

MANY VOICES

WORDS OF HOPE FOR PEOPLE RECOVERING FROM TRAUMA & DISSOCIATION

Vol XX, No.1

February 2008

ISSN1042-2277

Inside this issue:

Managing Symptoms of Dissociation & PTSD What Recovery Means to YOU



My Path by Rhonda H.

Sunflower

"You are like a sunflower," she said,
"always moving towards the light."
I took it as a compliment
being blinded by lust
and full of romantic desire:

If you'd have told me
It was possible, to go back into that
frightened child, and help her –
I'd have thought you fanciful,
another liar, another twister of the
truth, another monotonous conveyor
of false hope. I'd have thought:
Does she think I'm two years old?
To have not understood
the cold strangle of awesome reality?
I'm not that child. I'd given up
long before that, I'd felt the
strangest delight in watching:
I learnt fast and became an
automaton.

Yet all my life I've returned
from desperate places, found
I'm watching children's television
colouring-in, reading children's books
blowing bubbles, burning candles
and now with her I've found a space
where I can be warmed and yet
always be able to get away.

So when the sun shines
I turn up my face gratefully
she's right: I'm there:
like a sunflower, always turning
towards the light.

By Kirsty Winterbourne

MV

Join in MV's Plan for Progress!

By Lynn W.

I'm deeply pleased to announce to all MV readers and supporters that after nearly 12 months of preparation and applications, Many Voices received IRS approval as a 501(c)(3) charitable organization on December 26, 2007. The approval was retroactive to MV's non-profit founding date of April 2, 2007. This means that anyone who donated funds to Many Voices beyond a normal subscription or book cost, can legitimately deduct that donation on their federal tax form as a charitable contribution. I have sent confirming letters to the 2007 donors I've identified. If you believe you donated funds between April 2 and December 31, 2007, but have *not* received such a letter, please let me know by phone or email soon, and we'll take care of this official notification.

You Deserve the Thanks!

As MV enters its 20th year of bimonthly publication, I want to thank all the MV readers and contributors, clients and professionals, past and present, for your extraordinary gifts. MV simply would not exist without your help, and I certainly would have given up the effort to produce this newsletter years ago, without the encouraging, personal notes that let me know MV was helpful to you.

Literally thousands of submissions of your creative artwork, poetry, and prose have arrived over the years, through our post office box and email address. Each example is a unique expression--demonstrating wide-ranging struggles and sense of recovery. I assure you that every single piece is received with the respect it deserves. I wish I could have acknowledged it all. One goal, as MV begins to attract volunteer help, is to offer thanks with each submission, though that may take some time and organization to achieve. But you absolutely deserve it, and I personally send out positive vibes to each of you, individually, for your creative courage in sending materials to share.

Help Our Board Make Plans

So MV's 20th year has brought us to this new stage of growth. There are many, many improvements I hope to implement, as energy and funding permit. But MV remains wide open to your thoughts about what might be helpful to people of any age, recovering from traumatic experiences—whether they stem from childhood abuse, acts of war or torture, rape, violent crime, or even weather catastrophes such as Katrina. Please continue to send your ideas. MV's Board of Directors will consider them seriously.

*Special thanks to the members of
MV's founding Board of Directors:*

Joseph W. Hager, PhD, chair
William J. Taylor, CPA, treasurer
Barbara Polk
Priscilla Oehlschlaeger

and to our attorneys
Jennifer Anstaett and David Hathaway
of
Beckman Weil Shepardson LLC.

As for our Board composition, MV's non-profit entity was structured and intends to operate with a small, select Board of Directors who have pertinent skills that can help build and sustain the organization. We want to give MV a foundation of fiscal strength and stability that will enable it to provide needed services many years from now. Non-profit organizations that advocate for survivors fail regularly. I've seen it happen over and over, and I do not want this to happen to Many Voices. So if you or someone you know has considerable experience and insight about non-profit operations, I would appreciate hearing from you.

Also, we plan to add a few mental health professionals to the Board. If you are an interested professional who would like to participate, please let us know. We are already looking into Director's Liability insurance, to offer the security you may require.

Be Part of MV's Future

As a not-for-profit, Many Voices hopes to develop new and better services to readers, more subsidized subscriptions (as donations permit), and a secure sense of continuity for subscribers who can rely on MV's support and encouragement. We will be forming committees, setting priorities, and seeking new opportunities to reach trauma survivors.

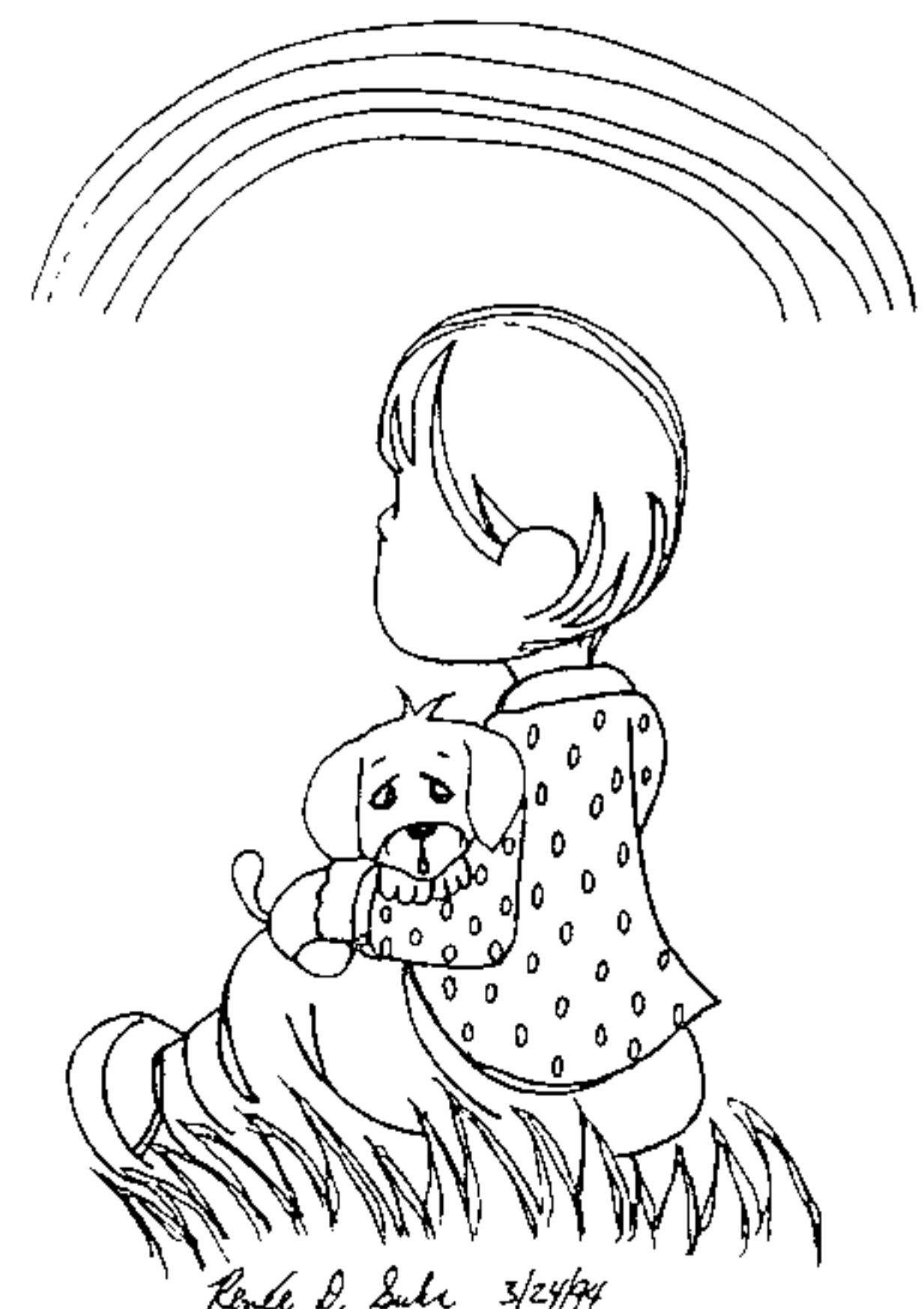
We're also interested in networking with other 501(c)(3) organizations, and learning about possible grant opportunities in your location. If you are interested in participating as a volunteer, please send your name and the skill area you offer, for our list. Pass the word that donations and bequests to Many Voices are now tax deductible.

Share Your Creative Spirit!

And of course, please continue to submit your wonderful artwork, poetry and prose...whether it is on the "topic" or not. Our goal is to improve the quality and reach of MV, and we can't do it without you.

Thanks so much for helping Many Voices help trauma survivors, everywhere!

MV



Me

A poem about reparenting myself. It was a crucial turning point in my recovery.

