

MANY VOICES

WORDS OF HOPE FOR PEOPLE WITH MPD OR A DISSOCIATIVE DISORDER

Vol. IV, No. 3

June 1992

ISSN1042-2277

**Inside:
Self-Concepts!
Exotic Alters!**

*Sangei
By Sarah*



This is Sangei. She is part white lioness, part human (at least in appearance). She is unable to speak, yet communicates externally with growls and roars. Internally she is telepathic. She is one of two Sentinels/Guardians who dwell in the Nursery (the inner children's world). As pet/Protectoress, Sangei lives with and watches over all the children. She guards them from all dangers and treats both from the inner world and the outside world. She is also a large and loving playmate to even the smallest child.

—By Sarah of JMC

Learning from Exotic Alters

By C.C.

In my family of alters there is a 4 year old girl who is deaf and was totally mute when I first met her. Her name is Pretty One. For a long time I could feel myself reading other people's lips and didn't know why I did it, while at the same time I would feel an odd sensation around my ears as if they were packed with cotton. Pretty One's beginning way to communicate was only an open-mouthed silent scream of fear and agony. We helped her by being close to her even though some parts could "feel" her screaming and were afraid. Then we drew pictures for her, gave her her name, and we wrote messages to her in big block printing to say we loved her. With lots of help and encouragement she can now almost say her name or will print letters on the hand of the person she is trying to talk to. We let her know where and when it is safe for her to come out. She has been able to share some of her memories through someone who knows of them. She is still deaf but had lost her voice through fear of what was done to her and from

screaming endlessly.

We also have an older blackwoman who is shorter than our body and weighs 300 pounds. (We weigh 150 pounds.) She was never allowed out except in voice because of real fears by younger others that the body would burst. She is a protector of some younger parts and gives lots of hugs, but is also aggressive and fearsome if she feels threatened. She loves ice cream which is a problem for the body. The last time she was out, four quarts of ice cream disappeared (eaten) and we felt ill for days. Because ice cream is her comfort we try to allow her to have some several times a week. It just didn't work to deny her any. Then she would gorge on it. She rarely comes out to talk directly to our new therapist because she seems embarrassed, so we help her to write out what she needs to say.

Also, I have some parts with allergies and several parts who have been smoking for the past year, after we had quit for eleven years. This is causing health problems. No matter what we do,

the cigarettes keep showing up.

We tried acupuncture without success (one part quit, as she was present at one session.) This week we are going to try to quit with hypnosis. Sometimes it is very difficult to get cooperation.

Our best methods to help other parts are through journalling, making it available to all parts without censure, and drawing at home, especially in a drawing medium preferred by our different parts, eg: crayons, finger-painting, drawing a large mural on our bedroom wall. We have recently joined an art therapy group for survivors where any part can feel safe and come out and draw for a two hour period, followed by an hour of group sharing.

The male parts in my female body have not yet really been dealt with and lately I have become aware that several of my parts are lesbian or bi-sexual. As I was married for 17 years, now divorced, I feel very confused about my sexuality. I would be interested to hear from others, through MV, about this problem.

MV

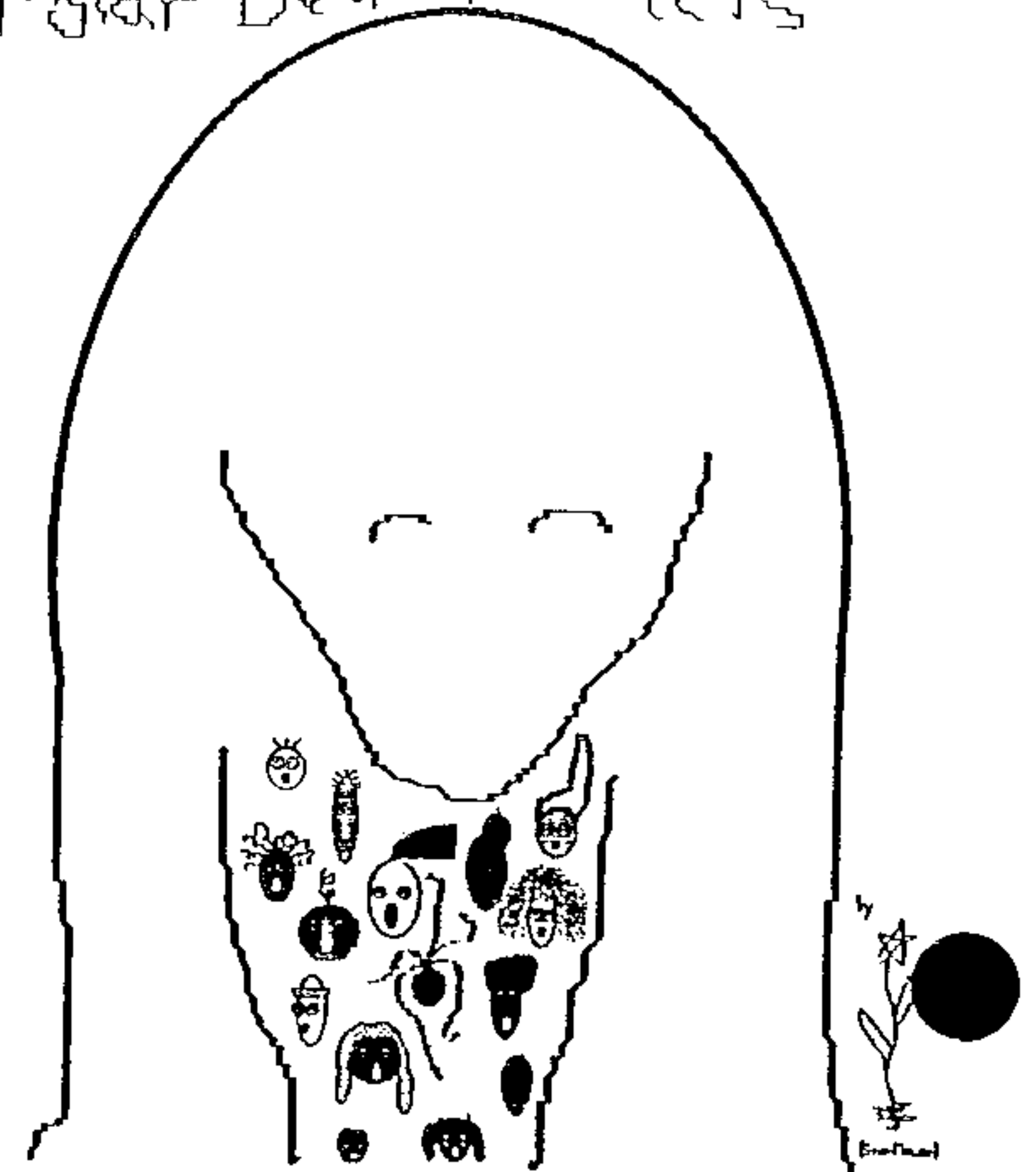
Starflower was thirteen months old when she first came out, about a year and a half ago. She was one of the first alters I remember meeting. She has never spoken a word. From the beginning she has only expressed herself graphically. A prolific artist, she did a number of watercolors expressing the horrors she witnessed in the past. Suddenly in September she disappeared inside and I, Julie, wondered where she had gone. She didn't come out until I read that your next issue's focus would be exotic alters. As I was contemplating what to send, I was compelled to stop what I was doing and open my Macintosh to my favorite graphics program.

Once again (it happens a lot these days) I got to witness my arm following somebody else's instructions.

The words "Polar Bear protects" are the first Starflower has ever written. Her disappearance inside was to go to school so she could better communicate. She asked me to spell out her name under her signature for you, to make sure you would know who she is. I believe Starflower is the face in the middle, the one my husband says looks like an onion. I think she's closer to a cross between a starfish and an octopus. Polar Bear loves this drawing. It is the first that has ever been done of her.

By Julie etc.

Polar Bear protects



Our Self is a Team!

By The Team

“Self” to us means our Team: Big Jill, Corporate Jill, Me-My-Own-Self. The Destroyer, and the See-er. We didn't used to know that we were a team and, when we started to become aware of each other, some parts wanted to kill other parts that seemed like intruders. But now we're proud of the way our Team works together and of the important role each plays!

Corporate Jill still has an editing management job that no one else likes. But she and Big Jill also go to graduate school to study how to help other people who hurt inside. Big Jill interacts with people and coordinates us so everyone gets to help and no one gets scared; Corporate Jill does the research and takes the exams. Big Jill and Corporate Jill share the physical body. Most outside people can't tell them apart, and sometimes they wear each other's clothes. Corporate Jill protects us from getting too close to people, and Big Jill protects us from being too isolated.

Me-My-Own-Self is only five, and she doesn't recognize the body as hers. Sometimes she feels lost and complains, “This is the *wrong* body!” because she is skinny and little and has brown eyes and curly blond-brown hair instead of hazel eyes and straight hair and a heavy body. When we broke our leg, she couldn't use the crutches because they were too big for her. Being safe and warm are important to her and she has learned to let hugs from special people feel good. She loves having stories read to her, especially *Bedtime for Frances* and *Where the Wild Things Are* and *The Silver Boat*. When she's happy — for instance, when she's trusting someone outside — she says she feels like buttercups.

The See-er and The Destroyer don't have any body; Corporate Jill, who likes to label things, says they are ego-states and not separate people. Sometimes The

Destroyer uncurls from the place she stays inside and tries to take over the body. That feels terrifying but we have learned that she only comes out when she thinks Me-My-Own-Self needs protection from scary memories or from somebody coming too close. The See-er is very deep inside and sort of separate from the rest of us, hard to explain because we only hear her when she decides we really need to. She's the one who has guided us all along the way, who helps our therapist understand, who gives us memories when we're ready, who makes the major decisions like about going to graduate school and changing careers. When none of us wants to go to therapy to face things, she takes us there by the scruff of our necks.

We used to be very confused and upset about being multiple. It seemed bizarre, like being crazy, and none of us believed it was true. No one knew what was going on, with different voices and different opinions and different pieces of memories making chaos. Our therapist's strength and caring, the love and support of Big Jill's husband, and our best friend's special love have helped us see ourselves as real. Now we're glad to have each other (well, Corporate Jill isn't very glad, but the rest of us are). We're stronger now. We have each other to protect us, to get acquainted with, and to appreciate. We don't worry so much when our outside body and our inside people don't match. As Me-My-Own-Self often says, “Oh well, that's just the way it is.” We're not too sure what integration might feel like, and no one wants to give up herself, but the See-er says that someday we'll be just one person who can give courage and hope and understanding to others. Maybe then we'll be able to look in the mirror and recognize the face there as “me”.

