

Survivor Matters

A Newsletter for the Christian DID Community

Who Leads My Life?

Under normal circumstances your primary identities, those parts most closely representing your Original Self, are the ones that lead your everyday life. The degree to which they are able to persist in doing this depends on several factors, including the capacity they have developed for handling negative emotions and the degree of stress, ongoing trauma, or reminders of trauma that are currently in your life. Whenever the primary identities become overwhelmed by what they are encountering, they will deflect life to the alter-identities. Alters will also automatically take over if a potent reminder of trauma (a trigger) is encountered.

Among the primary identities, the three that are most closely tied to the Original Self in the front of the brain are the ones we refer to as the Denial, Pain, and Confusion Identities. Each of these feel so strongly “like you” that you may not even recognize them as being separate without someone drawing their significantly different perspectives to your attention.

These slightly desynchronized parts will not call themselves Denial, Pain, or Confusion, but these are apt descriptions of the roles they play. They actually represent a sequential degree of separation from the alter-identities in the back of the brain, who carry the memories of the trauma. Denial lies farthest from them and closest to the Original Self. Pain lies closest to the alter-identities and thus feels the emotions leaking from them while not understanding their source. Confusion simply serves as a buffer between Denial and Pain because the system is so devoted to protecting Denial and the Original Self from any knowledge of the trauma.

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Among these three parts, one will be more predominant and serve as your Primary Presenter. Which one of the three this is has a significant impact on your life experience as well as your therapeutic journey.

If Denial is the strongest, you are usually among those survivors who are able to function the best as well as to maintain the brightest outlook on life. This is because Denial is so well separated from the knowledge and pain of the trauma.

Denial is also most vulnerable to being overwhelmed, however, if too many memories, possible indicators, or confirmations of the trauma arise. In this situation Denial will usually step back and deflect life to one of the other primary identities or to an alter, thus decreasing both functionality and mood.

This is why working with Denial whenever new memories are uncovered is so important. If Denial is asked, "What would it mean if this is true?" and has a chance to have her beliefs and conflicts regarding the memory resolved, she will be much more able to stay in place and handle life so that functionality is not compromised.

If Confusion is the most prominent of the primary identities, then both functionality and mood may be more erratic. Overall, this type of system generally demonstrates a somewhat lower level of functionality and mood than that experienced when Denial is the strongest.

When Pain serves as the most prominent of the three "inner circle" primaries, the system has the most difficulty functioning and the greatest degree of depression. Due to the level of debilitation that Pain feels and how easily she becomes overwhelmed, alters often play a greater role this is the kind of system.

Since alters are only designed to do a narrowly specified job, they lack flexibility and get stressed easily. Therefore, they are generally unable to stay out for prolonged periods of time either, resulting in frequent switching, which creates greater instability in the person's life.

A Pain dominated system most likely evidences the lowest degree of emotional capacity. These survivors will benefit most from capacity-building exercises and the support of a caring community.

(See www.lifemodel.com and www.thrivetoday.org.)

Creation

***I'm not the girl they think I am
God, if they only knew
That, oh so many years ago
I split myself in two***

***Two became four I think
Just when I am not sure
Some awful things were done to me
Those things made me impure***

***Division of self, that came of me
Each day came and went
The more traumatic things occurred
My fragile mind it bent***

***Bent into another self
For years I would not know
How many of "me" came to be
Still waiting for them all to show***

***Pieces may be many
The number is not the point
You are the one that matters most
In You, there's no disjoint***

***Together I will find myself
Just when, I do not care
I'll lean on You from this day on
My healing will come with time to spare***

***I'm here because You called me here
I'm staying until it's done
The work is just beginning
Yeah, I can let go of these fears***

***Now I walk down the road
Towards a Light that is calm and strong
May I continue on this journey
With You, my life is long***

Teresa Burkes

Survivors share...

Through reading *Victory over the Darkness* by Neil Anderson, God showed me that I'm not a helpless victim to the cosmic battle. He dealt with my sense of being "evil" and "Satan's pawn." Karen

"O soul, are you weary and troubled?
No light in the darkness you see?
There's light for a look at the Savior,
And life more abundant and free!"
Helen H. Lemmel

*"The Lord will rescue me from every evil deed and will bring me safely to His Heavenly Kingdom."
(2 Tim. 4:18; NASB)*

It is the truth that Jesus never will leave you and never will forsake you. As I had to be all alone in a dark room getting radiotherapy, the Lord showed me that HE was there. You also can ask the Lord to show you that HE was there to help you even if you couldn't see him. We can decide to trust Jesus more than our feelings or our past experience. Dagmar

Survivor Matters is written by Diane Hawkins, M.A., (unless otherwise noted) and published by Restoration in Christ Ministries.

