



The
VOICE
DIALOGUE
NEWSLETTER

From the Editor:

In September 2006, 23

members of the North American Voice Dialogue community joined Hal and Sidra Stone at The Colorado Convergence in Boulder, Colorado. The weekend was gracefully hosted by Judith Tamar Stone. The participants had the opportunity to join in a variety of activities together, and the time to explore the glorious mountains surrounding Boulder.

We shared our personal dreams, and our hopes for future communal gatherings. This Newsletter represents one aspect of our potential future growth as a community. All of the participants at The Convergence were invited to send material for the Newsletter, and this is the result. We hope that all members of the Voice Dialogue community will join in this venture, and contribute their thoughts, poems, and ideas to the Newsletter.

All contributions to The Newsletter will be gratefully received,

The Editor

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Voice Dialogue

Shakti Gawain

Much of my understanding

about the many selves within us, and the importance of developing the aware ego, has come from studying and working with Drs. Hal and Sidra Stone. Their understanding of the psychology of the selves is quite profound, and the method they have created for getting to know and understand our many sub-personalities—Voice Dialogue—is one of the most powerful tools for consciousness I have ever experienced. Their work relates to and draws from many other disciplines. But it takes a few steps beyond anything else. I have found it extraordinarily helpful, both in my own personal healing process and in my work with others.

Shakti Gawain, reprinted with permission from The Path of Transformation.

Energetic Linkage

MarthaLou Cohen

At the convergence I was

most impressed with the unique energetic I experienced being in a group of Voice Dialogue aficionados. The conscious linkage was palpable. We all know we cannot maintain it always, but when we do, it is delicious, nurturing and very heartwarming. I do not feel this kind of presence in other groups. I feel it with individuals but other groups seem to be dominated by other energies.

Positive or negative bonding patterns erode conscious linkage. We are fortunate to have the tools to recreate connection when it is broken by these patterns and we seem to be giving each other permission to help us stay alert to the energetics with diminish our connections with one another.

It is painful to clear bonding patterns and be accountable. But if we let this pain deter us from identifying them, we lose the deep satisfaction of conscious linkage. Better that we keep in mind the vulnerability and be as humble and gracious as possible when we begin to speak about them. Over time perhaps, we can create more fluidity in approaching them... create contexts which ease the difficulty of facing them. In any case, the richness that results from accountability never ceases to impress me. I believe we have a unique opportunity to create community without hierarchy because we are aware of these dynamics and have a commitment to address them.

Psychic Fingerprint

Yolanda Koumidou-Vlesmas

There is a Dance you dance alone.
You hear the music,
 You feel the beat,
 You move.

 This, is Your Dance.
 God, your only witness.
The rhythm, familiar only to Him.
 He composed it,
 Just for you.

When Our Children Suffer

John Cooper

Time was when I could hold you
And make it better—or not.
But at least I had something to do.

Now, I am locked out of the stadium
And can only watch you on TV
The guards of your Soul will not give me a ticket.

The mother/father inside of me suffers with
Longing and helplessness.
Now, I must comfort that parent inside of me.
Such a strange thing that I must become
Parent to myself.

The Language of the Body

The Body Dialogue Process

Judith Tamar Stone

Our illnesses, injuries and pain conditions can be both our greatest challenge and a profound opportunity for discovery and growth. Everything in our life can be affected by our pain and illness from our relationships to our jobs, family, friends and finances. Working the edge of our illness, pain condition, or injury offers us a bridge to look at all the areas of our life enabling us to see where the roots of imbalance lie.

Within each of us there is a reservoir of information. The Body Dialogue Process taps into this reserve and creates the opportunity for conscious communication with the overall voice of the body and the

many selves / parts which support the bodies miraculous functioning. Hearing and appreciating the body's own knowledge base is essential in supporting a healthy relationship with our bodies. In addition, this process inspires the development of an intimate friendship with our body. Imagine having the kind of relationship with your body that you have with your significant other or best friend, a connection based on mutual respect, effective communication and pleasure in each other's company. This possibility exists.

The Body Dialogue Process is a profound communication

experience inspired by The Voice Dialogue Process and my personal experience with a physically disabling illness. The Process offers a unique opportunity to bridge the chasm between mind and body, offering the body and its numerous selves the unifying experience of voice.

