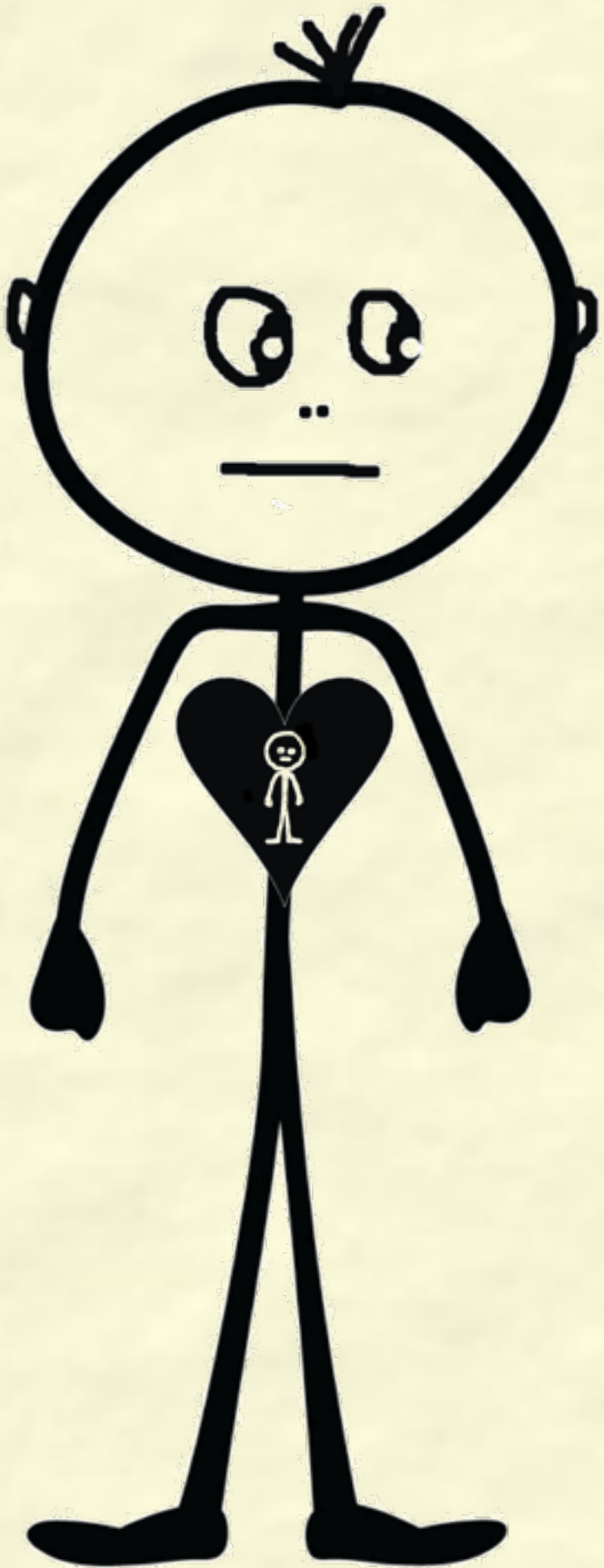


*Althea Hayton*



**YOU TOO  
MIGHT BE  
A WOMB  
TWIN  
SURVIVOR  
IF.....**

*Stories for teenagers*

# YOU TOO MIGHT BE A WOMB TWIN SURVIVOR IF....

## Introduction

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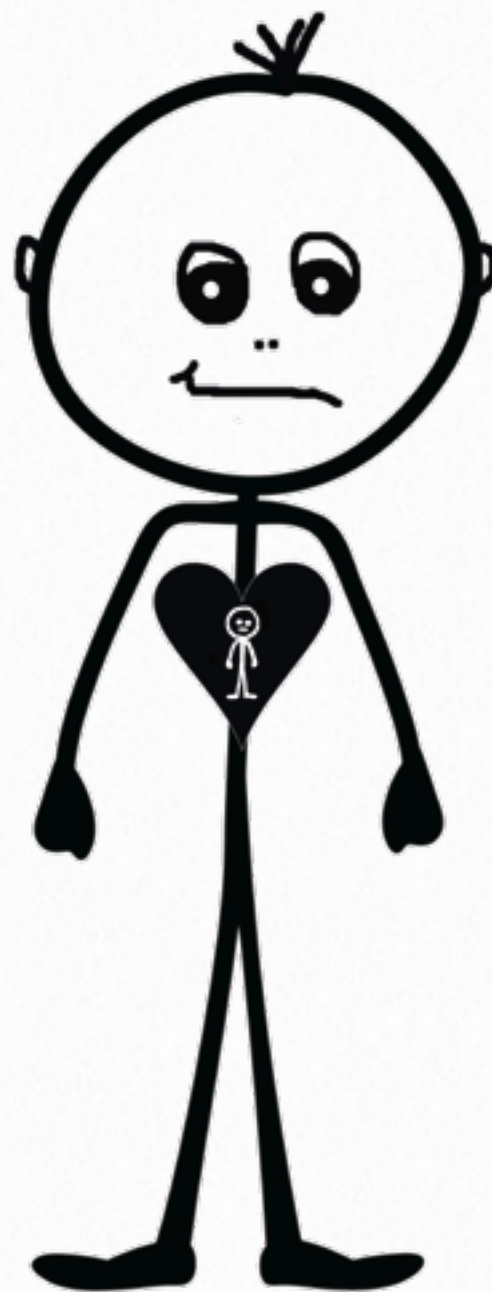
Here is Onli, who is a womb twin survivor. His tiny womb twin is always in his heart. He will guide you through some of the main effects on the sole survivor when a twin has died in the womb. If you don't know or are not sure, Onli will help you to decide whether you did once have a twin.

You may not share in all of the feelings that Onli has, but remember that womb twin survivors are very different from one another, according to exactly what happened to their twin.

When you read the stories, you may find your own feelings described. By the time you get to the end of the series of stories, you will have a clearer picture of the kind of womb twin survivor you are.

At the end of this book there is a checklist of physical signs that you may find useful.

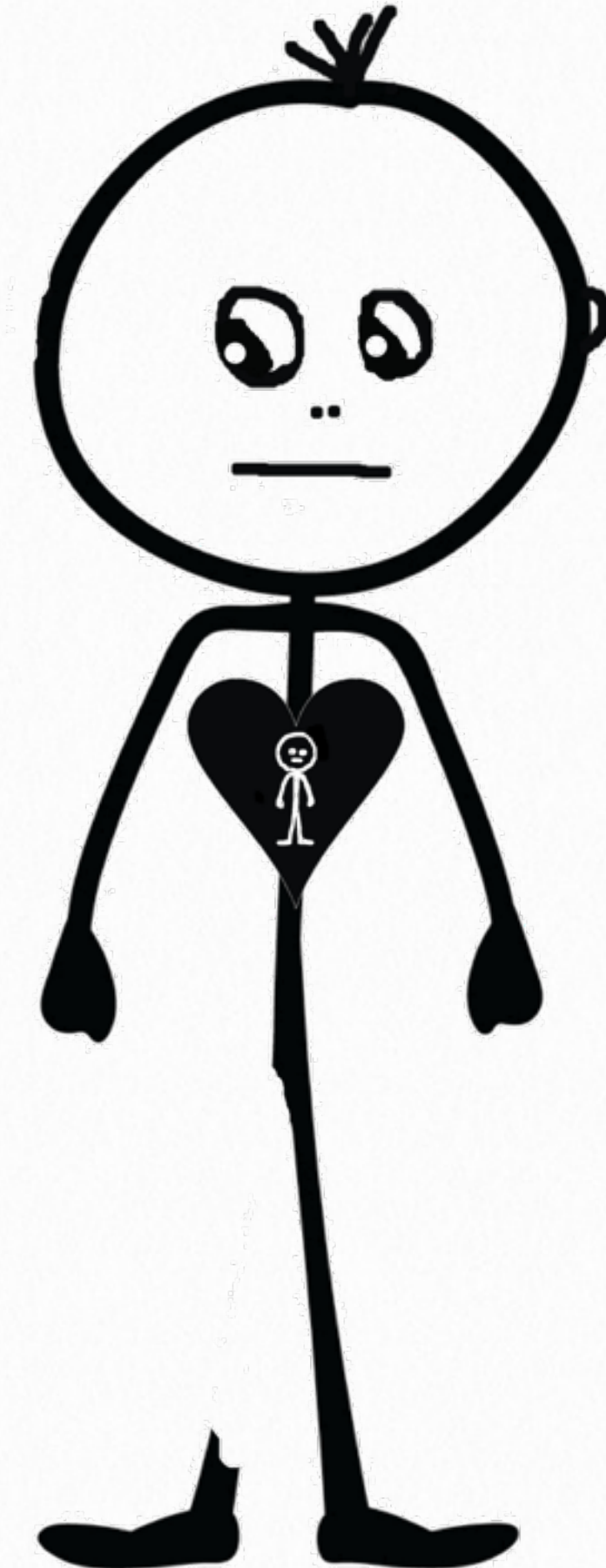
I hope that you find the stories interesting and helpful. They have been provided for this book by dozens of wonderful womb twin survivors from all around the world,. They were written to help other womb twin survivors to understand themselves better. I hope that this book and the stories it contains will help you too.



1

# SOMETHING MISSING

“All my life I have had a sense of something missing”





## **SOMEONE IS MISSING**

by Judith

I have always hated being alone and was very imaginative. Except I had a feeling I would get made fun of for - having an “imaginary friend,” so I kind of talked to him in my mind. My mother told me I didn’t have a twin. But I swear I did. Maybe she just didn’t know it. But it's like I’m looking through photos of me as a child and I feel like someone is missing. I always feel this emptiness.

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**I feel like someone is missing. I always feel this emptiness.**

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I dream about him all the time and what our lives would be like if he was here with me. I wish I had some friends that knew how this feels, because it’s pretty unbearable when I have NO one that understands me to relate and talk about our emptiness together. Which honestly, I think I need.

Also for some reason I am attracted to twins tremendously. I dated a twin. And I’m



still friends with him. In a way I envy twins. I admire the way they can finish each other's sentences. Me and my ex are like that way too. I honestly feel whole around him and his brother. But dating other people, I just feel nothing. Maybe it's because we both have that twin bond inside.

## **MISSING TWINS**

by Tom

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I learned about twins when I read my first **Sweet Valley Twins** book. I was aware that it was a twin brother I wanted or who was "missing."

I am a man and I was a twin with my twin dying in the womb. I am the youngest of four but my next nearest sibling in age is nearly nine years older than me. My family never spoke about the twin with me and I don't even know if it was a boy or girl.

I have always felt restless and alone. I used to think it was because I was in effect an only child, being so much younger than my brothers and sister, and from a violent family. I was a teenager before things emerged that I had been a twin, but sadly



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People's description of how they felt were so close to how I feel, that I know I need to take this more onboard.

my mum died before she could tell me much. Her last 11 years were in a wheel chair following a bad stroke, so her memory was mixed.

My dad I never stayed in touch with, so beyond knowing I was a twin, I know very little else. I never used to think that it mattered, until recently, when during the past 18 months I started counselling with my partner. I started to look at my emotions. I looked at “missing twins” when they die in the womb. People's description of how they felt were so close to how I feel, that I know I need to take this more onboard.

## **MY TWIN BROTHER WAS MISSING**

by Kim

I clearly remember how I felt the time I learned about the existence of “twins” (that there is such a thing) and the thoughts that raced at the back of my mind. I felt indignation and was confused as to why I



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**Although I am very much a girl, I have also been always aware of my marked boyishness in certain ways, which everyone around me would attest to.**

didn't have one. I learned about twins when I read my first Sweet Valley Twins book. I was aware that it was a twin brother I wanted or who was “missing.”

I have never doubted my sexuality and was never confused with regard to which gender I wanted to be, but although I am very much a girl, I have also been always aware of my marked boyishness in certain ways, which everyone around me would attest to. The family and I thought it to simply be due to my growing up with boys for siblings and cousins in the family compound.

I chanced upon a Wikipedia article on “twinless twins” and suddenly, everything seems to be making sense.

2

# REJECTION

“I fear rejection”







I tried to be very, very good all the time, in order to prove to her that I was not a bad person. But nothing I did worked.

## MY MOTHER SAID I WAS A MURDERER

by Alison

I'm never sure if my grief from being a surviving twin has been from my treatment of me from my family since birth, or from actual trauma relating to the loss of my twin.

From the time I was very small, my mother would occasionally burst into anger at me, and accuse me of being a murderer: "You killed your sister. You were too greedy. You sucked up all the food in the womb, and left her with no nourishment. It's all your fault!"

Even at the age of two or three, I knew she had to be projecting. I knew I couldn't possibly have consciously tried to kill my twin (who died, by the way, not in the womb, but two months after birth). But my mother's rage affected me very strongly, as it was part of my everyday life.



**My father would jeer at me when I said something smart and tell me with utmost contempt that I would make a good lawyer.**

As a result, I tried to be very, very good all the time, in order to prove to her that I was not a bad person. But nothing I did worked. There were four surviving children in my family. The two oldest were separated by a large gap in age. But my sister who was close in age to me sensed that I was to be the scapegoat, and, also wanting very much to comfort our depressed mother, abused me in turn. Thus, she turned into the good, saving, helping, comforting child, my mother's ally, whereas I was always the hated one, the greedy one, the one who did everything wrong.

The irony of this is, I was actually the one who did well in school and never got into trouble, whereas my sister got bad grades and constantly was getting into trouble. But when I brought home my first-grade report card, which I was very proud of because I had gotten mostly A's, my mother became very angry: "You're just trying to make your



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**My oldest sister told me that my mother never wanted to hold or touch me, and that she would instead hand me to her to nurse and hold...**

sister look bad!" After that, I never showed my parents my report cards, and they never asked to see them.

My "good" behaviour was ridiculed constantly by both of my parents, and I was constantly called "goody-two-shoes" and "pollyanna." My smartness was also ridiculed, and the fact that I liked to read a lot of books. My father would jeer at me when I said something smart and tell me with the utmost contempt that I would make a good lawyer.

Both of my parents were educated, with higher degrees, and my father was a university professor who was very well read. So their hatred was clearly personal and had nothing to do with their own values. As my sister and I became teenagers, she became even more of a brat and a bully, and her badness was unmistakable. She got into trouble with drugs and alcohol, boys, shoplifting, etc., and continued to do



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Once I started interacting with people outside of the family, I was able to form extremely deep bonds with people, which is strange

very poorly in school. She had mental problems, was physically violent and a pathological liar. But none of that changed my mother's feelings towards her, and none of my accomplishments, which started to pile up, changed her feelings towards me.

My sister was in fact so difficult and so mentally ill that I had to constantly escape from her, as I felt myself in danger of her violence and bullying. My mother would invariably take her side in everything, and I clearly had no rights in any situation whatever. It's only when I became older that I pieced the situation together and realised that my entire relationship with my family was defined by my mother's grief at the dead twin and at her death-wish against me - which the entire family tried to support, in order to help her.

My oldest sister told me that my mother never wanted to hold or touch me, and that she would instead hand me to her to nurse



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I remember having a terror of going hungry, and I used to hide cans of food under my bed. Could my mother have been right? Did I also steal food in the womb?

and hold. My father has described the year I was born as the worst year of his life, because of my mother's grief. My mother, an extremely beautiful and vain woman, also complained that having twins ruined her figure (which it didn't). But I feel she held the stretch marks against me as well.

Once when I was a child my mother said to me, "I hate you!" Then she qualified it with: "No, I don't hate you - I can't hate you, because you're my child. But I hate your ways." The explanation was of course worse than the initial outburst, because it was said in such a rational manner. What were the "ways" she hated? I could never figure it out.

On this particular occasion it was because I had accidentally spilled something, which she interpreted as an act of overt hostility. In reality, I spilled things a lot, not because I was hostile but because I was very nervous. The dinner table was especially chaotic,



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**My father has described the year I was born as the worst year of his life, because of my mother's grief.**

with everyone grabbing for food at the same time. I was the smallest and had a hard time reaching over the others. I spilled the milk nearly every night at the dinner table, knocking it over in an attempt to get some food before it was all gone.

I remember having a terror of going hungry, and I used to hide cans of food under my bed. Could my mother have been right? Did I also steal food in the womb? Was there limited nourishment, and did I hog it up? Even now, I have had to train myself to not panic when I am hungry and to not overeat. I don't in fact recall a single moment of kindness from anyone in my family in my childhood, except perhaps for one instance when my dad dried my hair at the beach, saying he feared I might catch cold. That's really the only thing I can remember that seemed caring or kind.

When adults outside of the family would be kind to me, I would be seized with some



kind of panic, fearing that my family would find out and punish me for it. Whenever there were family gatherings with other children involved, my sister would make sure that they all despised me and turned against me, so that I would be alone, with others laughing at me and ganging up on me. So naturally I turned to solitary pursuits such as reading to entertain myself.

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**As a result, I had very few friends as a child, being very shy, keeping to myself and naturally not trusting anyone.**

As a result, I had very few friends as a child, being very shy, keeping to myself and naturally not trusting anyone. So it's remarkable with this upbringing that I did not turn out to be autistic or socially retarded. On the contrary, once I started to be social, starting at about 15, I blossomed and was very popular, especially with boys. Once I started interacting with people outside of the family, I was able to form extremely deep bonds with people, which is strange for someone who had had no



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I don't know my dad's side, as I only knew him till I was four. I've tried to get in contact with him but he doesn't want to, which has left me feeling rejected.

bonding at all with her mother or anyone else.

