

# In A Nutshell

"... I could be bounded in a nutshell and count myself a king of infinite space..."

Wm. Shakespeare

Autumn 2009

## True Pleasures Proven to Open Us to New Possibilities

by Bob Krzyzewski

I was not surprised to read in a recent Globe and Mail article, a comment to the effect that although DVD and MP 3 sales are down, due to the economic downturn, sales of bubble gum, breath mints and candies are up. The presumption is forwarded that although we can't afford high-end purchases, we still indulge our tastes with small treats. That these treats are convenience "junk food" doesn't bother the writer.

It bothers me because we are trying to fill up with instant gratification, and are missing the deeper possibilities of human experience, possible through well-chosen life-supporting pleasures. If you are the curious type of reader, you're probably wondering, right now, "like what?"

I'm thinking here of the more satisfying pleasures of life, like a walk on the beach at sunset, a meaningful conversation with a friend, sharing a water break after riding on the bike path by Science World, strolling through the aromatic grounds of a community garden, or numerous other similar activities. Granted, these are all enhanced in Vancouver's summer warmth, but you get the idea, I'm sure. These are all normal activities, largely accessible to all of us, at least in modified form. To me, these are all life affirming, positively enhancing activities. Now is there any objective proof that these are more beneficial for us than picking up flavoured chewing gum at the cash out?

A scientific researcher, who coincidentally happens to be a Vancouverite, named David Sereda, has experimented with a device capable of reading the strength and fluctuations of the human electromagnetic energy field, which surrounds us as the human aura. His results, which I will shortly report as a series of findings, are based on the readings of over 700 people across a broad

spectrum of normal health conditions affecting people.

His first finding that underlies all others is that we are very 'sensitive' and affected by all kinds of conditions, external and internal. The second, is that if we can master our conditions, even somewhat, we can discover that we are much more powerful than most experts would have us believe. Thirdly, that our power is generated through "positive feelings of connection and meaning" which are largely governed by our belief systems and actions, hence our choice of healthy activities is very important to supporting a feeling of empowerment and enjoyment. Fourthly, when our positive feelings are combined with firm intentions, we can create beneficial possibilities for our future.

Some readers may turn a skeptical eye on this last point, and recognize that it sounds a lot like the "power of attraction", popularized by the best-selling DVD, "The Secret" which was all the rage last year.

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**M.P.A. Society**  
**122 Powell St.**  
**Vancouver, BC,**  
**V6A 1G1**  
**Tel:**  
**604-482-3700**  
**Fax:**  
**604-738-4132**  
**Website:**  
**[mpa-society.org](http://mpa-society.org)**

Actually, it is very similar, but Sereda has the added benefit of actual research, conducted by himself and others. One piece of research, conducted by his senior colleague, Dr. William Tiller PhD., asked test subjects to try and change the "ph content" of water located various distances from the laboratory. His findings were very conclusive that all subjects who stayed with the project could affect the ph of water, but it took approximately thirty days to do it. Here, he demonstrated experimentally that intention was a powerful force, but only when combined with intense persistence of focus.

The average person can use their mind to change conditions but only when they are very consistent and "single-minded". He observed that many people could not hold a focus for thirty consecutive days, as they tended to keep changing their minds. After the fun, and initial enthusiasm wore off a particular goal, subjects were likely to become distracted and emotionally vacillated. He said it takes a lot of energy to maintain a strong focus.

Depressed people, he said, had weak "life-force" readings, but could change their internal state through meditation and practices like singing/chanting, yoga, prayer and other forms of exercise. He further suggested that "bi-polar" conditions were created by too much life-force going through a person's nervous system, creating the typical symptoms of grandiose ideation, spending, and sexual ideation. This surge, somewhat like a mild

epileptic seizure, necessitates a deep recuperation period, experienced as the depressive phase of the condition. He declares that this condition can be healed by healing the human nervous system utilizing various holistic treatments, including the ones just mentioned, but again, only when consistently applied.

So, within the scope of this discussion, I propose that the next logical point to follow, is that a person's so-called pleasures, can either add to the 'toxic load' of their nervous system or can help reduce the overall stress which the person carries. If a person can choose their pleasures wisely, they are going to likely live a longer life, and one filled with less stress. Such beneficial activities hence, become part of their recovery program, contributing to enhanced quality which ripples through a person's life. Enhanced problem solving and creativity have been positively noted by Sereda. He is also quick to point out the connection between creativity, and those who suffered from bi-polar, depressive, epileptic, and related disorders. These are people who are conducive to creative energies, although they haven't positively integrated the whole process into a smoother lifestyle.

There are a great number of other findings reported by Sereda, and I encourage the interested reader to Google "David Sereda-Quantum Communication DVD", and related websites to follow this important line of research.

## Editorial Note

by Jim Gifford

Alistair Todd, a dear friend and contributor to our journal, has passed into eternity at age 73 years. A scholar, teacher, artist, and poet, Al soldiered on 'mid challenging psychic struggles, always revealing 'a great spirit'.

Bon Voyage, Pal. Peace Be With You.

The Editorial Board of **In A Nutshell** welcomes letters, articles, and poetry on mental health issues from you, our readers. Authors of writing that is accepted and published will receive an honourarium - \$50 for articles over 500 wds, \$25 for shorter articles, \$10-\$15 for poetry depending on length.

Deadline for submissions for the Winter 2009-10 issue is Friday Nov. 6 2009.

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# News Briefs From All Over

Compiled by Scott Dixon

## There But For Fortune

Hundreds of people are dying every year while held under the United Kingdom's Mental Health Act, the Observer newspaper has revealed. In the past 10 years 3,540 of those detained in facilities, including high-security psychiatric hospitals, have died.

"These numbers are horrific," said Frances Crook, director of the Howard League for Penal Reform. "These are closed institutions. These deaths are happening away from the public eye. We need to scrutinize exactly what's going on in this shadowy, hidden world."

The figures reveal that more than 800 of the 1,979 male deaths and almost 300 of the 1,561 deaths among women over the 10-year period were from unnatural causes, including suicides and accidents.

## You Can Help End the Stigma

The [www.health.com](http://www.health.com) website has some tips for what individuals can do to end the stigma of mental illness:

"Your attitude and actions can influence what others think. Be honest with people and show them who you really are. When you help people understand your mental health problem, they are more likely to get past their negative views. Here are some ways you can help others better understand mental health problems.

- Let them know that your mental health problem is a medical problem that can be treated.
- Talk about your recovery. This will help them understand the challenges you face.
- Show them your strengths and talents.

Don't let your mental health problem keep you from going after things you want to do.

- Remember that "you are the message."

You can show how you want to be treated by the way you act. Treating yourself with respect can set an example for everyone.

- Accept that you may need breaks during activities. Your symptoms may make it harder to focus on things for a long time.