The body and its many selves, want to be heard and acknowledged for the significant role it serves in our overall well-being. Keep in mind that the body has one of the greatest jobs of all and yet is often the least appreciated or recognized. We forget that all the

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selves function in and through the container of the body. Without the body there would be no selves. It is our challenge and opportunity to bridge this gap.

There are fascinating themes that are elicited through The Body Dialogue Process. One essential motif is that pain and illness are a cry for help and not a punishment. This often occurs before the body actually breaks down into illness or a significant pain condition giving us fair warning through subtle signs and signals. This may vary from aches and pains, twitches and tension to colds, flu's or minor bumps and bruises.

While working with a client that came in one day with an acidic stomach, he shared with me how this was not an uncommon occurrence in his life. In giving voice to his stomach we were able to find out that his stomach had become part of an information feedback system and would start to burn when he wasn't expressing what was really going on with him. Upon tracking some examples in his life, he

got the validity of what his stomach was sharing. In a short amount of time he was able to turn the pattern around by more consciously reflecting his emotional reality in the moment.

The Psychology of Selves reflects that what we disown we attract to ourselves. For example, a person who is overly responsible and refuses to take a break may attract quite a few seemingly irresponsible or lazy people into their life. The overly responsible person is most likely irritated by these people, but "lazy" people may actually be embodying an important message that the overly responsible person needs to hear – "it's ok to take a break!" These same kinds of messages can also come to us on an internal level from the body. For example, an overly camped-up or driven body will often attempt to get our attention. It does this by creating tension, headaches, colds, flu's or even something more dramatic in an attempt to slow us down or even stop us. If we don't read the subtle cues, we are setting up the body to have to call out or even scream to get our attention.

Unfortunately, most of the time the body's communication falls upon deaf ears. In fact, it was this very situation that became my discovery process for the Body Dialogue Process. While, ironically enough, working at a Health Maintenance Organization, my head and body were not functioning as one unified system. The part of me that claimed to know what was best for my "health" set up a daily routine of using the stairwell to the cafeteria for exercise. What the part didn't factor in was the high heels shoes on my feet. The many nights of rather intense muscle cramping in my legs was not a great enough sign to get my attention.

Eventually it took the development of a disabling condition, diagnosed as Rheumatoid Arthritis, to get my attention. And get my attention it did. In addition to the number of both traditional and non-traditional modalities that I explored, I had to relearn how to actually live in my own body. It was necessary for me to literally learn how to sit, stand, walk and lift a glass in as conscious

and connected a way as possible to avoid pain. This illness brought me fully into my body and into my life work. I'm grateful for the result, but the path of illness or pain is absolutely not a path I would ever recommend. This is why I am so devoted to promoting this consciousness process of learning to listen to and understand the language of the body.

What is possible for us once we are in a conscious relationship with our body is to eat when we are hungry, sleep when we are tired and do exercise or movement because our body wants to. We often eat when and what our Inner Child wants over that which the body, i.e. stomach, colon needs. A sweet tooth belongs to the Inner Child not the body. The body tends to choose protein over sugar for energy. The body doesn't eat for the emotional reasons that the child does. The body wants to sleep or rest when it is tired not drink coffee or artificially create a second wind. The body likes to exercise because it feels good not just because the mind or the

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critic says we should.

The body has its own thoughts and feelings. It knows when it wants protein and not just vegetables. It knows when it wants to walk instead of run or stay home and rest on the sofa over going out. All we have to do is learn the language, wants and needs of our own bodies and respond. The result is a container / temple that feels honored and respected. This is often reflected in greater health and stamina.

The Body Dialogue Process additionally serves to identify a “map of the inner selves.” This map reflects the related patterning between specific selves that may be perpetuating the potential for injury and illness. This map offers a creative approach to tracking inner patterns of undue stress or tension that could over time lead to a compromised relationship with our bodies, such as illness or pain.

In speaking with the body there is often an overriding self that is taking action or making decisions that are not aligned with the wants and needs of the body.

