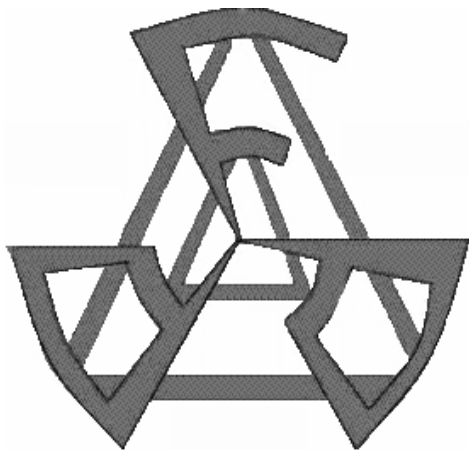




Volume 2: Issue 3

FIRST PERSON PLURAL

March, 2000

Newsletter for Dissociators and their Allies

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Main s.elves portrait
© Sheelah & s.elves, 2000

Free Gift for Members

Subscribers who are also Members of First Person Plural receive a free 2000 Mind calendar with this issue. (Late but still current for more than 8 months)

First Person Plural, PO Box 1309, Wolverhampton, WV6 9XY, United Kingdom
Email:- fpplural@aol.com

Editorial Statement

While every effort will be made to keep contributions complete and unedited we reserve the right to make amendments when necessary. Decisions about the inclusion and amendment of contributions are the burden of the editor and are final. Contributions do not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of First Person Plural, members of the steering group or the editor. Inclusion of any reference to an individual or organisational resource should not be taken as a recommendation. The contents of this newsletter are for information and support purposes only. The newsletter is not intended to be a substitute for individual therapy or professional supervision. It is intended that the newsletter will complement, not replace, other networks of support

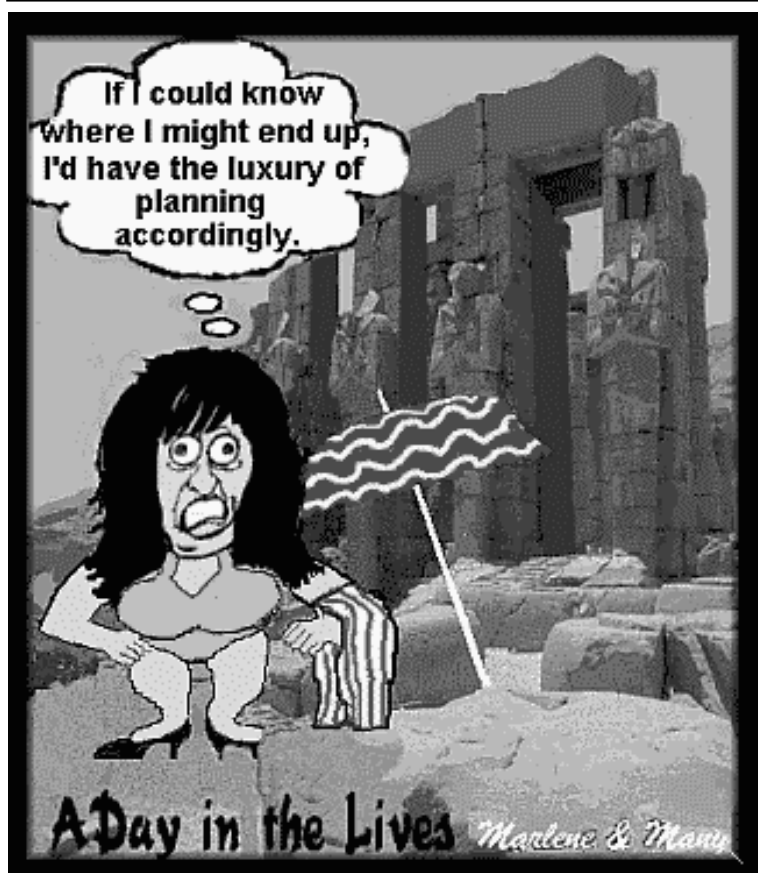
Contributions to next issue to be received by 8th May, 2000

articles; stories; resources; book reviews; tips; poetry; artwork; personal experiences

IMPORTANT : - When writing to First Person Plural please make it clear if your letter, article or other contribution is for publication and say which, if any, of your personal details can be printed. **The editor will assume permission to publish if you do not make your wishes clear.**

ATTENTION

Material in this newsletter may trigger painful memories and feelings.
Read with caution and appropriate support if necessary



See more MPD Toons on the internet at
<http://www.linkline.com/personal/mmrcraig>
or in future issues of FPP

Writing to

Dear Kathryn.....

- Keep your letters brief
- State clearly that your letter is for publication.
- If you wish to receive direct responses give permission for your contact details to be printed.
- If you wish responses to be forwarded from the FPP address **it is essential you send a large 33p s.a.e.** Your letter will be printed with a number.
- No replies will be forwarded if you have not sent an s.a.e.

Dear Kathryn....