I will be
 the mother you desperately needed
 I will be
 the tender voice in your head
 The one that welcomes you
 The one that tells you
 how precious you are
 No matter what you do
 or who you are
 I will be there for you
 I will be
 the Big sister you sometimes
 wished for
 You can call upon me
 in times of distress
 and I will be there
 to chase the bullies away
 to give you a hug and
 tell you that it's okay
 I will
 always be there whenever you need
 me
 Just stomp on the ground and I'll
 come around
 I will be
 caring as only a grandmother can be
 I'll tuck you in at night
 and blanket you with security
 I will wash you up after
 a long day of play when you
 come in all tired and dirty
 I will share in your laughter
 for I haven't forgotten
 how to be silly
 and I will
 forever hold you close to my heart
 you are my joy personified
 you are my love
 my sweetie
 my dolly
 I will be
 a hand to hold
 I will be
 a kiss on your forehead
 I will be
 abstract or concrete
 anything that you need
 me to be
 I am closer to you
 than a best friend
 I will never leave you
 No
 never again
 I will be
 Me

By Kimberly A. Cavanagh

MV

MANY THANKS TO OUR FRIENDS!

Del Amo Hospital - Torrance, CA

Call Francis Galura: (310) 784-2289 or (800) 533-5266

Intensive Trauma Therapy, Inc. - Morgantown WV

Outpatient Treatment for PTSD & Dissociation - (304) 291-2912

River Oaks Hospital - New Orleans, LA

Call Martha Bujanda: (504) 734-1740 or (800) 366-1740

Sheppard Pratt Health System - Baltimore, MD

Call Kimberly Colbert: (410) 938-5078 or (800) 627-0330 x5078

Timberlawn Mental Health System - Dallas, TX

Call Peyton Orr: (214) 381-7181 or (800) 426-4944

Two Rivers Psychiatric Hospital - Kansas City, MO

Call David Tate: (816) 356-5688 or (800) 225-8577

Women's Institute for Incorporation Therapy - Hollywood, FL

Call Larry Spinosa: (800) 437-5478

These organizations are not affiliated with this publication and have no control over its contents. Many Voices and its staff have no influence on their operations.

Does your clinic or conference need flyers? If so, please call 513-751-8020.

MANY VOICES is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization serving victims of trauma everywhere. Our EIN is 20-8945881.

Tax-deductible donations, volunteer help, and good ideas are always welcome! We appreciate your support! —Lynn W., Editor



Managing Activities of Daily Living

By Jenn J.

It seems that most of my life I have been unable to keep a clean room, or house. From the time I was a kid, everything messy just got stuck in a corner out of sight. I guess most kids do that growing up.

Today, at 42 years old, I still have trouble keeping up with the house laundry and dishes. I get the clothes washed, but then I don't have the energy to dry them, so I have to wash them again. When I do get them out and into the dryer, I take awhile to get them out of the dryer. Sometimes I get them out of the dryer and lay them flat so they are not too wrinkled. They get put up at least a week later.

It's the same with the kitchen and bathroom and rest of the house. I was evicted from my home due to the mess. Generally, the house was clean, but extraordinarily cluttered. I came across an article in a medical center newsletter that said cluttering may be a sign of mental illness. A light bulb went off in my head. Cluttering is part of my illness. I felt

somewhat relieved because I am not a poor housekeeper, just a sick one. I don't use that as an excuse, just a non judgmental reason for the evidence in front of me.

Like any other symptom, I need to do something to manage it. What I have realized is that if I take the task and divide it into small parts, I can accomplish it. I am talking very small parts like simply putting dishes into the sink. I have begun to make a habit of doing chores in small pieces. I wash small manageable loads of laundry. When it is dry I don't have as much to fold and put away. When I say "I did 4 loads of laundry!" I feel an accomplishment. I probably could have done them in two or three loads.

Less is more. For the dishes, I do a small load in the dishwasher. If I am really low on energy, I can go in the kitchen with a goal of washing 3 cups. Usually, I end up doing more. Even when I pick up the house I set a goal of 2 square feet. If I get on a roll, more gets done. Sometimes I wish I

was a little manic when I need to clean!

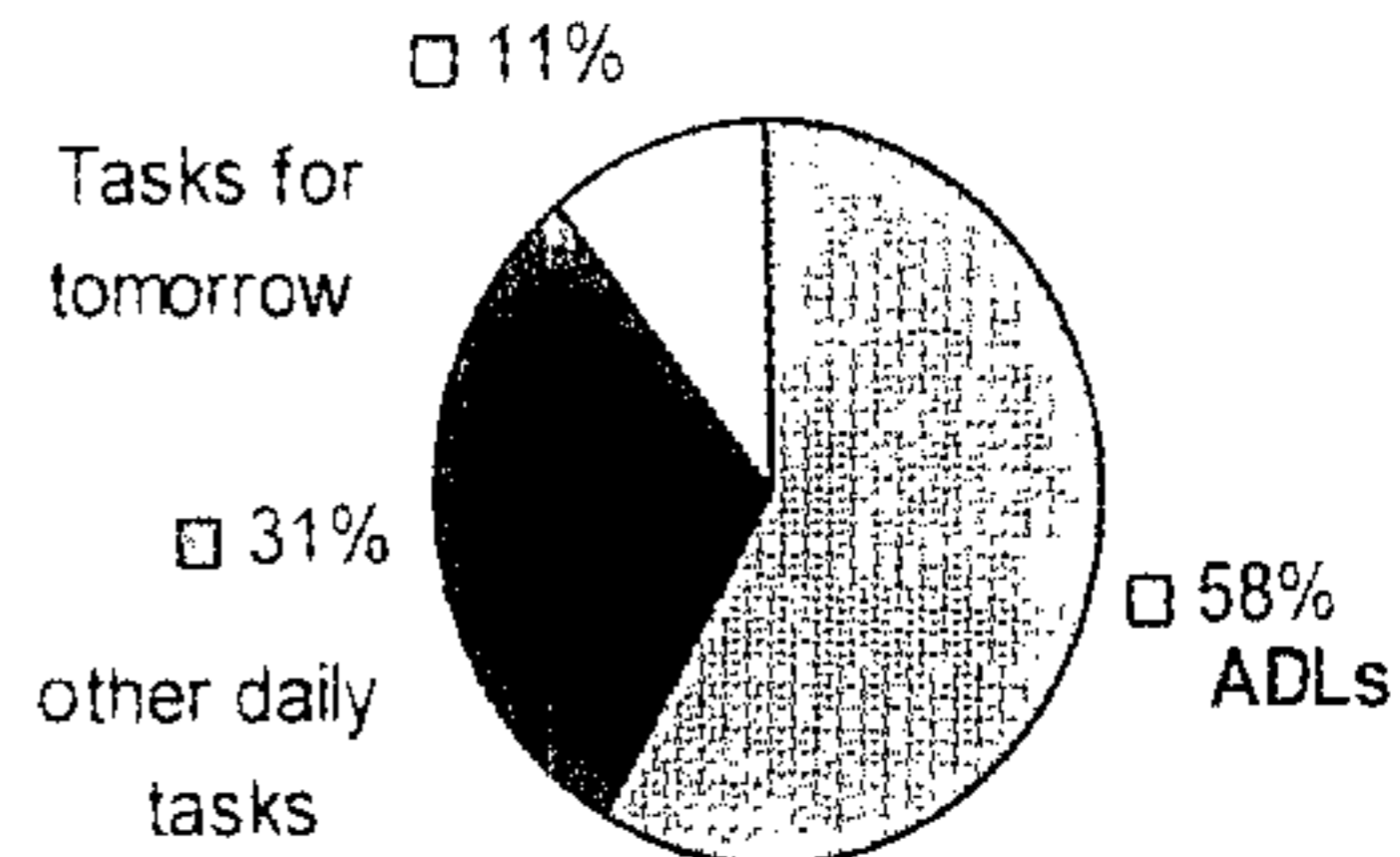
My bathroom gets a good cleaning about every two weeks. That is actually a sign of health for me. 4 years ago it got cleaned every other month or so. Same with my bed sheets, they got washed about every three months, now it's about every 3 weeks or so. I have a 15 yo son who can be great at helping when he is in the mood. He usually has to be told several times to do a task. In all honesty, I have to tell myself more than once to do things. I am easily distracted, especially by my inner children. I am trying to focus on one thing at a time. This has helped tremendously.

Money has been a problem for me also. I think it has been nearly two years since I've been using payday loans. I had no idea that I had been borrowing for this amount of time! I have borrowed as much as \$900 to meet the gap. The interest is horrible. It is \$20 for each hundred you borrow,

List of Daily Tasks

- A. Get out of bed 9%
- B. Let the dog out 4%
- C. Comb your hair 5%
- D. Brush your Teeth 10%
- E. Take Meds with water 10%
- F. Watch SAD Light 10%
- G. Bathe 10%
- H. Take dog for a walk 9%
- I. Make any appointments 10%
- J. Exercise for 30 min 12%

Daily Activities



I set up the list above and put a percentage by each of them for clarity. You can simply make a list and check items off. The percentages that I put are determined by relative difficulty. You can do this if it helps. If you look at the list and chart above, you will see one way to manage your time. Letters A to G are Activities of Daily Living (ADLs). Notice in the pie graph that if you accomplish your ADLs on this list, you have done the 58% part of the pie graph. If you do all the things on the list, you have accomplished a lot! You have accomplished more than three-fourths of your goals. Don't pay attention to the remaining 11%. Focus on what you have accomplished. Observe how small the 11% piece of the pie is in comparison with the rest of the pie. Then look at the pie without the 11%. Notice how large it that is!

so it was \$180 in addition to the \$900 to pay the loan back. I justified this by noting that \$20 is cheaper than the \$34 overdraft fees I was paying. Unfortunately I ended up with both charges many times. There were several months when I had over \$300 in overdraft fees. Now I have my mom managing my money.