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

**The National Center for
the Treatment of
Dissociative Disorders**
1290 S. Potomac
Aurora, CO 80012
(303) 751-8373 or
1-800-441-6921
Walter C. Young, M.D.;
Clinical Director

The National Center is not affiliated with nor does it have input to or control over the contents of this publication

Reach Out

By Diana Z.

Just reach forward.
Extend your hand.
It doesn't matter if it's trembling.
Reach out your hand
and your heart will follow
and you will learn
that love can be real.

Fear was right
when the pain was today.
But fear is holding you back now.
Dare fear one more time
and reach for what you need.

The struggle will not end quickly
but the truth will come
and then you will know
it was worth it.

If you continue to strive
for what you know you need,
you will have to reach for that
love.
So, go ahead.
Reach out your trembling hand
and trust that love
was not what they gave you,
and that it can be real,
and that you deserve to have it
just as you are.

Silent Shame, a public radio documentary on male survivors of child sexual abuse, featuring therapist and author Mike Lew, is available for purchase on cassette through 1-800-325-1616. Or write to the producer, Dan Gediman, at PO Box 4962, Louisville KY 40204-0962 for more information.

Therapists' Page

By Karen Surman Paley, M.Ed.

Karen Surman Paley, M.Ed. is a freelance writer and non-practicing social worker and alcoholism counselor. She is currently working on a book about using dreams to heal from childhood sexual abuse. She is especially seeking dream material from multiples. For more information, write to her at 60 Central St., Topsfield MA 01983. Dream material included in this article was submitted by women in response to advertisements placed in newsletters. No names or identifying data regarding perpetrators was included. All names in this article are pseudonyms.

I met a woman who told me that she had multiple personalities. "Are you a survivor of childhood sexual abuse?" I asked. "No," she said. "there was no abuse in my family." In fact, the only thing that bothered this woman about her family was that they had distanced themselves from her when she told them of her multiplicity. It was as if she had contracted MPD from some environmental contaminant. The woman had no memories. She needed a transmitter and a safe place for reception.

Dreams may be the result of random firing of neurons in our brain stem, as some researchers have suggested, but there is a purpose to it. *The purpose of dreaming is to wake us up.* If you have found yourself bolting upright in a cold sweat at night, you know what I mean literally, but I am speaking figuratively here. Dreams can wake us up from years of ice blue frozen denial. These communiques from the unconscious break down amnesic barriers that have been erected to block memories of trauma and the alters who carry them. They are the transmitter.

For those who were threatened with baneful consequences if they told of their abuse, dream recall, recording, and interpretation may feel like the only safe way to circumvent the fear left behind by the voices of perpetrators. In his book *The Diagnosis and Treatment of Multiple Personality Disorder*, psychiatrist Frank Putnam writes, "Dreams provide access to deeply hidden traumã that is difficult to elicit with hypnotic techniques. MPD patients seem more willing to share and work with dream material than with other forms of memory for trauma. (Page 202).

What I have found in reviewing dreams from 35 survivors is that much of what they experience as nightmares or anxiety dreams are actually flashbacks. Often the troubling dream is written in a journal and left unexamined until years later when the childhood trauma begins surfacing in the company of a trusted therapist or support group. The feelings of safety precipitate a scanning of old dream material and the survivor is shocked by what she finds.

Before they had any inkling of ritual abuse, many survivors submitted dreams to me in which they were being chased or attacked by groups.

(1) My father took me to this seedy-looking place. The man and my father took me down this long gray hallway and down some stairs. Lots of men came down. They examined my vagina and said I would be fine.

(2) I dreamt I was living with this tribe of people who ate black puppy dogs. Something had happened because the oldest child, if it was a girl, had to be sacrificed. There was a ritual about it. It didn't happen all the time and it was no big deal to them, it was the way things were done.

(3) I was taken to hell by an Angel of Death. I became the Devil's girlfriend.

Sometime after these dreams, each of the women had waking memories of cult abuse. In one case, the remembering was triggered by my asking her about some sort of group abuse. In the other cases, the women had conscious memories and then found evidence in prior dreams.

Dale reported a very troubling dream in which she had given birth and yet not remembered it within the confines of the dream. The baby shrank to the size of a

cigarette filter and burned up in the dashboard of a car. It was a horrible dream that still terrifies her. Years later, after having begun to accept a history of ritual abuse, she came to see the dream as a memory of a time when she was probably bred by the cult and gave birth to a baby that was sacrificed. "It's amazing to me that I wrote, 'I had lost time' and that 'I had had a child without knowing,' in my dream journal, ten years before I even knew I was a multiple."

While Dale still has no specific recall of giving birth, shortly after sending me this information, she had a similar dream.

A woman who was unknown to me, but said to be my sister, is holding a naked infant. She feeds him something and smiles at him while he chokes to death. She shakes him gently, then horror registers. "He's dead!"

These recurrent themes are the process by which the unconscious slowly transmits events which we will receive when we are ready to handle them.

Secondly, alters can be discovered through dreams. Mary had been doing a lot of reading about multiplicity and felt it was beginning to affect her dream life.

Parts of me were "peering out" of myself, like the woman describes in her book. It was as if they were clearly identified for the first time or had finally identified themselves. The one that stands out is a child. She seemed to be about three or four and the image I have is of her peering out of my eyes. The expression on my face is one of a mischievous child.

Over a two year period Mary had a series of dreams in which she switched personalities. Then she had a dream about moving back into her parents' house and

(continued on page 5)

(Therapist's Page cont'd)

finding another bedroom in the attic. "Another girl lives in the attic! She looks like me and is me, just a different expression of myself." After this dream, Mary could no longer totally attribute her dream life to the residue of her bibliophilism. She interpreted it as having another person, perhaps her core self, in the attic of her mind and began to bring her dreams to therapy where she is exploring possible multiplicity.

Through a sequence of dreams involving a scene at a cemetery in which her personalities were talking to a body in a grave, Geraldine was able to find a part of herself. She shared the dreams in therapy and, through hypnosis, Geraldine rewound the scene to a funeral home and, after more dreams, the body was revived and hospitalized. It has been determined to be her birth personality, geraldine. She is still in the hospital.

Finally, dreamwork is a very significant part of our spiritual recovery kits. What once were terrifying, recurring nightmares in which we found ourselves powerless to cry out for help against attackers, can become the stage for an end to victimization and the dress rehearsal for self-transformation. Beryl, told as a child that her reports of molestation were all in her

imagination, dreamt she smashed a would-be attacker over the head with a board as she yelled, "And this won't land in your imagination either!" In one motion she stopped a perpetrator and cleansed herself of her parents' paralyzing lies.

Dale sent confrontational letters to her perpetrators. The next day, which happened to be both the third anniversary of her MPD diagnosis as well as a Satanic holiday, she had a powerfully raging dream.

"I'm setting fire, with a wooden match, to a room full of assorted paper mache displays, piles of paper documents and pictures. I set them afire one by one."

Dale experienced this dream as her desire to burn to ashes the houses, churches, and theatres where she was abused. The dream provided her with a place to do something that would be too dangerous in her waking life.

Cynthia, an incest survivor, dreamt that she was able to stand up for herself as a child.

I am very young, still in my parents' care. They take me to a therapist who uses "touch therapy". The therapist keeps putting his hands on me. I keep screaming. I end up with my hands around his throat screaming, "How do you like it!" My parents decide not to hire him.

Even her parents get the message. She is heard. "I am smart enough to know that 'touch

therapy' is inappropriate and react with tremendous anger because I don't want to be 'touched' anymore."

Dreamwork has the potential to retrieve memories, bring alters out of hiding, and provide us with the experience of standing up for ourselves and putting our anger where it belongs. As survivors send me more dream material, I am able to learn more about this process. Many questions have been asked of me by multiples, and only more data can bring answers. Do we forget our dreams because they were dreamt by alters and we switch to the host upon awakening? Who is dreaming these dreams? What is the difference between what singles call dream characters and multiples call alters?

Bring dreams to your support groups and your therapists, and work on them alone. The healing energy from dreams can combine synergistically with other therapeutic activities to hasten recovery. Remember that you are your own best dream interpreter. Others can facilitate your process with questions, hypnosis and suggested meanings, but all associations are your own. Dreams come from your life, not someone else's. As you might do with an angry alter, befriend them. Your dreams will always be there for you.

MV

In the Mirror

i look in the mirror
to see if i have those
things the older two have
when mine get bigger
he says he will like
me better
i cover myself with
a full slip wishing i
were a boy and wanting
not to grow than i go
into the room with the bath
but i have been caught
as she brings the hose
down on my head and face
because i show too much
skin i am confused
a half slip is all that
is covering her
as she puts her choking hands
around my neck and her voice

shouts "open your legs now or
i'll beat you to death" i
wonder how to obey and do
something that is badder more
than what i was beat for
yesterday
i am here
under the bed
my world
safe
my face is hurting
my head
is hurting
my legs
burn
i hurt
i want to cry
but Michelle
pleads "no no no
she will beat again"

Michelle tells me
"it is my fault I
did not stop her
go to sleep next time
I will try harder"
so we share this space
under the bed our
world a safe world
free from dread
a fun world of sounds
words numbers stories
and on occasion a
book or two
Michelle and me
Betsy and Fred
Jessica and Nicole
Somehow with them
because of them
i
live

By Rosalie

Industrial Strength MPD

By Anne

I am but one of many that share this one body, but I am my own person. I have many limits living as I do, but that is what I must contend with. I share this body with others, but I am not a fragment of them. I am Anne.

Do not try to force me to be normal, for I will never be. I have never had the pleasure of living under normal conditions. I will always carry the scars of my past.

Please, don't try to sugar-coat my life, or suggest I "put it in the past". Ours is not an easy way to live, but it's the way we survived. Do not judge our internal world, for you have no true idea of what we endured.

We have agreements with each other and our new family that help us stay safe. Cooperation—not dictation, co-consciousness, or fusion—is what we strive for. Those who help us will be fondly held in our hearts forever.

Although I do not really know the others, I am convinced that they are all important and cannot be replaced. People are not interchangeable. Each of us has a reason to be. I will fight to the death for their right to live.

So don't try to abuse me further

by: Trying to fit me into what you think I should be.

Candy-coating my problem. It's damn hard having MPD.