First Person Plural encourages respectful open comment and debate about the issues, ideas and experiences of people who are dissociative, their supporters and allies. We welcome letters inspired by any article or other material published in the newsletter and other topics of interest to readers.

To reply to a numbered letter place your response in a sealed envelope with the number of the letter you are replying to marked on the outside and place inside a second stamped envelope addressed for posting to:-

**Kathryn Livingston, First Person Plural, PO Box 1309, Wolverhampton, WV6 9XY
email fpplural@aol.com**

Help with research wanted

I am a psychotherapist (UKCP registered) who works with a small number of people who have created alters in order to survive experiences of childhood. I am also a PhD student and am now researching the experience of the therapeutic relationship for therapists and people with alters who have completed, or who are in long-term psychotherapy.

I have been profoundly impacted during my work and believe that there is very little in the research literature describing the 'client' experience. I also feel strongly that through my research I may be able to offer a 'voice' to people with alters, so that they can be heard by more psychotherapists, many of whom have little knowledge about people who manifest this form of dissociation.

I would like to contact F.P.P readers with a view to interviewing them for my research. All information will be confidential and anonymity of all participants (therapist or client) would be maintained.

If you are interested in helping write to
Janice Scott, 2 Oak Cottages, Green Lane, Hanwell, London, W7 2PE

Something for everyone

My first connection to FPP was reading the July '99 cartoon by Marlene & Many which really made me laugh. It brought humour to what must be a very confusing experience to live with. I dearly love a friend who has been diagnosed as having D.I.D. and this cartoon showed an experience we have shared many times. I rang her straight away and we both laughed a lot as she had also read it.

I think the magazine is brilliant, something in it for everyone, and room for understanding D.I.D from all angles.

I am keen to learn more about the following things - dissociative self harm; communication and relationships with internal parts and the effects of this on the core/front personality. I would welcome contact with other allies, to break isolation, and to offer mutual support and learning from each other.

Thanks for FPP. After just one magazine it has helped my friend and I to interact more with one another as it opens up so many key issues that affect us.

Sue
Letter Number 2.3/1

Ed's Note : - More from Sue on p 4 .

URGENT plea for articles, reviews etc. etc.:- The topics covered in each issue of FPP is largely dependent what is received in the mailbox. If you have anything to say on the topics Sue suggests or on any other topic please send in your contributions. Remember, you don't have to be a literary genius to have something worthwhile to say. The "FPP - Unused Articles" file in my office is looking very thin.

THAT Horizon programme again

(Ed's Note - The BBC Horizon programme about D.I.D was broadcast in November, 1999)

A friend had drawn my attention to fact that *the BBC Horizon - Mistaken Identities* programme was being broadcast - adding that she would watch it herself. I have heard **nothing** from her since that evening - **NOTHING!**

Horizon made a farce out of something which, for the sufferer of D.I.D., is a continual living HELL. Where was the emotion, the agony, the pain that fills every moment - there was NONE. It was made to appear as if it simply involved seeing "who" wanted to do which activity, and then spending the days satisfying these demands.

What sensitivity was shown?? It was a traumatic experience to watch the programme. We were denied any existence YET AGAIN, and the pain, that annihilating AGONY which we cannot escape from, was also denied purely by its total absence throughout the entire programme.

There was NO respect or TACT shown at all. We are people who struggle very hard to hold our place in society. I am a wife, mother of two with a full time job. A few, very few, people know of my D.I.D. Horizon certainly did not show any interest in understanding what it is like to live with D.I.D., or what it is like to live amongst others who do not suffer from D.I.D. *The programme maker's* lack of tact and respect plus their lack of awareness that D.I.D. is a sensitive issue, would appear to have lost me the friendship of that person who advised me of the programme.

They made an unbearable condition (D.I.D.) appear as a fashionable, attention seeking, almost enjoyable game of total pretence. A game, which involved no pain, no upset, no chaos, no confusion, no self-hatred.

None of these issues which haunt a sufferer every single day when awake and then again in their dreams / nightmares - was given one second of time or attention.

Why, oh why didn't they contact some of the specialist people in the U.K.? Psychiatrists and psychologists who don't want to make it all theatrical, but who DO see the honest and courageous survival methods D.I.D. patients have been forced to implement due to the acts of other human beings who USED these patients to give vent to their loathsome needs. Those human beings traumatised the D.I.D. patients at one time. Was it so necessary for HORIZON, in order to produce an entertaining programme, to traumatise us YET AGAIN?! Maybe it was their way of trying to get at the "opinions of people who have the disorder". They are more than welcome to mine and those of my Team. Their programme was a TOTAL insult to D.I.D. sufferers who are honest, but very sad and lonely, despairing people. People who had to suffer alone AGAIN due to NO helpline. We were let down BADLY

Name supplied

Ed's Note - Disappointingly, but perhaps unsurprisingly the BBC have not responded to any of the letters of comment and criticism which First Person Plural forwarded to them.

On being an ally by Sue

I want to share how it is for me to love someone who is D.I.D. or as she prefers to describe herself - 'fragmented'. In the early days, when I knew and understood very little about how she experienced her life, I made monumental hurtful blunders. I never understood switching or how experiences of the past were housed inside her, so I was often confused by changes.

