

# MANY VOICES

WORDS OF HOPE FOR PEOPLE RECOVERING FROM TRAUMA & DISSOCIATION

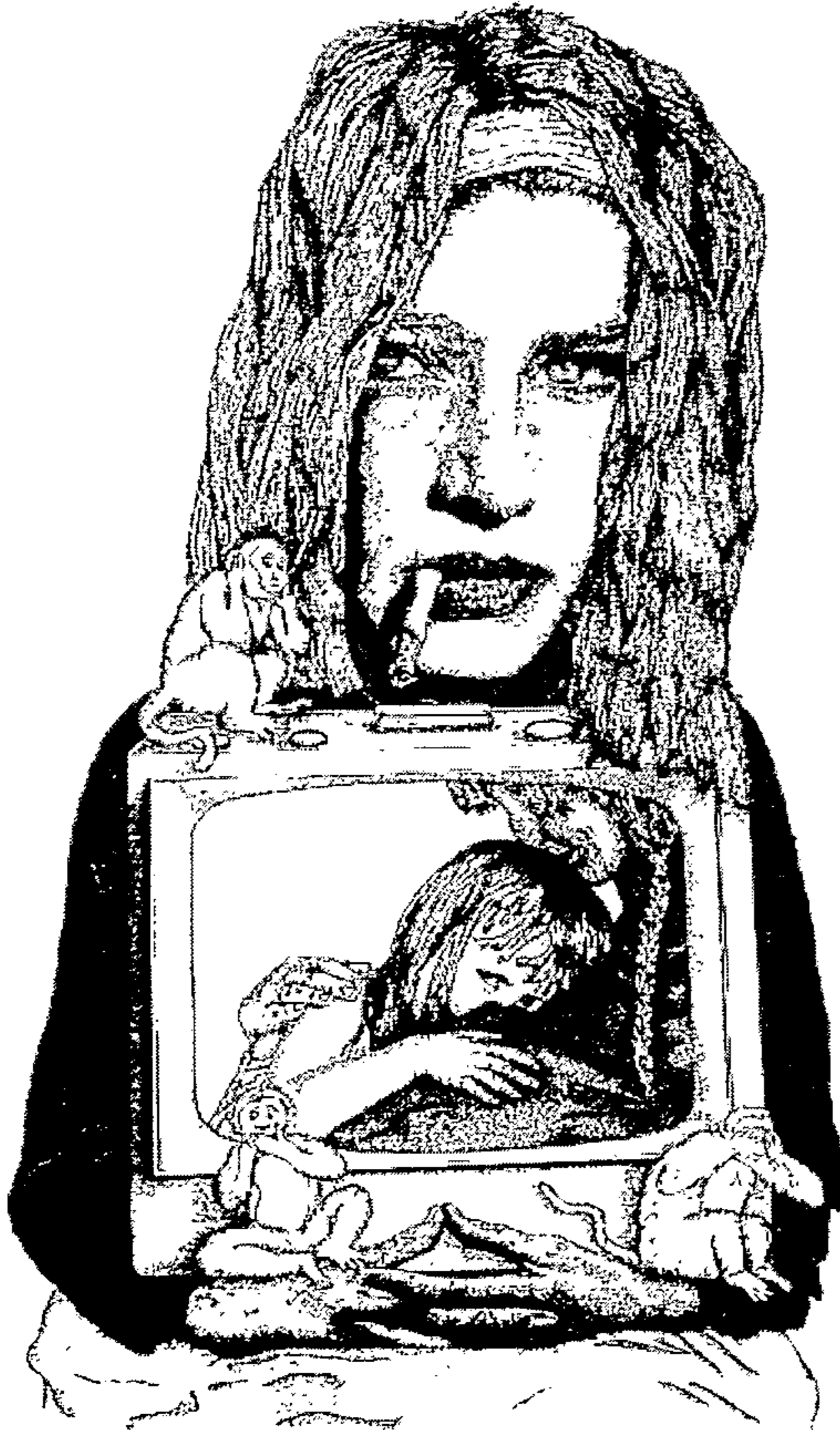
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*In This Issue:*

## Families of Origin



*a victim's vision of a mother's mission*

## *Who Am I*

For me...I mean "we"...  
We are a multifaceted,  
multidimensional creation,  
born of Mary and David, "loved" by  
them, but often (most often)  
desperately misunderstood.

We (the I of me) value being  
understood.

We value sensitivity and creativity.  
There is a deep sense of spirituality  
inside—but with that spiritual  
life force comes confusion and  
misunderstanding.

As we are misunderstood by Mom  
and Dad, we also turn around and  
misunderstand God. We just don't  
"get it" when love unconditional is  
discussed.

We have a hard time internalizing  
warmth, caring, comfort. We have a  
difficult time showing trust. We build  
walls. We keep people out. And we  
feel "Oh, so bad" and "Oh, so small"  
and "Oh, so sad."

We ricochet like a rubber ball that hits  
the bottom of our emotional wall time  
and time again. And we bounce  
back—ready to soar and fly and ten  
minutes later—again ready to die.

We are a walking contradiction. An  
enigma. A puzzle. A person only  
predictable in their unpredictability.

We cause pain although we don't  
maliciously set out to do so. We just  
don't have the forethought to think  
ahead. We are a group of children  
and fourteen-year-old keeper-selves  
who love and feel deeply—but often  
don't know how to show it.

We are the menagerie known to be...

*Frances and Company*

**MV**

# How I Got Away

By Angela M. Kroll

The dream began when I was thirteen. I guess at that age, you feel big enough to take physical flight from the abuse perpetrated by your family. No doubt, you feel fed up with it. I dreamt of running away to the middle of nowhere, assuming a new name and finding a new family who would take me in until I was eighteen. I could go to school where not a soul knew me.

There would be no Timmy Kaminski's saying "I heard your parents are crazy."

There would be no Colleen Haley's who wouldn't dare look me in the eye because their parents told them to stay away from me, or because they heard the violence first-hand as they biked past my house.

My older sister ran away when she was sixteen with the help of her high school guidance counselor and my best friend's mom. But my parents hired a detective to find her, brought her home and showed her why she would never do something so stupid as to try to run away again. The same would happen to me if I ever tried to run away.

What trapped me into staying during those early years was lack of money, so to speak. My parents brainwashed me into believing that it cost a thousand dollars a month for rent alone, and that I would never have food, clothes, heat or a car unless they bought these things for me—and of course, I had to live under their roof to get them.

I was constantly looking for opportunities to break free from my family. One alter convinced my parents to let me go away to college. Little Angel was the only one who had a chance to get that privilege. I don't know why I wanted to go, except that I felt it would bring me one step closer to freedom.

Dad agreed Little Angel could go to the local university, which was a step.

The next year, Little Angel pushed it farther. On the way to a flute lesson, I said, "Dad, could I go to Capitol

University or somewhere else? My grades are too good to just go to State."

"Yeah, I guess so," Daddy told Little Angel. "We'd just have to pay a little extra for room and board."

I really wanted to be a doctor, but again I was brainwashed into believing it would cost a million dollars to go to medical school. Of course, they'd be more than willing to pay if I lived with them.

After four years of journalism school (where I started my therapy at age eighteen as a depressive), another alter went to Chicago and became a reporter—this is the time my dissociative abilities wreaked havoc on my life, and since I didn't know what was happening, I felt I needed not only my parents, but my sisters and brother, also. I ended up going back to my manic-depressive father and my sadistic mother for another three months (of pure hell). Financially, I felt trapped. Emotionally, I couldn't live without my siblings and their children. I dreamed of the day my parents would be dead and we could be a real family. I needed safety. So I went back to school, a place where I always felt safe.

I lived off my assistantship stipend and student loans for three years, earning two Master's degrees and continuing therapy. Six years after my first-ever therapy session, I was diagnosed with DID. Once I was getting the proper treatment for the proper disorder, I started to gain control over my life.

For nearly 26 years, I hoped and wished and prayed that my parents would die, but at the same time, I tried so hard to secretly counsel them and mend my whole family. If I left my parents, I would have to leave my siblings. They each had their own reasons for being scared of them and would probably tell my parents where I was living. If that were to happen, my father would have me killed. So came the last visit.

Mom sat, hot in her arm chair, swatting flies and watching cooking shows on television.

"Hi, Mom! Whatcha doin'?"

She gritted her teeth in that old familiar devil-face pattern. "I'm trying to watch my goddamn programs, but as usual, the f\*\*\*\*\*g TV is broken because your father is too goddamn cheap to get cable!" she screamed. Then, she got up and whacked the television a few times.

"That's okay, mom. I came to visit with you, not watch TV." I thought that was a nice, calming thing to say.

"You selfish bitch! Is that all you think of? Yourself?" She went on in a tirade as I tuned her out and left the room to visit my dad in the kitchen where he was putting in a new floor. It seemed safe in there.

I went to the refrigerator and filled my arms with enough goodies to make an awesome sub. Knowing that as soon as I dropped the stuff on the counter, I would go back for the iced tea, I hadn't bothered to shut the refrigerator door. Then, it started.

"You goddamned kids! I pay the bills around here! What the hell's the matter with you leaving the door open..." I tuned him out as he started pushing me around, showing me the right way to take things out of the refrigerator. I started to cry as I put things back in. Then, I saw the back of his hand. I screamed and started running out of the house, my parents still screaming at me, my dad still trying to get in swatting distance of me. As I saw my hand reach for a hammer, another voice inside said, "No. Don't look back and just keep going."

