

MANY VOICES

WORDS OF HOPE FOR PEOPLE RECOVERING FROM TRAUMA & DISSOCIATION

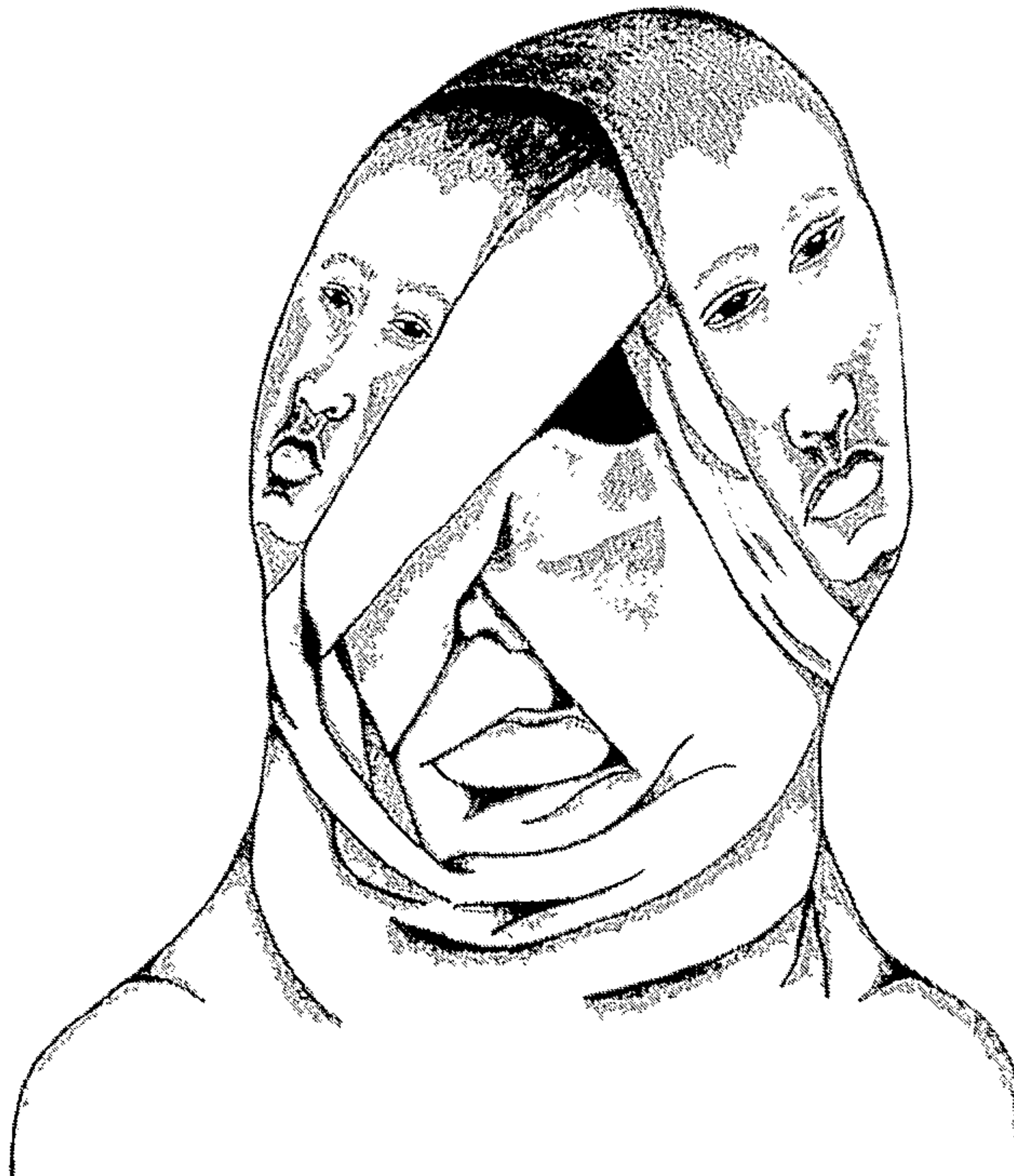
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In This Issue:

**Coping With Survivor Guilt...
Grieving Losses...
Healing the Spirit...Honoring Life**



I Am Many

i tried not to
but sometimes
i looked in the mirror
and saw only
darkness & confusion
revealed in the glass
i felt insane

my therapist
offered me
an answer – a reason
i accepted it
slowly
reluctantly
it explained
everything—the horrors
the scattered memories
and the others
living inside of me

now— i still look
in the mirror sometimes
and though i still see
a dark-faced woman
i know i'm filled with lots
of beautiful little lights inside
and i finally understand
i am not insane
i am many

By SJS

MV

Remembering, by Living Earth

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Survivor Guilt

By Carol L

Who would think that the sibling who suffered the trauma and split into alters would consider herself the "lucky" one? My folks did not want children. My sister is the elder by 11 months so she was "the mistake" and I was "the really big mistake." What a legacy!

Back in the '50s, Dr. Spock's legacy of letting children cry until exhausted, feeding on a strict schedule and keeping to a regimen was the scientific way to raise a child. My sister evidently endured this quietly and with a docile and placid disposition. She was the "good baby." Then "Wham!" I came along and was a fretful and demanding child.

My parents lived in the Orient and so were able to hire a full-time nanny to "shut me up". Although I knew she was hired to do so, she carried me

around all day, played with me and made me feel loved. As a result I formed those early attachment bonds that are so important to a child's development. To this day, I feel a warm core inside that was formed by her. My sister stayed quiet and phlegmatic.

My first split occurred when we left for the States and left my nanny behind. I couldn't imagine what had happened to my warmth, love and fun.

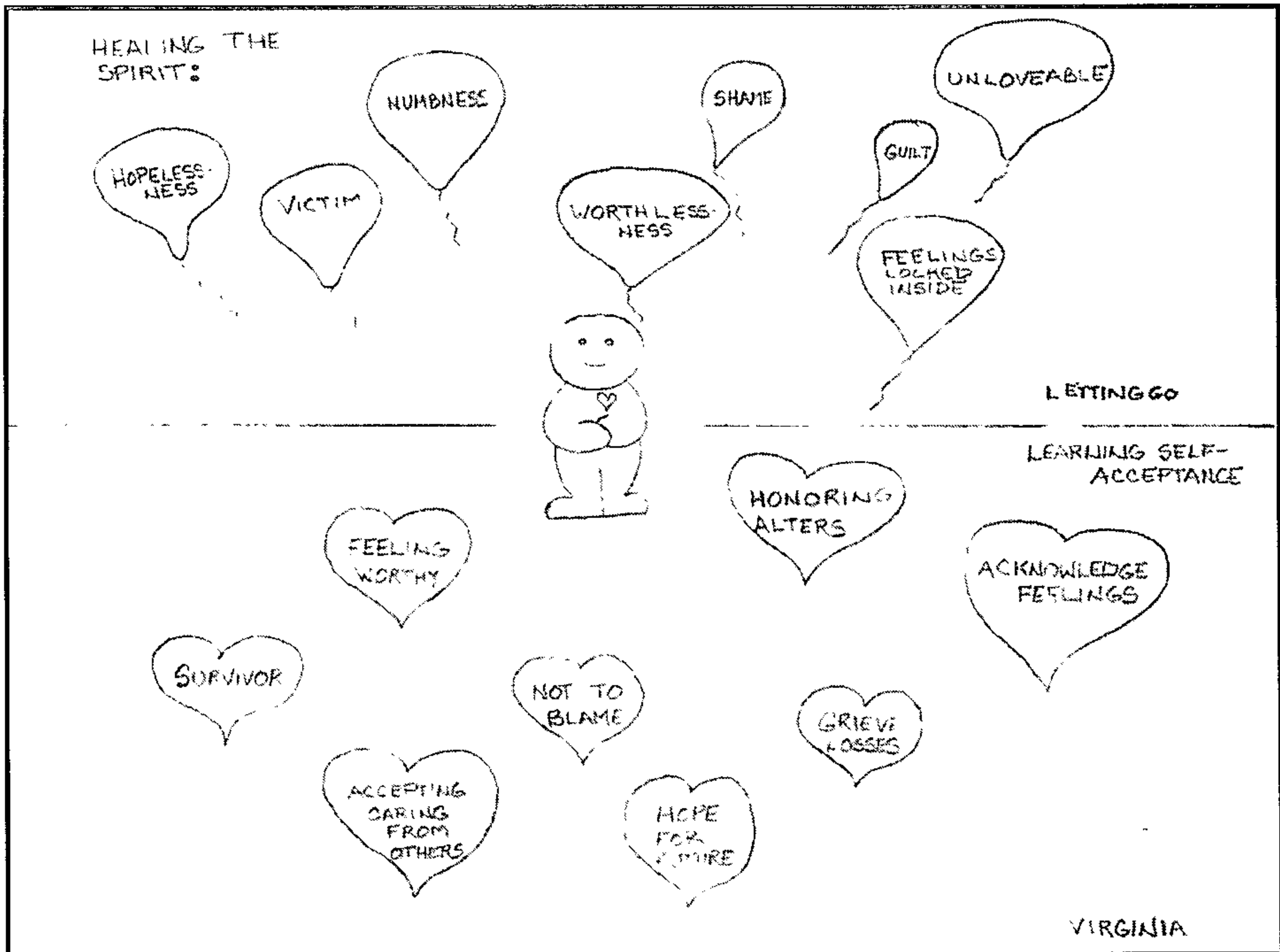
And later in life when I suffered sexual abuse and split into the panoply of alters that define "me," I still feel the lucky one in my own way compared with my sister. Her calmness that I have seen her display to everything in her life borders on autism. Although I was the one who suffered trauma and DID and have

been hospitalized several times, I also was the one who had the ability to feel the emotions of life, anger, hate and affection.