I once joked with a friend in her presence about 'who am I going home with'. It wasn't meant to be hurtful but it did hurt and it was a clumsy way of handling my confusion.

I used to get very confused when we would end up in heated debates with opinions that did not seem to fit the woman I knew up to that point. There appeared to be so many contradictory beliefs and views. Now, we don't have the same kind of intensity of conflict, as I accept and understand the contradictions are different parts, who see and experience life very differently.

Now, I see how going through these experiences has opened my heart and mind. I am now able to care more deeply for people and able to see life in a much broader way.

In the early days I needed to ask my friend a lot of questions in order to understand how fragmentation was for her, and to help me know how to relate better. After a while, a part said to me "you ask a lot of questions" which told me I needed to question how I was communicating. This was hard to resolve as there were so few people I could talk to who understood. My struggle was to try and meet my needs to communicate with others for support without breaking confidentiality.

This is a relationship like no other that I have had. It is challenging, frustrating, confusing, deep and meaningful, generous, respectful, honest, painful at times and also the most loving one I have ever had. They have all played a precious part in my life.

The Tribe - In Memoriam

Through multiplicity to integration
by Robyn

After six years of therapy the Bottle Lady, who had contained and protected us so assiduously for so long, broke apart and left our multiple selves to emerge into the light of day. Functional and dysfunctional by turns we lived our own lives and gradually became to and for one another the family we had never known.

I, who harboured the majority of the feelings, grew to love and respect Susquahannah's incredible brain, her unanswerable questions that were way beyond my comprehension; George's facility with words and her airy balloon-on-a-string divorce from anything so messy as feelings; Flossie's love affair with food; Lizzie's lego and her determination to be a priestess 'when I grow up', her wondrous malapropisms like 'ifstucktions' for instructions, "cos you only need them if you're stuck", her thrill when her piece was printed in FPP and she "burst with normousness"; Chlöë who acted as safety net and stage manager for us all; Théa, Zephyr, EMF and Anneke who helped contain some of our creativity and all the others who in their special ways played a part in our Tribal survival.

We all had an opportunity to be and to feel real for the first time and, regardless of the difficulties, were content on the whole to share the time and our skills. Integration was not on any of our agendas and was never some dreamed of therapeutic goal.

In March 1998 I began what was to be a three month spiritual emergency when I experienced an almost constant stream of spontaneous out of body, out of mind, out of this world journeyings. They were the most extraordinary gift and privilege. Familiar with non-ordinary states of consciousness and maps of transpersonal zones through Holotropic Breathwork these journeys were not as frightening as they otherwise might have been, and the rest of the Tribe effectively 'sat' for me during each episode.

FIRST PERSON PLURAL

After this time it gradually became clear that some Tribe members were fading, each one giving their unique memory or gift to me. The Tribe was slimming down but at the core was still solid and each of us as strongly individual as ever. Since my journeyings I had been in the habit of asking my inner guides questions of the, "where now/what next?" variety - my perennial search for a path and a purpose for us all.

In April, 1999 a couple of days after an impassioned plea the unequivocal answer arrived, "it's time to integrate". Then followed a couple of weeks of denial, shock and horror. I discovered that I cared about the Tribe and its multiplicity and its integrity as a Tribe far more deeply than any of the others, and yet it was clear that should integration occur I'd be the one who remained. Even Lizzie, in most things my staunchest ally, thought to be grown up all the time might be fun, and none of the others could see what I was so distraught about.

How might it happen? When? How would we know? The questions and imagined scenarios were legion. I imagined MGM epic on epic but not once did I doubt that integration was inevitable. The event, as such momentous events so often seem to be, was obvious and straightforward. We went to a breathwork weekend and during a breathing session with our therapist there, plus three other of the most precious witnesses to our process, it just happened. Somehow the others of the Tribe formed up in order of age and spiralled themselves inside of me, all of them into me, in the body we'd shared so disparately for so long. It was quick, so simple and so devastatingly total.

The first manifestation, both internal and external, was of a solidity never before experienced. It was as exciting as it was terrifying. The only description I could find which even approached the experience was having been blind and suddenly being able to see whilst at the same time having one's entire family wiped out in an accident. The first real impact was when FPP came through the door and there was no Lizzie to "burst with normousness" at her half page of biscuit jokes.

This heralded a month or more of total psychic shock, a time of lying in bed sobbing for the loss of each and every one of them. Unbearable pain, a physical wrenching ache plus exhaustion of having to cope all of the time - no longer able to flee to safer realms when the feelings overwhelmed me. To ease the psychic 'indigestion' I performed releasing rituals for each of them, honouring their individuality, their spirits and their unique qualities. I realised that none of them had integrated wholesale into me. Rather, the essence of each that I needed was there, and the remainder released, in ritual, to the Universe.

