

THE
DAVIS FOUNDATION

FOR PROVIDING
EMOTIONAL COMFORT

Letter of April 21, 2004

Dear Reader,

Our Inner Guides may communicate with us by finger signals, automatic handwriting, and/or inner thought if they want to. But will they? How do they decide? And how are they able to do it?

An Inner Guide is similar in some ways to the alters that develop in people with Dissociative Identity Disorder (formerly known as Multiple Personality Disorder). But there are important differences. An alter is created when a child is repetitively exposed to an overwhelming trauma, such as sexual abuse. During these experiences, the child's mental apparatus can find no *true* or *partial solution* to the situation, so a *false solution* is generated. A double pathway originates. In one branch, a new mental pathway is created with its own sense of identity. It may be an aggressive entity: "You can't hurt me because I am bigger and meaner than you are. I will kill you." Or it may be a promiscuous personality: "I'm not bothered by this, I like sex." These are obviously false solutions because the child can't kill her attacker and she doesn't like what is transpiring. Out of awareness, in the other branch of the double pathway, the disequilibrium-without-solution (the traumatic event) continues.

With repetition of the trauma, as when a child lives with an adult who regularly abuses her, the new pathway enlarges with each experience and develops a mind of its own. The false solution is adaptive at the moment it is created because it is a response to overwhelming trauma. It becomes problematic later, as it is evoked in situations that are associatively related to the original trauma. The aggressive alter may attack people who resemble the past tormenter. The promiscuous alter may respond to sexual feelings by seeking sex with strangers. When an alter is evoked and acts in the world, it feels real because it experiences perceptions directly during the time that it is "out." The more often it is evoked, and the more experience it has being "out," the greater its sense of identity and purpose becomes. People with Dissociative Identity Disorder have had a number of different kinds of extreme trauma, generating various types of false solutions. Those that are a response to a frequently experienced type of trauma will become well developed. Others, responses to less frequent kinds of trauma, will become small personality fragments.

An Inner Guide does not originate from trauma, but simply from a wish for it to come into existence. We wish for something in the mind that is not us, something that does not have our sense of identity. We wish for a certain type of "Other." There is no true or partial solution to this stimulus, so the mind generates a false solution: the origination of a new mental pathway, an Inner Guide pathway. Unlike an alter, the



The Davis Foundation for
Providing Emotional Comfort
30 North Michigan Avenue
Suite 1125
Chicago, IL 60602

Tel: (312) 230-0114
Fax: (312) 230-0168
www.davis-foundation.org
info@davis-foundation.org

Inner Guide has no negative feeling or intent. By definition, it feels only comfort, a sense of its own identity, and the wish to help. But how can it communicate with us?

Our minds contain many mental pathways and any one of them can initiate thought or movement when evoked. A man considers the income tax papers on his desk. One part of his mind thinks, "I need to do my taxes," but another mental pathway thinks, "I'd rather play golf today." Similarly when an Inner Guide communicates by inner thought it is simply expressing the feeling or idea in its own mental pathway. The man is aware that both thoughts are his but because our Inner Guides are in a mental pathway that is not part of our own identity, we experience their thoughts as not ours. If a thought of our Inner Guide's coincides with our own opinion, we may wonder whether that thought is our own or our Inner Guide's. Sometimes it is clear because the thought is one that we never would have thought of ourselves. If we are unsure we can ask for a finger signal for confirmation. This is more definitive than thought because it provides a physical sensation.

But how can an Inner Guide cause a finger to rise or a hand to spontaneously write? In the same way that the man acts on his choices. If the thought that he must do his taxes prevails, he sits down at his desk and begins. If the wish to play golf prevails, he gets his clubs and heads for the golf course. Because the Inner Guide is not part of our own sense of identity, its physical actions don't feel like ours. They feel spontaneous.

Sometimes an Inner Guide communicates by presenting an image in the mind's eye, or simply a feeling. It does this by choosing the perception that it wishes to convey and linking it with our sense of its identity.

Some of us experience communication with our Inner Guides and others don't. If not, why not? There are two possibilities. For some, the prospect of communication is so overwhelming that the mental apparatus protects against it by keeping it out of awareness. For others, the Inner Guide has determined that it can work most efficiently if it remains silent for a period of time.

If you cannot elicit finger signals, automatic writing, or inner thought from your Inner Guide, don't worry. Its work on your behalf is just as effective. Even as it works silently you will experience positive changes.

QUESTION:

A reader writes that he was temporarily unable to find some papers that were right in his briefcase. He thought he had searched it thoroughly but then realized that he had missed one compartment. He asks whether his search was blocked in some way by the Inner Guide.

ANSWER:

Yes. Locked-in habit patterns can be unlocked and replaced by better ones only during moments in which we experience a disequilibrium that causes a *complex stimulus* which is associatively related to the habit pattern to be changed. Although relevant disequilibria may occasionally happen by chance, an Inner Guide can cause them to occur systematically. It may cause any number of minor mishaps for this purpose. It may cause us to forget things, misplace things, drop things, lose things, or experience minor injuries. (A stubbed toe creates many

disequilibrations: every time one hesitates while taking a step, a complex stimulus occurs.) Dropping something or hurting oneself is an action that the Inner Guide takes, just like raising a finger or writing. Forgetting something or not seeing something that is in plain view occurs when the Inner Guide chooses a false solution: blocking out a thought or a perception. Although these events are momentarily annoying, they occur for a good cause: to efficiently solve our problems and end our discomforts. As one gets used to these minor mishaps, and understands their purpose, it is even possible to find them amusing.

I welcome your questions and comments, and will publish as many of them as possible. I look forward to hearing from you, either by post or at info@davis-foundation.org. If you would like to be anonymous, just let me know.

Cordially,

Judith M. Davis