By identifying and giving voice to these selves the body is supported. Some of the famous overriders are The Pusher, The Thinker, The Perfectionist, The Critic, etc. Overriders create the opportunity to find balance between the stronger parts of themselves and what has been disowned on the other side. The potential in doing this work is to support an overall balance of the inner system.

As with any other sub personality, the body and its numerous selves thrive on being communicated with as a meaningful member of our inner family. Establishing this line of connection with the body offers us the opportunity to take a proactive role as co-creators of our life. The Body Dialogue Process empowers us with a sense of choice, as opposed to the wear and tear of constant trouble-shooting. The body is a delegation of miraculous parts, each with their own unique personality, opinions and perspectives. Our mission should we decide to accept it, is to learn to listen.

Judith Tamar Stone created the Body Dialogue Process after being diagnosed with Rheumatoid Arthritis in her late twenties. Through her unwillingness subject her body to a lifelong sentence of medications and pain, she began to apply the theories of Voice Dialogue and the Psychology of Selves to her self- healing. Over the course of the past 18 years she has inspired and empowered others to learn the unique language of their own body.

More information on Judith Tamar Stone and The Body Dialogue Process can be found at www.voicedialogueconnection.com.

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Reed Between the Lions

Neil Meili

My mother's will
Was always stronger than my won't

My father's won't
Was always stronger than my will

Caretaker soft or Cowboy strong

How quick I learned to change my face
To face the faces that I faced

And

I can still spin that mirror now
So you can see the face you want to see

But neither you nor I will know

Which one is me.

The Therapist Practices Her Art

Neil Meili

Dorsey paints with people
Dips into their hearts
Where all colors
Have merged
To mud

Gently
Lays them out
Ultra violet to infra red
Spaces between clearly seen
And hands them back the brush.

Neil Meili, both above poems reprinted by permission from *Shrinking heads, Expanding hearts, the psychology poems* (2003)

An Example of Conscious Eating Selves Work

Mary Disharoon, MFT

The following is a series of eight Voice Dialogue sessions that a facilitator might use as a template when working with a client who wants to become a conscious eater. This series of sessions is imaginary, and shows how Voice Dialogue could be used with the issue of chronic weight-loss and weight-gain. In reality though, each self-system is unique and Voice Dialogue usually allows the process of self-discovery to unfold rather than planning it out. If these eight pairs of opposites are personally known to the facilitator, and kept in mind while facilitating, they can contribute to the discovery of a client's

unique set of selves – the primary ones that are keeping the status quo in place and the various disowned and undiscovered selves that are needed for change to occur.

Ruthie came to her first Voice Dialogue session with a plea – “Please help me get off this roller coaster of weight-loss and weight-gain that has plagued my life since high school. I’m sick of living this way and I really want to change this. Can you help me?”

The answer back was – “Yes! Voice Dialogue can definitely help you change this. You’ll be able to separate from the selves

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that are keeping this old pattern in place and open to the selves that will support you eating more

consciously.” So over the course of the next several months, Ruthie had a series of Voice Dialogue sessions. In each session, she talked

from a **Primary Self** – one that has unconsciously kept her in her weight-loss/weight-gain pattern. And in each session, she discovered and talked

from a **Disowned Self** – one that can help her stay more conscious and help her act differently.

Primary Selves	I	Disowned Selves
Emotional Eater	I	Inner Nurturer
Inner Critic	AWARE	Inner Wisdom
Diet Police	EGO	Intuitive Eater
Nutritional Dictator	PROCESS	Nutritional Guide
Exercise Extremist	I	Exercise Ally
Pusher	I	Aphrodite
Personal	I	Impersonal
Defeatist	I	Inner Coach

The experience Ruthie gained from talking from these opposite selves developed and strengthened her **Aware Ego process** and made it much easier for her to make healthy lifestyle choices.

In the **FIRST SESSION**, she spoke from her **Emotional Eater**, the part that gets her to eat unconsciously, with no thought in the moment to the consequences of this eating behavior. Ruthie took a lot of time hearing from this self because it had a lot to say. She discovered that it uses food to comfort, and to distract and even to sedate her. Ruthie began

to understand how this part manages her feelings by using food. Whenever she feels sad, lonely, bored, depressed, anxious, scared, frustrated, angry, awkward, guilty and even excited and happy, this part jumps in to help and then has a way of taking over.