I cried for three hours. I cried at the loss of my siblings, the joys of being an aunt, and of losing other things that meant a lot to me. I cried because I finally realized that I never needed my parents. I cried for the dreams I never had.

I grew stronger every day. I realized I don't have to forgive them. God may

*Continued on page 3*

*Got Away, Cont'd.*

absolve them, but not me. I realized that the greater sin would be for me to allow them to infect my future, my marriage, my in-laws and my future children. They had already infected my sisters' families.

Today, I have a great relationship with my eldest niece whom I vowed to protect from the day she was born. I have a great marriage and wonderful in-laws who know everything and love me anyway. And although I never became a doctor, my career in Student Financial Aid is allowing me to help many budding doctors make their dreams come true.

MV

*Keep Going, Keep Growing*

Oh, little wandering soul,  
full of fear and dread.  
Be comforted.  
Your days of misery  
are numbered.  
They soon shall be over.  
Reach out,  
there are hands awaiting you.  
But first you must ask.  
Do not allow the fear you carry to  
paralyze you—  
keep going,  
keep growing.  
Your fears are illusions  
and you will see through them—  
soon.  
Don't try  
and it will come—  
naturally.

Just spread your wings  
and  
fly!

By Anita, Inc.

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*Angels:*



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**Coming Soon! New Ads in MV!**

We will not be producing a *MANY VOICES/MULTIPLE CHOICES* Resource Guide in 1997. Instead, beginning with the August '97 issue of *MANY VOICES*, we plan to present regular advertising supplements on the following themed schedule:

**August '97 - Health Care Options:** hospitals & DD-units, dayprograms, therapists.

**October '97 - Books/Tapes/Videos**

**December '97 - 1998 Conference Guide. Other Education options.**

**February '98 - DD Services & Support. Online Information.**

**April '98 - Newsletters/Journals.**

**June '98 - Products/Tapes/Videos.**

These supplements will be additional pages added to the newsletter. The amount of editorial content of *MANY VOICES* will not be reduced. In fact, we may have even more room for your

good ideas and creative expressions for healing.

Classified ads for survivors (50 words) offering products or services are free. Professional listings (classified style) are \$25 each. Display ads are available at prices ranging from \$250 for a full page to \$40 for business-card size, payable in advance. All display ads must be completely camera-ready, or art charges (minimum \$25) will apply. If you have any questions regarding our new advertising supplements, or need specifics for display advertising, please write or call us for full information: **MANY VOICES PRESS, PO Box 2639, Cincinnati, OH 45201-2639. Phone (513) 531-5415.**

Note: This phone number may change in the next few months. If you have trouble calling us, please write or e-mail us at [LynnWatMV@aol.com](mailto:LynnWatMV@aol.com).

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# Family Interactions

I love my family...feel nothing at all about them...hate them, but don't know why.

I am the youngest of six children. My parents and the three youngest live nearby; the other three kids are in adjacent states. We've always been a "close" family, perhaps a bit rigid about outsiders, especially men—like the three sons-in-law, who are often ridiculed.

Over three years ago I abruptly stopped seeing any of them or speaking with them on the phone. This coincided with a suicide attempt and hospitalization at the height of my career. For years I thought I might have been abused, but in the hospital a bunch of doctors said I was MPD/DID and it doesn't just "happen."

After comparing notes with others on my unit, I decided I would stop seeing my family and see if I got memories of abuse. I also wanted distance because I was ashamed of how I had fallen from being the good, happy, successful daughter, to the suicidal failure who lost her career.

But now, more than three years later, I'm unconvinced there is any truth or value in all the crazy things I've said in therapy. None of it feels like "memory." It's all more like "dream" or "nightmare." I'm planning to start seeing them soon.

Since I last saw them I've had my share of ups and downs: I've had a head-on collision ( three days in the hospital), gained and lost 60 pounds, started work as a retail clerk part time. During the same time I missed both my parents' 70th birthdays and their 50th wedding anniversary. One brother celebrated his 50th birthday, another his 40th. Then there are the graduations, achievements and religious events in the lives of eight nieces and nephews, plus several serious medical emergencies. One nephew is suicidal.

All of this is lost because I thought I'd get better faster if I didn't see them. Have I? I don't know.

My doctor seems to believe there is truth in the strange things I've said

about blood, drugs, torture, sex. But if you met my family you'd know there must be some other explanation. Still, I seem to be functioning OK, so I guess it's not a waste.

But I know I've hurt all of them by not seeing them, and my life—and their lives—will never be what it was before I left them.

By M.E.



I grieve the loss of the family I never had. I never felt mother's love or nurturing, only harsh words of criticism or acts. My dad was my protector. I idolized him. I saw him as a friend. That illusion died as memories of sexual abuse surfaced. I distanced myself from my parents. My visits were less frequent.

My memories came back to me without hypnosis. Slowly I realized abuse was the cause of my lifetime depression and suicidal ideation. I always knew I was multiple but no one believed me. I wonder if my parents knew. I wonder if they could dissociate me. I became more cautious in their presence. Visits were shortened. I avoided overnight trips in their RV. I emotionally withdrew.

As years passed, I faced the sick parent dilemma. My dad needed major heart surgery. I was reluctant to be a support person. He did not want surgery. I had to convince him it was necessary. I visited him the night before the surgery. If only he would confess and ask for forgiveness! He never did. He never said he was sorry.

I wanted to forgive him. I tried that this past summer without him asking. That had a big drawback. I relaxed my guard. I sat next to him on the porch swing. His arm wrapped around my back and shoulder. He started to caress my arm. I moved forward and so did his hand. So much for forgiveness.

Heart problems again are the focus in my dad's life. I resented my mother calling me at my job. I spoke to my dad. I encouraged him to listen to the

cardiologist. I was being my dad's emotional wife. I hated myself for slipping back into old behavior patterns. I was not his wife, sexually or emotionally. I credit myself for having insight. I feel empowered. I set boundaries. I visit only when I feel comfortable in doing so.

"What if Dad dies?" asks the little girl inside. Without him, will my mother kill us?

By L.H.



For the last thirty years I tried hundreds of times to talk to my mother, who was one of my abusers. I never stopped trying to talk to her so we could work out the things that she felt so contemptible about me. She never wanted to talk, unless she had a few beers in her, and then it was impossible to accomplish anything through her drunken fog.

I have grown children who loved to keep things stirred up with her about me, and most of the time there wasn't any truth to their tales.

She was very ill for the last ten years, and being around her made me mentally unstable, so I only saw her face to face twice in those ten years. She passed away two years ago in March, and we were never able to make peace with one another. The relatives were unable to contact me because I had dropped out of sight, many years before.

After I found out in April that she was gone, my husband and I traveled to her home town. On the trip there I decided that I would write down in a letter to her how much I did and always had loved her. All the things that were untrue that she always told and believed about me. And I told her that I forgave her for all the ugly, mean and destructive things that she had inflicted on me since my birth. I also asked her to forgive me.

When we arrived at the cemetery, I dug down in her grave, just above her

Continued on page 5

*Family Interactions, Cont'd.*

head, and buried the letter. After forty years I finally was able to say everything that I had tried so hard to tell her in the past. I felt as if we had finally made peace with each other, and I prayed that she had finally found peace.

I hope and pray that this might help someone else to put closure on a tormented relationship.

God Bless us all.

*The Family and Friends*

MV

**Once Upon A Time**

Once upon a time, not so long ago  
or far away there was a child  
She wasn't a particularly pretty child  
or even a talented one.

She was just a child  
like so many other children.

She grew up in a house full of adults.

It doesn't matter what they  
looked like, because if you are a child  
when you look up all you really see are  
nostrils, anyway.

That is unless the adults notice you  
and look

d  
o  
w  
n.

In this house the adults didn't seem to know  
that the child existed. They just went around  
fighting

arguing

and blaming everyone else.

When she was very young

the child tried to tell  
the adults what she needed, but no one  
ever listened.

Soon when the little girl needed something  
she never told anyone.

No one really took care of the little girl  
instead

She felt responsible for taking care of the  
adults,

because they needed all the help  
they could get.

One day,  
she woke up and all the adults were gone.  
The child looked everywhere for the adults  
but they couldn't be found.