A goal sheet is a great way to manage daily living activities. You can check the items off as you do them. I'm not very good at keeping lists but I do have a weekly calendar white board. I try to write down what I need to do that day and check it off. It sounds easy, but it is not easy for me. Usually, I end up "cheating" and write the list after everything I've done. I have a group on Tuesdays that emphasizes weekly goals. These goals are related to coping skills. We talk about them in group, so it's a bit of 'pressure' to get them done. I usually write them out a couple days late in time for Tuesday.

It is important to adjust the items on your list to meet your needs. Each item on the list should be do-able and straight forward. Also you shouldn't put more than five items on your list beyond your ADLs so that it won't seem overwhelming. If you don't get everything done, move it to tomorrow's list.

This basic list above was what I had to stick with when I was very

depressed. As I have been feeling better, I make personal Activities of Daily Living or ADLs (Bathe, Brush Teeth, Comb hair, Get dressed) as one item on the list. You might try the idea of making lists of different levels when you are feeling well. When your routine becomes unstructured, you can turn to your pre-prepared list as needed. I have found unstructured time difficult because of the lack of focus. This often dissociative state sometimes leads to self harm or staying in bed all day. I find that if I am doing something that causes me to concentrate, I stay present most of the time.

So, in conclusion, make a plan of sorts to get what you need to be done during the day. One critical thing to remember is to give yourself credit for what you have done. So many times society (including us), focuses on the short fall. I grew up in that environment and it was really difficult to change my point of view. After much practice, I look at what I did accomplish.

You can accomplish quite a bit with a "user generated list." Most of all, for me, I feel as if I have mastery over daily events. Mastery means choice. You are allowed to choose your reactions. Bumping up and down over the rocks of a rough river is not your destiny. Mastery is.

MV

Clouds

I want the clouds to take me somewhere safe and happy where I can be free to love and accept myself just as I am.

I have issues that I would like to give to this cloud and watch them evaporate with the wind.

The clouds and the wind can become my friends or warriors or champions I just have to open my heart and let them in.

So the someplace safe and happy is right within reach!

I don't know when or how I will find it.

I will find it. I know I can.

By Mary G.

MV

Creating Safety

After a really bad experience, I needed to develop a system to prevent suicide attempts and self injury. I was becoming more and more co-conscious, so I was able to develop a discipline and reward system. If one personality was bent on destruction, etc., we would gather internally and decide on a safe and reliable way for the system to put a stop to the problem part.

It took a lot of effort from everyone, but we found a way to confine this part while also getting it therapy and help.

I also developed a system where unsafe parts had a companion to act like a safety check. The companion

on duty would call for helpers. Usually the cause for the acting out was anger and pain, so we would encourage the problem personality to write and draw the rage, pain, and desire to retaliate. Because no matter how ugly the pictures and words, they could not hurt or kill. In the end, they relieve the situation.

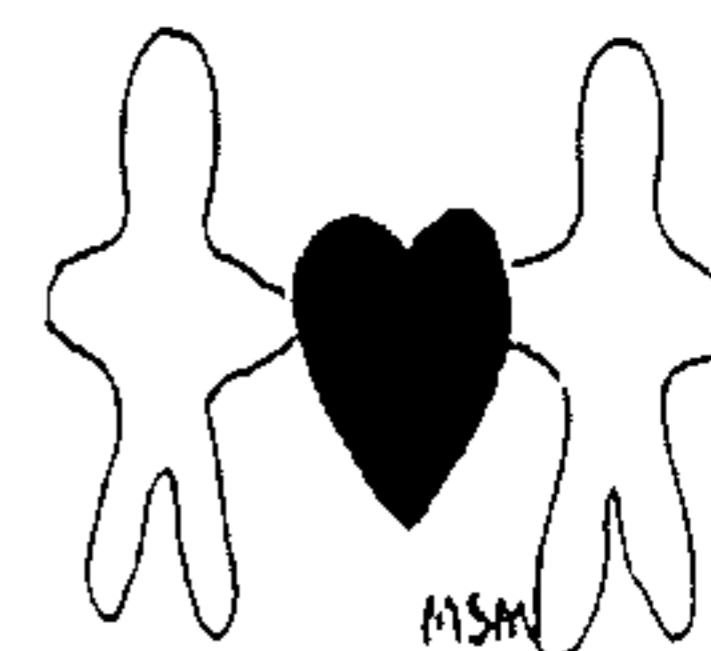
Anger and rage are not bad in themselves, they only become bad when violently acted out. I was really full of rage. No therapist would listen. I got put on meds to control it, but when we decided to work together and admit that the pain in our life really pissed us off, we found new ways to use the anger in healthy ways.

All emotions have reasons to exist. Even God gets mad, or would he have ever said "Noah, build me an ark!"?

Another thing that really helps is knowing others have been where you are now.

By Maggie

MV



Therapists' Dialogue

Note from the Editor:

I believe one of MV's most important roles is to help facilitate the open discussion of difficult topics, especially to bridge the divide between patients and the professional community, or to explore differing opinions within the professions.

After our recent Inpatient issue appeared in October 2007, I received the following letter from a licensed counselor who is known for her outspoken advocacy of survivors. I believe its message accurately describes the perceptions of many MV readers, and I am pleased to publish it. At the same time, I believe the institution that garnered her most pointed complaints also deserves an opportunity to respond. My own personal bias is to avoid creating a climate of "us versus them" within the community of trauma recovery where all parties—even when they differ—share the same goal: helping trauma survivors transform their lives for the better. I want all sides to be aired. So in place of our usual "Therapists' Page" we present two different views for the enlightenment and consideration of MV readers. As always, I welcome further comments on this or other topics. —LW

A Letter to the Editor of MV

By E. Sue Blume, LCSW, DCSW

Author, *Secret Survivors: Uncovering Incest and its Aftereffects in Women* (Ballantine, 1992)

www.esueblume.com

Dear MV,

I am writing regarding the October, 2007 issue of MV, which was devoted to articles about inpatient facilities for Dissociative Disorders. [Some of]-ed. These articles were written by representatives of those facilities.

As many of your readers might know, since the advent of the "false memory syndrome" backlash, the world has become very biased against the truth about incest, ritual abuse and mind control (RA/MC) and Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID), its survivors and those who treat them. "Repressed memories" (dissociated trauma material) have become a dirty word, although it has been scientifically established that they are common, and no less valid than consistently held trauma memories. Backlash attacks on "regression therapy" and "recovered memory therapy"—two terms they use with disdain but have never defined—have discredited legitimate explorations of dissociated childhood trauma, without any scientific basis for such a condemnation.

Backlash-driven lawsuits against therapists and facilities that treat incest trauma (mostly targeting DID, RA/MC) have had a chilling effect on trauma therapy.

These suits are usually settled for outrageous amounts by therapists' insurance companies. The defense side is never heard; no one cross examines Backlash "experts," who have included (in)famous False

Memory Syndrome Foundation (FMSF) spokesperson and pedophile-advocate Rev. Ralph Underwager, and the substantially discredited research of Elizabeth Loftus. Although these cases have been claimed as victories by the Backlash, the FMS side was never subjected to challenges of fact or testimony, and in truth most therapist and hospitals were never found guilty of anything.

Still the Backlash did "win," in that many therapists and facilities have left this work, literally or figuratively. A number of practitioners and facilities have been driven out of business, and fear of litigation or public criticism has curtailed the activities of many others. I constantly hear survivors' complaints that the inpatient facility they turned to in time of crisis ignored their attempts to discuss RA/MC, and, worse, that their alters were silenced or ignored by the very hospitals that solicited DID folks for business. It has become declared or undeclared policy for the facilities that still treat DID to focus exclusively on "stabilization." Although I understand the limits imposed on funding by "mangled care," I see a deeper issue here: how can we really help dissociated clients if the traumas that created their splits and destructive behaviors are never identified and neutralized?

Equally horrifying is the fact that virtually none of the remaining facilities recognizes, let alone safely and effectively treats, such "organized perpetrator" mind control abuses as RA.

These general concerns apply to the field in general. But what ****really**** led to this letter was my distress over seeing the following statement write-up for the Ross Institute: "The Treatment Program does not utilize regressive treatment modalities such as focusing on the retrieval of repressed memories."

Why did this facility, which positions itself as being on the side of trauma recovery, choose to adopt the very language used by the Backlash? This paragraph could have been taken from FMSF literature. It exactly contains the phrases that they have crafted to discredit our work, and therefore appears to make the same statement as the movement that has damned us all and driven the truth about incest, DID and RA into silence. I question its use, and wonder at the thought process that would lead to it, and object to its presence in a survivor advocacy newsletter.