## **MY DAD DIDN'T WANT CONTACT**

by Pam

I don't know my dad's side, as I only knew him till I was four. I've tried to get in contact with him but he doesn't want to, which has left me feeling rejected. But I tend to make up excuses for people who are mean to me, to make it easier. Growing up, when I was old enough to chose my own clothing, I always wanted to wear pants and was quite a tom boy. I even wanted to be a boy at one stage, but I'm glad I didn't follow that path.



# 3

## UNREALISED POTENTIAL

“I know I am not realising  
my true potential”





## **I AM NOT FULLY ALIVE**

by Linda

My twin brother and I were born from a 7-month, unwanted pregnancy. We spent the first six weeks in incubators and then another six weeks at home together. Then my twin brother died during his sleep. I have felt that my mother did wish to terminate her pregnancy and have recently discovered there were three of us in the womb.

I have always known I was a twin and have only recently discovered that I also had an identical twin sister. I went searching for twin support groups and found the Twinless Twins International Support Group and they talked about being a survivor. I found that word, “survivor” a hard word to deal with, as I don't think I have yet survived, although technically, I am a survivor.

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**I sometimes feel as if I am dead or in another world. I don't feel as if I am as alive as I could be.**



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I sometimes feel as if I am dead or in another world. I don't feel as if I am as alive as I could be.

I'm not sure how I can explain about being sensitive. Except that I often sense things others don't see. I used to wish to help others feel better. Now I realise, "to every season, there is a reason" and so I wish them to feel well, in whatever they are doing.

I frequently feel as if I have been awake all night in conversations or dreaming. When I was younger, I disliked going to bed and frequently walked in my sleep. As a child, I had a companion who was a ball of light and we went everywhere together and I would talk with him. He was with me most of the time when we were alone outside, because it was considered wrong to have such a companion in the house.

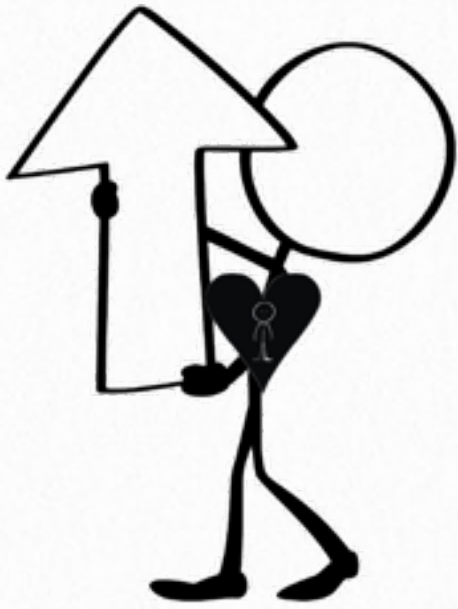
I sometimes feel as if I am dead or in another world. I don't feel as if I am as alive as I could be.

# 4

## FEELING DIFFERENT

“I feel different from other people.”





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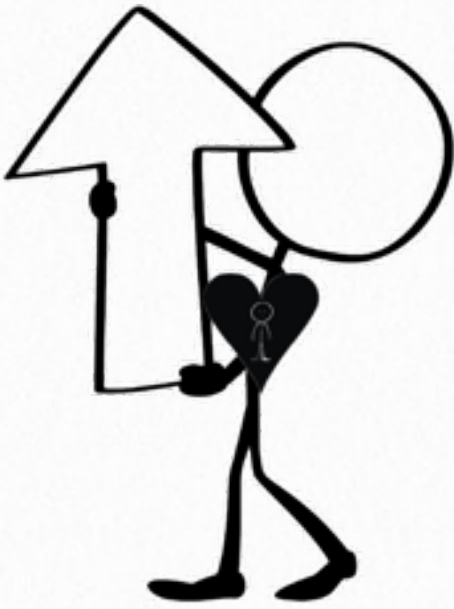
All my life I felt like I was different. As a child I thought I was somehow adopted.

## I FEEL DIFFERENT

by Tricia

All my life I have felt like I am different. As a child I thought I was somehow adopted. As a teenager I wished that I was abducted by aliens. I always have been fascinated by the supernatural, spiritualism and U.F.O.'s, although I haven't been in contact with situations or people who really experienced something like that.

Since I was three years old I have fallen in and out of love: I had a severe crush on a boy in kindergarden and I couldn't forget him, even years after I lost sight of him. After that I was heavily in love with a boy from the boy's school but he was not in love with me. Still I couldn't get him out of my mind, even when I lost contact when we moved to different high schools. I even cycled passed his house several time to hopefully see a glimpse of him.



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**I had doubts about my relationship and marriage. I felt like something was missing.**

When we met again in high school because he switched to my school, I finally had the guts to tell him I was in love with him, but he didn't want to have any to do with me. It really broke my heart into pieces.

When I switched schools to study music at 15, I had my first real relationship and I found myself getting in situations I didn't want getting into, because I wasn't even in love with him. I just couldn't say “no” to the relationship because this was the first time a boy noticed me. But when it started to get too serious, I broke it off.

After that I heavily fell in love with a boy who I still can't get out of my mind, even more than 15 years later. We never really had a relationship because he felt that I was too young for him, but we had a strange bond. I ran after him like a puppy, but he always kept me at a distance. He broke my heart several times.



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At 17 I was raped by my first serious boyfriend. I again wasn't in love with him but he talked me into a relationship and I couldn't say no. He persuaded me into having sex. After he tried asking me again and again, I said yes to something I really didn't want. I stayed with him for over two years and I still have nightmares about it.

After that, I fell into several abusive relationships until I finally met my husband whom I learned to love very deeply. Still, year after year I had doubts about my relationship and marriage. I felt like something was missing.

## **THE ODD ONE OUT**

by Brenda

My mother had toxemia during her term with me and gained around 100 pounds. I've suffered from depression since I was around 13 years old. I've always felt alone, like the odd one out.

# 5

## SEARCHING

“All my life I have been searching for something, but I don’t know what it is.”





## MY SEARCH

by Kathy



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When I was fourteen, I was curious and I asked my mother about my birth.

When I was a teenager, I made friends with identical twins and I just felt like I belonged when I was with them. When I was younger, my father had told me that I was born with something else, that he called “extra” and that there were complications during the pregnancy with me. All the other pregnancies and deliveries he said were normal.

I have done a lot of research on this, not forgetting what my father said. I also, years back taught Lamaze classes for pregnant mothers. I know what a pregnancy comprises of at conception, and I know any time there is something else born with a baby, it means that the “extra” is the remains of a twin that died in a foetal miscarriage, if it is still there and delivered with the surviving twin at birth.

On researching my sibling's birth certificates, my sister and I discovered that on my brother's and sister's certificates there is recorded a foetal miscarriage under "previous history." Since their state of birth recorded all stages of the previous history of miscarriages, it shows they were not the ones who had the twin.

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**My father I think once said something about "knowing someday that I would put things together and search."**

The state I was born in did not record miscarriages before 20 weeks, so it did not have to be recorded on mine but the state we later moved to did record it. Because my mother had my siblings so close together, there wasn't time in between.

Also because my father had said "all the pregnancies and deliveries were normal except mine" it would mean that a miscarriage in between did not happen, as if it did, "all the pregnancies and deliveries were normal" would not be a true statement, as a miscarriage is not normal. So it means the miscarriage happened to



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**I'm always looking for that connection that subconsciously, I feel I would have had with my twin.**

my twin in utero. Also he said I had the umbilical cord around my neck. Women who deliver singleton babies with cord entanglement will repeat cord entanglement in subsequent pregnancies.

My mother had ten children and they claim I was the only one with cord entanglement. Identical twins born in the same amniotic sac with no membrane dividing them and one placenta have 100% cord entanglement and more than 50% of them one dies or both can. These twins have to be born by C-section. These are mirror twins (I am left-handed) and if they make it to 24 weeks, they will have a better chance of survival.

Since I was the only child she had with cord entanglement, this tells me it is further evidence that I had a mirror (right handed) twin. When I was fourteen, I was curious and I asked my mother about my birth. She told me I was a small baby and her quietest.



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My father I think once said something about “knowing someday that I would put things together and search.”

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I was born on a Sunday evening it had been rainy. She then told me I could have twins. I ask her about my birth, and yet she tells me I could have twins myself!

My father had told me I had been born “with something else”. I think she did not know how to tell me about my twin, not knowing how I would react. My father I think once said something about “knowing someday that I would put things together and search.”

## **ALWAYS SEARCHING**

by Julia

I do think I've always been searching for someone to share with, at a level that everyone else just falls short of reaching. It's like I've always been looking for that special twin intimacy, but never really find it. At least, not in one person.

I've resigned myself to looking for different things in different people, rather than

expecting to find absolutely everything that I need emotionally, in one package (although my husband comes pretty damn close). I'm probably overly-open and empathise too easily, share too readily, because I'm always looking for that connection that sub consciously, I feel I would have had with my twin.



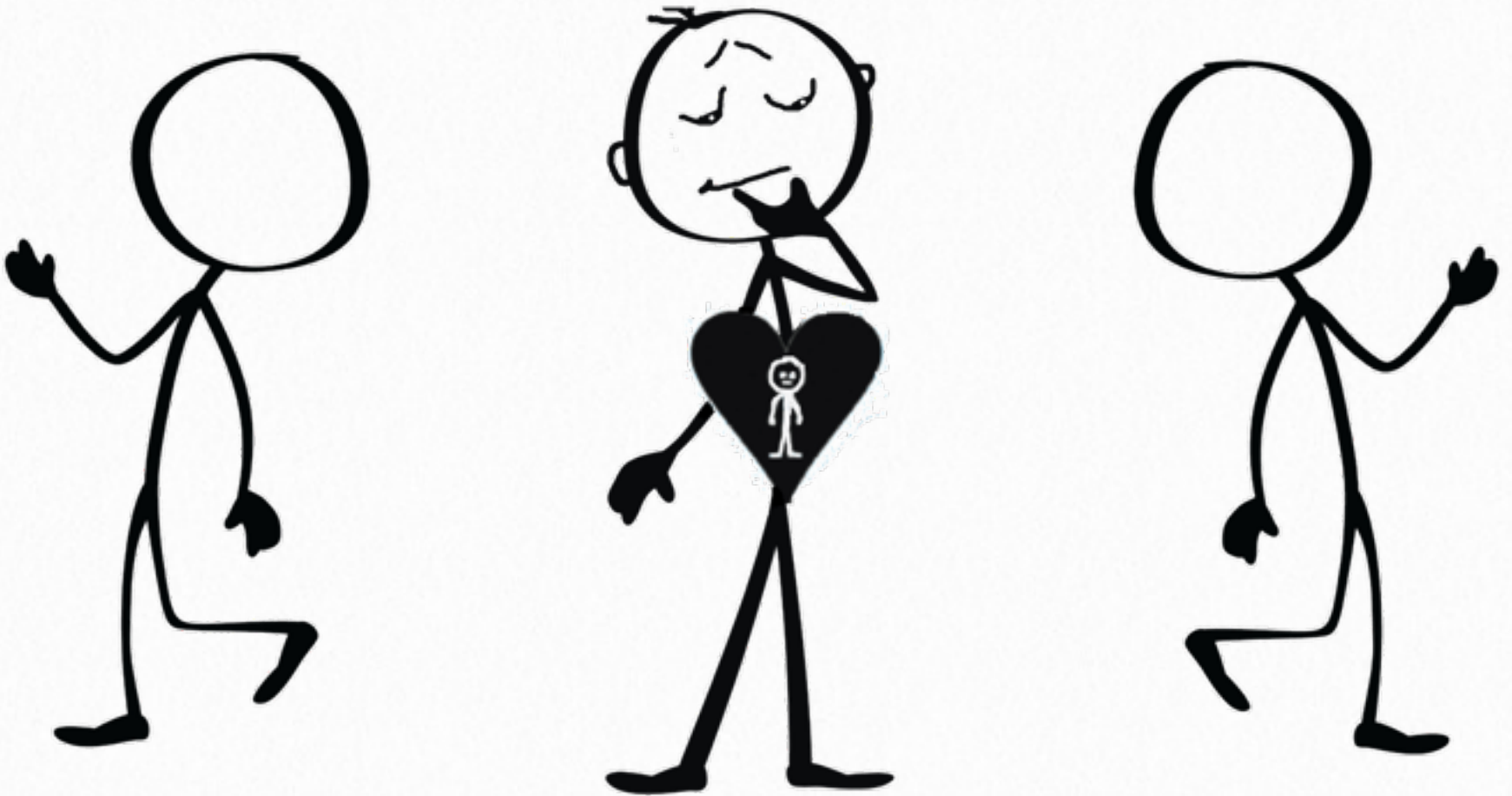
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**I do think I've always been searching for someone to share with, at a level that everyone else just falls short of reaching.**

# 6

## FEELING ALONE

“Deep down, I feel alone, even among friends.”



## **I FEEL MORE AND MORE ALONE**

by Maria

For my whole life, I always felt incomplete and empty, really like I was just half a person. I was an extremely emotional, sensitive and empathic child who felt the weight of the world on my shoulders and who wanted to heal everything and everyone in it. I always felt chronic and profound feelings of loneliness even among a group of people, it almost seemed like nothing could feel this great big gaping hole in my soul.

I can't speak to anybody about how I feel, with the exception of other womb twin survivors. Nobody can understand how this loss could affect me so profoundly, so I feel myself even more alone with it all the time.



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**Nobody can understand how this loss could affect me so profoundly, so I feel myself even more alone with it all the time.**

## **I WAS ALONE MOST OF THE TIME**

by Irene

When I was young I was alone most of the time. My school-mates thought I was weird, their parents called me “peculiar”. I lived in a fantasy world, read a lot (my elder brother taught me when I was five ) scribbled, talked to myself or my face in the mirror. I trailed after my brother and father a lot. I was alone, but not lonely.

One evening, however, I felt loneliness for the first time like a poisoned snakebite. I stopped crying. I was tired and exhausted, in a strange state of mind, half asleep. I don't remember quite how it happened, but suddenly there was another “me”, and it was a boy. He was strong, gentle, and creative. He was like a second skin I could slip in, that I could wear like a dress.



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First I played being him when I was alone. I collected special clothes for him, from my brother's old stuff, which he had outgrown.





**In Elementary School I didn't have many friends, but the other kids left me alone.**

First I played being him when I was alone. I collected special clothes for him, from my brother's old stuff, which he had outgrown. I dressed up to feel more like it. It became a ritual, like washing hands before dinner. It didn't happen overnight, but the transformation from me to him came more and more, especially for arts and crafts, writing, drawing, and painting.

Once my father heard me play Yuri, and he was puzzled. "Why, don't you know, Yuri is a boy's name? We would have called you Yuri, had you been a son."

High School was a terrible place. In Elementary School I didn't have many friends, but the other kids left me alone. That changed. Teachers liked me, because they thought I was mature and well educated for my age. For the same reason, and because I was weird, my peers bullied me. At first, I thought that they just didn't understand me.



When I was young I was alone most of the time. My school-mates thought I was weird, their parents called me “peculiar”.

Then I realised: I didn't understand them either. The games girls played, I had learned them but they didn't feel natural. But I couldn't be one of the guys either. I was neither girly girl nor tomboy. I was both and nothing at the same time. I didn't even fit in with the “freaks”.

My elder brother was of an age where he, who had cared for me and spent so much time with me, wasn't interested in a little sister any longer. This “loss” wounded me more than my peer's dislike. It took me years to recover my female self. Yuri didn't want to be forgotten.

The discovery that he is not me, but the twin brother I lost, was a huge revelation. Now I am looking to find a place in my life for him that doesn't smother my own.

7

# ABANDONED

“Deep down, I feel abandoned”



## I FEEL LIKE THE ONLY ONE LEFT

by Paula



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**I feel like I'm the only one left in the world. I have extreme abandonment issues.**

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I have this weird memory of someone that looks just like me but isn't me. When was younger I told my mom I had a twin and she flipped out and got mad. I always feel like I'm trying to find someone. I feel like I'm the only one left in the world. I have extreme abandonment issues.

Though I had a normal upbringing, for my whole life I have had a fascination with twins and conjoined twins. Even foetuses, dead or alive. I have low self-esteem issues, but at the same time I am narcissistic and stare at the mirror for hours every day. I can use both my right and left hand. People often refer to me as a typical Gemini but I'm an Aries.

I found out I was a twin from a family friend but I don't feel like a twin - I feel like a triplet. The number three is significant to me



and threes pop up everywhere in my life. I feel both male and female. I was supposed to have an identical sister but I know I am also male. I don't have a sexual preference. I just believe in love.

I feel like I can never sleep and when I do, I automatically start dreaming. All I do is dream. I can't sleep unless there is a large amount of weight on my body.

I am extremely intuitive. I know when people are upset before they even know themselves. I have always been able to sense death and that's the best I can describe it as. I sabotage my self with everything. I know I am extremely smart, more than most, but I feel undeserving. I have a thyroid problem but I refuse to take my meds. I have no clue why.

I never finish projects. My art reflects my fascination with twins and triplets and

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**I feel like I can never sleep and when I do, I automatically start dreaming. All I do is dream. I can't sleep unless there is a large amount of weight on my body.**

conjoinment. I scribble threes and fetuses on everything.



Then two years ago I had a child. He was born 3 weeks and 3 days early at 3:13pm in room 3. Then he died at exactly 3 weeks of age at 3:13pm to SIDS. It stirred up a lot of weird memories. I started having dreams about being pregnant with triplets or being one of the triplets. They were old dreams.