I catch from time to time a Lizzie speech pattern; a Flossie need for ice cream; a Zephyr clarity of purpose, a Chlöë practicality so, in a sense, they still surround me but I miss them so. Life as a singleton can feel so lonely and very, very peculiar. It is me, who treasured our multiplicity the most, that has ended up so very alone; feeling an even greater sense of unbelonging than ever - at home no more in the multiple world nor yet in the alien singleton one.

And yet, as Susquahannah once wrote -

"One journey's end is the next's beginning.
Down spiralling parabolas of the blackness,
Through the labyrinth.
Surrender after surrender after surrender"

Through multiplicity to integration - A View from Robyn's therapist

This has been a long, dramatic, curious, rewarding and sometimes terrifying journey; and as they say in the movies "it ain't over yet". Robyn's emergence from multiplicity to integration, was, when it happened, unexpected, and as she says surprisingly straightforward. Having long ago abandoned the psychotherapeutic strategy of trying to identify a Self underlying the tribal members, and urging the alter who seemed to be holding it all to use the word "I", I spent time facilitating appropriate relations between them. I certainly gave up on any idea of integration as being the outcome. It was clear this did not belong to the Tribe's reality, so I journeyed alongside the process, holding the ground and watching its unfoldment with patience, compassion, sometimes frustration and oftentimes wonder.

I really do subscribe to the belief that the psyche knows what it is doing, has its own time-scale for everything and that's its innate wish is to heal and be 'whole' whatever that might mean. I also trust the Holotropic Breathwork™ process which stirs the psyche's pot, and if you affirm the reality of the other, then that's as much as you can do. It was helpful for me to know I could hold with my own beliefs and affirm Robyn's reality at the same time.

When integration came, it was indeed unexpected, most welcome, and very exciting though bringing in its wake a new journey beset with difficulties, equally uncertain, yet unfolding, we both trust, towards the next stage of wholeness.

Name supplied

Contact List - a thin first issue of the First Person Plural contact list was circulated to all members in January.

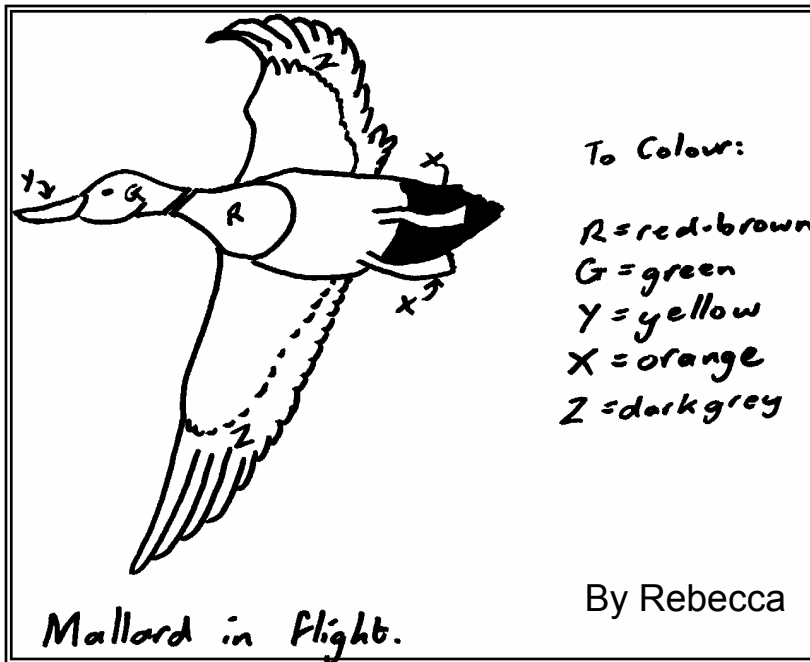
Judging by the letters we are forwarding from the First Person Plural PO Box members are already using it to make contact with each other.

Membership of First Person Plural is open only to newsletter subscribers who have personal experience of a dissociative disorder. There is a small annual membership fee of £1.50 payable in addition to your newsletter subscription. Members may choose to be listed in the Contact List and all members receive the Contact List as well as other occasional benefits. Only Members are eligible to join the First Person Plural steering group. To request further information about becoming a Member and/or having an entry in the Contact List (you must be a member to have an entry) write to:-
**FPP Membership, PO Box 1309,
Wolverhampton, WV6 9XY**

Keeping Our Spirits Up or Hugs not Drugs

"One of the ways in which I have come to understand more fully my dissociative disorder is through an increased understanding of the impact of trauma on infant development. From an attachment perspective, I have learned of the vital importance of the 'mother figure' (even as an ardent feminist I do believe it just has to be mum) for healthy growth and development (Archer, 1999a)). This is not just at the level of providing physical and psychological security, although these are major factors in enabling a child to learn to trust that her needs will be taken care of, at first by mum, then by significant others and eventually by her self."

The above is the first paragraph from an article by **Caro Archer** which explores the immunological anomalies which can be associated with dissociative disorders and which have been the subject of contributions to earlier issues of First Person Plural. Caro discusses her subject with a focus on attachment theories. The article is too long to be published in its entirety but would lose too much to inexperienced editing. Any reader who would like a copy of the article should write enclosing a large 33p self addressed envelope to the FPP address.



