone. I left the church. I have not been able to go back to any church since then. But this has not shaken my belief in a Higher Power.

I did not give up on therapists. I knew I needed a therapist to stay alive. I finally found a great one. Her name was Deanna. She was very knowledgeable in the field of dissociation and kind. She had a huge white board that took up an entire wall in her office that she had drawn the different stages of dissociation so that her patients\clients could better understand where they were at. Of course WE were at the severe end of the spectrum.

And she had STUFFIES! It took

Us an entire year to finally begin to trust Deanna at all. We weren't very healthy at the time and had to go in for surgery. It happened that she needed some surgery then, too. She had a small growth near her spine. She came back to her office before WE did. When WE came back she told Us she was fine.

I had made her a book of all of Our poetry. We have a book called "She Has Always Been Different," with years of poetry in it, all printed on green paper. I also trusted her with a book of portraits that Our artist sketched of several of the AllWithin (that is the name of Our system.) Most importantly, there was a doll that represented "The Essence," the child that was in the womb, that was never abused. The doll looked like a real baby sleeping.

Deanna had a huge stuffed lion in her office and she let Us put "The Essence" curled up with the lion to protect her. I went into surgery again. When I came back Deanna wasn't there. I called and called. It was September. I/We have a very difficult time in the autumn. It was November before someone finally called me back and that was after a very frantic call I made that I was in crisis. The return call was left on my answering machine. It was a voice I did not know. Deanna had died. The growth she had was cancer. She died September 20th and no one ever told Us. We called and called again to see about getting Our things back. But her office had been emptied and all of Our things were gone, "Essence" was GONE!! Deanna was dead..how could that be? She never said that she was sick? We never got to say good-bye.

Now abandonment really came into the picture and I sought a therapist who would be covered by my husband's insurance. Believe it or not, I found one. She wasn't the greatest but she could help me get by for awhile, I thought.

I was wrong. A couple of months into therapy I came into my appointment and she was fighting back tears. I asked her if she was OK. She told me she was fine. But she continued to sniffle. Of course I

Continued on Page 6

Not a Game, Cont'd

thought I had done something wrong because that is just the way I am wired. I thought I had to make it right, I had to help her.. Can you say "transference?" She totally broke down right in front of me...a complete breakdown. I was crying too. I worried about her. I went home damaged again.

I made an appointment hoping I would come back and she would be OK. The office kept saying she was coming back...but she never did.

I found out later that the morning she had broke down that her husband had just asked for a divorce. She should have known better for her patient's sake, NOT to come to work. Therapists are trained to be in touch with their own emotions. She should have known better than to come to work that day. What she did just in showing up was abusive.

The next therapist was wise enough to tell me that I was beyond her scope of expertise. Hey..it hurt. But she helped me find the place where I have been ever since.

I have been with my current therapist just over 2 years. She is a member of the ISSD (now ISSTD) and goes to different seminars all over the country to stay up to date on ego state training, etc. She is great with D.I.D.

But with all I/WE have been through it is so hard to let down Our guard and let her in. WE want to work in therapy. WE really do. WE know someday WE will get there.....Healed.

The body is 51 years old now, my children are grown and I have grandchildren. I/WE will never give up this journey to Our truth..to Ourselves.....plus I/WE know there is hope. We are MUCH better, We have not been hospitalized for psych reasons in over 10 years and have not self injured in about that much time too. I/WE want to LIVE!!!!

By the way, be your own health advocate for psychiatrists too. Don't let them over-medicate you just to keep you quiet. Look into the medications they are prescribing. I walked around in a medicated fog for 3 years. I'll never do it again.

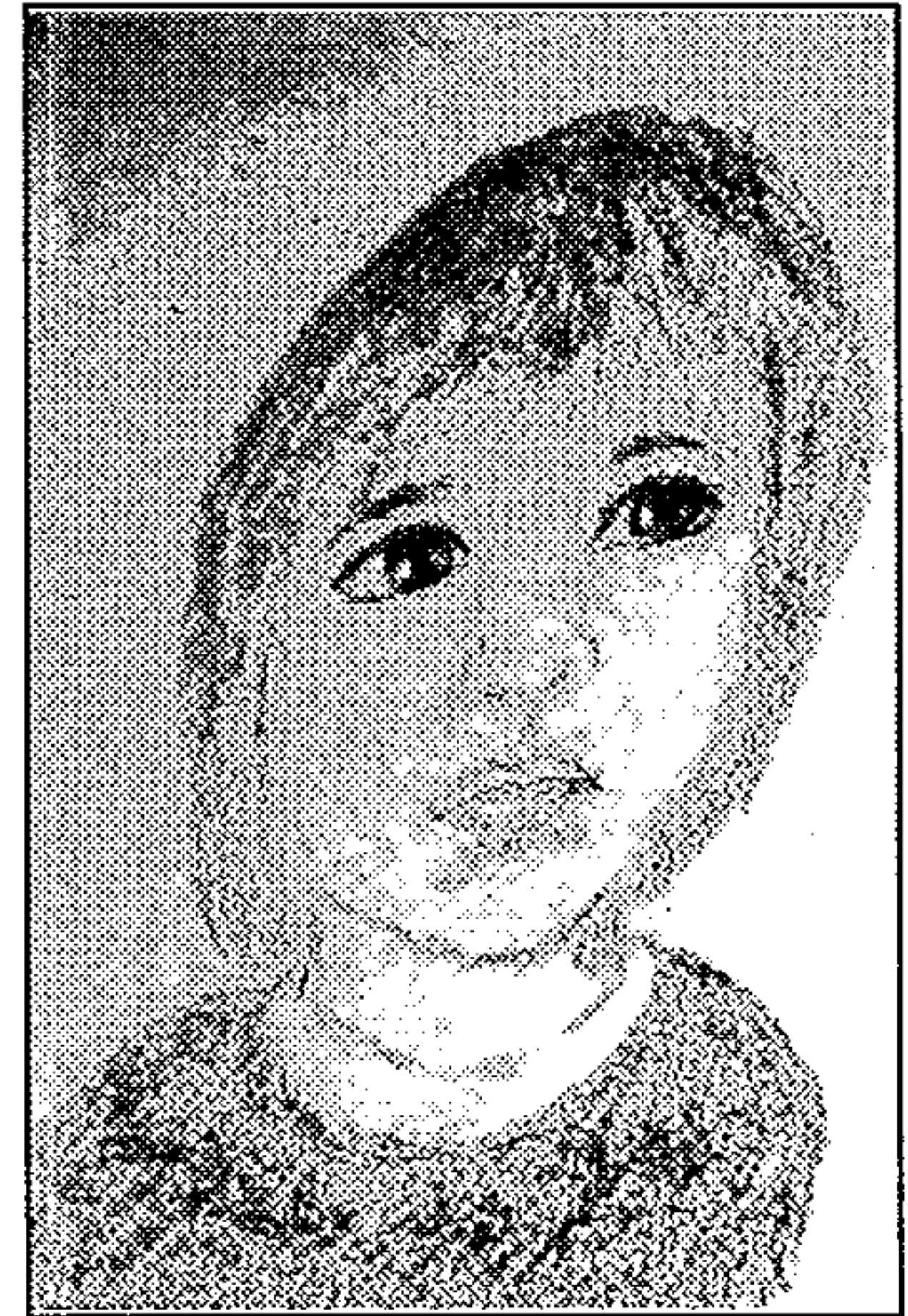
MV**The Face**

Do you see the child's face, my brother
with sorrows words cannot speak?
Abandoned by father, abused by mother,
The life she lives ever so bleak.
While others play outside, so free of care
She cooks the meals and washes the floor.
Nobody knows what goes on in there
When stepfather locks her bedroom door.

The face that should laugh and smile
Is tear-stained and forlorn.
The child behind the face all the while
Wishes she had never been born.
Wanting to sit on mother's lap
She's pushed from her desired seat.
"Don't touch me!" is followed by a slap,
"Like corpses are your hands and feet!"

To God she cries out in all her pain
Yet her childlike faith is mocked.
Is she calling out in vain?
Like hers, is His door locked?
Where is her mother and protector
In whom she ought to trust?
Has the woman been a defector
And sacrificed her child to her husband's lust?

What manner of mental sickness
Can cause familial bonds to fray,
And blood's lessening thickness
While "water" has his way?
The cries of the girl are heard through the years
As she struggles her life to maintain.
When memories come, so do the tears
And she slowly goes insane.



Do you see the woman's face, my brother?
Of her sorrows she can finally speak.
She can share the memories of her mother.
She is strong where she once was weak.
While others pass by, seemingly free of care,
She does the laundry and washes the floor.
She has finally learned it is okay to share,
And walk the path she was afraid to before.

*By Jackie B.*MV**Dissociation- Pros & Cons**

Dissociating is a problem for us in many ways. Reading a book, different people take turns and no one gets the whole story. Someone makes a lunch date or a doctor appointment but never tells the rest of us. So embarrassing!

On the upside, when some of us are depressed, the "littles" find all kinds of reasons to smile and be happy.

*By Sally B.*MV

Celebrating Life!

By Wendy K.

We have been getting waxed (legs, bikini line and underarms) for a long time. People usually take some kind of pain killer before they go, but we haven't had to.

One day when I was there, the technician said to me, "This is hurting you more than it usually does." I said, "Oh," took a deep breath, and slowly released the body.

She looked at me in amazement and said, "How did you do that? Can you teach me to do that? That would be so valuable for clients!"

I said, "I'm sorry, but it's something that you learn very young, like before 5 years old."

She was very disappointed, and we smiled inside – yet another benefit of being MPD. We still have to remember to do that when we go, and when we go to massage, we have to remember to relax, and we do so much better. At the chiropractor, too.

We are starting to remember to just do it in life. We are so used to holding life so tightly, and not being able to release it, and it's lovely to be able to relax once in a while, drop something, make a mistake, and know it's just life – not the end of the world.

I remember when I was going through a very difficult time in life, and for the first time lost the gas cap off my car. Then it happened again, and we lost the oil cap too. (We started buying two at a time.) It was so hard to not beat ourselves up. We were visiting a friend who we really respected, who's mono, and she said, "Oh, yeah, I lose about 10 a year."

We remind ourselves that mono's aren't perfect, and we don't have to be either. We cannot multitask all the time, and do everything perfectly. Nobody else can either.

When we were first identified (we actually did most of that ourselves) and our therapist said, "Don't tell your children," we did anyway, and they came up with the most wonderful positive qualities that apply to being MPD —like if you go to a theme park, and a young part wants to go on a

ride, the body's big enough, and you can.

I've raised children as a single parent, gone to graduate school while doing that, work for myself full time, and nearly own my house now. If I could only get my adult children to move out soon, so there's just me and my dogs, I'd be in heaven (or as close to it as I can come on earth).

I have a wide variety of interests, and things that I can do and like to do. I have limited time in which to do them, but we often do and plan them inside so that we don't have to do it out here, or it takes a lot less time. We quilt, sew, knit, crochet, draw, colour, airbrush, and generally do crafts.

Through contact with other multiples, we've become much more well-rounded inside, and set aside time to do the things we like. We like our job too. We have goals, but they are long term, and we know that if we start measuring now for kitchen cupboards, and looking at them in the store, and it's not done for five years, that's okay. Little steps along the way.

We learned that from SARK (www.planetsark.com). We keep trying to learn. When we're 65, you can go to university for free in our area, so we will go back part-time, and just enjoy learning at a pace we want. We are creating a list for what we would like to do. We appreciate being able to share with others out here who are on the journey. We love our gay friends, and the acceptance they have offered, when others have not.

We love that no one of us has to do life out here all the time. We love taking things that we see and would like inside, so that we don't have to spend the money. We love being able to have the children out, and switch in safety, without fear, and we love it when our adult children buy things that are nurturing to the children inside, and allow them to be validated and loved (my younger daughter says that it's easier to buy for the children, and you get a much better reaction –

she's right). We love being able to share pain, and pleasure, and we really love the support of other parts.

It's taken a long time to get here, and a lot of work, but as I keep telling myself and my mentees, you need to celebrate every little success along the way, and relax into any hiatus that comes up.

You need to just take the chance to get ready for the next part of the journey, and you'll be okay.

I love the wonderful toys that are available now (they keep making new Elmo's that do different things, and we have a Winnie the Pooh that snores). I love the influx of children's fantasy books – *Harry Potter*, *Lemony Snicket*, *Spiderwick Chronicles*, *Septimus Heap* books – and the wonderful movies that have brought things like *Narnia* and the *Lord of the Rings* to life. We read them for years, and now we get to see them, and almost be inside. We love being able to fix things, and plan to do things we'd like to do. We love, and cherish time to ourselves.

I've wanted to write this for a long time, so thanks to Daniel, who still writes our papers inside, we can sit down and type them out. You're a blessing! As is everyone else in here. We love you all and we need you all. And thanks to Mary vanderVeenan who walked with us on the first part of this journey, and encouraged us immeasurably at that time. She still is an encouragement to us.

Thanks to our outside kids too – Gillian & Laura. They have gone through a lot of growing pains with us, and they're still here, and one of them always holds my hand through the scary part of movies we go to together.

We didn't know it was possible, but we love life, and who we are, and the way we are, and do life. It gets better all the time! We wouldn't have it any other way. We love God, who knew before the foundations of the world, what we would experience, and planned a way for us to be, and be whole.

Mermaid

I, a mermaid in the sea of despair
was lost and alone with no one to care.
Battered and bruised, inside and out.
Enduring atrocity without a sound.

Going away in my mind deep inside,
I created an inner world where I could hide.
Far from the pain and the shame and the blame,
I became a new person, took on a new name.

Layers on layers I built to survive
an intricate network to keep me alive.
A rotating person, a revolving door.
A mommy, a baby, a killer, a whore.

I took on their sex and their rage and their hate,
turned it inside, made a sweet girl called Kate.
I took on their lust of power, for greed,
turned it inside, made a girl called Sweet Pea.

While outside my life was a "living hell,"
inside I kept secrets with no one to tell.
I wrote down each victim, each murderous act.
Kept every name, recorded all facts.

In honor of each one who lived and who died,
I created a sea of tears never cried.
But wall upon wall, behind lock and key,
kept away safe was the innocent me!

Far from the dark evil deeds of the night,
wrapped up in wonder, bathed in the light.
In silence I waited to be brought to the now.
Though I didn't know when and I didn't know how.

