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FAMILY PX:

EXPLORING THE PERSONALITIES OF A DISSOCIATIVE
(DI) SYSTEM



A collection of visual arts portraits
by Bernadine Fox

FAMILY PX: ARTIST STATEMENT

The concept of Dissociative Identities (formerly Multiple Personalities) has been embraced in pop culture by both those who believe it exists and those who deny it altogether. Unfortunately, the issue is seeped in controversy. *United States of Tara* attempted to give an authentic demonstration of how DI manifests in a domestic scenario, albeit with quite polarized personality-types. Other TV shows like *Law & Order* and *Criminal Minds* have exploited it as a means of solving impassable crime stories with DI as key to the actions of the serial killer or child abuser. *Doom Patrol* perhaps is the TV series that comes closest to representing the multi-faceted and complicated nature of dissociative identities and their relationships. Understanding DI requires accepting a paradigm shift in how we perceive the human condition and mind.



As you know, dissociation is not about crazed murderers or individuals plagued by drastic deviations in character, voice, and dress. It is about the normal human condition coping with life despite dealing with extreme childhood trauma that was, and continues to be, untenable and, otherwise, is unbearable. The average person is singular and has different tenants to their personality (i.e., how one behaves in church vs. at a party). In DI, the plural system of personalities embodies their strengths, life skills, and weaknesses. All share the same body and the same life. Together, they navigate the human experience albeit at times with some difficulty. But they can and do evolve into a strong cohesive group of identities who work together to live as good a life as possible for them.

To counter the misconceptions proffered by popular culture, Bernadine, a visual artist with DI who has worked as a peer support worker with 1000's of folks with DI, has crafted this art series entitled "*Family Px: Exploring the Personalities of a Dissociative (DI) System*" wherein she created portraits of typical (albeit completely fabricated) personalities within DI. It is not uncommon for dissociative systems to have as many as 51 personalities or more. Fox examines how each personality's job co-exists within their internal environment and, ultimately, how they assist the system to operate in the external world. These portraits include young/old, female/male, and human/non-



Images: Gus & Verena from Family PX

human personalities.

FAMILY PX: MORE BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Bernadine lives with well dissociative identities. Inspired to represent her lived experience in art, she began producing portraits of typical types of personalities: infant, rescuers, all-knowing etc. She had one rule: they couldn't be of anyone in her system nor from any system of the plural people she had worked with and/or knew. Soon she had several portraits. To be authentic as personalities, they had to have relationships with each other – so she began plotting that out. And as the number of personalities grew, she soon had a map that went from pages in a sketchbook to taking up an entire very large wall in her studio. The map included images of the portraits noting names (or other signifiers), functions, and relationships. It became crucial in keeping the system straight. For unlike with her own system, she found it almost impossible to recall names and if she could get that right, she often couldn't remember what they did or how they fit into the whole system. She easily misnamed them or misidentified them in other ways. She was forced to rely heavily on that map to create what eventually became 51 personalities. What became obvious was just how difficult it was to make-up a DI system even when one has personally experienced dissociation. To fabricate one, as is often the criticism, is unlikely to be successful especially with those professionals trained to recognize dissociative identity systems.

Each portrait is framed in the same 10" x 10" black shadow box. Each includes a tag that identifies the personality with their name, approximate age, and function within the DID system which can be, if desired, installed with each piece. These portraits include digitally altered images, photographs, and objects personal to each personality. When installed, along with the Family Px Album, the viewer is allowed to step up to and view the dissociative system and understand the subtle intricacies and nuances at play, how this person's life experiences and childhood trauma dictate how they must cope within their world, along with how they goal is *always* to survive.

Family Px has been exhibited in Vancouver BC at Gallery Gachet and the Britannia Art Gallery as well as having several of the portraits included in group shows. Most recently the portraits of *Perry*, *Verona*, and *Bertha* were included in the *Gifts of Madness* touring exhibition this year in Penticton, BC and then in Vancouver, BC.