I have had close personal friends, boyfriends, and have been married for 25 years. She has had one boyfriend in her lifetime which was a short-lived relationship. She has not been on a date in almost 30 years. She does not have "best friends."

I have envied that calm briefly but would not give up my rather tumultuous existence which has been so full of life—both good and bad. So I would say that our dysfunctional childhood led to two damaged women but I would not give up my ability to feel emotions and form relationships for all the calmness in the world.

MV



Handling Multiple Stressors

By Paula K. Ulrich, CSW-retired

Loosen self-expectations,
but don't let go

Time outs—good perks
walks, talks, projects, visits
reads, massages, works

More structure to schedule (external)

Involvement with others

Stay in self-touch scan/heal

Be clear re: what can do and what
is beyond can do/control

Talk down panic

Call for help if needed (be selective)

Start more positive image conveying

You are a survivor
and having untold generations of
survivors behind you is a benefit.

Comparatively (relevant?) things
could be far worse and more deadly.

Life is rarely easy—however this is
definitely not one of its
periods of grace

However such a period/moment
will/shall return and return again and
again in the times yet to come

Patience in large amounts

attempt more care > details precisely
because of absence of such

If accidents "feel" or begin—take
immediate/clear steps to control

TRUST YOURSELF AND OWN
CAPACITIES

DON'T PLAY ANY GAMES WITH
ANYBODY AT ALL.

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MANY THANKS TO OUR FRIENDS!

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

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Sheppard Pratt Health System - Baltimore, MD

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

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We appreciate your support! —Lynn W., Editor



Prisoners of My Mind by Keepers

The Art of Honoring Life

By Ravensong

To honor means to respect, or to hold in high regard. For those who have no experience with physical, emotional or sexual abuse, life's gifts are often taken for granted. For the rest of us, though, life is something to be reckoned with; in fact, we know that, just as with people, respect for life has to be earned, and that moving from a place of darkness to one of light and trust is a tough, and sometimes long, journey.

How do we learn the art of honoring life? For us, it's been hard to position ourselves away from despair and wanting to take our life and to move closer to a place of respect for it. In many ways, it is an ongoing process for us. The first step we had to take was to decide that we are worthy of the very basics that life offers—the air we breathe, the food we eat, the roof over our heads. On bad days, it's still a struggle, but it has gotten easier over the last couple of years. Once accepting our worth of the basics, we have had to move on to the more complex aspects of life and living.

We honor life in terms of ourself(ves) and others, both human and non-human. We have always had an immense respect for animals, loving and caring for them without condition, holding them in high regard, no matter their degree of "likeability." It's easy to see the Divine in these creatures; they live wholly and completely, using fully the tools they were given to interact with others in the world. Each is special and complex in its own way, and none expects more than to live in peace with us on this planet.

Respecting our fellow human beings becomes a daunting task for those of us who have not learned to respect ourselves. This means that we have to be patient with both ourselves and one another, and recognize that work may have to be done before we can fully honor those around us.

We begin that work unsuspecting, not realizing that, once begun, it

continues without end. We are always busy at some aspect of it, even if it is fighting the need to do it. This is what it means to grow and to heal. For us, there are four primary areas that we are working on to find honor in our lives:

Physical—One of the hardest aspects of ourselves to acknowledge, much less respect, is our physical body. During periods of dissociation, it becomes invisible to us, or changes shape and size. Our body becomes a thing out-of-control, often filled with sensations and desires foreign to us. How does one begin to connect with, and grow to respect such a stranger?

We started by making a conscious effort to be attentive to our body. Grounding techniques such as stomping our feet or holding and rubbing a stone or watching our breath help us connect and stay in touch in a very concrete way with the body. Following a regular regimen of soothing self-care, which includes warm, herbal baths, nutritious foods, the gentle exercise of tai chi, and massage (when money permits) helps us remain grounded and develop an appreciation and deepening respect for our physical self.

In addition, in order to fully respect this part of us, we have to stop cutting and other forms of self-injury. In the long run, these only serve to bring hurt and shame to us, and make the body an ugly reminder of how we feel inside.

Emotional—Emotionally, we are a complex being. Dissociation has allowed us to shift our emotions onto others, to make our memories less vivid and our feelings about them less painful and more tolerable. It has been, as we see it, a necessary means of survival, for without it, we surely would not have made it this far. But now is the time to honor our emotional self, to fully experience what we feel, and to embrace those feelings as our own.

Accepting ourselves emotionally is a difficult, sometimes seemingly

impossible task. Feelings of anger, sadness, anxiety, fear, terror, and despair overwhelm us, and we're left lost and struggling, not knowing what to do next. What we've discovered, though some past work on our own and with the help of a new therapist, is that what works best for us is to deal with the day-to-day, and to utilize some simple tools to do that.

We honor our emotional selves by acknowledging our feelings as they arise and working through them. For the especially difficult ones, we keep a writing journal, and when we can't put our thoughts into words, we turn to our art journal. In those pages, we promise ourselves to be honest about our feelings and, thus, can usually capture the true nature of our emotions.

Spiritual—We suspect that many survivors, just like many other people, give spirituality a low priority and don't take the time to find it an honorable place to reside in their chaotic lives. Our host has always been in a state of confusion with regard to spirituality, never quite sure what she believed, until fairly recently, and it took a small uprising inside to finally put us on-track.

Our host found a home in a small pagan group associated with a Unitarian Universalist Church near our hometown. About the same time, two others inside decided to assert their independence spiritually: one wished to convert to Catholicism; the other, to Judaism. This created an immense amount of conflict in our system; although there weren't any fights about it, there were frequent "debates" about the pros and cons of allowing each to follow her own path. There was a strong concern that to allow the activities necessary for each to follow through with her needs would create havoc for the system. Finally, our host suggested a compromise: that each celebrate privately holy days and rituals of the religion of her choice, and that we all join the Unitarian Universalist Church that hosted her pagan group. UUism

allows for diversity in spirituality, and celebrates the human being. It was a decision that, after some discussion, everyone agreed to, and that has satisfied our spiritual yearnings for now.

Psychological—Psychologically, it feels like we are riding a roller coaster, so much so that it makes us wonder if it is even possible to honor this aspect of us. We've recently figured out that the best way to do so is to fully accept each peak and each trough (and all the in-between) as important, vital parts of our journey. We seek outside

help for that which remains elusive to and chaotic for us, so that hidden pieces of us can be brought forward and given the respect they deserve.

Honor is a gift we give each other and ourselves. It comes in many, many small packages over a lifetime; for those of us who are survivors, its cultivation becomes a true artform. And, as we learn to honor ourselves as we are, we move slowly from a prison of darkness into a world of light.

MV

“Small Incidents” or Traumas?

By Joe R.

All that I am learning about myself, my inner realm, comes from acceptance, awareness and action. Put any of these three words in order, then try and see which order fits for your life.

Traumas, for me, are events that I used to consider just “small incidents.”

Consider these:

Seeing my mom drive drunk.

Having to wake her up when she was passed out from drinking an 18-ounce beer while waiting for me at the elementary and junior high school pick-up car pool.

Wiping my mother's face off when she passed out drunk in her chair while eating dinner.

Having a cousin of mine coerce me into attempting to give him oral sex when I was 8 years old and he was 17.

Just “small incidents” ...

Like going to my grandmother's house weekend after weekend because my mom could not get along with my dad.

Spending hours in a living room area with three older women (my mother, grandmother and an older female cousin who had lived with my grandmother's family for many years) with the curtains drawn because “that's the way Daddy (my grandmother's father) liked them,” even 10-15 years after his death.

And on and on I can go ...

Traumas! These are NOT little incidents.

Constant 911 calls for trivial health issues because my grandmother never let my mom grow up. Therefore, my mom never let me grow up. 911 calls that I would have to go to the hospital on, sign all paperwork for my mom or grandmother, sit and wait for an intestinal problem they were having to be cleansed.

Over and over again – chaos, trauma!

Who was I? Hell – I didn't know. That's wreckage I am still working to heal within myself. Healing from all of this does not happen overnight.

I am healing. I am worthy of a happy, healthy life. A life of healing, compassion and love for myself that I can then turn outward to a world full of kids coming along – wounded emotionally.

They are being kept behind because of family substance abuse.

Emotional incest. Covert incest.

I call it what it was and is and I make NO apologies for it.

My God!

MV

Hope

I watch the leaves
Age from their youthful green
To vibrant reds and yellows,
Before they fall to the ground
A beaten brown—
And yet they contain Hope...
Though they see their own death
They do not succumb to it but carry on,
Hopeful of the promise,
Of a renewed spirit in this spring.

Sometimes I wish to be like that tree...
To know as I lose my youthful vitality,
As I turn from vibrancy to dust,
That this is a low point in my life
That will be followed by a long, cold,
bitter winter,
But I wish I had the promise of this tree
To know that there would always be a spring
Filled with warmth, healing and rebirth.

I like to hope my life will be like the tree—
A cycle I can count on,
Endings always followed by new beginnings,
The belief that rebirth always follows death
And that there is no true death
Unless the spirit stops hoping,
Stops wishing, stops praying for the Promises
That Nature inevitably delivers.
Though the wait may be long,
Nature never lies,
Never breaks the promise of good returning to life.

