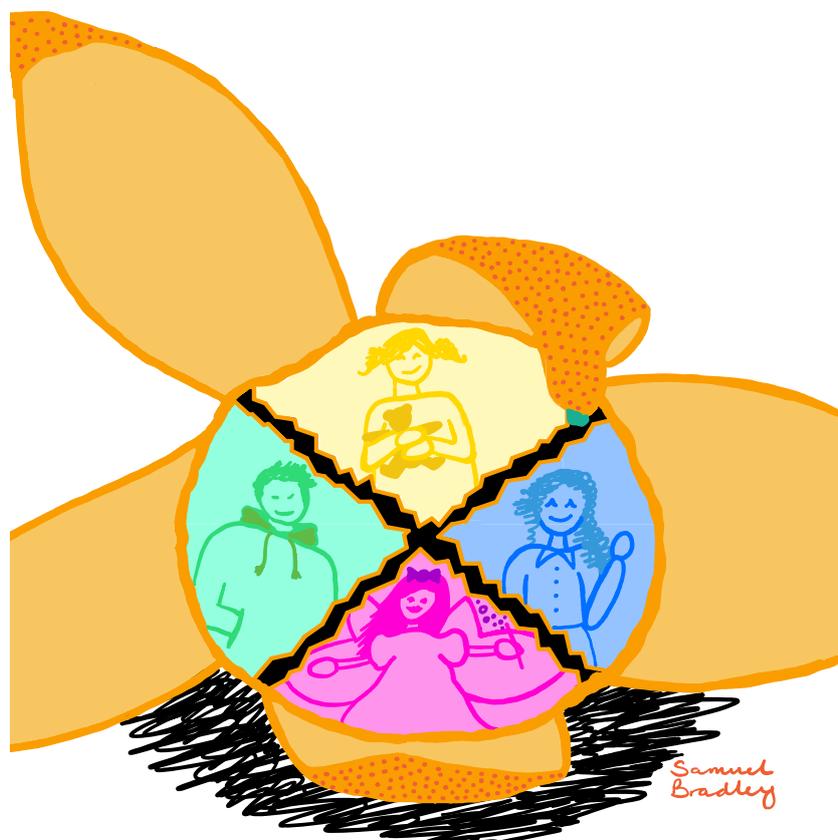


# Segmented – An insight into DID (Dissociative Identity Disorder)

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Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID) is the newer and more appropriate name for the disorder formerly known as 'Multiple Personality Disorder'. This disorder is characterised by the presence of two or more separate identities (also known as 'alters') co-existing in a single body. The disorder typically manifests in childhood due to severe or repeated childhood traumas; this results in a single cohesive identity failing to form.<sup>1</sup> The alters exist as part of a 'system', many DID sufferers self-identify as 'multiple' rather than an individual for this reason.<sup>2</sup>

The alters may differ as much as any two individual people. That is to say, alters can vary in gender, age, appearance, interests etc. Indeed, they are not confined to being human, for example, some alters may be fey creatures such as elves, or non-sentient beings such as trees. On psychiatric evaluation, there appears to be specific roles an alter provides for a system, for example a common role is the role of 'protector'. A 'protector' acts to shield less resilient alters from traumatic or stressful experiences.<sup>2,3</sup>

This disorder is associated with a variety of unique experiences and challenges. Some of these experiences such as 'time loss' are depicted in the comic. Time loss is where alter(s) experience lapses in memory due to information not being shared between the alters.<sup>4</sup> DID features such as this can make it a difficult and scary disorder to live with, it can severely impact a system's ability to form relationships, work, and perform activities of daily living.

This comic depicts aspects of the lived experience of DID. It aims to highlight and challenge common misconceptions of the disorder and break down stigmas which are prevalent

among lay people and professionals.<sup>5</sup> I am not a DID sufferer myself, as such this comic is an amalgamation of features and experiences from multiple sources in an attempt to find commonalities in this hugely variable disorder. My hope is that this comic can be read and enjoyed by people regardless of their academic ability or prior knowledge, whilst simultaneously allowing readers to learn about this largely misunderstood disorder.

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You'd have no idea just from looking at us...

... but our mind works in a very different way...

Due to severe childhood trauma (DON'T ASK!) parts of our mind split as a defence mechanism. These split segments developed independently into individual personalities, all of whom share our body.

The segments may just again, but our mind will never be the same as before. Either way, right now we need to work together as a system to keep life running smoothly.

Core

Sara

little

Amy

BEN

PROTECTOR

Tia

Fairy

Sara, what is the greatest challenge you've had to overcome?

TAP! TAP! TAP!

I have a rare psychological disorder called Dissociative Identity Disorder...

Oh... I'm sorry, I haven't heard of it. Could you please tell me a bit more?

Ben, 21. Loud-back guy. I'll growl/control the body when Sara gets stressed. Likes- girls Hates- girl stuff

That's actually a common misconception. All of us are lovely. We wouldn't hurt a fly!

This job involves working with people... Do you have a 'back side'? I need to be aware of?

It's the new name for 'multiple personality disorder'...

Meanwhile in the 'headspace'...

Wow! Ben is doing so well!

When we aren't fronting we live in a place in the mind we call our 'headspace'. We may or may not be aware of what is happening outside...

Interview Room

Someone please take over. Not right. I have this body. Help... why me?? Nope. I'm a man!! How can I change this?! So embarrassing.

Besides our core, Sara, our mental appearances don't match the body. This can make us feel extremely uneasy and anxious. Within the system we have a variety of clothing identities such as gender, sexual orientation, and ethnicity.

Excuse me, miss. This is the MEN'S restroom... You'll find yours is next door.

... Sorry... My bad...