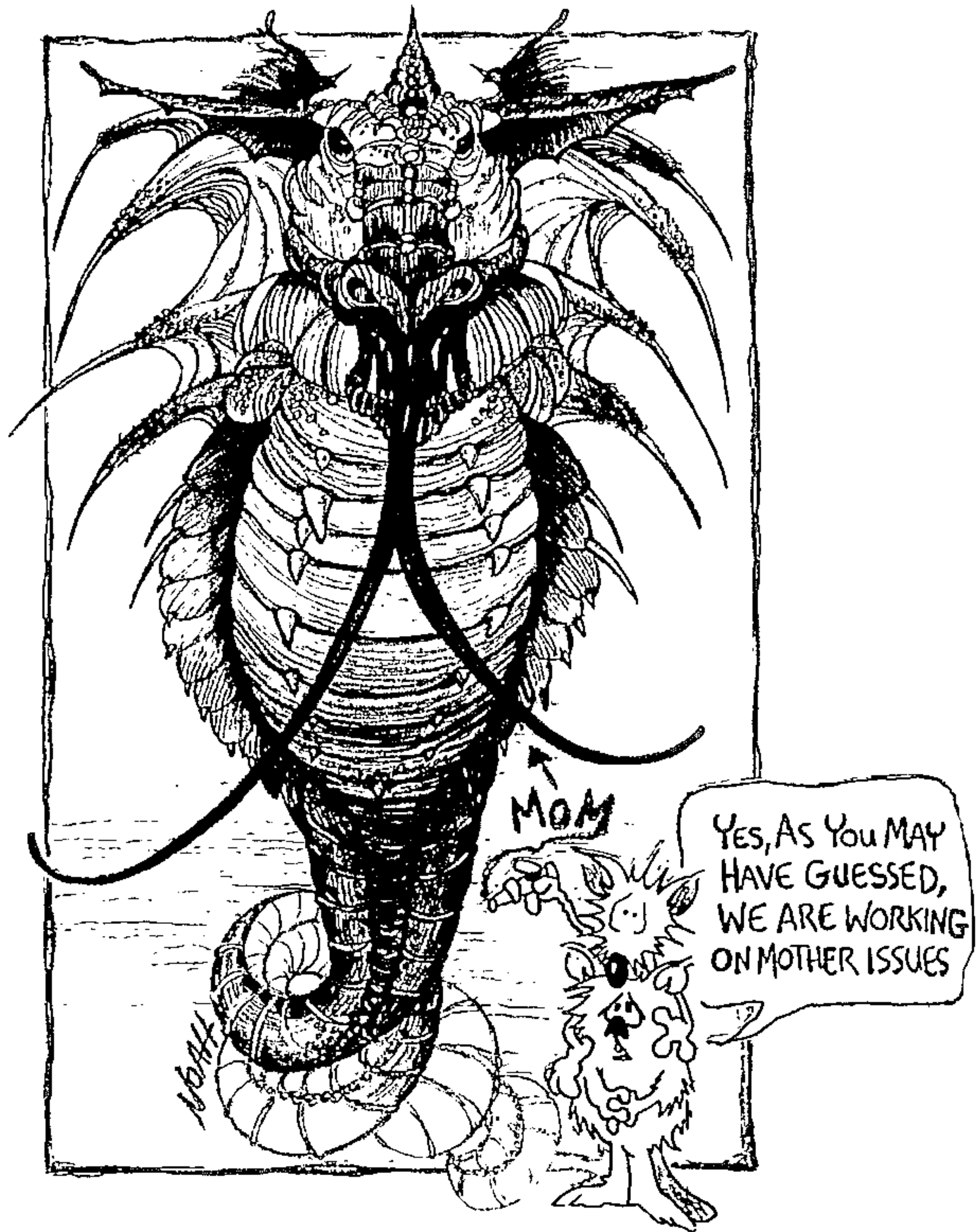
So, she cleaned  
the house

and began to  
take care of

herself.

*By Nita*

MV



**The One-Two Punch**

- 1. "Dad, I want another Porsche."
- 2. "You should be grateful for what you have. There are people who are worse off than you."

- 1. "Mom, I want a car."
- 2. "You should be grateful for what you have. There are people who are worse off than you."

- 1. "Mom, I want a new outfit."
- 2. "You should be grateful for what you have. There are people who are worse off than you."

- 1. "Dad, I want another hamburger."
- 2. "You should be grateful for what you have. There are people who are worse off than you."

- 1. "Dad, I want some dinner."
- 2. "You should be grateful for what you have. There are people who are worse off than you."

- 1. "Mom, I want some food today."
- 2. "You should be grateful for what you have. There are people who are worse off than you."

- 1. "Mom, I want to live in a house instead of the car."
- 2. "You should be grateful for what you have. There are people who are worse off than you."

- 1. "Mom, Dad hurt me."
- 2. "Just be glad you have a father. There are people who are worse off than you."

- 1. "I don't want to be an orphan."
- 2. "Just be glad you're alive. There are people who are worse off than you."

- 1. ~~~~~(notes from the grave) "I want to be alive again."
- 2. ~~~~~"Just be glad you're in the good place. There are people who are worse off than you."

*By Gossip*

MV

# Missing Mama

By Gwen

**M**ama died in winter. Snow sifted across the land and the red orb of sun rose, covering the sky in a blanket of brilliance. My oldest sister wrapped her arms around me as I cried, her fuzzy pink sweater ebbing into my memory, her face white as flower petals.

Mama, charming child. I wanted to mother her, set limits for her. She was the fury with a dark stare, leaving me uncomfortable, frightened, feeling somehow invaded. A brutal presence who had terrified me, sending me into the depths of my mind. She was summery in flowing cloth, pearls on her ear lobes, composing music, lifting satin slippers to her feet. Holding ancestral beliefs with a tightened fist, circling me in cool mystery, catlike. She was warm; deeply sensitive, with a delicious sense of humor. I mourned each part of her differently. I mourned for her as a whole woman. Exquisitely complicated and beautifully expressive.

Her dissociation had completely confused me as a child. It wasn't anything I recognized as being similar to my own experience. I didn't know how to make sense of it at all. I remember crying and crying because my mother would tell me she had not said what she *had said*.

Through therapy, I learned to recognize her dissociation, to anticipate the presence of her fury, recognize her self-protective stance. I'd back away to protect myself; this, I learned, calmed her as well. I decided that maybe the catlike part of her was unable to feel warmth for me as her daughter, and I stopped feeling hurt by her iciness. Most of the time. I didn't really stop wanting to say "*Mama, it's me, it's me!*"

When she became childlike, I decided that I would be warm toward her, refusing to hold her responsible for something she said in a different state. Sometimes I was really curious. I wanted to say, "*What's your name?*" But, I didn't. Maybe I anticipated a hollow answer, some sort of silence. Maybe I didn't want to press, intrude,

push past whatever wall was there, keeping Mama feeling safe. Maybe there were no names. I kept myself safe as much as possible. But I didn't anticipate how deeply all this would allow me to begin to love her, how I would develop a profound respect for the way in which my mother survived.

*Understanding her dissociation. Moments when the sorrow in her eyes reached for me, to soothe my pain; "I'm sorry." Her little postcards. Words. Refusing to lose her, demanding she listen. These all returned her to me.*

It took me a long time, but I stopped expecting her to mother me, and eventually, I stopped wanting that. Understanding that her complex responses could be separated from one another, sometimes I thought to myself, *This is a part of her whole response*. Her rage toward me was especially difficult, as was her inability to really know me. I'm not sure I really *wanted* her to know me, because I couldn't feel safe enough to allow that. But, I didn't want her to know me. What she was missing. That is a sadness I have yet to resolve. The way mother and daughter can lose each other.

After her death, I found an unsent letter, tucked between old papers, that she had written to me as a child. *Love you forever*. I found the old bear that she had sewn for me. In these treasures, I held onto my Mama, the warm and creative woman who sunk her hands into earthy clay; drew with pencil, arcing curves of shape onto manila paper. I found old paint boxes; colors unfaded by time. Her boxes full of sparkly things; scents of her. A yellowed apology letter from my father.

Her death catapulted me, unprepared, into a mire of ancient family dynamics. Family relationships have become even more fragile since her death. I am weary of attempting to hold these relationships together, of feeling as though I am hanging on too long. I am tired of fighting for what I wanted once, long ago. I am angry

when a sister tears into my life, after years of absence, and coolly disappears. She repeats this dance again and again. I am tired of the shit. The cruelty of words, raw edges of sarcasm, brutal wounds of icy silence. The way I am held underwater, one flat palm on my forehead, submerged. I am tired of some sort of focus on me, tired of the expectations that somehow, I have the answers. I am so lonely I ache. I hurt. But, I don't have answers for anyone but me. I have contributed to this mistaken idea, pretending for all these years that I could protect my Mama, the way as a little girl, I fought for her. Screaming at my father to stop. Pretending that I felt nothing, that I could fight him. The way it didn't matter the cost for me. *You talk to him*, my brother whispers. *What did he say?* sister hisses. They wait in the shadows for me, catching at my skin with tiny needles, demanding answers. I turn the key in the lock, boxing myself in. Alone. The way it's been.

Balance is difficult to find. I protect myself with absence, knowing that my choices are finite. My father's illness seeps its presence into bones and dreams. There is nothing he could say. But I want him to own up all the same; to tell the family to stop blaming me for my absence. He writes me letters, beyond the parameters I have asked him to follow for my safety. I imagine he will find me. That I am once again a little girl, alone in the house with him, my Mama far away, someplace else. I wake screaming in the night, unable to breathe, a pale moth fluttering its wings against my chest, wanting out. My heart has been beating hard; horses hooves across a wet wildflower field. There is the ache of missingness that doesn't go away.

"You were presented with a challenge," my psychiatrist says, speaking of my mother's dissociation.

As a child and adolescent, I was not consciously aware that anything was changing within my mother. I was aware only of the changes within

myself. *I thought that I was the only one changing.* My imaginings of different mothers may have somehow represented parts of my mother. This is the way I knew, telling stories. Moving through stories, forests of ancient trees.

"If my mother changed, then it would be somebody else's mother," I say.

"Whose mother?"

"If it was the Spanish mother then it would be...If my mother changed, then it would change." Words fall from my mouth, small stars, luminous tasting.

"What would change?" my psychiatrist asks; his lips mouth the beginnings of the word *you*. His expression delights in the anticipation that I might accept this, a tiny gift for me, full of somethingness.