Telling me to integrate. I deserve to live my own life as best as I can.

Thinking I should hide my problems because you don't want to look at them.

I value each of the others with whom I share my body for their strengths, weaknesses, memories, and the pain they endured in order for us to survive. I will remember to trust them, for we are in this together.

I know I am one of the 3%–4% of bodies that are diagnosed as having MPD with "flagrant" symptoms of the disorder, but don't call me dysfunctional, or other such labels, for I functioned in the abyss.

Perhaps I scare you and you object to sharing your label with people like Sybil and myself. . . but I object to sharing my label with judgemental persons who are afraid to let people know who they really are.

Yes, I am angry, mostly at the solitude that I am forced into by others who are on the other side of the continuum of dissociation

and MPD. Yes I am rarer, but I am not less of a person.

If you can't or won't help me in my quest for peace, that is your choice, and I certainly understand. But please, don't harm me just to distance your problems from mine.

Yes, I have very little communication with "the others", and maybe it's better that way. For it helps me respect them as the separate people that they are.

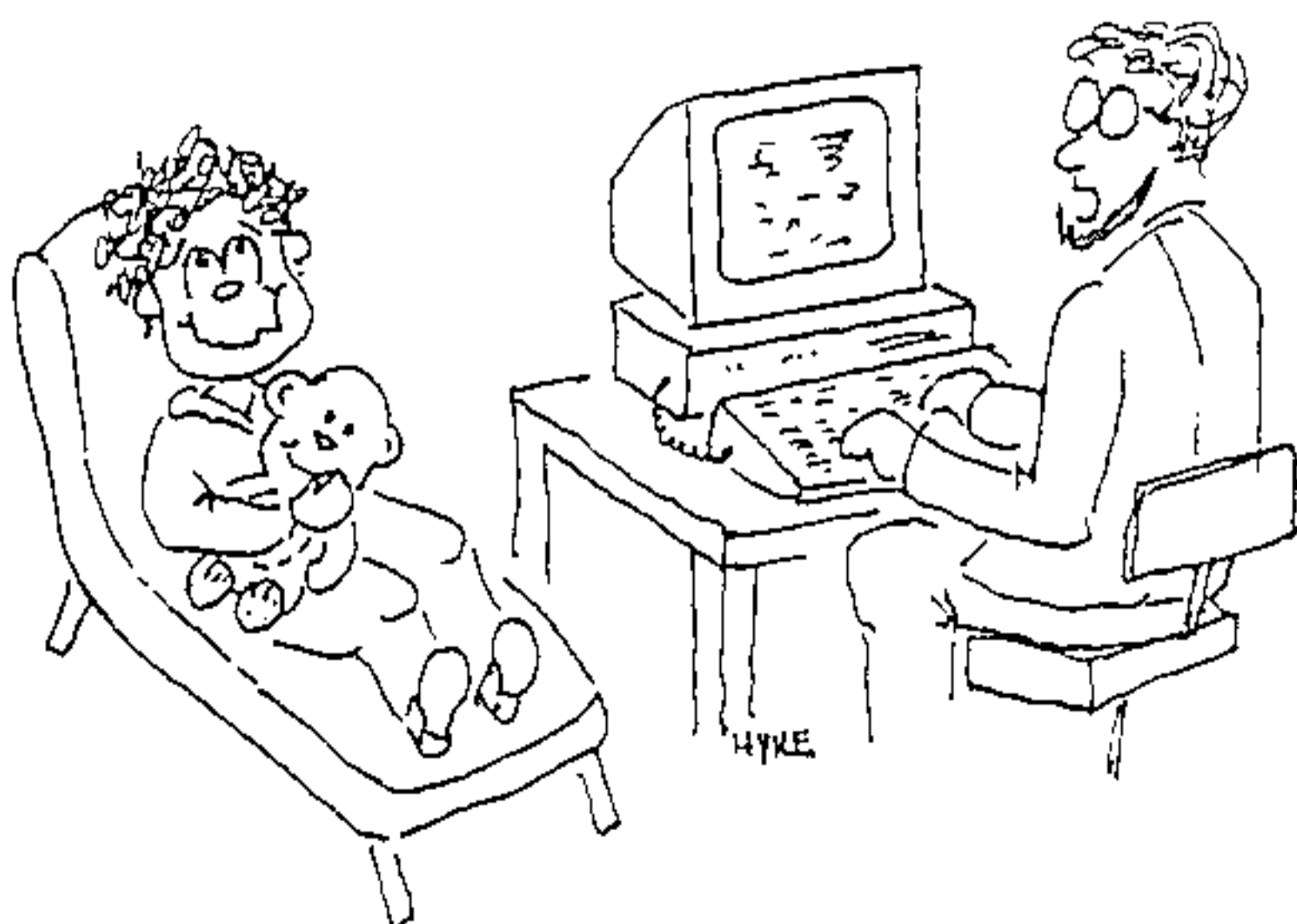
It's hard to "wake up" passing a car, or in other dangerous places, and even harder to live with commitments made by others. But this is the way we survived the unsurvivable.

I am myself. We are separate but equal. Together we share all that life has handed us. The body, a past of unending torture, torment and pain, and now separate futures, and the right to pursue our own fulfillment with those whom we choose.

Our lives are now spent finding our own contentment with the love and care of a few but special people. We are now learning safety, love, trust and respect from an excellent therapist, and a wonderful "husband" and children.

MV

"WE DON'T DO WEEKLY SESSIONS ANYMORE
WITH THIS "INSTA-BLEND" PROGRAM YOUR
INTEGRATION IS POSSIBLE IN MINUTES!"



Snail

By SC

snail music, spiralled chambers,
vibrating
delicately,
pearl halls
translucent,
a symphony locked inside.

snail life, anonymous,
creeping delicately,
wandering minstrel,
secretive,
a symphony locked inside.

snail colours, blending
grey brown
sliding,
lost in the woods,
a snail trail,
with a symphony locked inside.

Recovering

By Ellen H. for D.L.

The following piece was submitted by a client who was helped by this clarification of "guilt", written by her therapist (who is also recovering). It applies especially to those who report ritual abuse.—LW

Guilt of the Innocent.

Within your blue, despairing eyes lives a pain so pure,
 Only the truly innocent would recognize its source.
 You carry an agony so primal because you knew guilt
 And tasted the bitterness of shame eons before your time.
 A child, born unstained and pure, receiving a horrible heritage:
 Parents who worshipped an un-holy being to whom torture was
 pleasing.
 Starving, beaten and bloodied; raped by men and animals,
 Your childhood ripped from you by the point of a knife With the total
 absence of parental love or concern.
 None-the-less, you could not bear to perceive those you needed as bad,
 So you began the futile labor of attempting to discover,
 Of trying to find what wrong you had committed.
 Small, dependent, helpless, you felt guilty of a transgression,
 Of some mysterious, horrible deed that surely you must have
 performed.
 Held captive by your consuming guilt, you were pliable,
 You did the bidding of the people around you or, you knew,
 In your trembling little girl heart, that to disobey,
 To dare to scream or vomit, would mean a certain and ugly death.
 With creativity, courage and strength, you survived those years,
 But were never able to discover what despicable crime you'd
 committed.
 You experience a shame and a guilt, so real as it lives within you,
 First because you are still alive while so many others perished,
 Second, because you still believe you must have deserved your lot.
 What terrible lies you were told, brave, wounded lady!
 The evil ways of those who were supposed to tenderly nurture you,
 The belief system of those who should have warned and protected
 you.
 Crushed you with the weight of their wickedness until you surmised,
 That you, not them, had done a wrong worthy of your suffering.
 Please believe that a child is always innocent, but Satanists never are.
 Please go back, find that innocent heart which is free at last
 Of those who would delight in the silent screams of an innocent child.
 Gather to yourself the truth that belongs to all children:
 They are born with a right to be respected and cared for.
 Trust that it is never too late to learn to love yourself.
 Look in the mirror and see those eyes which do, despite their anguish,
 Hold a hope that no cult can completely erase or taint
 Which is that hope that all humans are born with:
 The hope to know an authentic, compassionate Mother and Father.
 Dare yourself to capture that faint light there in your eyes.
 Encourage it to grow, that one day
 Your emotions will follow the light of your reason,
 And you'll become that tender Mother, caring Father.
 You'll become the most important person in your life.
 Because you'll learn to care for yourself and wash away,
 Yes, cleanse yourself, of a guilt and shame which never belonged to
 you.
 Guilt of the Innocent.

Resources

Rosemarie W. recommends a poetry magazine, *Up Against the Wall, Mother*. She says it is devoted to women in crisis and its goal is to "bring women's thoughts and feelings to light, explore them and accept them with new insights." For more information, write to Miriam Press, 9114 Wood Spice Lane, Lorton, VA 22079.

Volunteers needed for research about stressful life events and relationship adjustment. Female and male survivors and/or their partners (over 18 years old) needed to complete anonymous questionnaire and return at my expense. You may use pseudonym to receive questionnaire by mail. Write or call Robert Ferguson, MA, Dept. of Educational and Counseling Psychology, Dickey Hall, Univ. of Kentucky, Lexington, KY 40506-0017, (606) 269-1310.

A book on healing from satanic ritual abuse is in progress. Material and information is requested by the author, who writes that she is an SRA survivor and integrated MPD. Significant Others may also participate. She is using a pen name and post office box, and advises others to do the same. Write to Mary C., 1435 State St. #521, Santa Barbara CA 93101. Deadline August 31, 1992.

Incest survivors: your brothers or sisters may be interested in this research study. . .

If you were raised in a family where a child was molested by a father figure but were *not* molested yourself, your help is needed to complete an anonymous questionnaire for doctoral research for which you will be paid \$5. Call Joanne Wendt., MA, at (619) 674-4913 collect, *Saturday* only.

Conferences for therapists only: the Sexual Abuse Treatment Symposium will be held in Breckenridge, CO, August 5-8, and in San Antonio, TX, October 14-17, 1992 for advanced skill-building. Sponsored by Meta Resources, Colorado West Mental Health, and Counseling Assoc. of San Antonio. Call Barbara Murdock, 404/933-0215 for registration details.

Exotic Alters...

Prior to reading Jeremy's letter (Dec. '91, MV), I couldn't understand why I have/had the need to learn "lip reading." I now believe one or many of my alters are deaf. Maybe this is why any communication has been so limited.