- Work with your family and doctor to set goals you can reach. Let them know what changes

you want to make in your life." (Many more tips can be found at the website)

## No Tim Bits Served Here

A rally of mental health advocates has protested the naming of the Psycho Donut Shop near San Jose, California, the Mercury News reports. The shop names its donuts after mental illnesses, and features a padded cell and a strait jacket for seats. "We feel really good about this demonstration just because it was good for everyone who participated, and it does seem like there's something that possibly might happen as far as changes," a spokesman for the protestors said.

## Just Do It

The chairman of the Global Business and Economic Roundtable on Addiction and Mental Health has told the Edmonton Journal private sector companies could save billions of dollars by taking the stigma out of mental illness. Bill Wilkerson gathered representatives of some of Canada's top businesses for a meeting to hear how the military and Veterans Affairs made mental health a management and operational priority for the armed forces.

In 2009, Veterans Affairs will have opened 10 new mental-health clinics, in addition to similar clinics National Defence has on all its bases. The departments have also teamed up to create a peer support network that has made major inroads in reducing the stigma of mental illness and getting soldiers treated sooner and faster.

"If I was running a company and found out I was losing employees because they crashed and burned and were on sick leave, I'd want to know why and how to help them. That's lost productivity," said retired colonel Don Ethell, who served on 14 peacekeeping missions and chairs the advisory committee for peer support groups helping

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soldiers across the country. "With the appropriate treatment and sensitivity, people can be brought around."

## Doctors Not Immune

Only one in five UK doctors would seek advice from colleagues or other health professionals if they developed a mental illness, a new survey has revealed, according to a Press Association report. One in five (20%) said they were worried about the stigma of having a mental health problem. Three-quarters (73%) said they were most likely to speak to family or friends while only 13% would speak to professional or governmental organizations and just 7% would talk to colleagues. A further 7% said they would tell nobody, according to the poll by the Royal College of Physicians.

## Bridge Over Troubled Waters

It took 70 years of tireless advocacy, countless studies on mental health issues and the lost lives of more than 1,300 people, but supporters of a suicide barrier on Golden Gate Bridge finally celebrated a victory when the bridge district approved plans for a suicide deterrent net to be installed under the iconic span.

That was the easy part, says the San Francisco Examiner. Advocates for the suicide deterrent system now face the harsh reality of trying to secure funding for the \$50 million project in the middle of a national financial crisis.

Kevin Hines, a San Francisco resident who has turned into one of the most visible advocates for a barrier after he survived a suicide attempt from the

bridge in 2000, called the funding problems "extremely painful."

"We're going to keep fighting for this," said Hines, who is one of only a handful of people to survive the 220-foot plunge. "But the way it looks right now, I'd be happy if this project was finished in the next five years. Although we appreciate the sentiment, they basically told us, 'good luck finding the dough for this project.'"

## Laugh In

At the Sertoma Centre near Chicago, Kathy O'Brien has become a Certified Laughter Leader after witnessing the effects of laughter therapy at a hospital where she worked as a registered nurse.

"I just think that everyone needs to laugh, to have fun, no matter what their physical or mental abilities," O'Brien told the Southwest News-Herald

With laughs ranging from loud guffaws to soft giggles, individuals engaged in breathing exercises while stomping their feet and clapping their hands, all things that, according to O'Brien, contribute to overall physical, mental and emotional health.

"Laughter helps people get along better, improves the immune system, helps alleviate pain, and decreases stress and anxiety," she said. "When you laugh, especially a good hearty one, it makes you breathe deeply and delivers a rush of fresh oxygen which helps your respiratory system."

# Healing The Primal Wound

by Rose Ananda Heart

Because of the emotional work I've done throughout my recovery journey I have come to understand that it is our loss of and disconnection from the mother that is the primal wound that needs to be healed in order for full re-emergence to occur. This core wound includes the loss of our continuum needs as infants, the loss of a natural living environment, which in turn creates the loss of meaning and purpose. We live in a world that has severed itself from the natural way of being that would allow us to tap into our innate wisdom.

Unfortunately many, if not most of our mothers were brainwashed into the modern era of consumption so rather than give of her own blessed milk complete with skin to skin contact, modern mothers were encouraged to purchase the scientifically superior baby formula allowing for more ease and flexibility. She was told that now she was free to get a paying job outside the home, assured that her infant would be getting adequate nutrition.

Meanwhile the price for this early separation from the mother is very high resulting in long-term consequences. The infant suffers physically, psychologically, and spiritually without the touch, the bonding and the complete ease of well being from continuous contact with the mother during those first months of life. This kind of disconnection occurs throughout life within the unnatural modern culture, a culture disconnected from the Earth Mother, and from the feminine aspect of our nature, which concerns intuition, knowing, feelings and inspiration. A child needs a natural environment in which to thrive, not an artificial playroom made up of artificial store bought toys or dead classrooms filled with books that can never substitute for the real thing. It is the living world that provides the space for the young being to grow into his/her innate brilliance.

During the summer I like to grow a patio garden that continually reminds me just how abundantly the Earth Mother gives to me. If I cut some spinach, more grows in its place. Recently I have made a decision to relax more and make a conscious connection to the Mother Earth, for I've come to understand that she is truly the source of my prosperity, for she offers her gifts freely. As far as the mother who birthed me, I can only grieve our lack of connection and choose to get close to others who are able to support me and nurture me in ways that sustain me. When I was a child, I spent a great deal of time in Nature, somehow knowing that it was she who would keep me sane as I attempted to survive the torment of a crazy making environment. As time went on, however, I spent less and less time in the forest and more time doing the things expected of me until eventually I could no longer function in society's way of doing continual busy-ness. As an infant I

depended on my mother for my well-being and so too my current health depends on the mother, on her pure water, her many nourishing foods, and her clean air.

A collection of books, known as the Ringing Cedar Series has caught my attention lately. These books, written by Vladimir Megre, contain a brilliant plan for recreating paradise here on Earth. This series came about because Vladimir met a young woman called Anastasia who lives alone in the Taiga, the forest of Russia. This woman's companions are bears, wolves, eagles and squirrels. She lives off the food that grows naturally in the forest as well as food from her garden. She has abilities that we would consider super human, yet she claims that if we were all cared for within a natural space of love we would all have these abilities. These books describe how we too can create a space of love, a paradise here on Earth, simply by getting our priorities straight and releasing our addictions to unhealthy patterns of behavior.

These books, as well as others I have read, inspire me to envision a world where people are happy, the air is pure, the water is clean, babies are cherished as wee gods and goddesses, and everyone experiences abundance. The power of vision is a divine ability and is more powerful than many of us may realize. Anastasia has given me a clear vision of hope for humanity. Mother Earth responds to love just as we all do. We can heal the mother wound through gentle words, loving embrace, organic living foods, song, dance, celebration, meditation and by planting trees and gardens that are allowed to flourish as nature intended. As I wrote in a poem once: The cure is so simple. The pain is all gone. It's only a memory. Now life is a song. ■

# Much Ado About Recovery

by Paul Strashok

It has become quite fashionable in many circles (including the mental health community) to speak about 'recovery'.