It is only we who give up,
Only we who do not see the promises fulfilled,
And only we who kill ourselves.
But the hope is there...
The promise is there...
You must open your eyes so that
You may see the beauty, the passion,
the ecstasy,
Of new life, of good life,
Of hope in better things to come.

By Kimberley D. Bertrand

MV

New Landscape

Support Group for Almost-Betters in New York

By Laura/Vivian

Last year, I wrote an article for *Many Voices* describing the difficulties I was having as I got better from DID/MPD (*Learning to Navigate in a New Landscape: Difficulties of Getting Better.* MV, April 2004). At the time, I was trying to start a support group for almost-betters in the New York City area. This article is an update on the group, which has now been meeting one Saturday a month since November at a YMCA in Manhattan. It is called New Landscape.

I started the group because getting better had thrust me into a world so new and foreign that I couldn't find a way to fit. My therapist was understanding, but I also needed to talk to people who were going through what I was. I likened my disorientation to the man in Oliver Sacks's book who had been blind for 40 years, then had an operation that restored his sight. In his old, blind world, the man judged distance by counting the steps from one place to another, and he got along fine; in his new, sighted world, he had to judge distance by seeing, but he had no conception of perspective, or that things appear smaller when they are farther away, and he often bumped into things. In his old world, he touched an apple and knew what it was; in his new world, if he saw an apple but couldn't feel it, he didn't know it was an apple.

In losing a structure that had sustained me for most of my 60 years, I, too, felt like an immigrant in a foreign country. I didn't know the customs, the culture, or the rules of engagement. I could no longer relate to people, although in my many dissociative years, I had related to them fine and was successful professionally, both in academia and corporate America.

If there had been any DID/MPD support group in New York, even one that wasn't specifically targeted to

almost-betters, I probably would have joined it and not tried to start a new one. But the NYSSMP&D (the local chapter of the ISSD), had been inactive for a few years. That group had been a combination support-group and study-group; members included therapists, clients (who ran the gamut from newly-diagnosed to almost-better), friends, and significant others.

My biggest task in starting New Landscape was contacting almost-betters. To avoid attracting voyeurs, I didn't want to advertise on the internet or post flyers. *Many Voices* helped by publishing a notice about the still-to-be-formed group. As a result of that notice and my article, the past-president of the NYSSMP&D offered to give me their mailing list, even though it was a few years old.

New Landscape is a peer-led support group for people who are in the almost-better stage of their recovery from DID/MPD or another dissociative disorder. The two-hour meetings are open. You don't have to sign up ahead of time. You can just show up. At present, the first hour-and-a-half is for sharing. The last half-hour is a discussion of the group format and structure, which is still evolving. In a few more months, after the structure has been refined to everyone's taste, we will not need to discuss it each time and can devote the entire two hours to sharing.

SHARING: There is a topic, decided upon at the meeting. People have the option of sharing on or off the topic. Some topics have been:

- No child left behind—what it's like when some of your parts get better at a different rate than others.

- How people you have known for a long time can seem different now that you are getting better, and you also seem different to them – and all the ramifications that stem from that.

- Getting out into the world,

- broadening your horizons by meeting new people—friends or lovers—and how much to reveal to them about your dissociation and your history.

- Relapses – how they make you feel; dealing with them.

- Feelings – feeling nothing; feeling too much.

GUIDELINES: The guidelines are intended to foster safety. They include:

- If you wish to share, please raise your hand and wait to be recognized by the moderator (at present, I am the moderator; one of the aims of the format discussions is to arrange for a rotation of moderators).

- There is no cross-talk or feedback. Please address your comments to the group as a whole, not to any individual member.

- If you do allude to other people's sharing, please do so from the "I" perspective. Example: "I related to what the last person said because I had a similar experience." Then go on to tell of your own experience.

- You may ask questions of the group as a whole when it is your turn to share, as long as you know you may or may not get an answer. Example: "Has anyone had the experience of..." "If anyone would like to exchange phone numbers, please see me after the meeting."

- You don't have to talk. No one will call on you.

- You are not obligated to give personal information about yourself unless you wish to do so.

- Please feel free to walk out and come back during the meeting.

- Alters are welcome as long as they respect the guidelines.

FAQ's (from e-mail inquiries I have received):

- *What is the definition of "almost better?"*

New Landscape does not have an official definition of almost-better. It means different things to different people. Anyone who feels he/she is almost-better is welcome. If I had to define it, I would say it is someone who is fairly well along in the healing process. It is not someone who is newly diagnosed and still coping with the diagnosis, or someone who is having frequent abreactions and crises. That leaves a lot of latitude.

Do you have to be integrated to come to the group?

No.

What if you don't have integration as a goal?

Everyone's goal is different. Some people don't even have a goal. New Landscape does not care what your goal is, or whether you even have one.

Is the group safe? What do you do if a member is disruptive?

Everyone adheres to the guidelines; they are read aloud at the beginning of each meeting, and copies are available on the give-away table. We have not had any disruptive members. Nor were there any disruptive members in the many years that the old NYSSMP&D met. In the unlikely event that anyone becomes disruptive, we can call YMCA security. (The question about disruptive members is raised more by therapists than clients.)

GROUP FORMAT AND STRUCTURE: The group is still new, and we are still defining our purpose and role. These are some of the issues we have discussed in the last

half hour of the meeting:

Who this meeting is for:

At present, the meeting is only for people who are in the almost-better stage of their recovery from DID/MPD or another dissociative disorder. It is not for therapists (unless they are also recovering from a dissociative disorder), friends, significant others, or observers (students, journalists). Some members say they wouldn't be able to share freely if therapists were present; others say they would be unaffected. The consensus is that for now we will keep it to just those recovering from DID/MPD, but we will revisit this in the future.

Whether we should have an education/study component to the group as well as the support component:

The consensus is that at present, we should be a support group only. However it is important to educate therapists, friends, and significant others. When the group is better established, we will explore ways of incorporating an education component without compromising the group's main function: peer support. Some suggestions were inviting therapists to the last half hour, compiling writings and artwork from the members and distributing it to therapists, forming a committee to explore other education possibilities.

Finances:

There are no membership fees. A donation bag is passed around to help defray the monthly cost of \$150 (room rental and mailing), but no one is obligated to contribute. I am putting in the difference at present.

We are looking for free meeting space (the one we have now is safe and congenial, but not free), preferably in a neutral building like a Y or community center, not in a private office or home. One of the difficulties is that some centers which make free space available are not comfortable with a dissociative group. We are also looking for grant money and exploring ways of cutting down on the monthly mailing expenses.

Membership:

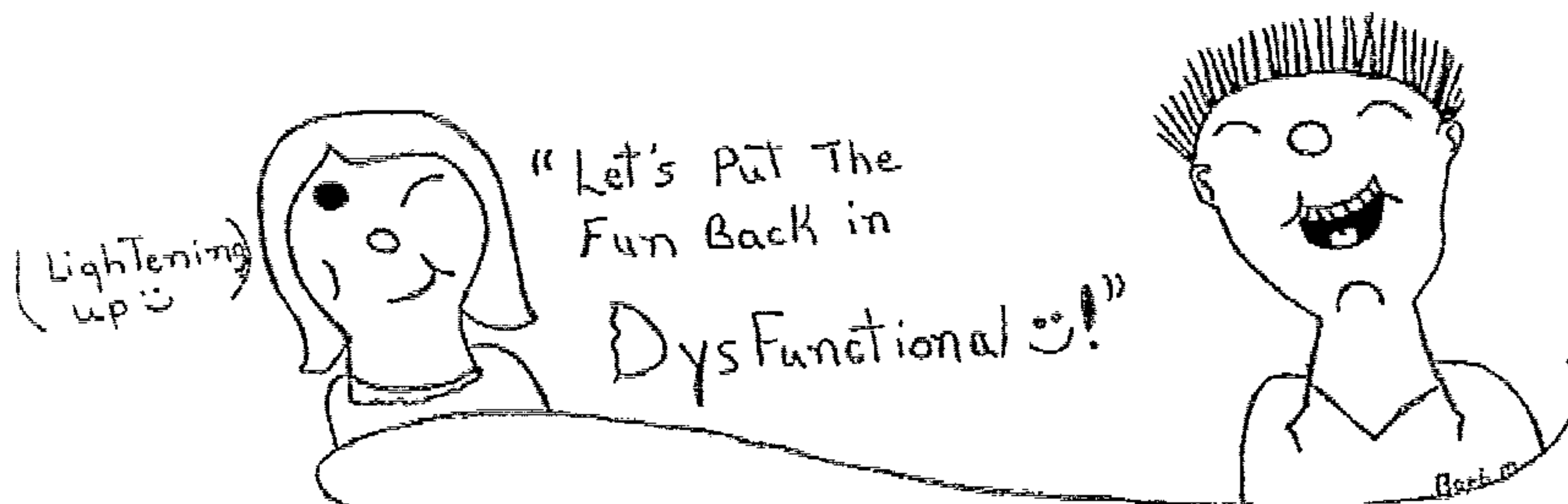
So far, we average about 8 people at a meeting. We are hoping to grow. There is a core of 4 or 5 regulars; others come some months and not others. The monthly mailings go out to about 200 clients and therapists; while therapists are not invited to attend, we hope they will tell their almost-better clients about the group. The meeting is also publicized via e-mail or snailmail to people who have contacted me, some referred by Many Voices, some by therapists, some by the past-president of the old NYSSMP&D, who still gets support group inquiries.

