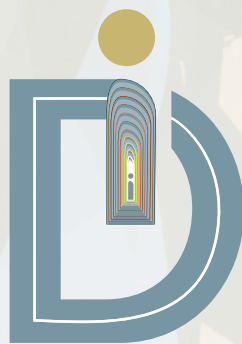


Definitions



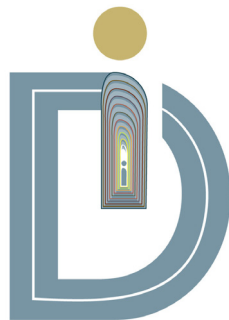
Seen and Heard

Online Support Group for CPTSD
and All Dissociative Experiences

Definitions Sources

American Psychiatric Association. (2013). Dissociative Disorders. In Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders (5th ed.). <http://dx.doi.org/10.1176/appi.books.9780890425596.dsm08>

Lustyk, M. K. B., Chawla, N., Nolan, R. S., & Marlatt, A. (2009). Mindfulness meditation research: Issues of participant screening, safety procedures, and researcher training. *Advances in Mind Body Medicine*, 24(1), 20-30.



Dissociative Identity [DID] Defined:

- A. Disruption of identity characterized by two or more distinct personality states, which may be described in some cultures as an experience of possession. The disruption in identity involves marked discontinuity in sense of self and sense of agency, accompanied by related alterations in affect, behavior, consciousness, memory, perception, cognition, and/or sensory-motor functioning. These signs and symptoms may be observed by others or reported by the individual.
- B. Recurrent gaps in the recall of everyday events, important personal information, and/or traumatic events that are inconsistent with ordinary forgetting.
- C. The symptoms cause clinically significant distress or impairment in social, occupational, or other important areas of functioning.
- D. The disturbance is not a normal part of a broadly accepted cultural or religious practice. Note: In children, the symptoms are not better explained by imaginary playmates or other fantasy play.
- E. The symptoms are not attributable to the physiological effects of a substance (e.g., blackouts or chaotic behavior during alcohol intoxication) or other medical condition (e.g., complex partial seizures) (American Psychiatric Association, 2022).

Dissociative Amnesia

- A. An inability to recall important autobiographical information, usually of a traumatic or stressful nature, that is inconsistent with ordinary forgetting.
- B. Note: Dissociative amnesia most often consists of localized or selective amnesia for a specific event or events; or generalized amnesia for identity and life history.
- C. The symptoms cause clinically significant distress or impairment in social, occupational, or other important areas of functioning.
- D. The disturbance is not attributable to the physiological effects of a substance (e.g., alcohol or other drug of abuse, a medication) or a neurological or other medical condition (e.g., partial complex seizures, transient global amnesia, sequelae of a closed head injury/traumatic brain injury, other neurological condition).
- E. The disturbance is not better explained by dissociative identity disorder, posttraumatic stress disorder, acute stress disorder, somatic symptom disorder, or major or mild neurocognitive disorder.

Other Specified Dissociation [OSDD]

This category applies to presentations in which symptoms characteristic of a dissociation that cause clinically significant distress or impairment in social, occupational, or other important areas of functioning predominate but do not meet the full criteria for any of the disorders in the dissociative disorders diagnostic class. The other specified dissociative disorder category is used in situations in which the clinician chooses to communicate the specific reason that the presentation does not meet the criteria for any specific dissociative disorder. This is done by recording “other specified dissociative disorder” followed by the specific reason (e.g., “dissociative trance”).

Examples of presentations that can be specified using the “other specified” designation include the following:

- A. Chronic and recurrent syndromes of mixed dissociative symptoms: This category includes identity disturbance associated with less-than-marked discontinuities in sense of self and agency, or alterations of identity or episodes of possession in an individual who reports no dissociative amnesia.
- B. Identity disturbance due to prolonged and intense coercive persuasion: Individuals who have been subjected to intense coercive persuasion (e.g., brainwashing, thought reform, indoctrination while captive, torture, long-term political imprisonment, recruitment by sects/cults or by terror organizations) may present with prolonged changes in, or conscious questioning of, their identity.
- C. Acute dissociative reactions to stressful events: This category is for acute, transient conditions that typically last less than 1 month, and sometimes only a few hours or days. These conditions are characterized by constriction of consciousness; depersonalization; derealization; perceptual disturbances (e.g., time slowing, macropsia); micro-amnesias; transient stupor; and/or alterations in sensory-motor functioning (e.g., analgesia, paralysis).
- D. Dissociative trance: This condition is characterized by an acute narrowing or complete loss of awareness of immediate surroundings that manifests as profound unresponsiveness or insensitivity to environmental stimuli. The unresponsiveness may be accompanied by minor stereotyped behaviors (e.g., finger movements) of which the individual is unaware and/or that he or she cannot control, as well as transient paralysis or loss of consciousness. The dissociative trance is not a normal part of a broadly accepted collective cultural or religious practice (American Psychiatric Association, 2013)¹.

DEPERSONALIZATION / DEREALIZATION

Depersonalization / Derealization

- A. The presence of persistent or recurrent experiences of depersonalization, derealization, or both:
 - 1. Depersonalization: Experiences of unreality, detachment, or being an outside observer with respect to one's thoughts, feelings, sensations, body, or actions (e.g., perceptual alterations, distorted sense of time, unreal or absent self, emotional and/or physical numbing).
 - 2. Derealization: Experiences of unreality or detachment with respect to surroundings (e.g., individuals or objects are experienced as unreal, dreamlike, foggy, lifeless, or visually distorted).
- C. During the depersonalization or derealization experiences, reality testing remains intact.
- D. The symptoms cause clinically significant distress or impairment in social, occupational, or other important areas of functioning.
- E. The disturbance is not attributable to the physiological effects of a substance (e.g., a drug of abuse, medication) or another medical condition (e.g., seizures).
- F. The disturbance is not better explained by another mental disorder, such as schizophrenia, panic disorder, major depressive disorder, acute stress disorder, posttraumatic stress disorder, or another dissociative disorder (American Psychiatric Association, 2013)¹.

Symptoms

Criterion A clarifies that depersonalization/derealization disorder involves feelings of depersonalization (such as that one isn't real or isn't connected to or in control of one's thoughts, feelings, sensations, body, or actions; this may involve alterations in how one perceives reality, how one experiences time, how one conceptualizes their self, or how one experiences emotions or physical sensations) and/or feelings of derealization (such as that the world around one isn't real or relevant to them; this may involve the world seeming unreal, dreamlike, foggy, lifeless, or distorted).

Individuals experiencing depersonalization may feel that they have no identity, be able to recognize but not experience emotions, experience their thoughts as alien and not their own, feel disconnected from their whole body or specific parts of their body, or be unable to register or comprehend sensations such as touch, hunger, or thirst. They may feel robotic and out of control, or they may have an "out of body experience" in which they feel as if they are witnessing their own actions as a passive observer.

Individuals experiencing derealization may feel that the world, individuals, inanimate objects, or all surroundings are unreal, unfamiliar, or detached. They may feel as if they are in a dream, fog, or bubble or as if they are separated from the world around them by glass or by a veil. The world around them may appear to be colorless, lifeless, or artificial, and other visual distortions regarding blurriness, visual field, flatness, or distance may be present.

