

FAQs

I have heard people talk about Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. Is this Multiple Personality Disorder?

No. Literature¹ tells us that Post-Traumatic Stress results when a person has experienced an event that is **outside** the range of usual human experience and that would be markedly **distressing** to almost **anyone**. The central feature of PTSD is that the survivor **re-experiences** elements of the trauma in **dreams**, uncontrollable and emotionally distressing **intrusive images**, and dissociative mental states. Alternately, the victim feels numb, experiences a loss of normal affect and emotional responsiveness, and exhibits less interest and involvement in work and interpersonal relationships.

A traumatic event could cause dissociation, but dissociation is often confused with what is called Multiple Personality Disorder (MPD), now known as Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID). Webster's Dictionary² defines dissociation as "a split in the conscious process in which a group of mental activities breaks away from the main stream of consciousness and functions as a separate unit, as if belonging to another person.)**

This does not mean that a person that has dissociation has MPD/DID. Dissociation is a reaction to an extremely stressful and traumatic event, an often impossible and overwhelming conflict, with no means of escape. It appears that the mind will take the content of that event and place it behind an amnesic barrier in the mind so the person can cope with life. That kind of event may or may not create an alter personality. It's a means of coping and escaping and not carrying the conscious content of the traumatic event.

I have observed and worked with many people with multiple personalities: they are people that need a lot of compassion and care. They often are very nice people; their torment is internal. I have had the pleasure of working as a team with a prominent psychiatrist with one lady who had hundreds of personalities. Previously the psychiatric hospitals had given up on her. She is a very kind, gentle and caring spiritual Christian. Today she has been completely healed and does not hear voices or have alter personalities. These are very precious, severely wounded people and God wants to heal them.

Many people suffer from some form of dissociation, but not all dissociation is indicative of MPD/DID. A person that has symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder or believes they are dissociative should seek help to receive healing and have a happy, productive life.

¹ *DSM-III-R Training Guide*, Reid, W.H. and Wise, M.G. Bruner/Mazel, New York, 1989.

² *Webster's New World Dictionary and Thesaurus*, Macmillian Pub. Version 2.0, 1998.

FAQs

I have been told that Multiple Personality Disorder does not exist and that if an alter personality is present, it is a demon. Is this true?

The answer is no, however, this is a very common belief. An alter personality is a divided part of the soul, formed by trauma and dissociation.

A demon is a spiritual being, not an original part of a human, although some of the behavior of hostile alters may resemble a demon manifestation.

Demons desire to defile the person, and try to get them to reject God or do something that will cause them to run from God. Alters are parts of the mind that hold pain, denial, protect or do a specific function. An alter is an altered state of consciousness and you can't cast out a part of the mind. The mind has to be healed and renewed.

On the other hand, a demon is a foreign entity that has attacked or attached to the person and has to be eliminated for the person to gain peace and to be able to follow God. Demons are intent on defiling the person and trying to get them to sin and reject God. Demons can be cast out by Christians. Alters are healed.

Why do you have to go back to the event that caused you the pain and relive it? Shouldn't we just be able to forgive and go on?

It would be wonderful if it was that simple, but it's not. There are several reasons why.

If it is a traumatic memory, it will cause problems for the adult today because the memory contains lies and beliefs that hinder or limit the person in the present. The traumatic memory is, in essence, "buried alive."

The memory may also have issues of unforgiveness, oaths, false covenants and other spiritual issues that will have to be worked through for the person to be free and have peace and joy. God is merciful and not all the past memories have to be processed— only the ones that are triggering the person today or the ones that Jesus reveals.