But ever so slowly the stories came out.
Some came in a whisper, some came in a shout.
Some came out with sorry, pain and such grief.
Some came on the 'morrow and with such relief!

And little by little the walls went away,
as each one came forward with something to say.
Everyone came with their stories to tell.
Everyone praised for a job done so well.

Each one was different but their goal was the same.
Just keep her alive! Keep her mind sane!
I've been in the fight now for fifteen long years.
I've struggled for life, cried an ocean of tears.

I've beat at the bars of my prison cage,
Squeezed out through the opening, let out the rage.
I've screamed out their guilt and thrown off their shame,
Released all their hate, rejected their blame!

I've refused to believe all the lies told to me.
That I'd never be well. That I'd never be free.
and as truth was spoken I began to let go
of the things that had happened so long ago.

And love found its way down deep in my soul,
mending the cracks, making me whole!
Giving beauty for ashes and joy for the tears,
a tower of safety for a lifetime of fear.
And a wisdom that goes way beyond all my years!

So one thing I've learned from my life's tragedy,
that I love being here, and I love being me.
And there's so much more joy than there ever was pain,
and there's so much more love than there ever was hate!
And there's nothing that's shattered that cannot be healed,
when love comes to save and the truth is revealed!

By Debra Baker

MV

Color!

You may have noticed there is a huge color insert in this issue. This is a first for MV, and I want to explain how it happened.

The artwork is by Pegge Singer. Awhile back, Mark Singer, Pegge's husband, asked if MV ever printed color. I explained that I had purchased a new whoop-t-doo color printer that could handle newsletter-sized sheets as well as smaller ones – but I couldn't afford to run the copies on MV's dime. & besides, most of the

print run is done at a 'real' printer, but the costs for that outfit to print a color page would be huge. So Mark generously covered the cost to have me print this insert. (It's inkjet, so it will run if you spill coffee on it. Don't do that!)

The price Mark paid was much less than Kinko's, but still a lot of \$\$\$. My commercial printer folded and inserted the page into the issue - & VOILA, we have color!

But this is a rarity, folks. With the

miniscule budget I've got for MV, it can't happen unless someone else picks up the charge.

Just BTW, I also have a duplexing laser printer that can print short run booklets, if anyone is interested. But the main print run of MV is – and likely will be forever – printed by a real printing company.

THANKS Mark & Pegge, for a bright new addition to the April 2007 MV!

Lynn W. Editor/Publisher

MV

PEGGE SINGER



My 30 Alters - 1999

Monica, my core alter, was found at this time. She helped me create these colored pencil portraits of her and the rest of my alters.

My 30 Alters - 2000

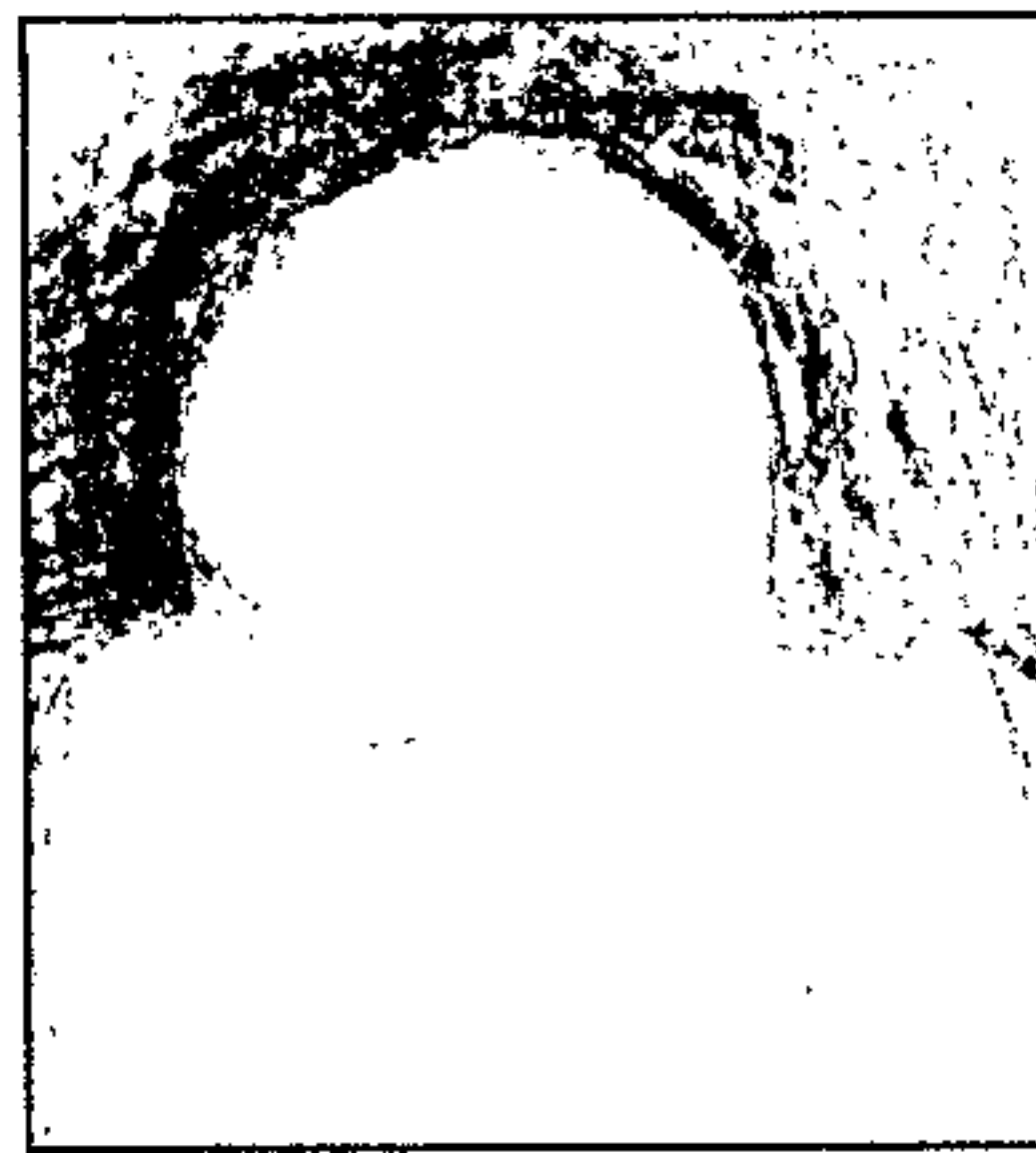
Here are the crayon drawings of my alters which show them as moving forces of energy. Sometimes, I see my alters this way. However, I primarily communicate with them through feelings or internal dialogue.