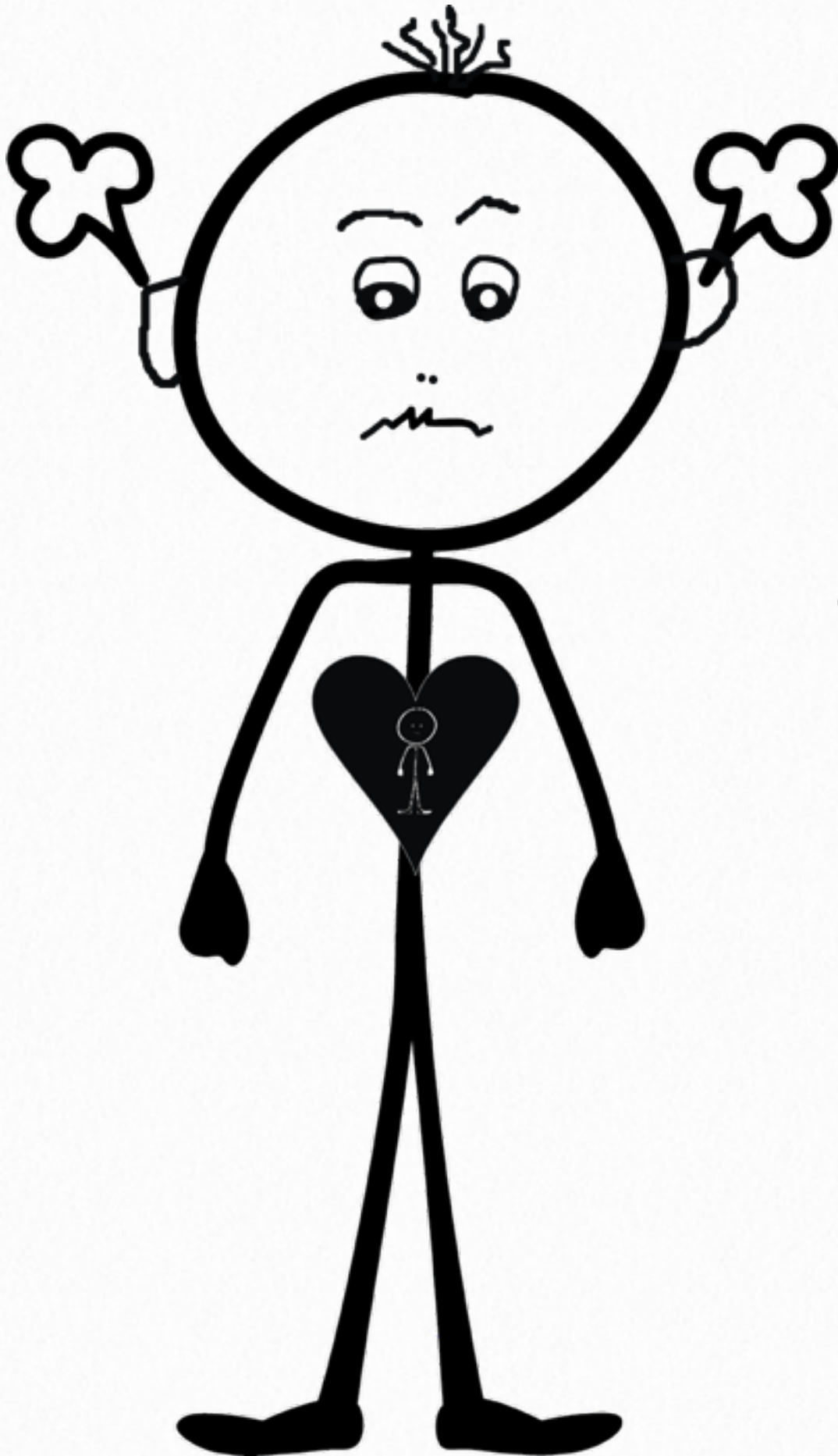
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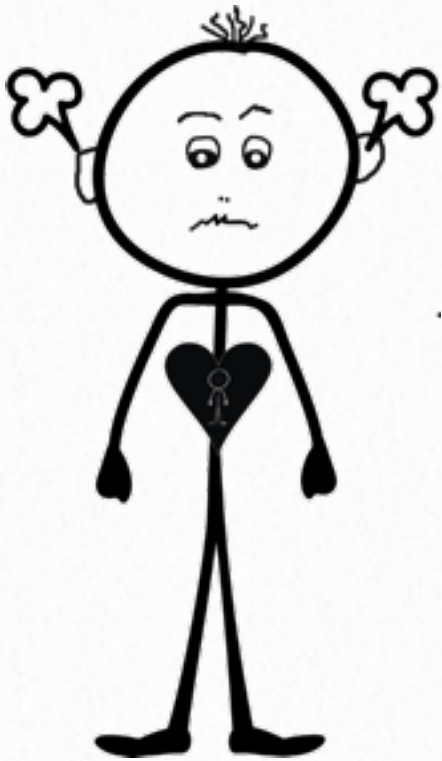
**I constantly feel like I am someone else in hiding. Like I am not me. Like a host of some sort. It is very difficult to explain.**

I constantly feel like I am someone else in hiding. Like I am not me. Like a host of some sort. It is very difficult to explain.

# ANGER PROBLEMS

“I have a problem with anger - there is too much or too little”





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I fly into private rages when I do something as trivial as drop my keys, whispering obscene oaths at myself.

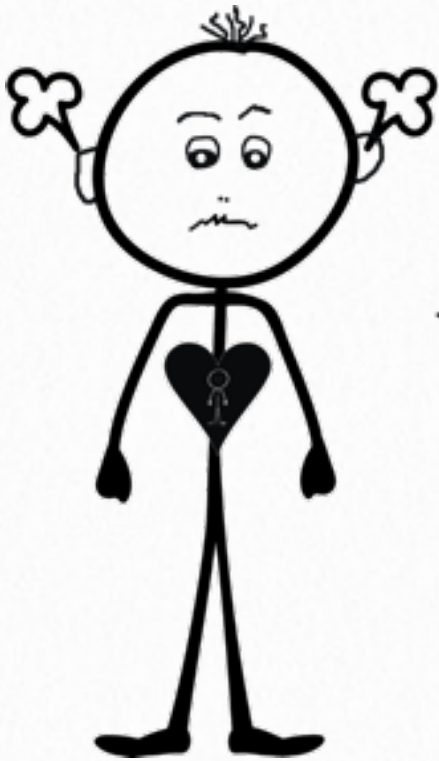
## REPPRESSED ANGER

by Michael

My perception of myself is that I don't really exist, or that I am some form of ghost. I sometimes have a dream in which I am a ghost looking into the windows of 'normal' happy families on Xmas Eve. My rational brain knows that none of this is 'true', but that doesn't make the feelings go away. In order to function socially day to day, I have to pretend to be real.

This takes its toll, and I perpetually feel tired from the effort, as well as a bit grubby from my 'deception'. I can be quite the life of the party if necessary, cracking jokes like a machine gun, but after it's all over I feel like a fraud and usually sink into depression. If I could, I would simply shut myself away in my room. Being alone makes it easier, despite the fact that I dislike being lonely. I sometimes fantasise about faking my own death and disappearing to



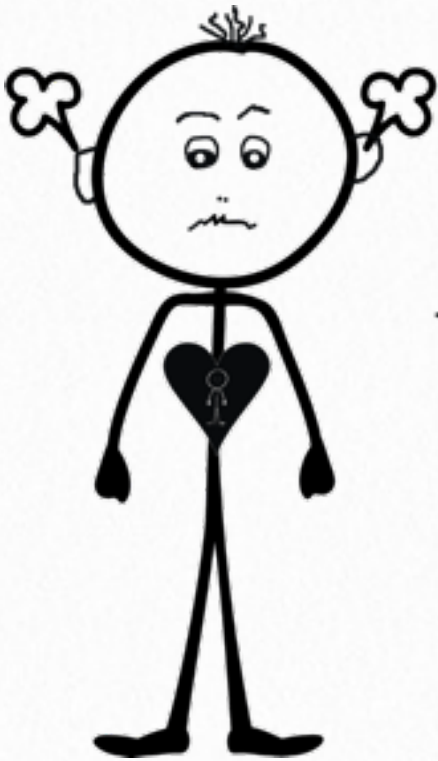


I picture myself as a broken, unloved child's toy – a pointless, empty object. I use the word 'pointless' a lot.

some obscure country to live out my days in anonymity, in a little hut on a wild coast.

I have a lot of repressed anger in me, but no matter how anyone may mistreat me, I always turn the anger back onto myself. I also fly into private rages when I do something as trivial as drop my keys, whispering obscene oaths at myself. In these moments I utterly loathe myself for being such a pathetic loser.

Paradoxically, I can do very well in my work (I am now a graphic designer), but it hasn't brought me fame and fortune. Although I crave praise for what I create, I hate it when people actually say something like, "you're so clever". The praise, if it comes, feels undeserved, as if I was a charlatan; I just can't win. I am 'clever', for what it's worth, with an unusually high IQ of around 160, but it hasn't done me much good.



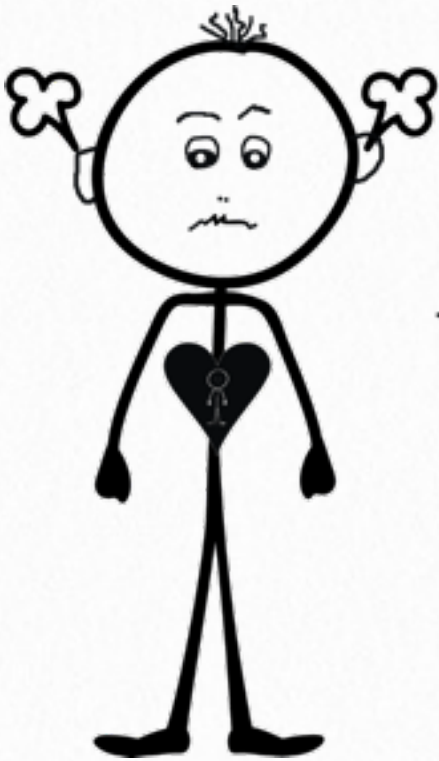
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**These feelings come and go, but can occasionally be almost overwhelming.**

I constantly feel as if my heart is broken. In fact, in some ways, I feel as if my whole body is broken. It's close to a physical pain, and I sometimes find myself holding my heart or gripping my ribcage and rocking gently.

I picture myself as a broken, unloved child's toy – a pointless, empty object. I use the word 'pointless' a lot. I am a bit of a hypochondriac, imagining I have some terrible disease for a while, until I move onto the next disease that I've just discovered.

I often feel I am slowly dying, but from what I don't know. Part of me even hopes that I AM dying. Again, I have a rational mind that knows my fears are likely to be unfounded, but that doesn't stop them from overwhelming me on occasions.



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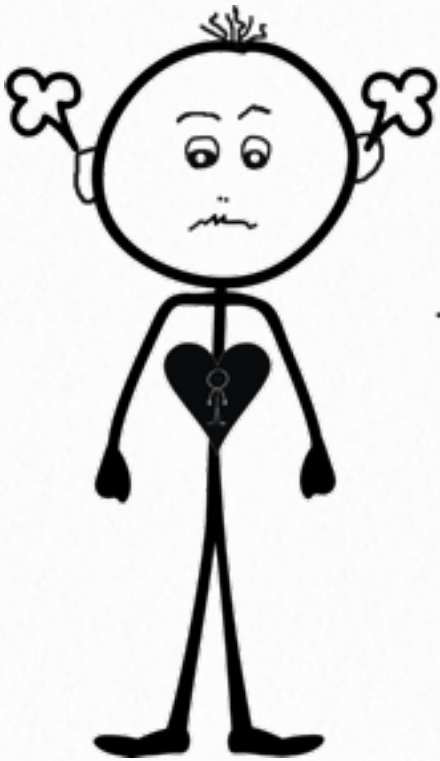
I've felt many different things. Grief primarily, but also anger at my parents for not telling me; anger at the hospital for not being able to stop it.....

## ANGRY WITH THE HOSPITAL

by Anna

I had an identical twin sister in the womb, but due to Twin to Twin Transfusion Syndrome she died approximately 3 months before we were due to be born. My mother did not tell me anything whatsoever about her until I was 16 years old (I am now nearly 19), but throughout my childhood I had an imaginary friend whom I pretended was my “twin sister.” I have always had feelings I could never quite describe properly, but which have related to feeling incomplete, or inadequate.

Ever since I found out about the existence of my sister, I've felt many different things. Grief primarily, but also anger at my parents for not telling me; anger at the hospital for not being able to stop it; anxiety that I have greatly upset my parents by having these reactions, as well as worrying that I have hugely overreacted to the entire situation,



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I am a bit of a hypochondriac, imagining I have some terrible disease for a while, until I move onto the next disease that I've just discovered.

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as I didn't even know her. These feelings come and go, but can occasionally be almost overwhelming. It has even lead to me using my very active imagination to invent situations where my sister somehow survived, and was brought up in secret by another family, and that someday I will have a chance meeting with her. I have no idea how to stop such feelings, and imagine that they will carry on indefinitely, until I achieve some form of closure.

This is made difficult by the method my parents have found easiest, which is to not think about it or discuss it at all. For example, she has no name, though my mother once told me I could give her a name if I wanted. Sometimes I think of her as having my middle name, but other times it just doesn't feel right.

Now, it feels like I have hit a dead end. I am wary of discussing the matter further with my parents in case it upsets them,

# 9

## UNSATISFIED

“I always feel in some way unsatisfied, but I don't know why.”



## I'M NEVER SATISFIED

by Zoe



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I'm never satisfied with work I finish, it's never done, I feel like I can always do better.

My mom was extremely big during pregnancy, and the doctors expected twins or even triplets, but there was just me. A piece of the placenta didn't leave my Mom's body until two weeks after my birth. The piece of the placenta that was released then showed an unusual amount of veins, and didn't lack anything a normal placenta should have, in fact it, was bigger than a normal placenta.

Ever since I was a young kid, I used to feel alone and different from other kids. I felt as if I was there, but somehow wasn't there at the same time. I have problems with maintaining contact with others. I can easily establish contact...though I find it prettyscary, since I'm always afraid people will dislike me.



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I feel like no matter what I manage to achieve, it's never enough.

As a toddler, my parents noticed that I was talking to myself a lot, and loved to play all by myself. When I got older, I started to live in fantasy more than in reality and was unable to deal with reality itself. I was always alone in elementary school, and talked to myself a lot, even in public. In 2nd grade I had twins in my class for about half a year. I felt drawn to them, but at the same time it was painful for me to be around them. I was jealous of them, as if they had something that I was supposed to have.

I'm never satisfied with work I finish, it's never done, I feel like I can always do better. When I scored an A on a test in high school, I was disappointed I didn't get an A+. I never really had friends. I had people I got along with, but never really friends. And when someone got too close, I either pushed that person away, or I scared that person away by wanting to get too close.



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**When I hang out with other people I enjoy it, but I feel like I always miss a certain connection, like I might as well be there alone.**

Even today I still do that, which is really annoying, not only for other people, but also for myself. When I hang out with other people I enjoy it, but I feel like I always miss a certain connection, like I might as well be there alone. Others don't ignore me, not at all, but I feel alone and left alone anyway. I've had girlfriends, but it took a long time to trust someone, and when they got too close (emotionally, not physically) I tried to end the relationship.

I've tried to commit suicide twice in my life, once at the age of 13, when I took a very unhealthy dose of sleeping pills in combination with alcohol. I got nervous or something, so I threw up, which got most of it out of my system and that saved my life. The second time I stabbed myself with a tiny screwdriver, trying to bleed to death. This didn't work because my parents discovered me in time. I was 17 when I tried this.





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I feel like, no matter what I manage to achieve, it's never enough.

