

# When the Devil Knocks

A Bountiful Films Production

*“For years, my alters went to therapy and I wasn’t there for more than five minutes.”*

- Hilary Stanton

*“I knew immediately I must befriend Tim. You want the angry hostile alters to be your assistants. When the devil knocks, invite him in for tea.”*

- Cheryl Malmo, Hilary’s psychologist

## One Line Synopsis

***When the Devil Knocks.*** A woman’s gripping struggle with multiple personality is captured on camera as she goes public with her private therapy tapes.

Joanie wants to kill herself. Problem is: she’ll kill “everybody else” too. Riveting therapy footage captures one woman’s battle with multiple personalities.

Forty hours of videotaped therapy sessions capture Hilary Stanton’s gripping struggle with the illness formerly known as Multiple Personality Disorder.

***When the Devil Knocks*** captures the fractured life of Hilary Stanton as one by one, her alters, or personalities, reveal themselves in rare videotaped therapy sessions.

## Short Synopsis

***When the Devil Knocks*** is a real life “United States of Tara” - the intimate story of a woman suffering from Dissociative Identity Disorder, formerly known as Multiple Personality. Protagonist Hilary Stanton gave the filmmakers unlimited access to more than 40 hours of videotapes of her psychotherapy, filmed over 10 years.

The therapy tapes reveal a cast of supporting characters, “alters”, who kept Hilary alive by taking over from her during times of crisis. As Hilary says, “For years, my alters went to therapy and I wasn’t there for more than five minutes.” The film takes us inside a mind in the throes of this fascinating disorder – and reveals the power of the human psyche to protect the self, by disconnecting from traumatic memories.

## Long Synopsis

***When the Devil Knocks*** is a real life “United States of Tara” - the intimate story of a woman suffering from Dissociative Identity Disorder, formerly known as Multiple Personality. Hilary Stanton gave the filmmakers unlimited access to more than 40 hours of videotapes of her psychotherapy, filmed over 10 years. The therapy tapes reveal a cast of supporting characters, “alters”, who kept Hilary alive by taking over from her during times of crisis. As Hilary says, “For years, my alters went to therapy and I wasn’t there for more than five minutes.”

Until her mid-40s, Hilary Stanton lived with big gaps in her memory that she thought were normal. Then Hilary had a breakdown, started therapy, and gradually discovered that - during those gaps in memory that she thought were so normal - other personalities (“alters”) were taking over from her.

The documentary ***When the Devil Knocks*** opens as Hilary barrels down the highway towards a family reunion. Alter Tim takes over the wheel and makes a u-turn at high speed. Hilary ‘comes to’ as she’s losing control of the car.

Tim was one of the most dominant of the 35 alters who would finally make their presence known, a phalanx of inner children who fought to protect Hilary’s core self from memories of horrific childhood abuse. It would be the job of therapist Cheryl Malmo to convince each of these alters that the abuse is in the past: it is safe to give up their memories to Hilary and, finally, to merge their personality with hers.

The therapy sessions were initially videotaped to train therapists in the treatment of Dissociative Identity Disorder. They are shockingly intimate; taking us inside a mind in the throes of a fascinating disorder and revealing the power of the human mind to protect the self by disconnecting from traumatic memories.

## Photos

Photos of Hilary Stanton’s journey through Dissociative Identity Disorder can be viewed and downloaded on Bountiful Films’ Flickr page.

- <http://www.flickr.com/photos/bountifulfilms/sets/72157624682563165/>

***When the Devil Knocks*** is a Bountiful Films production. More information on Bountiful Films can be found online at [www.bountiful.ca](http://www.bountiful.ca).