The term 'recovery' is not exclusive to the mental health community. In these trying economic times there is talk about 'financial recovery'. In Christian community, I was once involved in the 'Lord's Recovery', and there are twelve step Christian 'Recovery' programs being organized

both in my community and in other communities throughout North America. I recently made the acquaintance of a young man who was working with the homeless with an organization simply known as 'Recovery'. Recovery has become a modern 'buzzword'.

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Now, there are many shapes and sizes that are connected to this term as it relates to the mental health community. I know that when I was working as a Peer Support Worker with Vancouver Coastal Health, it was mandatory to be receiving services from a Care Team. This, however, did not stop the overseers of the peer support program from making 'recovery' a huge priority. I received many e-mails and information about the 'Recovery Model of Mental Health', asking questions such as 'Do you know someone who has recovered from a mental illness?' and 'How did they accomplish this?'. I even received the complete PowerPoint presentation on 'The Recovery Model' soliciting my input on a par with the professional community.

The truth is that I do know people who have recovered from a diagnosis and the way in which they did it was to get as far away from psychiatrists as they possibly could and 'to work with their own hands the things that are good' to 'supply their own needs' and even having a surplus to help others eventually. One trip to the 'loony bin' for some of them was enough to 'scare them straight'. Others went through a long period of withdrawal from anti-psychotic medications, changed their names and moved to different cities. For most of us who are receiving help through the Care Teams, this is not an option.

The last time I saw my therapist, he clearly said to me 'You don't have to come to the Care Team if you don't want to.' Well, excuse me, but are you willing to take me through the long period of total withdrawal from all anti-psychotic medications? This process may take months and even years. If I even miss one dosage of my medication, the next day I feel totally different. (There is much well-documented evidence of 'rebound psychosis' occurring from an abrupt cessations of medications.) My G.P. will not prescribe anti-psychotic medication for me and even told me that he wanted me to go to the Care Team. For these reasons, plus long trial and error, I am still attending a Care Team and I have my own, prayerful way of dealing with medications.

All this tells me, that although there is much talk about 'recovery', in actual practice, one is not allowed to recover unless they want to join the 'system' and get a degree in psychology or psychiatry to try and change things. I have never felt led or impelled to go in that direction, feeling, rather, that I have natural gifts and talents that I wish to cultivate. Rather, let me speak my truth quietly and soberly in a small way through these essays and let those who make much ado about recovery bloom where they are planted.

## Note To Dad: I Will Dream On

by Frank G. Sterle, Jr.

Dreams can be a blessing; indeed, they can be a great gift from God. Some people believe that dreams are metaphors of our realities, while some others say that dreams can actually be prophetic.

They can be (like they are for me and many other people) a much-needed timeless break from the sometimes-bleak reality of waken life. Furthermore, they can allow us what we can only wish we might have in waken reality, such as soaring through the air like an eagle or making love to our dream woman or man (pardon the pun).

Granted, the other side of the proverbial coin is that dreams can consist of true hell through demonic nightmares, such as falling into a pit of venomous scorpions, spiders and snakes.

But for those of us lucky enough to remember most, or at least some, good dreams, we

should be grateful. And, yes, we all dream, whether or not we can recall any of them; the fact is, we'd all eventually, literally go insane if we'd cease experiencing our share of REM (rapid eye movement) sleep every night.

My dreams for me are memorable and vivid (perhaps due at least in part to my consumption of psychotropic meds); and my dreams can, on unfortunately-rare occasions, leave me tickled pink, so to speak. The night prior to writing this article, I enjoyed heart-lifting—and perhaps much needed—laughter in a dream with a sibling with whom in waken life I simply fail to get along.

The real blessing, however, that dreams have brought to my life in the last half-dozen years is that of my dreams about my father, who passed away on June 7, 2002. He died about three weeks

following a massive heart failure (he was revived five times on the night his heart stopped).

Because of my dreams, I'll always, in a sense, have a part of Dad in my life, if even just for a brief 'visit.' Dreams involving deceased loved-ones are perhaps a manner in which they can live on; in a way, we still can have them with us living friends and relatives left behind.

I did not go to Dad's funeral (nor to my cousin's, a few years back) because funerals involving people I care about are simply too much for me to handle—the finality of it all, in an Earthly sense. That may be selfish of me, but it's how strong I feel about it.

And I'm glad I never went to visit my father after his heart attack in the hospital, unlike my brave siblings and mother; I always want my last image of him to be as a man standing on his own two feet, seeing my mother and me off on the hospital elevator the evening before his heart attack. Because his brain went without oxygen for too long, when he came to from his drug-induced coma, he would just look around at everybody and everything without expression or words. A neurologist confirmed that Dad had no real brain capacity left.

My family went to see Dad that first night, during which the surgeons left my father's ribcage open so his swollen heart had room in which to pump blood. What a sight that must have been.

Eventually, because his throat was becoming raw and sore from the feeding tube, we were told that soon he'd have to have a hole drilled into his chest and esophagus through which a feeding tube could be placed. And that was the last straw; we said no and had the feeding tube discontinued.

If life was fair, Dad would have passed away that first night and not have had to bear—

whether or not cognizant of the fact—having his under garments changed for him and being cleaned up like a three-month-old baby.

I was closest to Dad over the years, so that may be why my dreams of Dad are mostly positive. One of my sisters, though the love between Dad and her was fairly strong, has dreams involving Dad that are typically more confrontational. Admittedly, we, his family, tended to endure a love/hate relationship with Dad because of his undiagnosed, untreated neurosis and psychosis and their awful effects on him. And his illness was unintentionally passed on down to me and, to an extent, the rest of my family.

Perhaps Dad's spirit 'whispers' in my ear as I sleep, as did the character actor Bruce Willis depicted, as a spirit, to his sleeping wife in the hit movie *The Sixth Sense*.

Nonetheless, I tend to dream a fair bit about gill-net fishing with Dad; usually, from my recollections upon awakening, they are pleasant dreams. Yes, in reality, I endured some bad-luck fishing trips with my Dad back in the day; however, my dreams about those fishing days with my father are almost always pleasant—we'd set the net and watch the fish entangling within the net's web, with the proverbial dollar signs in our eyes.

It seems to not really matter to me in my dreams about Dad, the fact that I often realize that he has indeed passed on in reality. It's like I'm sure but not sure, all simultaneously.

Following his death, during the first couple of years, I was still in denial in my dreams about Dad, in which I would hug and tell him that, "I knew you didn't die."

## Ode: to the Funeral & Its Physical Finality

by Frank G. Sterle, Jr.