I don't want to disappoint him; don't want to disappoint me. "I would change." I feel like a frightened child, wanting to run.

"That's right. *You would change.*" His face lights up.

"But I can't see from those perspectives. It's not like I wear a

mask. It's that I metamorphose." Sadness pushes at me, makes my eyes wet. "What I miss is a consistent mother. It feels as though my mother was always leaving, and I was always chasing her."

The sadness of this wants to break my heart.

"Your mother *was* always leaving, becoming different mothers, and you *did* chase her, by changing and becoming different children, and that is something you experienced many, many times."

I feel suspended after this meeting, as though my hands might reach and there will be nothing there. The underwater sensation I know well. The way it all becomes fluid, salve that turns it all watery, rivulets of rain on the window.

I have been in deep depression since Mama's death. I will never be able to care for her when she is old; I won't be able to serve her hot tea, walk with her beneath the trees. Listen to her laugh fall across the light. I haven't cut my hair since her death; it is long and

curling, rippling the way hers did. She doesn't know that I have turned somber, because I miss her. Because of the way death creeps past, stealing at the ones I love; past the silty windows, open and bruised. Bitter winter cold. Sometimes I think, *I'll go back and get her.* The way she holds time still.

*I welcome supportive letters in response, though I may not be able to respond.*

*Readers might be interested to know that I have been in intensive psychotherapy for years to reach this place. This piece is one layer in the story. One layer of the onion peel. I have experienced rage toward my mother for hurting me, felt darkly disappointed in her. As an adolescent, I barely contained my homicidal feelings toward her, my rage went so deep. But my feelings for her are a kaleidoscope of hues. Something I hoped to express in this story.*

Gwen

MV



# NON-Therapists' Page

By Roberta L.

To provide some relief from the sometimes painful subject of "Family," we're turning the tables a bit and printing a piece by a non-therapist-subscriber in this space. I think it raises serious therapy questions with a touch of humor. Enjoy! —LW

I wonder if any of you sometimes feel as though you are doing therapy wrong. If you are like me, no one ever told you how to do therapy. Psychiatrists and other therapists are taught how, but we, the clients, are "flying blind" as they say. When I ask my doctor what I am supposed to be doing, he answers with a question. (How many of you could have guessed that?) When I tell him I think I'm not doing it right, he asks what I think I'm doing wrong. I don't know...but it seems to me that there ought to be "how to" seminars for therapy clients.

To be honest, my doctor *has* given me a few basic guidelines; but somehow they don't help very much. "Tell the truth at all times" is one of them. Part of the reason I'm seeing him is because I don't know what is true. Whose voice should I believe when one says, "Mommy did such-and-such," and other says, "She did not!"? After which, as you can imagine, there is a free-for-all of

"Did too!"

"Did not."

"Did!"

"Didn't!"

"Did." . Well, I'm sure you know how that tune goes.

When he asks, "How are you feeling right now?" it startles me and I shut off feelings, so the answer is "Nothing." But is that the answer he wants, or does he want to know what I was feeling before he asked? By the time I puzzle it out, I no longer remember what I was feeling. Sometimes the question catches me unaware and I switch because I'm afraid I'll be in trouble for having feelings at all. Then, when he repeats the question, I wonder *Why would I be feeling anything? What's been going on? Help! Somebody fill me in here.*

He also suggested that I give the first answer that comes to mind. Silly man.

Whose first answer do I choose? Does he think we line up and take turns answering? Or that we raise hands and wait to be called on? I could relay the answer of the loudest voice, or one of those whose issues we are addressing, or that of the one making threats, or my personal opinion, or the answer of any of those who responded to his question. My intellectual one wants to know why he's asking that particular question. What's he trying to accomplish? And then there's the one who tries to figure out how he is defining the word. If he says "child," my first thought is, "That depends."

If he asks, "Have you ever been angry?" is he asking if I personally have ever been, or if we collectively or individually have been? Then someone says, "If you say 'yes' he's going to want to know when," which is true—and that answer, which will probably determine where the rest of the session will go, is also a multiple's choice. Do I want to spend the next forty minutes taking about *how my spouse...?* Well, I really don't want to, so I won't give that answer. Maybe I should tell him about the time when my daughter...or the time in third grade...or maybe the nasty store clerk...and what does he mean by *ever?* How do I know if I got angry during one of those periods I'm amnesiac for? Take that as far as it goes and discover that the only true answers to a question that has the word *ever* in it are "yes" and "I don't know."

Just imagine the conversation...

Doctor: "Have you ever been in a train wreck?"

Me: "Hmmm, gee doc, I don't know. Can't say for sure what I was doing the last week in October of '96 or August of '92. And then there's those first twenty years that I can't account for. Could you be a little more specific?"

Doctor: "Do you or anyone else inside remember being in a train wreck?"

Me: "Uh, I don't know, doc. Nobody's talking—oops, I don't mean Nobody the alter, I mean no one. They aren't saying 'yes' and they aren't saying 'no' either. I'm just not sure how to give you the true answer to that question."

Another problem arises when I respond to some internal interaction that has little or nothing to do with what we're dealing with in therapy, and he notices a smile or a shaking of my head and questions it. If I say it's not important he then wants to know why I won't tell him.

Doctor: "How do you know it's not important?"

Me: "Trust me here, doc. It's really nothing."

Doctor: "Why are you keeping secrets? Why won't you tell me? Just tell me what's going on."

Me: "Oh, Sara just tied Butch's shoe laces together and he didn't notice until he tried to walk."

Doctor: "Oh."

Me: "It was funny. Uh, I guess you'd have had to been there. Anyway, I told you it wasn't important."

And have you ever tried to explain an inside joke? That's another thing that doesn't go anywhere. You know, I don't think therapists understand that while they're engaging one or more of us in the session, the rest are going about their business as usual. It's not like a panel discussion, with a few talking and the rest as an audience. It's more like a convention where you and the therapist are off in a corner talking privately. He has his back to the room so tends to forget the others are there, but you can talk with him and still follow the antics of the others.

Language is yet another area of confusion. Doctor: "Are you angry about something?" Me: "No."



*Non-Therapist's Page, Cont'd.*

But a voice in my head says, "Damn right, I'm mad."

"Shut up. He wasn't asking you."

But, was he? Should I say, "I'm not, but Joe is?" If I do, Joe may leave without elaborating, or he may commandeer the rest of my therapy time.

Another troublesome word is "we." Does he mean he and I, he and all of us, he and other therapists, or he and my spouse?

So many questions, so many possible answers and each one determines how helpful a particular session will be. I often think, as I'm driving home, "Where did I go wrong?"

Can you relate to any of this?  
Comments welcomed.

MV

## *Infinity and Time are Wrapped in a Dancing Spiral of All One*

As each spirit makes its journey  
through infinity

it continuously changes form  
through time

from human to spirit  
innumerable times.

For we are traveling on an  
unending spiral of life

existing in some points with  
human experiences,

existing at other points of the  
spiral with spiritual experiences.

When we are lucky, we coexist.

As we move thru our lifetimes,  
we embrace ourselves wrapped

in the warm glow of forever  
love,

as each dance on the spiral  
comes closer and closer to the

one eternal loving all

of the one Totality Radiant  
Lover.

*By Norma*

MV

## *Resources*

This is the month for research volunteers. If you are interested in helping to educate professionals about your DID experience, check out these interesting opportunities:

**RESEARCH STUDY:** Angel Casey, a doctoral student in clinical psychology, seeks volunteers who have completed the integration process to participate in her dissertation research: *The Phenomenology of Postunification in Clients with Dissociative Identity Disorder*, which has been approved by Dept. of Psychology dissertation committee members and by the Institutional Review Board at the University of Montana. Persons eligible for the study must be at least 18 years of age and must have been professionally diagnosed with DID by a therapist or physician. In addition, volunteers must have achieved unification (no more alters) and have been integrated for at least three months. For those eligible, a confidential phone interview will focus on your personal experiences during the integration process. You may use the phone of a friend or therapist to protect your identity. Qualified individuals may volunteer for the study by writing to *MANY VOICES* Research Dept., or contact Angel Casey directly, at 1041 Crescent Drive, Logan, UT 84321. You may call her collect at (801) 750-6838 to receive preliminary materials and consent form. Deadline for input is July 31, 1997. Results of the study will appear in a future issue of *MANY VOICES*.

**Book writer wants to know** how impact of mother loss affected your spirituality. Confidential questionnaire & phone interview options: mother loss as caused by death, abandonment, abuse, or neglect. Include phone number if interview OK. E-mail [Godschild@bigfoot.com](mailto:Godschild@bigfoot.com) or [100102.1270@compuserve.com](mailto:100102.1270@compuserve.com) or write J.Godschild, V. Mertensstraat 3, 1560 Hoeilaart, Belgium.

**Therapist preparing Doctoral Dissertation**, "A Psychospiritual Perspective for the Therapeutic Recovery Process of Adult Female Incest Survivors." Write for anonymous survey questionnaire to Barbara Sinor, M.A., PO Box 303, Etiwanda, CA 91739. Results of the study will help guide counselors in their care and treatment of all incest survivors.

**Joyful Child Journal.** Maureen, an MV subscriber, recommends this quarterly magazine for parenting inside and outside children. Write or call for ordering info, c/o Karen Spring Stevens, publisher, PO Box 566, Buffalo, NY 14213. (716) 831-0574.