For more information:

New Landscape, PO Box 231315, New York, NY 10023

newlandscape1@yahoo.com
(There's a numeral ONE after newlandscape on this address).or
newlandscape@hotmail.com

MV



Confession of a Multiple

By Velvetfairy

I have so much to confess and so much to share.

I am aware that I have a dissociative Identity Disorder from years of early neglect and trauma.

I am also aware that I have used this fact to avoid responsibility for so much of my life.

In the span of one week, I lost both financial support and my partner of four and a half years. I didn't want to change and so the Universe has helped me. I am guilty of so much and I want so badly to forgive myself. I have judged everyone, and my judgment created an isolation that I am now painfully feeling. I am now learning that we need each other, and that the only way to evolve is to live in harmony. I have hated everyone for their differences, and never saw where we were alike. I have been so critical.

I no longer feel this way towards people. I now know that every person here has a gift for me, even my so-called "enemies."

I used to judge other multiples for taking medication! Now here I am, scared and panicked, feeling so depressed that I have considered taking Prozac (although I probably won't-- yoga works wonders for me.)

Finally, I have understanding. It's an amazingly liberating thing to let go of judgment. I truly feel lighter.

Another thing I have been guilty of

is complete lack of gratitude. I was getting money from my father and my partner, not needing to work, and I never appreciated it!

I remember the moment where I began to realize that most people have to work to survive: I was in Santa Clara. I had driven there myself-- five hours --to take two therapy sessions with a couple hypnotherapist team. I slept over one night in a motel. I remember going to Rite Aid, and listening to the woman teller. She was telling me of her dream of being a singer. I told her I wished her success and she said how much better that would be than the three jobs she held. I remember saying to myself "wow, this woman has three jobs and you are given money, don't have to work at all."

This was the beginning of recognition that I had something most others don't. But there is a price to what I had. First, my dad, who was giving me a small sum per month, (small, but enough to pay half my rent, bills and food) is one of my abusers! Crazy, right? How healing can it be to be taking money from a parent who abused you but who denies it? And I have never confronted him because I wanted the money! Now that's something to judge if you're going to judge!!! But I didn't want to work, and I deceived myself in thinking that this was good for me.

Now I know that it wasn't good for me at all.

So I am putting all my intention now into creating money easily and effortlessly for survival and healing. In only two weeks, I have made great progress. I have taught yoga in the past, and I have secured a few classes already. I still need more income though, and between moments of severe anxiety, I have total faith that I will succeed in supporting myself.

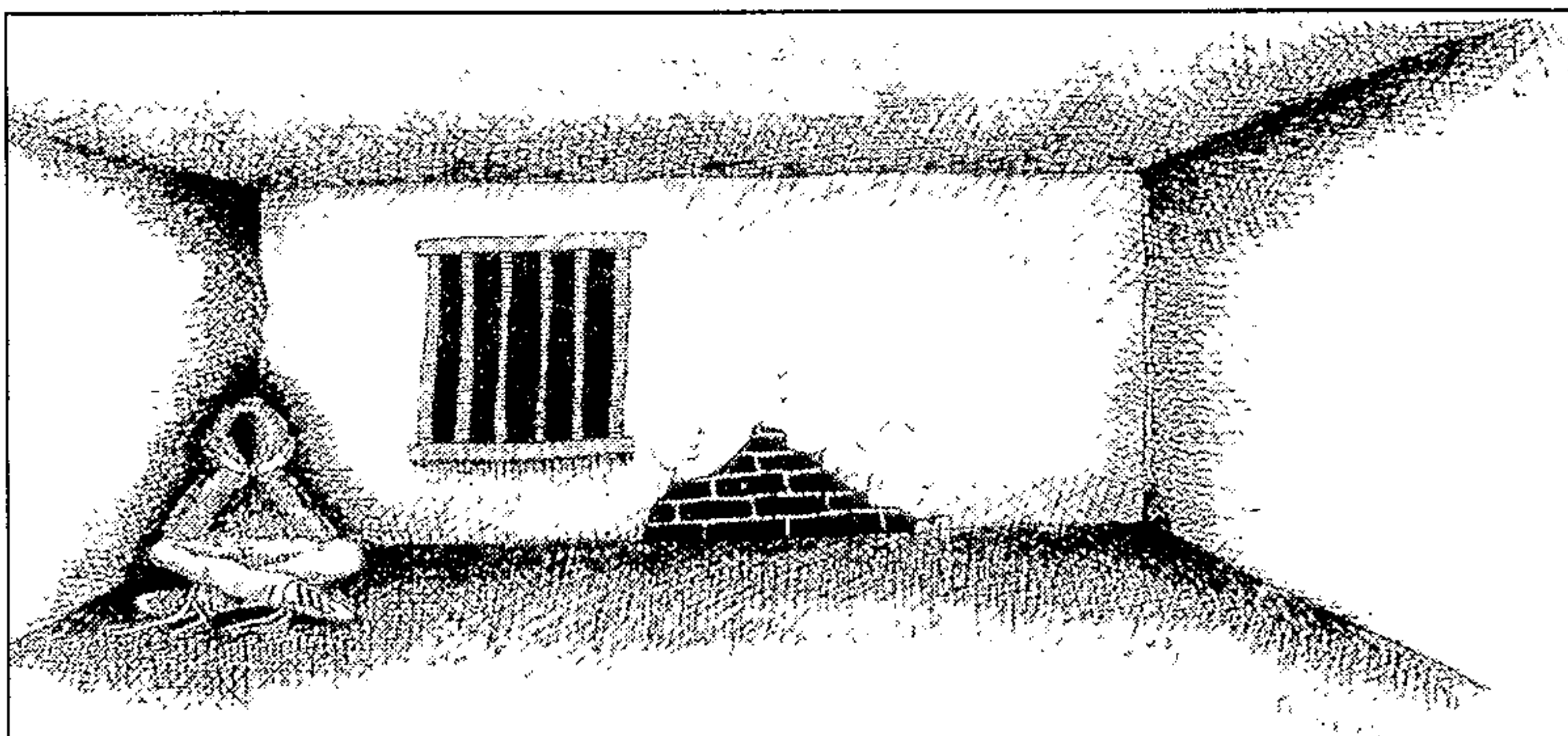
My quest to heal my MPD has taken somewhat of a back step in my need to survive. But perhaps it hasn't. Maybe my independence is exactly the thing that will spur my ultimate healing.

I have also been guilty of projecting anger onto people who did not deserve it, and I feel ashamed at this behavior. I have promised myself that my anger will only come out in therapy or alone, unless it is warranted to protect me. I want to be a kind person, and never hurt anyone again who has done nothing to me.

Maybe I'm writing this to feel absolved. It is so hard for me to forgive myself, yet I must. I want so much to be happy here on Earth. I want to thrive and not just survive. I pray for happiness and prosperity for all Many Voices writers and readers, including myself.

Namaste.

MV



By MEK

Letting Go of My Guilt

By Pat R.

I've come a long way on my journey through recovery, since that first day over 12 years ago. I was 25 years old then and addicted to alcohol and other drugs. My addiction had taken me on a downward spiral that I couldn't stop myself. All I wanted to do was die, and every attempt I tried at that time failed, and today I'm glad of that. The spiral I was on landed me in the psychiatric ward for the first of many trips for me. The local hospital psychiatric unit had a revolving door with my name on it. Later, I was being sent to other hospital psychiatric units that were better equipped to deal with my diagnosis.

I was medicated for my mental illness and sent to an out patient psychiatrist, who sent me for therapy. I was with that therapist for about 2 years before meeting my present one that has walked me through many things I thought I never over come. I started seeing Sharon, at a place called The Abused Persons Program. It was hard for me to walk under that sign every time I went to see her or any of the other wonderful people there that assisted me through my journey. Some years later they changed the name of the program to The Crisis Intervention program, but to me it will always be the APP program.

Even after 2 years, I hadn't done very much work on the abuse area of my recovery. That was a hard area for me to accept. For some reason, I felt responsible, and thought that there had to have been something I did to cause this. Sharon tried to explain that there was nothing I could have done as a child to cause such a traumatic event such as this. She gave me an exercise to do before our next appointment. It was to take a look at kids between the ages of 5&8 years old and see if there was anything they do that would attract an adult to sexually harm them and to look at the size of the child versus the adult as to could that child do

anything about it. I wasn't happy about this assignment, but I did it, and to watch children innocently playing just being a child really helped me a great deal. I started letting go of the guilt of that being my fault, that I could have prevented it in some way. This has been a continual problem throughout my journey in this recovery process, and it is a process not an event. During my work with Sharon, more and more starts being revealed to me and one of the big reasons I kept going back to thinking it was my fault in some way and feeling guilty was because of my mother. My mother played a huge roll in my thinking by constantly telling me that everything was my fault that my brother and his friends did to me. I was 7 years old when my brother started abusing me physically, mentally, and sexually. He brought his friends in on the abuse for a long time. My parents had no clue of the sexual abuse going on. My mother was aware of the physical and mental abuse but brushed it off as kid stuff.