Mapping Family Px

WHO IS BERNADINE FOX: BIO

Bernadine has always used her life experiences to inform her creative work, which often reflects the realities of the contemporary woman's life. Bernadine studied at the Alberta College of Art and Douglas College of BC before obtaining her BFA from the Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design (now Emily Carr University) in Vancouver, BC. After graduating, Bernadine worked as a Film Producer/Production Manager for both film and animation projects. Upon leaving the film industry she began work as a peer support worker and mental health advocate for victims of violence. A physical disability had her returning to her art: oil on canvas and mixed media assemblage. Bernadine is recognized as an established artist whose work has been in many juried exhibitions: solo, duo, and group and held in private collections in Canada, the USA, New Zealand, and Australia. She has volunteered her expertise on the boards of various art organizations, including Women in Film, CARFAC BC, Gallery Gachet, and the Society for Disability Arts and Culture (host of the international KickstART Festival). She is a signatory to the Canadian Artists Representation Copyright Collective.

Bernadine is an award-winning mental health advocate with about 30 years experience. She created an innovative, syndicated radio program that focuses on mental health and is now in its fifth year. *ReThreading Madness* looks through the lens of those with lived experience and can boast of an audience across the globe and recently won the Breaking Barriers through the NCRA.

When not making art or producing radio, Bernadine teaches drawing, curates exhibitions, organizes art and cultural events, and volunteers her time as a peer support worker and social activist around issues pertaining to the lives of women and children. She currently lives in a forest with one of her grandchildren and three cats.



Image: ReThreading Madness tile with Bernadine Fox

REVIEWS:

CURATOR, HARUKO OKANA: BRITANNIA ART GALLERY

Premiered in the gallery March of 2012. It opened to a packed house and garnered positive responses including "stunning, shocking, totally amazing, very creative and innovative." Bernadine approaches DID not from an illness position but from a wellness model. Visitors took time to read the name tags accompanying each piece and several patrons returned repeatedly. Fox combines a sense of history with an intimacy of human struggle. The body of the work is intense, packed with visual narrative, with voices (both muted but insistent) that speak not of illness but of the strength and ingenuity of the human psyche.

CURATOR, KAGAN GOH: PENTICTON ART GALLERY

The three portraits (Bertha, Verena, and Perry) exhibited in Gifts of Madness were well-received and provoked curiosity, intrigue and interest in an, oftentimes, little known or misunderstood mental health condition. Not only does Bernadine's artwork educate the viewer, but more so illuminates and broadens their understanding in an intellectual, esthetic and emotional way through the beauty of her artistry. Due to the overwhelmingly positive reception of Family Px, these pieces were also chosen by a jury to be featured at the Gifts of Madness touring art exhibition.

CURATOR, PIERRE LEICHER: CONNECTION SALON

Art reveals humanity to itself. Bernadine Fox's series of portraits in 10x10" shadow boxes ... reveals many faces of a human mind. For the past 15 years I have worked as a multidisciplinary artist with a focus on the environment and mental health. Before this I worked for 35 years as a psychiatrist and quit because I could no longer ethically work within the health care system. ... Each of Bernadine's exquisitely created boxes challenge this system. They courageously open windows into the artist mind making her vulnerable. But this is how Bernadine through her art draws attention to the multiple faces of the personality within each of us. It is the embodied knowledge art can give, at its best.

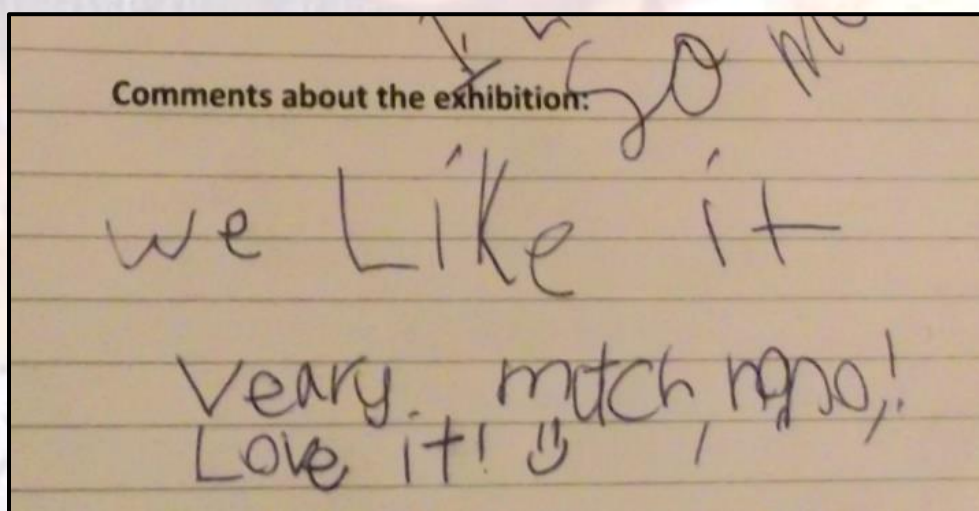


Image: Comment closeup from Guest Book at Britannia Art Gallery

SPECIFICS:



