

LOOKING INSIDE

Life Lessons From a
Multiple Personality

In Pictures and Words
Second Edition

Judy Castelli

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The DID Journal Kit: For Therapists and People with
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DEDICATION

Our thanks to all who have not seen, yet they believe.

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FOREWORD

By Judy Castelli

From age eighteen to age forty-four, I spent many weeks and months in psychiatric hospitals. I received anti-psychotic medications, anti-depressants, lithium, seizure medications, and anti-anxiety medications. I took them, in various combinations, hoping for relief from the constant screaming in my head.

There were voices that told me I was "BAD." There were voices that told me to "DIE." There were voices that told me to cut out my eyes, and voices that told me to set myself on fire. I lived with the constant threat of suicide. I looked, acted, and felt crazy. *I was crazy.*

On the verge of a contract with a major record label, I abandoned my dream of becoming a singer/songwriter. My artwork appeased my creative juices, while for fifteen years, I worked with a wonderful and caring psychotherapist, and I was healing.

I eventually 'graduated' therapy. My diagnosis was still schizophrenia, and I was still taking medications, but during good periods, I was able to sustain work. I was in a loving supportive relationship, and I was happy.

In 1994, I opened a stained glass studio in the same Day Treatment Center where I had been a patient twenty years prior. I hired and trained ten people with mental illness to build my Tiffany Style lamps. We all worked part time, and sold the lamps we made to Bloomingdale's in New York. I was doing well.

The responsibility of running the business was intense. I was starting to feel un-well. Flashes of memory disturbed my daily life. I called my former therapist and asked if she could squeeze me in. I was "not okay." She saw me on her lunch hour. A little bit into the session, she asked if I could tell her what was going on. I said I really didn't know. For some reason, she said these words, "Perhaps some other part of you knows."

The response came from my lips in a voice that was not mine. "Torture." This was the personality we would call Gravely Voice.

Without further invitation, seven other alter-personalities came forward to tell what they knew. They used my vocal chords, my throat, my body, and they were not me. They were telling the secret that they had

kept hidden for a lifetime: child abuse. My life turned upside down, and changed forever.

My therapist said that she thought they had misdiagnosed me from the beginning. This "appeared to be" a dissociative disorder, but she had no experience with DID. She would call her friend who was an expert. I would go home and wait. I don't remember how I got home.

For the next eight days, I was flooded with memories of horrific childhood abuse. My child alters relived the original trauma in my adult body. Alters seemed to be coming out of the woodwork. I couldn't control any of it.

The DID "expert" suggested to my therapist, that if I was already having "body-memories", I needed to be in a hospital with a specialty in Dissociative Identity Disorders, preferably one with a separate DID unit. There were only eight in the country at the time. She called them all. I would take the first one that had a bed.

In November of 1994, I was diagnosed with Dissociative Identity Disorder (Multiple Personality Disorder). I have forty-four alter-personalities.

Dissociative Identity Disorder often looks like many other mental disorders, including schizophrenia. I suffered most of my adult life due to ignorance of DID, and I am grateful that I was finally diagnosed correctly.

This hospitalization at Northwestern Institute was painful, yet healing. Upon release, I began therapy with Renee' Hoffman, C.S.W., who had extensive experience working with trauma survivors. I returned to the hospital twice more to deal with alters who had reverted to fire, and thoughts of suicide.

Together, the personalities would have to find new ways to deal with the reality of my childhood, the memories, and life with Multiple Personality Disorder.

After one of my first sessions with my doctor at Northwestern, I cornered her in the hall. I asked her to explain how this was supposed to work. How was I supposed to get better?

The flashbacks had not stopped, I was switching constantly, and I was losing time, and had amnesia of events and conversation. I was in total chaos, and I was frightened. "Ask inside," she said. "Ask, who needs

to talk." Moving quickly down the hall, she turned back to me and added, "Journal!"

I started immediately. Telling the secrets was just the first step to ending the pain. We would have to understand this complex system of alter personalities and get them all working together. The answers were inside. We intended to survive the memories, and the speaking of the truth. We would have to heal from the inside out.

My journals saved my life. There, all parts of the mind could freely express whatever was inside, whatever they needed to say. We tried not to censor, not to judge.

I am pleased to offer the drawings and text on these pages, taken directly from my journals. Not poetry. But the words sometimes read like poetry. They illustrate the struggles, the joys, the mystery, the wonder, the ups and downs, the ins and outs of life with multiplicity.

Renee', Phyllis, and my friends at The New York Society for the Study of Multiple Personality and Dissociation, have been marvelous supports. My Website, www.multiple-personality.com keeps me

connected with other Multiples, their loved ones, and professionals working in the field.

I am doing well. I am fully functioning as a Multiple. I am almost completely "co-conscious," and there are no parts of me who want to hurt or kill the body we share. I have been free of medications for over five years.