As the coffin's content lies breathless, still,  
no more on Earth's tough surface will he tread,  
nor will he be with her whom he had wed,  
and those close left behind must pay the bill,  
it's all real and it's making me feel ill,  
there are many tears I'm going to shed,  
there's no going back I think while in bed,  
alone—I can't sleep, even with a pill.  
So, of life's misfortunes I've had my fill  
and about my 'dead' dad I, weeping, said,  
"your demise must have been the good Lord's will,  
for He did grant us our daily bread,"  
but death's futility does my mind drill  
and I seek peace of mind since my dad's 'dead.'

# Grounding

by Rose Ananda Heart

I breathe in,  
Mother Love,  
rich dark energy,  
up through my roots  
allowing her to nourish  
my feet, ankles, calves  
knees and thighs  
relaxing me into  
the here and now.  
I draw her sustenance  
up into my trunk  
and throughout my branches,  
reaching heavenward  
for Father Light  
to embrace his radiance  
and absorb his electricity  
flowing into twigs  
leaves and stem,  
into hair and face,  
neck and shoulders  
arms and hands  
heart and belly.  
I am expanding  
filled with swirling,  
worshiping air  
giving me muscles  
making me strong  
Deep red earth  
and brilliant white,  
mingle as one,  
evolving to a pink,  
translucent glow  
that emanates outwards,  
banishing toxins  
so that I glimmer  
with divine perfection.

# I am Tardive Dyskenisia and Music

by Susan Trapp (Consumer Initiative Funds  
Project Manager,  
Tardive Dyskenesia Support Group)

Musical tunes  
  
Go through my mind.  
  
My muscles move in discord.  
  
My foot taps  
  
But not in response to the music.  
  
It has a life of its own  
  
I have piano fingers  
  
But no musical instrument.  
  
Maybe my hands  
  
Are longing for one.  
  
Music and TD  
  
Is a mystery.  
  
A dream in my Mind  
  
Could there be a connection?  
  
Maybe my voice could sing again  
  
Without rasping for breath.  
  
I know so many people  
  
That suffer from this malady.  
  
Could music be the answer?

# Bankrupt Heart

by Satya Devi for Alistair Todd

the face is orange rock that looks on nothing, nothing but a great space  
of white and pewter lights and a din like silversmiths  
beating and beating at an intractable metal.

Blackberrying, Sylvia Plath

## Song

by Alistair Todd (1936-2009)

The sun is boring holes through my head  
Red, white and black  
For twenty of fifty years  
I've been stretched out on a rack.

Another twenty and I'll be dead  
Two sides of a coin  
The stigma of insanity  
And Ra inside my head.

My soul has tried to find a path  
A middle way between  
Ecstasy and piercing pain  
To sing and yet be sane.

I wander sometimes in the dark  
Thinking of wars to come  
But each day the sun appears  
Like a large mischievous gnome.

I will sit beside a river  
And dream of a day to come  
When the Jew will sit down to eat with  
The Arab and the Hun.

The sun has done its work well  
I know no other way,  
I shall die when I have learned  
To love all and to pray.

I lay down with the pain  
my pain of the 10,000  
that hour who died  
how did they die –  
alone, surrounded by family and loved ones  
fallen dead off the toilet, and found several hours later  
died in pieces, asking for someone else but me

died never knowing  
I loved them, because  
by the time I realized  
I loved them, they were  
dead over ten years

or like the undead who cannot die  
who are not allowed to die

half-lives, half-lived  
syllables of rhetoric  
a few quoted clichés  
and epigrams that  
just might be possible

you waltzed windershun  
wan butterfly, winged  
and fluttered, unfettered

(and the bird and her scarf  
pass once more over the top  
of a mountain).

Me seeing in from the outside and out  
from the inside – both ill-appropriate

never really there, your gazes  
fixed upon each other  
as my eyes turn back to me  
and I laid down with the pain,  
my pain, and missed out on  
the other 9,999.

Whatever happens, whatever  
what is is what  
I want. Only that. But that.

Galway Kinnell

# Dead Man's Hand

by reinhart

Blackjack Davey was sitting at his usual spot – at the poker table. As always, his back was to the wall and he had a clear view of the saloon doors and the front wall windows. Like every savvy dude knows, you never know what might be coming at you. You've got to keep your back covered and also be able to see who's coming and going. A saloon can be a dangerous place and you always have to keep your wits about you. Danger can come bursting through the saloon doors or windows at any time.

To the right of Blackjack Davey sat Lefty. Lefty got caught stealing a horse down Mexico way – a capital offence. The Mexicans gave him a choice – either hang by the neck until dead or have his right arm chopped off with a machete. Lefty decided he'd rather lose his right hand than his entire life. People started calling him Lefty ever since.

To the left of Blackjack Davey sat Two-tooth Tommy. Two-tooth loved the girls. He loved them all. Big ones, little ones, short ones, tall ones, dark and light ones. Unfortunately, some of the girls he loved happened to be married. One warm summer evening Two-tooth Tommy was sitting with a lovely girl under the shade of a cotton tree. It wasn't very long before he started kissing her. Along came a man who happened to be the husband of this lovely, little girl. The man never said a word. He just walked right up and punched Tommy in the face and knocked out his two front teeth. And that's how he got the name Two-tooth Tommy.

On the other side of the table sat Stinky and Diamond Jim. Stinky was a handsome fellow and he was famous for taking a bath at least once every three months. When it came to his personal hygiene, the only thing he really cared about was his teeth. He brushed them every day and was able to flash pearly whites and a winning smile. The reason for this was fairly obvious since anyone could smell him coming.

Diamond Jim wore a large diamond gold ring on each hand. The diamonds sparkled from every direction and Jim loved them so much that he

never took them off. Neither in his bath: nor when he slept. Diamond Jim also happened to be the richest man in town. He owned the saloon, the hotel and the general store. Every person in town called him sir and most were at least a little scared of him. Diamond Jim's money could buy a lot of clout if an occasion called for it.

The rules of the game were simple. A minimum ante of five dollars was required. The dealer had the choice of game. (Traditionally five-card stud was the preferred game of most gamblers.) And you could only bet what was brought with you to the table.

As for Blackjack Davey, no one knew for certain how he got his name. Many people speculated on the topic but nobody could come up with anything that would stick. After all, poker was his game. It seemed to be some sort of mystery, an enigma if you will.