If a treatment facility wishes to "protect its ass" by avoiding activities that attract the litigious attention of the Backlash, that is one thing. However, to use such biased language, and imply that treatment interventions which explore the history that created the very problems they are theoretically there to address is not good practice, is to me, unacceptable.

I appreciate your publishing this letter and look forward to seeing the response.

A Letter's Response

By Colin A. Ross, MD

Founder of the Ross Institute www.rossinst.com
 Director of Trauma Programs at Timberlawn, Del Amo, and Forest View Hospitals

Dear MV,

I would like to clarify why my Trauma Program "does not utilize regressive treatment modalities such as focusing on the retrieval of repressed memories." There are several reasons.

One, as E. Sue Blume points out, is to protect the Trauma Program and its staff from malpractice lawsuits. This is standard risk management practiced by all hospitals and corporations, and there is nothing unusual about it. There has not been a lawsuit against the Timberlawn Trauma Program in the ten years it has been in operation. During this time thousands of survivors, of whom about half have DID, have received treatment in the Trauma Program, with overall excellent treatment outcomes, as summarized in a paper of mine (Ross, 2005).

The Program stays open and can offer service to survivors because, unlike Programs that closed in the 90's, it protects itself and Timberlawn Hospital against crippling lawsuits that would result in the Program being closed. This is a good thing for survivors. If the Program is shut down, no one will get any help.

I could be mistaken in my perception, but I believe I have seen hundreds of cases of harmful regressive therapy that focused too much on memory retrieval. This is a real problem that has caused a lot of harm to a lot of survivors. I have testified against therapists and hospitals as an expert witness in malpractice lawsuits in which the plaintiff's insurance was billed hundreds of thousands of dollars for one admission, and the patient was discharged after months or years of inpatient "memory work" that caused deterioration, regression and harm. In my view, I have an ethical and moral obligation to help police this kind of therapy—if I do nothing, I am an

enabler and a bystander, and am repeating the role of the absent rescuer from the survivor's childhood.

My Trauma Program policy is that we do "not utilize regressive treatment modalities such as focusing on the retrieval of repressed memories." This has nothing to do with whether the memories are real. A therapy could be harmful and regressive because of too much focus on memories, even if there were videotapes proving the reality of the abuse. It is important to separate these two issues.

The policy of the Trauma Program is that the staff maintains a position of therapeutic neutrality. We do not "believe" the memories, and we do not "disbelieve" the memories. We do neither. We remain neutral. The therapist was not there during the survivor's childhood and does not know for a fact that the events took place. It is equally true that the therapist does not know that the events did *not* take place.

As far as the reality of DID, SRA and mind control are concerned, I am not silent about any of these. I continue to publish books and papers on DID and the effects of psychological trauma (Ross, 2006). I have published a book documenting the reality of the Manchurian Candidate Programs (Ross, 2007a) and documenting that two FMSF Advisory Board Members were MKULTRA contractors with TOP SECRET clearance from the CIA to work on the creation of Manchurian Candidates. I have appeared on TV documentaries in Europe, Japan and North America talking about the documented reality of CIA and military mind control, and I have called for the creation of ethical standards concerning mind control contracting by psychiatrists and psychologists (Ross, 2007b). I published a book on SRA explaining at great length the importance of and the reasons for

therapeutic neutrality in treating survivors (Ross, 1995).

In my Trauma Programs, survivors are free to talk in detail about any form of trauma they want, but only in individual therapy. In groups, there is a rule that no one can go into the details of trauma because the details are too triggering for others in the group. This rule applies to all types of trauma, whether documented or not. For instance, a decorated Vietnam veteran could not describe his combat trauma in group in detail. This rule protects everyone in the Program.

When the opposite approach is taken—talking in great detail about trauma in groups—the milieu becomes chaotic and re-traumatizing, there is regression and destabilization, treatment time gets wasted, and recovery is derailed and delayed.

Not everyone agrees with or likes these policies, but those are the reasons for them.

Colin A. Ross, MD

Ross, C.A. (1995). *Satanic Ritual Abuse: Principles of Treatment*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Ross, C.A. (2005). *A proposed trial of dialectical behavior therapy and trauma model therapy*. *Psychological Reports*, 96, 901-911.

Ross, C.A. (2006). *The Trauma Model: A Solution to the Problem of Comorbidity in Psychiatry*. Richardson, TX: Manitou Communications.

Ross, C.A. (2007a). *The C.I.A. Doctors: Human Rights Violations by American Psychiatrists*. Richardson, TX: Manitou Communications.

Ross, C.A. (2007b). *Ethics of CIA and military contracting by psychiatrists*. *Ethical Human Psychology and Psychiatry*, 9, 25-34.

Stigma Starts at Home

By Sunshine

For years now I've been pushed around, called names and been harassed in untold and countless ways by family, friends, neighbors, relatives and strangers. Whenever I even mention it to anyone, I've been told that I'm having a "pity party" or that I'm feeling sorry for myself.

No, I'm not feeling sorry for myself and I don't want your pity either. Matter of fact, I've been called a "bitch", a "witch", a "whore", "crazy", "paranoid", "Holier than thou", and even been told that I'm "invisible" and that I should "check out now", not to mention "mental" and a "sideshow"...and worst of all, these "adults" are teaching young children to model their behavior and to have these same attitudes.

I've been told numerous times that "what goes around comes around"do you think I asked for this? I want to scream..."LEAVE ME ALONE!"

What have I done to deserve this? Well, for one, I have chronic health problems that people don't understand, and for another, I don't get along with my mother! My younger sister asks me, "Why can't we all get along?"

Why, indeed. Why? Because I don't agree with my mother violating my boundaries, interfering in all my relationships, invading my privacy, laughing at me and having me forced drugged by the mental illness system. I'm being continually told that I'm disrespectful, rebellious and an ungrateful daughter (need I say more?)

Of course, I respect her for providing for my physical needs while I was growing up. I understand that she had a hard life herself, but I'm not going to be put on a guilt trip for the rest of my life and force myself to be around people who have proven they want to bully and tease me and they do not care about my mental or physical health.

The overdosing of psych drugs almost killed me...they wreaked havoc on my body and made me feel spiritually dead inside; the side effects nearly caused me permanent brain damage and if not for holistic and safe alternative treatments in mental health (and prayer), I would not be here today.

Yes, I'm still here, folks, and recovered people talk! I'm no longer going to keep silent! My "mental illness" per se was caused by sexual and emotional abuse, being the product of a divorce, and being the highly sensitive person that I am, I lived in fear, internalizing all my anger, instead of speaking up for myself when I needed to. Even those times when I did try to speak up or talk back, I was told that I was being "defensive."

Well, who wouldn't be when you feel like your feelings are being hurt or that people are being mean to you?

It's time to tell the truth. Many people who are diagnosed with psych labels - at least in my case - are not taught how to express our feelings in an appropriate manner, or when we do, we are being systematically ignored, invalidated or neglected and treated like our feelings don't count.

And then, people wonder why I have had low self-esteem all my life? Not only that, "people like me" are being constantly teased and bullied in numerous ways.

For years I've endured endless harassment and discrimination in my family, in school, in the workplace, at church and in the community.

For example, bullies cutting my tires, egging my car, smashing my windows, putting sugar in my gas tank and ruining my engine, stealing my personal belongings, stealing my mail, assault, verbal threats, using the phone as a weapon, breaking and entering and much more, causing me emotional duress, yet I have mostly reacted in a peaceful, nonviolent manner.

The bullying in this country is at an all-time high. Not only do all of us need to develop more tolerance for one another, but we need to encourage diversity and creativity. That is what makes us unique and human.

Maybe if we can learn to accept each other's differences, maybe then we can develop into a more civilized society.

MV

Out of the Blue

A song on the radio
Speaks to my blood
But my mind holds so few
memories
Of who I am.

I fly over a landscape,
Skimming the patchwork below
Of soft velvet and jagged peaks.
Watery blue...brilliant
green...screaming red
Flow through my eyes
And out of my hands...
Too many empty squares -
Cold, black and empty.

I want my life back
Memories, feelings...all of it
I want to hold
All of me again.

By HR

MV



Walking the Road of Recovery

By Gloria

I am writing to share what I have learned about my DID. Years of therapy because of trauma from four years old on through young adulthood taught me I am ego-split. I am split into many parts of myself. Each trauma became a separate personality unconnected to each other.

I could not identify with the multiple personality disorder because each part of myself is connected at the base (my parts are as a tree: the trunk, with many branches). For years I felt so alone not being able to identify with those who had no awareness of others within. I went years trying to "make myself better," not having the slightest clue of what was wrong, only that there was something wrong with me that I had to fix. And of course I held myself responsible for the way I was, not the parents or parent figures who had caused me to be the way I was.

Through therapy and at the age of 26 having a diagnostic (3 hour) session with 8 psychiatrists, I was told that I did not have any structure at all to go from, that I was deprived of all a child needs--which was love, protection, care, support, kindness, and help in dealing with life. These doctors did not know how I was functioning, doing all that I was

doing, being a mother, working, etc. Back then, trauma in children or women was not any reality. Now, of course, I know that in splitting I was able to function.