I am no longer in counseling. I have taken a "time out" from my counselor because he doesn't hear me. It's like he isn't listening to me. I have had a hearing problem with him in the past. Sometimes his lips will move and I haven't heard a word he is saying. Therefore, he must repeat himself, and I hope I hear him the second or third time, if I am lucky.

In the past, my husband has yelled at me a lot for not paying attention to him or what is going on around me. If only he could understand!

I cope by making light of something I missed. In college, I flunked a lot of classes. I just assumed I was "stupid" or had a "learning disability."

Jeremy's letter made a positive difference in my life. Thank you.

By Louise & Co. (the girls)



This is our good friend Mr. Lion. He is a wonderful, snuggly comforter to the kids, a confidant to the teens, and a role model for the other animals and the adults. We love him.

The Wind for B & the Group



We are the people who live in Denyse. There are lots of special alters like Time-Runner, and Carol who is very, very small and can hide anywhere. Her favorite place to hide is inside the window casings. We also have a monkey and a monster inside.

The picture we sent is of Stardust. She is our favorite one. Stardust is the leader and guide for the People of the Universe. She helped many children escape and go beyond the stars. When the time is right she will bring them back. Beautiful music and wonderful light shows lie beyond the stars, but mostly there's peace and knowing that we all belong in the universe. There are many other children there, other lives that are not from our body. They too escaped beyond the stars.

Stardust is really special. She draws well, writes poetry, and loves to work with clay. She is our creative side even though lots of us can draw and paint. She's especially important because she protects lives. She is the "Keeper of Screams". She shatters the screams and the pain and sprinkles it among the stars. That way we don't get killed or made to hurt others because we screamed.

We have other guardians who protect the system, but she's the only one with wings. I think she's our angel.

By Elizabeth for all of us in Denyse

My name is Shadow T. I am 27 years old. I am an American Indian from the Chippewa Tribe of northern Wisconsin. I am what you would call an alter. The therapist we see, who I call Lake Lady, tells me we are all real but we share Sue's body. Lake Lady explains that she and people who really know Sue know we are separate, but in public we share one body. This is new and confusing to me.

Before, I always felt inferior, stupid, dumb and other things I've been told my whole life until I met Lake Lady.

Now I feel I have something to help, by sharing about myself and my 14-year-old sister Sky.

Sky is unable to talk. When we were 14 we had a baby. Sky was living with the tribe still. I was with the "Bad People". The people in our tribe noticed Sky was pregnant. Sky told the truth. She said she got pregnant by people in a black robe at a ritual, and that she had been going to these rituals for awhile and told the horrible details. No one believed her. Sky was told to leave because she shamed the tribe.

...Special Powers for Special People

Sky had nowhere to go but back to those "Bad People". They cut her tongue out for telling. They told her she was an animal. They kept her in a cage when she wasn't out and being tortured and abused. Because Sky could not talk she had to do the most horrible things of any of us adults or kids, because she couldn't tell anyone.

Sky always felt different from others. Even when we started therapy she couldn't come out to talk like everyone else did. So I wrote Lake Lady a letter and told her about Sky.

Sky and I communicate through notes. I talk, she writes. She knows sign language, but none of us I'm aware of know it. Neither does the Lake Lady. After you communicate with Sky and get to know her you are able to understand with her simple gestures and a few words. She now can carry on conversations like speaking people.

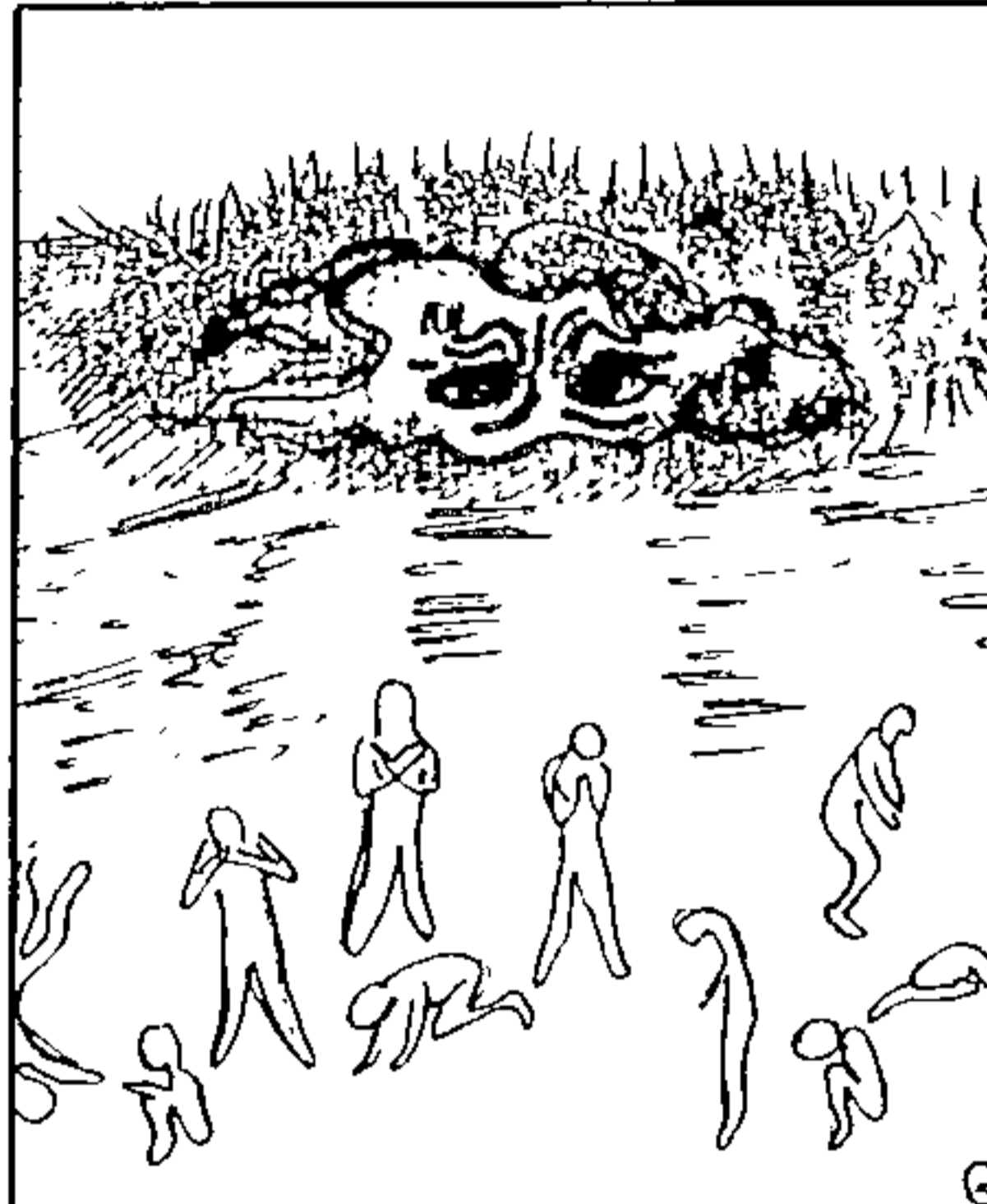
She is afraid to talk. She makes noises and was laughed at by the "Bad People". The Lake Lady encourages her to have a voice, to make a noise, to yell or scream or "be heard" any way she can. She does this in a safe place where strangers can't hear her, like in our house, the car, or outside.

We also have a 3½ year old girl who I'll call Lafay. She has black and green ugly hands with red claws. She calls them bad hands. They are bad because they had to kill and hurt and do bad things. Lake Lady tells Lafay they are good hands because they kept her alive by doing what she had to do. She holds her hands. She also lets her hold stuffed animals and dolls. Lafay was afraid her hands would hurt anything she touched. After one year and 8 months, her little hands touched flowers and plants that did not die. She met other pals who also held her hands. Her hands write nice letters and color wonderful pictures. Less and less she talks about her bad hands. They are always there in her self-portraits, but she doesn't dwell on

them being bad.

We are lucky to have each other and to have found the Lake Lady. She finds good in all of us, even those of us who think we are all bad.

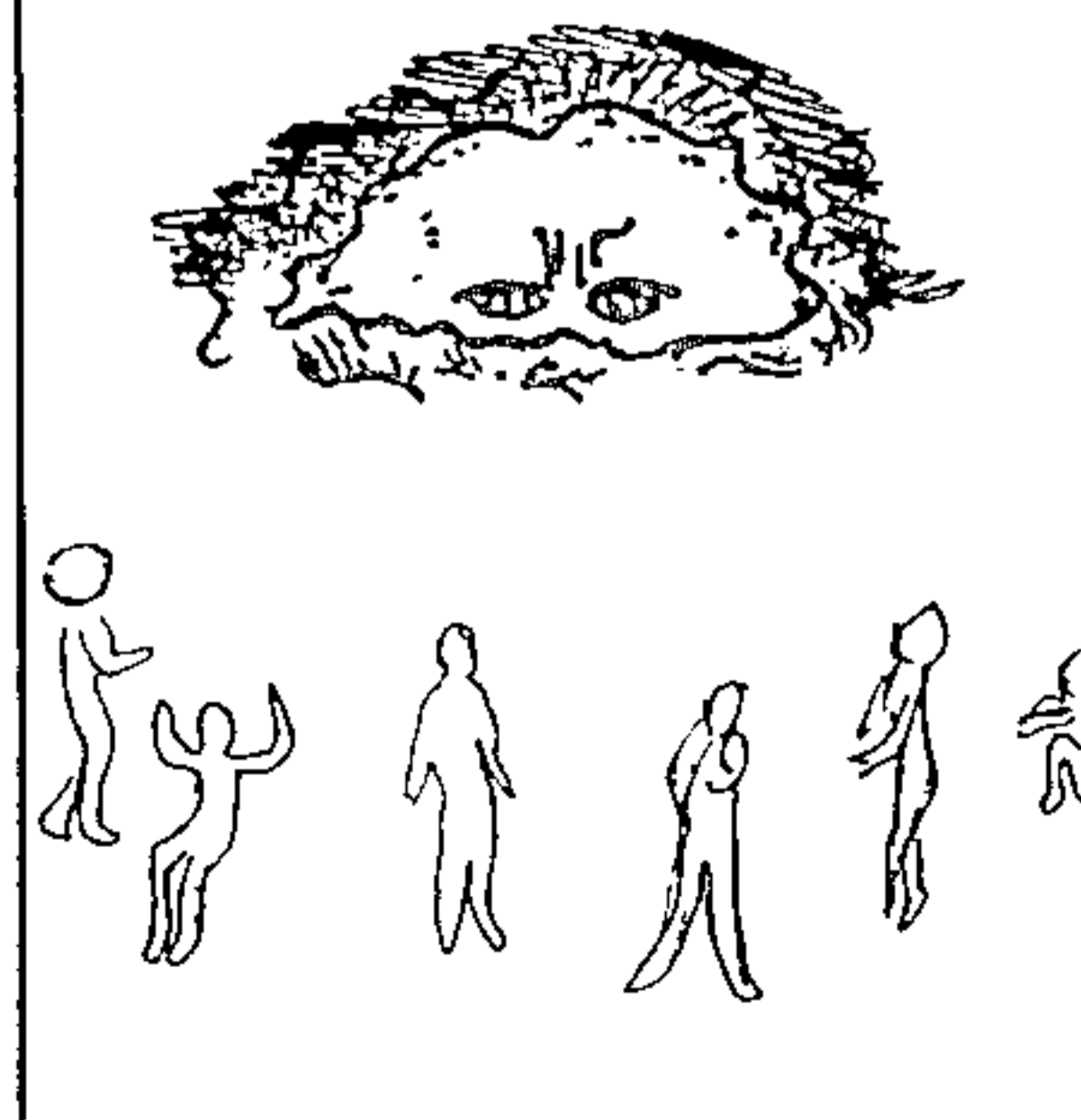
By Shadow T.