The more dangerous things got, and the more I got hurt, the more I was to blame, and it all became my fault. My brother and his friends got no punishment for the cruel things they did to me, my mother laid it all at my feet, and the guilt started to set in. My mother would say to me, "You got what you deserved and it's all your fault", what a guilt trip that can throw a child into and to continue hearing those words years later from her. It brings it all back to the moment of being that small child and you have no control and she's right, it's my fault, but then you realize that's not the case, this is a new day, and it's not MY FAULT and it NEVER WAS, NEVER COULD'VE BEEN.

The journey through recovery isn't easy, but it is worth every step. To work on replacing those old tapes and retraining your mind to think differently.

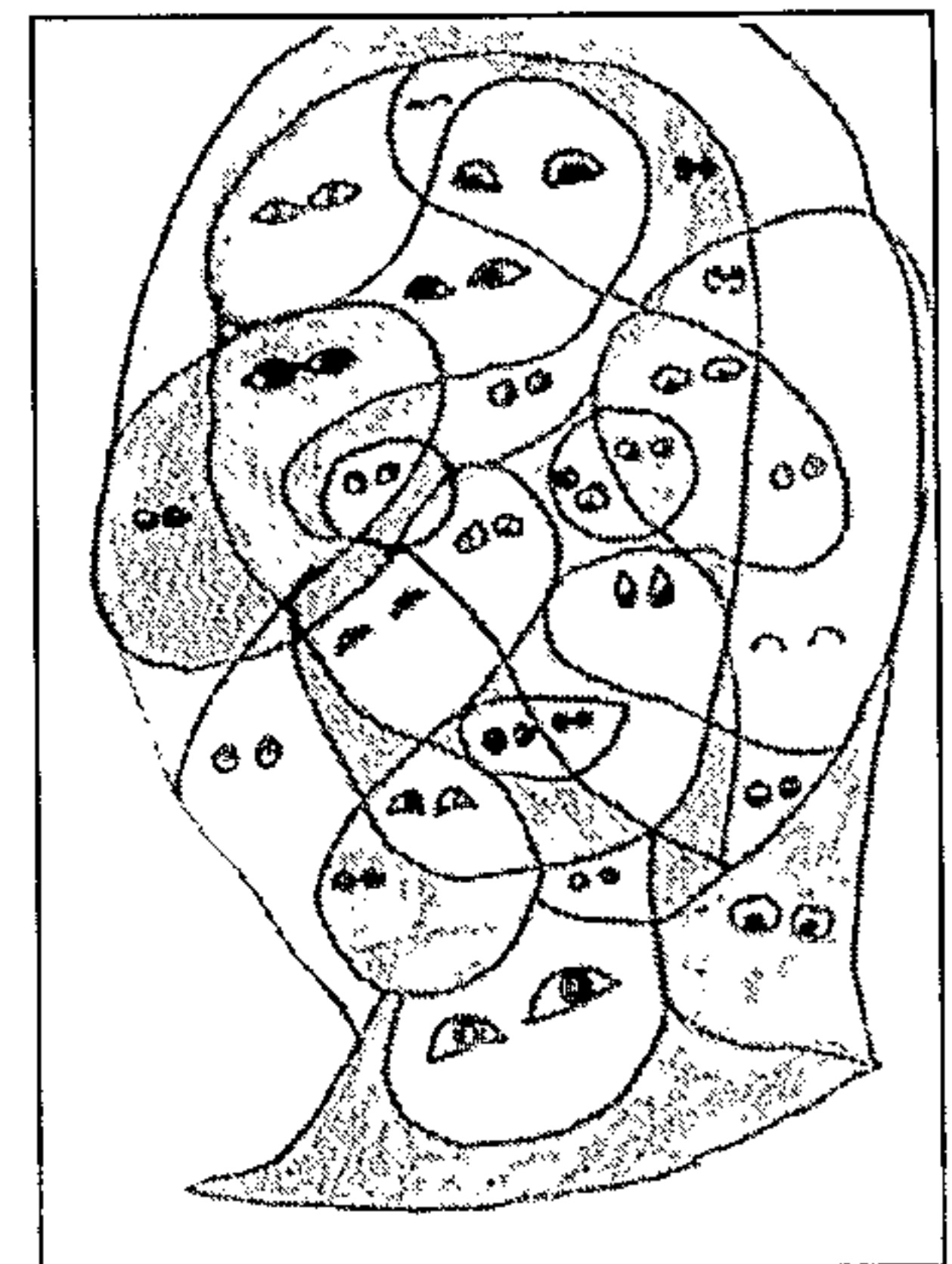
MV

The Gift

Today my poetry was a gift
To a friend in a deep black hole.
Without asking permission,
I read to her,
Read her poems of promise and pain.
I read to her of hopelessness,
And of faith that knew no bounds.
Over and over she said to me,
"That's me...that's how I feel."
I read to her of the journey back,
Of the work that must be done.
I read to her the promise of help,
And of rejoicing in the birth of the
sun.
I read to her poems both black and
white
Of punishment and relief.
For more than an hour I read to her,
Then she asked to borrow the book.
And though she shed tears,
They were silent ones,
Not the violent sobbing of before.
These were tears of cleansing
Of knowing she wasn't alone.
My poetry was a gift today,
To my best friend in all the world.
And her acceptance and relief
Were her gift right back to me.

By Candace E. Barnes
©2004

MV



Invalidation

By Michele J. Bornert

Invalidation. It's one of those five-syllable words that most people assume is only found in psychological mumbo-jumbo. But in fact, invalidation is something that almost everyone experiences on a daily basis. It hides itself though, so it's not something everyone can identify. Indeed, even those who are well-versed in the term find it difficult at times to acknowledge.

Invalidation, in the most simple of definitions, means to make someone feel bad by discounting their feelings, motives, or self-esteem. This comes in many shapes and forms. Do you remember that bully in the fifth grade who got great thrills from stealing your lunch money or pulling the chair out from under you in class? Or how about your boss, who tells you that you're late because you're completely irresponsible and you simply don't have respect for your job? Maybe you can identify with a family member who tells you that you're just not good enough to make it in engineering, even though, they claim to think the world of you. Possibly it's the person in your e-group who tells you how miserable and negative you must be just because you voice an opposing opinion. All of these people are using invalidation behaviors...and it hurts!

The truth of the matter is that some people don't even realize what they're doing. When they point out your faults and claim that you've got problems you need to address, they may do it under the guise of concern. Is that really the truth though? Or, by pointing out something about yourself that they know you're sensitive to, does it allow them to take your power away and feel superior? Perhaps it's both. But regardless of if a person is doing these things consciously or unconsciously, they still must take responsibility for it.

And don't expect the person who is invalidating to listen to your "accusations," and turn around and repent. On, no! What you'll usually get is something along the lines of, "Boy,

are you paranoid! Why in the world would you think I was trying to do that?" Thus, making you feel guilty for even thinking what you do.

So what do you do when you're not sure if you're being invalidated? How do you know for sure before making a fool out of yourself with a temper tantrum in front of the entire board of directors at your company? I think the answer is fairly simply. If you are around a specific person and a great majority of the time you're around them you feel bad, they are most like invalidating you. The trick though is that they will claim that they care and so, when you mention that something they did or said hurt, they are pros at turning it around and making it your problem. Thus, you begin to feel guilty. Maybe it's just all in my head, you think. I'm making a big deal out of nothing. I seriously doubt it.

So you run into Susan three times a week on your way to the YMCA. Upon seeing Susan, something inside you shrivels up and you feel utter dread. Your first thought is, "Did she see me? How quickly can I dodge her so she won't notice me?" Too late. Already, she's waving her arms and calling out to you with this ever-too-pleasant smile on her face. All you can think is Uh-oh! Here we go again.

"Hi, Marcy. How's it going? I see you're headed to the Y today, huh? Trying to lose those extra rolls of fat?"

Not sure how to respond to that, you might answer, "Uh, well, yeah. I'm trying."

"Well, I just have so much respect for you. I mean a person your size...it must take a lot out of you just to get here. And then to actually work out. How long have you been doing this now?"

"I think I started about six months ago."

"Six months?! Oh, I'm so sorry it's taking so long to make a difference. But you keep it up. I'm proud of you. I'm just sure that one of these days you'll be able to shop in the normal

clothing stores. I just know you'll be beautiful!"

"Uh...thanks," you answer as you walk on by. Now these feelings start to creep up. Was she encouraging me or insulting me? Whichever it was, it sure didn't make me feel very good. Every time I run into Susan I end up feeling inferior. Its probably just me being overly sensitive. These are thing you might say before you actually come to grips with the fact that what your "friend" Susan was actually doing was invalidating you. Why? One can only guess, but chances are good that she feels inferior and it helps her feel better by making others feel like they're less than her.

Now, let's imagine that same scenario after you've realized Susan's motives are less than friendly....

"Hi, Marcy! How are you doing today? I see you're headed to the Y. Trying to lose those extra rolls of fat?"

"Well, actually Susan, I am headed to the Y. I like the way I feel about myself after I've exercised. It helps reduce my stress."

"Oh. You're stressed, huh? Must have a pretty tough life. Yeah, I guess you could try exercise. How long have you been at it?"

"Oh, I think I started about six months ago."

"Oh, I'm so sorry it's taking so long to make a difference. But you keep it up. I'm..."

"Actually, Susan," you say, cutting her off, "it's already made a world of difference. I feel great. I have to run now. Bye."

That would be one way of getting out of the conversation before feelings get hurt. Then again, when she mentioned your "extra rolls of fat," you could always say, "Susan, when you talk about my body that way, I feel offended. I am exercising and I'm feeling really well. I hope that you are feeling well too, but I have to run now. Bye."

