

ASCA News • December 1999

P.O. Box 477

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web: <http://www.ascasupport.org>



From the Desk of Executive Director

George Bilotta

I am pleased to announce that our new ASCA e-Meeting program is presently operational on our web site. As we acquire experience with this alternative and creative mode of ASCA, there will be adjustments and tweaking to insure maximum gain for participants. So check it out, use it as part of your ongoing recovery plan, and give us some feedback. Our biggest single challenge, as usual, is getting the word out concerning Internet ASCA. We need to increase the number of shares and the rich variety that many shares offer to establish Internet ASCA's viability and efficacy. In this way it is similar to starting-up a standard ASCA meeting, i.e., promotion and encouraging people to try the meeting. It would be a big (like humongous) help and a leap forward if sometime during the month of December every ASCA member who has access to the world wide web would submit a brief share and/or some feedback to a share. I think Internet ASCA has exceptional potential as an adjunct to recovery.

Looking out my window not a single leaf remains on the red maple tree that stands sentry like outside my study. The last days of Fall are giving way to the inevitability of the coming winter's dormancy, cold, and snow. With the onset of a few snow flurries the other day, I purchased my first set of snow tires in about 25 years. Talk about a reality check. Yet there is a quiet beauty of pre-snow days in New England. The warmth of the sun's rays on a clear day is welcomingly and appreciatively soaked in. With the yard raked of its leaves, and the gardens and grass cut short for their winter's rest, there is an accepted preparedness for the anticipated freeze and sleep of winter to come.

December fills its days with the anticipation of the end of the year holidays which for many survivors is a mixed bag. The joy, festivities and meaning of the holidays often gives way to sadness, resentment and depression. A rule of thumb for us during this season might be to give ourselves an extra scoop of loving everyday. Do something special for yourself everyday during the month of December. Another rule of thumb might be to only do what you want to do, and join only in that which you want to participate. Sometimes friends, family and coworkers might exert pressure to join certain activities in which we do not care to participate. Say "thank you, but no", and go off and do that special something for yourself. Remember it is your holiday season and you can do whatever you want with it.

I want to take the occasion of this season of hope and anticipation to wish you peace during this annual period of good cheer and good will to all. We have had another successful year at The Morris Center and ASCA because of the many dedicated people contributing their time, energy and talent. We are primarily a volunteer organization and without the good will of so many people, ASCA and our other programs simply could not exist.

Thank you for being there and Happy Holidays!



ASCA Meeting Ongoing Education Moment:

Guideline #4:

What you hear today is told in confidence and should not be repeated outside this meeting.

During an ASCA meeting we take participants into our confidence. We share a mutual expectation that people in attendance will extend to each other reciprocal support and respect. Within an ASCA meeting we have faith and trust that members will do no harm to us. In fact, we anticipate that members will gently hold whatever we express, as they would caress a vulnerable infant.

Repeating something from the meeting to another person outside the meeting is a breach of confidence. Repeating something that directly or indirectly violates a person's anonymity is a gross violation of that person's confidence. It is okay to discuss with others one's own share but not the shares of others. It is okay to discuss with others themes that come up in a meeting. Naturally, these themes would be discussed from one's own personal perspective and would not include confidential information from others.



Book Announcement

Multiple Journeys to One: Spiritual Stories of Integrating from Dissociative Identity Disorder

by co-author Terry Popp

Can ten, fifty, a hundred autonomous personalities live within one body?

Multiple Journeys to One: Spiritual Stories of Integrating from Dissociative Identity Disorder offers eight stories that cover eight modes of dissociation, alter systems, processes of integration/fusion, forms of wholeness, and expressions of spirituality. Some of the writers' backgrounds include incest, familial torture, Satanic Ritual Abuse, and programming. All involve mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual abuse at a young age. The book focuses on the integration/fusion process rather than on the abuse. The writers trust that within their stories will be found a connection that leads to hope, strength, insight, inspiration, and a unifying spirituality. The role of spirituality and the journey to self acceptance and love of all our aspects, mirrors the healing of our dissociated planet and a return to an integrated global consciousness.