Before: SHE/HER sees all, knows all. Dominator. Rulemaker. Enforcer. Punisher. Raging storms. Always angry, demanding, rigid. Intimidator. Power comes from causing fear within.

Now: SHE/HER sees all, knows all. Recognition of SHE/HER as repository of everyone's anger. Respect for her protection and order keeping. Less fear. More communication.

P. & TC



I would like to relate a humorous experience with an alter who talks like a cat. We were on a hospital unit one night and she was the cause of the hospitalization for trying suicide. She was sad and depressed because she couldn't do anything, so she started to whimper and meow to herself, using the body. The staff knew we were multiple and were looking all over the unit saying to each other "Do you hear a cat?" "Where could it be coming from?" "Oh no. I think hallucinating sounds is catching!" "Maybe you should take some Thorazine!" They laughed, but we could tell they were unnerved. We never told who it was. Let them suffer for once! We suffered enough when we didn't know it was an alter making the meowing sounds internally and we thought we were hallucinating.

We have another different "insider". Our favorite movie as a child was "Pete's Dragon", so one alter decided she had to have a dragon just like Elliot. Hers is purple and pink, though. We're not sure whether it's a real alter or just an internal stuffed animal, or something the alter made up for protection. We have protecting monsters like that and other things that aren't so protecting (to the rest of us) but the alter who has them thinks so. We're not sure how to deal with them. Our method at the moment is leave it alone and it'll work out. Don't think about it and don't encourage it. But as our fear of the strange things decreases we'll probably be able to work with them more.

By Justus

COLD WIND is an ISH who is able to encompass much of the Inside World. It also watched much of the abuse and can give detached reports when the children are too frightened.

By Penny

Wolfman and Bear

By Beth

The first animal-like defensive encounter I experienced was during an abreaction that contained just terror memories. I was accustomed to being hassled by thoughts that criticized me, made fun of me, etc. But this time a hair-covered, laughing, drooling face appeared. It was huge and covered my full view of vision. I responded with anger and begged to be left alone, the face remained and the laughing continued until the abreaction was brought under control.

I named him Wolfman. I sat down with pencil and paper to draw him as big as I saw him. The terror began to return, so I drew him as small as I needed to feel safe. Wolfman continued to appear and hassle me at regular intervals; he remained vicious and frightening. I knew I should befriend him, but it was hard to find kind feelings for such a cruel experience.

Assuming he was actually very small and scared, I talked to him and wrote to him. He continued to haunt me.

Almost a year after my first encounter with him a change occurred while journaling. I wrote "I want to learn how to not be scared of you. Like my other parts, something created you. Did Little Beth have a need that was so hard to take care of, that you were created? What who was it that hurt so viciously that she had to create or find a vicious face to laugh at the pain, at the confusion?"

At that point, the mixture of feelings felt overwhelming. I wrote "I feel like I don't know what I am talking about. I asked God to bring his light and healing to Wolfman."

It was then that I realized that Wolfman was just a head and didn't have a body. Was he tired of just floating around and never having a place to rest? I felt sorry for him, so I made a drawing and gave him a pillow to sit on. The expression on his face changed as

the drawing simultaneously came from my pencil. He looked friendly and not at all scary. I could feel him relax and snuggle in warmly on the pillow. I asked him to select a pillow from around the house for his own resting place. Several months have passed and he continues to have a place of honor in our home. I continue to talk and write to him, checking up on how he is perceiving what is happening in our world of "us". He is usually quietly watching the process, thinking it through as we go. Wolfman seems content to be the observer and never returns to laugh, drool, or haunt me.

The second animal I encountered is an alter fragment. I had never experienced anger at my abusers; my therapist had told me that my rage was stored somewhere and that sooner or later it would emerge. When it did, I felt like all the rage I had been harboring erupted like an exploding pressure cooker. I was alone at home and beginning to cry. Instead, "Angry Animal" came growling, snarling, clawing and looking for something or someone to hurt, destroy, or kill. This is a co-conscious alter and needless to say that part of me in the background watching the animal rage was shocked and frightened. My cat walked by and Angry Animal wanted to strangle her. Fortunately, I have a well-developed internal manager who stopped Angry Animal from killing my cat.

My manager regained control and after a long rest I was able to respond as I had been taught—I took my pencil and paper and drew Angry Animal. I wrote, "welcome to the family" and thanked him for taking care of my rage in a safe way. Then I telephoned a member of my support group who also had an animal alter and shared my experience with her.

The next time I encountered Angry Animal was while a memory was returning. I was two

or three years old, tied down and feeling the terror of what was going to happen. Angry Animal appeared; he raged and raged at my abusers, growling and snarling and clawing at them. Little Beth responded with appreciation to him, releasing him from his rage when she acknowledged he was "pretend" and therefore not able to help. Her general response to him changed and she became endeared and comforted by his presence. Somewhere along the healing process his name changed to Bear. When Little Beth needs comforting, she often goes to Bear; she will snuggle into his thick warm fur and feel safe.



To Bear: My best and most wonderful friend. Thank you for trying to scare the horrible bad people away. You tried so hard. You growl and snarl and claw best in the *whole world!* Thank you for letting me snuggle with you. You are so soft and warm. I love you, Little Beth. (And thank you for wearing the pink hairbow. We're so silly!)

Spinning

by Grace

The most difficult thing about multiplicity is who is the right one? You don't know it when you are not aware of each other and each part's role, but when you go inside, and the "inside" gets closer to the "outside", who are you? Really, who are you? I don't feel right. I don't feel comfortable where I am or who I am at the moment. And I know more about myself now than I have ever known before, yet I still don't know who I am. I don't feel dirty, yet I still feel ashamed. Ashamed that I didn't do something differently? Dying instead of learning "the way", the "games", wouldn't have made a difference, yet what difference am I making now? What is my purpose? My goal then obviously was to stay safe. That is my only goal now, it seems. What has changed?

I feel that if I had a goal, a purpose outside my self(ves), what? I would hurt less? I would feel less abused? I would feel less ashamed? I can't change anything from this moment backwards, and

that makes me angry. I have lived so much, yet so little, in my 37 years, and that makes me angry. I have felt so much yet so little in my 37 years and that, too, makes me angry.

I want another chance now, from this moment forward. I no longer have to hurt or be hurt, kill or be killed, not know or be terrorized; yet I feel it. I feel everything in more than my heart. I feel it in my entire body. I don't want this, but I do. As I write I am spinning. Stop spinning, but how? I'm scared. Trust myself(ves), but how? I've lied, I'm bad. I've told the truth, I'm bad. The feelings are the same and I am spinning faster and faster, yet my hand is still writing. . . .

I want my mommy, but I don't. I want my daddy, but I don't. I want me, but I don't. I want to be held, but I don't. I want to feel warm, but I don't. I want to feel cold, but I don't. I want to cry, but I don't. I want to throw up, but I don't. I want to strangle myself until I pass out, but I don't. I want to drink until I pass out, but I don't. I

want to kill my baby better than my father ever could, but I don't. I want to make anyone cry so I won't hear me whoop, but I don't. I want to feel special by killing and cutting, but I don't.

I want a set of good rules to follow, I can learn them well. Someone just give them to me and I'll show you; but I don't because I really want my own, but I don't know what they are.

Give me one more chance and I'll get it right. I don't want to fall asleep with my head and my world spinning.

I "know", I feel it, why am I still spinning? Would a bottle of pills help? A blanket would be better. I'm not a baby, I am 37. I'm not a boy, I am a girl. I'm not a girl, I am a woman. I've done good things, I've done bad things. I've done bad, good things. I've felt bad doing good things and good doing bad things.

Who am I? I am a person learning to feel human. I will be. *Hope gives us courage to do what we are afraid to do.*

Beginning CoConsciousness

You are looking through an open, screened window at something along the edge of your building. It's so close to the side that there is really only one place you can look through to see it well enough. A friend is looking, too, and you're fighting for the best position, which is the only place from which you can see the important thing by the building. Only, you and your friend can't see each other; you don't even realize that the other person is there. Instead, you each feel this giant, clear, heavy, shape-changing box in your way. Most often, it's too heavy to push out of the way entirely, so you have to look through it in order to see that important thing out the window. Being an imperfect object, it naturally distorts the image entering your senses. Before you realize that it's a box (hence the shape-changing aspect) you just accept that that's the way

everything looks out that window. After looking out the window through the box often enough, you begin to notice that the view is definitely wavy in places. The waviness is definitely irritating, now that it is defined, because you wish you could get around it to see with your own eyes. After awhile, you resign yourself to having to see a wavy view sometimes, and you try to think your way around it: "What would this look like without the waviness?" Then, after a long time, you look out the window through the box and suddenly notice that the view sparkles in places, and that there's a crease in the view that leads to other creases. You follow all the lines in amazement and realize you've been looking through a big box all this time! At first, it was a big pain, then it was irritating, then it wasn't worth fighting about, and now it's pretty! It adds variety and

sparkle to your view that you would have missed without it. So you just let it be for awhile and enjoy it sometimes.