It is available to all free of charge but donations are appreciated.

To be added to the mailing list or to submit very brief testimonies, questions, or creative writings, contact us at:

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Donations may also be given through our website:
www.rcm-usa.org/Donation.htm

God's Resources

Another great gift that belongs to survivors who are children of God is a new heritage. This is especially important to those of us who may not be proud of our generational lineage or the things that have been part of our own life experience.

The great news is that when we accept Jesus Christ as our Savior, we are born anew into the family of God. The imperishable, spiritual seed of which we are born (1 Peter 1:23) gives us a new identity that will last through eternity.

As with any heritage, it also adds a new source of influence over the characteristics of our lives. While it does not override the DNA we receive as a genetic heritage from our parents, it can completely supersede the flesh, which we receive as a spiritual heritage from the ruler of darkness because of Adam and Eve's sin.

Our new heritage comes directly from our heavenly Father in the form of the Holy Spirit, who intricately unites with our own spirits (1 Cor. 6:17). Unlike our heritage that is expressed automatically through our DNA and the flesh, we play a much greater role in determining the extent to which our lives will be transformed by our new heritage.

Because the Holy Spirit is united with our spirits, we only benefit from His presence if we learn to live from our spirits rather than from the flesh, which is our default operating system. This requires the deliberate focus of our minds onto the things of the spirit rather than the things of the world and the surrender of our wills to the Holy Spirit. Genuine prayer, worship, and godly meditation all serve to activate our spirits and to open the door for the Holy Spirit to affect our thoughts, our disposition, and our actions.

The more we can maintain an attitude of surrender and divine focus through the day, the more opportunity He has to transform our hearts, the very center of who we are, to reflect our new heritage coming from our heavenly Father. As this occurs, we will find ourselves becoming more and more like Jesus Christ, our Brother.

A Helpful Resource

Straight from the Heart

by Shani Christin, a healed survivor.

This collection of writings is a favorite of many survivors, validating their emotional pain and struggles and bringing them hope.

Suggested Donation: \$12.00 (92-Pg Book)
Available at www.rcm-usa.org

Testimony

During a time of deep despair I found myself on my knees while God was asking me to come closer so that I could know Him as Father. I was so scared I could hardly move. It was a hidden fear, one that actually had no definition. My only point of reference was the fear of drawing close to anyone that calls himself father. He was responding to my prayer to know Him as Father, and at the same time wanting Him to end my deep loneliness. A loneliness that is spelled “fear” as a child, and loneliness that spells “Fatherless” as an adult! I found myself kneeling in my own childhood tears that had never been released. In my childlike faith I lifted my right hand to reach for Him; my left clutching the nearest thing to me. The wind of His Spirit rushed over me, and both hands were free to embrace His love. There was no pain, and I was not made to do anything I didn’t want to do. He just revealed to me the Father heart of God! It was vivid for me as I felt more of my spirit come to life. That same vividness continually lives within me today as I wholeheartedly testify that childhood “fear” is no longer “Fatherless.” The two have met, and now fear does not have to keep me from the Truth...Father God will not hurt me. What a grand reunion with my birthright! -- Louise

Questions & Answers

How do I as the presenter repent of worshipping the devil and destroying all that goes close to God by taking in demons?

When you, as the Primary Presenter, are doing things that “you” don’t want to do, you are probably not recognizing the subtle differences between you and other primary identities that “feel like you.” It would seem that you may have a cult-loyal primary identity that has different goals than you, as the Primary Presenter, do. Distinguishing a cult-loyal primary identity is a big step forward. When the conflicts and false beliefs carried by this important identity can be resolved and its perspective brought into unity with your other primary identities, this not only brings much greater stability to your system but also helps create the safety needed for your Original Self to be released.

Is dissociation ever mentioned in the Bible?

Jesus clearly stated that His earthly mission, as described in Isaiah 61:1 and Luke 4:18, includes “binding up the broken-hearted.” He is referring to those who have been deeply wounded, not in a physical sense but in a way that affects the very core of their beings. The original Hebrew could also be translated as the “shattered in soul,” which aptly describes the dissociation seen in those with DID.