Then she met an opposite and less developed inner self that she calls her **Inner Nurturer**. This part knows how to nurture Ruthie in an assortment of other ways besides using food. She likes to help Ruthie experience her feelings, rather than stuff them. She takes Ruthie on slow walks through her

neighborhood to look at all of the beautiful flowers, to light candles and take long relaxing baths, and to express her thoughts and feelings in a journal. She is always available when Ruthie needs comforting and offers a deep nurturing presence that is forever reliable.

In her **SECOND SESSION**, she talked from her **Inner Critic**, the part that is always criticizing her for over-eating. This part is constantly on her case to be different, and doesn't give her a moment's rest because it's always trying to motivate her to meet a certain standard.

The disowned, opposite self that Ruthie discovered was an Inner Wisdom part that can give her an internal experience of value and self-worth. The experience of this worthiness felt very authentic and unconditional. Ruthie was thrilled to be able to feel this part and to know that it would now be accessible to her.

In her **THIRD, FOURTH & FIFTH SESSIONS**, Ruthie met a trio of selves that work together to support a diet agenda, but actually doom her to repeat the weight-loss/weight-gain roller coaster ride. The

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first self she named the **Diet Police**. This part takes pride in being very strict and disciplined as it controls her food choices and portion sizes. Another self she named the **Nutritional Dictator** because it uses nutritional information to keep a tight grip on Ruthie's food choices. The third self she named her **Exercise Extremist** because it keeps her exercising and burning calories at a high rate of intensity. These three selves create a synergy that invariably leads her into burnout and the rebound effect of over-eating.

Then Ruthie discovered that she had three opposite inner selves that also work as a system, but these selves make sure Ruthie's food choices feel good in her body and that her exercise routine contributes to her overall health. The **Intuitive Eater** helps Ruthie to eat when she's hungry, stop when she's full and make food choices that bring her satisfaction and pleasure. The **Nutritional Guide** helps Ruthie make food decisions so that her body gets what it needs nutritionally. The **Exercise**

Ally helps Ruthie develop a healthy exercise routine and then motivates her to workout at a reasonable pace so she feels good in her body, now and into the future as she ages.

In her SIXTH SESSION, Ruthie let her inner **Pusher** speak. This self keeps her very busy, so she is able to accomplish a lot. But Ruthie can get pretty wound up, and quite often she'll start spinning out of control and then eat just to settle herself down. She was thrilled to discover her **Aphrodite** energy as an opposite. This self helps her to stay connected to her body senses and to appreciate the many pleasures that are part of every moment.

In her SEVENTH SESSION, Ruthie addressed her need to set limits with herself. She started by speaking from the part of her that keeps her energetically open – to her husband, to her kids, to her friends and co-workers, and to food. This **Personal self** helps her make connections with people. This has always been a special gift of hers to make other people feel warm and welcome. But this same openness, when applied to food, keeps her living without food

boundaries.

Limit setting is the gift of her Impersonal self, the part of her that can hold an energetic boundary – with people and with food. Ruthie has always thought this was a skill that most other people had, but not her. With Voice Dialogue, she was able to discover her own ability to set limits for herself, and with others.

In her EIGHTH SESSION, Ruthie spoke about how easily she can feel discouraged and she worried that this could eventually cause her to fall back into her old cycle of dieting and over-eating. So she talked from her **Defeatist**, a part that keeps her thinking she cannot change or that the changes won't last. This part undermines Ruthie's efforts with its negativity. But she discovered an opposite self that she called her **Inner Coach**, and this part is quite capable of rooting her on with positive encouragement as she secures the changes she wants for herself.

Each time Ruthie had a Voice Dialogue session, she developed a stronger Aware Ego capacity. She came to appreciate each of these inner selves

and what strengths and challenges they bring. And she also learned how to manage them all so she can make her own life decisions rather than letting one or several of the selves take control and run her.

This **Conscious Eating SelvesWork** helped Ruthie end her cyclical pattern of weight-loss and weight-gain. She now makes healthy choices for herself, fueled by an inner set of selves that offer her nurturing, worthiness, body awareness, health information, sensual pleasure, limit setting and encouragement.