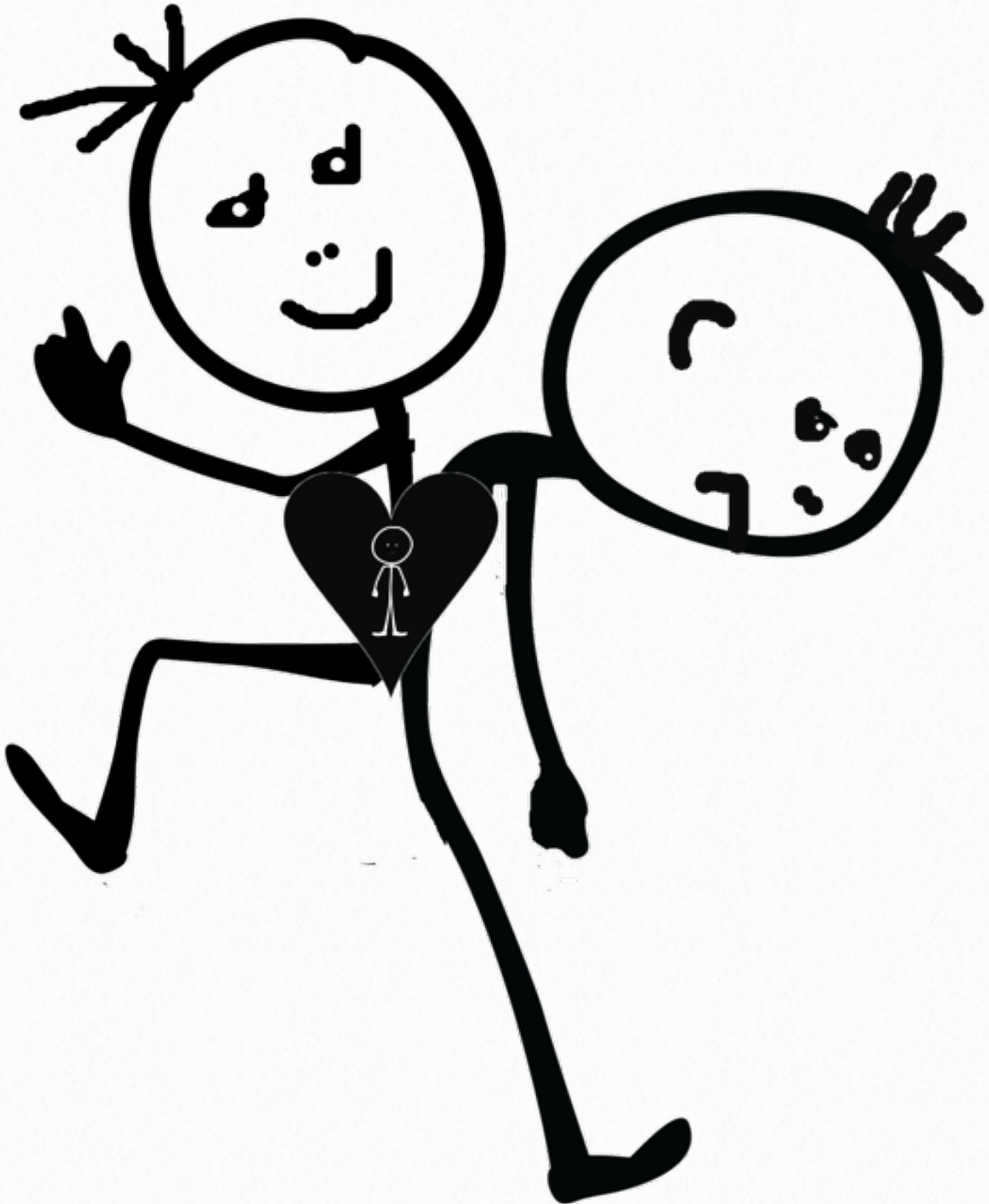
I can officially say I hate myself and my life. I feel worthless, and sometimes I wish I could do it all over again. Basically I think that every day. I love to write stories about how my life could be, and I must have up to 300 of those by now. I feel ashamed every time I write one of those, but I just can't seem to stop.

Everyday when I go to sleep, all I can think is: "great, another day wasted." I feel like, no matter what I manage to achieve, it's never enough. Sometimes I think I'm the worlds biggest freak, and I don't want to feel like that. I want to feel normal, like every other person in this world. I've always felt grief I couldn't understand, and I can't give it a place. I can't express it. I actually do have a problem expressing emotions in general. I feel like I'm lost inside myself, and can't find my way back.

# 10

## TWO SIDES

“There are two very different sides to my character.”



## CONFIDENT YET SENSITIVE

by Kate



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.....As if there's two  
of me who can only  
seem to co-exist

I am quite a positive, confident person outwardly, but i am very sensitive inwardly and get offended very easily. I like to appear confident and happy to make others happy even when I'm not.

I feel I am extremely selfish, even when I'm trying to give everything away. I feel a need to share, but at the same time, hoard in a completely paradoxical manner.

I have always felt "Torn" between the two mediums of writing and drawing. When I do one thing, I seem to forget the other, as if there's two of me who can only seem to co-exist when I'm drawing, yet actually thinking about the sentences that I would put to it, if I were narrating a story of sorts



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If things aren't symmetrical it drives me nuts. I try to keep everything symmetrical, which is probably why I crave two of whatever.

## **TWO PEOPLE**

by Claudia

I have often felt that I am two people. There is one side of me that is very strong and wise and assertive. She is rational and has leader-like qualities. But then there is the other side of me, who is weak and needy. She gets knocked down by life and is extremely sensitive. Sometimes the sheer magnitude of pain that living brings, causes her to think, "How am I ever going to make it through this life, if everything reduces me to THIS?"

## **IF I LIKE SOMETHING, I WANT TWO**

by Pamela

My mother always told me when I was young that I was supposed to have had a twin. I used to make jokes that the reason I have multi-personality disorder was because when my mom was pregnant with me I ate my twin.



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**If things aren't symmetrical it drives me nuts. I try to keep everything symmetrical, which is probably why I crave two of whatever.**

I don't really have multi-personality disorder in the psychotic clinical sense, but I do personality-wise.

In high school I would dress according to how I felt that day, whether it be preppy, bad girl, weird girl, nerdy girl, tomboy, etc. I also listen to all kinds of music. Simple decisions take me forever: like picking out a shirt. I narrow it down to 2 or 3, then it takes me forever, comparing them. Then later on I think, I should have gotten the other one. This is my dilemma for buying pretty much anything. If I really like something, I want two. I don't know why, I have always been this way.

If things aren't symmetrical it drives me nuts. I try to keep everything symmetrical, which is probably why I crave two of whatever. I read something online once about surviving vanished twins that had the same problems, which freaked me out. I also read that they have trouble getting to

sleep no matter how tired they are, which I have been doing since as far back as I can remember - from at least 4 years old.



I have always felt like I'm not really who I am. My personality changes too often to really know who I am. I'm a girl, but I am really un-girly a lot of the time. For the most part, girls get on my nerves. I am a very paranoid person. I have a problem with eating, I am never full, which is probably just from being depressed.

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**My personality changes too often to really know who I am.**

11

# TORN IN TWO

“I often feel torn in two between two decisions.”



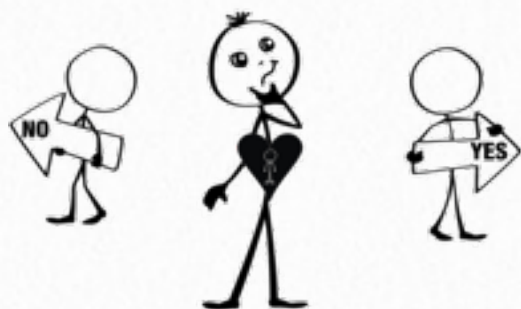
## **PULLED IN TWO EXTREME DIRECTIONS**

by Laura

I never really feel comfortable sharing about myself because I feel strange admitting to being a survivor of a vanishing twin and another womb twin. Most people are one or the other. I guess I am saying that I think I am a triplet. My sister that died would be an identical twin and a vanishing twin; my brother, would be a fraternal twin and a womb twin.

I am frequently pulled in two extreme directions. One direction seems to be a very female/emotional role, which seems to be connected to my sister and the other direction is very male/work oriented, which seems connected to my brother.

I am currently trying to figure out how to balance both of these energies/memories. I guess somehow I have to be in the middle



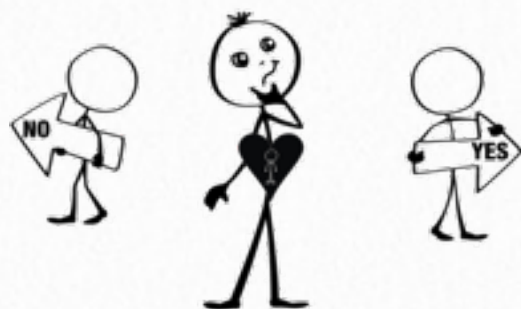
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**I am frequently  
pulled in two  
extreme directions.**



and have memories from both siblings with me but not controlling me.

I also believe in past lives and feel I have been a twin in many past lives. I feel that once you have been a twin in a past life that the memory and the ways of being a twin are carried forward to one's present life. That has been my experience, anyway.



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**I am currently trying to figure out how to balance both of these energies/memories.**

I keep having what I call womb memories or feelings. I keep feeling like people are invading me or consuming me. I think that when my twin sister died we were in the same egg - like my sister went "splat" onto me. Her being consumed me, went all over me - her energy, her existence, her everything. Like my body absorbed her?

I think that this is why I don't want to be close to people, because it reminds me of that closeness with my sister - the ultimate of closeness - being together in one egg.

My brother would not have been as close because he was fraternal, made of another egg. He would affect my fear of closeness, too, but probably in another way. I have always thought that these feelings had to do with enmeshment, but I am now rethinking that.



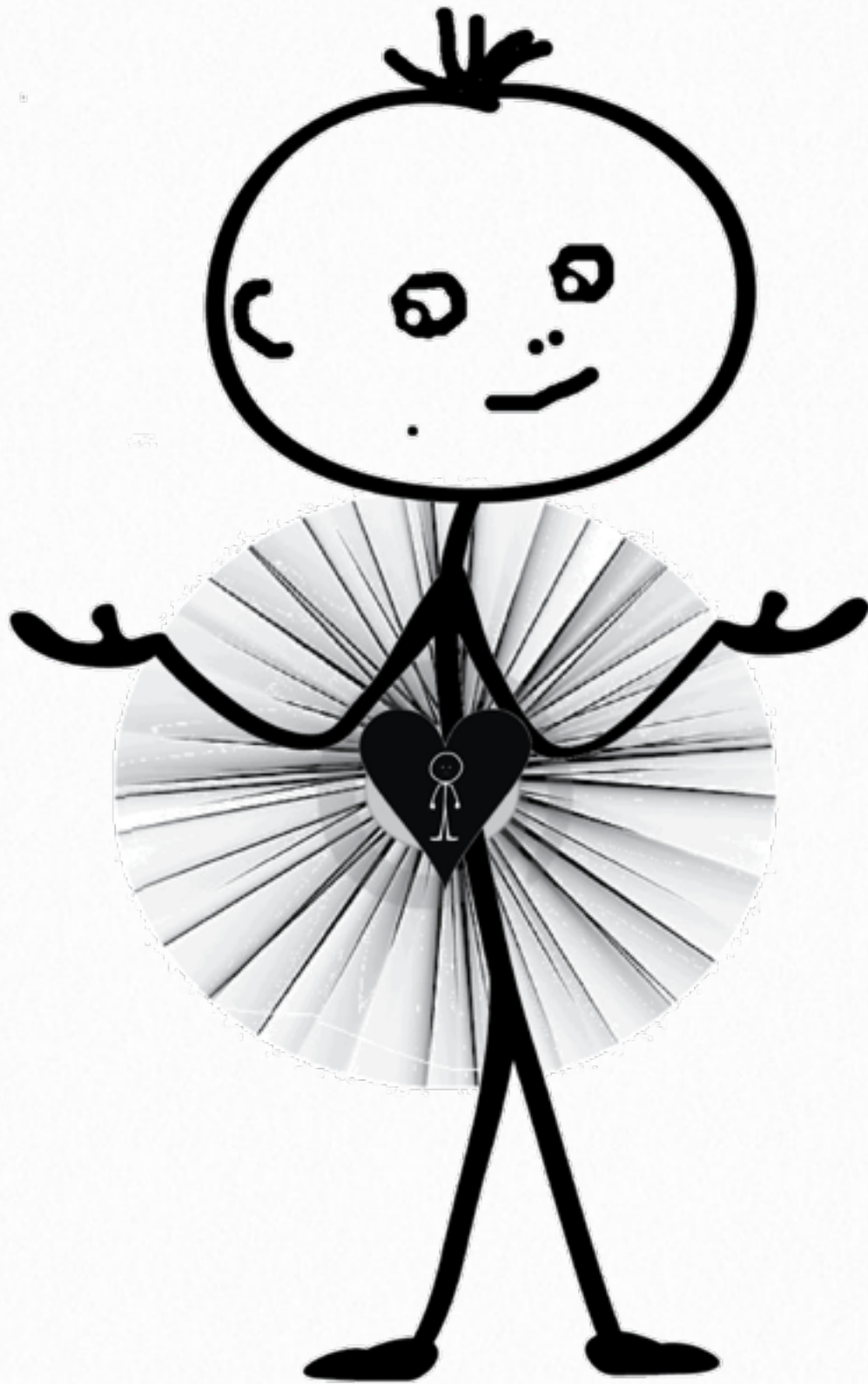
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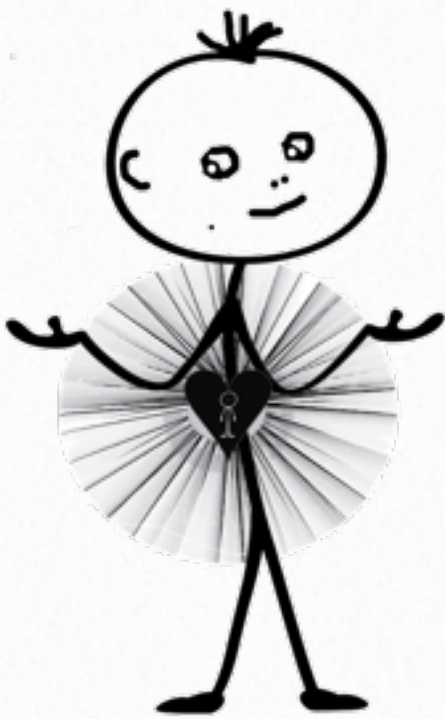
**I think that this is why I don't want to be close to people, because it reminds me of that closeness with my sister - the ultimate of closeness - being together in one egg.**

# 12

## INNER LIFE

“ I have strong, inner  
imaginary life that I use as  
a coping mechanism”





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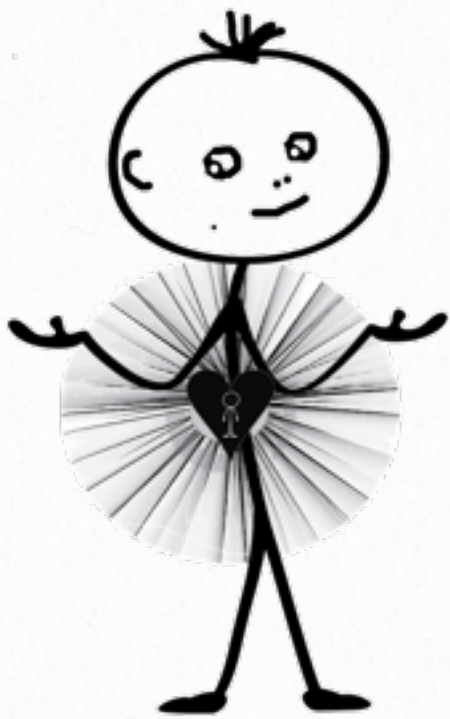
**I had a constantly shifting procession of imaginary friends, and I would insist that places be set at the table for them.**

## **MY IMAGINARY FRIENDS**

by Ben

All of this was told to me by my mother when I was a young boy (around 10 years old, I think). My father, however, never spoke of it. My parents never had any other children, and I grew up as an only child. I am beginning to see that, although it was only occasionally mentioned, the death of my twin forever shaped our whole family dynamic. It also shaped my entire life story.

For the first few months of my life, I cried constantly, or would go into tiny rages for no apparent reason. By the time I was about three years old I was causing enough of a problem for my mother to take me to a child psychologist, who apparently asked (after I had trashed his office and was now attempting to remove the legs of his chair) “Is there any history of insanity in the family?” Later, this story was told at social gatherings, accompanied by much laughter.

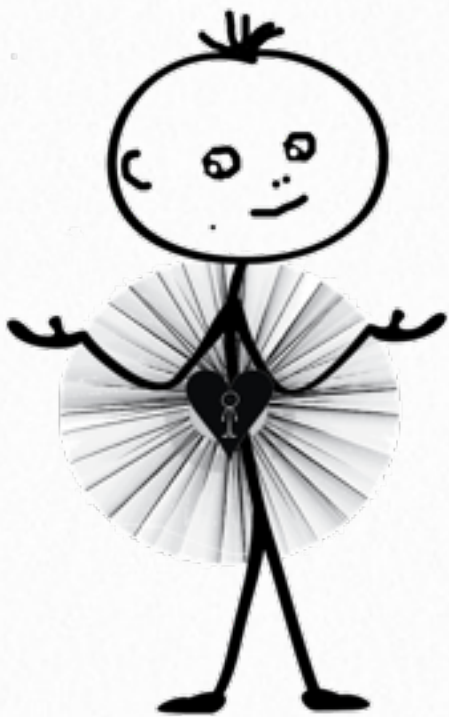


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**I think I felt very little fear in the 'real' world because, to me, it wasn't all that real. It was the imaginary world where the real monsters lurked.**

My earliest memories date from my fourth birthday. By this time I was living almost entirely in a privately constructed world. I had a constantly shifting procession of imaginary friends, and I would insist that places be set at the table for them. I still managed to interact with my parents though, especially my father, who doted on me and spent hours playing games and making toys with me. However, I always felt distant from my mother and, despite all my efforts, this private feeling persisted into adulthood. Although I have many memories of my father from that time, I can't seem to picture her at all.

At around the age of 5 or 6, I started to have regular nightmares, some of which I can still recall. Women with monstrous, bloated red faces would come up to the window of my bedroom and look in on me. Another dream, which my mother would often relate at parties for a laugh, involved



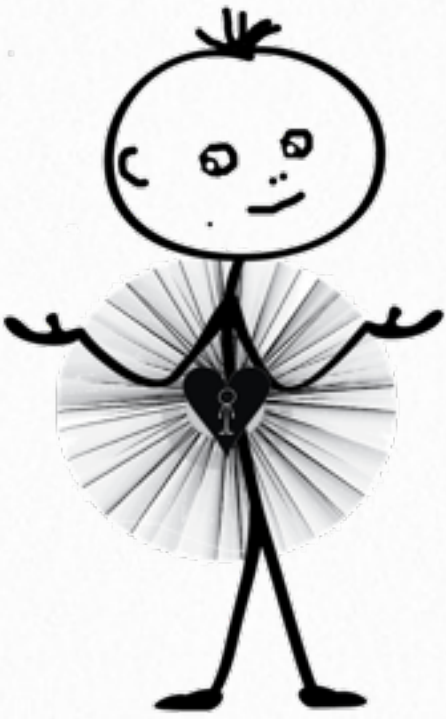
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**My earliest memories date from my fourth birthday. By this time I was living almost entirely in a privately constructed world.**

her standing on a station platform, inexplicably wearing a fireman's helmet. My mother turns to look at me with disinterest, then boards the train, and I am left alone in the crowd. I also had a frequent 'fever dream' in which the walls of the room would recede far away from me, while my bones felt as thin as wire.