If there is tragedy here, it is in the abuse of a child- a child unseen. The effects of child abuse last a lifetime. Nevertheless, with the correct diagnosis and proper treatment, recovery is possible. You can heal yourself, from the inside out.

With the diagnosis of Multiple Personality / Dissociative Identity Disorder, I was given a chance at a new life. The chaos that was my life is over. I am still healing. I am still Multiple, but I am whole, and I am happy.

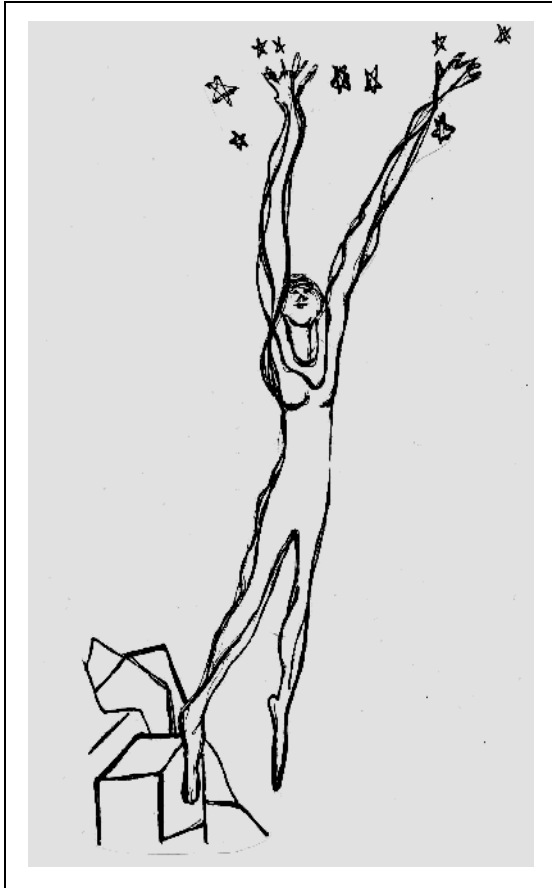
This is a world that does not see its' children, and does not care to know. There is hope in these pages for all who suffer still, and for those who are alone in a world that is hard on anyone different. Multiple is different.

I invite you all, to look inside.

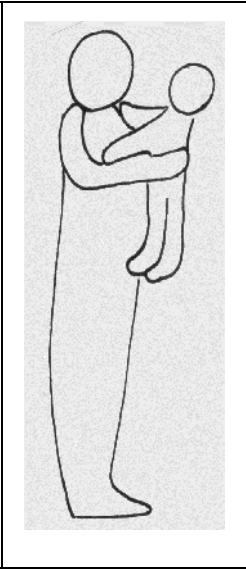
WE BEGIN

~ 1 ~

Taking the Leap.
Trusting there will be stars.



~ 2 ~



I wake up calling for Mommy.

It's a Little One.

We're just little.

Not scared.

Sad.

It's funny how things are turning out in this life.

It's not what I had thought.

~ 3 ~

I am lost.

How do I get from here to there?

I am blind.

No eyes to see.

I take another
step.

Another.

I climb the
mountain
in darkness.

The next step
will kill me.

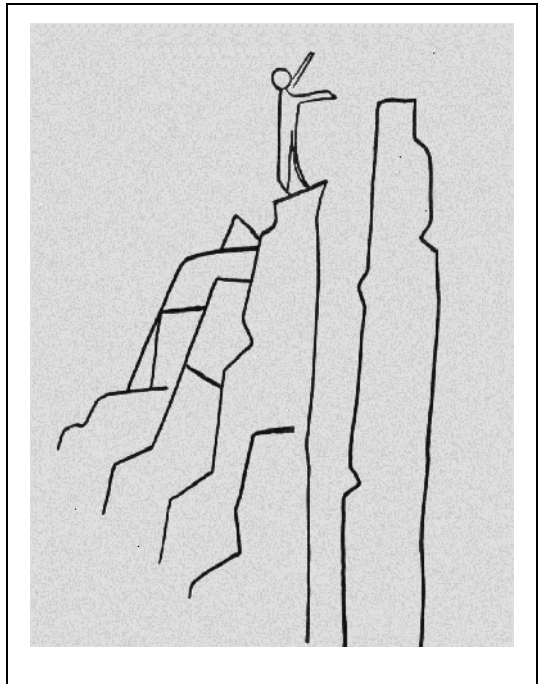
If I do not see it,
I will not know.

If I see I will not dare to make the leap.

Either way, I do not win this game.

There is no prize for winning.

I do not expect to win.



~ 4 ~

You will survive this night.

We have survived together all this time,
and we did not know.

There is power in
knowing.