Later, you fuss about it, arranging the curtains to enhance its prettiness. With all the fussing and rearranging the true shape and character of the box becomes clear and your jaw drops to the floor as you realize that you're looking at a friend that you haven't seen in years! S/he realizes the same thing (eventually? already?). After lots of stumbling and fumbling, you both get over the awkwardness of having been so near, yet so far, and you learn how to share the views and discuss them with each other. You both still have to look through the screen, and you still fight over the best view, but at least neither of you is fighting an inanimate object any more.

By Mia E.

Who are we? What are we?

Some of us say we are ego states, used to get away with saying or doing things. Some of us say we are people. Some of us say the rest don't exist.

I see so many of us. We laugh, we cry, we work, we play. We have feelings, thoughts and ideas. We are people. That's my opinion.

By Susan, for Kathy & Co.

I'm a boy in a woman's body. I know I'll never be a real person like some might. I'm not sure what label I'd use. I "am" certain feelings and thoughts. I'm me. I may not have a body but I'm still me. Even if the body were a boy's, it might not look like me. It doesn't look like Susan and she's a girl. The body doesn't make the person. Lots of "real" people are trapped in the wrong body. That doesn't make them what the body is.

By David, for Kathy & Co.

We are a cross-section of society. We are a family. Boys, girls, old, young, black, white — we all fit. Even Cat, a panther. We may not have the physical trappings of a family but we are one. We are the thoughts and feelings that make a family. We cry together, laugh together. We care about each other. We love. We each have purpose in this family. What else is life?

By Kristen, for Kathy & Co.

Sometimes when I touch my body, it's like touching someone else's. I haven't read anything about this before. So — sometimes it is as tho — it is NOT "as tho" — it is *that* I am making love to another person. It's not a fantasy; I fantasize about people and definitely know the difference. This is actually *sharing* the interconnectiveness of feeling and emotion between two people.

Now, the interesting part comes. Upon completion, there's only one body and a sense of loss with that. Knowing that two people were present, and one has faded, certainly causes one to ponder a moment.

This may be too far fetched for "normies" to comprehend. I'll stop here. I'll probably regret this venture out.

By Thom for Arien's Condo

I have a total of thirty-seven personalities. Only six of these were female personalities. The rest are males all living in a female body.

I have had many discussions about whether or not someone had a penis. Jon, my therapist, has admitted defeat when told by a three-year-old male alter that his penis was small, so how could he show Jon?

I also have an alter Michael who struggled with being gay because he is attracted to males. Many

people found this hard to understand. Jon said it made sense to him, that since Michael was in a female body but saw himself as being male. . . when he found he was attracted to males, he would feel that he is gay.

Many of my male alters have the strength needed to protect the female and children alters. Since becoming integrated, I find it scary at times. Sometimes I feel strong and capable, but moments later, I'm not as strong.

I know that without all the male parts of me I wouldn't have lived through my childhood. I am very thankful for their strength and their abilities to protect and think fast in any given situation.

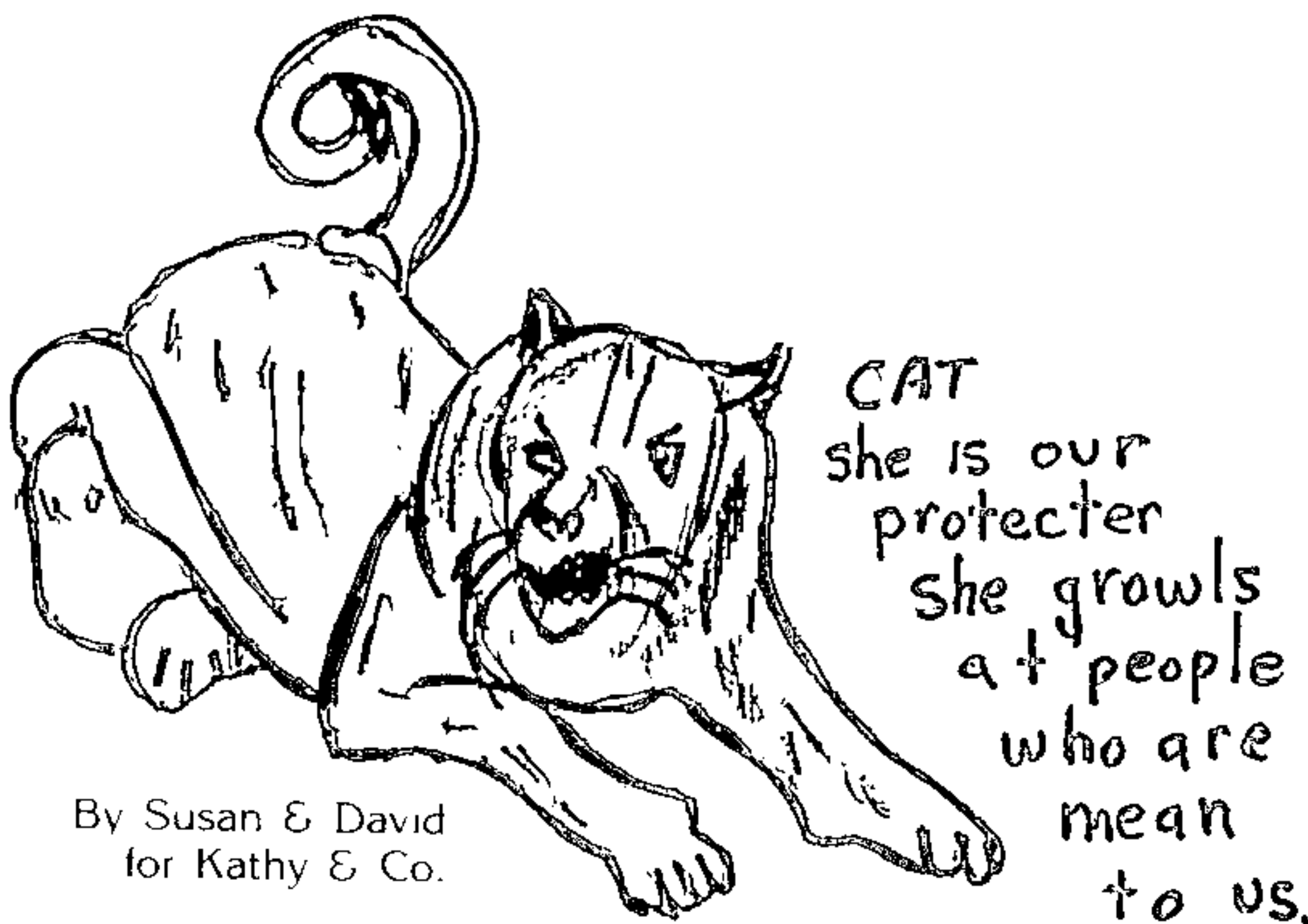
I have learned much from all my alters and know that they are all needed in order to heal.

By Vickie and the gang

Identity. Arghh! Who am I. I don't know. Literally, at the moment — I don't yet know the name of the alter who's typing this. But I'm in this body firmly at the moment — no light-headedness, no dizziness — so it's secure for me, whoever "me" is.

I do have a core person, the Named One. She's 9 or 10; she got lost back then, didn't know how to continue growing up. She wanted to die, and so she created me — and me — and me — and some others — to carry on for her. Life was too much! Sometimes she'd be around through our teen years, less often in adulthood. I want to know her again, and help her now to grow up, to relate to people on the outside. She's always lived so much inside it's going to be hard for her and us.

She's the core person; I'm not. Even though I (and a bunch of others) have been running our life/body for a long time, and have learned much about the world and how to live in it. Somehow she seems to have more depth. Is that just my romanticizing her? We're her agents, her out-in-the-world people. We're protectors too, 'cause she's precious. We're also hurt, because we've been



By Susan & David
for Kathy & Co.

...Multiple self-concepts

abandoned (by her). But I'm an adult and others are too, so we can help with the hurt and with her fear. It's a big task!

Who am I? Somedays that is exquisitely difficult to sense. As if I am walking along. Stepping down on one leg, a leg that belongs to Me#1. The next step with the other leg could be Me#2, or 3, or 4 or... simply someone else. I hate those days! Yet we are all one. A mosaic, a patchwork. We are broken, injured, wounded, splintered, riven. In our separateness we are so lonely, lonely, lonely, so alone together. We learn to help each other, and never, never to abuse (well, at least we try).

Some of us are outside that circle, though. Too young to understand that our body isn't our own, but belongs to Her and is shared with many others. Or too angry, cold and uncaring for it to matter. Or perhaps just too hardheaded or ruthless to consider others. But whoever we are, we are doing our best for us as we see it. We are parts of one, originally, and created for Our well-being. We hang on to that as our life-line, our cord.

By Elizabeth and Her People

Our concept of ourselves is a shift and flow of the people within. We don't really see ourselves as our outward body shows. We each have our own image inside to show who we are as an individual person within.

We are almost an equal split half and half for males and females. We have to take this into account with relationships and our outer body (is too much male showing? and things like that.) Each female has her mate. Some work closely together as a team, while others go to their mate for comfort and renewal.

We consider our body as the final hiding place for the kids. We explain to them the body is big now. No one can find you or hurt you for talking to our counselor.

The body is just the house we share and live in. It isn't us, but

where we reside. We are becoming more bodily aware. need to lose weight, etc. The body is often numb to hunger or cold. It just holds the co-consciousness that is the working group.

The males are frustrated by the female body. They are as close to a normal male as we can figure. They try to take the female gender in stride. Compromising to us with dress...but we females also allow them their choice of darker color clothing and t-shirts.

We have recently found some non-human personalities: a panther sized house cat, a cat man who has human features and body with a cat's ears, mouth and tail.

We have taken them in stride just as we have taken the rest in stride. They are a part of us. The She cat (panther sized) was born out of love, not trauma. The body as a child played with our grandmother's cat. They adored each other. Something responded and a cat was born. The cat man is her partner. He still scares the

kids some, but in time this will change.

One of our most central alters is a form of computer. We had a hard time for a long time trying to convince him that he is human. He's decided "android" is a more accurate description of himself. He is a link-up to most of the personalities so we can broadcast important information through him. All we need to say is "Data (his name) Broadcast" and he sends the information out.

