

Some Symptoms & Indications of Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID)

No single person with **Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID)** is likely to have all the symptoms on this list. Nor does the presence of any one or even several of these symptoms necessarily imply the existence of alter personalities. DID is at one end of the dissociate continuum. At the other end, dissociation is a very ordinary phenomenon that is experienced by everyone. *DID develops as a defense against repeated severe abuse in early childhood.* It can take a variety of forms. Symptoms may differ widely between individuals and within the same individual over time. Since DID is a disorder which is based on keeping of secrets, both from the individual and from the outside world, the symptoms are often subtle or masked. The symptoms may change or become more pronounced as the person becomes aware of his/her multiplicity and starts working with it.

1. History of child abuse, especially prolonged severe sexual and/or physical abuse starting early in childhood.
2. Presence of symptoms indicative of childhood abuse even if there is no memory of abuse. (See E. Sue Blume's *Incest Survivors Aftereffects Checklist*).
3. Amnesia for large periods of childhood and sometimes adulthood.
4. Blackouts or time loss: suddenly finding oneself someplace without knowing how one got there; the sense that time has passed very quickly although there may not be any awareness of having been "absent".
5. Switching: alter personality takes executive control of one's body. This may not involve loss of continuous memory.
6. Talking, crying or acting like a young child, baby or other wise "unlike" oneself, but not in a conscious or premeditated way.
7. Distinctly different handwritings, art styles or speaking voices.
8. Finding writing or art work that one doesn't recognize as having created.
9. Hearing voices (or thoughts), usually coming from within one's head (may differ from oneself in age, accent or speech patterns), which are lucid (no evidence of thought disorder) and which can be conversed with.
10. Feeling that one is not alone within one's body.
11. Objects in one's possession one doesn't remember acquiring or things disappearing without explanation.
12. Varying ability to perform familiar skills.
13. Varying ability to access or remember certain information, especially details.
14. Frequent experience of *jamais vu* (as opposed to *déjà vu*). Familiar places or things seem suddenly strange or different.
15. Not recognizing oneself in the mirror.

16. Frequent feelings of depersonalization or unreality.
17. Presence of fears, depression, anger, laughter or other strong emotions for which one doesn't understand the origin.
18. Body pains or other physical symptoms for which there is no known physiological or emotional cause.
19. Lack of pain when there is a physiological reason for it.
20. Inexplicable headaches.
21. Thoughts, feelings or knowledge that seem to belong to someone else.
22. Radical changes in affect, opinion or attitude in same or similar situations.
23. Speaking of oneself in the third person.
24. People assaying one has done or said things that one doesn't remember, especially things that seem totally out of character.
25. Calling oneself by different names.
26. Constantly losing one's train of thought, or changing the subject during conversations.
27. Asking the same question over and over again, despite getting the same answer, without being aware one is doing it.
28. Difficulty remembering sequence of events.
29. Inability to see, hear or read something that is there.
30. Forgetting or not hearing much of what happens during an emotionally loaded experience such as a therapy session, a family event or during sex.
31. Sense of "fading in and out" while listening to emotionally difficult material, or sense of pressure in forehead—as if many consciousnesses listening at once.
32. Unusual creative ability, especially where things come out in finished form without any conscious forethought.
33. "Intuitively" knowing the solutions to problems in situations where intuition wouldn't normally be expected, as with math problems.
34. Unusual psychic or paranormal abilities.