



Amden Counselling Services

PSYCHOTHERAPY · COUNSELLING · MEDIATION



DISSOCIATION



Dissociation

Dissociation is a complex psychological phenomenon often misunderstood and overlooked in therapeutic settings. It serves as a coping mechanism to help an individual deal with overwhelming stress or trauma. By delving into its nuances, understanding its forms, and recognizing its origins in the body's primal responses to danger, one can better appreciate the therapeutic pathways available through psychotherapy. At Amden Counselling Services, we are committed to providing informed and compassionate care for those experiencing dissociative symptoms.

Understanding Dissociation

Dissociation can manifest in various ways, from mild detachment from immediate surroundings to more severe disconnection from physical and emotional experiences. It is often seen as a survival mechanism, allowing the person to endure difficult situations by detaching from them emotionally. This can occur in situations of both acute trauma and chronic stress. Dissociation helps manage reality by numbing a person to pain and emotional distress, akin to the body's way of protecting itself from physical harm.

Categories of Dissociation: Depersonalization and Derealization

Dissociation includes several distinct categories, primarily depersonalization and derealization, which can occur simultaneously or independently.

Depersonalization involves a sense of watching oneself from outside, or feeling as though one's thoughts, feelings, and body are not their own. Individuals may feel like an observer of their life, rather than a participant, experiencing a profound sense of detachment from their being.

Derealization is characterized by a feeling of unreality regarding the world around the individual. People or objects may seem unreal, dreamlike, foggy, or visually distorted. This can be distressing and confusing, as the affected person struggles with recognizing what is real.



The Role of the Fight, Flight, and Freeze Responses

Dissociation is deeply rooted in the body's intrinsic fight, flight, or freeze responses to perceived threats. While most are familiar with fight or flight, the freeze response is particularly pertinent to understanding dissociation. This response occurs when an individual perceives a threat as so overwhelming that neither fight nor flight seems viable. In such cases, freezing—both physically and psychologically—becomes a protective act.

Freezing can manifest as a temporary inability to move or act and, in psychological terms, as dissociation. It is the mind's attempt to pause, creating a distancing from the traumatic or stressful event, thus reducing its immediate impact.

Dissociation as a Coping Mechanism

Acknowledging dissociation as a coping mechanism is crucial in the therapeutic process. It represents the mind's attempt to protect itself, and as such, it is neither inherently good nor bad. It becomes problematic when it persists long after the danger has passed and starts to interfere with normal functioning.

Psychotherapeutic Intervention at Amden Counselling Services

At Amden Counselling Services, our approach to treating dissociation is rooted in understanding the personal context of each client's experiences. Psychotherapy offers a safe space for clients to explore these protective mechanisms and gradually learn to stay present, reducing the need for dissociation.

Our therapists are trained in various modalities to address dissociation:

- Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) helps in identifying and changing the thought patterns that may perpetuate dissociative experiences.
- Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) has proven particularly effective in treating trauma that can underlie dissociation.
- Mindfulness-Based Therapies teach clients to remain grounded in their present experience, which can mitigate symptoms of depersonalization and derealization.



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Additionally, exploring the trauma or stressors that triggered dissociation initially is crucial. This exploration helps in processing and integrating those experiences, reducing the need for the mind to escape from reality.

Encouragement and Hope

Understanding dissociation and its roots in the fight, flight, or freeze responses provides a hopeful outlook for those affected. Psychotherapy can offer a pathway out of the fog of dissociation, guiding individuals back to a life where they feel more present and engaged.

At Amden Counselling Services, we are dedicated to supporting our clients through their journey of healing and recovery. Dissociation, once a survival strategy, can be reshaped into a narrative of resilience and strength with the right therapeutic support. We believe in the potential of each individual to overcome their challenges and lead a fulfilling life, fully present and connected to their experiences.

You can contact us by email admin@amdensuites.ie or through our website www.amdencounsellingservices.ie

You can contact a Therapist directly by phone.
Details of each Therapist can be found on www.amdencounsellingservices.ie

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Directions: [Click Here](#)

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