PLAY

H A N D

Ladder Word

Make a hand into a foot by climbing down the ladder changing one letter on each rung to make a new word

F O O T

Answer on p. 9

A Story by Tiger Girl & Mew two inside little ones from different multiple systems.

Originally written in play on an internet message board. Reproduced with permission exactly as written with the exception of the addition of some punctuation

(TG) Ter be butiful big gren feld wit los an los gras tat be wav in win an it do son lik it be wispren. An 1 da a big brit blu buterfli did cumd tis feld an him be luken fer floers. So him luk an luk fer se colers tat be floers onli onli coler him be seded be gren frum te gras. An him tink gren be nic coler onli it no be coler lik floers an him ned sum floers so him don noed wat fer do.



(M) Big big priti butrfli luk luk luk luk 4 flowr. No c flowr. Sad sad sad skrd butrfli. Afr that butrfli c catpilar!!! That b nis nis nis bug that b sum lik cat. B fuzzee sam lik cat. Butrfli tel catpilur butrfli wana got flowr need flowr 4 brakfast



Catrpilr tel nis nis butrfli u got go ther!! Go c that nis nis nis watr. Afr c that nis watr, afr that got lotalota gud flowr. Nis gud priti butrfli sed thenk u nis nis catpilr!!!! me du that!! byby!!!! An butrfli go go go 2 watr an butrfli c



(TG) an priti brit blu buterfli fin te watr an him luk in watr an seded he own sels an seded gren gras in feld. Onli as he be luken him seded al ranbos colers in watr to an him tink al tem ranbos colers be gud colers fer floers bcos ter be red an yelo an oranj an blu an purpel an los oder colers. An ten as he be tinken tis he seded nudr buterfli be coler orang. An she be lan on lef in midel watr. Him tink she be butiful buterfli an tink mabe she noed wer be floers. An him did ax she an she sa tat ifn he hep she lif up ranbo frum watr an fli wit she ovr te gren gras ten mabe tem wild fin sum floers.



CENTRE

(M) So nis big blu butrfli sed ok ok ok ok!!! i help!!!! An nis gud orinj butrfli an blu butrfli fli neer watr an them pik up that
 rainbo
 werk
 werk
 hard an pik up rainbo. An go go go go go an put that nis gud rainbo ovr th nis big big big fren gras. An afr that blu butrfli an orinj butrfli luk up an them c

 nis nis gud
 an them
 werk werk
 an fli fli fli



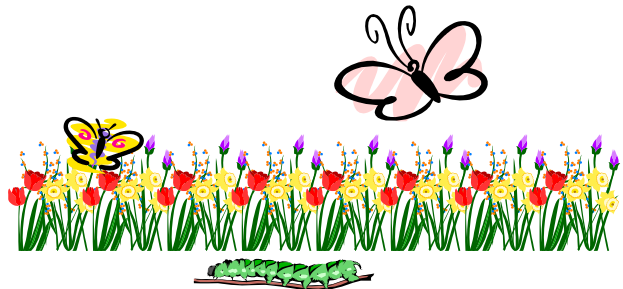
(TG) Firs tem se clowd be in te ski an it do be starten fer ran an brit blu buterfli sa oooooooh we be goded geted weted.
 wings
 buterfli
 she fli
 He tuch
 wit orinj
 an he hep
 fer sheltr
 uner a tre tat be ner te feld. An ten frum ter dri dri sheltr tem did luk up agen an tem did se tat te brit yelo sun be shinen an smilen frum bhin te clowd tat be ranen te ran an ten sumtink wunerful be hapen in te feld



(M) An th nisnis butrfli luk luk luk at th grasss an c LOT A LOT A LOT A LOT A LOT A FLOWR CUM UP!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!



lotalotalota big big big priti prit flowr lota lota ota difrent culr. Got red an blu an yelo an lota lota lota ALA culr an lota baybeee flowr an lota flowr that no b big an no b litul. flowr b in a midul. An ala flowr b hapee hapee flowr. An ala flowr sing nis nis nis gud song. An ala butrfli b hapeee an ala flowr b hapeeee an nis nis catrpilur b happpeeee.



th end frum tigur gurl an mew



JOKES

Q. What do you call a teacher Who falls asleep during class?

A. Nothing. You don't Want to Wake him 😊

Q. Why do mother kangeroos hate rainy days?

A. Because little Joeys have to play indoors When it rains. 😊

Man: Oy, you can't fish here. This is a private lake.

Boy: I'm not fishing. I'm teaching my pet Worm to sWim 😊

Journeying Through Books

I am the outside person, the one who knew nothing about our past, the one who feels as though she has to keep the show on the road. I wouldn't say I have been unwilling to learn but I have handled learning from an intellectual, academic angle. As this option is becoming much less available and the reality of the past sometimes feels more like mine rather than I story I listen to, I realise how much I have relied on various books at different times to just get me through.