**Compuserve Survivor's Forum** is an excellent place to make contact with others who have survived trauma and abuse, says MV subscriber Judith G., who is the Dissociation Issues section leader. If you have access to a computer with Compuserve membership, click on the Go

icon (looks like a green light on the top of your computer screen) and type in the word "safeplace." Many in the Forum have DID and all parts are welcome. There are special safe places for child alters and inner children. Chat rooms, message boards and conferences are available. "It's a great place to make friends and to give and receive support and encouragement," she adds.

**Self-Harm Issues?** Dissertation copies are available on *An Existential-Phenomenological Investigation of the Experience of Self-Cutting in Subjects with Multiple Personality Disorder*, by Faith A. Robinson, PhD (1994). Order from UMI, (800) 521-0600 Extension 3879, or direct from author (\$25 incl shipping & handling) to Faith A. Robinson, PhD., 26485 Carmel Rancho Blvd. #6, Carmel, CA 93923. Phone (408) 427-3024.

**Queen of Angels House** in Lansing, MI offers a year-long program of intensive therapy for adult women victims of childhood physical and sexual abuse. Residential and Day treatment. Catholic spirituality. For information call (517) 482-4779 or voice mail (517) 360-2195.

**S.M.A.R.T.** is a newsletter for those interested in learning how secret societies, especially Masons, may be connected to ritual abuse. Write to PO Box 60577, Florence, MA 01060. Email [SMARTNEWS@aol.com](mailto:SMARTNEWS@aol.com).

### **CONFERENCES**

**June 14, '97: Survivorship Seminar:** Navigating the Outside World. Emeryville, CA. Learn to deal with medical, workplace, police/legal systems and more. For survivors of childhood abuse and therapists. For info call Paul Crissey at (408) 453-7611 x 137, or e-mail [svship@aol.com](mailto:svship@aol.com).

**June 27, '97 Mind, Body & Soul One Day Workshop.** Indianapolis, IN. Theoretical and clinical advances in trauma-based therapy. Sponsored by Masters & Johnson Trauma Treatment Center (River Oaks). Info and remaining '97 conference schedule: (800) 598-2040.

**June 21-27, '97: 14th International Congress of Hypnosis.** San Diego, CA. For professionals and approved grad students in appropriate disciplines. Call (847) 297-3317 for information.

**Sept. 18-21, '97: International Conference on Male Sexual Victimization.** Orinda CA. For male survivors, students and professionals in mental health, bodywork, and hypnosis. Contact Neal King, PhD at JFKUniversity, 12 Altarinda Rd., Orinda, CA 94563, (800) 696-JFKU, or e-mail [nkingcal@aol.com](mailto:nkingcal@aol.com).

MV

# Generations and Generations

By Hannah and Clan

Last year as I was sorting out old photographs prior to a move, I uncovered many pictures of grandparents, parents, siblings, my own children and myself. Some of these were as very young children, and I decided to use them in putting together a three-tier generational picture of my mother and her slightly older brother, myself, and my fourteen-month older brother, and my daughter and her twentyfour-month older brother. Three little girls, all about three years old, all clad in pretty dresses, all with smiles on their faces, and bows in their hair. Three little boys playing big brother. To mat my composite picture I used a wallpaper sample with tiny flowers on a pastel background. And then I hung it on the wall, pondered on it, and thought how idyllic it looks.

Generations and generations. I wonder how long the pain has gone on; how many ancestors have threatened "Don't tell." How many aunts and uncles, parents and grandparents have fragmented from self into selves in order to survive and grow into some semblance of "normal" adulthood. For in my family this seems to be a generational tendency, as much a part of the genes as skin and hair and eye color. And oh, how well it was all hidden behind a wall of convincing respectability.

I left home permanently as soon as I graduated from college. No returning to the nest for me! I wanted out and took the first exit I saw. There was little contact between my birth family and myself for years. I was too busy raising my own children and struggling with my own fragmentation. It wasn't until my mother was dying, when I was thirty-four, that I felt a need and desire to reconnect. I went to visit her and found a human being, hurting, frightened, and reaching out to me as she'd never allowed herself to do when well. The next time I saw her after that brief visit was in the funeral home. I

was the only one of her four children who went to say "goodbye" but all I could manage was an "I'm sorry." For what I'm not sure—for not being the daughter I thought she had wanted, or perhaps for her own unhappy and fragmented life? I don't know.

Years later I reconnected with my father. He was now an old and fragile man and he too reached out to me more as a frightened child than the domineering man I had once known. Now he is gone. But I could honestly say to him at one of our last visits, "I love you, Pop." And he could finally accept it.

Siblings? They are all still alive and well. Each has found his or her way of coping—through denial, cynicism, medication, and for myself, chaos and dissociation.

Probably I come at this from a slightly different perspective than many of you. My parents are both dead, my siblings and I well-advanced in middle age and my children all grown. At this statement several of my inner little ones let out a distinct squawk, "We're not old, we'll never be old!" The youngest members of our inner clan indisputably carry the most clout!

I am finding that the further I go on the healing path, the more compassion I have for my outer family, but the less time I can comfortably spend with them. I am becoming increasingly aware of and sensitive to others' defenses and denials. This applies to siblings as well as some of my own offspring.

As I uncover my own tortuous path of covering up old trauma—like the cat with its litter box—I become more attuned to others' cover-ups. One of the better aspects of this journey, though, is that as I become more attuned to cover-ups, I also become more able to nurture my inner family. When they become uneasy in the presence of a family member I can and do say, "Gotta go now." I put my inner family in the forefront of my attention

and I minister first to their needs. This is new, for in the past they always got the short end of the stick, and we would stay and hurt, and by the time we finally left we would feel like a whipped dog slinking away with its tail between its legs, and feeling guilty, guilty, guilty. No more!

I feel little of this discomfort with another person honestly seeking healing, admitting pain, etc. With such I can usually stay and stay. There is a commonality within which all of the inner family feel reasonably safe. Above all, there is connection. We are not alone, healing does not have to be a lonely journey; there are hands to hold when the going gets rough, when we stumble and lose our way. That is also family, not necessarily blood relatives, but family nevertheless. But, oh, how we all wish our siblings and offspring ("Yes, Pooh Bear, we do have offspring even if you are only two years old, and, no, I can't explain right now.") how we wish our siblings and offspring would join us on this journey. At least some of them. There is a bonding, a tugging at the heart strings, that will not go away when I think of my outer family.

We have a dream, all of us, that someday, if and when we pass into the Great Beyond, we will find them all—grandparents, parents, siblings, eventually offspring. That our Creator, God, Allah, Higher Power—whatever you name him/her—heals each of us as we pass beyond. That the mother whom we loved and the mummy whom we feared will be one and the whole, loving, gentle person she was created to be, and that she will be as if the fragmentation and warping had never happened. She will be whole and we will finally know her love. That the father who neglected his wife and children in so many ways will be there for and with all of them, in nurturing and joyful cherishing. That we shall all finally be family, all finally be Home, all finally—in safety and love—be united and holy and whole.

These poems reflect the two sides of my relationship with my mother: the anguished struggle of our "mother-daughter" relationship, and the relative peace we were able to find later, as friends.

### *Mom and Me*

My mother's terror  
Sets off a chain reaction in me  
Maybe it's flashbacks shooting off  
inside  
Like big and little fireworks  
Maybe it's wrestling with a slippery  
grip  
To keep any kind of wall between us  
Sticking fingers in a dam she keeps  
poking holes in  
Till her escalating anxiety fills me up  
At times I work hard to stay detached

Other times reach out to give some  
comfort  
Still it detonates deep inside  
That none of my efforts are working  
My fears rise to match hers  
An undersea mine finally explodes  
The water-geyser erupts  
Enveloping us with the hurt and  
rage and terror  
Of my primal-child self  
She once again the martyr  
Me once again reduced  
To hysterical infant

Then my splintered spirit  
Empty now of its arsenal  
Wearily expends the last of her  
energy  
In apologies and embarrassment  
and broken pride  
Like actors caught up  
In a too-long running play  
We always come back  
To our same old closing refrain  
"I'm sorry, Mother"  
"I'm sorry too, honey"  
This won't happen again"



### *Frances and Me*

Mother and me and the ocean  
Incoming waves whispering calming  
tones  
It's all part of history now  
We know you, we see you  
We understand  
How bad it was  
We understand  
How much it hurt  
We're here to hold you now  
To let you know  
It's over now  
To sing together with you  
Of peace in your new world  
Talk and we will listen  
Ensure you're not alone  
Join you with all who've gone  
before you  
Known what you have known  
The energies of war are spent  
Survivors washed up on the shore  
Safe at last to walk about  
Speak of what's gone before  
Cry together and to mourn  
Then reach across  
Hold out a hand  
Free to finally say  
Can I be your friend?

By Lori J.

## Partner's Page

# The Need For A Therapist

By Richard

**I** learned the lesson the hard way — if I was committed to loving a multiple, I needed my head examined.

Survivors of childhood sexual abuse, especially those with Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID), will challenge you in every way possible—emotionally, financially, sexually, spiritually. DID magnifies the daily stresses that any committed relationship faces. Sooner or later, your partner will hit you where your armor is thin, and you'll need professional help.