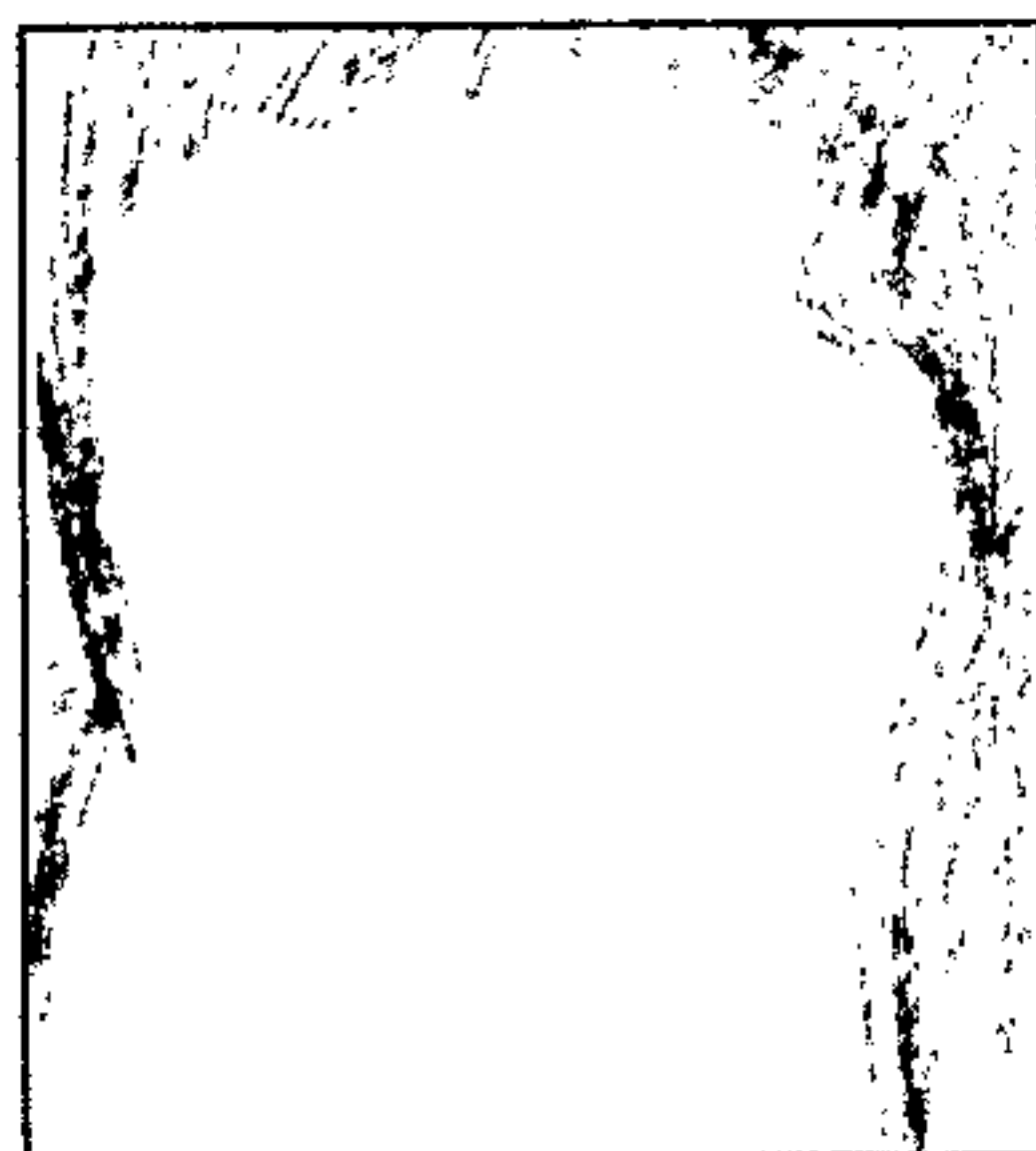
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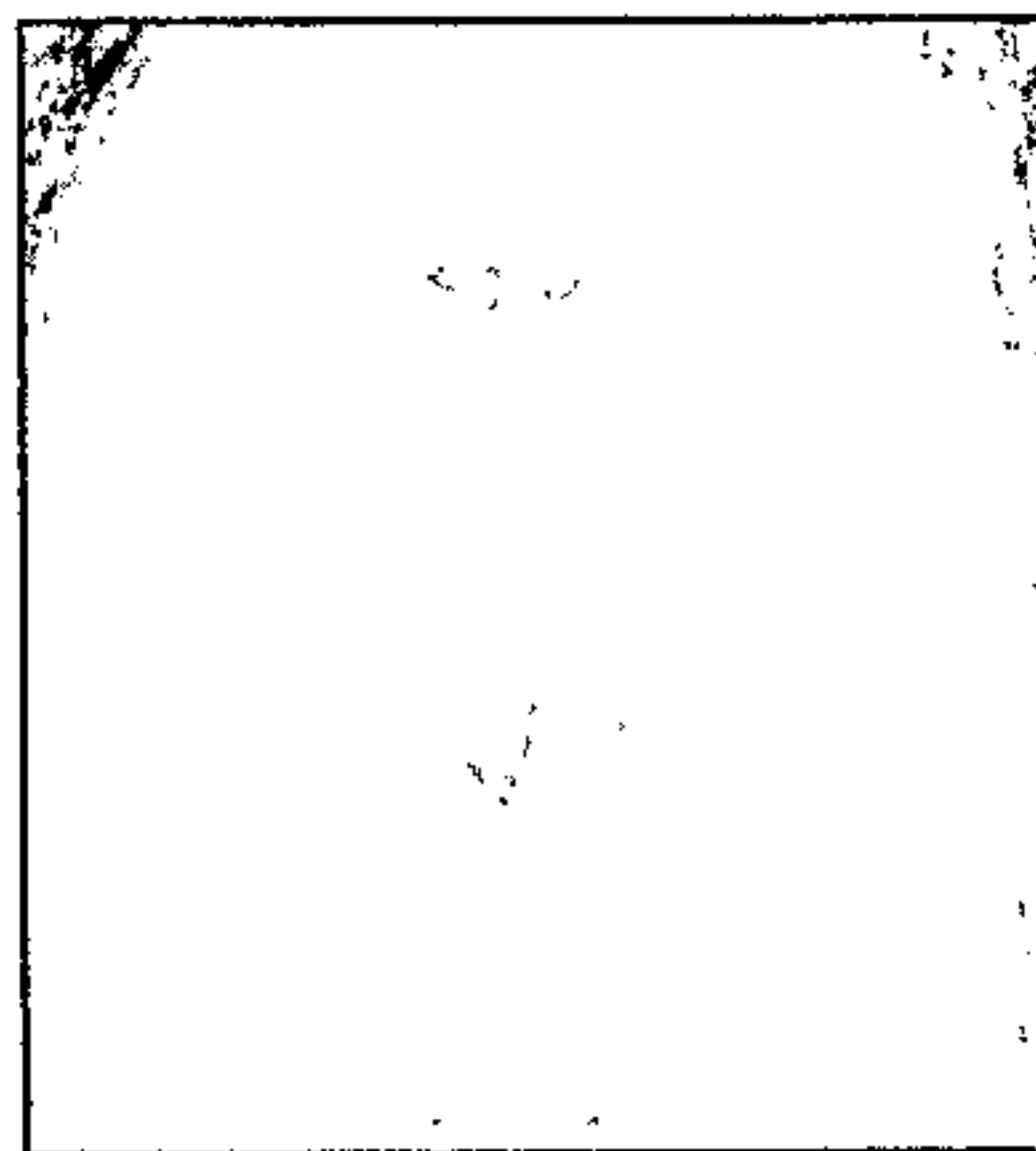
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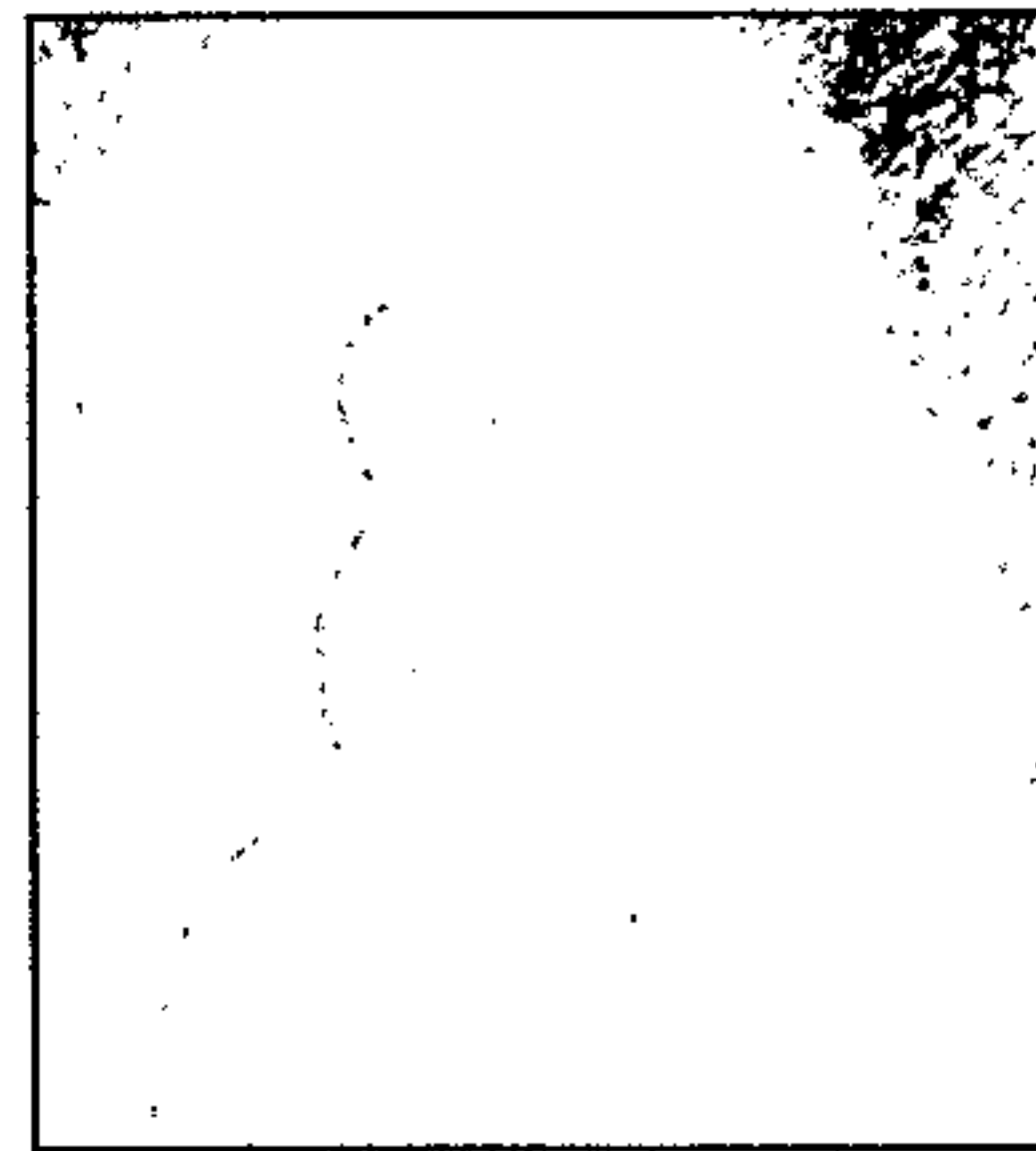
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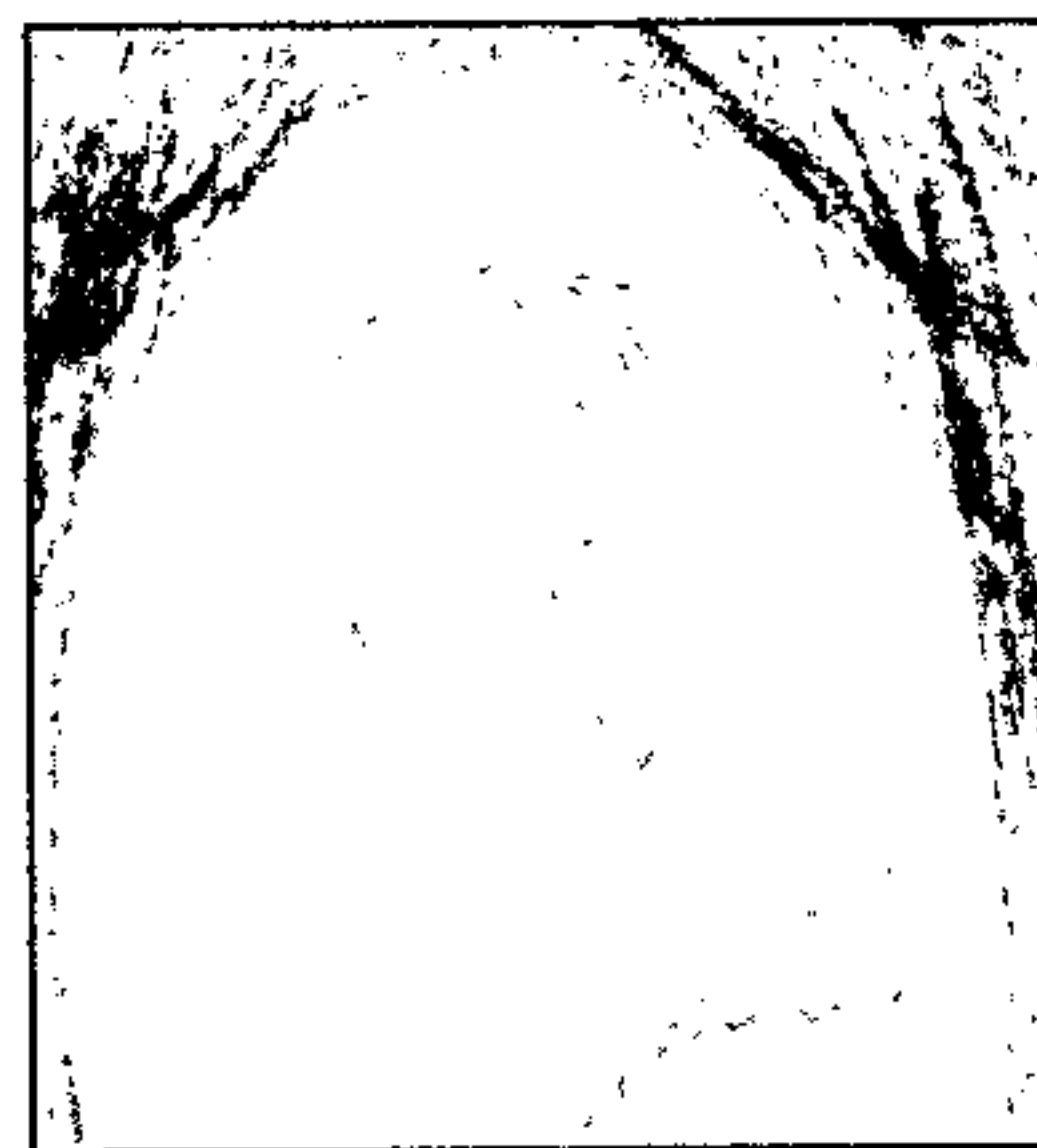
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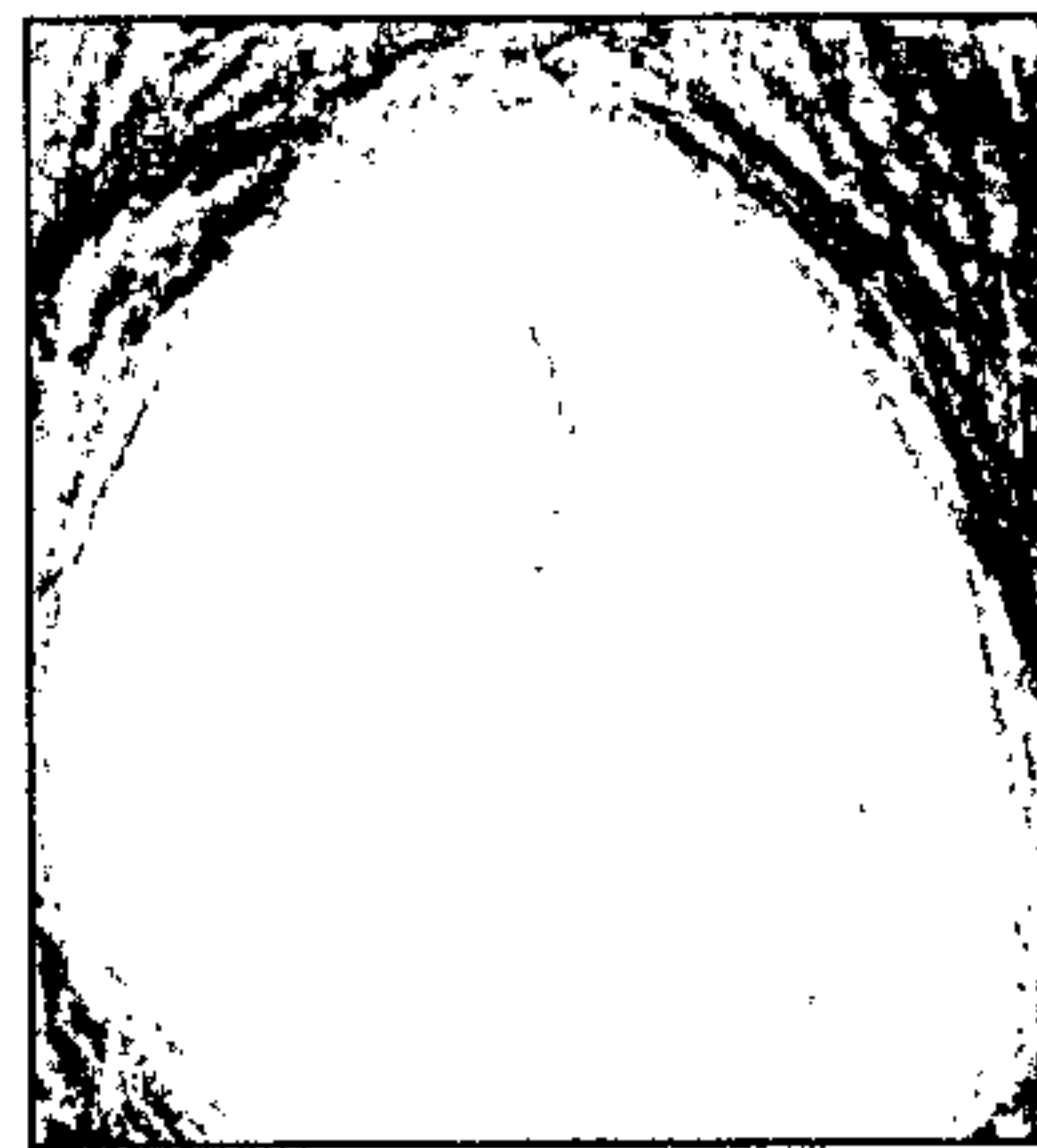
Jasmine