As I grew older I began to see how disturbed my parent's relationship was and I came to the conclusion that it was somehow my fault. Perhaps it was. My mother was overprotective towards me from the instant of my birth until I was old enough to leave home. She would wrap my infant body in far too many clothes, so that I would often overheat. I recall constant warnings about threat and potential dangers at every turn, even into my teenage years.

Paradoxically, I was quite reckless as a child, and was always getting into scrapes



and dangerous – even life threatening – situations. I must have driven my mother to distraction. Both parents literally saved my life on more than one occasion.

Looking back on it, I think I felt very little fear in the ‘real’ world because, to me, it wasn’t all that real. It was in the imaginary world where the real monsters lurked.

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**By the time I was about three years old I was causing enough of a problem for my mother to take me to a child psychologist.**

# 13

## RESTLESS

“All my life I have felt restless and unsettled.”





## I AM RESTLESS

by Katherine



Since I was little I didn't seem to be coping with stress situations. My mother told me that I was very restless as a baby and child and that I had difficulties falling asleep. At one time, I even started to sleep walk a few times but it stopped when I grew older. My body seemed to want to protect itself by making itself as small as possible.

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**My mother told me that I was very restless as a baby and child and that I had difficulty falling asleep.**

As a child and teenager I was very shy. When I started studying music, I finally found something that gave me an opportunity to connect with other people, but still, I was afraid to pick up the phone, talk to strangers or organise my life into the outside world. I felt like I was living in two different worlds: a world within me who seemed like a totally different world around me. My mother said that I hadn't any imaginary friends, but I know that I lived a

lot in my own fantasy world where everything was safe and solid.

The stress related problems went on and made me quit my musical studies at art college, because I couldn't cope with the high expectations. I felt like there was so much music in me, but I couldn't get it out. I felt threatened by the outside world and sank into a depression because I had no future prospects.

I felt so much resistance to stepping into the world and find a job that suited me. I couldn't image myself working a job because I felt like I couldn't even take care of myself. It felt like I never had the energy to study and work and seeing other people do it like it is normal and obvious, made me terribly anxious, lonely and afraid for myself. For three years I isolated myself at home, getting into a serious internet addiction, while my husband went working to pay off our bills. I felt like I was a total failure. After



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**I liked my job, because it was the first job that really felt like something I could cope with, but after a few years I was heading for a burn-out.**



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**For three years I isolated myself at home, getting into a serious internet addiction, while my husband went working to pay off our bills.**

a while something came up: someone in my village had heard that I had studied classical singing and she wanted some tips to practice her own voice. I started playing with the idea of becoming a vocal coach and a while later I founded a teaching practice.

I liked my job, because it was the first job that really felt like something I could cope with, but after a few years I was heading for a burn-out. It still seemed like I did not have the energy to do my job properly. I tried to change some of my personal and teaching habits but again, some time later I was heading for another burn-out. After that I started to have panic attacks during the day. I felt like I was chronically over-stimulated. I started to have hyper-ventilation attacks.

Even when I'm extremely tired, there are nights that I can't seem to fall asleep. Some nights I lay awake until 6 or 7 o'clock in the



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**At this point I have tried several different therapies, body-oriented and psychological, but the problems come back every time and stronger than before.**

morning. When I lay awake, I feel anxious and afraid, like there is something seriously wrong with me. Every time I doze off, I startle awake and adrenaline seems to rush through my veins. It's like falling asleep means that I'm going to die. So my body does everything it can to keep me awake.

I suffer from a lot of psychosomatic and stress-related symptoms, I am hypersensitive (always have been), and I feel like it's getting worse every year. I so desperately want to be “normal” but the more I want it, the more I seem to fail.

At this point I have tried several different therapies, body-oriented and psychological, but the problems come back every time and stronger than before. I even studied some of the therapies myself, like Reiki, Emotional Freedom Technique and Mindfulness. This year I started studying psychotherapy, hoping that it will bring me answers.

14

## FEELING SAD

“Deep down, I feel sad all the time, even when good things are happening”



## **I FEEL SAD EVERY DAY**

by Colin



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**I feel alone and sad everyday. Even chatting with my friends is getting less and less fun.**

I am a 13 year old boy who lives in America. It all started when I was 10 years old. I was sitting on my computer on a look-alike website, trying to find my twin. I always feel alone and feel like I'm missing the other half of me. I have always fantasied about the first day I will meet my twin brother or sister, hugging him or her in my arms and crying.

I do not know if my twin is still out there or if he or she died in the womb, but I am certain that I have, or did have, a twin. I feel alone and sad everyday. Even chatting with my friends is getting less and less fun. My dream is to finally meet my twin (if he/she is alive.) I feel like I will be complete with my other half.

## A STRONG FEELING OF SADNESS

by Lesley



**It feels like it's going to drag me under, into a deep dark blackness, and I will drown**

A few months ago one of my therapists gave me a list with questions that I had to answer. She thought that I was a womb twin survivor. I felt a lot of resistance to what she was saying, but after a while I started to read a book about the subject. But I still couldn't get my head around it, so I let it go. But after a while I noticed myself asking questions about my birth and my mother's pregnancy. My mother couldn't give me answers and didn't feel like I had a twin, so again, I let it go. My resistance to the subject gradually reduced, until after reading stories from womb twin survivors on the website I felt emotional and also somewhat agitated.

I noticed that there is a strong feeling of grief and sadness within me, something I recognise as having all my life but never being able to understand.



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**My body is now so exhausted I can't run any more. I'm starting to accept that I maybe had a twin lost in the womb, but it's hard to go with it, because I don't have any evidence.**

The problem is that this feeling, or emotion, seems to be buried under the mechanisms I have created all my life. It feels like my body is in a sort of survival mode I can't seem to get out of. I'm also very afraid to discover what is the true cause of this all, because it feels like I won't be able to cope with it (I even don't know how). It feels like it's going to drag me under, into a deep dark blackness and I will drown. The one thing that is preventing me from living my life fully is the thing that scares me the most, so for my whole life I have been trying to run away from it. My body is now so exhausted I can't run any more. I'm starting to accept that I maybe had a twin lost in the womb, but it's hard to go with it, because I don't have any evidence.

My mother herself had a very traumatic time in the womb and after birth: her mother, my grandmother, tried to abort the pregnancy herself, but still, she gave birth to a fraternal





twin pair, my mother and my aunt. After birth, my grandmother left them for over two weeks in the hospital. My mother and aunt had to stay in the hospital because they were premature and my grandmother would only visit to bring along some breast milk to the nurses. My mother still hasn't healed those traumas, so at this time we don't have a close relationship (it hurts me deeply) because she is not able to talk to me emotionally.

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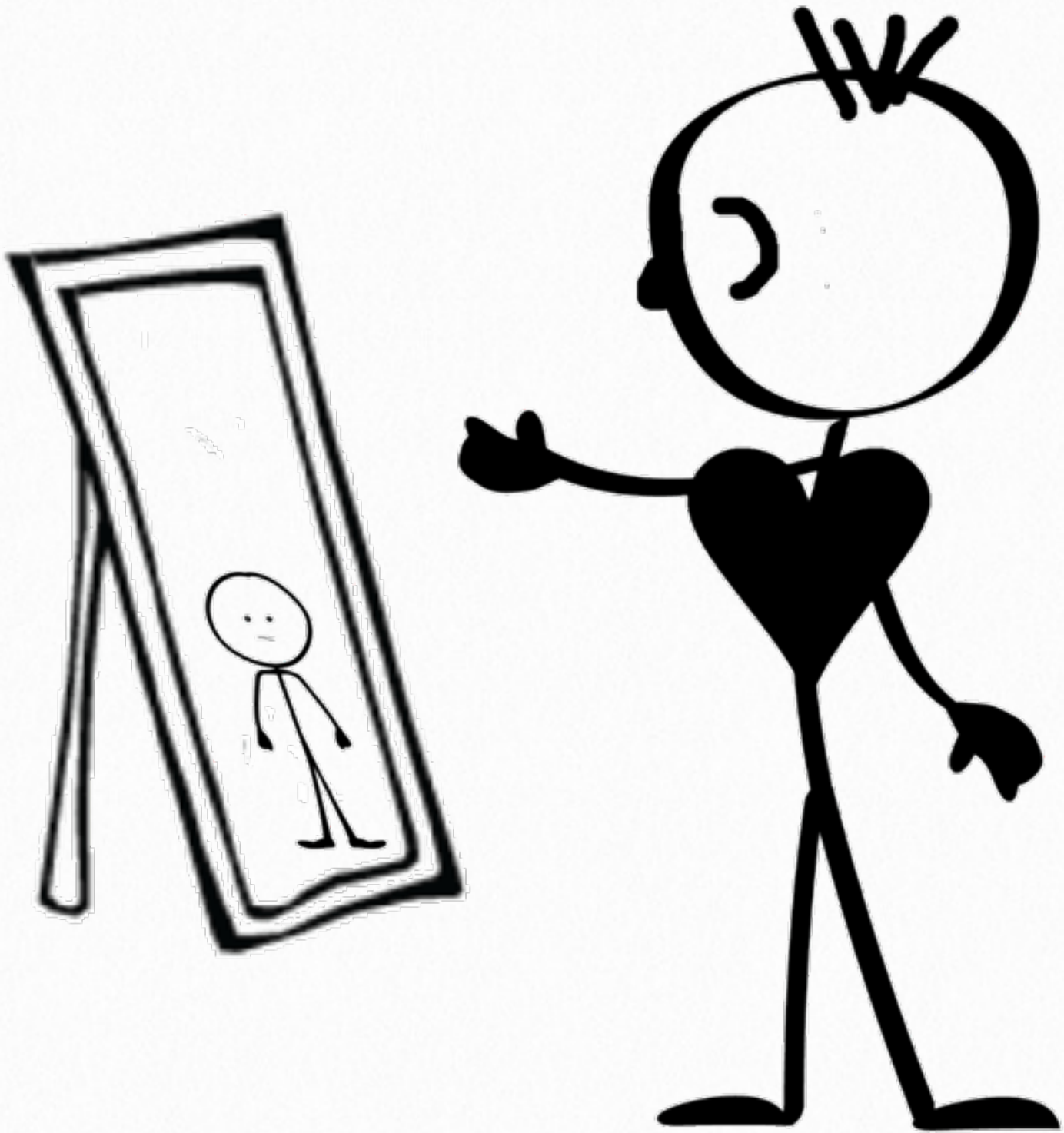
**I feel terribly alone and rejected. The fact that I wasn't planned (my mother was only 18 when she became pregnant with me) makes it even harder**

I feel terribly alone and rejected. The fact that I wasn't planned (my mother was only 18 when she became pregnant with me) makes it even harder, also the fact that she seems to have a totally different relationship with my younger brother.

15

# LOW SELF-ESTEEM

“I suffer from low self esteem.”



## JUST AN AFTERTHOUGHT

by Marcie

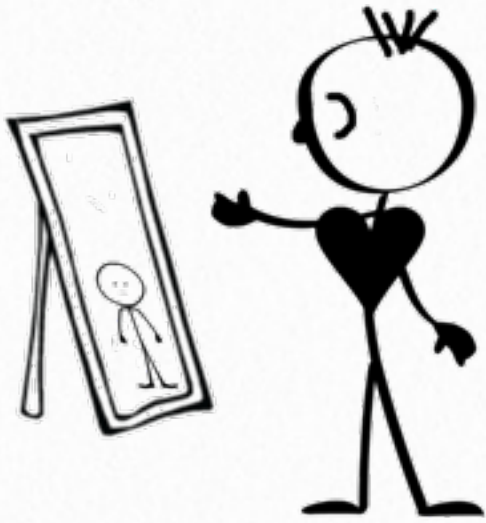


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I feel very overlooked by most people, kind of like I'm just an afterthought to them.

My whole life, I've felt very different from everyone else in the world, almost like a freak of nature. I've always been called “weird” by people, although usually in an admiring way. People often tell me, “There's no one like you, that's for sure!” and I've always felt very alone, like there has to be someone else out there like me. I feel very overlooked by most people, kind of like I’m just an afterthought to them.

My relationships with boys always start out very intensely and I usually get my heart broken, which makes me feel like my whole world has crumbled. I’ve always possessed a feeling of emptiness that I can’t shake, no matter what. I get very nervous around a lot of strangers, and I hate it when they look at me.



**To this day, I get those weird feelings from time to time about not being worthy of food.**

I feel like if I don't go above and beyond to please everyone in my life, the result will be them leaving me. I'm very cautious about making a man I'm with angry, because I feel like just one time making them mad will make them leave me forever. I guess I just feel like I'm not worth it to people, like I'm not worthy of them keeping me around, so I overcompensate.

I long for that special closeness that I see in other people, than unshakeable bond. Even though I've enjoyed close relationships with family, friends and boys, I have never had the closeness that I'm really looking for.

I've battled anorexia and bulimia in the past, and I've always had a sense that I don't deserve food. To this day, I get those feelings sometimes, like I'm completely unworthy of food. Sometimes I'll be eating and out of nowhere I'll think, "Why am I eating? Why should I of all people, get food?"



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I'm not like that any more. I'm exhausted and too tired to start anything. I wonder if I burned out.

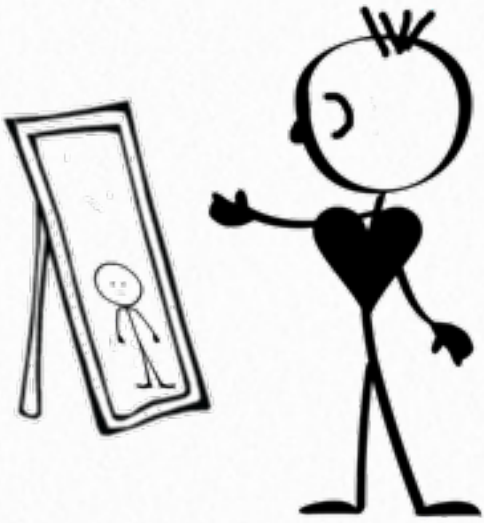
I have a very weird relationship with food and always have. Even though I like being thin, my anorexia in the past was more about a weird sense of not deserving to eat. To this day, I get those weird feelings from time to time about not being worthy of food. I never did understand where this came from.

## **I AM UNDESERVING OF LOVE**

By Anna

I have had depression as long as I can remember, since I was a little girl. I would have dark times and crying jags and never know why. My family assumed I was doing it for attention. I just didn't know why it hurt so much.

I'm tired and jaded and skeptical and sad, and this is actually an improvement after years of therapy. A long time ago I was a lot worse. I was self-destructive to the point of physically hurting myself, suicidal,



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**I'm tired and jaded and skeptical and sad, and this is actually an improvement after years of therapy.**

sabotaging all of my relationships. I'm also very empathetic - I'm good at keying into what people are really saying and the minute nuances of it. I try to put other people at ease when they can't even articulate what's bothering them. I also tend to get so wrapped up in other people's pain that sometimes I can't detach and let it go. I'm getting better with that, over time. I am trying to learn that it's not my job to heal the world and save everybody else from their pain, but that's taking a while, too.

The questions were like a checklist of my life: the nameless guilt; the fear of abandonment; the food and control issues; feeling like you're two separate people, one of whom is buoyant and charming and everyone's friend and the other who is lonely, quiet and broken; secretly being convinced you're undeserving of love. Then I worried that I was having a false-positive sort of response - the way that people will

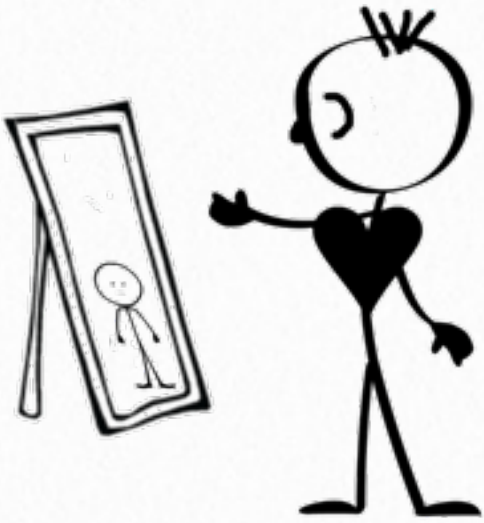


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**The questions were like a checklist of my life: the nameless guilt; the fear of abandonment; the food and control issues.....**

believe horoscopes because they're just vague enough to be universally applicable - so I had my husband read it. He said, "I've never seen something describe someone so accurately. I mean, this is you." My husband says that when he met me, I was brimming with energy and couldn't sit still for one project but for hopping to the next. I'm not like that any more. I'm exhausted and too tired to start anything. I wonder if I burned out.

My mother gave birth to a full-term baby girl, my sister. Six months later she conceived again. Most of the family thought she was having twins, since she "ballooned up" rather quickly, and since twins run in the family - she has brothers who are fraternal twins. Later in the pregnancy the doctors told her there was only one baby, and she assumed that they had all been mistaken about it being twins.