Installation of several portraits of Family Px at Gallery Gachet

51 portraits with name tags

10" x 10" framed in shadow boxes

Mixed media assemblage

Family Album (book) which has all 51 portraits & Artist statement

Price: \$15,000 (Cdn)



Sample Name Tag: Bertha

Price does not include applicable taxes or shipping costs
(packaging, transportation, duties)

Does not include Installation but this can be negotiated if required

Will require ~ 55 sq ft to install

For example, on a 30' wall they could be installed in 2 rows of with 25/26 each row

CONTACT:

Bernadine Fox

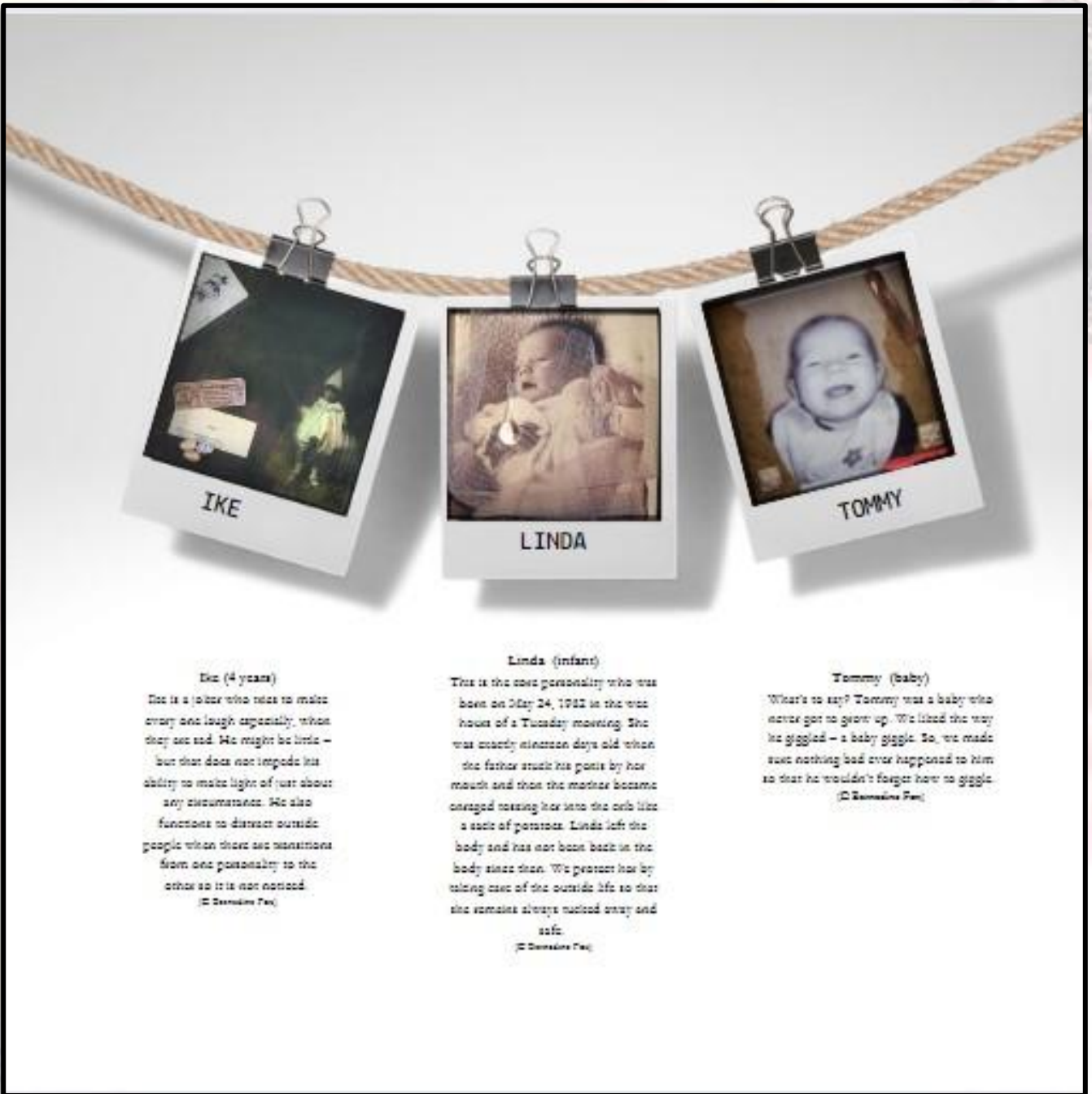
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For more information on **Family Px** or Bernadine Fox see
www.bernadinefox.ca