There is power in
knowing why you came
to be.

We have not forgotten
you.

We have been gathering
our strength for the
hardest fight of all ~

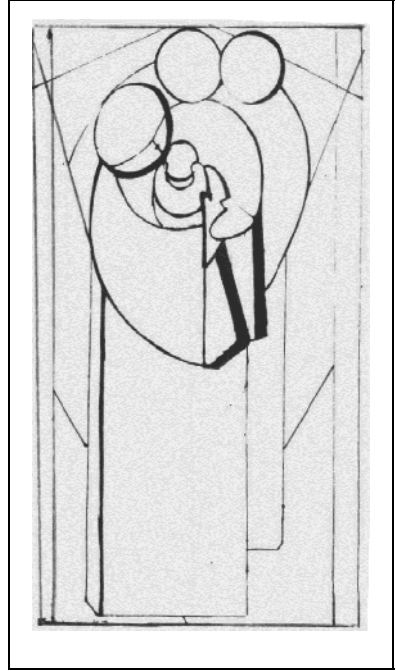
The toughest struggle we will face.

We see you.

We have not forgotten.

We remember ~

And we will live.

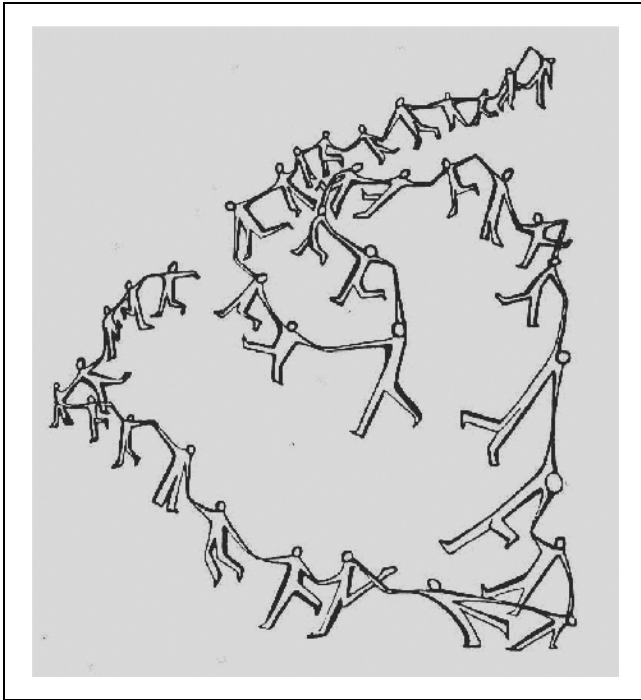


~ 5 ~

And a little child shall lead them.

Is there a child among us
who has any strength left
to take over the lead?

Is there a child among us,
who has room in her heart for hope?



~ 6 ~

With power and fury that comes from knowledge,
You protect all children small and grown.

You stayed,

Mother of

Mothers.

You lived it.

Your body,

Our body.

No one knew.

You protected

us well.

You allowed us

to leave.

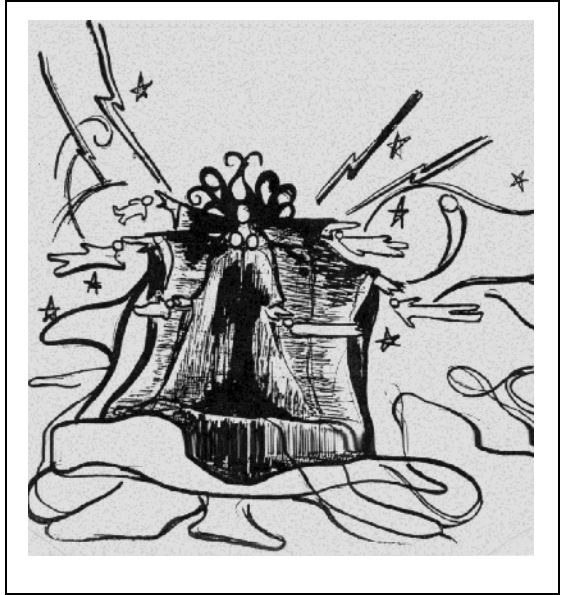
You stayed behind. You felt the pain.

You knew the terror of pain to come.

You carried that.

A child protecting a child.

A child grown, protecting us still.



~ 7 ~

There is rocking. Thumb sucking.
No words coming. Only pictures.
A child. A baby. A bigger child.

Comfort the child.
Hold the child.
Speak softly to the child.

This child can never be held
enough.

This emptiness cannot be
filled in this lifetime.

This loss will be with us till
eternity.

We hold you and rock you.
Speak softly words of love
and comfort.

You will have what you need. Needed then.
Need now.

All I can give to another I give to you.

To myself.
To the child who hums ~
Who rocks herself to sleep.

