Dissociative Identity Disorder As A Result Of Chronic Trauma

Consider yourself trapped inside your own head while someone else is controlling your every movement but there is no exit until that person is done using your body as a vessel. That is how dissociative identity disorder is usually consider as but it is different, Dissociative Identity Disorder or DID have another name for it which is Multiple Personality Disorder or MPD. DID is a disorder that have two or more personality states. The common research of this disorder is linked with childhood trauma and help the person cope or avoid traumatic events. Furthermore, DID is always wrongly showed off as a negative or considered a psychopath in media and others do not understand that it is a complex disorder.

According to the DSM-V, 'a complex and chronic post traumatic psychopathology closely related to severe, particularly early, child abuse.' (American Psychiatric Association, 2013) There are many different signs and symptoms for this disorder but also tricky to figure out. The first sign is amnesia or, Memory loss, of certain time periods, events, people and personal information. Another sign could be dissociation which means feeling detached from one's self but their emotions too. Additionally, this disorder has made mental health problem that includes depression, anxiety and suicidal behaviors. Lastly, Inability to cope with emotional or professional stress which could lead to multiple panic and anxiety attacks. (American Psychiatric Association, 2013) For diagnosis, it could be in three ways of getting evaluated, an actual physical exam which means in-depth questions with the doctor because it can help eliminate physical conditions. Like a head injury and intoxication, because they are symptoms which include memory loss. Next, a psychiatric exam basically gets in depth with thoughts, feelings and behavior that could be an outlet for the symptoms. Lastly, the diagnostic criteria for the DSM-5 because most therapist use the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5) to classified if to evaluate the person. (American Psychiatric Association, 2013) The criteria for Dissociative Identity Disorder contain five simple key points but only two are the most important. The first one is when "You display, or others observe, two or more distinct identities or personalities, which may be described in some cultures as possession that is unwanted and involuntary. Each identity has its own pattern of perceiving, relating to and thinking about yourself and the world." (Mayo Clinic) The second one is that "You have recurrent gaps in memory for everyday events, skills, important personal information and traumatic event that are too extensive to be explained by ordinary forgetfulness." (Mayo Clinic)

Most therapist and mental health professionals do believe that the cause of DID is chronic trauma during childhood. Trauma includes repeating physical, sexual and emotional abuse but sometimes neglect. Also, family environments could be turn into the big risk for getting dissociative identity disorder and it makes the child feel "disconnected" because of stress. Sometimes, this could be linked to war, torture, adulthood or going through a natural disaster. The reasoning for both causes could lead to trauma or permanent damage on the child if they are going through those situations. (Dissociative Identity Disorder {Multiple Personality Disorder}.)

In a 1997 treatment research, a patient group of 135 with dissociative identity disorder was monitored to see if there could be improvement. Fifty-four of these patients were located and re-

assessed after a two-year period, by using the same self-report measures and structured clinical interviews that had been initially administered. (Ellason, J. & Ross, C.) They thought it would be effective because it could have a decrease of prescribed medications and an increase of patient integration, but it did not reach to become singular again instead of multiple. With modern treatment, there are three different types of Psychotherapy. Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT) and Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) but the most important ones are DBT and EMDR. DBT focuses on coping skills that combat destructive urges, regulate and improve relationships while creating validation to the disorder. The reasoning for this is to help stimulate better working within a group or individually. Also, this type of treatment helps encourage practicing meditation, regulated breathing techniques and coping with one's self during a difficult situation. Next, EMDR now this one is to distress the association with traumatic memories but also combines with CBT but viewed as a positive pattern rather than negative (Nami).