And so this motley crew sat at a round table with a smooth green cloth draped upon it. The players cut the deck to see who would deal first. High card wins. Stinky won the deal with a club king. He called five-card stud as the game. Lefty opened the betting with five bucks. He was holding a pair of deuces. Blackjack Davey called the bet. He had a pair of threes in his mitt. Two-tooth Tommy matched the bet and raised it five dollars more. He was holding a pair of sevens in his hand. Diamond Jim just matched the bet. He was only holding a solitary ace. Stinky with a single king matched and raised another ten dollars. Lefty, with his pair of deuces, once more matched the bet. The bet went around the table and everyone called. Lefty discarded three cards and kept his pair. He drew a third deuce to add to his pair. Blackjack Davey also discarded three cards and kept his pair of threes. He also drew another card to add to his pair of threes. A third three. In his mind he thought this was a good sign. Two-tooth Tommy matched suit and drew a third seven out of the three cards that he had discarded. Diamond Jim drew four cards and ended up with ace, kin, and queen. Stinky also discarded three cards and drew a second king toward his hand. Lefty bet five dollars on his three deuces. Blackjack Davey

called the bet and raised it another five dollars. He bet on three of a kind. Three threes. Two-tooth Tommy matched the bet and raised it another twenty dollars. Diamond Jim folded his hand. All except for Diamond Jim were in the game and called the bet. Two-tooth Tommy won the game with his three sevens. He flashed a huge, toothless grin.

It was Lefty's turn to deal. He called the game read 'em and weep. Everybody bet on the hand they were dealt. No draws allowed. Blackjack Davey opened the betting with ten dollars. He had an ace and a king. Two-tooth Tommy called the bet and raised it another forty dollars. He had a pair of tens. Diamond Jim called the bet and raised another forty dollars. He had a pair of jacks. Stinky just called the bet with his king and queen. Lefty followed suit with his own king and queen. Blackjack Davey folded. Two-tooth Tommy stayed in the game and called the bet. Diamond Jim took the pot with his pair of jacks.

The deal next came to Blackjack Davey. He called the game two-twenty-two. People sometimes wondered if he came up with that game himself. In any case, the game allowed for two draws of two cards maximum, and all deuces were wild. Therefore 222. Two-tooth Tommy had crap in his hand and folded. Diamond Jim sat pretty with a pair of queens. Stinky was holding his own pair of nines. Lefty kept a pair of eights close to his chest. Blackjack Davey was holding three tens and a deuce. Four of a kind. Diamond Jim bet fifty dollars on his queens. Stinky matched the bet with his nines. Lefty also matched the bet with his pair of eights. Blackjack Davey with his four tens matched the bet and raised it another ten dollars. All around the table they called. Everyone except Two-tooth Tommy stayed in the game. Diamond Jim discarded the maximum two cards and drew another queen to match his pair. Stinky also drew two cards. He wound up with three nines and a deuce. Also four of a kind. Lefty discarded his two cards and drew a pair of fours. Two pair. Blackjack Davey stayed pat and took no more cards. Suddenly there was a moment of complete silence as the players all wondered what he might be holding in his hand. Diamond Jim bet another fifty dollars on his three queens. Stinky matched the fifty and raised twenty dollars more. He had a solid hand with his four nines. Lefty just called the bet and didn't raise. Blackjack Davey matched the seventy and raised another thirty. Diamond Jim just called the bet. It was his turn to discard first

since Two-tooth Tommy had folded. He drew a pair of sixes and ended up with a full house. Stinky drew a single card but gained nothing to add to his four nines. No five of a kind today. Lefty discarded a single card and drew a third four. He also wound up with a full house. Blackjack Davey again stayed pat and drew no cards. Diamond Jim bet another fifty dollars on his full house. Stinky called and raised twenty on his four nines. Lefty matched the bet but didn't raise. He didn't want to tip his hand. Blackjack Davey called the bet and raised it thirty dollars more. Diamond Jim was almost smiling. He figured that Stinky, Lefty and Blackjack Davey all had flushes and that he was holding the winning hand. He bet one hundred dollars on his full house. Stinky called and matched the bet. Lefty did likewise. But Blackjack Davey called and raised the bet another hundred dollars. Diamond Jim could hardly contain himself. He raised the bet another two hundred dollars. Stinky and Lefty were out of the game. They didn't have any more cash to cover the bet. All they had left was a couple bucks each. Not enough to stay in the game. Blackjack Davey calmly added another two hundred dollars to the pot. Diamond Jim called and raised another hundred. Blackjack Davey decided that this was enough and called the bet. Diamond Jim proudly unveiled his queen-high full house; but his countenance severely dropped when Blackjack Davey flipped up his four of a kind. Diamond Jim was visibly shaken. He had always prided himself on being able to read his opponents. He really had no idea that Blackjack Davey held the winning hand with four of a kind.

The deal next came to Two-tooth Tommy. He called five-card stud. Diamond Jim bet forty dollars on a pair of eights. Stinky called the bet with a pair of fives, but he didn't raise. Lefty was one card short of a straight. He called the bet and raised it by forty dollars. Blackjack Davey just matched the bet. He was sitting on a pair of fours. Everybody called and were in the game. Diamond Jim discarded three cards and drew another eight to match his pair. Stinky took three cards. He was unable to add anything to his pair of fives. Lefty drew one card and made his straight. Blackjack Davey discarded three and added another four to his pair. Two-tooth Tommy was holding a pair of threes and added another one for three of a kind. Diamond Jim bet another forty dollars on his three

**(continued page over)**

of a kind. Everybody called. Lefty had wanted to raise, but he was out of money. Nevertheless, he won the pot with his straight.

Left at the table were Two-tooth Tommy, Diamond Jim, Lefty and Blackjack Davey. It was Jim's turn to deal and call the game. He pronounced five-card stud. Blackjack Davey was dealt two aces right off the bat. He scrutinized them very carefully but he had a really bad feeling in his gut. Two-tooth Tommy was dealt a pair of fours. Diamond Jim dealt himself a pair of fives. Lefty was stuck with a solitary king. Blackjack Davey checked on his bet. Two-tooth Tommy bet thirty dollars on his pair of fours. Diamond Jim was feeling a lot more uncertainty and caution after the humiliating blunder that cost him hundreds of dollars. This time he simply called the bet. Lefty also called the bet without raising. Blackjack Davey discarded three cards and drew two eights and a ten. Eights and aces – two aces and two eights – “The Dead Man's Hand”. Gamblers are a superstitious lot and there's not a one of them that doesn't know the story of “The Dead Man's Hand”. There once was a man who played in a high stakes poker game and he had a winning hand with two aces and two eights. Apparently the loser was so angry and broke that he pulled out his gun and shot the winner dead right there at the poker table. And so aces and eights came to be known as “The Dead Man's Hand”. Blackjack Davey knew that in all likelihood he had a winning hand, but he went with his feeling in his gut and folded. Two-tooth Tommy discarded three cards and drew a pair of sevens to go with the pair of fours already in his hand. Diamond Jim also discarded three cards and drew a pair of kings. Lefty as well discarded three cards and also drew a king so that he was then holding a pair. Two-tooth Tommy checked his bet. Diamond Jim however laid down a hundred dollars. He was betting big on his two pair. He decided that if he didn't have the winning hand, he would simply bluff and buy the pot. He would raise the bet so high that no one at the table would dare to call his bet. They would all fold. Lefty had to drop out of the game because he didn't have money left to cover the bet. Such is the nature of the beast when it comes to the game of poker. Two-tooth Tommy barely had enough cash left to cover the bet. He said to himself, this is it, all or nothing. He called the bet but lost to Diamond Jim's higher two pair. Blackjack Davey was not surprised. He knew that he had probably folded on a winning hand, but,

like everyone knows, gamblers are a superstitious lot.