Doreen



IKE

Ike (4 years)
 Ike is a joker who likes to make every one laugh especially when they are sad. He might be little - but that does not impede his ability to make light of just about any circumstance. He also functions to distract outside people when there are tensions from one personality to the other so it is not noticed.
 © Bernadine Fox

LINDA

Linda (infant)
 This is the core personality who was born on May 24, 1962 in the wee hours of a Tuesday morning. She was nearly nineteen days old when the father struck his pants by her mouth and then the mother became overjoyed tossing her into the crib like a sack of potatoes. Linda left the body and has not been back in the body since then. We protect her by taking care of the outside life so that she remains always noticed away and safe.
 © Bernadine Fox

TOMMY

Tommy (baby)
 What's to say? Tommy was a baby who never got to grow up. We liked the way he giggled - a baby giggle. So, we made sure nothing bad ever happened to him so that he wouldn't forget how to giggle.
 © Bernadine Fox

FAMILY PX: THE PERSONALITIES OF A DISSOCIATIVE (DID) SYSTEM

Color version of images can be viewed at this private link
<http://www.bernadinefox.ca/family-px-buyers-package.html>



Tommy (baby)

What's to say? Tommy was a baby who never got to grow up. We liked the way he giggled – a baby giggle. So, we made sure nothing bad ever happened to him so that he wouldn't forget how to giggle. (© Bernadine Fox)



Sarah (9 years)

Sarah's favourite place in the whole world was the backyard with her bubbles. So long as she focused on making them and then watching them float up higher and higher into the sky, the other stuff going on around her could be ignored. (© Bernadine Fox)



Mary (9 months)

Poor Mary. Born into a family that saw children as commodities able to generate money. She didn't know this yet. Her debt was being incurred and soon, someone would come to collect and that happy face would turn to sadness. (© Bernadine Fox)



Angela (15 years)

Angela also experienced the sexual abuse. However, she was stronger than the others who often became overwhelmed. She would step forward and protect them by doing whatever was asked. For a long time, some inside thought she was strange and avoided her because it seemed like she liked to be hurt. But they realized she pretended to like it so that it wouldn't be as bad and so that the adults doing the hurting outside wouldn't know that she was protecting the little ones. (© Bernadine Fox)



Audrey (13 years)

Like Marsha, Audrey dealt with the sexual abuse. Audrey was able to cope with the pain "down there" involved in those assaults. She is 13 years old in this photo but she came when the body was 8 years old. Consequently, when Cheryl was about to give birth to her baby, it was Audrey who came into the body to deal with the pain of childbirth. This division of labour, also meant that the pain did not trigger off memories of the sexual abuse. (© Bernadine Fox)



Bear

Thank God for Bear! He is big and hairy and can stand on his back legs and growl furiously and loudly. When he is mad, he is even bigger and scarier. Bear only makes an appearance when someone is going to hurt Dottie. Bear loves Dottie and will do anything to make sure that no one ever hurts her again. So, if you intend to harm any one of these guys – but especially Dottie - watch out for Bear! (© Bernadine Fox)



Bertha (old)

No one knows how old Bertha is. "Could be older than time itself," they think when she is not around. If you wanna know something about what is going on inside, all you gotta do is ask Bertha. Just don't get on her bad side. She knows everyone – well at least everyone we know, she knows. (© Bernadine Fox)



Camille (19 years)