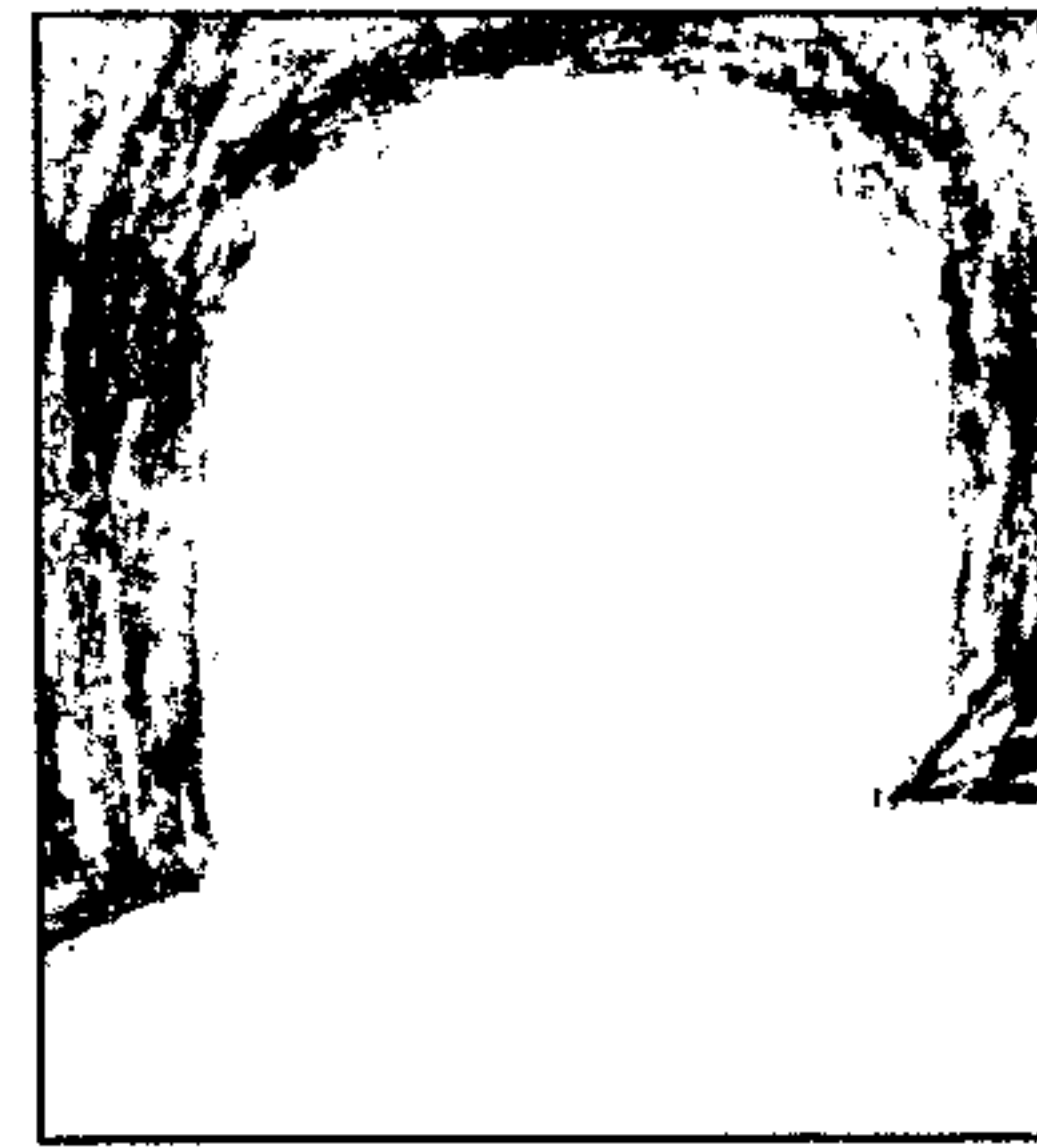
Freeda



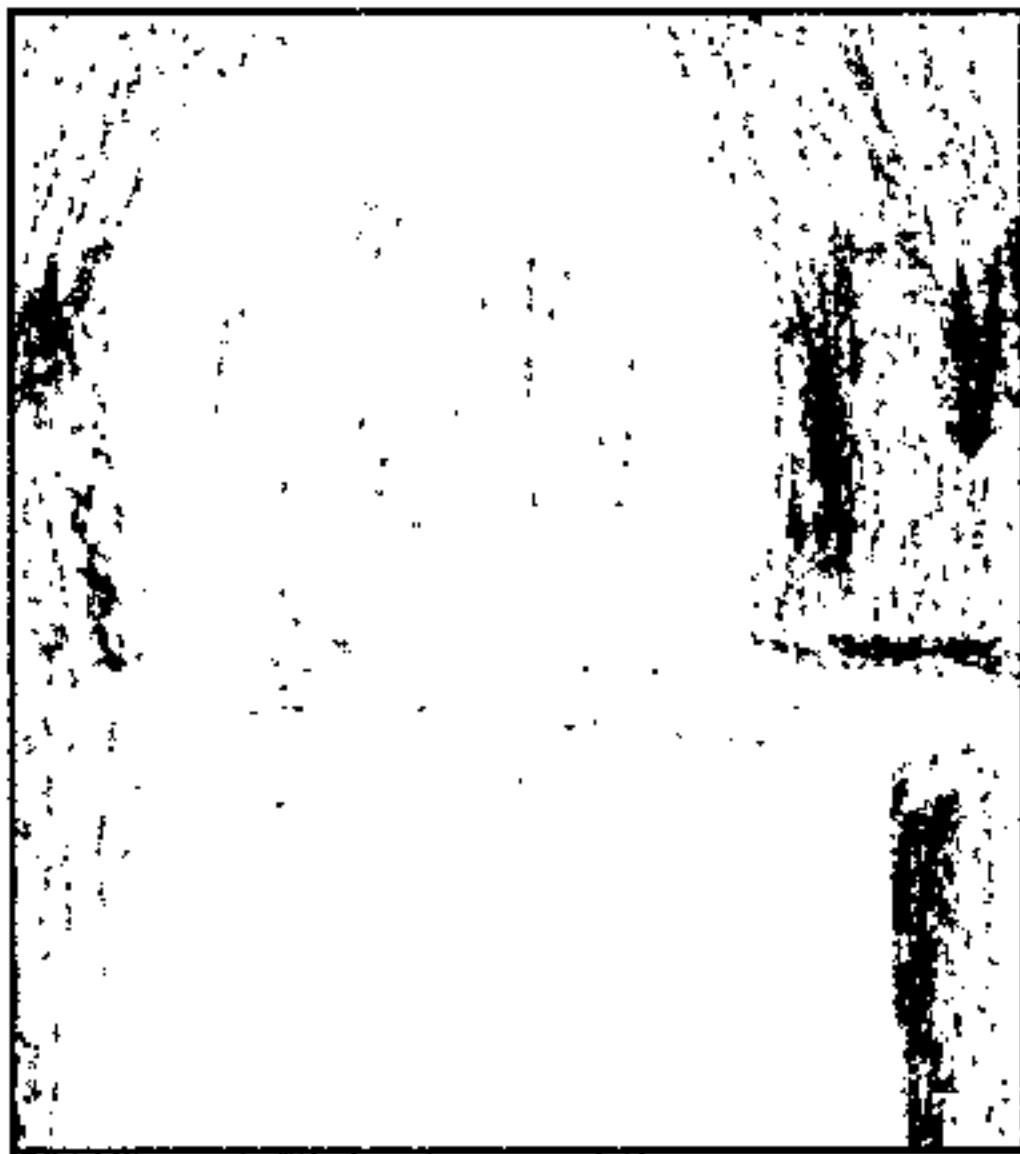
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Helen



