



April Edition 2022

**TRUE PEACE WITH ONESELF  
AND WITH THE WORLD  
AROUND US  
CAN ONLY BE ACHIEVED  
THROUGH THE  
DEVELOPMENT OF MENTAL  
PEACE**

Dalai Lama 1935

Limbrick Centre, Limbrick Road, Sheffield, S6 2PE,  
Tel: 07590837359

Email: [enquiries@nationalparanoianetwork.org](mailto:enquiries@nationalparanoianetwork.org)

Website: [www.nationalparanoianetwork.org](http://www.nationalparanoianetwork.org)

[support@nationalparanoianetwork.org](mailto:support@nationalparanoianetwork.org)

The articles are the views of the contributors and not necessarily those of NPN.

# Body Flashbacks: An NPN Member discusses this Unusual Phenomenon

**Many people experience tactile experiences, that is, a feeling that someone or something is actually touching you. In some cases, this touching can seem to be of a sexual nature and can be extremely distressing. We have received several letters on this subject; one of our members discusses this in an open letter.**

It is perhaps, understandable that for each individual or set of circumstances there is no right or wrong way of coping with what is happening to a person. However, I can say I had similar experiences with the sensation that were spirits entering me in a sexual way, I can perhaps discuss what helped get rid of them.

Bear in mind that voices, thoughts and feelings are individual to each person. They are your thoughts and feelings and individual to you. It is of equal importance to recognise that if you believe this then it is in your power to switch them off.

I will at this point stress that medication helped me enormously. However, it can only do so much. I did have to work very hard at believing I was responsible for the thought or feelings in the first place.

Looking back, I can see how I invited these sensations of “tactile spirits” into my being. I accept that to begin with I enjoyed what was happening to me and how I felt afterwards; sexually, emotionally and physically, it felt good, and I felt okay with it. However, I also felt bad and guilty. Sex is a taboo area. I found it too sensitive an area to talk about with others. There were times I felt out of control by what was happening. It had begun as a useful way of exploring my sexual being. Sometimes harmless and sometimes fun; it then became unnatural and uncomfortable. I wanted it to stop. It had become intrusive.

I began having sexual feelings when I didn’t want them. I felt hot and cold areas on my body, and I felt “things being done to me”. The more I panicked about this the more tactile they became. By now I could hear what they were saying and the names they were calling me. The voices told me I was a “pervert” etc. If I told a doctor all my sexual thoughts, it would be in my notes for all to see. What would my friends and family think of me? The more I tried to get a hold over this the worse I thought of myself.

Talking to friends who understood about my voice hearing experiences assured me I was quite “normal”. But there were issues around sex and my own sexuality I needed help with. I took the plunge and went to a psychologist in relation to these and other difficulties.

My belief system is such that if the voices are tormenting me about certain issues. These could very well be unresolved issues coming forwards in times when I am most vulnerable. I have a choice. I can deny the experience is a part of me and suppress it. Or I can open it up in a safe environment by myself or with a person who has relevant training, or a close friend I can trust, or both.

I kept a private diary/journal to keep note of issues that came up over and over again, I showed this nobody. Issues that I couldn't control or could make little sense of I talked about it with people I trusted including the psychologist.

If I felt sexual feelings, I didn't want (usually these happened when I was in bed) I physically changed the position I was in. I put the TV, radio, or Walkman on. I kept the journal going at night. I didn't listen to the thought; I also took my medication.

I felt that the medication prescribed was going to help me. It had done in the past and there was no reason why it shouldn't in the future. If you can think positively about all types of coping strategies (even medicated ones) the chances, are it will help. When you decide to take responsibility for your own recovery medication can assist in the process.

The mind does play some horrible tricks. For me, it seemed worse after an occasion when I stopped taking the tablets.

My beliefs system was such that these so called “spirit voices” told me really good and interesting things to start off with. They led me to believe I was spiritual and that were from spiritual realms, A lot of the stuff was in fact very informative and very helpful and boosted my level of self-esteem.

However, “bad voices” can deceive in a way that make you think they are “good voices”, it’s a way of bringing you in to make you listen, be more attentive. As I have found out this can in fact change to something less desirable. I had to stop giving this process credit and recognise it as my own subconscious. That was hard because I wanted to believe the good stuff was from a higher realm and not a way of boosting my ego.

A good friend and spiritual advisor helped me sort out a lot of issues I have mentioned. She felt that it, what I perceived as “the good guys” were “helpful influences” assisting me in a spiritual way they would not be evasive or intrusive. If they are harmful or hurtful, they are not “helpful influences”.

Also, if you asked the “good guys” to leave they would go. However, they would not feel hurt or rejected by you. They would know or understand. Be careful at this

point not to hold on to these types of voices. At this stage these are your thoughts. Be aware of this. In taking responsibility for your won recovery, you have to work hard to change fixed thoughts.