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**I try to put other people at ease when they can't even articulate what's bothering them.**

She said that she was sick throughout both of her pregnancies, but that it was worse with me. Partway through she developed toxemia - she wasn't bedridden, and I was full-term, so it could not have been severe. During labour, the end of the placenta stayed attached to her uterus. Instead of performing a D&C, her ob/gyn - who apparently got his medical license out of a Cracker Jack box - assumed that it was "stuck" and that it would come dislodged if he yanked on it. My mother haemorrhaged so badly that she nearly died. She survived, but was told not to have any more children. (Not that she was planning on it, all things considered.)

Apparently what had caused the attachment was a small node on the outside of the placenta - either a potential twin who never formed, or a twin who didn't survive.



# 16

## PRIVACY

“I make a lot of effort to protect my privacy.”





## A SECRET STORY

by Bethany

I was born a fraternal twin; my twin sister died shortly after birth. I don't remember when my parents told me about her; I must have been fairly young. It wasn't really a topic for further discussion, although they did take me to see her grave at one point. I was always very curious about my twin, but I definitely got the message that it wasn't something my parents felt comfortable talking about.

They are kind people, but not the most emotionally expressive. As a child I was known to be a bit "spooky"; I said I saw ghosts, had terrible nightmares, and was often lost inside my head. I remember having a terrible unreal feeling of not knowing whether I was asleep or awake, which would last for long periods of time. When I was maybe five, I tearfully told my father about this, to which he replied that

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I spent most of my time playing by myself, wandering in the woods. I didn't want company most of the time.



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I am nervous about bringing the subject up with my parents; I am not sure I'm ready to hear about how they feel and what their experience was.

perhaps they should take me to see a doctor. I don't think I mentioned it much after that, but that feeling persisted into adolescence, when it was less frequent but extremely frightening.

Although I have an older sister I spend most of my time playing by myself, wandering in the woods. I don't want company most of the time. We move frequently, and I have therefore been "the new girl" for most of my life so far. When I have made friends, I have tended to be fiercely possessive of them, and I get jealous of any other friends they might have. I am afraid that I will lose them (which I inevitably will the next time we move). I always wanted to draw them into my private world. As I got older, I continued to have those strong attachments

and longings and fears of loss, and am still trying to learn to deal with them in ways other than shutting people out entirely.



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**I definitely got the message that it wasn't something my parents felt comfortable talking about.**

I was "supposed" to be a brilliant child - "So much potential!" was the common refrain all through my youth. If only I would apply myself.

A few months ago, in therapy, I mentioned my twin to my counsellor. We talked about it for a little while as a possible root of some of my problems and then I dismissed the idea as a sort of cop-out - since I had never know anything else, how could I say whether or not my problems were caused by going through life without my twin?

I still don't know how to approach the matter, but I am starting to open up to the possibility that I'm still suffering that loss. Even saying that much makes me feel guilty: how can I say I lost someone I never "met" outside the womb, let alone suffer emotional aftermath? I am nervous about bringing the subject up with my parents; I'm not sure I'm ready to hear about how they feel and what their experience was.

# 17

## VULNERABLE

“Deep down, I feel very vulnerable, as it would not take much to totally annihilate me as an individual”





## THEY SAID I WAS TOO SENSITIVE

by Sarah

When I was about 18 I started smoking - and still haven't been able to quit! By that time I had already moved out and was living on my own. It was a very destructive time. There were abusive relationships, I became very suspicious of men in general, as I never really felt respected or loved at all. There was a lot of drinking, smoking, and “friends” started to use drugs.

As I was an observer and saw where this would end, I somehow managed to escape. It was an odd, sudden, thought that made me leave that “scene”. All I remember is having a drink in a bar, and suddenly thinking, “What am I doing?? This is insane!” as if someone said it to me, in my head. So I left and I felt liberated. Free. Hopeful. I was going to make a new, fresh start. Never again did I see those “friends”.

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Also people always told me that I was too sensitive, as a child, as a teenager, and still, as an adult, they say I am too sensitive



Not that it was easy, I had many different jobs and places to live.

A few years later my mother had a heart-attack and I went back home to take care of my father. I stayed home for over a year. Both my parents were now not well and I felt very guilty because of it. Although everyone told me it was not my fault, the guilt has always been part of me. Feeling guilty is normal for me. Also people always told me that I was too sensitive, as a child, as a teenager, and still, as an adult, they say I am too sensitive. I care too much, I want to make things right, etc. Recently I have found out that I am indeed sensitive, often I know exactly how other people feel. This can be physical or emotional. My therapist calls it “an empathic gift”. It amazed me that something like that actually exists, I never even knew anything about it.

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**When I don't feel that connection or have been recently scared by some external event, I can be very afraid of the dark, especially when I have to sleep alone, even when someone is in the next room.**



## LACK OF CONNECTION

by Trudy

I can remember a period of my very early childhood when I wasn't afraid of the dark. I also remember feeling a certain level of connection with my parents, a blanket, sucking my thumb, and imaginary companions during this period. It felt like these connections - particularly the one with my parents - could protect me, even in the dark, so I remember the dark not occurring to me as being scary then.

Likewise, I was not afraid of dark or other things killing me at that time, since I felt protected, but at some point later I became terrified of the dark again (this was when it began to feel like my parents couldn't protect me from death and the dark.)

I currently continue to be afraid of the dark when I get scared from some external event (e.g. seeing a movie that seems scary to

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I can be very afraid of the dark, especially when I have to sleep alone, even when someone is in the next room.





me) or when I don't feel connected to someone.

When I feel a certain connection with someone out there in the world - for example when I have a boyfriend I feel connected to in a special way - I am not afraid, or as afraid, of the dark, even when I have to sleep alone in a dark room.

When I don't feel that connection or have been recently scared by some external event, I can be very afraid of the dark, especially when I have to sleep alone, even when someone is in the next room.

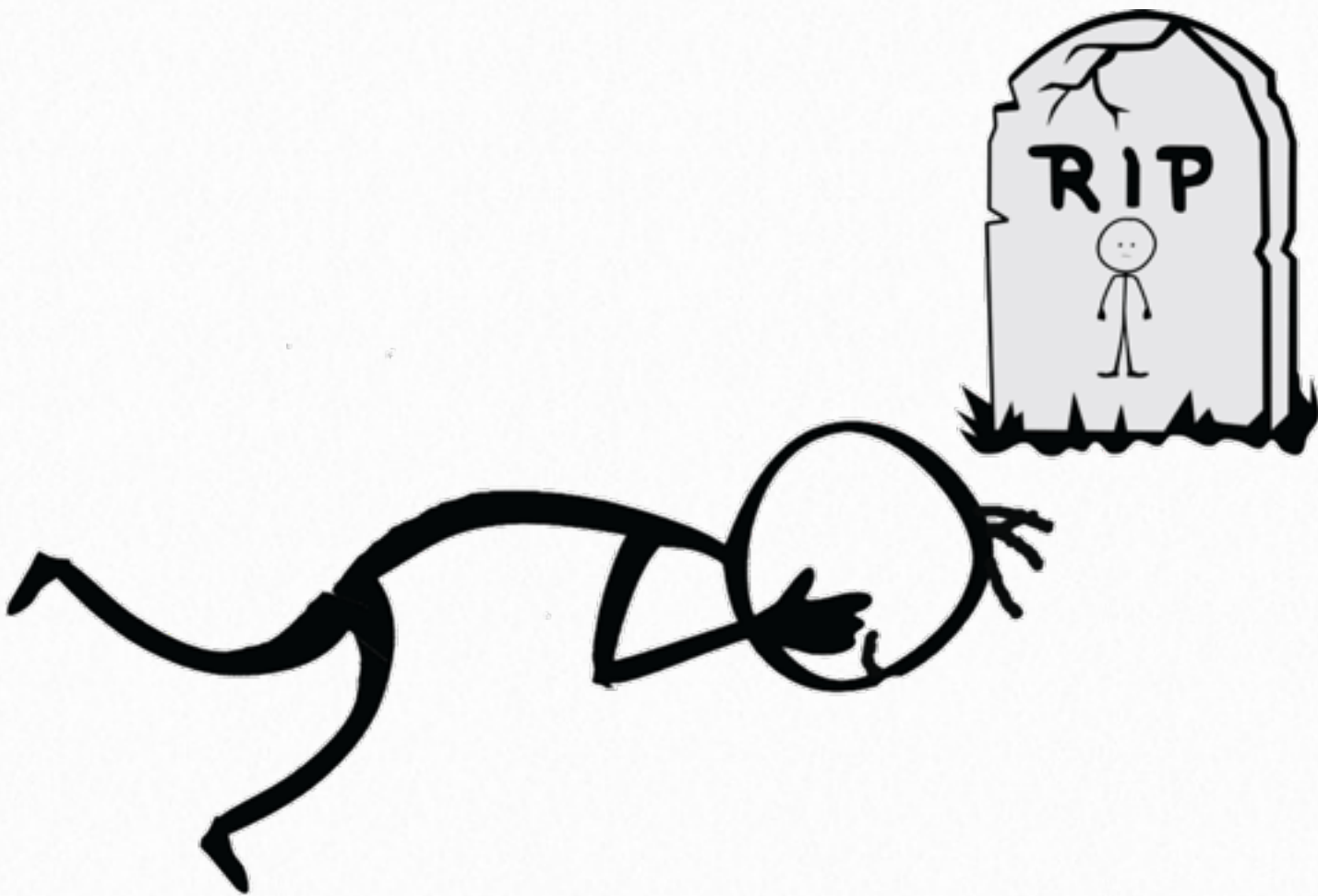
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**I currently continue to be afraid of the dark when I get scared from some external event (e.g. seeing a movie that seems scary to me) or when I don't feel connected to someone.**

# 18

## UNRESOLVED GRIEF

“There is a deep feeling of grief inside me that will not go away, however hard I try to get over it.”



## **I OFTEN FALL INTO DESPAIR**

by Christina



I have a constant feeling of loneliness which I can sometimes escape with physical closeness to another person, where I feel like I am “connecting” with them. I become very depressed at the slightest thing. I often hide my actions from others, or hate to be “seen”, whilst desiring closeness.

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**I often think about death, and consider my own death, but not so much in a melodramatic suicidal way, but just the possibility of it; the facts of its impending presence.**

I suffer from an eating disorder: one moment I will feel empowered by my ability to not eat anything and I lose my appetite completely. Then I will feel sad at my self-denial, and over-compensate with comfort eating. Then I will perhaps feel guilty and purge. This cycle can be over years, months, or even over a couple of days.

I have always had a sense that there is someone with me, out of reach. Sometimes this is positive, like a guardian angel, or guide (but not religious, more like a



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I feel guilty most days in most moments and have been grieving everything my whole life.

presence). I speak to myself in the mirror, or study my face like it is someone else's, imagining I am watching someone else.

Whatever I do, there is something missing- I have always felt this, as far back as I can remember. Nothing fills the void which I feel. I am beautiful, intelligent, have a prestigious degree and a successful job. I have modelled, I need ask for nothing but my feelings of emptiness are all the more **BECAUSE** these things do not fill the void. I feel I should appreciate or make the most of things, live life to the full and love what I have but I cannot help falling into despair.

I often think about death and consider my own death, but not so much in a melodramatic suicidal way, but just the possibility of it; the fact of its impending presence.

## A LIFETIME OF GRIEF

by Liz



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I often think about death and consider my own death, but not so much in a melodramatic suicidal way, but just the possibility of it; the fact of its impending presence.

I have always felt lost. Even at my happiest I have felt like a fraud. I'm more of a man than most the men I date. I grew up on a farm with a no-nonsense father so I always have contributed my tomboyish way/ mentality to that. I am however very heterosexual and love the companionship of a man to a fault.

I feel guilty most days in most moments and have been grieving everything my whole life. Believe it or not, I have made great changes in my life in the past five years of sobriety. People now see me as a positive, fun, free spirit of a person and I find great joy in that.

I recently saw a holistic/alternative chiropractor who told me I had a vanishing twin. He explained that is why I have struggled with abandonment issues my

whole living life even though I have no history of being abandoned.

I talked to my mother about this and she told me that until her 5th month of pregnancy, she was told I was possibly twins because she gained so much weight in the beginning. She only gained 3-5 lbs in the last three months of her pregnancy and when she went for a check up in the beginning November she was told I was fully developed but they would wait and see when I decided to come. Her due date for me was Dec 18th, I was born on the 19<sup>th</sup> January. Almost 10 lbs with a full head of hair.

I have always joked that I didn't want to come into this world, that is why I was a month late. I didn't know that I was possibly a surviving twin.



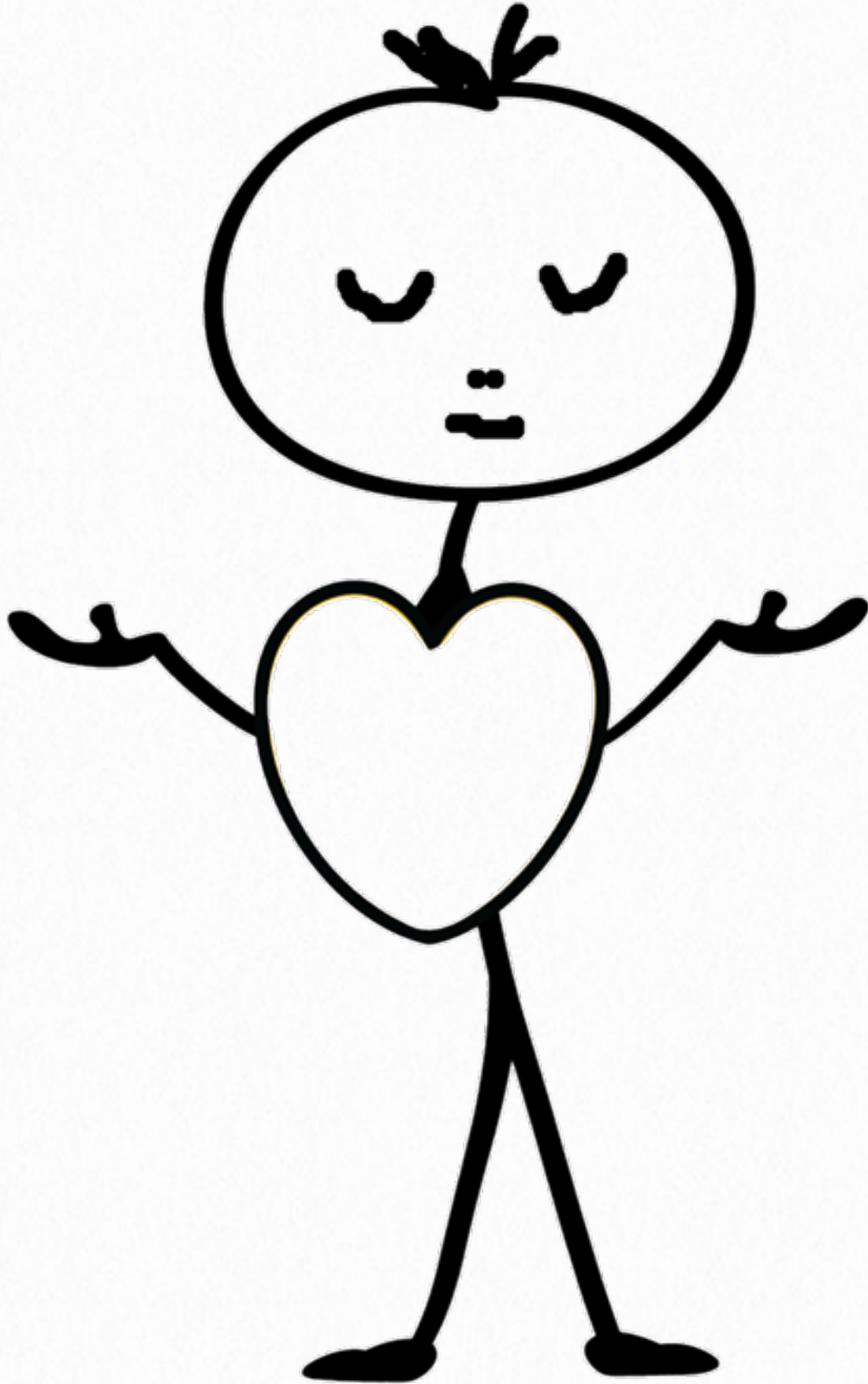
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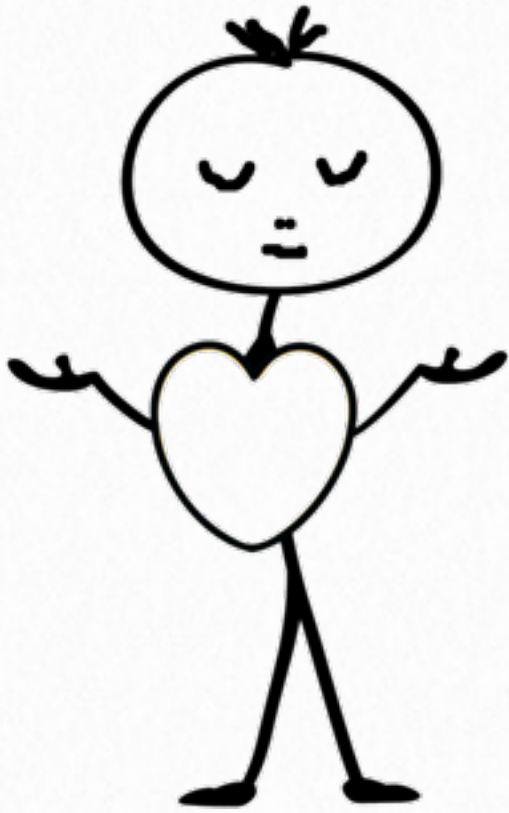
**I have always joked that I didn't want to come into this world, that is why I was a month late. I didn't know that I was possibly a surviving twin.**

# 19

## INNER EMPTINESS

“All my life I have felt empty inside.”