Our goal in gathering these narratives was to present a sufficient number of writers to adequately cover some of the diverse experiences of multiplicity and the integration process, and to give readers an idea of what these are like viewed from different perspectives and backgrounds. Not only will *Multiple Journeys to One* be of help to those who are still multiples, but it will allow those who have completed this phase of the process to acknowledge and honor their accomplishments. The book will also be a source of information for partners, therapists, and anyone interested in learning more about multiplicity and the role spirituality can play in healing.

Multiple Journeys to One may be purchased directly from the publishers at danserpents@juno.com, P.O. Box 8115 Santa Rosa, CA 95407-1115, or <http://www.sonic.net/~tpath>. It is also available through <http://www.amazon.com>, select bookstores in the San Francisco Bay Area, and Book People's Distributors, Oakland, CA.



Rotation C Topic:

Possible ASCA Meeting Topic for December

Holidays: Lost & Found

Holidays often evoke the full range of feelings for many survivors of childhood abuse. Usually a puzzling mixture of hurt and sadness, joy and warmth, shame and loneliness, acceptance and hope, anxiety and depression, pleasure and wonder, dread and tension, etc. wells up within our being. These feelings and accompanying memories almost feel embedded in our bodies, our spirit, encased within the very fiber of who we are.

For many survivors holidays bring nothing but dread, resentment, anguish and unhappiness. Yet other survivors have managed to instill the holidays with aliveness, generosity, compassion, joy and enthusiasm, a renewed spirit.

Part of the holiday spirit seems to have been lost, some would say stolen. What did we lose? What was stolen from us? We lost out on part of a child's innocence, joyfulness and wonder. Many lost out on cherished, sustaining and nurturing memories. Many have lost the holiday spirit itself, with its warmth, reassurance, and sense of hope.

Yet, most of us look and yearn for something more from the holidays. We want to experience some of the season's joy, hope, warmth and enthusiasm. Many of us need to reconfigure, re-manage, rewire a renewed sense of holiday spirit. Holidays seem to have something to do with spirit, that intangible flavor for life.

The keys to finding and reclaiming the holidays for ourselves seems to rest on what do we want from the holidays and how do we begin to regenerate for ourselves a sense of holiday spirit. Holidays were lost. But they can be found and enjoyed again.

Questions:

1. What do the holidays evoke in you?
 2. What did you lose? What was stolen from you in reference to the holidays?
 3. What are you looking for in reference to the holidays?
 4. What might be some of the things that you need to do to renew for yourself a sense of holiday spirit?
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Co-Secretary Update

Any updates for current Co-Secretaries of ASCA meetings are included in this section of the ASCA NEWS. In addition, Co-Secretaries or some designated person from the meeting should be downloading the ASCA NEWS. It is then duplicated and distributed to the meeting membership.

Remember that the fee for the 1st Quarter of 2000 for listing your meeting on our web site is due the end of December. For information concerning this refer to the last paragraph in the "ASCA Meeting List" section of our web page. Make your \$10 check payable to The Morris Center and mail to: The Morris Center . 173 Malden Street . West Boylston . MA . 01583.

For the San Francisco Bay area ASCA meetings, the \$15 fee for the 1st Quarter of 2000 for the ASCA telephone voice mail listing is also due the end of December. Please forward your payment of \$15 payable to: Dorothy Boerste. Mail to Dorothy Boerste . 537 Franklin Street . #307 . San Francisco . CA . 94109.

George B would like to be in telephone contact with all co-secretaries during the month of December to just touch base with everyone. Also I want to discuss my visit to San Francisco in late February or early March, 2000.

If you have a question or a situation that needs discussion, you can always reach George Bilotta, Executive Director, by e-mailing him or telephoning him directly in Massachusetts 508.835.6054. Never hesitate to e-mail or call.

I want to thank all the ASCA participants who have taken on the duties of co-secretaries during the past year for your generosity and hard work. You are the people who have allowed ASCA to touch many people. Thank you for making your meeting possible. Thank you for giving of your time, energy and talents.



Observations, Questions, Comments!

If you have any observations, questions and/or comments that you want to share concerning ASCA and THE MORRIS CENTER, George Bilotta, welcomes your inquiries, phone: 508.835.6054, e-mail: georgebilotta@cs.com. If you would like to contribute a poem, story, article, etc. to our ASCA News please contact us.