But what I have learned to do is to accept all my parts, as who I am, as my brain was wired as such. I have learned to love each one of my parts, to listen to the child in me, to honor the child in me, to know that I am in charge of all my parts today. It means I wake up each morning to do battle with life as I am.

Accepting myself as I am has given me a freedom from the constant inner conflict within, from the constant arguing of my parts. I found out separate personalities are total in their identities, and as any group of people with different ideas claim their ideas are the right ones. (Our society proves this out every day.)

Through my therapist, who has a united brain, I can see clearly his brain operates as a whole. At the same time, he can make choices, can sort out which course he wants to take. My brain operates as parts, not as a whole. I can arrive at the choice of my course only by switching into the part that deals with intellectual choice, sans emotion. This process of my brain operates as such in all

aspects of my life.

There is the benefit that I can focus totally on that part without any conflict. My therapist experiences the conflict, then sorts out all the pros and cons in the decision.

Recently I learned, through much struggle, that if I want to change something in my life, with me, etc., I cannot do it as I have been trying to do, which is to go from where I am into where I want to go. Now I understand that I need to add another part to my personality, that is, as all other parts of myself, a separate part. This is now working for me. As in all rebirth, I still emotionally grieve what I am giving up in my feelings, to welcome new feelings. As in all parts, my feelings are separate unto themselves.

Through therapy I have opened emotions that were shut off from me as a child who could not deal with the losses that created the trauma. I learned that I would come from my mind only where loving feelings had been shut down. And as in all breakthroughs, much pain, fear, and anger was as overwhelming as the love.

I would like to think this letter may help someone who walked the same road I have.

MV

Pink

Pink light shimmering
in the distance

Come into me and help me.

The time that I need you is
now!

Will you come, because I need
you.

Protect me, light.

By Mary G

MV



12-07

S TICKMAN
EARTH'S
ONLY
D.I.D.
HERO!

BY DWY

SUPER-HERO
HEADQUARTERS

STICKMAN GUARDS
FAIR CITY FROM HIS
TREE HEADQUARTERS

NOTE: STICKMAN
EVOLVED FROM A
CACTUS, HENCE
HIS APPEARANCE!

GREAT TREES! THE
ALARM! IT'S ...
THE MATCH

DOOSM

GAMMY! BURN!!

THE MATCH HATES
US ALL! I MUST PRE-
PARE A BATTLE PLAN!

BUT STICKMAN IS
D.I.D. WITH SIX
ALTERS, SO A PLAN
IS NOT EASILY CREATED

ALL THE ALTERS
HAVE THEIR AGENDAS!

LET'S
SMOOT
HIM!

FIELD HIM
MANAGE
ANGER!

ASK HIM
ON A
DATE!

RUN
AWAY!

CALL
FAT-
STICK
FOR HELP

STOP IT! WE'VE NO
TIME TO DEBATE!
MATCH IS BURNING
OUR CITY TO
CINDERS! AH,
STICKMAN!

4000
7000
GROUPE

YOU WON'T TRICK ME
WITH THAT STOO-
DROP-ROLL TRICK!!

I'M WISE TO YOU THIS
TIME! I'LL BURN
DOWN FAIR CITY
AND REBUILD IT
AS A WAL-MART!

YOU -- MADMAN!!

FORGET IT, MATCH!
EAT HOT CACTUS
NEEDLE!

BUT THE ALTER GEN
FOLDS STICKMAN'S
AIM! NO! THAT'S
MEAN!
DRAT! MISSED!