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**I still feel that emptiness inside of me that I can never really explain fully. But it's good to know that I have answers.**

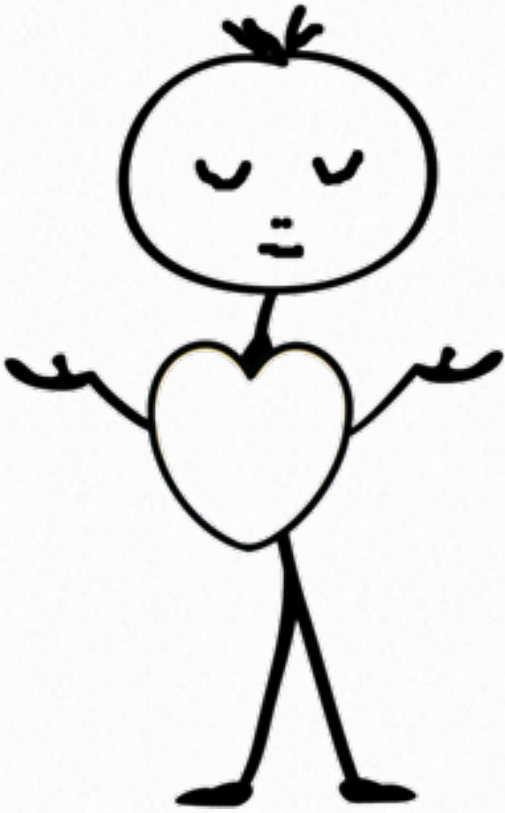
## **THAT EMPTINESS INSIDE OF ME**

by Dustin

As a little kid, I was always wanted a twin. I knew it didn't seem right that it was just me. I had my older brother, who I did always love, but something just didn't seem right. I would always think that I was born a twin but my mom didn't want 2 of me and sent one away. Then as I got older, I noticed that every time I would see a set of twins my mind would go racing at how cool that thought would be to have a twin beside me all the time.

I would always go to the bathroom mirror, which had three different moving mirrors on it. And I would move one so I could see two reflections and then I would just pretend I had a twin. Each reflection had a different personality. As years past I just never felt comfortable being alone in a big place with other people. I just wanted to be by myself.





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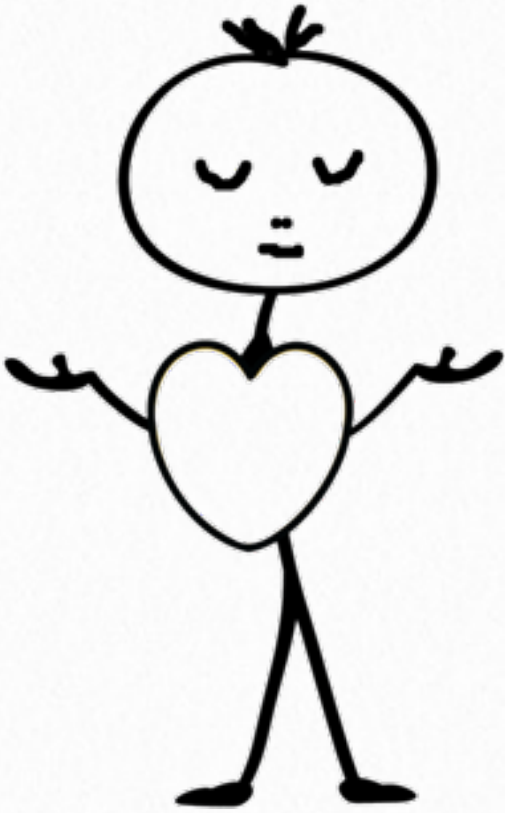
**I still feel restless,  
yet fearful of moving,  
passionless and lost,  
empty and  
searching.**

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But at the age of 16 I discovered 'Vanishing Twin syndrome' in an article online. I just had the most overwhelming feeling that hit me and I knew that this had happened to me. After reading up on this Syndrome for a couple of weeks I found out that many left handed people are vanishing twins. I myself who is left-handed only reassured myself further.

After discovering more about this, I talked to my mother who said that she too had always felt that I was supposed to be more than one baby. I told her all my worries and concerns and she the told me that twins run in our family, every 3rd generation in fact.

She said that her and her siblings were inline, for at least one of them, to have twins. And not one of them did. She then explained that during her very first ultrasound for me the doctor told her that she might have just conceived twins but he was not sure so early in the pregnancy. Here I



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This information has really resonated with me and since then, I can't stop thinking about it.

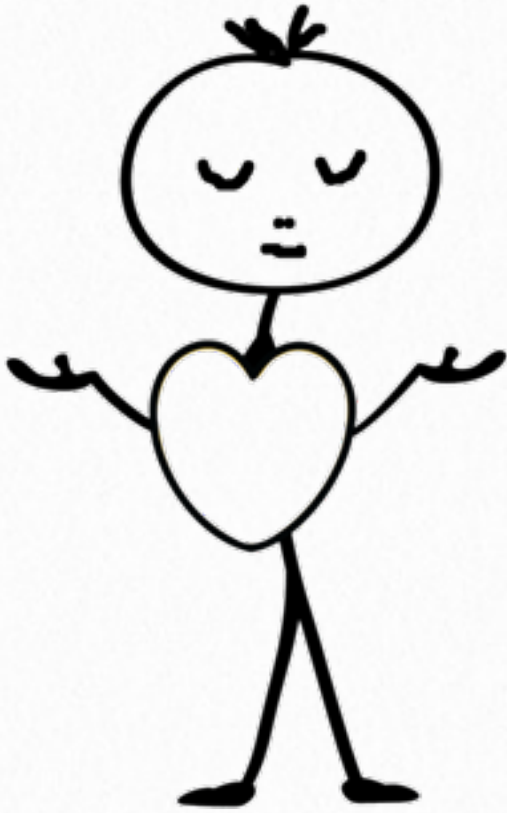
am now.. I still feel that emptiness inside of me that I can never really explain fully. But it's good to know that I have answers.

## **I FEEL EMPTY AND SEARCHING**

by Lucy

I was adopted at birth and I also have an adopted brother two years older than me. I have walked through my whole life feeling like something was missing. I often wondered about my biological family, wondering if I had any brothers or sisters. My birth parents were young and unmarried at the time of my birth, so it would be logical to assume I at least have half-siblings out there somewhere. I also have often wondered if I might be a twin.

I never took it too seriously, I just would wonder about it from time to time. I always related to the feeling twins would talk about when they had been separated at birth. Mostly, I just attributed this feeling of



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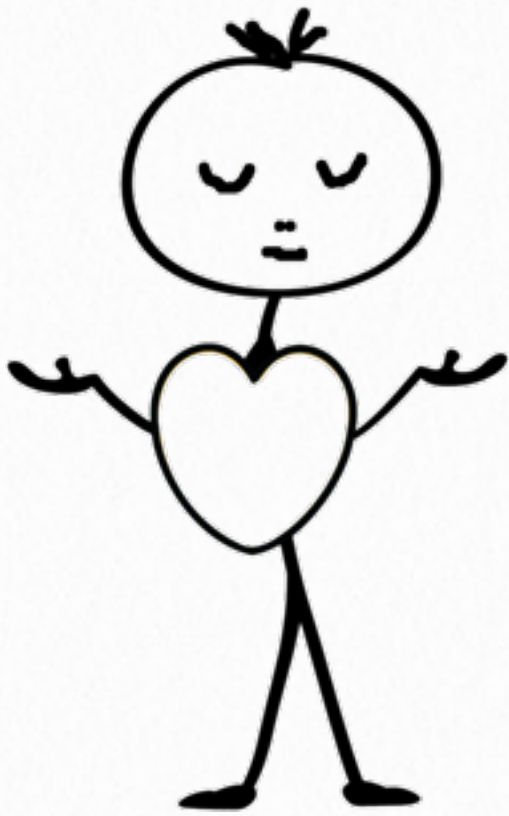
I went to an intuitive healer who asked me out of the blue if I had an older sister, I said No. Was it a younger sister? No. "Well, she's a blood relative of yours who is no longer with us."

malaise to being adopted - separated from my birth parents - and also to my difficult childhood.

I have always felt alone, disconnected and out of place. Always felt like I didn't belong and sometimes like I wasn't really even here or supposed to be here (especially as a young child). I spend most of my time alone and have a difficult time connecting with others.

I was very depressed for a long time and even though I feel like I have finally conquered the depression, I still feel restless, yet fearful of moving, passionless and lost, empty and searching.

I went to an intuitive healer who asked me out of the blue if I had an older sister, I said No. Was it a younger sister? No. "Well, she's a blood relative of yours who is no longer with us" he said. I told him I was



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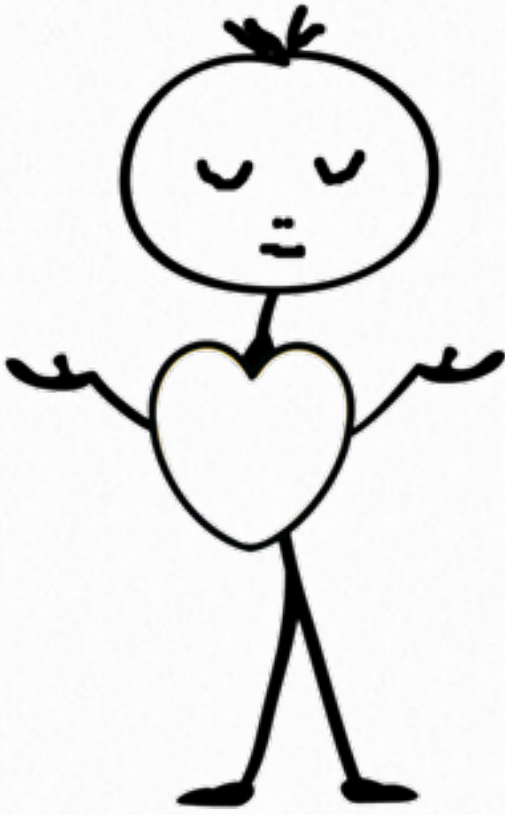
He told me I did have a sister who died and my immediate reaction was, “I knew it!” He said she could have been a twin, but he wasn't sure.

adopted and didn't know any blood relatives.

He told me I did have a sister who died and my immediate reaction was, “I knew it!” He said she could have been a twin, but he wasn't sure. She could have died in the womb or she could have been born sometime after me and then died, but whatever the case, I never really recovered from that loss and I have been carrying around that pain my whole life

This information has really resonated with me. Since then, I can't stop thinking about it. My intuition is telling me that she was my twin, but whether she died in the womb, or we were separated at birth and then she died, I am not sure.

I am hoping that delving deeper into this mystery may bring some much needed closure for me, although I am not sure I will



Truly, I feel I know the answer in my heart. I had a twin sister and I lost her somehow. Why did I survive and she didn't?

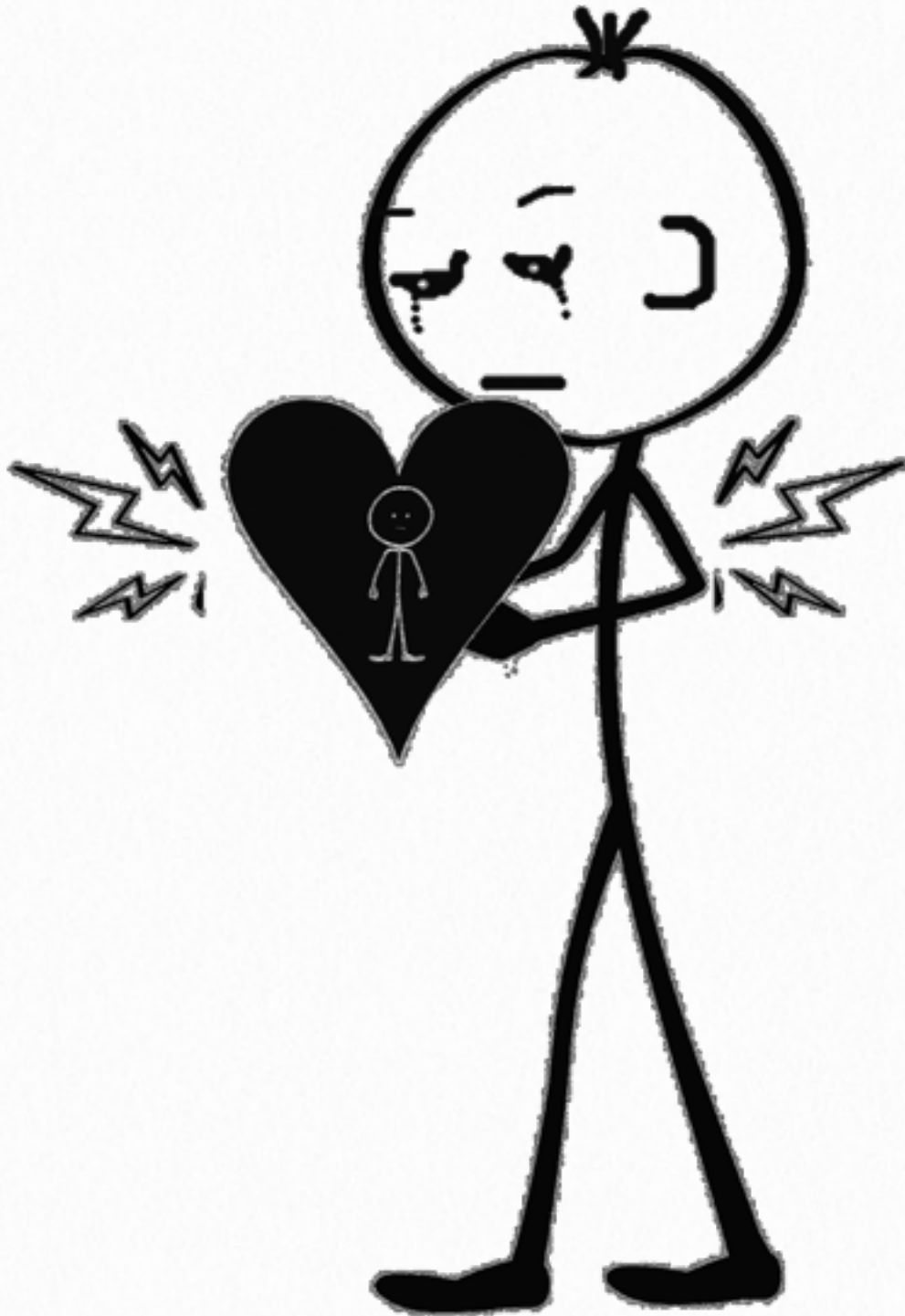
ever find the factual information I seek, as adoption records are closed.

Truly, I feel I know the answer in my heart. I had a twin sister and I lost her somehow. Why did I survive and she didn't? How do I let go and heal from a loss like this? Can I somehow connect with her now? Just having my suspicions confirmed, even to a small degree, has been helpful and has explained a lot about some of these deep emotional feelings and why they won't let go. I guess it's a good start.

# 20

## EMOTIONAL PAIN

“All my life I have carried deeply-felt emotional pain that persists, despite all my efforts to heal myself.”



## A PAINFUL ACHE

by Naomi



I have to write this now, for my own sake, and for my other half, who I have within me and have never truly known. There was a time when we played together, talked to each other, could see each other and yet were apart. I knew she was dead, yet she was within me. Why? I do not know.

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I feel her now in my heart physically, an ache that is physical, heavy, so painful, I can hardly breathe.

I feel her now in my heart physically, an ache that is physical, heavy, so painful, I can hardly breathe. Yet it is so part of me I know that it will be there until I die. My mother told me that I had an imaginary friend, and that I had even gave her a name. I once told my mother she was my friend, and that she was the little girl that had died.

Knowing her is like knowing me; we were one, from one cell that split into two. Yet two spirits joined throughout our journeys.



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But my mom was always mad at me. She felt like I killed my sister, and because of that she was stuck with just one child.

I need to know her better, and yet I know her so well. Part of her was within me for the first 18 yrs of my life, and was she then surgically removed without me knowing that part of her had been there all the time?

Was that the reason for my searching for something I just could not find? Is that the reason for this empty feeling every time I am alone? I have this feeling of being isolated, and being so alone. Even when there are many people around me, this feeling takes hold of me.

## **A WARRIOR FIGHTING MY OWN WAR**

by Stephanie

We don't know exactly how, why or when my twin died in my mother's womb. All we know is that we were going to be identical girls. She died and I survived. When I was born, my mom gave birth of me first and right after a little dead foetus came after me, in the same placenta. Shortly after my





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**Doctors told her I was a miracle baby. They couldn't understand how I survived in the same placenta, with a dead foetus next to me**

birth, my mother got diagnosed with ovarian cancer and as a result, she got a hysterectomy.

The doctors believed that the dead foetus in her womb (since she never really miscarried), ruined her reproductive organs. She was only 21 when she got all her reproductive organs removed. Doctors told her I was a miracle baby. They couldn't understand how I survived in the same placenta, with a dead foetus next to me.

But my mom was always mad at me. She felt like I killed my sister, and because of that she was stuck with just one child. She never told me she loved me, hugged me, kissed me or even played with me.

On the other hand, my dad totally adored me. I was his whole world. And he is still my whole world. He is truly the love of my life. He tells me every day how lucky he is to have the best daughter in the world.



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I am the lucky survivor. Is a miracle I am here. maybe there is something important that I needed to achieve.