At the very start of therapy when memories were first beginning to bleed through, but the fact that we are many was still unknown to me, I relied on ***"The Courage to Heal" by Ellen Bass & Laura Davis***. I know this book has met with controversy but it enabled me to cling onto sanity over the first couple of years. I would flick to any page and read whatever was there. All I needed to know at this stage was that for people who had been abused how I was feeling and behaving was perfectly normal. I had always been someone who could cope in any situation that was thrown at me, so it was totally unnerving finding myself unable to do so now. This book made it possible for me to leave the safety of my bathroom and get through the day. It was always within reach throughout the early years and there is a photo of me on the beach in France with it at my feet.

I knew that progress was being made when I could contemplate leaving the house without it and then came the day when I lent it to someone without the slightest hint of anxiety.

The next book to make a deep and lasting impact on me was ***"The Flock by Joan Frances Casey***. I had handled this book many times in the course of my work in a library but until we were ready to read it I had shelved it without a second look. Cynics will claim that reading this book created our internal family but I now feel safe enough in our way of being to ignore them. I read this book from cover to cover in one go. It was not that we identified with the author's actual situations in anyway. It was much more complex than that, more a coming home, a very deep knowing without understanding what we felt we now knew that we didn't know before. I was both relieved and excited to have found out what was really happening to me but I had no conception of the enormity of what being dissociative meant. I kept this newly discovered understanding to myself for six months before sharing it with my therapist. I suspect she was realising the situation as well as she showed no surprise and so many things began to fall into place, particularly her frustration for the lack in continuity of my handling and processing in therapy. For me I began to understand why I felt such a failure during therapy sessions as however hard I tried I didn't understand what was going on.

It didn't happen at once but over the last few years a gradual dawning that even if I stayed up all night and tried really hard I didn't have access to what was happening and what I knew was incredibly limited. I now accept I am the outside part and will only know my history by listening to and accepting my internal family.

The third book that has played an important role is **"The Family Inside" by Doris Bryant, Judy Kessler & Lynda Shira**. Both my therapist and I wished we had found this a couple of years earlier. I found the circular chart identifying the stages you may go through very helpful. I began to recognise how after particularly bad memories - both body and visual - we would withdraw from the therapist and I would often be left out front with no internal communication and a feeling of deep depression. At those times we were most at risk of suicide. Being able to identify a pattern at this stage was particularly helpful for me. Having never had to deal with feelings and now being swamped by them it introduced me to the thought that I have a say in the matter. I can at times gain a control while beginning to understand what is happening and why. Not understanding is terrifying and its all very well being told to just be, but this didn't work for me. Again I am learning to be and try not to be quite so terrified of feeling terrified. I also found the descriptions of normal and disturbed child development helpful.

I could begin to identify losses and interrupted development within my own internal family. Quite a stride from the early days. Again I referred to this book for restoring a sense of sanity but now I was also prepared to try and understand how I may help. Others would interpret this as control. It is only in the very recent past I realise how much I have used the written word to hide behind rather than fully face what is happening. Maybe, 'hide behind' is a little too harsh a descriptor as it was not done consciously. It seemed the only thing I could do when everyone had gone inwards in chaos and I was left struggling to cope. Now I find reading doesn't help but that no longer matters.

Throughout our journey we have needed to find things we can positively do to help. I have always been a doer, not very tolerant of inactivity, so this whole process has been very difficult and often alien to me. My last book, **"Amongst Ourselves" by Tracy Alderman & Karen Marshall**. It is a self help guide and gives positive ideas for furthering internal communication. There are also chapters for family and partners. If I had found this book earlier it would have made a big impact on my personal viewpoint but I am arriving under my own steam now.

I realise now that the printed word is an aid only. It is not the cure I suspect I had hoped for until the last few months.

By Melanie

BOOK REVIEWS

Welcome Home Stranger

An account of multiple personalities
by Matthew Daniels
Random House, NZ;
ISBN:1 86941 312 1

Reviewed by **Melanie**

This is not a comfortable read. It captures the difficulty of many parts with different perceptions and skills for conveying their own interpretation of various situations. The reader becomes a part of Matthew's exhausting world, a world initially made up of black moods, pain and misery with no understanding. As the book progresses you learn a little about the why but stay with how it is for Matthew as he comes to understand and gradually accept his dissociation as well as his sexual disorientation.

His writing parallels the experience of dissociation - complete chaos and then a slow clearness and sense of logic developing, often alongside an escalation in splitting and anxiety. Gradually as he tells his story you realise that the book is becoming easier to read the further his journey progresses.

I read it with a sense of panic as my own need for happy endings fuelled a desperation for him to find some peace. Throughout you have little sense of how old he is and then there is a throw away line which reveals his age. Always, he was so young which I found hard to handle. Welcome Home Stranger is a totally unique story which exposes you to the author's inner world with no intention of making it alright for the reader.