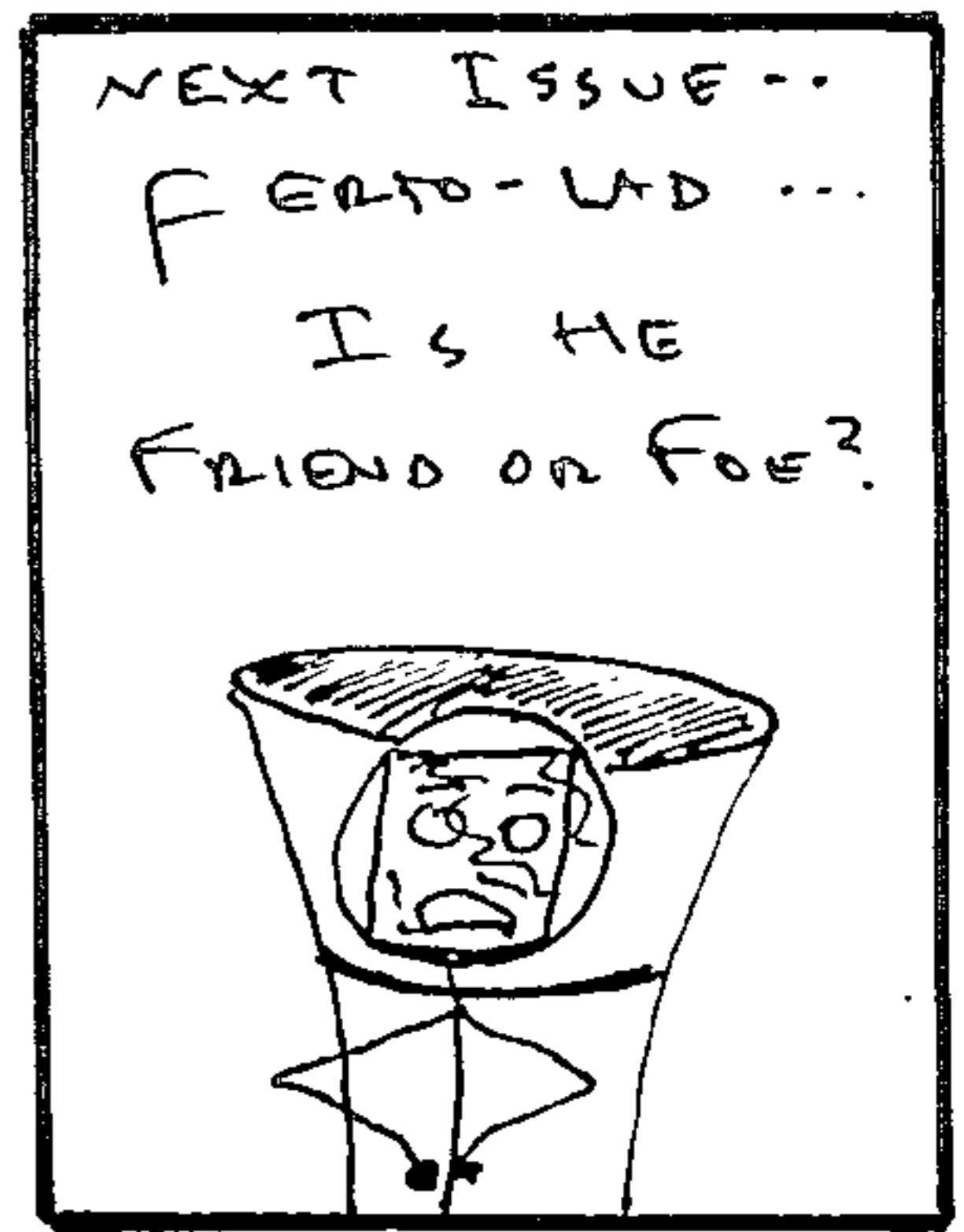
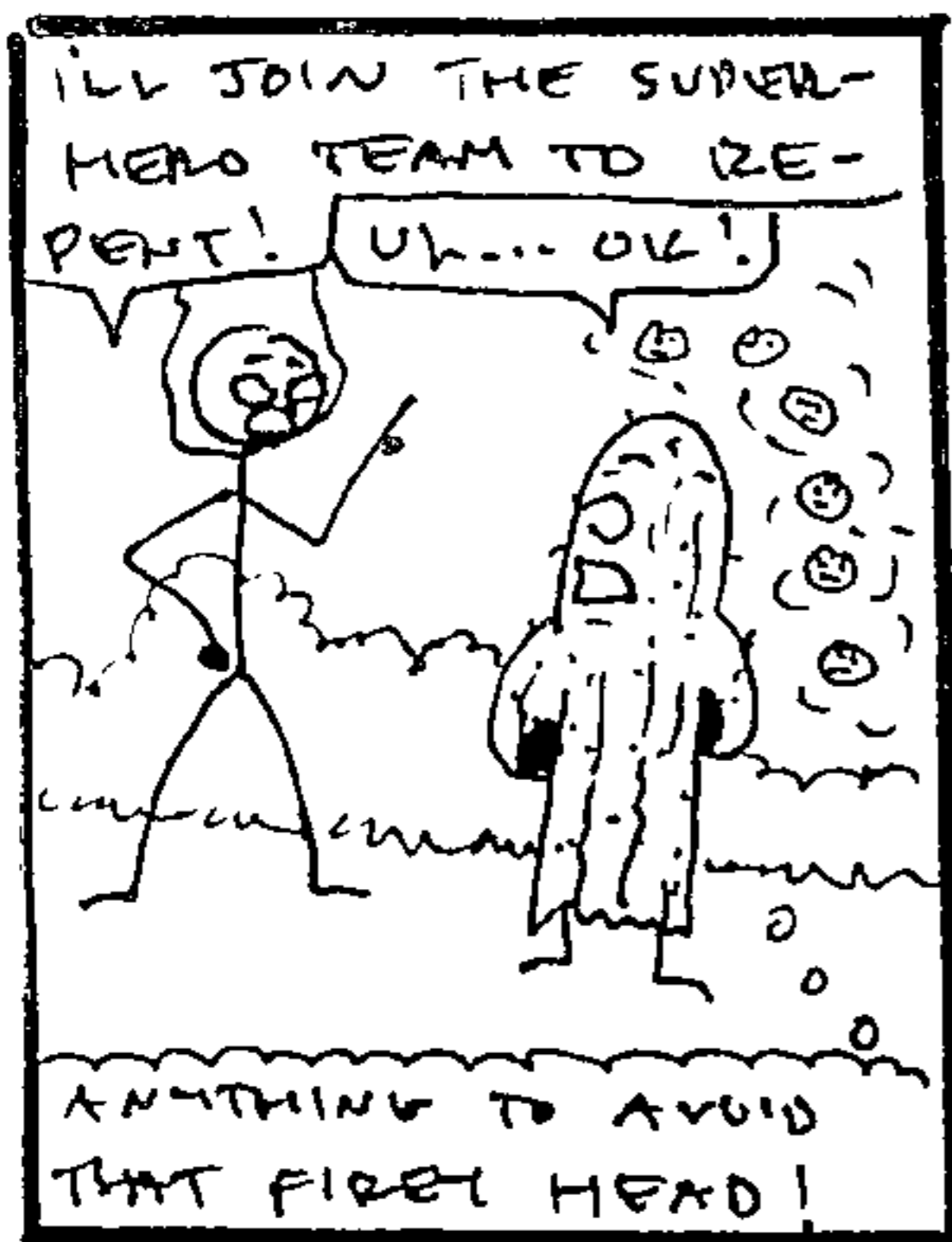
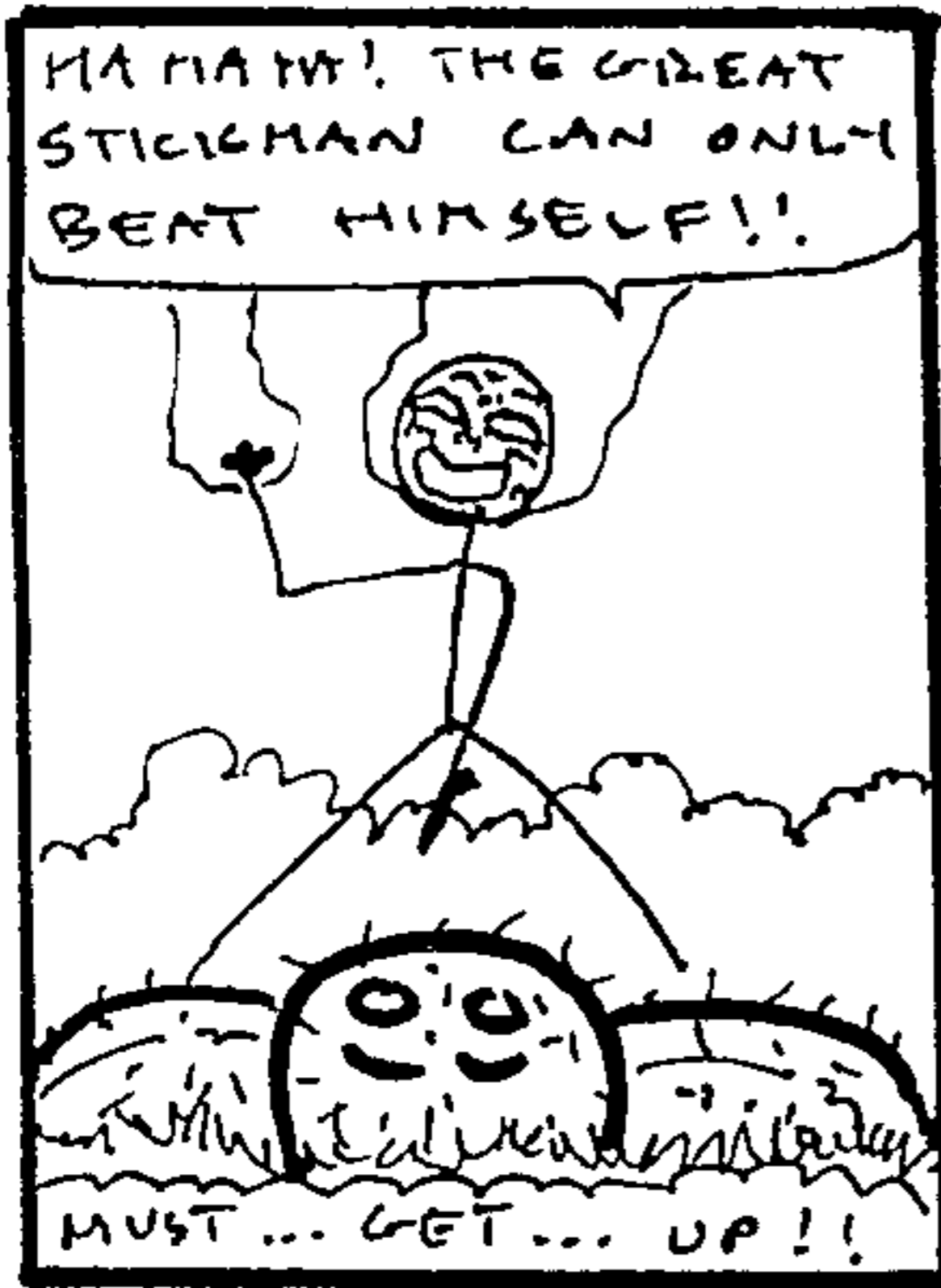
HEY! YOU ALMOST...

-- HIT ME!

NO-
JOB!
HITTING--
MYSELF!

NOW A NEW
ALTER HAS
CONTROL!

IDIOT!
YOU DO
EVERY-
THING
WRONG!
PUT
ME
IN
CHARGE!



Two Poems of Recovery

(A work still in progress, just like me)

By Rainee Day

Assignment: Write a poem about your core issue. Write about it, through it, and life after it

1000 lbs of Anger

(For Judy K.)

My anger is the fuel
that feeds the inferno inside
deep inside the time of my mind.

The road's been rough.

The journey's been tough.

The wounds still tender

Even though they've had enough
time to heal & time to fade.

I'm taking my anger

like electric charges of energy

bouncing around inside

doing damage of their own

I will hear them when they express

I will talk to them and calm them

I will be with them inside my mind

I will feel them and mold them

and give them a form

a form that I can see

a form that I can use

A strong rope to hang on to

in my time of need.

I will recycle that energy

I will put it to good use

creating a life I can live out loud.

It's mandatory if you want to survive.

I want to live

in the here & now

not stuck in the past

but I've never known how.

My rope of anger

will be my strength

to finally set me free

I can breathe!

I can laugh!

I can live life now!

My goal is not so far away.

It's insight! I can see it now.

A few more mountains to climb

A few more miles to go

But I have the energy

to do it now.

DBT Skills

Welcome to the world
of the Wise Mind Skills
Marsha Linehan's
Life Relearning Skills.
It's not required reading
it's back-up to the Bible
It's the second string of support.

Come build a relationship
between the two extremes
A marriage made in heaven
that compliments the soul.
A balance that empowers
an awakened awareness
of a common ground between
the nothingness of no feelings
and the mania of deceit.

Slow down the action!
Regroup your thoughts!
Consider the alternatives,
and try them on for size

How does it fit me?
How does it look?
Is it too tight in the middle?
Is it too baggy in the seat?
Does it fit my image
and the decisions that I make?

I celebrate my arrival
to this place within my head
and extend a "welcome" to my body
to be with me in the days ahead.

I like this special feeling
of strength & groundedness
of always being present
in the here & now,
balanced & insightful,
and ready for the challenges
that life is sure to bring.

© 2007 by Lorraine A. Kaelin

Sometimes

sometimes i'm just so

depressed

i don't know why

i/we just don't feel good

some of us

feel worse than others

i love my parts

they try to help

both me

and each other

i admit

sometimes it gets

so very confusing

and chaotic

but when all

is said and done

we work; we work together

we're a system

we're a team

these times when nobody feels good

are hard

but we always

pull through

we pull through together

with help

from everyone

by sjs

The Importance of Twelve-Step Work in Recovery

By Brad Carter

(A version of this text previously appeared in *Survivorship*, © 2003. MV editors removed brief graphic descriptions only. Used with permission.)

I read somewhere that the typical recovery from RA is six to eight years of being misdiagnosed followed by another six to eight years of therapy. That's over a decade of time wasted just trying to catch up to the place where others begin.

In my case, I went through four counselors with advanced degrees, all with over six years' experience, who all came across well. None of them helped me. Out of sheer desperation to make therapy go someplace, I pushed the last counselor to the point where she realized she could not help me. She said it was the first time that she had gotten into a fight with a client. It was the first time I had been loud and made a scene.