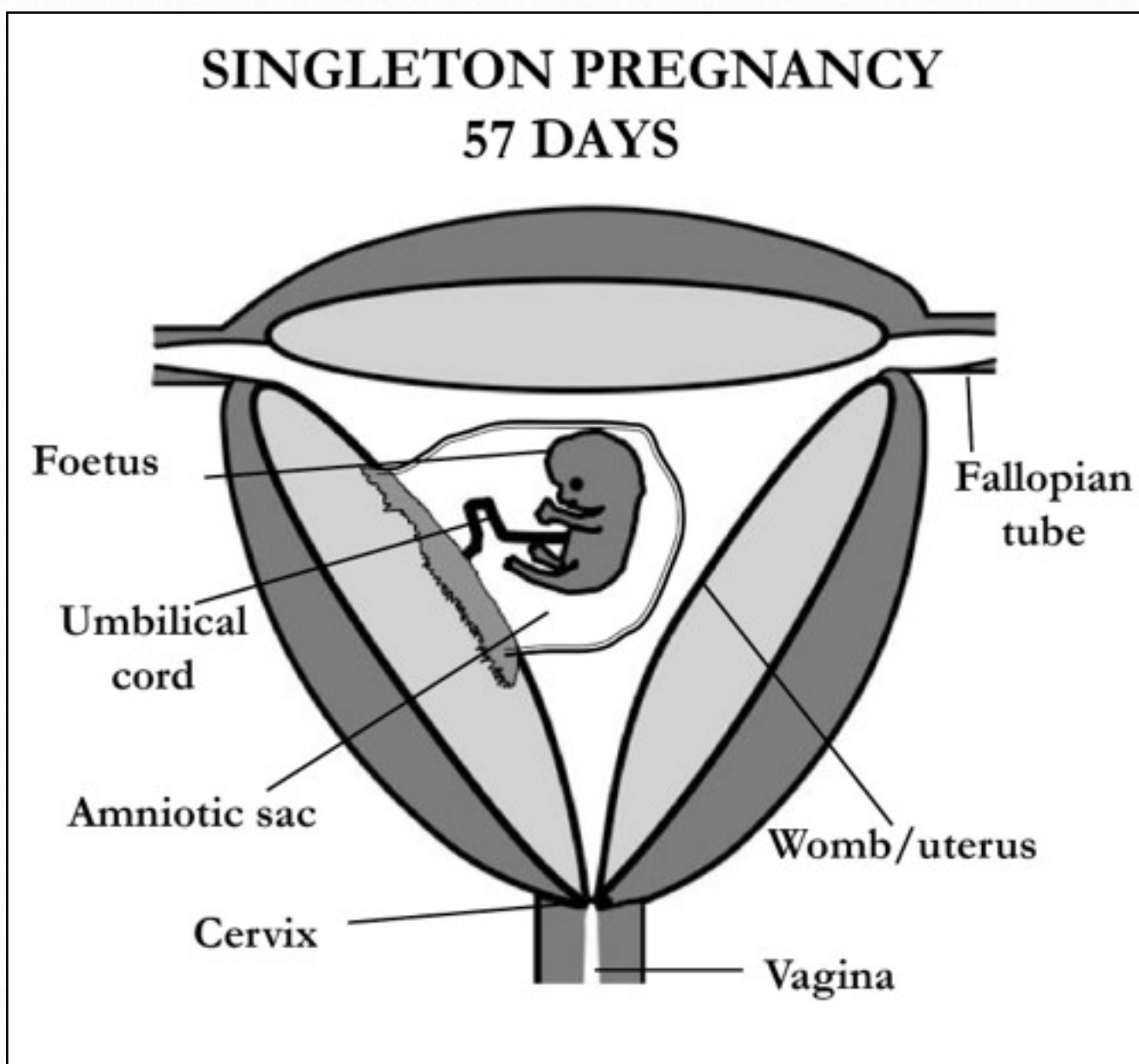
My mom got even more mad at the strong bond that me and my dad had, and eventually ended up blaming me for killing my sister in the womb and also taking her husband's love. I think I am an old soul, because at a very young age I already understood her neurosis and never hated her for feeling like that towards me.

Still, I always feel lonely. I always feel like I am a warrior battling my own war. But I always feel the presence of my twin sister watching me. Weird, but I feel I have to live my life and her life to the best. I am very competitive, so I always want to win in life. I am the lucky survivor. Is a miracle I am here. maybe there is something important that I needed to achieve.

# 21

## How twins are made

The embryo at 57 days is complete in every detail and just needs to grow bigger until it's time to be born.



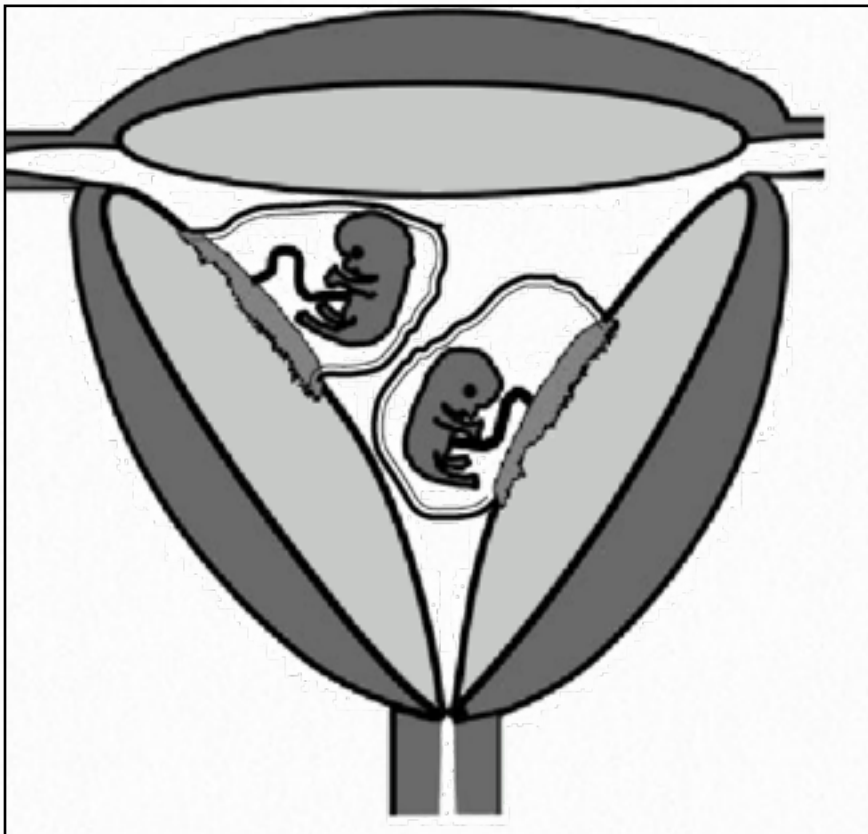
You probably learned in school that a pregnancy begins with the fertilisation of an egg from the mother with a sperm from the father. When they meet and merge, a **zygote** is formed, which, if all goes well, will eventually become a baby.

# Two-egg twins

## (Sometimes called “Fraternal” twins)

In the case of two-egg twins, two eggs are fertilised at the same time.

So at 57 days the pregnancy looks like this:



*I was born at six months, a fraternal twin female. My sister, was born dead. The doctors assumed that this was from the cord around her neck a few days before birth. I was born second, rife with toxemia and labelled a fighter at three pounds four ounces in weight.*

When one twin dies, it can be at any stage of the pregnancy, from conception until birth, If If you were once a two-egg twin, your twin was quite different from you because he or she had different genes.

### **Your twin may have been:**

- The same sex as you or the opposite sex
- Different hair and eye colour from you
- Sick or healthy
- Developing normally or abnormally

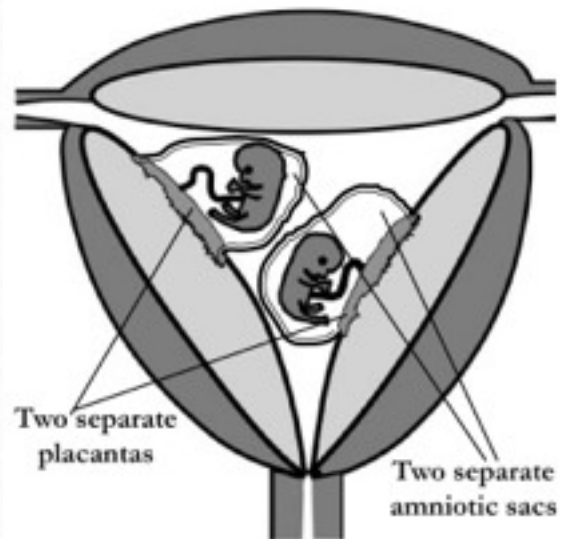
### **The ‘Vanishing’ twin**

Some twins die in the first few weeks of pregnancy. If your mother had a scan early enough, the doctors may have glimpsed your twin on the ultrasound scan but later on, there was no further evidence - but you know.....

# One-egg twins

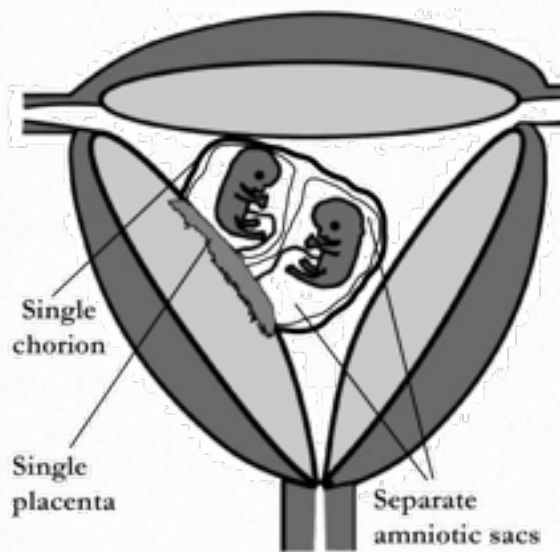
## (Sometimes called “Identical” twins)

When twins are formed from a single zygote which split into two, how things turn out depends on the day when the zygote split. There are three types of one-egg twins, depending on the way the chorion, amniotic sac and placenta develop:



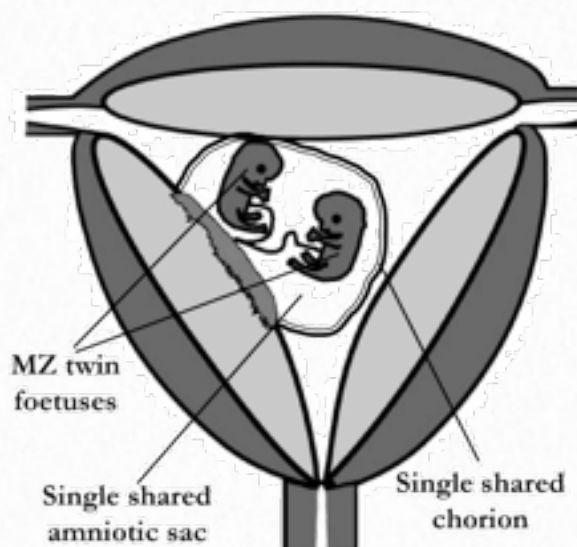
### 1. Split 0-4 days after fertilisation (Two sacs, two placentas)

In this case, if one twin dies at any stage of development, the other twin has a good chance of surviving until birth.



### 2. Split 4-6 days after fertilisation (Two sacs, single placenta)

Because the placenta is shared, any problems with the placenta will also be shared, so that if one twin dies, the other twin only has a small chance of surviving. Twin-twin transfusion can also occur if one twin dies, so that the life of the other twin may be at risk.



### 3. Split 6-8 days after fertilisation (Single sac, single placenta)

The twins are so close that the cords can become entangled, which may cut off the blood supply to one twin, but leaving the other with a good chance of surviving. Twin-twin transfusion can also occur if one twin dies, so that the life of the other twin may be at risk.

“I know I am a womb twin survivor.”

### Signs of a lost twin in pregnancy

If any of these are true for you, then you **ARE** a womb twin survivor!

- My twin was born with me but died in the first six months of his or her life
- My twin was born with me but was stillborn
- My mother had a miscarriage but the pregnancy continued and I was born
- My mother had an abortion but her pregnancy with me continued
- My mother had cramps and bleeding in the first three months of her pregnancy with me
- Mother took fertility drugs to get pregnant with me
- When my mother had her first scan, there were two sacs but later on there was only one - that was me.
- My mother had IVF and I was born as a result
- Mother took special medication during her pregnancy to keep the pregnancy going
- When I was born, they saw another tiny sac or cord attached to the placenta
- There was *foetus papyraceous* attached to my placenta
- I have had (or still have) a dermoid cyst or a teratoma
- There was a *fetus in fetu* inside me when I was born
- My mother was abnormally large around the waist in the first three months

## ARE YOU A WOMB TWIN SURVIVOR?

<i>How true is each statement for you? (5 is the highest)</i>	Yes (1-5)
All my life, I have felt as if something is missing	
I fear rejection	
I know I am not realising my true potential	
I feel different from other people	
I have been searching for something all my life	
Deep down, I feel alone, even when I am among friends	
I fear abandonment	
I have a problem with expressing anger -	
I always feel in some way unsatisfied, but I don't know why	
There are two very different sides to my character	
I often feel torn in two between two decisions	
I have strong, inner imaginary life that I use as a coping mechanism	
All my life I have felt restless and unsettled	
Deep down, I feel sad all the time	
I suffer from low self esteem	
I make a lot of effort to protect my privacy	
Deep down, I feel very vulnerable	
I grieve deeply and for a very long time after someone dies.	
All my life I have felt empty inside	
All my life I have carried deeply felt emotional pain that persists.	
<b>TOTAL</b>	

**WHAT IS YOUR SCORE?** *65-100 probably you are*

*45-64 possibly you are / 0-45 you probably are not*

## WEB SITES THAT CAN HELP

### [Wren Publications](#)



### [WombTwin.com](#)

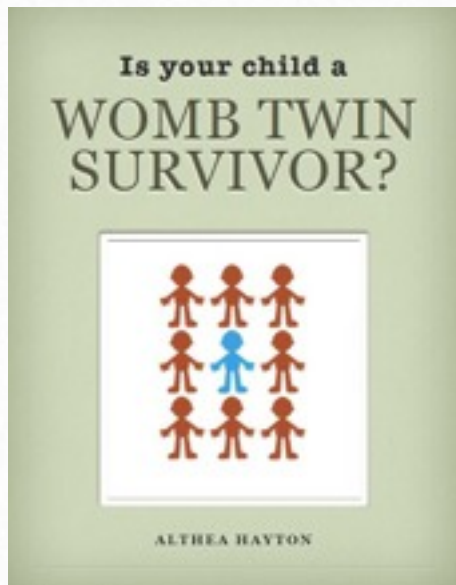


### [WombTwinSurvivors.com](#)





## FURTHER READING



### Is your child a womb twin survivor?

*Free PDF e-book and free Apple iBook  
Written by Althea Hayton*

*For parents of womb twin survivors of all ages -  
information, explanations and advice.*

[www.wombtwin.com](http://www.wombtwin.com)



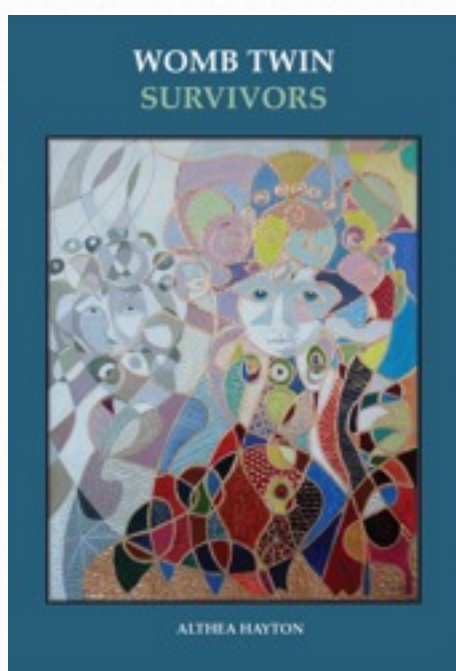
### A SILENT CRY

*Edited by Althea Hayton  
ISBN 978-0-9557808-0-6  
Paperback book*

*Price £9.99p*

*Published by Wren Publications 2008*

*Seventy stories written by womb twin survivors.*



### WOMB TWIN SURVIVORS

*Written by Althea Hayton*

*ISBN 978-0-9557808-2-0*

*Paperback book*

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*Everything you ever needed to know about womb twin  
survivors.*

# YOU TOO MIGHT BE A WOMB TWIN SURVIVOR IF.....

**ALTHEA HAYTON**

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*She is very grateful to those womb twin survivors who agreed to having their personal stories included in this book.*

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*AL3 6NE*

# Embryo

A fertilised egg that has begin to develop but is still less than 12 week

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## Related Glossary Terms

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**Index**

Find Term

# Fetus

A baby in the womb that is bigger than an embryo but not yet born.

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## Related Glossary Terms

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# Miscarriage

A fetus dies in the womb and cannot be born alive.

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## Related Glossary Terms

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# Vanishing twin

When a twin pregnancy is visible on an ultrasound scan, two little embryos can be seen. If one twin dies, the tiny body breaks down and disappears. On a later scan only one embryo is visible.

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## Related Glossary Terms

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# Womb twin

A twin embryo or fetus that did not survive pregnancy or birth.

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## Related Glossary Terms

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# Womb twin survivor

A person who began life in the womb as a twin, but whose twin died, the womb or around birth.

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## Related Glossary Terms

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# Zygote

A large cell that is formed when a sperm meets with an egg.

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