Hidden Selves

An exploration of multiple personality
edited by Moira Walker & Jenifer Anthony-Black; Open University Press; ISBN: 0 335 20200 4

Reviewed by **Kathryn Livingston**

This is a welcome recent addition to the limited British literature on Multiple Personality Disorder. It succeeds in giving a balance of perspectives on a controversial subject which all too often is done disservice by extremist sceptical writers or passionate adherents who let their passion lead them into a writing style which makes their views un-believable to any but the best informed readers.

At the suggestion of First Person Plural, Mind - the leading mental health charity in England & Wales - is, for the first time, listing books on dissociative disorders in it's Publications Catalogue. Two titles are included in their Spring Catalogue - "Amongst Ourselves - A Self Help Guide to Living with DID" & "Hidden Selves - an exploration of multiple personality disorder" Contact Mind Publications on 020 8221 9666 or email publications@mind.org.uk

"Hidden Selves" achieves this balance through keeping the debate focused on the real life tragedy of a single survivor's story. The abuse survivor bravely tells her own story including her experience of life as multiple selves. Six therapists/counsellors then present their views about multiple personality disorder through an exploration of the survivor's story and a description of how they might approach this survivor's treatment.

Both sceptics and believers present their arguments well with thoroughly referenced texts, which may not suit the reader who prefers uninterrupted continuity of ideas.

The target audience seems principally to be the mental health practitioner wishing to ensure their own thinking on the subject of multiple personalities has a sound academic and theoretical base while also seeking practical ideas for working with abuse survivors who present in ways suggestive of multiple selves.

Moira Walker's introductory chapter sets the scene well with a fair descriptive history of the controversy surrounding multiple personality disorder. Her discussion of the inter-relatedness between the MPD and 'recovered memory' debates is convincing advocacy for an ...

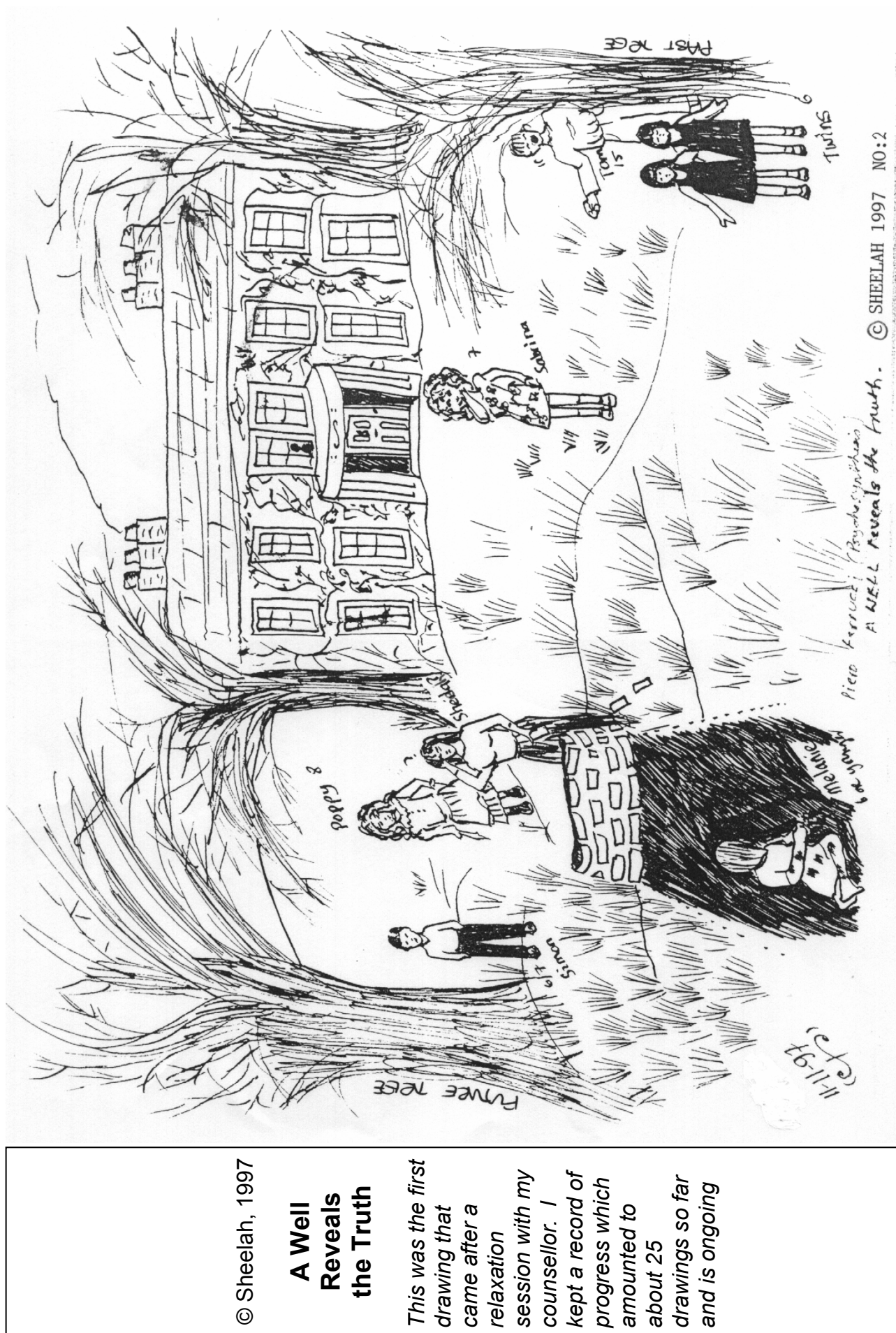
"openness to complexity; an awareness that at any point in history our knowledge is

incomplete; and an active acknowledgement that where abuse is concerned we have been horribly wrong many times in the past."