I stopped at a park on the way home from the failed session knowing I was back at the starting point. Two-foot high snowdrifts, temperature in the teens, sparkling ice on the trees. Nature didn't comfort me as it always had. Nothing was working, and I knew I had to come up with a way to return to normal life.

Later, I very distinctly remember lying on the bed looking at the ceiling. There was simply nothing new I could think of to try. It was like striking out for the last time. Then a voice came into my head and said to "make a pact to live by the Twelve Steps." I didn't know what the steps were and wasn't exactly sure what a pact was, either. Since there were no other options, I accepted a life-long commitment to do this.

Emotions Anonymous seemed to fit the bill, as they dealt with depression and anxiety. The first meeting is forever etched in my being. I arrived in a nice sports jacket and sat down among strangers...a white-collar worker who had never told anyone of his troubles before.

For a year I entered the process of building a bond of trust with people with similar problems. Broken people,

largely, who I never would have been seen with before.

But I discovered another, more important stranger at those meetings: *my feelings*. As everybody used their five-to-seven minutes to apply one of the steps to their personal situation, I found that the staring eyes caused me to bypass my conscious mind. What was left was to reach down into the unconscious and pull out what was naturally there.

After a year, I found I was comfortable enough to touch, express, and then release some deep anguish hidden in my soul. After the meeting, I took a walk at night. I had a foreboding that something powerful was going to happen. I had pulled out one of the plugs between my conscious and unconscious mind. What spilled out as I slept was one of the most horrible of dreams. Only it wasn't a dream. It was a flashback.

My abuse stopped for some reason after second grade. In fourth grade, we moved to a new location. Then, knowing I was safe, some part of me floated up a memory from two years earlier. It came while I was awake, and I knew that it had actually happened to me. The neighbor girl and I were walking naked down a hall. I knew it was a ceremony, although being ten, I wasn't sure what a ceremony was.

But the flashbacks after the twelve-step meeting made the connection. What I had recalled years before was part of a satanic marriage ceremony. Now many of the details came smashing home, very real...Staring back at my own face, partially a mask of terror, partially frozen from the dissociation.

After having gone to four therapists for depression, the non-professionals at EA led me to discover the cause of my depression—ritual abuse.

I write this article because I came to believe that a power greater than

myself can, and is, restoring me to sanity. I write in case there is somebody else who is stuck, not knowing what to do. I write because sharing in a carefully controlled group, dedicated to recovery, still helps me retrieve repressed emotions and beliefs. And I write out of gratitude that, just as there was someone to abuse me, there is another to help me in the many times I can no longer help myself. There is a Friend and a hope in recovery. He found my real true "me," and life is getting better.

The Twelfth Promise reads: "We realize that God is doing for us what we could not do ourselves."

MV

Winning

While realizing the internal work I do, I felt inspired. I do a lot of work outside the therapy office.

I like this fact. I like that my growth depends on me and not on a therapist. It is not her availability nor her prodding. Instead it is my desire for a life designed to win.

Winning is living to the fullest. Winning isn't getting a medal or even an acknowledgement, it is a state of being. I survived and thrived, therefore have won...and continue to grow and nurture the very core of who we are.

It isn't easy with the many messages which surface each day, yet defusing them again and again they lose strength, and over time they have no detonation at all. This takes much work and dedication to ones' inner selves...which daily we become more and more committed to.

By Cara (Guarding Angels)

MV

New Habits

By Cassie

I seldom tried to change my 'habits' because I believed it wasn't possible. Then a series of life events changed my life so much from what is considered normal to something that is not very well understood. My hubby and I found ourselves homeless. We did not expect it to be very long—we have income etc. At the two year point we simply continued to live each day on Faith that God had some plan and soon .

We got a place—a mini-slum—and were also collecting things for our new bigger place. Needed to store it—had to get it somewhat organized. Something I had never been good at.

I began collecting banana boxes and painted them basic colors—and stacked them as high as we could

We are now in a wonderful apartment, with good landlords, quiet, peaceful and safe. We have not simply rebuilt our lives, we have seriously renovated big chunks of old ways into new improved ways.

We both have DID. Our systems fit very well and we seem to be able to help each other cope better because if one is missing skills the other usually has them. He's super organized. So we watch him, ask him to help us and do what we can to learn new skills.

I can lose a tool, a notebook, something I just had in my hands using it, so fast—which puts me in a bad temper.

I saw he's careful to put things in their proper spot. Decided to try that, to help us to not lose things, because losing things forces me to waste time finding them

Sounds so simple—it is a difficult task. Seems one inside thinks here's a good spot—another says "no no, over here" - then "uh uh - not - let's put it here!"

The remote, lighters, things we use almost on a constant basis, were shuffled from here, to there, to lost! Then temper. .all the while looking for "it"

So we made a rule. Put the remote in one of three places or lose TV privileges. Put the lighter with the cigs

next to the ash tray or—we'll just not smoke (harder habit to change.)

At first it was purely nuts. Still no remote, no lighter...We needed better solutions. We said "remote must be in one of these three places". As for small stuff: we buy extras. Have tons of lighters, lots of rulers, and many other often-needed and seldom found cheaply-gotten stuff.

We then decided being the Queen of Clutter wasn't ok. By watching hubby and finding cheap access to high quality storage boxes of all sizes, shapes, and see through to boot, we began to try to get better organized.

So when one of my act team was visiting in the playroom studio that was in almost-full-cluttered state, she's looking at my home-made shelving unit ..uh—"Cassie" - AKA? You are just so-so-organized.

We laughed at that—yah. You are the coffee Queen. I'm the Queen of Clutter. When she left I had to have a good think about this. She's a bit OCD in being organized.

Huh—that box is only for these things, and those boxes are full of like items. Someone has helpfully labeled them. And even put a label on the top dresser drawer where we keep the hand-held game batteries...Does she have something here?

We put stuff without a spot in plastic sacks near similar items until we find it the best home. Things in boxes have a home.

People take the labeled boxes and move them, and use marker to write on the bags...but slowly in some kind of methodical way the room's set up is moved—trying to find the best place for this set of shelves or that stack of brightly painted with contents on them in huge letters. As boxes seem to be in the best spot they begin to never get moved.

So as we pondered about "so so organized" it hit us. It's a simple premise—so so obvious—if we keep *trying* to put something in the same places, *we will then find them there.*

This sort of became a chain reaction set of thoughts. Huh. Before

I couldn't do this or that, but now we are getting better at remembering. Some things we simply do now—without having to really think about it. Why?

Because over time, even while homeless, we had begun to simply do things in a more consistent set of ways. Don't just toss the keys down. Put them in the same spot at least 75% of the time. Now let's get it 85% of the time to 95% of the time.

Each of us has preferences but have agreed that once we find a spot, or a way to do things that is comfortable for most, we'll then build it into us as a new habit.

The way we see it, a lot of life is lived within sets of habits developed over many years. If we want to change anything we must first get a majority to agree. More importantly, we really need to want change enough to begin to work at it. Can't try to change a lot at the same time. Trying to remember one or two things is hard enough.

Then we do our best to remember—*oh this is now.* And we are trying to change this into a better more healthy set for behaviors, or new ways to do things. Check the notes—see what's being setup (we communicate a lot in notes. System is too big and complex otherwise.)

#1. Understand it's not a simple task to change especially with the DID challenge. It took a long time to get this way and will take time and patience to change. (Lessons from a great therapist.)

#2. You can not eat a whole cake in one sitting...but if you eat one piece, then later go back and eat another small piece, soon the cake is gone. Same goes for a lot in life. Need to take it in smaller sets of learning and doing.

#3. Do our best to remember—*oh, this is being worked on to change.* Then try our best to do it consistently—leaving room for others' differences.

#4. Don't be super strict or into too tight of what's the best, unless it's very important.

Things like meds must be put back

here—no choice no options. You can change the container they are kept in but that must be put in this spot.

#5. Time is a hard concept when DID is a life thing. Lost time—blackouts—not realizing... wow, I got so into that, we just lost track of time.

So we also need to have some more realistic idea that this is not an *instant change* thing. We need to try to be patient and do things the same way as often as possible. At some point there's less need to think about it and we do it out of habit. Oh yah—we no longer want to eat the whole cake, have a loving hubby to share it with—and gee, all that sugar—how about a sandwich for lunch instead?

We have used this basic premise to change things that are very serious issues. Not just where we put the remote. For example:

We keep all sharps and things used to self-injure in one place. When we feel like SI, we give them to hubby to guard and journal about the need to hurt ourself. Before hubby we threw

them into some dumpster.

Now we think it's better to spend money than SI. That was a motive to change too. We have learned to ask for help inside and outside. That it's not going to be easy. We think—*oh this will be a breeze—easy—no problem*. To end up struggling with it. OR—*Oh this is going to be too hard. It's just too hard*, to then find—hey it's been easier than we thought! Go figure.

Now we have about 5 places we can legally lose our favorite store glasses, and a bin of others at different strengths. Keys have one place only.

The desire to change will grow when it's given room to be thought about in groups and by individual personalities. The decision to change is often hard because the old way is familiar, even if it's not good or healthy. New ways were frightening.

So we need to take it slowly, a step at a time.