Cut the conversation off before you are stuck in a trap between wanting to

Invalidation, Cont'd.

be polite (because you're not an invalidator) and wanting to smack her in the face (because that's what she probably deserves).

The fact is, invalidation happens daily and for those of us who are highly sensitive people, especially abuse survivors, we tend to have a "kick me" sign on our backs. It's as though vulnerability has a scent and the mean people of this world can smell it. But we don't have to remain victims if we don't want to. The best bet is, if you have someone whom you know makes you feel bad just being around them, stop being around them. Are they really worth your self-esteem? And if you can't simply stop being around them (for example, it's your mother who lives next door..poor you), then you have to cut them off. Tell them how it feels. Don't say how they "make" you feel, because you're giving them the power. They don't have the power to control how you feel, but they should be aware of what feelings arise when you're with them.

Sometimes it may seem like the world is out to get you. Look scared enough and the monsters will find their prey. But you're important. You're just as important as that monster with the seemingly perfect life. Besides, beware of the person who "has it all together." Perfect clothes, perfect spouse, perfect job...the fact is those are the people who are hurting the most. But they'll cover it up and cover it up well. I mean, why feel upset that your life is not going as well as planned if you can point out just how terrible someone else's life is? Right?

Invalidation. A five syllable word that translates to manipulation. And manipulation translates to I don't give a damn about you. The next time you feel invalidated, even if others disagree, remember that only you have the power to control what you think. In the words of Eleanor Roosevelt: "No one can make you feel inferior without your consent."

MV

The Self-Harm Syndromes

By Joe R.

I'm aware of people who have been through trauma situations and/or addictive-compulsive behavior that get involved with self-harm.

Some people wound their bodies physically over shame, guilt, self-hatred and repressed events that come to the forefront of their minds.

Lately, my awareness of my own addictive behaviors has led me to see how I self-harm my self.

No, I don't use any objects to leave scars on my body. Yet if someone had vision to see my soul, then the scars are numerous.

I have had a habitual nature of beating myself up when I don't do something right. In some area of my life, I came up short – morally, emotionally, mentally and/or physically. At times, I turn all the anger that I have within me toward me instead of toward my addictions and the collateral damage that's left for me to heal.

This syndrome of self-harm is not healthy. There is no healing from the trauma and chaos of growing up in an environment of substance abuse, emotional incest and covert incest.

When I self-harm myself, then it triggers all the old "tapes" that were ingrained in me for so many years. I grew up predominantly surrounded by older women who never had healthy relationships with men, never talked positively about men and never said anything healthy about relationships. It was like I was getting programmed to never have any sexuality – healthy, no less. Men were bad – except for my great-grandfather, whom my grandmother worshipped as if he was Jesus Christ himself. (Of course, this man was just a good man – but to her, he was God and she lived her life by his words. "Daddy said ..." was the favorite chirp.)

So all my anger inside turned into addiction to mask trauma. My therapist has even told me that I have signs of dissociation. He can tell when I "zone out" during a conversation. I don't notice it and it makes me feel bad that I don't notice it.

I've been numbing out my pain for so long that I think I should be healed from all this crap after four or five years of hard work in recovery. Yet it is progress, not perfection, which counts.

I know I'm not a totally bad, evil person.

I was born with a cleft palate, clipped lip and without a uvula. From what I've read, this can sometimes lead to trauma symptoms. I don't know if it's true in my case.

All I want is to keep healing.

I can't do all this alone. I want and need help from healthy people – or, at least people who strive to work on their own issues.

Someday – God willing – I pray that I can have a healthy, loving relationship with a woman.

First, though, I have to keep learning to have a healthy, nurturing relationship with myself.

That, I know, will be my work for my lifetime.

I wonder, as a man, if any woman can relate to what I am saying or would even consider me worthy of having a healthy, nurturing relationship.

I'll keep walking – and healing.

MV

Grief and Redemption

By Diane S.

As I was going through my journals, I realized that two parts in particular held on to the grief and the sadness and, after nine plus years of therapy, a great deal of wisdom as well. One part is quite young and speaks in a voice that reflects more vulnerability. The other sounds tougher, but holds more of the despair.

Some years ago I went to a well-known massage therapist who specialized in working with trauma survivors. As I lay on the table, I suddenly became aware of the strangest sensation: it was as if there was a mouth just above my abdomen, and it was crying; it was so real, I couldn't go back to her. I am just now facing this incredible manifestation of the grief I have borne since I was a child. I had told my therapist about it at the time, but the last couple of years I have had very troublesome digestive problems which have baffled my doctors, and I came to realize, with the help of my therapist and a Shiatsu masseuse, that it might be wise to devote more attention to this particular phenomenon. It isn't as though I haven't experienced grief; quite the contrary, but it still seems that a part of me has been holding something back. So I finally asked inside. And this is what she said:

"Some years ago we watched a video made by Anna Salter and often shown to survivors of sexual abuse. The part of the tape that I most identified with and was the most difficult to wrap my mind around concerned the total indifference of the perpetrator to the suffering of the victim. I knew that feeling, and it made me feel worthless. Underneath all the anger and fear, the sense of being invaded and the helplessness and despair, is this utter feeling of worthlessness. Because these other so-called human beings don't see you at all. You are just an object to them. It defies meaning. It defies understanding. It makes it difficult to believe in spirituality. The only person

there is you, and you are in survival mode, all the time being traumatized as you are being trivialized."

Later my therapist asked me to draw the mouth from the perspective of all my different parts and to put their words to it. The youngest part said:

"Why are you doing this to me? I never hurt you. You make me so sad inside. I can't bear the sadness. I thought you would love me. Why won't you stop when you see how it hurts me?"

So in a sense, they were both saying similar things. For all the crying I have done over the years, there have been many times when I have felt devastating sadness and been unable to cry. I started to realize that I was holding the pain inside because somehow I felt it gave me an element of control, a source of self-protection. But the opposite is true because I no longer need to defend myself. I need instead to trust myself enough to let go of the old vulnerabilities. I am no longer that powerless little girl. For all the horror and the helplessness, there was always a person inside me who not only fought to survive, but who defied her oppressors with every fiber of her being. And that means there was a person inside who valued me, who at my very core did not accept the humiliation and invalidation they tried to force upon me. That is one of the chief reasons I survived. I may struggle to find that feeling inside, that feeling of self-worth and confidence and autonomy, but somewhere it has always existed. I have often been told that I have a lot of "spunk" and now I know where it comes from; it's a part of me that I always kept hidden and tried to protect. I like to think of it as my soul.

When my therapist encouraged me to ask the parts what they needed in order to heal this digestive affliction, they didn't hesitate to answer. I asked, "What do you need from me to help heal this pain? How can we stop

crying inside for what happened so long ago? Without diverting the sadness somewhere else? Without pretending that it doesn't hurt anymore?"

The younger one said: "I need your gentle compassion, your patience. I need you to take care of me and make me feel safe. I need you to let me cry when I need to cry, to hold me. I need you to face up to the fact that the past isn't going away; it will always be a part of who we are. We still need to talk about it, with each other and with others who have gone through it. I need you to let go of the crutches that keep certain emotions at bay, like eating too much sometimes, or eating too many sweets, eating to stuff the feelings down. Sometimes it seems like we always have to keep our mind distracted, with television or shopping or just busywork. We need to be taking care of our other needs, including those that deepen relationships. We need to face our fear of getting stuck in the sadness to prove to our self that that doesn't have to happen, that it will help us to push through to a deeper level of awareness and compassion. We're different inside since starting on this journey. We'll still feel sad sometimes; it is a normal part of life, especially with our past, but it will also help us to move forward in a positive way, to make those giant leaps we used to talk about. Remember? We have grown up a lot these last few years."

The older self said: "We have accomplished a lot of things in spite of our ailments. And I think we would be so relieved to feel better after all this time that we would become more focused, especially now with our writing and our singing. Going through our journals will help us to review a lot that we have forgotten, a lot that was hopeful and positive. We are always surprised by what we have written, by the wisdom of it and the encouragement in it. We want to move beyond the sadness, not that

Grief, Cont'd

we will never feel it, but that it won't be such a big part of our life. There is so much of our true self in our journals, and I don't think for a minute that we have really given up finding some purpose or spiritual meaning to our life. We had just gotten so used to feeling helpless because of the way we were forced to live our childhood; there was a sort of comfort in just accepting that things would never get better. We need to lose that because it is no longer valid. We have important things to do."

She's right. It has always been a struggle to balance my healing from the past with my current aspirations. Grief has taken its toll on my energy and motivation. George Harrison says it best: I sometimes feel like "I'm down on my knees, looking for my life..." Grief has brought me to my knees more than once. Yet, ironically, it is ultimately the release of sadness that heals us, that cleanses us. It helps us to be more present, more compassionate, more available to love. And love heals. It puts positive energy into the universe that hopefully will someday tip the balance in its favor. I want to be a part of that. I won't let my childhood determine the quality of my life or my contribution to the world. That would be the greatest of losses.