My wife is getting an I-told-you-so horse-laugh out of this. For months, early in our courtship, she urged me to get therapy, and I fought it tooth-and-nail. After all, she was the one with problems, not me. I had a few quirks, but no more than the average guy. Dealing with my problems as they arose had always worked in the past. I grew up in a family that doesn't run to the doctor with every little hangnail (physical or psychological). We seek professional help when something serious happens.

Well, something serious happened.

One Sunday afternoon, my partner and I were enjoying lunch aboard the *Dandy*, a restaurant boat that cruises the Potomac River here in Washington, D.C.

We were having a nice time, until she brought up a sensitive issue that I thought we had settled long before. I went ballistic and chewed her out rather loudly. Seated on board the *Dandy* is almost hip-to-hip and I know everyone nearby heard me.

But I wasn't thinking about that at the moment; I had been blindsided and I was angry. She went to the bathroom to cry, and we spent the rest of the afternoon speaking awkward monosyllables. Stuck on a boat in the middle of the Potomac River, we couldn't even get away from each other.

It was the wrong thing to do in the wrong place, and I'm still embarrassed

about it. During the years, I have forgiven my partner for a lot of hurts, but the forgiveness has not all been one-sided. I've also made some terrible errors that she has worked hard to forgive.

A few days later, when we had both calmed down, she gave me an ultimatum—get into therapy or she would leave.

By that time, I agreed with her. As embarrassing as the scene on the *Dandy* was, it proved that the DID was getting to me worse than I thought. It was pushing buttons that, with a different woman, might never have bothered me.

Sometimes you have to bite the bullet, even if it's a 105mm howitzer round. During the next two weeks I spoke with several therapists by phone, interviewed two, and chose Thomas C. Overton. He and his wife, Jody Tompros, operate Partners in Counseling in Reston, Va.

Here are the criteria I used to choose a therapist. For me, experience has proven that these factors are important. If you love and support someone with DID, I suggest that your therapist should:

**Believe in DID.** DID in general and multiplicity in particular are still controversial, even in the medical community. A therapist who doesn't believe in what your partner has can be of little help to you, and can even do a great deal of harm to your relationship.

**Have experience with abuse survivors and/or their partners.** I wanted someone with experience in dealing with the kinds of stresses and problems I faced.

**Be state licensed.** Every field has crackpots, wannabes, and con-artists, and psychotherapy is no exception. A state license offers no guarantees, but it does mean the therapist has been screened and met some standards of training and expertise.

**Be the same sex as you.** Others may not agree with this one, but it was important to me. Don't misunderstand — there are many excellent female therapists; I interviewed one and almost chose her. But, in the long run, I wanted someone who has a guy mind, guy gonads, and understands guy problems and how to deal with them.

**Have a stable marriage.** My ultimate goal was to preserve my relationship with my partner, hopefully forever. So I wanted someone who knows how to sustain a long-term relationship. It helped that Thom is a battle-scarred veteran of the divorce wars, and now has a stable marriage. He can recognize the pitfalls of a relationship and help me avoid them.

**Have a life of his/her own.** This has proven to be an important requirement. Multiples are a vortex of needs, problems, and issues. If you're not careful, you can get drawn so deep into care-taking that you literally lose your life. I wanted a therapist who had found interests outside of therapy and marriage, and could help me do the same.

At first, much of my time with Thom was spent talking about my partner's problems and our relationship. But the focus quickly changed from her to me — to my background and the issues that caused me to respond in the ways I did, and how to change my attitudes and behavior.

Despite my early reluctance and denial, getting into individual therapy is one of the best things I've done. It has made an enormous difference, and it's a big part of the reason that my wife and I are still together.

So, I'll close by saying something I've told my wife privately, but have never had a chance to say publicly until now — *Yes dear; you were right. It's not possible to make a relationship like ours work without counseling.*

**MV**

**Letters**

I wish mothers, parents of outside children, would write to MV and discuss parenting issues. I have a daughter, age 22, and son, age 18, and way too much guilt. I need all the emotional support I can get.

*By Maureen A.*

I am currently starting to have very full and painful memories in therapy as we tackle our sexual abuse issues from a more united and co-conscious approach. I am freaking. Flashbacks seem to have become a daily horror, some more intense than others. I feel overwhelmed and guilty and dirty as I feel and deal with these issues. I am no longer seemingly able to be there for my lover sexually, without risking a trigger to a flashback (that's the guilt) and I feel filthy about sex altogether by the material in the memories. I see sex as an abusive and tormenting perversion right now. My experience in recovery tells me "I am not alone."

Those who can relate, can you direct me into solutions? My lover is extremely understanding and supportive. That's hard to receive too. We're so used to people leaving. Help!

*By Lost Voices of T.O.T.W.*

I am in search for answers. I recently had a memory that is hard to fully accept, except for the fact that my younger sister (who is also MPD) has a memory that fits with mine. I guess between the two of us there is a complete memory.

I wonder how others are able to accept/validate trauma from ritual abuse. I have read of others who are survivors of Satanic ritual abuse or other such cult abuse. Yet it is difficult for me to understand how it could have been real for me. My memories of sexual, emotional, psychological and physical abuse are very real for me, so why am I having such a problem with this memory? I grew up in a military home, moving constantly. My mother is from Japan. My father was a career military man. I have no memory of my younger sister except for pictures. Is there anyone who can relate to this in any way? I would appreciate knowing how to trust memories of this magnitude.

*By Sue & Crowd*

MV

**Theme Ideas Wanted!**

*It's time again to put on your thinking hats and help select the themes for MANY VOICES' 1998 issues. Send me your thoughts on general subjects, therapist's pages and artwork. Use the mail (PO Box 2639, Cincinnati, OH 45201) or e-mail me at LynnWatMV@aol.com We need ideas here by June 25 so the choices can be made, to appear in the August '97 issue.*

*ALSO: We are planning to introduce an International Page, beginning in August, to run whenever we have material. Anyone outside the US can submit resources, ideas or news of DD and Trauma-related subjects in your country, for possible publication. Tell us what it's like to find DD treatment outside the US, and ask questions. We will forward replies. - Thanks for sharing your recovery ideas with MANY VOICES! —LW*

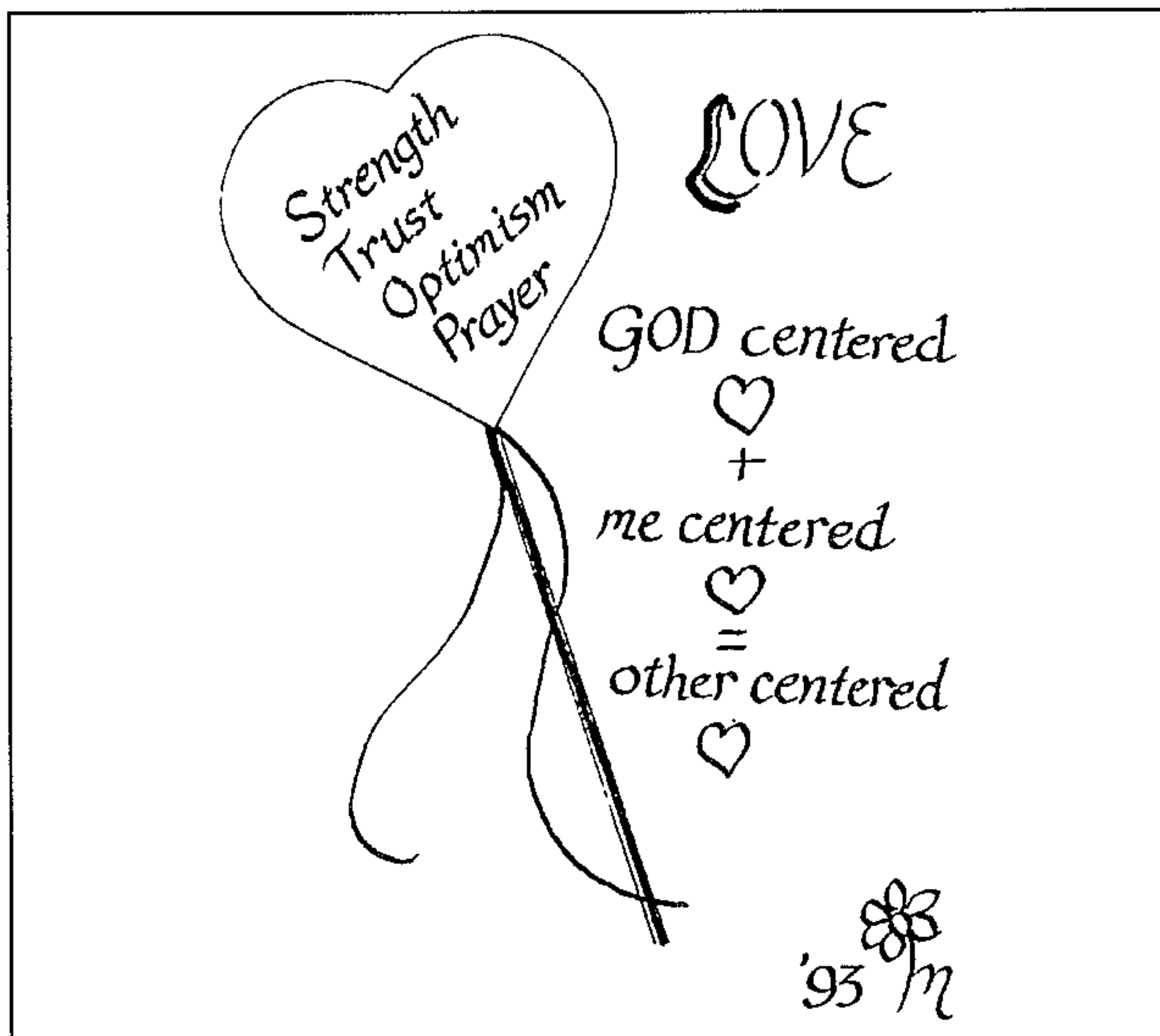
MV

**Survival**

That piece that can buy the lies you can hide in sex, alcohol, drugs, relationships, cutting, work, food etc. wants to kill me. Have me hand over all that is good. She then became the predator. I was vulnerable, pieces unprotected exposed. Some I can't deal with yet. Knew I was strong in so many ways but she saw the window so she could crawl in. Mind games — triggers. Drugs, scoring, prepping, shooting. Fooling around & heavy conversations. She pretended to care. That's how it was when I was a kid. Desensitization, porn, beatings, masturbation, sex & alcohol. They said "I love you" "Don't Tell" & "Kill Yourself." She wanted that too. "You can't tell anyone..." rush, numb, pinned, dissociative. "No, I won't tell," I mumbled like years ago. My amazon — my warrior tells. I survive & I will move on.

