

Talking to Myself

By Marilyn Reeves

As with many senior citizens, the life I have today bears little resemblance to the life I led before. The things I used to do, the places I used to go to, the people I used to see on a regular basis, have largely become relegated to the past, and I find myself increasingly alone the majority of the time, trying to find ways in which to engage myself. As a consequence, my mind is often occupied with a continuous flow of internal dialog. Most of it silent, as I sit at my kitchen table working on my latest painting, or as I putter about my apartment cooking, cleaning and putting things away. But there are moments when I speak to myself out loud.

I find that I am becoming increasingly forgetful as the years go by. If I'm in the bathroom brushing my teeth and notice that I'm nearly out of toothpaste, I'll make a mental note to write that down on my grocery list as soon as I get back out to the kitchen. But I may go through this a half dozen times before I finally say to myself, out loud, "You're almost out of toothpaste. Write it down!" Hearing my voice say the words aloud seems to help the thought stick in my head once I step outside the bathroom door.

But it begs the question: Who is the "you" I am speaking to? And who is the "I" who is doing the speaking? Are there two people living inside my head? Is it my mind addressing my body? Or is it the Intellect speaking to the Essential Me? That little fragment of Universal Spirit that took up temporary residence inside this earthly form when I was born. That living essence which makes me, me: The Inner Child.

It is my Inner Child who fears the dark and is drawn toward the light. That part of me that knows the joy of loving and feels bereft when love is lost. One who is awestruck by beauty and devastated by cruelty and violence. My Inner Child responds to honesty and genuineness and tries to steer clear of that which is false and deceptive. She wishes always to be kind and feels remorse when she falls short. It is that part of me that longs for acceptance and validation from my fellow travelers in order to thrive and feel fully alive. My Inner Child knows how precious and temporal life itself is and is grateful for having been granted the privilege of bearing witness, if only for a brief moment in time.

I believe it is my Inner Child that I am addressing when I talk to myself, whether aloud, or in the on-going, quiet conversation that takes place inside my mind.