Other suggestion that may also help is essential oils (not altogether) flicked on the bedclothes or around the room. For example, as a calmative and aid to sleep try 3 drops of yellow mandarin and 1 drop benzoin in an oil burner. Don't use oils meant to be used in burners in the bath. It must be pure essential oil for the bath.

#### Tips for coping with distressing experiences

When people first suggested these things to me, I didn't think any of them would work, because that was the frame of mind, I had set myself. I did have to change the way I was thinking in order for this belief pattern for change itself for the better.

Some tips that may help include:

Keep your sleeping area relaxed and calm. Open the window during the daytime; close it at night to stop you getting cold and if it feels like a relaxed atmosphere, you have a better chance of dozing off.

If getting off to sleep is a problem, try and keep busy during the day so you feel physically more tired at night. Don't doze during the day. Also buy some relaxation tapes and play them at night or have the radio on quite low.

Don't drink stimulants such as tea or coffee after 6pm/  
Drink alternatives such as de-caff or a warm glass of milk.

Friends that you can perhaps talk to during that day.

If I found myself worrying about my thoughts, I tried to distract myself by thinking really nice thoughts about others or myself. My friend once told me if you think positively, you bring positivity to yourself. Vice versa if you think negatively about yourself.

There are other things such as doing a job for somebody else, so you feel nicer inside. It could be going to post a letter for a neighbour who can't get out, or cleaning for others. Do not wear yourself out to the bone though. There are loads of things like writing a letter or going for a walk in the park you could try.

## **4 Ways You Can Use Your Anger to Make Yourself More Powerful**

Of all human emotions, the one that people struggle with the most is anger. That's understandable! After all, it's the emotion with the most potential to get us into trouble. It can be exquisitely uncomfortable, and it's the most difficult to control. Many people find it easier to push anger down altogether (or suppress it) to avoid discomfort and conflict and to stay out of trouble. Some wear anger like armour in hopes it will protect them from being hurt or mistreated. Others go back and forth between pushing it down and erupting. In fact, these two things go together. The more you suppress your anger, the more intense it will be when it finally erupts.

If you were raised by parents who had low tolerance for your feelings (Childhood Emotional Neglect, or CEN), then you may be all too good at pushing your anger away; suppressing it and repressing it so that you don't even have to feel it. In fact, you may – especially if you have CEN – be so uncomfortable with the A-Word that you can't even say it.

*I'm frustrated*

*I'm annoyed*

*I'm anxious*



you may say instead of, I'm angry.

If you're not comfortable with your anger, you're more likely to misread and mislabel it as something milder or more diffuse. "Isn't stopping yourself from feeling angry a good skill to have?" you may be wondering.

The answer is actually NO. Research has shown how very important anger is to living a healthy life.

#### **4 Reasons to Make Friends With Your Anger**

##### **Anger is a beautiful motivator**

Aarts et al. (2010) found that people who were shown a picture of an angry face were more driven to obtain an object that they were shown later. Anger is like a driver that pushes you to strive for what you want or need. Anger carries with it the message, "Act!"

##### **2. Anger can make your relationship better and stronger**

Anger, when used appropriately, can be very helpful in communication:

Baumeister et al. (1990) found that hiding anger in intimate relationships can be detrimental. When you hide your anger from your partner, you're bypassing an important message that he or she may very much need to hear.

Of course, it's important to take great care in how you express your anger. Try your best to calibrate it to the situation and express it with as much compassion for your partner as you can.

### **3. Anger can help you better understand yourself**

Anger can provide insight into ourselves if we allow it.

Kassinove et al. (1997) asked a large sample of people how recent outbursts of anger had affected them. Fifty-five percent said that getting angry had led to a positive outcome. Many respondents said that the anger episode had provided them with some insight into their own faults.

Anger can help you see yourself more clearly. And it can motivate self-change.

### **4. Anger helps you negotiate**

Anger can help you get what you want.

In a study of negotiation by Van Kleef et al. (2002), people made larger concessions and fewer demands of participants who were angry than ones who were not angry.

Anger makes you more powerful, especially when it's justified and expressed with thought and care.

If you grew up emotionally ignored or in an environment that did not have the room or tolerance for you to get angry (CEN), some small part of your brain probably screams “STOP!” as soon as you get an inkling of anger. The reality is that it’s not easy to turn that around.

But you *can do it*. Start thinking of anger as a helpful emotion, not something to avoid. Pay attention to your anger and try to notice when you’re feeling it. Stop saying “STOP!” to your anger. Instead, listen to your anger’s message, consciously manage your angry feeling, and let your anger motivate and energize you.

Anger, when properly managed and expressed, is power.

So, when you suppress your anger, you’re suppressing your power.

And why would you do that?