MV

BRUSH AWAY YOUR TEARS

© Michael Skinner 10/20/05 www.mskinnermusic.com

Brush away the tears from your eyes
my child

The world don't want to see you cry
- CHORUS -

Brush away the tears from your eyes
my child

The world don't want to hear you cry
And though it's not right you've got to
carry on with your life - please try
The world don't understand, sticks its
head in the sand - and hides
- VERSE -

I wish I could take your hand, try to
help you understand my child
You've got to carry on, your story
must be told - sometime

Brush away the tears from your eyes
my child
The world don't want to see you cry
- CHORUS -

Brush away the tears from your eyes
my child
The world don't want to hear you cry
When you're standing all alone, reach
inside to carry on - dear child
Find the ways to be strong, though
they may break you down inside

Your spirit is still alive so look around
and you'll find

-VERSE -

A friend who'll hold your hand, will try
their best to understand your life
So till then please carry on, find the
ways to be strong my child

Brush away the tears from your eyes
my child
The world don't want to see you cry
- CHORUS -

Brush away the tears from your eyes
my child
The world don't want to hear you cry
Brush away your tears
Hide all of your fears
- CHORUS REFRAIN -

Hide all of your pain
Hide all of your shame
The world don't want to know
The world don't want to know
Someday the world will understand
And then they'll hold out their hand
Till then you must be strong
And find the way to carry on
Brush away your tears
Brush away your tears

MV

Books

Spiritually Integrated Psychotherapy: Understanding and Addressing the Sacred

By Kenneth I. Pargament © 2007 by The Guilford Press, New York, NY
www.guilford.com \$38 hardback 345 pages plus references & index

Author Kenneth Pargament, PhD, is a professor of psychology at Bowling Green State University, and in his role as a practicing clinician, he has worked extensively with people from diverse spiritual backgrounds.

In this book he performs an excellent service for the therapeutic community by connecting the worlds of spiritual reflection and psychotherapy in a way that is not weighted toward the promotion of one spiritual view versus another.

Because the spiritual dimension has traditionally been set aside in the clinicians office, some professionals may not know where to begin in discussing the spiritual. Directly asking about God, church, or other religious practices may not be the best route to a person's spiritual core.

For example, at one point in Pargament's work with a long-term client he'd perceived as "boring," he asked "Have you ever had a time in your life when you felt deeply and fully alive?"

The client's response was most surprising, and transformed this person from "boring" to "incredibly interesting" almost instantly. Building on this response over time, his client's life and work became invigorated and much more satisfying.

Dr. Pargament employs numerous case examples to explain how clients can be encouraged to use their spiritual energy to deal with current and past problems.

This is not a "religious" book in the usual sense. It is tolerant, wise, respectful of all beliefs. By validating a wide range of spiritual views it brings together both spiritual and psychological resources in a harmonious combination that may benefit both client and therapist.

MV

Thank You All...

MV works for healing because YOU share your wonderful ideas, artwork, writing, and creative spirit. Please keep those good vibes flowing! Have a wonderful year! Lynn W., Editor

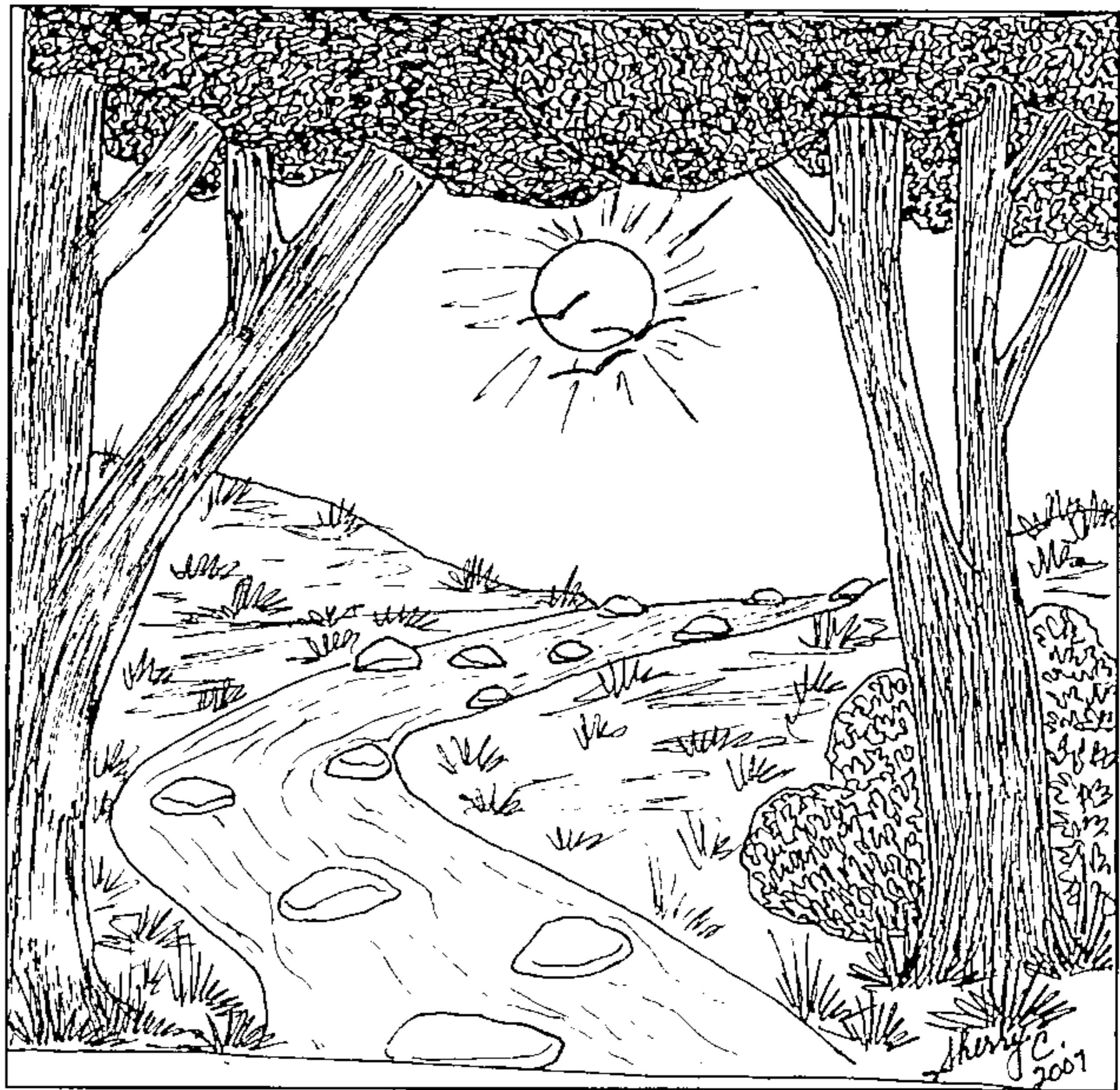
COMING SOON!

April 2008

Finding therapy that Works. Physical healing
ART: Therapy in Action
Deadline Feb 15, 2008

June 2008

What you do for fun Expanding life outside therapy.
ART: Cartoon Festival
Deadline April 15, 2008



Share with us!

Prose poetry and art are accepted on upcoming issue themes, (and even on NON-themes, if it's really great.) DO send humor cartoons, good ideas, and whatever is useful to you. Please limit prose to about 4 typed double-spaced pages. Line drawings (black on white) are best. We can't possibly print everything. Some pieces will be condensed, but we'll print as much as we can. Please enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope for return of your originals and a note giving us permission to publish and or edit or excerpt your work.

Subscriptions for a year (six issues) of *MANY VOICES* \$36 in the U.S., \$42US in Canada, \$48US elsewhere. Back issues always available, each issue 1/6 yearly price. Enclose the form below (or a copy) with your check, and mail to *MANY VOICES*, P.O. Box 2639, Cincinnati, OH 45201-2639. Phone (513) 751-8020. Web: www.manyvoicespress.com

MANY VOICES

We now accept
American Express
Visa, Mastercard
& Discover!



Name _____

Address _____

City/State/ZIP _____

I have a Dissociative Disorder Professional/therapist Relative/Friend

Subscription type. New Renewal Gift Send full list of past themes _____

Full yr(6 iss) 89 ___ '90 ___ '91 ___ '92 ___ '93 ___ '94 ___ '95 ___ '96 ___ '97 ___ '98 ___ '99 ___ '00 ___
'01 ___ '02 ___ '03 ___ '04 ___ '05 ___ '06 ___ '07 ___ '08 ___ '09 ___ '10 ___ '11 ___ '12 ___

Specific issues or preferred start date: _____

1 year \$36 in U.S. \$42US in Canada, Elsewhere, \$48 in U.S. Currency drawn on a U.S. Bank
Make check payable to *MANY VOICES* & send with this form to

MANY VOICES, PO Box 2639, Cincinnati, OH 45201-2639

CHARGE IT! (Please print clearly) (circle one) VISA MASTERCARD AMERICAN EXPRESS

Cardholder's Name _____

Acct. # _____ Exp. Date _____ Total: \$ _____

Signature: _____ Today's Date _____