Blackjack Davey was next to deal again. This time he decided to call the game five card stud. Two-tooth Tommy was dealt a pair of sixes. Diamond Jim was dealt three hearts towards a flush. Blackjack Davey dealt himself a pair of deuces. Two-tooth Tommy started the betting but decided to check. Diamond Jim bet ten dollars. Blackjack Davey called the bet and raised fifty dollars more. Two-tooth Tommy and Diamond Jim called and just matched the bet. Two-tooth Tommy discarded three cards and drew a third six. Diamond Jim drew two hearts and made his flush. Blackjack Davey discarded two cards and drew absolutely nothing to help his hand. Two-tooth Tommy bet ten dollars on his sixes. Diamond Jim called the bet and raised it another twenty. Blackjack Davey matched the thirty dollars on the table and bet another seventy-five. Two-tooth Tommy was broke and had no more money to play with. He was forced to fold. Diamond Jim called the bet and raised it by fifty dollars. Blackjack Davey matched the bet and raised it two hundred more. He was bluffing. Diamond Jim folded and Blackjack Davey won the pot.

Blackjack Davey stood up and gathered together his winnings. He announced to the table “It's been a fine evening gentlemen and a good game, but I have a long ride ahead of me and I must excuse myself from these proceedings.” Diamond Jim then stood up and said, “Hold on there mister. You have a lot of my money there in your bag and I want a chance to win it back”. He pulled his handgun out of its holster and laid the weapon on the table and said, “This game ain't over until I say it is.” Blackjack Davey thought quietly for a moment or two and then he said, “How much money have you got in front of you?” “Three hundred and change”, answered Diamond Jim. Blackjack Davey replied, “I have about seven hundred here of my own. It's my turn to call the game. I'll tell you what, I'll bet my seven hundred dollars against your three hundred in a final game of Blackjack.” “You're on Buddy”, said Diamond Jim. Blackjack Davey dealt them each one card face down and then he dealt Diamond Jim a Jack of Diamonds face up. Diamond Jim thought the Jack of Diamonds was a good sign and a good omen and since he had a king on his down card he announced that he would stay. Who wouldn't stay at twenty on a game of twenty-one? Then Black-

jack Davey dealt himself the Queen of Hearts face up. Diamond Jim proudly turned up his king and pronounced "Twenty". Davey calmly flipped up the Ace of Spades and quietly said, "Blackjack".

Blackjack Davey added this pot to the rest of his winnings in his saddlebag. He tipped his hat to all

the company there and said, "It's been a pleasure gentlemen, but you'll have to excuse me since I have miles to go before I sleep." He left the saloon, mounted his horse and rode out of town just as the sun was beginning to set. On to the next town and the next "poker" game. ■

# Sacred Insanity

by Alex Winstanley

I am not about to abandon all hope,  
when I have communion

tattooed on my tongue.  
Madness must be a blessing.

We walk around  
with too many deities inside us,  
while we forget—

to look in the bone of Yahweh,  
or the lips on Jesus Christ,  
made of Adam's clay.

Elijah the prophet—  
fed on peanut butter—  
revelates on the hospital piano

and keeps trying to run away  
in his robes to stand  
in front of four lanes of traffic.

Yahweh feasts  
on mushy bread

and packaged milk  
in front of three Elohim psychiatrists.

He is a small bald man  
with yellow teeth who  
rises at three in the afternoon

into the dome of heaven  
on chariots of fire—

you can look into  
His eyes of lightning  
and see tempests raging there.

I am not about to abandon all hope,  
when I have communion

tattooed on my tongue  
Madness must be a blessing.

## Websites Of Interest To Consumers/Survivors/Ex-Mental Patients

This list is not intended to be comprehensive or exhaustive, and has left out many well-known sites that are widely available and easily accessible from local directories.

### Organizations (General)

[www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk) [www.power2u.org](http://www.power2u.org) [www.mhselfhelp.org](http://www.mhselfhelp.org) [www.wnusp.org](http://www.wnusp.org) [www.tao.ca/~pact](http://www.tao.ca/~pact)  
[www.u-kan.co.uk](http://www.u-kan.co.uk) [www.mentalhealth.com](http://www.mentalhealth.com) [www.icspp.org](http://www.icspp.org) [www.oikos.org](http://www.oikos.org) [www.icomm.ca/csinfo](http://www.icomm.ca/csinfo)  
[www.aapd-dc.org](http://www.aapd-dc.org) [www.mindfreedom.org](http://www.mindfreedom.org) [www.geocities.com](http://www.geocities.com) [www.mdri.org](http://www.mdri.org) [www.breggin.com](http://www.breggin.com)  
[www.cvdinfolbase.ca/mh-atlas/](http://www.cvdinfolbase.ca/mh-atlas/) [www.szasz.com](http://www.szasz.com) [www.antipsychiatry.org](http://www.antipsychiatry.org) [www.peoplewho.org](http://www.peoplewho.org)  
[www.walnet.org/llf](http://www.walnet.org/llf) [www.mentalhealth.org.uk](http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk) [www.fsu.edu/~trauma/ip.html](http://www.fsu.edu/~trauma/ip.html) [www.radpsynet.org](http://www.radpsynet.org)  
[www.contac.org](http://www.contac.org) [www.buildfreedom.com/ft/psychiatric\\_survivors.htm](http://www.buildfreedom.com/ft/psychiatric_survivors.htm) [www.samhsa.gov](http://www.samhsa.gov)  
[www.nucknfuts.com/index.php](http://www.nucknfuts.com/index.php) [www.cam.org](http://www.cam.org) [www.lino.com/~raiddat](http://www.lino.com/~raiddat) <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antipsychiatry> <http://aix1.uottawa.ca/~nstaman/alternatives/OVNVinternational.htm>

### Advocacy and Activism

[www.mental-health-matters.com/activist.html](http://www.mental-health-matters.com/activist.html) [www.m-power.org](http://www.m-power.org) [www.narpa.org](http://www.narpa.org)  
[www.protectionandadvocacy.com](http://www.protectionandadvocacy.com) [www.cchr.org](http://www.cchr.org) [www.popan.org.uk](http://www.popan.org.uk) [www.advocatweb.com](http://www.advocatweb.com)  
[www.gamian-europe.com](http://www.gamian-europe.com) [www.hri.ca](http://www.hri.ca) [www.hrweb.org](http://www.hrweb.org) [www.iahf.com](http://www.iahf.com) [www.benzo.org.uk/prawi.htm](http://www.benzo.org.uk/prawi.htm)  
<http://members.aol.com/jimhofw/jimho.htm>