## **Helping with hearing voices**

### **Challenge them**

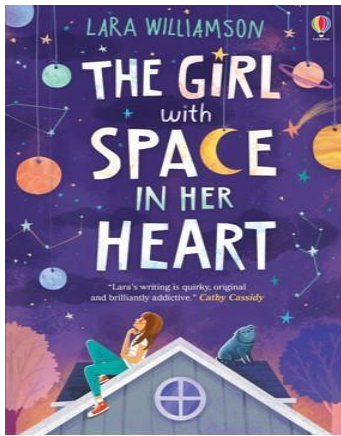
If someone in your life said something nasty about you, you'd probably tell them to stop being mean. You might tell them that they're wrong about you and say why. It can help to deal with voices in the same way. So, if your voices are saying something you don't like, ask them why you are all these things, if they can't justify what they say why believe them?

### **Express yourself**

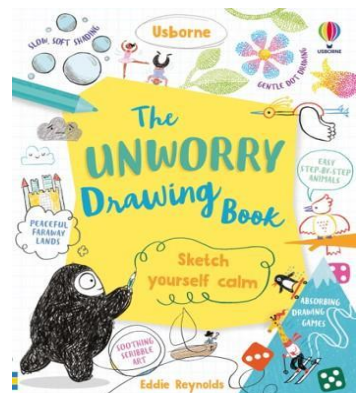
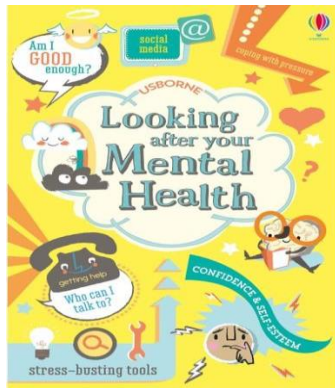
If your voices sound really angry, hurt or distressed it may be a sign that you've got some feelings that you need to let out. Creativity can really help here especially if you're not sure what you're feeling. Why not try drawing, painting, writing or making something?

### **Getting a second opinion:**

If you're not sure what to say back to the voices, talk it over with someone you trust. Sometimes writing down some of the things the voices say most often can help. You can think together about some replies, write them down and use them next time you need to.



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## **Maastricht Approach Project: A Journey Begins**

Join us **in-person** as we debut MAP, an Advocacy Unlimited initiative

This is a **free** event to learn about the Maastricht Approach Project and to explore Voice Hearing through a holistic lens. We invite clinical professionals, people with lived experience, family and friends to come together in support of creating choice and understanding of what it means to hear voices.

### **Highlights of the event**

- NASW and CCB/RSS CEU's (pending)
- Guest speaker Peter Bullimore
- A Taco Bar
- Vendors
- Music
- Creative expression hour
- Much more details to come!

### **Portions of the event will be offered virtually!**

We understand if you are not able to attend in-person, we still would like for you to join in the celebration.

### **When:**

May 5<sup>th</sup> 2022 9:30-4pm

### **Where:**

Chrysalis Center Banquet Hall 255 Homestead Ave  
Hartford, CT 06112

Please email Maggie for questions.

[Mtaylor@advocacyunlimited.org](mailto:Mtaylor@advocacyunlimited.org)

**Maastricht Interview Training for Hearing Voices & Problematic Thought Beliefs & Paranoia Is available online and face to face from the National Paranoia Network. Other training available Working through Paranoia, Making Sense of Hearing Voices & Working with Childhood Trauma It can be delivered across the world for more information and costings Email [enquiries@nationalparanoianetwork.org](mailto:enquiries@nationalparanoianetwork.org)**

Online Hearing Voices & Paranoia Support Groups Join our online Hearing Voices & Paranoia Support Group Meetings on ZOOM

Thursday 3pm -4.30pm with Paul Meeting ID 88460268952 Password 375878

Sundays: HVN USA on ZOOM 6:30p - 8:00p USA Time with Cindee 11.30pm – 1.00 am UK Time Meeting ID 827 5463 8654 No Password Needed

Saturdays Texas USA HVN Meeting on ZOOM 10am-11.30 USA Time with Paul 4pm-5.30pm UK Time Meeting ID 83079149464 No Password Needed

Monday Sheffield Hearing Voices & Paranoia Support Group with Emma & Lyn on ZOOM 11am-12pm UK Time Meeting ID: 558 685 8263 Password 6DyVca

**Online Hearing Voices Group in Ireland Facilitated by  
Michael Ryan**

**Hearing Voices Group Ireland**

A group for people who hear voices or experience  
paranoia and unusual beliefs, on Zoom

Facilitated by Michael Ryan

Every Sunday @ 4pm

Zoom Link <https://us02web.zoom.web/j/89201253186>

Email: [vhmichael9345@gmail.com](mailto:vhmichael9345@gmail.com)

With enquiries

**Families/friends can contact**

**[families@usahearingvoices.org](mailto:families@usahearingvoices.org)**

**For support groups**