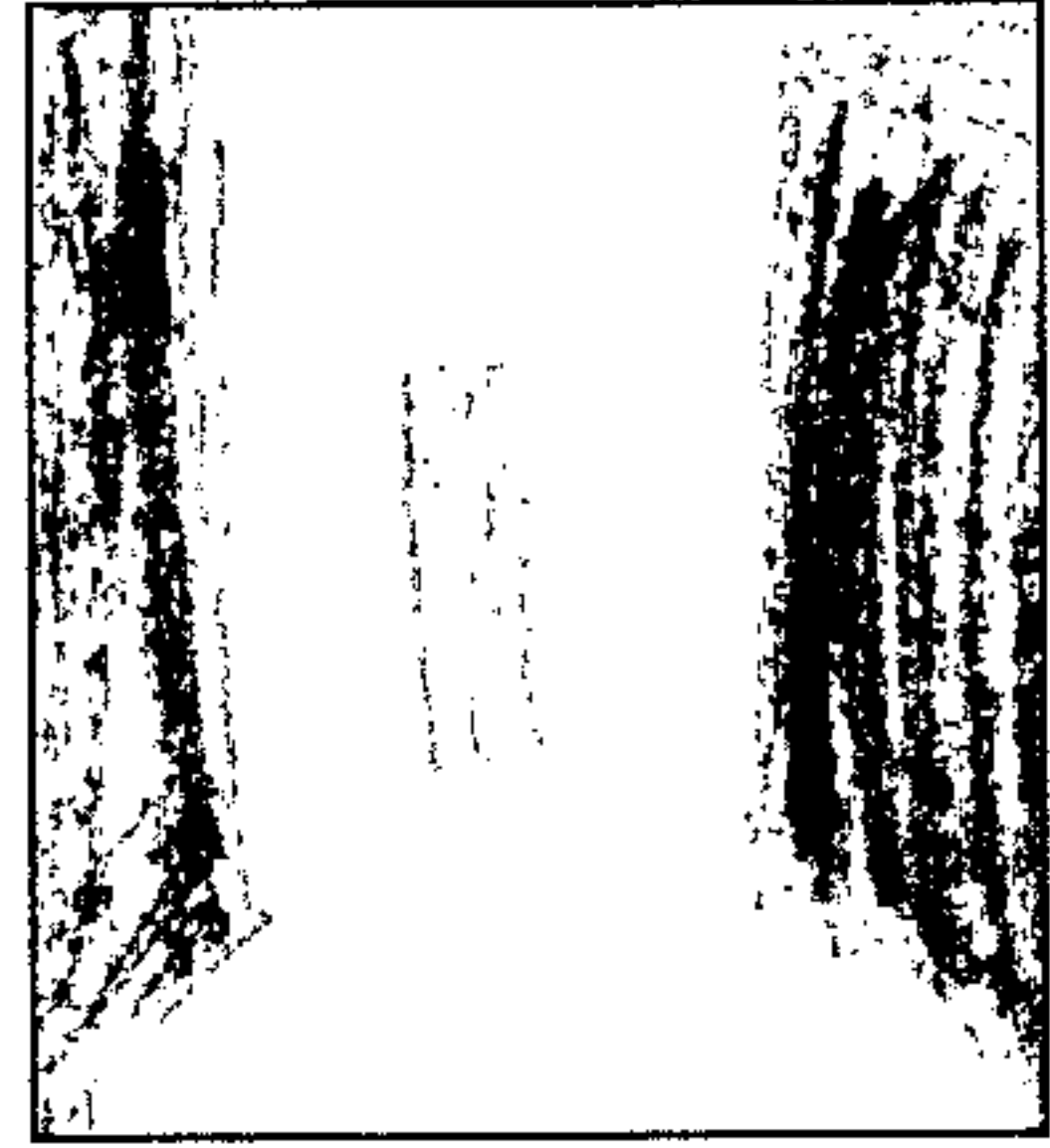
David



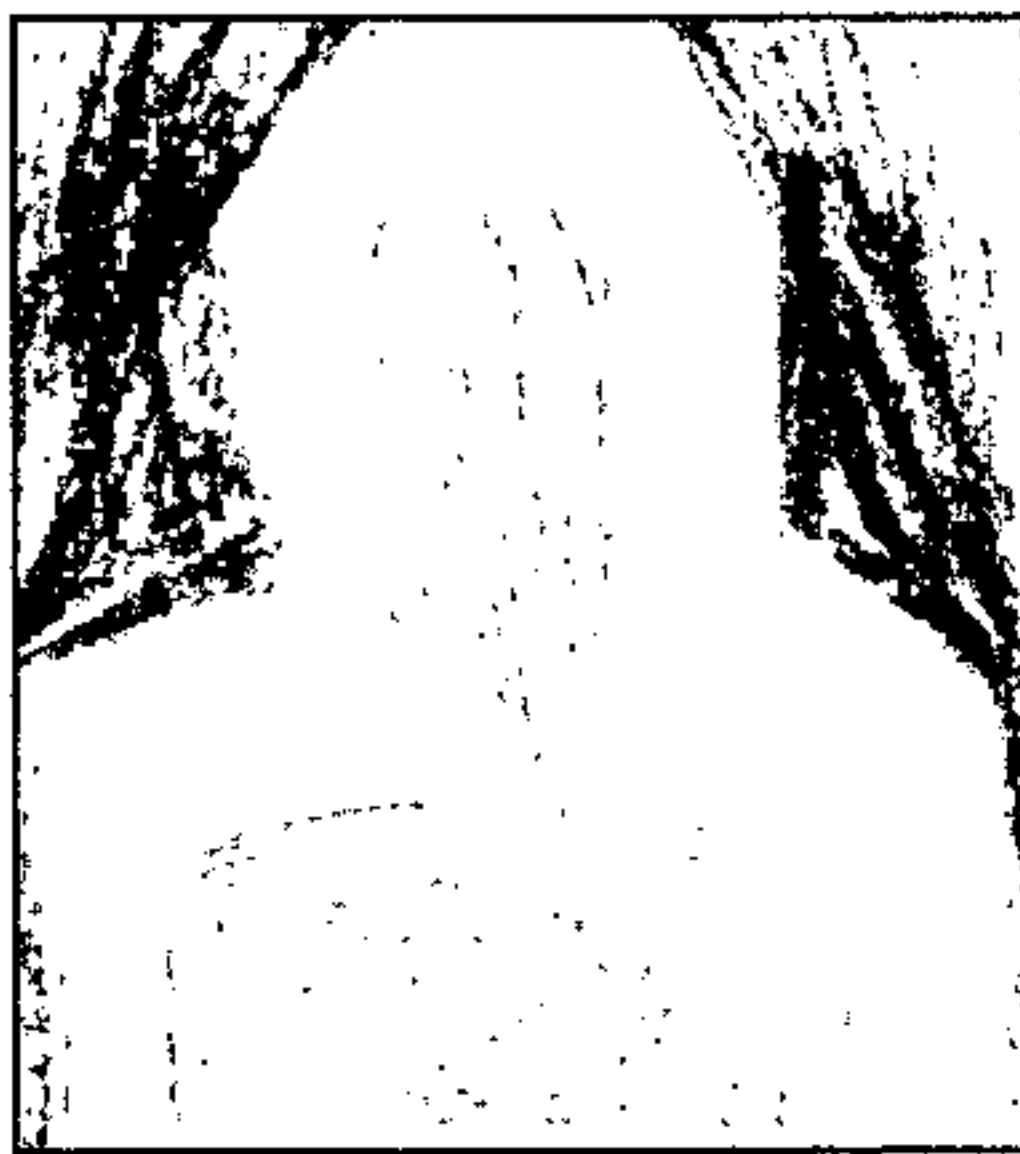
Marshall



Sadie



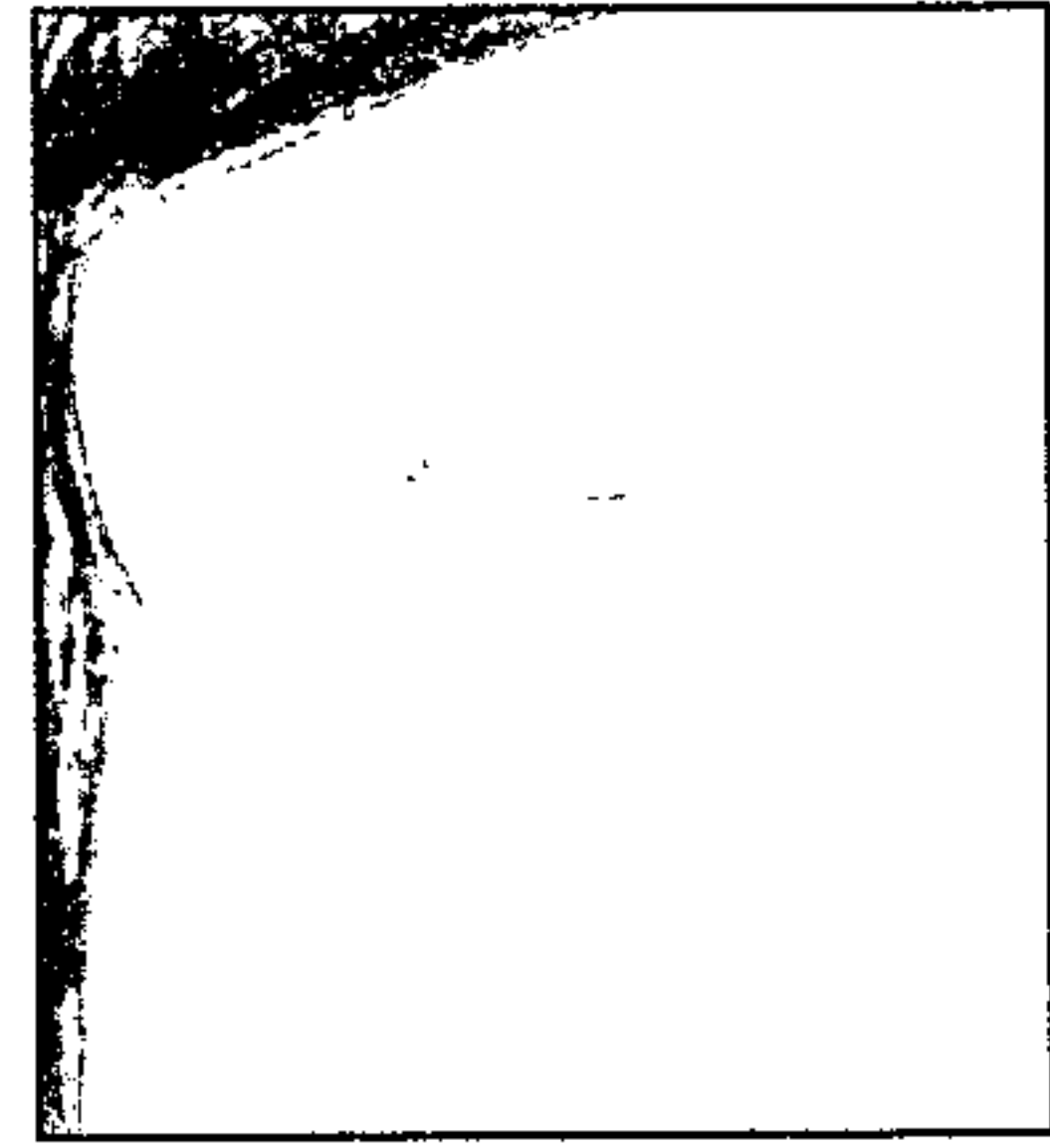
Sally



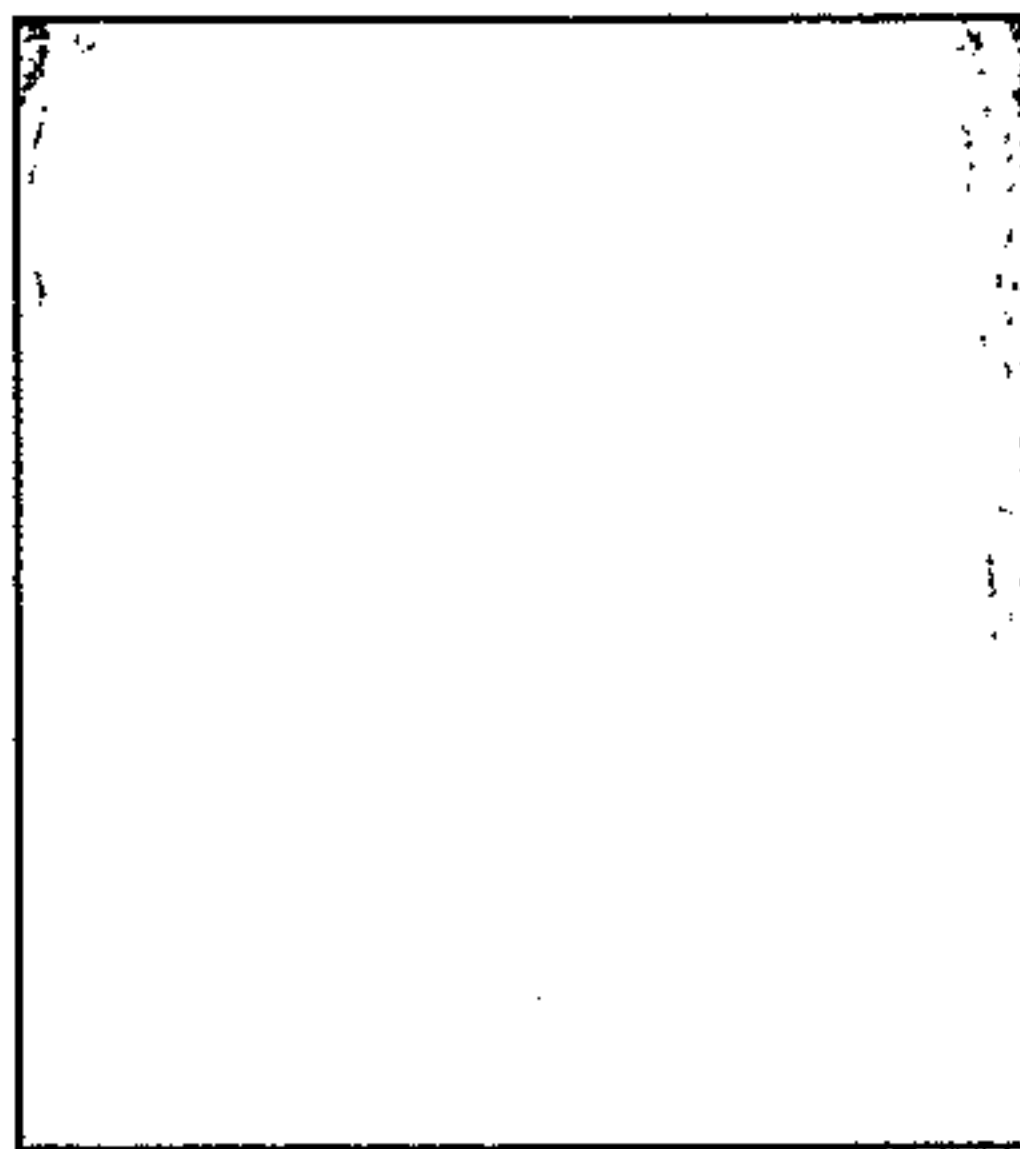
Christopher



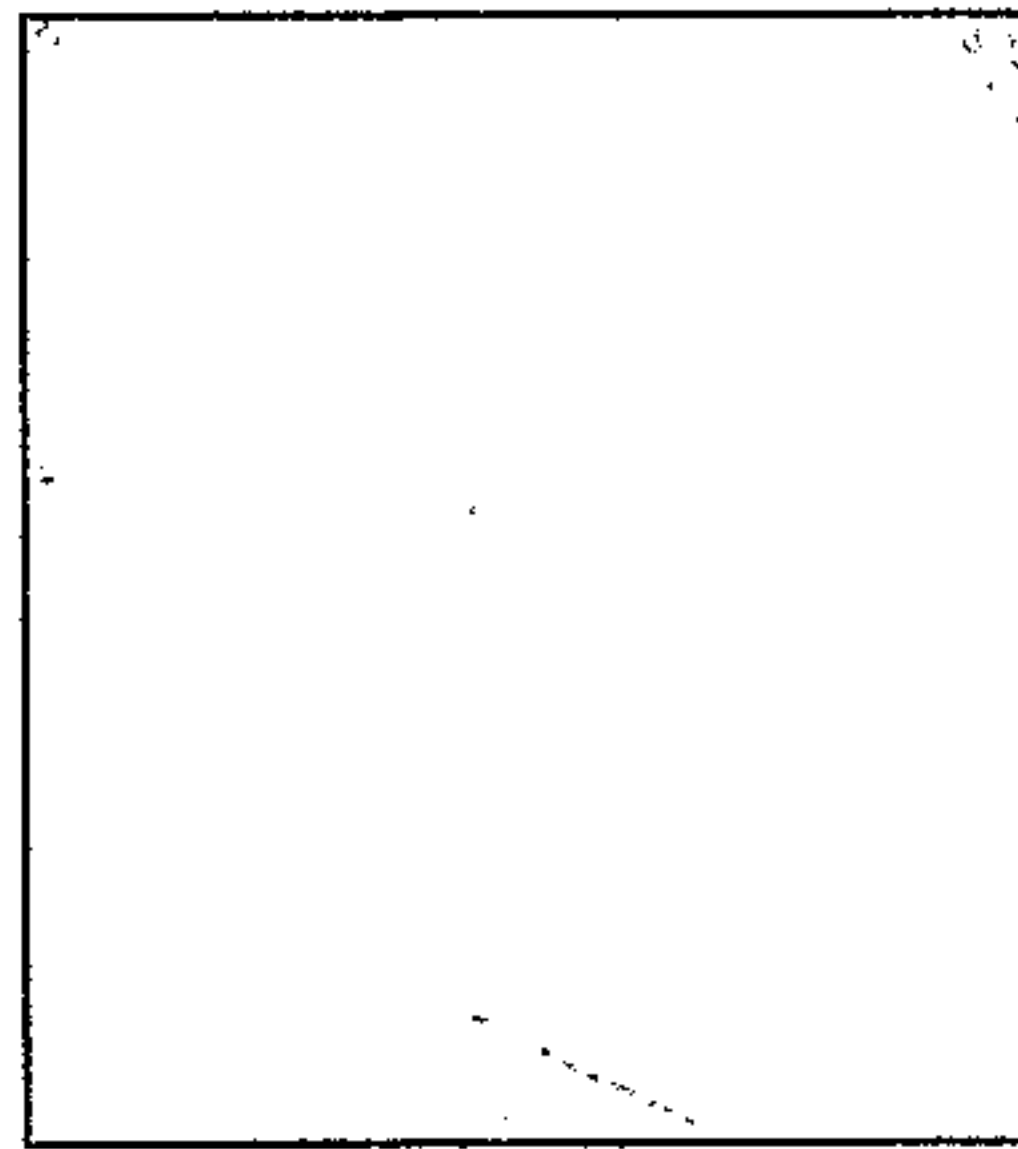
Moses



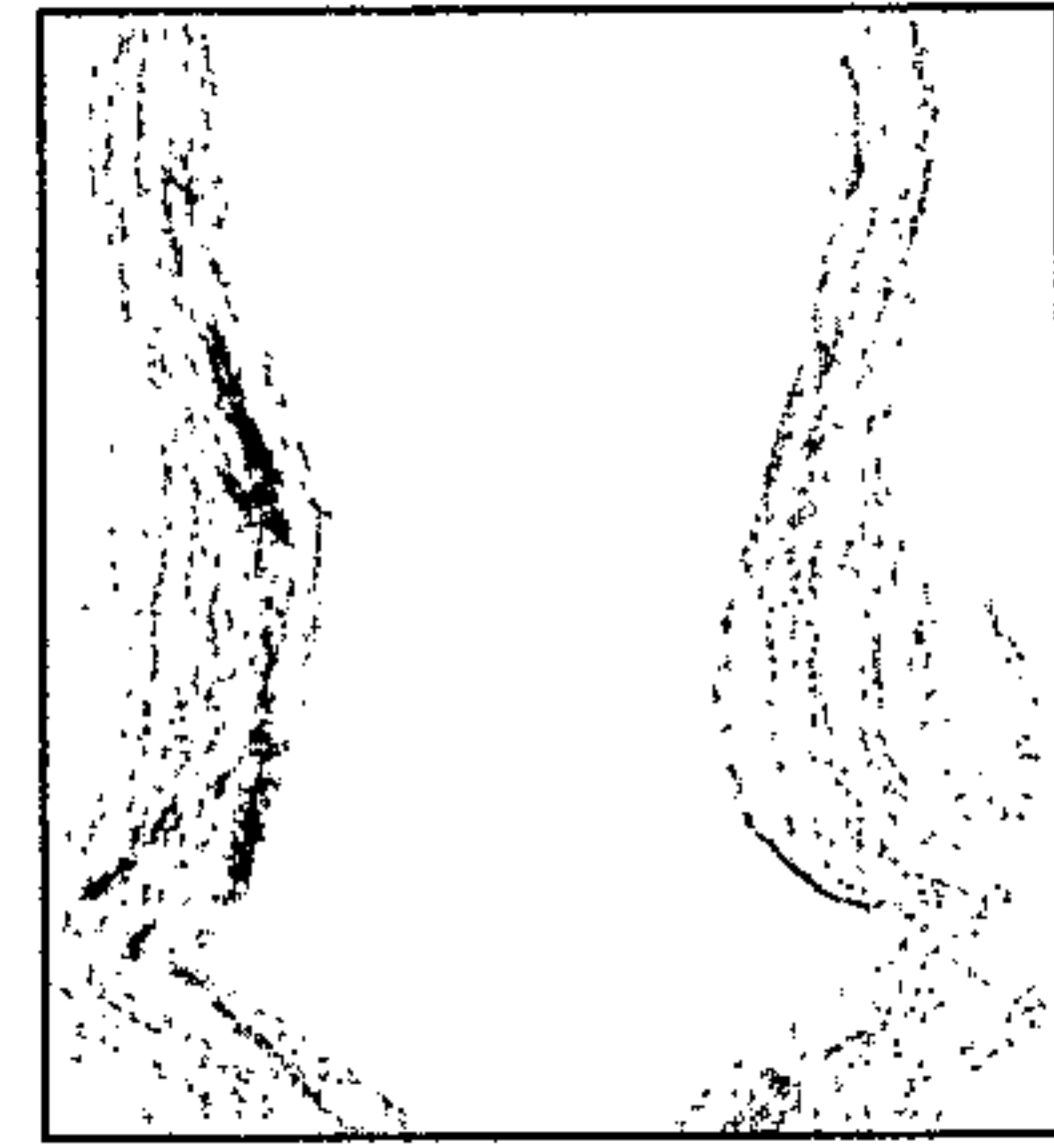
Rita



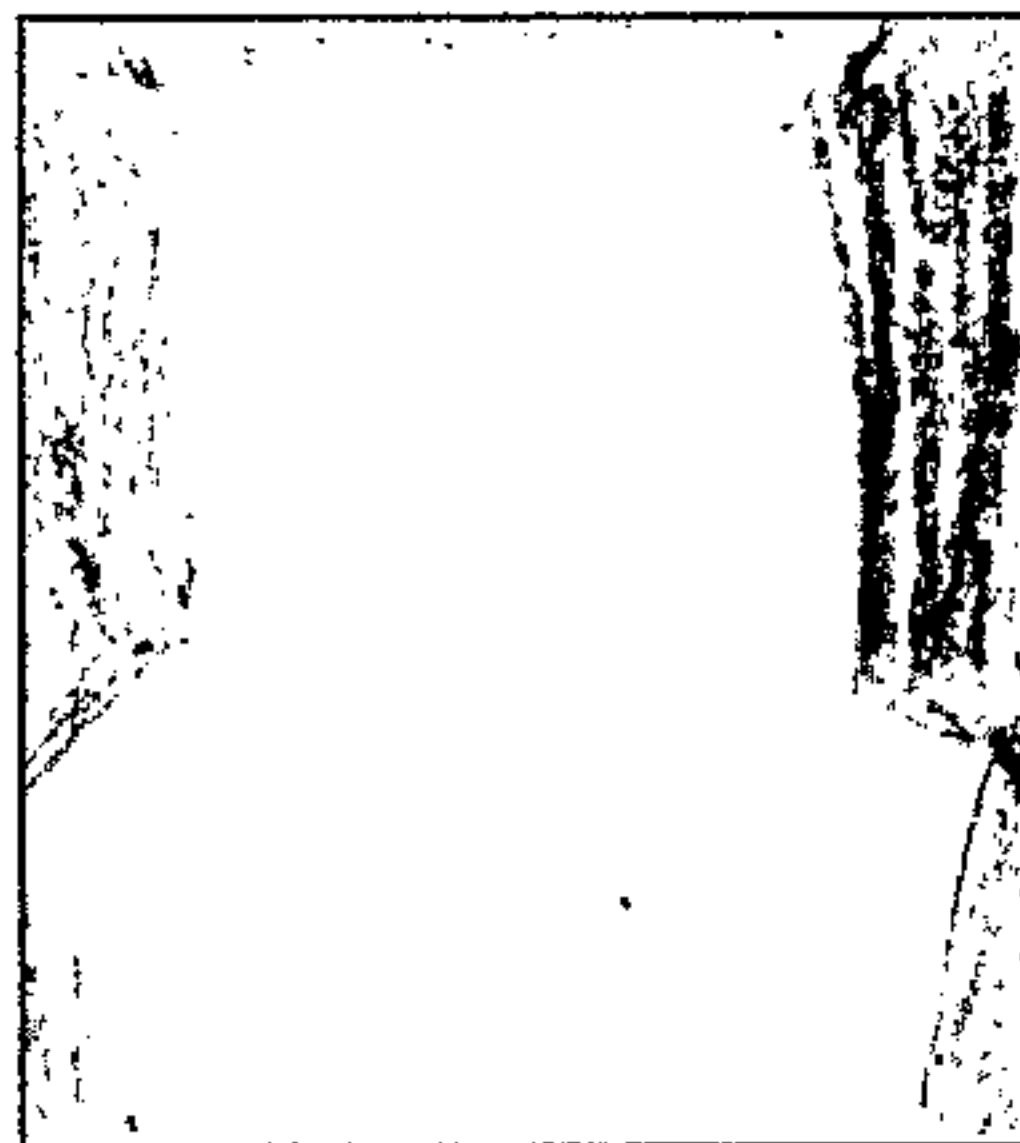
Gloria



Hannah



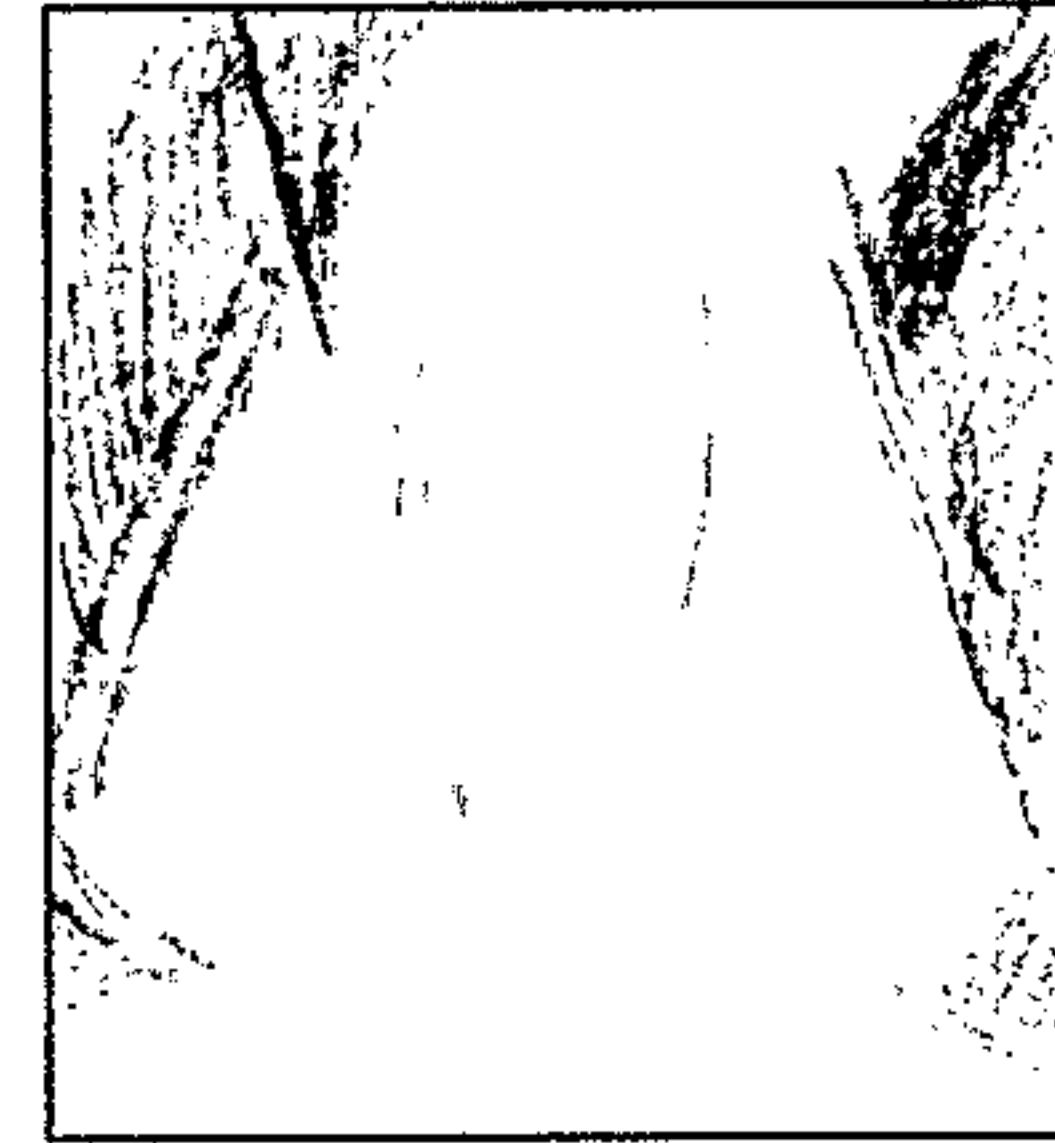
Betty



Grace



Theo



Jane



Catherine



Cora



Tess



Dee Dee



Prudence



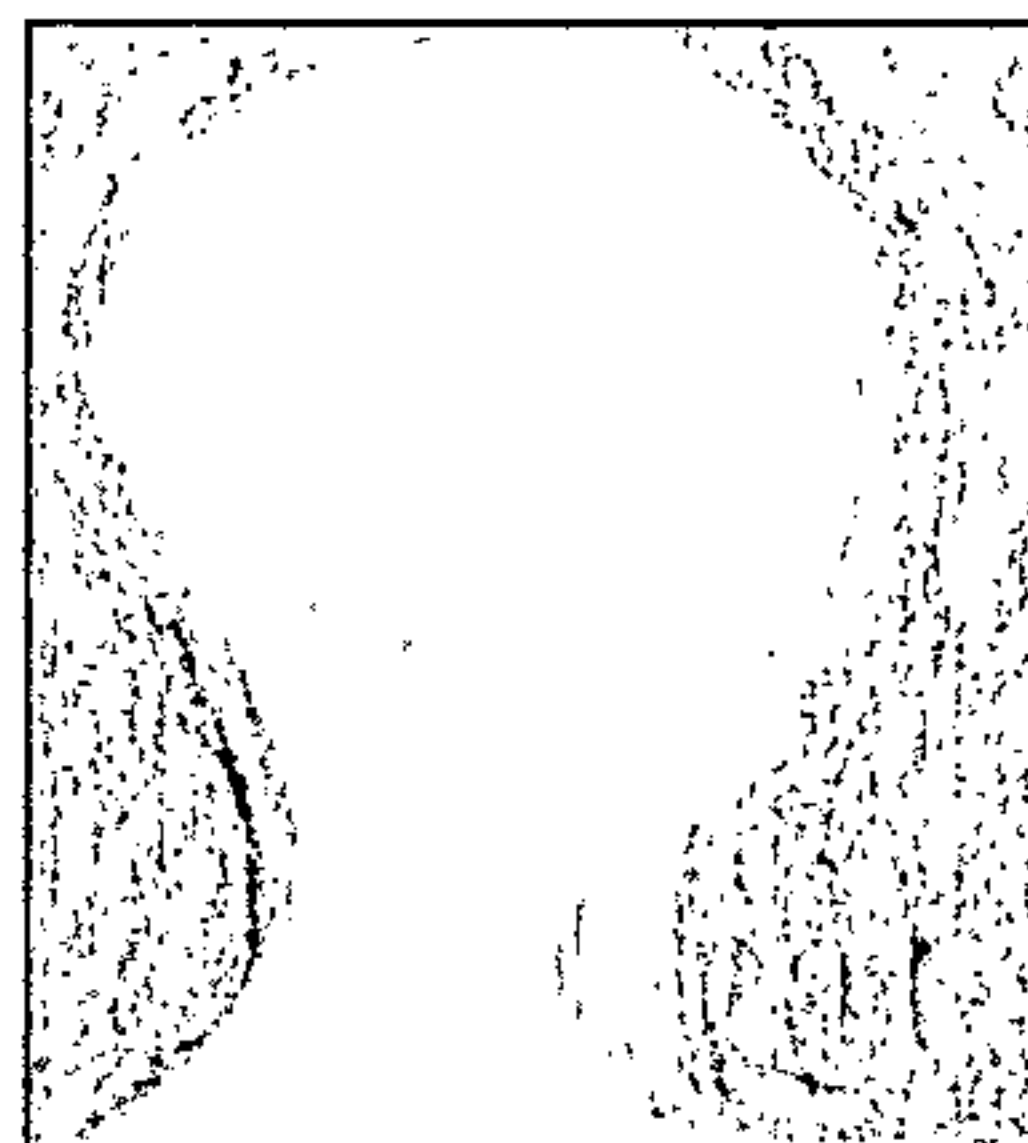
Nellie



Lora



Lori



Trudy

In 2006, I achieved an integration of my alters. Key elements were: a loving husband, hard work on my issues, the philosophy of Immanuel Kant, and the "Internal Family Systems Model" by Richard C. Schwartz.

Questions?

Please contact Pegge Singer, pgesinger@aol.com

Healing Relationships

By Rhonda P.

This has been a hard year for me. Not only do I daily deal with the effects of my childhood abuse, my inner parts, etc., I also am a recovering addict who just celebrated 1 year clean and sober. I have a lot of obstacles in developing relationships in my life but here are some of the things I am learning:

The most important thing I've realized on this journey is that I have no idea what a healthy relationship looks like. I am so not in touch with my body, that if I put one hand on top of the other, I feel nothing. It shows up in my eating. I don't taste food, I eat more than I should because I don't know what it feels like to be full (until I've overeaten) and I eat to get numb. This week in therapy, I told my therapist something that was very hard to say. I told her that the only time I feel "in my body" is when she is hugging me. It is the only time I feel shoulder to shoulder, breast to breast, pelvis to pelvis. I feel safe and connected.

Now this is a scary thing to acknowledge because I am gay and was terrified my therapist would think I was having sexual feeling towards her. I don't. She didn't. It's about finding out what feels safe and then practicing it on the outside world. I am trying to feel when another person puts their arm around me or hugs me. It is hard. Intimacy on any level is difficult it seems, except in the safety of my therapist's office. She told me it

was o.k. (to my relief) and that each new situation and growth starts in her office and then is carried out into the world.

I thought until recently that I would be alone forever, because I was incapable of having a sexual relationship. It was too threatening and my child parts have always freaked during sex. Everything feels like rape. I now have hope that someday (not today or tomorrow or for a very long while) I will be able to have a safe, mutual, sexual relationship with the partner of my choice, because I will be in my body. Hugging my therapist proves that I am capable of that. What a relief it is to find hope!