### Alternatives

[www.talkingcure.com/index.asp](http://www.talkingcure.com/index.asp) [www.alternativementalhealth.com](http://www.alternativementalhealth.com) [www.medsfree.com](http://www.medsfree.com) [www.mosher-soteria.com](http://www.mosher-soteria.com)  
[www.transtherapy.org](http://www.transtherapy.org) [www.patchadams.org](http://www.patchadams.org) [www.healthfreedommovement.com](http://www.healthfreedommovement.com)  
[www.weglauchhaus.de](http://www.weglauchhaus.de) [www.elcollie.com](http://www.elcollie.com) [www.stopshrinks.org](http://www.stopshrinks.org) [www.lstpm.org](http://www.lstpm.org)  
[www.emotionsinbalance.com](http://www.emotionsinbalance.com) [www.the-bright-side.org/site/thebrightside/](http://www.the-bright-side.org/site/thebrightside/) [www.doctoryourself.com](http://www.doctoryourself.com)  
[www.emotionsanonymous.org](http://www.emotionsanonymous.org) [www.projectresilience.com](http://www.projectresilience.com) [www.bu.edu/cpr/rr/alternative/](http://www.bu.edu/cpr/rr/alternative/)  
[www.religiousfreedom.org](http://www.religiousfreedom.org) [www.wildestcolts.com](http://www.wildestcolts.com) <http://stopbadtherapy.com> [http://nht\\_amh11.blogspot.com](http://nht_amh11.blogspot.com) <http://essence-euro.org/iasp/> <http://myweb.tiscali.co.uk/erthworks/nonmain.htm>

### Drug Information

[www.larsmartensson.com](http://www.larsmartensson.com) [www.drugs-and-medications.com](http://www.drugs-and-medications.com) [www.drugawareness.org](http://www.drugawareness.org)  
[www.outlookcities.com/psych/](http://www.outlookcities.com/psych/) [www.canadiandimension.mb.ca/v35/v35\\_5ab.htm#three](http://www.canadiandimension.mb.ca/v35/v35_5ab.htm#three)  
[www.nmsis.org](http://www.nmsis.org) [www.antidepressantsfacts.com](http://www.antidepressantsfacts.com) [www.socialaudit.org.uk/1.4.html](http://www.socialaudit.org.uk/1.4.html)  
[www.chemsense.com](http://www.chemsense.com) [www.prozactruth.com](http://www.prozactruth.com) [www.quitpaxil.org](http://www.quitpaxil.org) [www.talkingcure.com/archive/drugs.htm](http://www.talkingcure.com/archive/drugs.htm)  
[www.truehope.com](http://www.truehope.com) [www.astrocyte-design.com/pseudoscience/index.html](http://www.astrocyte-design.com/pseudoscience/index.html) <http://members.fortunecity.com/siriusw/Biochemical-Imbalance.htm> <http://groups.msn.com/SIDEEFFECTS>  
[www.benzo.org.uk](http://www.benzo.org.uk)

### Children & Youth

[www.voice4kids.org](http://www.voice4kids.org) [www.aspire.us](http://www.aspire.us) [www.hearmyvoice.org](http://www.hearmyvoice.org) [www.ritalindeath.com](http://www.ritalindeath.com) [www.p-a-r.org](http://www.p-a-r.org)  
[www.adhd4fraud.org](http://www.adhd4fraud.org)

### Tardive Dyskinesia/Dystonia

[www.power2u.org/selfhep/tardive.html](http://www.power2u.org/selfhep/tardive.html) [www.wemove.org](http://www.wemove.org) [www.dystonia-support.org](http://www.dystonia-support.org) [www.dystonia-foundation.org](http://www.dystonia-foundation.org)  
[www.iatrogenic.org/index.html](http://www.iatrogenic.org/index.html) [www.breggin.com/tardivedysk.html](http://www.breggin.com/tardivedysk.html)  
[www.caromont.org/16036.cfm](http://www.caromont.org/16036.cfm) [www.emedicine.com/neuro/topic362.htm](http://www.emedicine.com/neuro/topic362.htm) [www.drugdigest.org/DD/Articles/News/0.10141.513136.00.html](http://www.drugdigest.org/DD/Articles/News/0.10141.513136.00.html) [www.psyweb.com/Diction/tardived.html](http://www.psyweb.com/Diction/tardived.html) [www.thebody.com/pinf/phenos.html](http://www.thebody.com/pinf/phenos.html)  
[www.reglan-lawsuit.com](http://www.reglan-lawsuit.com) [www.ninds.nih.gov/healthandmedical/disorders/tardivedoc.htm](http://www.ninds.nih.gov/healthandmedical/disorders/tardivedoc.htm) [www.easyweb.easynet.co.uk/simplpsych/tardive.html](http://www.easyweb.easynet.co.uk/simplpsych/tardive.html)

# Bulletin Board

**The Self-Help Resource Association of BC (SHRA)** has changed its name to **PeerNetBC**. They also publish a Directory of Self Help/Support Groups in Greater Vancouver with over 600 listings, many of them dealing with mental health issues. **PeerNetBC** is located at suite 306 - 1212 West Broadway, Van. BC V6H 3V1 Tel. 604-733-6186 Fax. 604-730-1015 e-mail [info@peernetbc.com](mailto:info@peernetbc.com) . Website - [www.peernetbc.com](http://www.peernetbc.com)

**West Coast Mental Health Network** sponsors many self-help groups. Office at #201 - 1300 Richards Street, Vancouver, BC V6B 3G6 Tel. 604-733-5570 Fax: 604-733-9556 e-mail [vrnhn@vcn.bc.ca](mailto:vrnhn@vcn.bc.ca)

Named after Vincent van Gough's homeopathic doctor, Paul Gachet, **Gallery Gachet** works to provide a safe, borderless place of artistic expression. It is located at 88 E. Cordova, Vancouver. Tel. 604-687-2468

Check out the **Our Voice** website at [www.ourvoice-notrevoix.com](http://www.ourvoice-notrevoix.com).