Camille discovered at a very young age the joy of making marks on pieces of paper or of molding bits of things into other more spectacular things. She is an artist and uses her art to not only help the system cope with the stress of being a little kid, but to also keep track of memories. To do this, Camille must spend a lot of time scrutinizing how things actually look. Because of that, many people think she is just a daydreamer. (© Bernadine Fox)



Cheryl (17 years)

Cheryl is a teenager. She hangs out with her boyfriend, George all the time. She and George mess around but never went past 2nd base. George often assumes they will go farther because, unbeknownst to her, Sherry and he have been "going all the way" for a long time now. Cheryl got pregnant and doesn't understand how that happened. Her parents forced her to marry George. Like with getting pregnant, sometimes she wakes up with bruises on her body or a hurt lip and she doesn't know how it happened. (© Bernadine Fox)



Crybabies (baby)

Everyone cries. But when it is not OK to cry ('cause you'll get "something to cry about") we send these two off into the back where they can wail without being noticed or heard. This way, it is easier for folks like Darin or others to stay on the outside and do what they need to do which includes not crying. (© Bernadine Fox)



Dale (35 years)

Dale is the internal engineer. He is responsible for designing and creating the objects that create the dissociative barriers and the actual storage compartments for memories or feelings. Dale did not go to university to learn how to do this. But he does a fine job of making sure that walls and containers are built sturdy. (© Bernadine Fox)



Darin (5 years)

Darin is a boy. Not a girl. Darin likes boy things. He finds all kinds of treasures and hides them in his hiding spot where no one can find them. He spends a lot of time looking at and touching these treasures. He likes how they feel in his fingers. Boys don't cry. Darin comes forward to help out when someone is gonna get punished for crying and they have to stop. He knows how not to cry. (© Bernadine Fox)



Doreen (16-30 years)

Like Dorothy, Doreen loved (LOVED!) school. Came at grade 11 and was around right through university. She loves learning and challenging her own idea and thoughts. She was, and remains, a voracious reader. The web has replaced the library as her most favourite place to hang out. When anyone needs to know something, like how to bake a cake, where Africa is, or the principles of quantum mechanics, they always come to Doreen to find the answers: she has them all. Doreen dressed conservatively desperately trying to stop the boys from thinking that she wanted to hang out with them, kiss them, or do other things with them. Doreen did not know about Sherry. After university, Doreen passed the bar and became a lawyer in a small local firm. (© Bernadine Fox)



Dorothy (10 years)

OMG! Dorothy loved school and she was good at it. She loved writing essays, figuring out math problems, making demonstration models, and studying for tests. Mostly she loved when she got a test back and found out she got another "A." Dorothy started out helping Laura with school and eventually did more than her. (© Bernadine Fox)



Dottie (3 years)

Dottie was a presenting personality. That meant she predominantly held an outside position in the system and coped with a range of necessary activities. For instance, Dottie learned to eat, walk, talk, have baths, play with the cat, and walk beside her mom and dad down the street. She also learned that some of the rules included not crying, not making noise, not giggling too loud, not making a mess, and not making a fuss when she was told to go to bed. (© Bernadine Fox)



Ery

Plain and simpct.) that no one else inside ever wants to feel and absorbs them whenever they come up. Ery is the embodiment of the feeling called "afraid." (© Bernadine Fox)



Georgia (1.5 year)

Everyone knew that Georgia was still very small. Even when she was just learning to walk, outside folks were already making her do things that she didn't like. Someone decided that helping her learn to walk might help her get away. So a bunch of us helped her every day. She got pretty good at it. (© Bernadine Fox)



Gopa (Unknown)

We are not sure if Gopa is a guy or a girl. This one doesn't have a body and we only know when Gopa is around by the feeling we get in our gut and the pressure that happens on the right side of our head. Gopa is important. Sometimes it is necessary to become invisible. But Gopa also has a perspective on life that can only come when one is not hampered by the physicality of being human. (© Bernadine Fox)



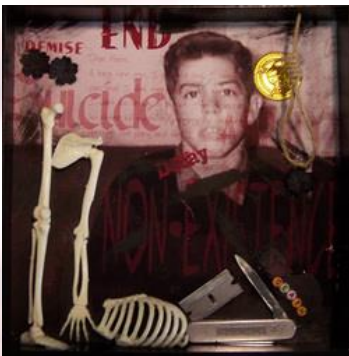
Ike (4 years)