Mary Disharoon, M.A., M.F.T offers Voice Dialogue facilitations in Petaluma and Santa Rosa, California and by phone. She welcomes you to her websites, HYPERLINK <http://www.marydisharoon.com> www.marydisharoon.com and HYPERLINK <http://www.voicedialoguecalifornia.com> www.voicedialoguecalifornia.com. Send questions and comments to HYPERLINK <mailto:MaryDish@comcast.net> MaryDish@comcast.net

Who's Doing (or not doing) Your Exercise?

Judith Hendin, PhD

I am fascinated by the interplay between selves and the body in everyday life), so I am taking a lighthearted look at a familiar life challenge: Getting the exercise your body needs for optimal health. I will be familiarizing you with the many different selves that have something to say on this subject. You will meet each self that can contribute to your exercise regimen—or lack of it—and so increase your consciousness of your own self-system.

It is vitally important to match your exercise with the energy of your inner selves, and that inner state fluctuates day to day, like the weather. Letting your exercise reflect the needs of your inner selves lets you breathe and flow more naturally in your own physical rhythms.

You'll find that boredom is minimized and the conscious dance of your many selves will promote health.

SELVES THAT URGE YOU TO EXERCISE

A group of selves urge you to get your quota of exercise. You can rely on these selves to remind you go to the gym or take your walk, and they all have your best interests at heart.

The **Responsible** voice says, "You really ought to exercise. You must take responsibility for your body and your health." This is the self that most people tap into when they face the dilemma of exercise. But many more players stand on the field.

When the **Pusher** puts exercise on its list, then exercise you must do.

You must get to the gym often, visit each weight machine, and take lots of classes. When the Pusher puts exercise on the agenda, there may be so much rush and anxiety to get it done, to squeeze it between appointments, that, although you set out to do a good thing for your body, the overall effect may add negative stress.

The **Health Monitor** gathers and evaluates the latest fitness information to ensure you follow the optimum exercise regimen. These days the Health Monitor is inundated with options—Pilates for core strength, elliptical machines for ease on the knees, glucosamine for rebuilding cartilage. Sometimes it is hard to remember what life was like before we had

so much information available.

The **Movement Monitor** observes your motion and corrects alignment to ensure your body is moving in optimum ways. Whether pumping iron or doing gentle yoga, the Movement Monitor is vigilant about good form. While this has obvious benefits, the downside is a Movement Monitor that takes over. My Movement Monitor is such a primary self that it tells me to align my body properly even when I'm trying to relax or go to sleep!

The **Inner Critic** has volumes to say about your exercise. "You didn't do it today, you lazy bum. You should have worked out longer. If you

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had stretched before you ran yesterday, your muscles wouldn't have cramped up." The Critic loves to compare us with others, so it will compare you to every other person in the gym. It is the Critic who looks in the gym mirror and sees every centimeter of possible imperfection. Actually, your Inner Critic is anxious about your wellbeing. It wants you to be attractive and healthy.

The inner **Cheerleader** braves when you've done a good job. "You worked up a sweat. That's great. Even though the class was hard, you finished it. Good for you," it says, figuratively patting you on the back.

SELVES THAT CRACK THE WHIP

We often pay a personal trainer or a class leader to play the role of these selves. These parts motivate us, yet with consciousness we can moderate between their demands and our body's needs in the moment.

In the American tradition of "better and better," the **Goal Setter** sets its sights

on ever-increasing heights. "These weights should go up at least five pounds per week." Or "In yoga, learn to do a full shoulder stand." The Goal Setter keeps us progressing, yet without our awareness, it can ignore your own body's capacity. As I got older, I needed to unhook from this part without guilt and allow myself to enjoy a slower walk or a shorter workout. Ultimately, my body has been happier.

The **Disciplinarian** sets a schedule to meet your goals (which, of course, may be escalating). It says, "You set out to work out three times a week, so three times a week it must be." No variations and no days off the routine are allowed. If you had planned to do the treadmill all week, and it's a gorgeous sunny day outside and your body would rather walk, the Disciplinarian may be inflexible and want to stay with the original plan.

The **Drill Sergeant** keeps you moving. "Hup, two, three, four! Ten more minutes on the bike. Sixteen more arm circles. Lift those knees. Come on!"