## Websites Of Interest To Consumers/Survivors/Ex-Mental Patients

(continued from previous page)

### Electroshock

[www.ect.org](http://www.ect.org) [www.banshock.org](http://www.banshock.org) [www.idiom.com/~drjohn/review.html](http://www.idiom.com/~drjohn/review.html) <http://bmj.com/cgi/content/full/bmj;326/7403/1363>

### Forced Treatment

[www.freedom-center.org](http://www.freedom-center.org) [www.namisce.org/newsletters/August01/MindAid.htm](http://www.namisce.org/newsletters/August01/MindAid.htm) [www.hri.doccentre/docs/gosden.shtml](http://www.hri.doccentre/docs/gosden.shtml) [www.garynull.com/issues/Psych/Index.htm](http://www.garynull.com/issues/Psych/Index.htm) [www.psychlaws.org](http://www.psychlaws.org) [www.kqed.org/w/hope/involuntarytreatment.html](http://www.kqed.org/w/hope/involuntarytreatment.html)

### Mental Health Law

[www.bazelon.org](http://www.bazelon.org) [www.ac.wvu.edu/~knecht/law.htm](http://www.ac.wvu.edu/~knecht/law.htm) [www.psych.org/public\\_info/insanity.cfm](http://www.psych.org/public_info/insanity.cfm) [www.forensic-psych.com/pubs/pubADment.html](http://www.forensic-psych.com/pubs/pubADment.html) [www.psychlaws.org](http://www.psychlaws.org) [www.imhl.com](http://www.imhl.com) [www.ialmh.org](http://www.ialmh.org) [www.justiceseekers.com](http://www.justiceseekers.com) [www.safe-trak.com/main/competency1.htm](http://www.safe-trak.com/main/competency1.htm) [www.abanet.org/disability/sites.html](http://www.abanet.org/disability/sites.html) [www.experts.com](http://www.experts.com) [www.expertpages.com/psychiatry-psychology.htm](http://www.expertpages.com/psychiatry-psychology.htm) [www.psych.org/advocacy-policy/leg\\_res/apa\\_testimony/testimonysub-crimeposted91800.cfm](http://www.psych.org/advocacy-policy/leg_res/apa_testimony/testimonysub-crimeposted91800.cfm) [www.ilppp.virginia.edu/](http://www.ilppp.virginia.edu/) [www.law.cornell.edu/topics/mental\\_health.html](http://www.law.cornell.edu/topics/mental_health.html) [www.helpforparents.net/LegalResources/1LegalResources.htm](http://www.helpforparents.net/LegalResources/1LegalResources.htm)

### History of Mental Health Care

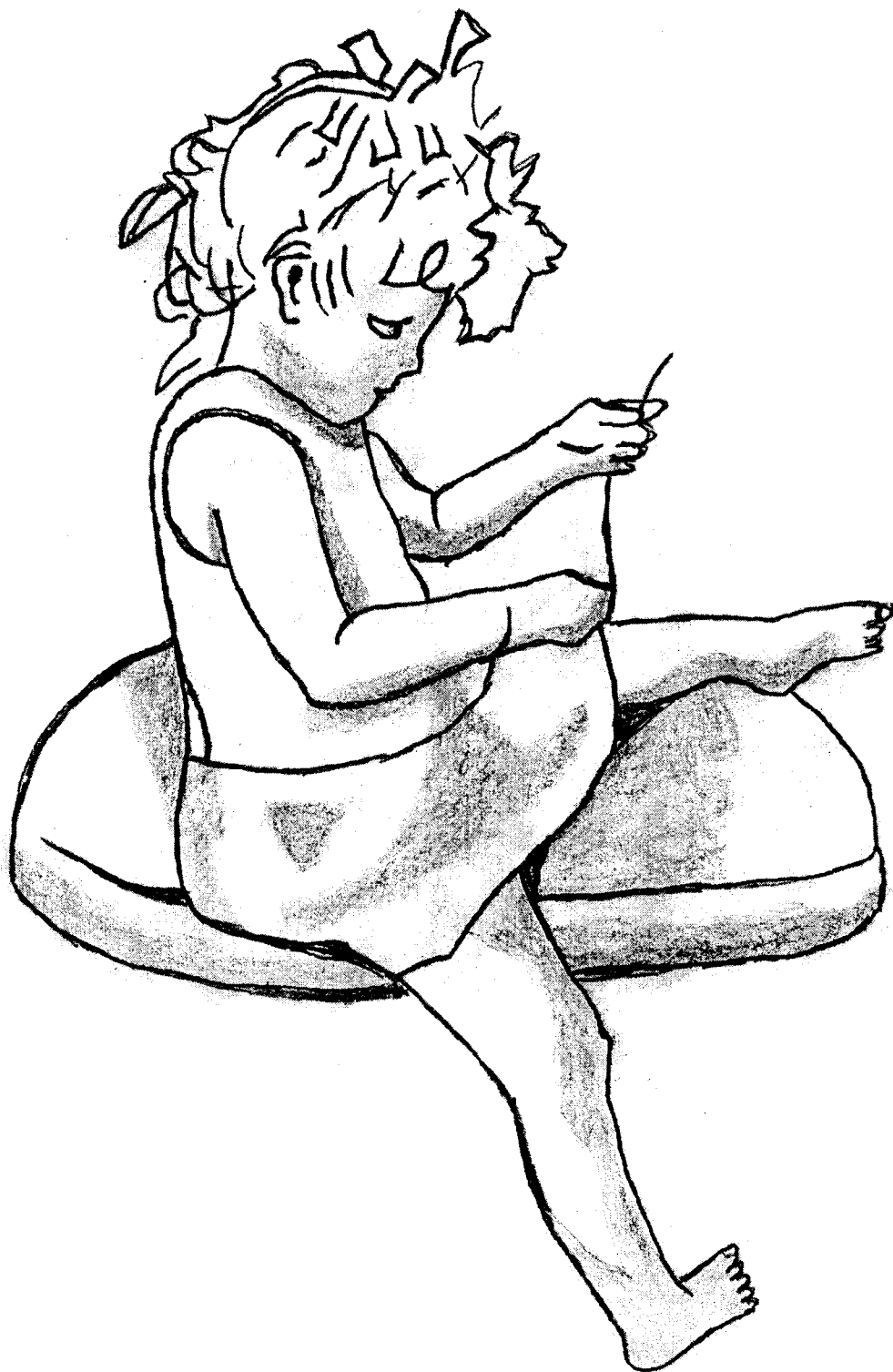
[www.psychiatricsurvivorsarchives.com](http://www.psychiatricsurvivorsarchives.com) [www.webcom.com/thrive/schizo/kdarch.html](http://www.webcom.com/thrive/schizo/kdarch.html) [www.cwu.edu/~warren/addenda.html](http://www.cwu.edu/~warren/addenda.html) [www.epub.org.br/cm/n02/historia/psicocirg\\_i.htm](http://www.epub.org.br/cm/n02/historia/psicocirg_i.htm)

### Online Publications

[www.mentalmagazine.co.uk](http://www.mentalmagazine.co.uk) <http://members.aol.com/asylumpub> <http://userpage.fu-berlin.de/~expert/psychnews/>

### Orthomolecular Medicine

[www.islandnet.com/~hoffer/hofferhp.htm](http://www.islandnet.com/~hoffer/hofferhp.htm) [www.islandnet.com/~hoffer/](http://www.islandnet.com/~hoffer/) [www.orthomed.org](http://www.orthomed.org)



Yvonne van Unen