Ike is a joker who tries to make every one laugh. Especially, when they are sad. He might be little – but that does not impede his ability to make light of just about any circumstance. He also functions to distract outside people when there are transitions from one personality to the other so it is not noticed. (© Bernadine Fox)



Ira Moria (3 years)

Ira Moria was named after her very best friend who died after being hit by a car as she crossed the road. Everyone missed her so very much. The idea of escaping the pain that they went through by just being dead was easy for everyone. Dead felt good. Everyone inside protected this part that lay dead in a very protected area. (© Bernadine Fox)



Jabez (14 years)

Jabez just wants to die. That's all he thinks about, all he works on, and all he spend his time on. He has several plans that he considers fool-proof. Jabez has tried to do this on a couple of occasions. He only failed cause other personalities (like Bertha) kept interfering. They would either block him from getting into the body by locking him in an internal room or by taking over before he could complete his task. Ok, so the plan was fool-proof – figuring out how to get them to leave him alone was another issue. The other thing he would do was whenever George (outside husband to Cheryl) was beating up Jean or Cheryl Jabez would step in hoping that George might kill him. (© Bernadine Fox)



Jean (20 years)

Jean, like any good mom, takes care of the children inside and sometimes the outside ones. She makes sure that all the kids are fed, washed, in bed on time, and that they keep out of trouble and are hustled off to safe internal territory when bad things are happening outside. She is very gentle and soft and always knows what to say to make them feel better, safe. She always takes care of the kids and comes to their aid when they are sick or scared or hurt. Along with Cheryl and Rhonda, Jean is also a battered woman. She knew that George (outside husband) hit them, but never stuck around to see what happened. (© Bernadine Fox)



Laura (12 years)

Laura is a presenting personality who learned about life through board games of strategy. If only she could perfect the application of them in the outside life which always seemed way more complicated. She arrived at 8 years during Elementary school around Grade 4 and went on to Junior High School. She represents the first absolute division between those who knew about the sexual abuse and those who dealt with the normal day-to-day life on the outside. Laura knows nothing about how others are being sexually abused. (© Bernadine Fox)



Linda (infant)

This is the core personality who was born on May 24, 1962 in the wee hours of a Tuesday morning. She was exactly nineteen days old when the father stuck his penis by her mouth and then the mother became enraged tossing her into the crib like a sack of potatoes. Linda left the body and has not been back in the body since then. We protect her by taking care of the outside life so that she remains always tucked away and safe. (© Bernadine Fox)



Madison (35 years)

One day, a few of the kids were enthralled watching their friend's father comfort her after a fall. His name was Madison. As they longingly watched how he lovingly enveloped her and took care of her owie an inside-Madison was created. So, now when the lil ones get hurt, he comes forward to care for their wounds, He protects them when they are in danger and takes them away inside. When all seems lost he comes along and wraps them up in his big arms and tells them silly stories. Madison is very, very tall and has a big voice that booms when he is upset for the kids. Some of the girls tho' are still afraid of him cause he is a boy. So they ask for Jean. (© Bernadine Fox)



Marley (3.5 years)

Marley loves to dance and wears her dance costume everywhere. In fact, no one can get her to take it off. The music lifts her little soul and makes her happy especially when people around her are fighting using loud scary voices. (© Bernadine Fox)



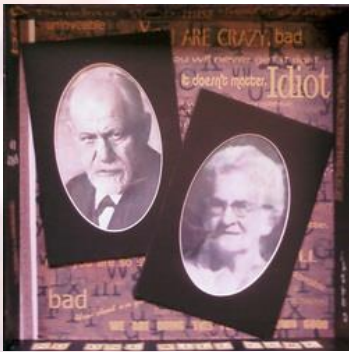
Marni (13 years)

This is a younger photo of Marni. Now, she is really old: maybe even a hundred years or so. She started out taking care of the younger kids, but now she oversees many of the folks inside. She knows stuff and can make decisions that are good for everyone. So, we let her make decisions. She is tough as nails and what she says goes! (© Bernadine Fox)



Marsha (8 years)