With many practitioners in statutory mental health services already leaning towards a generally ill-informed and unquestioning sceptical view it is unfortunate that, after Moira Walker's excellent introduction and Lisa (the survivor's) own brave story, the floor of this debate is given first to Peter Dale who presents the most sceptical view contained in the book.

Order of presentation, notwithstanding, "Hidden Selves" comes second only to Phil Mollon's "Multiple Selves, Multiple Voices" for balance. It is one of the most informative books on MPD for the open-minded, discerning and critical professional I have read to date. It is unfortunate that it's format will make it all too easy for the hardened sceptic (and, less so, the naively passionate believer) to selectively garner arguments to support their extremist views.





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A Well Reveals the Truth

This was the first drawing that came after a relaxation session with my counsellor. I kept a record of progress which amounted to about 25 drawings so far and is ongoing

P o e m s & R h y m e s

Voices in Time by Caro Archer

So many confusing voices?
Rushing in my ears
Jostling for position,
For the chance to be heard.
To which should I listen
And which set aside?

Voices on the outside.,
The daily rhythms of life,
Drown out the silent ones
Speechless in the wings,
Vie with the word perfect
To take centre stage.

Voices in my sleep
Nudge me into wakefulness
Body and soul alerted,
Burning through my skin,
With aching, restless limbs
To assault my dreaming mind.

Voices from time long past
Keeping their own time,
With time running backwards
As if to greet them halfway,
Voices wrestling with the present
Trying to beat time.

Yet just as we make time
For each voice to play
Finding our inner rhythms,
We begin to keep time
To ease their dissonance
And harmonise their chorus.

Each voice takes part,
Sometimes standing alone,
Sometimes in concert,
As they resonate and modulate:
Able to be truly heard
And able to hear the world

Could You? By Grace

Could you be a friend to me Who Would
listen very Well?
To all the horrors I have seen but couldn't
ever tell.
Would you keep these secrets so as not to
cause more strife?
Because if you could be this person you
could save my life.
It is becoming too much for us to carry on
alone
The things I need to talk about Would
surely make you groan
In horror and shock and maybe even
disbelief and rage
Of all the pain We experienced at such a
tender age.
Could you be a friend to me and help me
start again
To try and tell of secrets that have kept
me locked in pain.
The little voice inside of me says this could
never be
But I have hopes that you're the one to
help to set us free.
If you give us re-assurance, you Will hear
my Words
Even if it is about the things Which you
have never heard.
This Will include my oWn part in things so
very bad.
I really need a friend to trust Which I
have never had.
Not just a friend to talk to but one Who'll
really see
HoW to help us to recover from all We've
had to be.
A child I Was not ever able to really get
to know
Because of all the fear and many places I
had to go.
Don't tell me this is imagination, made up in
my mind.
Just listen to my pain and try to help me
find
A Way of moving on from this place of
binding fear.
Will you be this friend and say the Words I
need to hear?
That you Will not hurt me anymore than I
have been
And that your hearing me is not as bad as

Accepting the Stranger by Rhymaster

She was a stranger, She had no name, No voice.
She was a storm in my soul Springing to life Without choice.

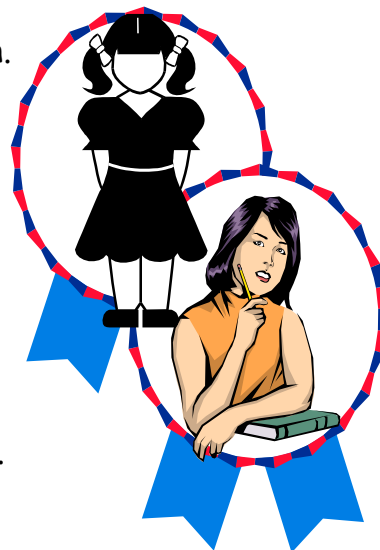
She was a stranger; She lived within, Hidden.
She was a vision of the night Haunting my mind Unbidden.

She was a stranger; She loitered In the shadows.
She was the silent Screaming Deafening me With woes

She was a stranger; She stole from me Blessed sleep.
She was a spirit from hell Bringing past pain Too deep.

She is no more a stranger; I call her name - My own.
She has my love, Acceptance; Her torment now Is known.

She is no more a stranger; Her pain and fear Are mine
She shares too awesome courage, Forever now We're twined.



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