The **Competitor** slyly notices how many pounds the guy on the biceps machine is pressing and urges you to up the ante.

SELVES THAT SPICE IT UP

Exercise is not all work and sweat when you allow these spicy selves to have their say. Making room for these selves adds surprise and variety to an otherwise tiringly predictable exercise plan.

In juxtaposition to a planned schedule, **Spontaneity** wants to exercise when the spirit moves. Out of the blue, Spontaneity may walk in the house and yell, "Let's go dancing tonight."

The **Adventurer** seeks exciting, challenging ways to exercise. The Adventurer might say, "Instead of going to the pool, let's go swimming in the river today." Or "Let's ride the bike along that new trail." The Adventurer may need special gear and advance planning as it adds new flavors to exercise.

Sensual **Aphrodite** adds luxurious energy that sparkles in any exercise session. In dance, Aphrodite, in a

man or woman, loves the wafting arms of a ballet class, the sexy hip wiggles of a jazz class, or the intimacy of partnering in ballroom dancing. In the gym, invite your Aphrodite onto the treadmill and the body will be thrilled. Try it. By the way, Aphrodite may wear next to nothing at the gym or on the beach.

When your **Inner Child** becomes part of your exercise, a whole world opens up to you. You'll be absolutely amazed at how the world feels different. Rather than an obligatory march around the block, walking the dog becomes a romp. A stroll in the neighborhood becomes a magical experience when you let the Child see through your eyes. You notice different things, like cute markings on flowers or the fascinating grating over a neighbor's window. At the health club the Child may say, "I don't want to do the stair stepper. That's boring." I used to swim across a small lake for exercise. But one day an Irish setter jumped in with me, and my Inner Child was

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delighted as the dog and I paddled together. When I got tired, I—or my Inner Child—hung on to him and he carried me for a while. It changed exercise into bliss.

SELVES THAT ADD ANOTHER DIMENSION

While your body exercises, other selves in you can be fed at different levels, including the practicality of just getting the errands done.

The **Spiritual** self wants a form of exercise that promotes meditative peace, such as yoga or t'ai chi. Or it may want to commune with nature in a canoe on a pristine pond.

The **Warrior** loves the fierce exchange of energy in the battle of karate, kung fu or fencing.

The inner **Artist** may choose a ballet class in which beauty and musicality weave together in a noble art form that also provides exercise.

Practical loves the exercise that comes from doing what needs to get done. It votes to ride your bike to the store or

walk to the post office four miles away. When I lived in the woods of Nova Scotia, my Practical self enjoyed stacking and carrying logs and hauling water from the well—all in the fresh air. During travel, Practical carries luggage and opts for stairs rather than the escalator.

SELVES THAT ARE SOCIAL

Personal selves that enjoy the company of other people enliven an exercise routine.

The **Conversationalist** engages in repartee as it chats with companions while lifting weights at the gym. Walking or hiking together side by side gives this part a chance to talk.

The **Team Player** loves the camaraderie of volleyball, soccer, or any team sport.

The **Knower** makes sure that others acknowledge his expertise. The Knower strolls around the gym offering advice, whether welcome or not. A truly knowledgeable Knower can be a boon to any athlete. A strutting, uninformed Knower who wants to appear

insightful without substantial background becomes a prickly annoyance.

Notice Me thrives on recognition. Notice Me gets bored and lonely when someone else is not keeping it company or applauding its efforts. A personal trainer or attentive teacher gives this self comfort and confidence. The staff at my gym must be trained to acknowledge this self, for whenever someone walks in the door, the person behind the desk cheerily calls out, "Hi, how are you?" It makes me feel noticed, and it feels good.

SELVES WHO STOP THE DOING OF EXERCISE

These selves are just as valid and important as the selves that do exercise. They carry the opposite energy of the pro-exercise contingent, and may let you know when rest is more beneficial to your health than a workout. The more conscious you become of the entire family of selves that gives input on your exercise, the more choice you will have.

Carefree balks at routine and discipline and obligation. Often

the day is already too full of doings. The doing-dance-card is full. Many of us lead such full, responsible lives that our Carefree part needs somewhere to express itself, some way to hold the energy of, "I'm not going to follow a schedule for one more minute." If you find your Carefree self diverting your path away from exercise, try giving it another outlet. Don't call someone you were supposed to, or don't go to the store that day.