*By Judy*

MV



# Operation "FOO" Disconnect

By The Constellation a.k.a. "Bonnie"

Disconnecting with FOO (a term for "family of origin" coined by my friend with DID) has been our most difficult and liberating theme of the past year. We "divorced" the Mother.

To date, she appears to be our main abuser. Most of us idealized her, and believed the contempt we felt then and still feel in her presence was our fault. It seemed that just by being alive we drove her to hurt and shame us.

We now believe that dissociating and creating others inside is one way of disconnecting from FOO when still too small and dependent on them to actually leave.

As a young adult, I tried to physically separate by going to college 500 miles away. We have lived alone the balance of our adult life. We did become independent in a self-sufficient way. That laid a foundation, but was not enough.

Independence does not equal individuation. Emotionally separating Bonnie from the Mother was excruciating. We worked on developing a sense of gray, since the Mother sees only in black and white terms. We tried to emphasize health while Mother counted on us maintaining our Identified Patient role in the family. We were taking a shape more in line with what we felt our true selves to be.

But all these gains in therapy, from age 15 through 42, weren't producing the results we'd expected. We always felt like a seedling planted directly beneath a stone so that while the sun beckoned us forward and upward, we kept doubling back on ourselves. Bonnie became increasingly discouraged and depressed. The physical problems of fibromyalgia, TMJ, and migraine intensified.

The correct diagnosis of DID in 1992 and a very special therapist in 1993 started us on this path. Early in our DID therapy we read Alice Miller's *The Drama of the Gifted Child*. Sometimes we slept with this book because her description of childhood "soul murder" by means of parental abuse, neglect and unavailability was so validating. We focused on rediscovering and reclaiming our soul. But we still thought that if our relationship with ourselves healed we could redefine our relationship with the Mother. Perhaps the real task for us and, we suspect, many of you, is the other way around. Until we had redefined our relationship with the Mother, we could not heal or reclaim our true selves. In our heads we believed we were on the right track, but emotional loyalty seems more resistant to change. We were not letting go.

Books help us a lot as an adjunct to therapy. Last year we read three in a row that directly addressed the mother-daughter relationship: *Motherless Daughters*, *Fat and Furious*, and *When Mothers and Daughters Can't Be Friends*. Sometime after beginning the third book, the Mother had both knees replaced. We became her primary caretaker. Naively we looked forward to it as a chance to demonstrate our adult love for her. It would probably be the last time we spent more than a day alone together because of her enmeshment in our sister's world.

From the very beginning she was vicious. By Day Six all of us were back to feeling that we should have died in utero. We relapsed into a constant state of self-injurious impulses and suicidal depression. While many parts cowered like the Lion, Tinman and Scarecrow in OZ, other parts summoned the strength to push back the curtain. The inner strength had been incubating in the consistent and nurturing atmosphere our therapist provides. The vote was cast for the final option—DIVORCE.

Four months passed in terrifying turbulence. The changes occurred in such a deep place that we had difficulty articulating its profound nature. It had its own life and direction now. Our job was to observe and allow precious delusions, worn-out attempts, and unrealistic hopes to evaporate.

Our physical symptoms flared. Suicidal parts began planning to end our agony in March if the darkness did not lift. To our greater distress, our therapist was not "getting" it. We so desperately wanted his recognition and guidance.

It was February before something vital shifted. We had some interactions with the Mother that looked the same but felt very different. For example, we were not as anxious getting together with her because we are strong enough to stand up for ourselves or leave if she intruded on our Spirit. The head no longer pounded from trying to read her mind and anticipate every outcome of each conversational exchange. We now saw we could not control her behavior. So what we say or do now serves to protect or express us, not to manipulate her into the Mother we wished her to be.

This list goes on and on. The differences are at once subtle and earthshattering. The rock above us was rolled away. We're still beneath the surface, but now our path is clear. My readings emphasized that this choice be a last resort. It is not simply an angry flight away from the other party. We

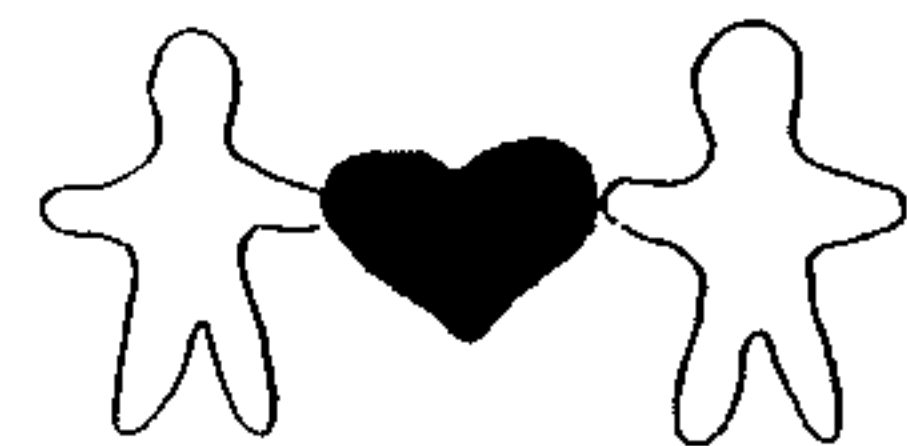
would describe it more as a state of readiness. We are ready to walk away and never have any contact again with the Mother, if that were the only way to preserve our soul. "Bonnie" now originates within. She is no longer the sum of the Mother's angry parts and judgments.

Our therapist views us as a kaleidoscope. The elements of the Constellation remain the same, but they've shifted into a new arrangement. This design is new and dazzling.

Electing to disconnect from FOO is hard. Persecuting alters call us "traitors," "ingrates," "too big for our britches." Orphaning ourselves sometimes feels insanely lonely. And real people who know our FOO's public face may share and vocalize those same sentiments. However, only a month or two into implementing this decision, we realize that we are really only accepting losses already suffered.

The picture of our life right now is as far as it could be from anything we ever would have chosen. But it is *our* life, maybe for the first time. So we're going to stick around and grow awhile, poke our seedling head out of the ground and have a look around. We even risk hoping now and then, not just with the borrowed hope we have lived on for years, but a little of our own as well.

MV



## *My Heart Sings*

I have taken the path He showed me.  
I have crossed the divide.

I see clearly now.  
They call me "ill."

