



English Teachers On Call

Dissociative Disorders



Overview of Dissociative Disorders

Everyone occasionally experiences a failure in the normal automatic integration of memories, perceptions, identity, and consciousness. For example, people may drive somewhere and then realize that they do not remember many aspects of the drive because they are **preoccupied** with personal concerns, a program on the radio, or conversation with a passenger. Typically, such a failure, referred to as **non-pathologic** dissociation, does not **disrupt** everyday activities.

People with a dissociative disorder may totally forget a series of normal behaviors occupying minutes or hours and may sense missing a period of time in their experience. Dissociation thus disrupts the continuity of self and the **recollection** of life events. People may experience the following:

- Poorly integrated memory (**dissociative amnesia**)
- Fragmentation of identity and memory (**dissociative fugue** or dissociative identity disorder)
- Disruption of experience and self-perception (**depersonalization disorder**)

Dissociative disorders are usually attributed to overwhelming stress. Such stress may be generated by traumatic events or by **intolerable** inner conflict.



Reference: <http://www.merckmanuals.com> English Teachers On Call