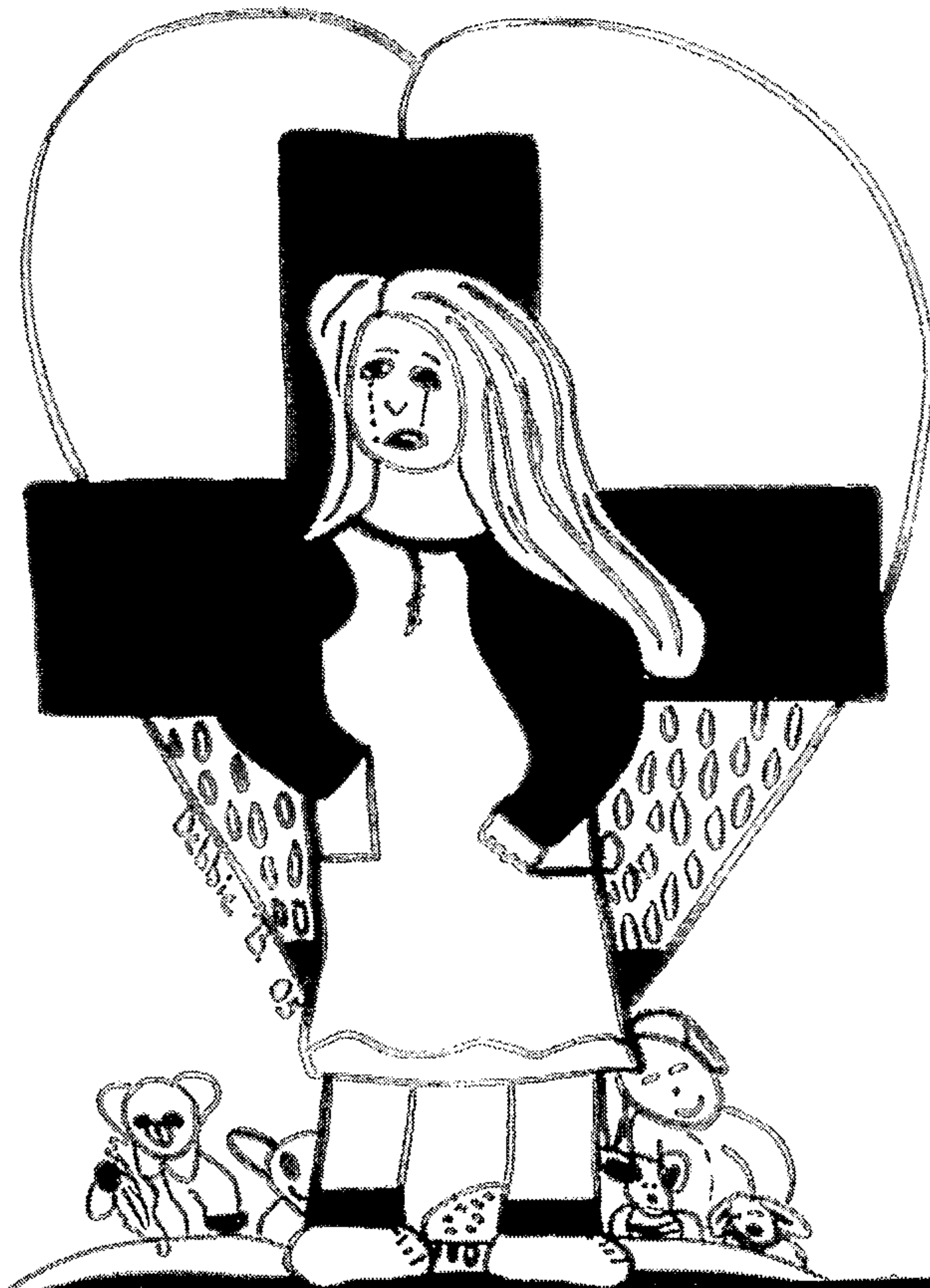
MV

Grace

Grace is movement
 breath
 the power that binds us together
 It is a gift.
 It is the voice of a Higher Power,
 an invitation,
 an awakening,
 a beginning,
 a journey,
 a destination,
 a continuum,
 the circle...
 Life.

*By Bethanne and Echo for the
 Coalition For Joy*

MV



This artwork is a meaningful memorial. It shows the grief and loss depicted through our eyes, as to the loss we suffered through our ordeal of losing ourselves from our memory of The Flock, through the effects of suffering following a major physical illness. Our stroke of 11/99 left us no longer as we knew life. We feel like we were hung on a cross to die. But God's love through His Son's death and resurrection has allowed us to survive in a resurrected new body, mind and spirit. We are a new creation. Through God's power, we survived. A new world, as we view it, sometimes seems foreign and extremely confusing. But staying connected to homelife and relatives has seen us through our toughest times. Yes, my old retired family-doctor's words seem to ring truer with each passing year: "Friends can come and go in our life, but family can never walk away." They are connected forever.

By Debbie B.

MV



Wrestling with Spirituality

By Sahara

I just finished the first part of a book called "The Dream Giver" by Bruce Wilkinson. I found it at the library in the religion section yesterday while I was searching for something, anything, to make sense of what has happened in my life. The book is about a person named "Ordinary" who hates his job and is generally unhappy. Ordinary is in a rut. He is comfortable with the routine in his life, yet he loathes it. He feels empty. One day he talks to his Dad who tells him that he has felt the same but never took the risk to discover what else there is in the universe. He is saddened that he never took the chance to discover what lies out there for him. He encourages his son to pursue his dream.

Ordinary decides one morning that he is going to take the Big Step and leave the land of Familiar to seek his dream. He is going to listen to the Dream Giver and trust that the Dream Giver wouldn't give him a dream if he couldn't get to it. Along the way Ordinary encounters many obstacles, from the discouragement from his relatives, to vast wasteland, to despair. Along the way he meets Truth, and Faith. As he travels toward his dream he encounters others who have turned back due to the difficult obstacles. He keeps going. Eventually, he reaches the place of his dream.

This story is obviously a metaphor for God. Like many survivors I have struggled with the notion of an omnipotent God. If he is omnipotent, why didn't he save me from my abuser? What Being could have the power to save a child, but simply stand by and watch it being horribly abused? For many years I have formulated my ideas about God in a manner that takes away that power. In my view, God does not intervene in anything on earth. Because I cannot accept the existence of a God that allows abuse to occur, he must take a "hands off" approach to the world. This creates some problems. For instance, if God is "hands off," how does he answer prayer?

This clash of characteristics of a mighty being is mutually exclusive in my mind. Almost a physics rule, two points cannot occupy the same space at the same time.

Keeping God out of the everyday has allowed me to believe in the goodness of a Supreme Being, yet I have still struggled with the question of innocents being horribly harmed.

I saw a Thanksgiving sermon on TV one year and it made some sense to me in this spiritual dilemma of mine. The minister told a story that goes like this. One Thanksgiving a minister of a small church was delivering the opening prayer. As he closed his eyes and raised his hands toward heaven he began to speak. "Dear Lord, you are so great. You have given us so many wonderful blessings. We come to you in thanks. We thank you for the shelter of the homes you have given us." At this point in the prayer ten people who were homeless got up and walked out of the church. "We thank you for our healthy bodies and minds." Ten people got up and left, for their minds and bodies were not healthy. Three had cancer, two had AIDS, five had some sort of mental illness. "Lord we thank you for our friends and family." Another ten people got up and left, as they had no friends or family. "We thank you for our jobs that earn us money to feed our families." The rest of the people in the church, all unemployed, walked out. As the minister said "Amen." He opened his eyes to begin his sermon and was surprised to see an empty church. "Where did everyone go?" he said. God answered the minister. "John, I did not promise you health, wealth, a nice home, friendship, sanity or employment. What I did promise you was that I would always be with you."

That story has been with me for the past 6 or 7 years. It was an "aha!" moment when I heard it. It sort of fit with my views that God is there for me to feel strong enough to survive, but not to fix or prevent hurting.

Back to the book. The Dream Giver had the same effect. God can't take away the obstacles but he can remind me that I'm strong enough to get through it. The book made me remember my dream to want to help others. It reminded me that my experiences have taught me important things. It reminded me that I survived and had the strength to make it through many of the obstacles on the healing path. It

made me think of the tools that have helped me on that path, the people that have come into my life at the perfect time to aid in healing. It made me think about God in a non-threatening way because religious terms that could be triggering were never used.

It also made me consider some of my difficulties and experiences of late. As a survivor of SRA, I have repeatedly had to deal with the fear that "Satan will get me." That is a great big lie. It is no different than the lies all abusers tell. They are not going to get me; they aren't watching me; and they aren't going to kill me if I tell. The added dimension of the devil scares children to death, especially if you were brought up in a "fire and brimstone, you are going to hell" church. It is so hard to get that indoctrination of the church out of your brain when you've heard it for years in your childhood. Abusers prey on that.

My therapist said something a couple weeks ago, and I'm sure many times before that. "The abuse was not about Satanism. It was a method of terrifying and sexually abusing children." As much as I trust and care for my therapist, that statement did not get to my core being. Then I saw the same statement in a book on the history of Satanism. They stated that "true" Satanists do not "cover their tracks." People that do this are simply child abusers attempting to scare their victims into silence. After I read that in the book, a light came on. I am not evil, I am not a child of Satan, my "dark" parts are not Satanists, I am not "marked" by the devil.

Realizing these things took away a lot of the terror I had been feeling surrounding my "dark" parts. I actually let my therapist work with them. There were very few ramifications after that session. Yes, I felt like cutting after the session. Yes, some alters felt suicidal for a while. Yes, I was exhausted. But I worked after the session. Became grounded, and haven't cut or acted out any kind of pseudo-rituals while I have been alone this weekend. In the past this work would have sent me into a tailspin and left me depressed and despondent, needing to see my therapist 3 times weekly to survive.