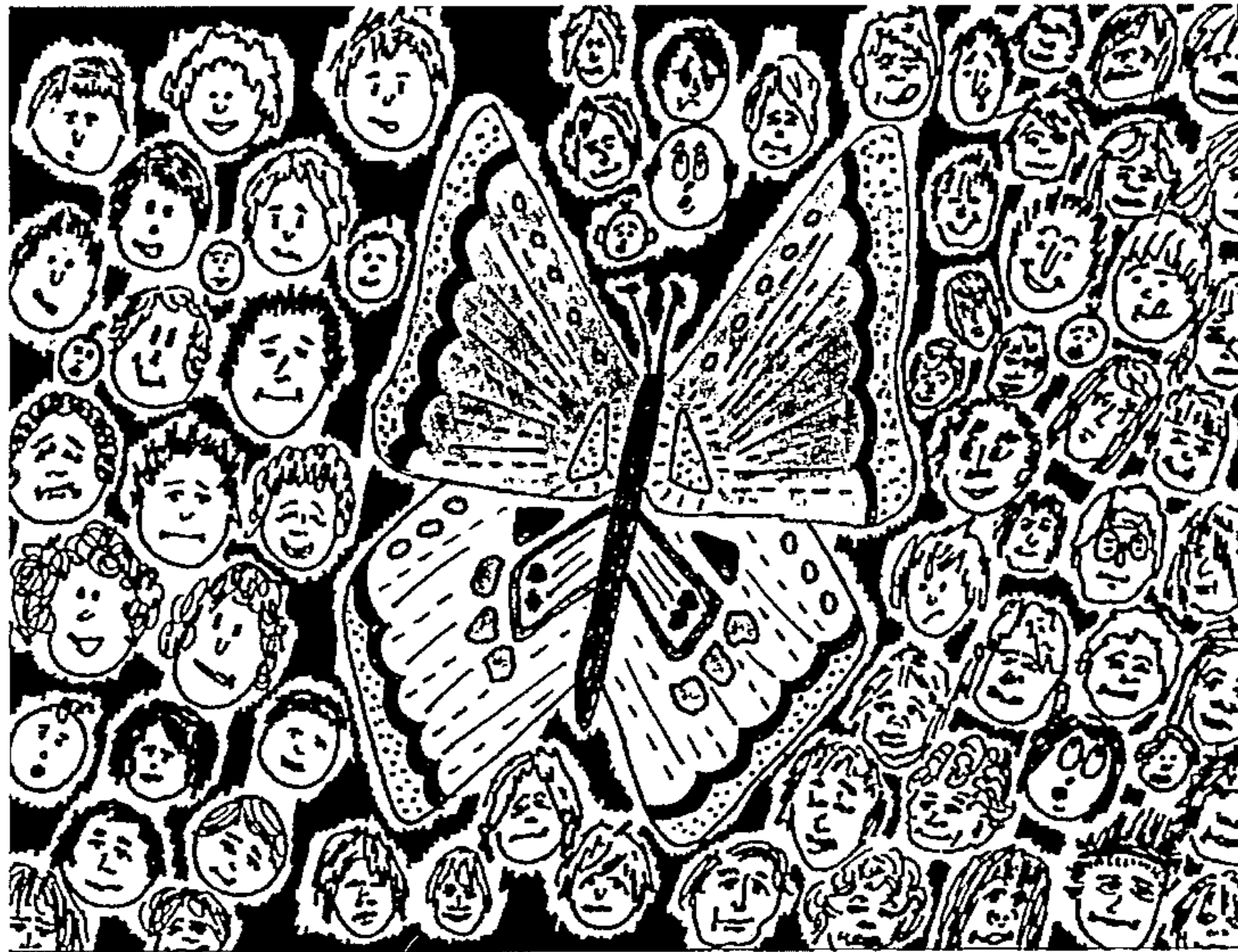
I tell the truth.  
They call me "liar."

I am happy.  
They call me "failure."

I am free.  
Let them call me what they will.

By Miriam C.

MV



We  
Are  
Family!

By Kris P.

## Books

### Betrayal Trauma: The Logic of Forgetting Childhood Abuse

By Jennifer J. Freyd. ©1996. Published by Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA. 232 pages. Hardback. \$24.95.

Jennifer Freyd is a professor of psychology at the University of Oregon. For the past decade she has pursued research on memory and, since 1991, began to develop her understanding of betrayal trauma. She is the daughter of the founders of the False Memory Syndrome Foundation. Having her parents' version of her personal life, memory, and therapy discussed nationally was an extraordinarily painful invasion of privacy and distortion of the facts, she reported in a presentation in Michigan in 1993.\* But this book is not a personal polemic against the FMSF, or an angry response to her parents' intrusion into her adult decisions. Instead, she summarizes much current memory research, then discusses in careful, reasoned language, the processes that may lead to abuse memories being "forgotten" or only partially remembered for years. Freyd's Betrayal Theory proposes that "the trauma most likely to be forgotten are not necessarily the most painful,

terrifying or overwhelming ones...but the trauma in which betrayal is a fundamental component...Domestic abuse and child abuse are clearly examples of social traumas that possess components of betrayal." Richard P. Kluft, MD wrote an excellent, detailed review of this book in the March 12, '97 edition of JAMA, in which he states that Freyd's work is especially useful, since by her study of the importance of close relationships to the traumatized, she is beginning to build a bridge between cognitive psychology and psychoanalysis. The development of this bridge may significantly improve the clinical understanding and treatment of trauma survivors. I bought my copy because it was a small way to support Jennifer Freyd in her work and her own recovery. I encourage you to buy and read it or, if you can't afford a copy, suggest it to your local library as an acquisition.

\**Theoretical and Personal Perspectives on the Delayed Memory Debate* a speech given by J. Freyd at a conference sponsored by Foote Hospital in Ann Arbor, MI, August 7, 1993. Reprinted in *Treating Abuse Today*, Vol.3, No. 5.

### Social Tips for the Socially Challenged

By Barbara Wilson. © 1995. Available from the author at 1111 N. Dearborn St. #1511, Chicago, IL 60610. 64 pages. Comb binding. \$9.95 + 2.50 shipping.

For those of us who did not learn appropriate social skills from parents or caretakers, this little book gives sound advice on very practical matters: how to dress, clean house, and behave in public (to name just a few of the subjects it covers.) Barbara Wilson was trained in social work. She applies her common-sense approach to public standards and behavior in "sound-bite" format: "Don't whine in public." "If you are mad at someone and you think you may hit them, turn around and walk away. Whatever they say keep walking until you cool off. You can always talk things through when you feel better." "If you have a tendency to eat your food too fast, try taking smaller bites and counting to 20 when you chew." This book would be a very useful shared resource in recovery centers and group homes...not to mention making a funny graduation gift for the nerd in your life. *Social Tips* is also good reading for young alters who may benefit from easy-to-read advice on behaving like outsiders.—LW

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**August 1997**

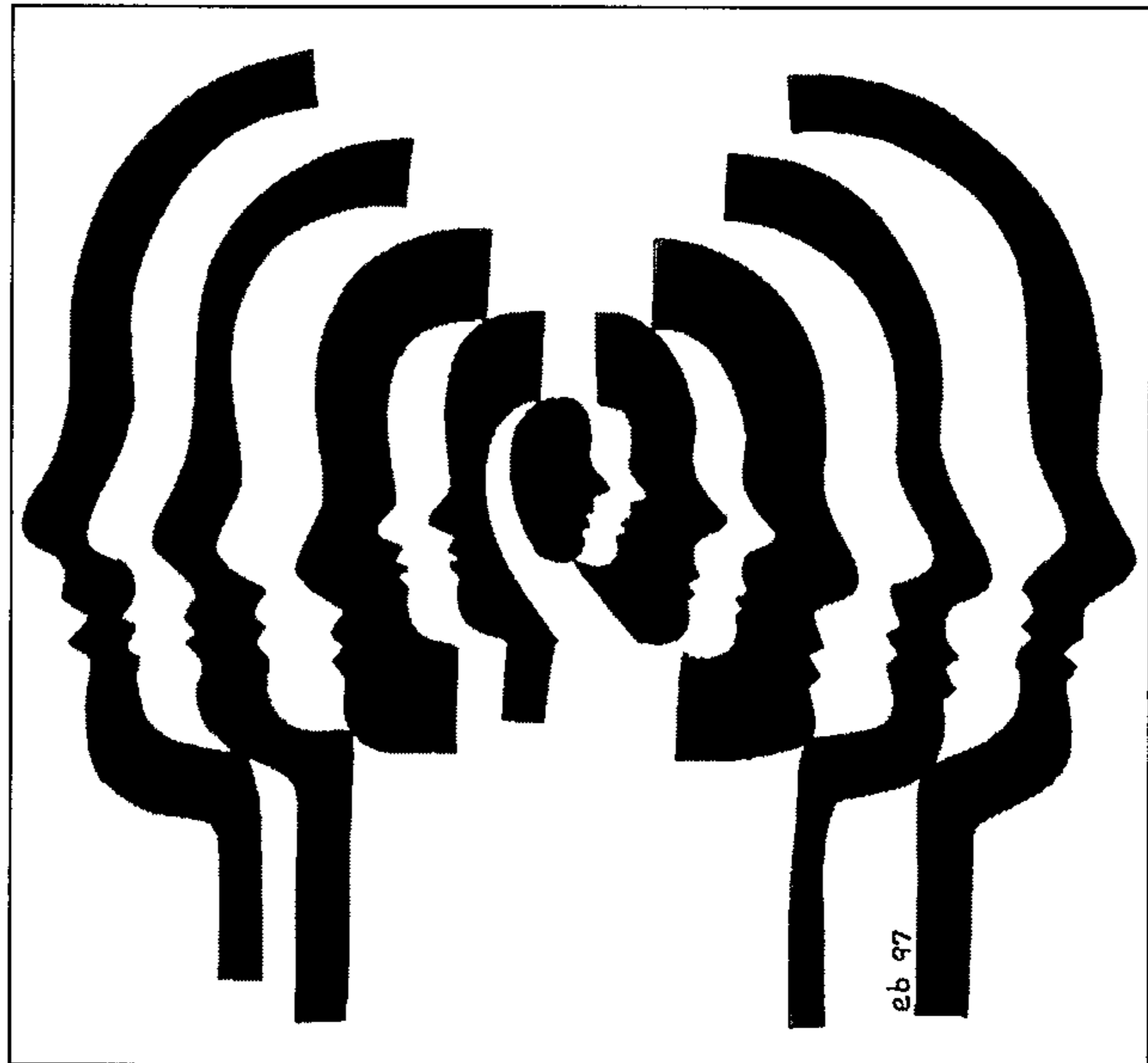
Hope and Healing for All who Dissociate. Special concerns of Men, Children, Elders and People of Color. Community & Medical Education Efforts. ART: Faces and facets of dissociation. DEADLINE: June 1, 1997.

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Trusting Yourself, Trusting Others. Building courage. Inside ways to keep all of you safe. ART: Your safety net. DEADLINE: August 1, 1997.

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Practical Tips on Living "normally" covering money management, housecleaning, to-do schedules, etc. ART: Past, Present, Future self. DEADLINE: October 1, 1997.



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