I need to work on a lot of issues before I am ready to pursue a relationship. I need to practice getting in touch with what it feels like in my body. Starting with food is a baby step. But also, I need to remember that being in touch with my body may mean a return to body memories and an overwhelming fear of knowing, experiencing what my body has gone through, that has led me to this level of blockage. There'll be more memories I'm sure. But with the awesome therapist I have, I know I can work through all of that, a little at a time. I'm not ready now to dive into a relationship, but I have HOPE. And isn't that what it's all about? And if there's hope for me, there's hope for you too.

Healing and Massage

By Rahel

Somehow I'm trapped inside myself. Around other people, I try to imitate normal behavior, so I can make a living and enjoy the times by myself, with plants and books and animals, music and needlework.

Intellectually, I understand that I dissociated in my early teens. I didn't develop multiple personalities, perhaps because I can lose myself in and be made utterly happy by colors and designs.

Emotionally, I am like someone wrapped in hundreds of layers of plastic wrap. Just enough awareness comes in to let me function.

Intellectually, I can learn a lot about dissociation. My head tells me *you need healthy touch; you need to try massage therapy.*

Emotionally, I am terrified. To have an honest interchange, I just tell each therapist, "I dissociated when I was young, and each treatment helps me reassociate a little." This brief, simple honesty makes contact that has good boundaries. To help steady myself during sessions, I practice breathing. If my mind begins to wander or worry, I picture the cardiovascular system and lungs at work. And each time, it is as if a layer of the plastic wrap is removed.

Luckily, there is a massage school in my city, making treatments affordable. No matter how much I like a student's work, I never ask for any particular person. There is something to learn from each person's style. Just as they are learning touch therapy, I am learning from each of them.

In talk therapy, I can't let go of that intellectual control. The only time I ever cried was when talking about the book, *"I Will Not Die an Unlived Life."*

With the help of touch therapy, slowly I am developing my own self. With each session, I have a little more life to live.



MV

MV

Non Therapists' Page:

Integration as a Transformative Process

By Dr. Coral Hull (The Voyager System)

Coral Hull was born with Autism in 1965. She is now an established writer, artist and photographer living in Darwin, Australia. She is a Doctor of Creative Arts and the Director of The Thylazine Foundation: Arts, Ethics and Literature. She is a vegan who supports animal rights, neurodiversity and functional multiplicity.