Marsha came at 5 years of age to help the lil ones who found it difficult to cope with going to elementary school. However, Marsha also had been one of the personalities who experienced the sexual abuse and trying to juggle dealing with school and the stuff happening at home was too much for Marsha. Eventually she moved back and someone else came forward to deal with going to school and she continued to deal with the stuff going on at home. (© Bernadine Fox)



Matilda & John (old)

These two old goats are scary. They reprimand the kids to keep them in line. "Spare the rod spoil the child" is their favourite motto. They punish by starving or withholding certain foods, sending off a constant barrage of negative comments, corporal punishment with the strap, paddle, belt or whatever is handy. They can spew off insults or running commentaries on what the others inside are doing wrong: stupid, good for nothing, worthless, no wonder no one loves you, etc. etc. Sometimes, they would act this way towards the outside children. The inside feared them and it took awhile for everyone to understand that these folks cared about them and didn't want them to be in trouble. Eventually, they learned to help in more loving way. (© Bernadine Fox)



Maxine (20 years)

Maxine is a young woman who sits between Sherry and Bruce and is mostly not sure if she is a woman or man. She struggles with gender identity issues. Although she was "born" a woman she feels like a man and many times finds herself very attracted to her girl friends. Helps with work and graduated with Doreen from university. She smokes, plays poker, drinks beer and helps Doreen with her law practice. (© Bernadine Fox)



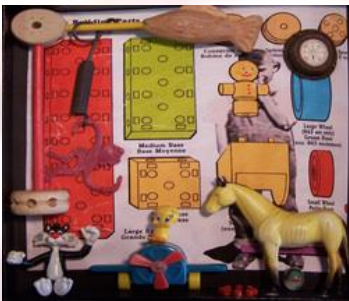
Millicent (old)

Millicent makes all the internal rules. She has been around longer than anyone we know (inside or out). She is very stern and doesn't have much time for being upset or crying. When she says something goes this way or that – it does. No one argues with Millicent. They just do as they are told. Millicent keeps a record of all the events that occur so that this can be fed to whoever is on the outside dealing with the world (presenting personality) if it becomes necessary. (© Bernadine Fox)



Nathan

Nathan learned to tell time at 7 years of age. He learned it so well that he is able to tell the exact time of day, any day, regardless of whether or not there is a clock around that he can reference. Nathan loves clocks and time pieces. He collects them all the time even if they are broken. Nathan's job is to remind others, especially those upfront, about their appointments and other time-related activities such as waking up, watching TV shows, getting to class on time, etc. etc. (© Bernadine Fox)



Nobody (7 years)

Nobody was very shy and didn't talk to too many folks inside or out. We could never get a good photo of him. He liked being by himself, always had his hand over his mouth and wanted to be alone. He worked in the garage fixing things. Liked animals too. Horses were his favourite and sometimes he would sneak off to the track and hang out there just to be near them. Anything but being with people was just fine with him. Nobody had experienced sodomy of which he told no one (inside or out). (© Bernadine Fox)



Perry (30 years)

Perry protects knowledge or memory storage by guarding or suppressing information, dissociated memory, knowledge, or feelings. He guards the entrances to different parts of the system(s) and special levels or rooms. Perry ensures that some personalities either cannot get outside or to certain places within the system and also ensures that outside individuals (friends or therapists) do not have access to parts of the inner system and/or personalities. He will signal "danger" if walls will be breached or if personalities are being contaminated by accessing memories they shouldn't have. (© Bernadine Fox)



Poppa (old)

Poppa is very wise old man who loves children but never hurts them like some other grown-ups do. He knows how to fix problems. In fact, he is so smart, I don't think there is a problem he doesn't know how to solve once he puts his mind to it. Mostly, he makes sure the kids are okay. (© Bernadine Fox)



Rachel (15 years)

Rachel is one of those prim and proper types. She never does anything wrong. She never breaks a rule and comes forward when the rules absolutely must be followed regardless of what those rules are. Most of us can't stand going to church but Rachel adores it. She has learned and memorized the scriptures. The parents say we must eat liver. It grosses us all out but Rachel will sit down and eat the liver. (© Bernadine Fox)



Rhonda (18 years)

When Sherry got pregnant with Cheryl's boyfriend George, Rhonda is the one who decided to have the baby and, consequently, married George. She didn't actually give birth to "Willow" the baby – she just became the mommy to her. Rhonda was the presenting personality when the baby was born on Aug 7th, 1980 until 1986 when Willow went off to school. (© Bernadine Fox)



