Multiple Personality Disorder Essay, Research Paper

Multiple Personality Disorder

More than two million cases can be found altogether in psychological and psychiatric records of multiple personality disorder also called dissociative identity disorder. It is often thought that multiple personality disorder is a trick, a bizarre form of "play-acting" that is committed by manipulative, attention-seeking individuals. It is not. Multiple personality disorder is a "disorder of hiding" wherein 80-90% of multiple personality disorder patients do not have a clue that they have the disorder. Most know that there is something wrong with them; many fear that they are crazy, but few know that they have a disorder.

What is Multiple Personality Disorder?

Multiple personalities is a dissociate reaction to stress in which the patient develops two or more personalities. Each personality has a distinct, well-developed emotional and thought process and represents a unique and relatively stable personality. The individual may change from one personality to another at periods varying from a few minutes to several years. The personalities are usually very different and have different attitudes; one may be happy, carefree and fun loving, and another quiet, studious, and serious.

People can have up to fifty personalities or more. All personalities usually will have their own name and their own role. For example one personality can be the keeper of pain, his role is to take and feel all the pain that the other personalities come in contact with. The personality also can have their own appearance, but this does not mean the person changes its outer image it is just the way he/she sees inside his/her head. The personalities will also have different ages, talents, and likes and dislikes. For example:

In the novel, The Minds of Billy Miligin, there was a man who had twenty-four personalities. All of his twenty-four personalities were different. They had different ages, their own appearance, and some were of the opposite sex. The personalities all had their own role and their own talents. There was one personality that was right handed all others were left handed, only one smoked, one had a British accent another Slavic. Many used their own talents some liked to paint, one was an escape artist, one was a karate expert and another a sculptor.

Various types of relationships may exist between the different personalities. Usually the individual alternates from one personality to the other, and can not remember in one, what happened in the other. Occasionally however while one personality is dominant and functions consciously, the other continues to function sub-consciously and is referred to the co conscious personality.

Relationships may become highly complicated when there is more than two personalities.

In many cases of multiple personalities the personalities will talk of a spotlight. The spotlight is how they come into the conscious world. All the personalities live around the spotlight whoever stands on it finds himself or herself in the conscious world leaving the other personalities unaware of the personality’s actions. This leaves the next personality that comes into consciousness in total amnesia.

Causes of Multiple Personality Disorder

Multiple personality disorder often forms with a person who has been deprived of love and friendship and with a person who has been abused. These people make up friends for themselves, but not just and imaginary friends these friends form there own personalities. These people may also make up other people who are not scared or people, who can not feel pain to turn deal with abuse, which also turn into separate personalities. These people usually deny what is happening and may live their lives without anyone finding out about their disorder.

The degree of vulnerability of the child has a great impact on the amount of personalities the person will have. The typical female multiple has about 19 personalities; male multiples tend to have less that half of that. For example a male multiple from ages 7 to 10 who was sexually abused a half-dozen times by a distant relative is going to have far fewer personalities than a female multiple who was severely physically, sexually, and emotionally abused by both parents from infancy to age 16. The female could easily develop 30 to 50 (+) personalities, even in the hundreds. Although its important to remember that every person is different so there may be some people with many personalities and not that much abuse. Or allot of abuse and not that many personalities.

Some signs that a person has multiple personality disorder are:

1. History of depression or suicidal behavior.

2. Childhood history of physical, sexual, emotional, or psychological abuse… reports one parent was very cold and critical reports of "wonderful" parents by a person who is clearly emotionally troubled.

3. Abusive relationships in adulthood

4. Strong attacks of shame; sees self as bad or undeserving sacrifices self for others feels does not deserve help; is a burden, reluctant to ask for help is sure you do not want to be troubled with seeing him or her

5. Reports being able to turn off pain or "put it out of my mind."

6. Self-mutilation or self-injuring behavior.

7. Hears voices.

8. Flashbacks (visual, auditory, somatic, affective, or behavioral)

9. History of unsuccessful therapy.

10. Multiple past diagnoses (e.g.: major depression, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, borderline personality disorder, and substance abuse).

11. History of shifting symptom picture.

12. Reports of odd changes or variations in physical skills or interests.

13. Described by significant other as having 2 personalities or being a "Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde." 14. Family history of dissociation.

15. Phobia or panic attacks.

16. Substance abuse.

17. Daytime enuresis or encopresis.

18. History of psychophysiological symptoms.

19. Seizure-like episodes.

20. History of nightmare and sleep disorders.

21. History of sleepwalking.

22. School problems.

23. Reports psychic experiences.

24. Anorexia or Bulimia.

25. Sexual difficulties.

Cures of Multiple Personality Disorder

There is treatment for multiple personality disorder, but the disorder usually can not be cured completely. The personalities can be combined to form one core personality the "original" person. This process of integrating all the personalities into one is complicated and does not work in several cases. The personalities will fuse together for awhile, but than break apart when put in a stressful or unsafe situation. Recovery from multiple personality disorder and childhood trauma takes of five years or more. It is a long and difficult process of mourning. The important thing to remember is that recovery does and can happen.

Conclusion

For many observers, multiple personality disorders are a fascinating, exotic, and weird phenomenon. For the patient, it is confusing, unpleasant, sometimes terrifying, and always a source of the unexpected. The treatment of multiple personality disorder is excruciatingly uncomfortable for the patient. Their childhood traumas and memories must be faced, experienced, digested, and integrated into the patient’s view of him/herself. Similarly, the nature of one’s parents, one’s life, and the day-to-day world must be re-thought. As each issue or trauma is dealt with the alter personality that deals with it can disappear. The personality is no longer needed to contain undigested trauma.

In a sense we are all multiple personalities in that we have many conflicting tendencies and frequently do things that surprise both others and ourselves. This is illustrated by common sayings such as, "I don’t know why I did it" or "I didn’t think he had it in him." But most of us do not develop distinct separate personalities.

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