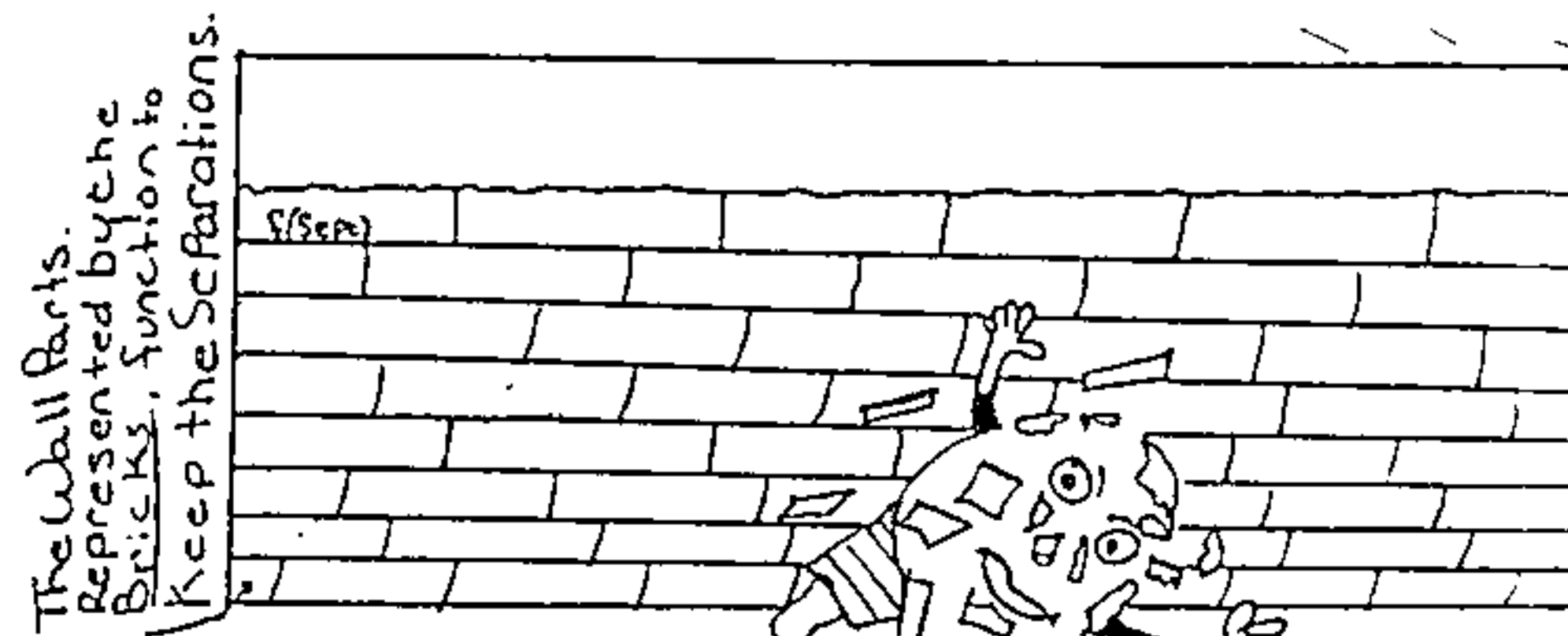
We don't know who or what will show up next. It's my function to look/listen and aid whomever is inside, or help two others to keep the body and face looking normal. I am the female guardian. I have responsibilities to all to help prevent crisis. My mate was born way before me — years ago. But he and I are body protectors and internal inspectors. We do this for safety and the love we are learning to give each other.

By Tina in Stacy

Teachings From: *The White Bride*

My Wall is A Brick Wall And Humpty lies on the other Side

On this side of the wall are the ones who function in day-to-day living.



Sid
October 1991
S
-
C
O
O
D

On the esoteric Side, we are represented by Humpty Dumpty, whom we were told - could never be put together again

Self Sensing Self

By Angela for Artworks

Spider webbing through biochemical pathways, we reach for each other. We run lightly along silken threads, a balancing act between 'Me and You'. We dance our spiderish dance, looping and spinning out a net of Mes and Is in an effort to catch that collective mind of ours. Run along with me down just this one strand of mine, and see how being human is divided. Here, we cooperate out of sheer necessity. But just a few layers away, others are so foreign that we automatically block, recoiling in horror. Some disconnections are so familiar that I can not imagine what closeness would feel like. Yet we continue to reach for each other any way.

We sense ourselves as individual separate whole without any other part. I know that I am myself and no one else. Angela and only Angela. This in itself must be a form of disconnection from my others, yet it is totally true for me. I struggle with a sense of guilt that I feel my own autonomy, wrestle with this idea that I should be able to understand on an emotional level that I am 'an alter', a part of a person that is in reality 'US' all of us with not one part left out. And intellectually I do understand and believe this. But in my heart I am just myself. I am very connected to Annie. She is my sexuality. Without her I am not sexual. When she leans into me she feels like a part of me, but to Annie, she is just Annie, never Angela's Sexuality.

I resent and reject the approach that this is unhealthy and delusional, and that we may never be 'well' or integrated because of our sense of disconnection from each other. What we feel is not a delusional mentality that we have allowed ourselves to luxuriously slide into. Our separation was forced on us. We were stretched to the breaking point and instead of snapping, we spun out, forced far apart, each with her or his share of pain, shame, guilt, rage, humiliation and broken heartedness, to keep the whole from buckling and shattering under the massive weight of our reality.

We are a web, a net that moves with each wind of change. We are flexible, we adapt. Our disconnections have served us well. We are alive. We have made it past the reality of danger. In the light of this gradual dawning of understanding, we reach tentatively for each other, craving closeness, togetherness with each

other. But with each touch of a part we had not known before, we embrace and relive this new one's pain. Connectedness comes at a high price for us. No one outside of this body could possibly convince us that connection is something that we should or must do to be healthy, whole, or valuable.

We move toward each other in tiny, often unnoticed, seemingly unimportant ways, as well as the huge leaps of faith that many of us have taken. A year ago when Sugar was in constant physical pain because she was reliving the experience of being tortured, we took turns in the body, and we shared it with her. Her pain was given back to the system. Morgin went to her and held her, stayed by her side for days, getting her drinks, singing to her, rocking her and comforting her. Sugar is too young to understand what she should or should not consider 'Self' or 'Other', connection or disconnection. But Sugar knows without the trace of a doubt that Morgin absolutely loves her. We made a conscious choice as a group at that time to let Sugar out and let her give her experience back to us, and the connecting process began.

Babe and Penelope have hated each other for many years. Penelope turned her back on Babe at a young age because Babe was able to enjoy some of the attention she got while being molested by Grampa. Penelope called Babe a whore, a slut, a tramp, and told Babe that she was selling us out, that her enjoyment was no different than receiving money for sex. Babe was terribly hurt, and the rift grew wider and wider as the years went on. Penelope became the perfect Christian, constantly striving in her own way to save herself and the System. Babe continued to act out sexually, trying to fill the hole inside that was left by the disconnection from Penelope. When Babe and Penelope began to reach for each other and try to understand each other's position and pain, they found that they held the missing parts of each other. Penelope found that with Babe close by her side, she could feel, be spontaneous, be pretty, be sociable, and Babe found that the aching need for repeated, empty sexual contact faded more and more as she moved closer to Penelope. Babe and Penelope still see themselves each as individuals, but they are very rarely far apart. They

love, trust, understand, and need each other. They continue their connection with each other in little ways on a daily basis by being there for each other, by sharing hurts, joys, and ordinary life problems. Their willingness to learn to let go of old beliefs about each other and to begin to learn to cooperate has enriched both of their lives and the System as a whole. This is not something that either of them could have even imagined before experiencing it themselves, a little at a time.

It is important to add here that this connection would probably never have been a possibility without good therapy and careful, gentle guidance through the initial shocking realization that neither of them were to blame for their hatred of each other, and that they both were simply doing the jobs that they came to do.

When I was very young, I hated our perpetrators. I fantasized constantly of ways to magically become stronger than them. I dreamed of being clever and quick enough to trick them and kill them. As the abuse went on and on, the anger and pain grew. To ever, even in the tiniest way resist or try to stop them meant that my best friends would be hurt more. I felt responsible. The only way I knew to protect them was to take my rage deep inside and hide it, leaving them to be hurt over and over. Through the years, my sense of helplessness drove me to great lengths to prove to myself that I was powerful. To me, this meant that I had to save myself, and my System — by myself. To pay back the terrible debt of not having been able to stop the abuse. When all my efforts failed, I drank myself numb to get away from my constant, gnawing guilt. When I finally bottomed out, I accepted for the first time that I couldn't save myself alone, that I needed help. As I sobered up, I began to know how desperately I needed Sherry to acknowledge my existence, and to accept me, to love me. I started to see that keeping myself, my feelings, my experiences away from her wasn't saving her anymore. It felt like my isolation was killing me. When I made myself known to her, she was terrified. Penelope told her that I was a demon that had possessed her. She was afraid that she was crazy. It hurt me that my very existence was terrorizing her, but I was desperate for connection with her. When she began remembering

(continued on page 15)

(Self cont'd)

the abuse. she stopped pushing me away with her fear and let me hold her. For me, that first connecting was the single most satisfying experience of my life. Sherry says that for her it was the first time that she ever had relief from the terrible constant feeling of being totally alone. For a long time, Sherry's greatest fear was that I would suddenly leave her and she would be alone again. I think that she knows now that no one and nothing can ever take me away from her. She is truly the greatest love of my life. And yet we are still separate — Angela and Sherry.

Connections like these are made in our system constantly. The spaces between us exist because we need them to exist. The weight of what really happened and how we feel cumulatively is too great for any one of us to bear. We make our connections, touching carefully in our own time in our own way, and with each new shared pain, we become stronger, more united. With each bit of our reality that we let into the whole, we piece together a picture of surprising beauty and courage along with the horror. Our survival is a miracle, and our willingness to continue to connect with each other in the Now is equally miraculous.

MV

Growing Up

By Nancy E.

I took myself seriously tonight
 even though I wasn't suicidal.
 I paid attention to my pain
 even though I didn't lose control.
 I decided I was worth reaching out
 even though I'd survive without it.
 I found out someone would gladly help
 even though I could do it alone.
 I learned that I can be an adult
 and still have my feelings responded to.
 I realized I can weather the storm
 because someone will be near by.

Books

Surviving the Wreck 1991 by Susan Osborn. 226 pages. Published by Henry Holt and Co. Inc., New York \$19.95 hardback.