As human beings, our greatness lies not so much in being able to remake the world ... as in being able to remake ourselves.

— Mahatma Gandhi

Our Initial Responses To Integration

After finding out we were multiple, an avalanche of knowledge came flooding into the central psyche as the amnesic walls of MPD (Multiple Personality Disorder) began to collapse. The best we could do, was for several of us to hold on to our conscious positions with awareness, humour and detachment, in order not to be drowned out in the cascade of 'selves' who were now coming into awareness within the one physical body, selves that we knew were not us.

By holding our conscious position within the psyche, we were able to observe and gradually learn from the thoughts and actions of each other, until a very basic co-consciousness was achieved between a number of us. We were less concerned with uncovering past memories and more concerned with maintaining consciousness. We wanted to know, as quickly as possible, who was in there with us, who we were, why we existed and how we best could assist each other.

It wasn't long before we learnt about "integration". The discovery that multiples were not only expected to do it, but that some were locked up until they did it, sent the system into a panic. While only partially conscious, we clearly remember looking up at a photograph of one of us (Xena) on the wall and a child coming through sobbing, "Mama." Aside from the amazement and disbelief that this was actually happening, we realised that

the child saw this self (Xena) as a mother and was terrified of losing that mother and of dying. While this child self was unaware of our readings about integration, the fear of annihilation was filtering through the system, bringing these scared and lost selves to the surface.

The result was that we immediately became both fearful and protective of the system and defensive of any outside interference. The several of us who remained conscious made a decision to reject the idea of "integration" and to avoid contact with those who would attempt to make us all into the one person. We were just beginning to find out who we actually were and none of us wanted to die through the integrative process. In fact, from what little awareness we had of each other, our system of selves appeared to be both nurturing and supportive.

We also had to remember that while we either didn't know about or disbelieved in MPD, that we had been operating in this way since earliest memory. At first we panicked, but then we reminded ourselves that nothing had changed except for our awareness of each other and the situation. No-one was going to harm us, but they might put us into a hospital, if they found out that we were multiple and not just one person. This initial 'crisis of awareness' lasted for around twelve weeks.

Multiple Ego States or Selves In Crisis

Unlike many multiples that we read about, we did not appear to have a host self or a primary self. Therefore, our next decision was that no single self should claim complete control over the physical body to the detriment of the others. Even when

we did not know who we were, or how many of us there were, the protection of each other was the primary consideration. This meant the preservation and continuance of the system. In this fearful state, we considered any multiple system who chose to integrate as murdering the other selves. We initially judged other multiples who became one person harshly, accusing the primary or host self of the murders. This all occurred before we had a better understanding of who we were and the transformative nature of consciousness.

In addition, words such as 'integration', 'blending' and 'combining' were seen as a threat and therefore deemed unacceptable. We stopped reading all literature put out by the mental health industry, since it only caused fear and panic, which in turn caused anger and disdain from those who had taken up protective positions.

We realised that we needed to be on our own in order to sort out this situation and that if integration was to occur at all, then it would only occur as an organic or spiritual process that was beyond our control. We preferred words such as co-consciousness or co-presence to describe our experience. Partial integration and soul braiding have now become acceptable. This occurred once we realised that the individuals within, would not be manipulated or compromised against their will. What we now know, is that no one from either inside or outside the central psyche, can force a multiple system of selves to integrate into a single self.

A Message From The Creator

There was another concern aside from interference from outsiders.

What we feared is that we would just naturally become the one energy, or integrate from the inside. This fear was unnecessary, but it went very deep, due to the cultural and social conditioning that has always insisted that we be just the one person.

We also felt that we were creations of some higher unknown self. Several of us thought that we were going to be called back to this essence, or creator, or the source from where we all came or were formed. At one stage the psyche fell into semi-consciousness. During this time we became witness to half a dozen or so of us before a huge white light. It felt like a combination of what we have since discovered as being a near death experience and a shamanistic trance journey.

During this process we moved in and out of conscious awareness. But the visionary experience was overwhelming and we kept losing our bearings. In this trance state we saw one of the troublesome teenage selves (Scarlett) begin to walk towards the white light and with a cheeky look, she disappeared into it. Several selves began to scream and panic inside and a wolf self began to howl as we reached for a cushion to block the noise so that the neighbours didn't hear us.

Once we regained conscious awareness, we thought that Scarlett had died and we were all wondering who was next. But within minutes of waking, she appeared to come back into the body, as if from the ceiling and then down through the top of the head and she was alive. We couldn't believe that she hadn't died! While we had no idea of why this had occurred, we can now see that The Essence and Scarlett were teaching us that "death" or the "integration" of consciousness, is a natural and transformative process, rather than a permanent end to our beingness.

Our Views On Integration Today

We first became aware that we were sharing a body with others on 19th March, 2004. Today we understand that we are individual selves, beings, entities, energy forms,

ego states or streams of consciousness, existing within the one physical body. We can operate as up to fifty individuals or as a collective consciousness.

Sometimes we appear as one very complex layered person and other times there can be up to twelve of us, switching between each other in conversation and interaction with other people. We will usually say, "I can speak as one person or we can speak as many." If the outsider is receptive to multiplicity without fear or prejudice, then we will speak as many. But generally I speak under my legal birth name and title of Dr. Coral Hull, who is meant to exist as a single person.

Why do we do this? It makes life simpler. It gives the appearance of normality. It is easy to do. It doesn't frighten or cause people to want to attack the unknown. It keeps our lives private from human society. It is what a non-multiple society expects of us and therefore we chose to fit in, at least for short periods of time. It is safer. But while we are able to function as one very complex individual, in our natural state and in private we remain a co-conscious functional multiple system.

Several of our children got it right when they came out and talked with two startled outsiders and announced "We are made of electricity!" Understanding the nature of each of our existences, has allowed us to understand 'integration' as a transformative process within the psyche, rather than a final death knell, for selves or ego states who have become aware of their exclusive or autonomous existences. We have also come to view our situation as flexible and evolving.

Bodily death is also a transformative process. This means that we will have to leave the body eventually and that we may lose our individuality or ego states. But isn't that what all beings must do, once they choose to connect to the universal consciousness? Perhaps as multiples who have lost or gained time, or who move in and out of awareness, we have simply had a little more practice.



Butterfly

A delicate little butterfly
With wings of colors so vibrant
Only muted by pain held tight
Waiting to fly away....

To get out of this game.
She stretches her wings
So stiff from being held captive
Just waiting for that moment
To soar above the stars.

Slow to start, aching with
anticipation...
To finally be what she wants to be.
Gently floating up into the air
Stretching her wings she has hid for
so long.
Colors unleashing to beauty most
rare...
Talents unfolding like a little child.
Becoming aware of new places and
things,
Acknowledging the past but
beginning to
soar...
Into the future, with curiosity and
learning
Among the stars.
A better life awaits. Unafraid.....
Beginning again.

By Julie 2004

Partner's Page:

Having Fun With Keepers

By John W.

How do Keepers and I have fun? We have fun in many ways but let me also say how important it is for Keepers and me to have fun together, because having fun is relaxing and part of the healing process. Having fun is so important for healing from old wounds and new ones. Many Keepers had never known what fun was, to actually experience it, they were doubtful of their entitlement to it. For many it took a long time to get them to accept it as real and not a trick to be pulled on them one more time for some more devious purpose.

Some things were not attempted before because Keepers did not feel strong enough to attempt, like going to listen to a band. Our former webmistress, Blue, also is a singer and has her own group, Morning Vision Blue, and we have now gone to listen to them perform at several clubs in the area as well as at free city picnics and such events. Keepers love to listen to the live music at these events and is fun for all of us!

There are different things we do, ways to do things, that work better now than before. Before was when Keepers weren't in synch with each other, they were pretty much acting independently of each other, but now that they are more accepting of each other and cooperating more we can do lots of things.

One thing we used to do was go to one of the local casinos. Little Keepers loved to see and hear the coins falling down when you cashed in on a slot machine! Sadly the casinos have gone to printouts and have removed the coins so it isn't nearly as much fun as it used to be for littles. They still enjoy it but not as much as before.

In conjunction with the trip to the casino was going for rides, up the River Road which is in Illinois along the Mississippi River. We enjoy that any time of the year. Right now, in early months of the year, the Bald

Eagles are nesting along there, and hardly a trip goes by where we don't see at least some of the majestic birds. When the winter is frigid there is ice on the river and the eagles can be seen on the ice watching for fish to be churned up in the river as barges go by.

In the summer we may go up the River Road to a park and let Keepers take their easel and paints and spend the afternoon painting the river scenery after eating a lunch we took or picked up on the way. Sometimes we will pick up a sandwich and soda and drive part way up the road, then park and eat in the car and watch the boats go up and down the river. Sometimes the littles get an ice cream while other times the adults and I have a beer along the way or in the winter a hot cup of coffee. It is all to relax and enjoy and sometimes calm, and it works very well.

On the other side of the River is a park where the Missouri and Mississippi come together, named Confluence Park. Keepers love to go there and sit at the point where the rivers converge. They meditate and clear their heads while I use the binoculars and watch boats going by or check out the treetops for eagles. We have seen eagles nesting there; we have had them overhead at treetop level. Seeing them in their natural habitat is really incredible.

We often let Keepers choose the meals or where we go for dinner. Maybe one night littles get to have beanies and weenies and the next night the teens get tacos or maybe the adults get roast beef, and of course some nights most win when the choice is for something everyone (for the most part) likes.

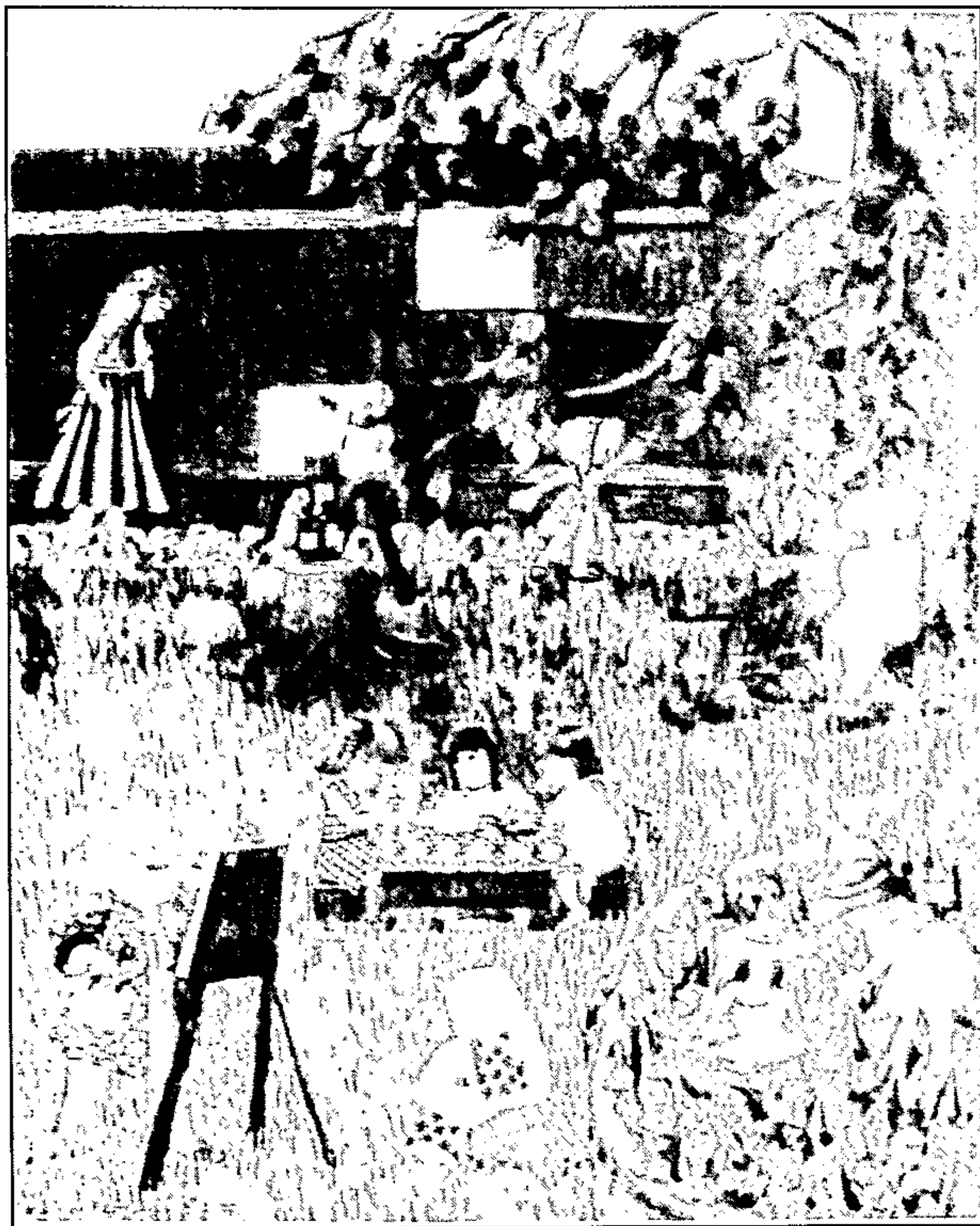
We try to do the same with movies we watch. Over the years we have invested in many vhs and dvds and we try to vary what we watch. Littles love Shirley Temple, Disney and Pixar movies, while the teens love *Trouble*

with Angels or Elvis movies. Some like westerns more than others; others like action or romance or drama. It all depends but we try to take turns, not just among them but between them and me. Popcorn or a homemade pizza just seems to go with a movie but other nights it may be cheese and crackers or some snackies.

There are some things all Keepers enjoy, some things enjoyed more by one age group than the others and still other things by the girls more than the boys (who are in the minority by a bunch!) or the adults more than the younger ones. Some things we do as dates so the teens get to choose the clothes to be worn and enjoy our date while other times the adults dress up and we go to a restaurant of their choice.

We love to go to the zoo or to the local amusement park. There is also an animal park near us sponsored by a local corporation; it has animals, a train ride from the gate to the animal area with closeup small animal shows and goats to feed and camels to feed and Clydesdales to pet. By the time we get home from these types of excursions all of the Keepers are tuckered out! Usually me too! We also have times where I will play games with the littles or teens. We may play Candyland or Sorry, maybe Parcheesi or Life or the Memory Game or Yahtzee. Different Keepers may play one game while others play this game or that one so they all get a chance to play and be included.