Spirituality, Cont'd.

Now I understand that my therapeutic work is not about believing in Satan or wanting to be his follower, it is about recovering from child sexual abuse by demented, evil perpetrators. My healing has been placed at a conquerable level. I can fight the effects of people that harmed me. I don't have to worry about conquering some supernatural being.

I am ok. I am not afraid. I know I am not what my perpetrators said I was. I am me. I am a kind, caring, and loving person. As I realize the truth of these phrases, I smile. It's good that I was put on this earth. The world needs positive people like me!

MV**Letter**

Is there a good message board or online support group where I might get my questions answered? I recently moved to NY from VT where I had an awesome therapist. I had been in and out of hospitals, taken many medications and had more diagnoses than I can remember. She is the first person to believe that a lot of my symptoms were dissociative rather than psychotic. She encouraged my psychiatrist to take me off the anti-psychotic meds. They had no effect on my voices anyway. I truly miss her.

I want to know if my symptoms are all dissociative, or if I can also be bipolar at the same time. I have had "voices" ever since I can remember. I can't imagine life without them and if I think about not having them around I actually feel scared like I would be alone and in a vacuum. For most of my life, I also had many "imaginary friends" who were very real to me, but I knew enough not to talk to others about them.

I also exhibit the manic/depressive cycles of bipolar, and went completely manic on antidepressants. These episodes (esp. the manic) seem like I am someone else and just watching from behind that glass, only this time, watching myself.

My husband has been out of work, and I am on disability due to this "mental illness" issue. I recently tried to go back part-time but this has once again gotten in my way.

Any help in understanding what I'm experiencing would be appreciated.

By Julie

MV**Books**

**Separated From the Light
A Path Back from Psychological Trauma**
By William B. Tollefson, Ph.D. Published by Tollefson Enterprises ©1997, 2004 (800) 437-5478 \$13 US, \$20 Canada, 180 pgs, paperback.

This is a book of hope for trauma survivors, especially those who are new to the processes of recovery. It also clarifies how an inpatient hospitalization program can facilitate recovery. Dr. Tollefson, the founder and director of the Women's Institute for Incorporation Therapy (WIT) in Florida, employs a dual approach to communicate with readers—first by 'storytelling,' to engage reader's emotions, and second, with an instructional section that details the recovery process.

Dr. Tollefson describes the response of a traumatized child as an unfolding of self that "creatively combats the negative effects" of trauma. The child instinctively creates alternative defenses, breaking its system into imaginative parts or compartments. These symbolic acts unfold in several stages, establishing ever-greater degrees of "separation" depending on the levels of fear, severity of trauma, and repetitive nature of trauma, among other factors. Multiplicity or DID is the most extreme unfolding, reached only by children who experience severe trauma before the age of seven.

In Dr. Tollefson's view, trauma and PTSD recovery does not require reliving memories or analyzing past traumas. It doesn't bury memories, either. Rather, recovery is built on acceptance and awareness of what happened by "revisiting" memories, while realizing that the child-self could not control those events. It encourages honor and respect of the whole self, and developing healthy relationships over time. With Incorporation Therapy, the process of recovery is open-ended and ongoing. Dr. Tollefson's techniques teach the survivor a safe method to symbolically rescue the core self and rebuild the structure that was dismantled when unfolding took place. The survivor, not the practitioner, retains control of the process, and can stop it at any time if feelings become overwhelming. Dr. Tollefson explains that even after "wholeness" is achieved, it is just the beginning of another recovery. But each step along the way affords the patient greater stability and the opportunity to

make decisions and take initiative that would have been difficult or impossible in the past. The theories depicted here teach a practical method for trauma survivors who want to live better in the real world.

Woman Redeemed

By Diana Kline, MS, CRC. © 2005
Published by Authorhouse, Bloomington Indiana (800) 839-8640
www.authorhouse.com \$13.95 230 pgs., paperback.

Diana Kline, a frequent MV contributor, has written a remarkable book about her experience of gradually gaining control over the dysfunctional life she was born into, and her struggle with addictive eating disorders and dissociation she used, initially, to cope with it.

Ms Kline, a gifted musician, was raised in a perfectionistic Mormon household amid extreme criticism and cruelty. Through a series of short, focused chapters, she demonstrates how in her life, Mormon beliefs presented more obstacles than avenues for help in her healing. By the end of this vivid, intellectually and emotionally honest rendering, she gains the strength to leave the church and move toward personal fulfillment.

Many books written by "survivors" are, frankly, quite difficult to read. *Woman Redeemed* is not. It is an intelligent, candid portrayal of a sensitive girl's emotionally complex passage through childhood, adolescence and early adulthood. Her striving for perfection, self-punishing behaviors, and aching loneliness will resonate with other *Many Voices* readers. She describes how she slowly emerged from the malevolent cocoon that surrounded her, and became her own, much stronger self (or cooperative selves). She doesn't claim a "cure." Instead, her recovery continues.

It's an intriguing story, well worth reading, especially by those with food-related issues or concerns about Mormonism.

MV

THANK YOU for sending your Prose, Artwork & Poetry to share. **MANY VOICES** is only as useful as the material you submit.
PLEASE SEND MORE!

June 2005

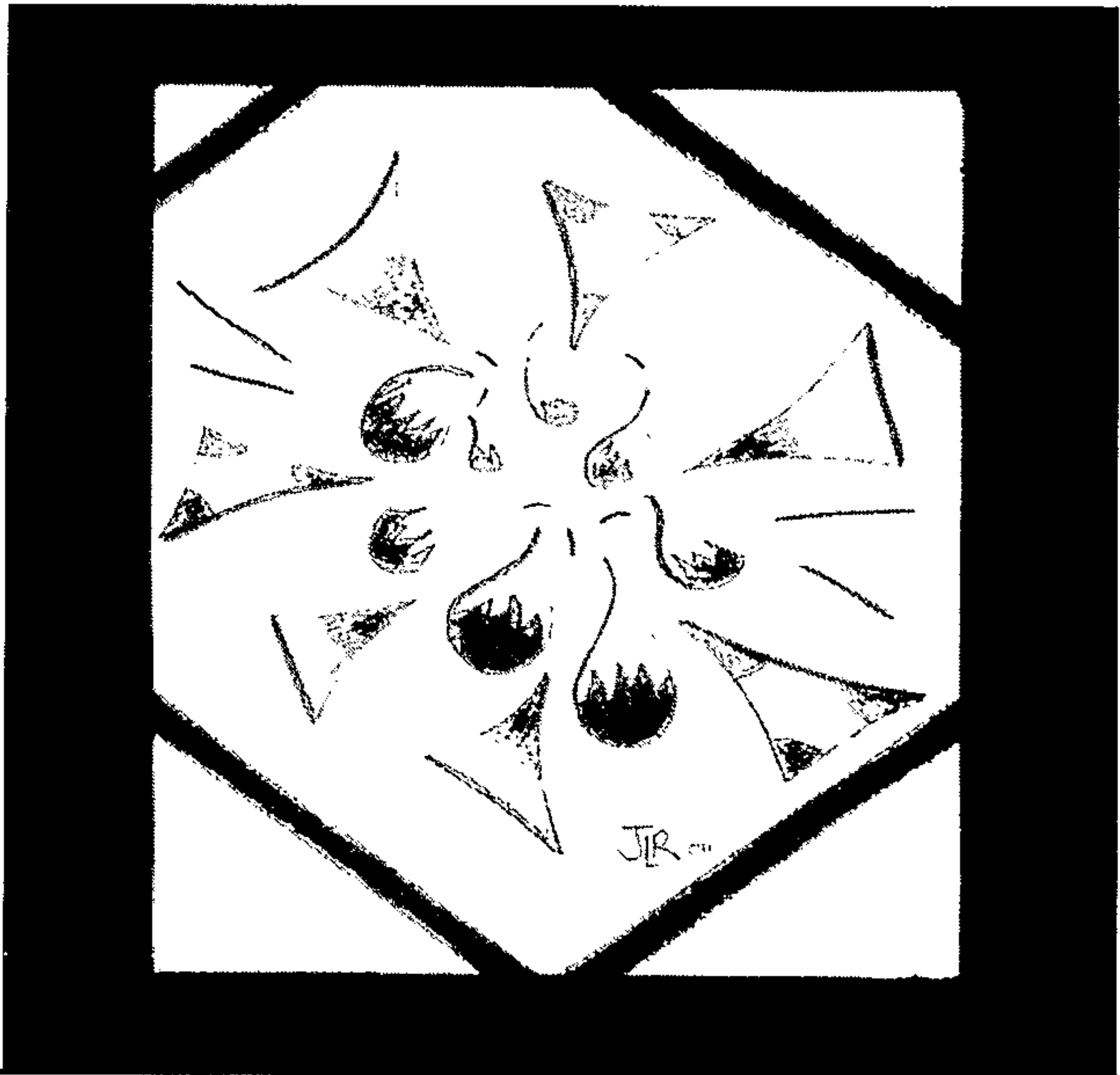
Fear vs Courage. Managing fearful situations. Coping with flashbacks. Developing inner strength. ART: Your strongest self or your compassionate self (or both).

DEADLINE: April 1, 2005

August 2005

Best ways to communicate with yourself, your therapist, your friends, strangers. Who should you tell and what do you tell them? Humorous encounters. ART: Cartoons about communication.

DEADLINE: June 1, 2005



Share with us!

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

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

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