This is a well-written novel about incest in a family that lives on "Country Club Drive". It's a scenario that may be quite familiar, since they're all here: The charming, alcoholic, predatory father; the mother who ignores reality (at one point, where the father beats his daughter bloody, Mother says "You must have fallen down, hit yourself on the bedpost.") And of course the survivor, Megan, spinning in a cyclone of mixed emotions about it all. Don't come to this book for graphic details, or even "proof" of what happened to Megan. This is a subtle story. But the underlying threat and wretchedness are well-conveyed.

Into the Silence. Healing the wounds of abuse. 1992 by Marj. 111 pages. Published by White Oak Publications, PO Box 567, Victor NY 14564-0567 1-800 531 3921 \$9.95 paperback.

A lovely book of poetry, written while recovering from childhood abuse. It also includes information and letters from a direct confrontation with her father, which evolve into a mutual resolution of sorts.

I personally have trouble accepting the type of therapy Marj chose (beginning with a marathon

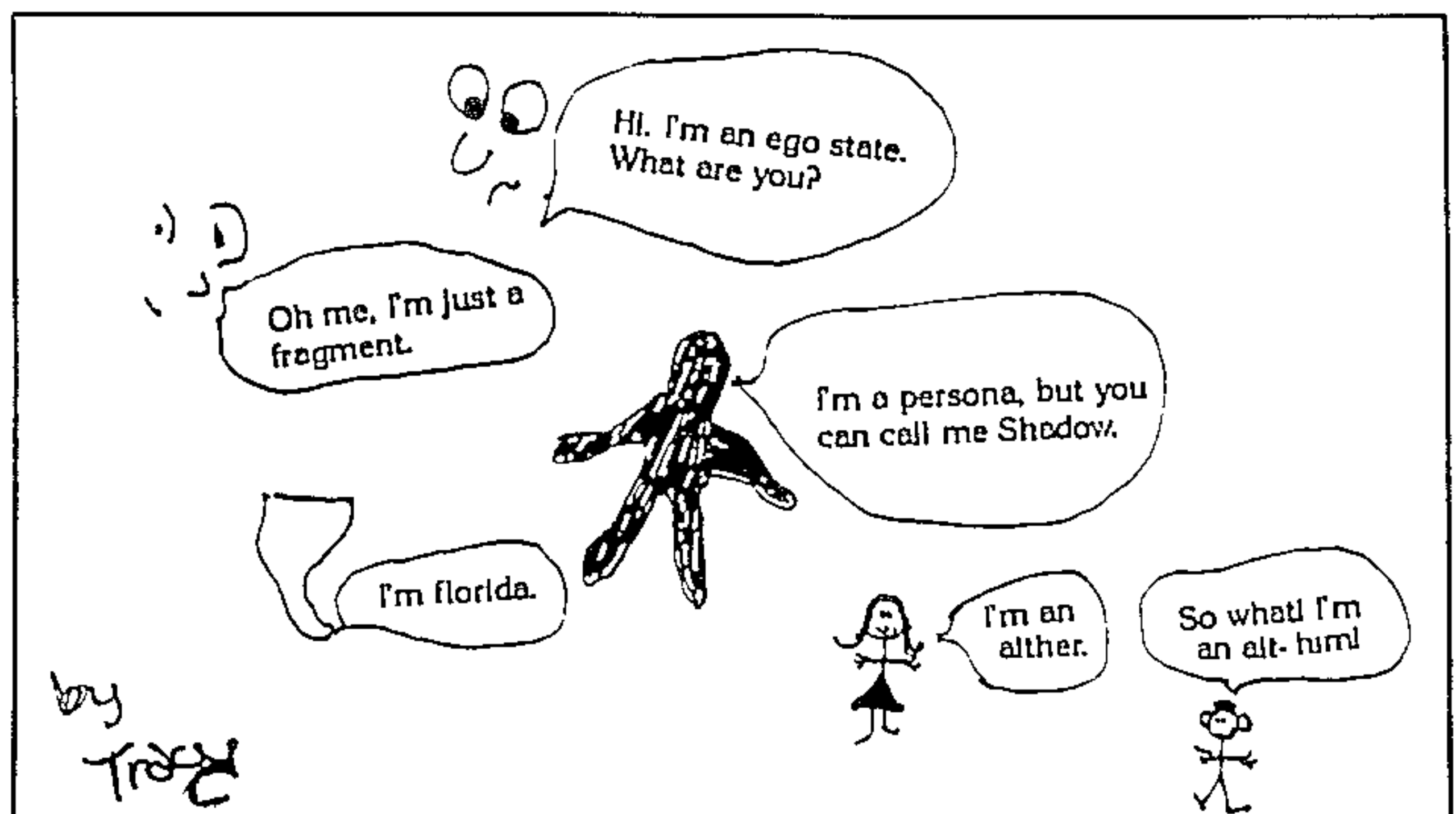
session of 12 people, closed in a room with a therapist for 12 hours "working" on issues. The therapist also engages in "tabletop" work, asking questions and touching the client.) But to each her own, I guess.

While the writer acknowledges the existence of "my little girl" and "my teenager", there does not seem to be a definite diagnosis of MPD or DD. Rather, this is based on "inner child" work. Maybe this type of therapy is safe for those who are not far along the DD continuum. I'd like to hear the views of others on this subject.

Becoming Whole: Dissociation and Me, Louisa Branscomb Ph.D 1990 18 pages. Published by Lodestar Publications, 1834 Clairmont Rd. Decatur GA 30033. \$15 plus \$2 postage. Quantity discounts.

This is a small, simple booklet intended to guide the "therapy journey" in healing from a dissociative disorder or MPD. It covers the definition of dissociation, when it is a problem, and why one might "fix it". Branscomb also describes the usual phases of therapy for dissociative disorders. Half the book is blank, for thoughts, feelings, and images that accompany the reading of the text. Could be a useful adjunct in the launching of therapy for DD/MPD.

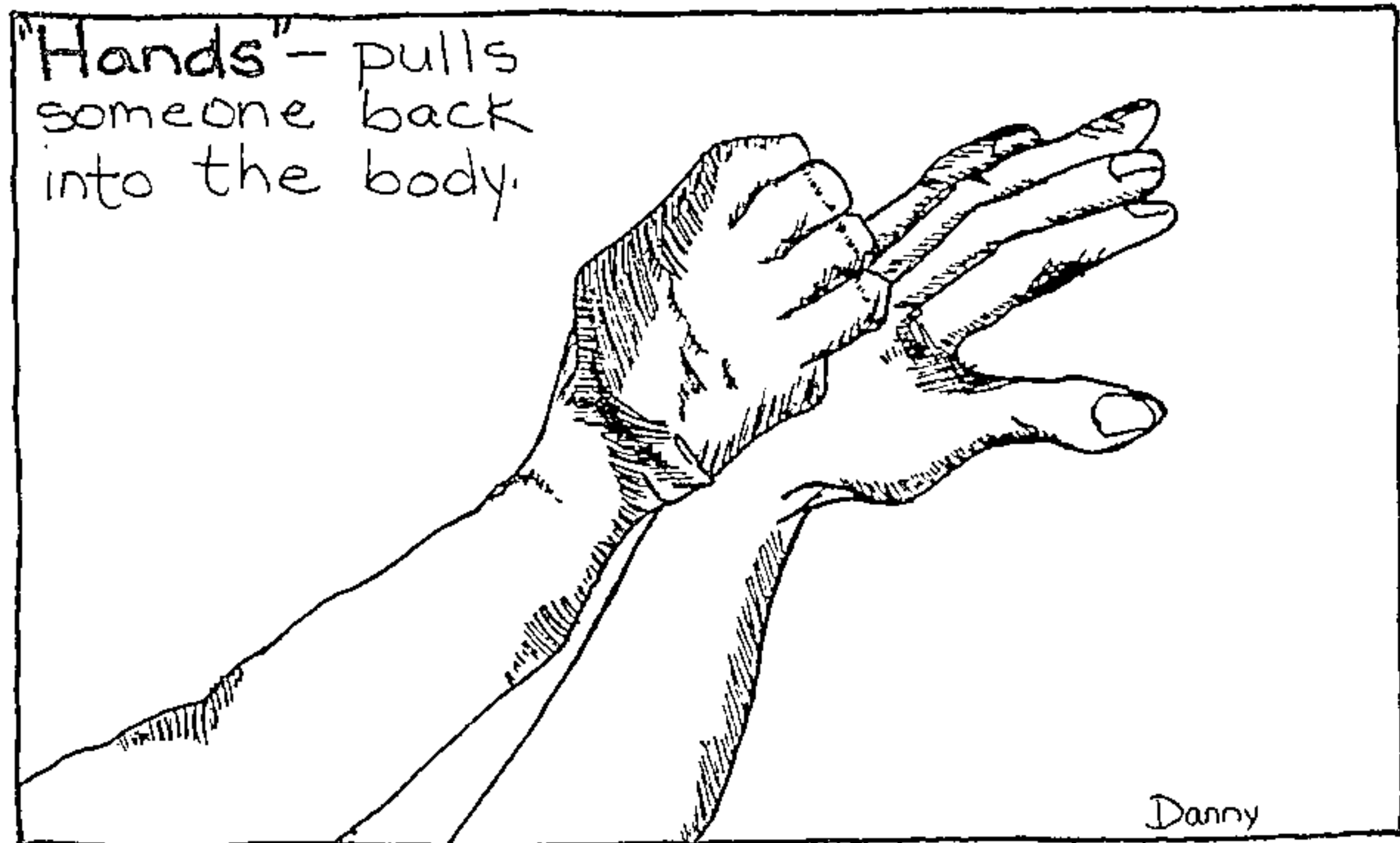
—Lynn W.



New Themes!

We're planning the themes for 1993 right now! Please tell us what YOU want to read about and draw in the coming year. Your sharing makes a big difference! PLEASE HELP! And THANKS for your wonderful creative work, this issue and always!

-LW



August 1992

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

October 1992

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

December 1992

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

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* are \$30 in the U.S., \$36 elsewhere. Please enclose the form below (or a copy) with your check, and mail to *MANY VOICES*, P.O. Box 2639, Cincinnati, OH 45201-2639.

MANY VOICES

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/ZIP _____

Please check one:

I am a client Professional/therapist Relative/friend

Subscription type: New Renewal Gift

Please start subscription with Feb '89 ___ Feb '90 ___ Feb '91 ___ Feb. '92 ___

Other _____

1 year: \$30 in U.S.; Elsewhere, \$36 in U.S. currency.

Make check payable and send with this form to *MANY VOICES*
P.O. Box 2639, Cincinnati, OH 45201-2639.