Keepers took care of our two granddaughters at their house for 6 weeks. I would drop Keepers off on my way to work and go back for lunch with Keepers and our granddaughters, and we would all laugh and play and eat and enjoy the heck out of each other. Then I would pick up Keepers on the way home and we would go home and they would tell me all of the stories of all the girls did all day long.



Future women of wisdom by Keepers

Fun With Keepers, Cont'd.

We have two cats, Max and Owen, who are brothers; just watching them can be amusing and fun. We had some bubbles with the wand you use to blow the bubbles. Watching the cats with these bubbles can be a journey into the absurd. It is fun in so many ways to watch how they react, watch them sit up and bat the bubbles and try to figure out where they go.

Another thing we enjoy is traveling west from here and meeting our friend Pastor Brown for lunch; we meet midway between where he lives and we live and our lunches usually last from 2-1/2 to 3 hours. We enjoy each others' company so very much and it is truly fun for Keepers, Pastor and myself. We all leave there reinvigorated and looking forward to our next lunch meeting!

In the summer one of the things they enjoy the most is getting a snow cone. All it is, is shaved ice with fruity flavoring poured over it, but Keepers love it and once the stands open we will go there several times a week. As I saved the first draft of this on our PC, Terrence came up to me and whispered in my ear that he was looking in the freezer for ice cubes, which meant he saw the vanilla ice cream I bought for root beer floats later this evening. "So, John Michael, put root beer floats down as a fun thing to do!" he said, so here it is, root beer floats are fun also!

Anything you can do with your partner that any part of your partner enjoys can be fun, not only for them but for you. Sharing with them the things that they were denied many years ago can lead to a sharing of joy

I Was Magic

I was magic and could
float away
Beyond your reach all on
my own
I could do what you
could not
Lifted above the fear with
a feathery lightness in
my mind
I could escape the
heaviness which you
tried to press into my
heart.
Power was your delusion
but weakness was your
truth
I was stronger than you
could ever be

For I was magic and

I survived

By Laura Ann

MV

now for all of you. Ask what they want to do; you may surprised at some of the responses you get. When you tell a little or a teen they can do this or that with you and watch their smile broaden or hear them ask "We can really do that?" or "You will let us do that?" it will, I hope, bring you and them closer in many ways. Be careful not to say something can be done and then not do it unless unavoidable; they have been promised things before that never came true. They were promised happiness and got abuse. It is up to you to slowly and gently let them know there can be fun for you and them without pain of any sort. Once they realize and believe that, well . . .

maybe that will be the most fun thing yet.

MV

Dissociation

By Jenn J.

Let's begin with a short introduction. I am a 41 year old, female, sexual abuse survivor. I've had to put up with other types of abuse as well. I come from a military family in which my sisters and I were taught not to feel. Our sexuality "briefing" went something like this according to my sisters: We all sat down on the couch and our father said, "all boys want to get in your pants. Don't let them!"

By saying this, my father failed to recognize that the statement inherently blamed us for "letting them in my pants." Also, sex was a dirty thing and not to be discussed, and if you did have sex with someone, you sure as hell better marry him. The final "set-up" for my abuse was that once my body began to change my father was no longer physically affectionate with me. In his mind it wasn't "proper."

Now that you know what my childhood was like we can talk about dissociation. I don't know when I first began dissociating. Living in a house where only angry or happy feelings are allowed tends to encourage repression and possible dissociation. The feelings have to go somewhere. I was unfortunately born at the wrong time. We had a bad car accident and my sister was killed. She was 3 years old. I was safely tucked in my car seat. My mom was in the hospital so I didn't see her for several weeks. This is traumatic for a baby and my splitting may have started then. My mother dissociated and doesn't even remember the year after my sister died. I believe she wasn't able to comfort me because of her own grief. She tells me that when I cried they put me in my bed and I was happy. I learned early to self soothe. I believe that I may have started using dissociation as a coping mechanism even as an infant.

I was "gently" (fondled) abused when I was about 5. I had no clue this was abuse. It was quick with no arousal. About 15 years ago I

remembered that incident. I knew it was true, I had just forgotten it for a while. The same thing was happening as I grew up a victim. To survive in my household I had to act normal and be a straight-A student. That was the only way I felt I could get love.

When the book *Sybil* came out I read it, and I thought "Wow, different parts can hold different feelings. I'll call them Meghan and Sarah." It seems to me that those parts were already there when I read the book.

I had been through a lot of trauma up until 13. There were several rapes and other abuses. I was truly a victim. A girl said she'd beat me up if I didn't cheat on the exam for her. The bad thing about dissociation is generally, for me anyway, the victim parts are mostly around. Don't make waves or get noticed under any circumstances!

I didn't even know I had strong parts. A teacher asked me if I could split my scholarship to summer camp with another student so he could go. If it's ok by my parents it's ok with me. Compliant Victim. I had another teacher tell me to not work with another student because she was not a good fit. I told the person that and the teacher got angry with me. I gave her my power.

I believe that part of being dissociative is that you replay events that happened in your life continuously. This can be just little things or big things. The people who abused me told me that they would kill me. Many of my parts think that it is better to die by my own hand than let them get to me.

That is a very ugly thing - suicidal programming. Programming is all-and-all ugly and maybe very bad at best. I figured out that if I cut, then that's enough self harm to make the suicidal feelings go away. Another ugly thing is punishment. If you tell someone what happened, therapist included, you may be programmed to cut.

Another ugly thing is memory flooding. Some survivors have been programmed to have so many memories all at once in order to break them down into psychosis and render them unfunctional, which impedes healing. Of course, there are flashbacks that make you think you are back in the situation. These are really scary. There are hospitalizations that some may consider a step backwards. I generally have found hospitalization to be a great mover in my therapy. I think a hospital with a Trauma Program is essential. Find out every thing you can before going. I came out exhausted because I had done about 4 months work in three weeks. Some might consider this ugly, but I consider it a positive coping method. If I had insurance I might try to go every year.

The more "mild" consequences of dissociation are things like losing time, a few minutes here and there (losing days or weeks is ugly). If I lose 10 minutes in the morning I am late. Losing keys, something you just set down, not remembering if you said something or thought it a couple of minutes ago. Impulsiveness is a big one for me. I have tons of stuffed animals, crayons and markers. When you are dissociating you don't manage finances too well. The younger ones just buy what they want. I have corrected this by not going shopping or shopping only at the Dollar store.

Keeping the house clean is a problem for me. Sometimes I'm tired, sometimes I'm just having a part that wants to do something fun. I get headaches from switching from part to part. I have finally cleared a path through to my bed from my doorway.

I had someone at work recently ask me if there is any reason that I might forget things. I panicked. I can't be dissociating at work. That leads to the other part of bad, keeping a job is tough. Jobs which

have a major attention to detail are not for me. I just hate people knowing that I'm DID, Bipolar, and have PTSD for fear of stigma. On the flip side of this, DID is the medal I wear for surviving.

Another issue that is not often mentioned is confidentiality in therapy. Often the supporter wants to know what was said. My ex-husband was really angry that I couldn't and wouldn't share what I talked about in our sessions. Try to remember that the therapist is truly the most trustworthy individual the survivor has ever met. While you may be a great supporter you could walk out anytime, even if you say you won't. Therapists have rules regarding their practice and they cannot walk out.

I saved the best for last! *Great things about dissociation.* I can sing two songs in my head at the same time. (I just found out about this.) If you are overwhelmed, you can ask for help from a part inside. Usually you have company and don't feel alone with your inner family. You have parts that have healed guiding other parts

on the healing path. Each part gets acknowledged and gets time with the therapist. This validates them, showing that they are not just a thought or feeling. They are all there for a reason. It's like figuring out a puzzle. In fact, that is what the brain does for us in severe trauma. It builds a wall around a memory to hold onto until we are mature enough and have help to cope with it.

I know at 12 years old I was not able to cope with a gang rape that left me bloody and torn. Now as a 41 year old, I can tell the story and be believed and feel sympathy from my therapist who accepts me completely and wholly. I also get to feel the horrible feelings that I couldn't express then. When I feel all the feelings for the involved part, that part generally has recovered and is ready to do another job, or grow up.

I feel peaceful instead of anxious. I read somewhere that dissociated memories are unexperienced experiences. I think that sizes it up well and gives you a reason this process is so difficult. Your

dissociation is really a map for healing - just follow the road the alters are on. Your alters are your guides. They are all important in some way because they helped you make it through. Treasure them all, even though they can be a pain in the neck at times.

One really cool thing happened a couple of weeks ago. I had a speaking role in *The Vagina Monologues*. I was able to dissociate to a part that was comfortable with what I was reading. The part after mine was really triggering so I sang to myself during it. I am so glad I was able to participate in the show!

Finally, one of the best things is I get to watch cartoons! *Little Bear* is our favorite. We also get lots of games and toys to play with. One therapist told me that you can heal some of the losses by parenting your inner child. Society doesn't really support the idea, but I believe that finding your inner children is a big key to happiness. You get to see how you were. You get to see that kid that had absolutely no reason to be abused. Then, you can move forward.

MV

Books

Emotional Resonance: The Story of World-Acclaimed Psychotherapist Helen Watkins

By John G. Watkins, PhD. (c) 2005
Published by Sentient Publications, 1113 Spruce St., Boulder, CO 80302. (303) 443-2188. www.sentientpublications.com
\$16.95 US, 21.95CAN 160 pgs.
Paperback.

Two prominent psychotherapists are featured in this book - one the author, John G. Watkins, PhD, and the other his subject—his beloved late wife, Helen Huth Watkins, a clinical psychologist. Both psychotherapists played an important role in the growth of the International Society for the Study of Dissociation: www.issd.org

The book is John Watkins' tribute to his wife—a wonderful, mid-life love story. But it is much more. It is a glimpse into the lives of the couple that developed and taught Ego State Therapy...a way of easing internal conflicts of so-called normal

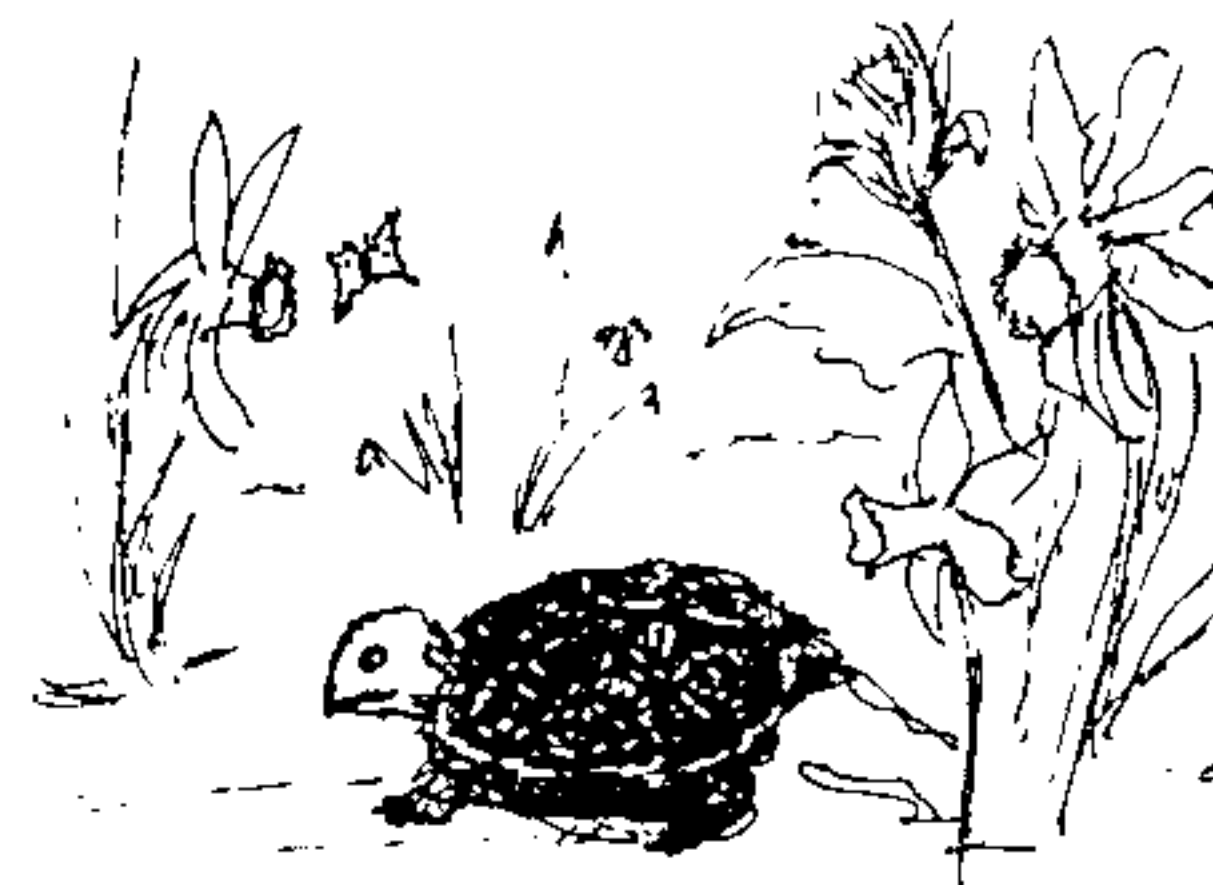
individuals as well as those who experienced trauma. According to Helen Watkins' writing in 1993: *Ego-state therapy is the utilization of family and group-therapy techniques for the resolution of conflicts between the different ego states that constitutes a "family of self" within a single individual.* Together, they taught Ego State Therapy techniques to clinicians around the world. Together they published 10 books and over 180 articles, influencing a generation of psychotherapists with their healing message.

The title describes a quality that Helen proffered in abundance to her patients, friends, and family--the capacity for emotional resonance or connecting with an individual on that person's level. Dr. Watkins describes many therapeutic interactions that might help survivors or partners reading this understand how ego states or internal divisions develop and can be soothed or resolved.

Pioneers of trauma treatment, like John and Helen Watkins, deserve the respect and honor of all who have benefited from careful therapy, as well as from those who conduct it. I am sorry I didn't know about this book earlier, but hope that even at this late date, others will buy it, read it, and connect with John and Helen's story.

By Lynn W.

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