Being gives you respite from too much doing. It may say, "I don't want to exercise today," and, in fact, that may be healthier for your body than doing a workout! Every now and then, I will head out to the gym, but en route I hear the Being voice gently whisper, "I'd really rather just lounge on the sofa and nap." Although dressed and ready, I will sometimes turn the car around, drive home and snooze—and feel better for it.

On the other hand, the **Pusher** may appear in a different guise. Rather than urging you to exercise, it may say,

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“You cannot possibly fit exercise into the schedule today, or tomorrow, or all week for that matter. There is too much else to do!”

A WONDERFUL PHYSICAL DAY

Whew! And we thought exercising was simple! Here is an example of a day replete with selves that took me from the gym to the river.

It was a beautiful sunny Sunday. My partner and I were lazing around, not motivated to do much of anything. Then he showed me my horoscope and it said, “You’d better exercise if you want to keep your figure.” That immediately sparked my **Inner Critic**. My partner suggested we go biking at the Y. **Responsible** loved this idea, and in three minutes we were dressed and out the door. Heeding the **Disciplinarian** and the **Goal Setter**, we dutifully biked 25 minutes, and my **Movement Monitor** reminded us both to keep our heads high, our spines long, and our knees aligned. My **Notice Me** self liked having my partner there to see my efforts. His **Inner Child**

really wanted to have fun too, so after biking we played basketball. (We couldn’t remember the rules of one-on-one, so we made up silly rules as we went along, which our inner kids loved.) I won the first game, so my **Competitor** and **Cheerleader** were thrilled. When we went outside it was so hot, yet so beautiful, that my **Spontaneous** and **Adventurer** selves suggested we go to the river for a swim. He agreed. The body was thrilled with all of this, and afterwards **Aphrodite** stretched out on the shore, pulled the bathing suit straps off the shoulders, and soaked up the sun. My **Spiritual** self enjoyed communing with nature. What a marvelous day our bodies and our selves had.

In a society that urges you to exercise and gives you many rules to follow, you can enjoy more variety and spice when you allow your diverse family of inner selves to contribute to the effort. Your health will benefit, and your body will rejoice.

What selves do, or don’t do, your exercise?

Thanks to Mary Disharoon for her warm and clear feedback on this article.

Judith Hendin, Ph.D., N.M.T., directs the Conscious Body & Voice Dialogue Institute. She offers Voice Dialogue facilitations in Easton, PA and New York City, and by phone. She welcomes you to her website, HYPERLINK <http://www.consciousbody.com>

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And finally . . .

a message from Hal and Sidra Stone (reprinted by permission).

As we approach our

70th and 80th birthdays we feel that we have reached an important milestone in our lives. This is truly a time of transition for us. We are moving from the role of leaders to the role of active members of a richly complex and excitingly varied worldwide "Voice Dialogue Community." We have no plans to retire from our work in the world; instead we see ourselves as moving into the role of senior advisors.

We use the word "community" deliberately because we see this as a worldwide community of amazing individuals. We have traveled the world over, and wherever we have taught, we have met wonderful people. It is our hope that this meeting (Voice Dialogue Summer

Conference 2007 in Europe) will enable you to meet one another. The people we have met on our travels are individuals – they would be termed "cultural creatives – they are not the kinds of people who can easily be categorized or who fit into an ongoing collective. Most of them are not people who wish to be defined – or limited by a hierarchical system. And so it is that we think of you as coming together in a community rather than in an association.

We are looking forward eagerly to celebrating this next step in our lives with all of you. As we read the program for this summer conference and see the presentations that are being offered, we feel a deep sense of contentment. The work

we've begun has spread around the planet and each one of you has contributed something to its growth and its influence. Some of you have made dramatic and creative contributions and some of your contributions have been more subdued. But we know that our/your work has affected others in many ways. And for all of use, sometimes we can infer the impact we've had, and sometimes this impact will never be known directly.

We applaud you all – the new generation of teachers and healers. We look forward to seeing you this summer, and we wish you Godspeed on your journeys.

—Hal and Sidra