Sherry (17 years)

Sherry dates a lot of boys. She often hangs out with George (Cheryl's boyfriend). Unbeknownst to Cheryl, they go way past 2nd base. But Sherry goes way past 2nd base with lots of boys. George got mad about that – but Sherry doesn't care. He was Cheryl's boyfriend, anyway. Eventually, Cheryl married George – but Sherry didn't. Sometimes Sherry took money from some of these guys to help Doreen pay for the tuition at university. (© Bernadine Fox)



Tilly (6 years)

There were many many times that folks were asked to do grown-up things long before they had even grown out of their baby fat. Tilly hated them all and decided at 6 years old that she (like Peter Pan) would never grow up. (© Bernadine Fox) Poem from "Now We are Six" by A. A. Milne E.P.Dutton & Company NY 1927 "The End" (p102). (© Bernadine Fox)



Verena (4 years)

Verena loves music it is in her bones and makes her body move to the rhythms that filter in through her ears making her brain forget anything she might have seen or experienced that is painful or scary. Music made it all go away. (© Bernadine Fox)



Vernon (old)

Vernon is essential an internal janitor. His job is to maintain the internal walls and barriers along with keeping things on the inside cleaned up and repaired. No one wants inside folks tripping over memories that they shouldn't have. He will alert Perry if the dissociative walls have been breached. When there has been a dissociative spill, he will clean it up and help Dale and Perry get everything put back where it belongs. Vernon has lots of tools, hooks and clasps. (© Bernadine Fox)



Young Bear (adult)

Young Bear is native and shares a spirituality that honours the inter-connectedness of all living things (including all personalities). He helps everyone see how each part is valuable regardless of what their function is (good or bad). (© Bernadine Fox)



Florence (14 - adult)

Seeing an outside doctor was frowned upon in her family because they had a duty to report suspected childhood abuse. Rarely were they allowed to see one. From a tender age of 14 years, Florence studied the human body and learned about injury and disease along with home-treatment options. (© Bernadine Fox)



Duerf (adult)

Duerf studied the long-term consequences of severe, childhood, sexual trauma. As few psychologists, therapists, and/or counsellors truly understood the nature of being traumatized. Duerf figured out how it impacted on each part and the whole. He took what was an External Locus of Control influenced by dissociative chaos and implemented a strong Internal Locus of Control within the personalities. (© Bernadine Fox)



Twiggy (12 years)

So often being sexually traumatized and exploited leaves one feeling out of control. Sometimes hanging on to one form of control (eating just 4 crackers per day) allows one to believe they will survive. (© Bernadine Fox)



Scott (25 years)

There is always a need for someone whose ability at seeing everything, identifying key signifiers and connecting the dots allows the whole to stay safe. Scott is always on alert and vigilant. He has an uncanny ability to recall details and is skilled at interpreting what is happening around him. (© Bernadine Fox)



Sweet (adult)

Sweet kept a log and plotted out how certain bits of learning were taught to certain parts through repetitive trauma and, consequently, he was able to plan and monitor the deconstruction of that same learning during the healing process. This was essential for changing future behaviour. (© Bernadine Fox)



Opal (14 years)

Many professionals and others perceive cutting as self-mutilation or self-harm. Opal understood it differently. Florence tried to explain to her that cutting released dopamine which would dull physical pain. All Opal knew is that if others were under extreme emotional duress, her cutting made it go away so that they could survive. She cut to help others feel better. (© Bernadine Fox)



Donald (3 years)

There are many ways that being deaf is useful. It stops one from hearing things one simply doesn't want to know. And, it helps to insulate others from the world around them when it was overwhelming. Sometimes getting close to Donald was helpful. (© Bernadine Fox)



Colt Percie Scholes (CPS) (adult)

CPS studied pharmaceuticals and other forms of medication. He learned how they were processed in the body and was able to assist at times in making sure certain medications got to, or were kept away, from certain personalities. (© Bernadine Fox)



Gus (25 years)

Gus loves food. He loves everything about food: the colours, the textures, the multitude of tastes, hot or cold, sweet or spicy. He doesn't care to know (like cutting) that eating could also release dopamine and help everyone inside feel better. He just loved food. (© Bernadine Fox)