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Deconstructing Dissociation and Recognizing Its Subtypes

Dissociation is much more common than you think. What is dissociation? Dissociation is body 1 the feeling of being disconnected from yourself and the world around you. Dissociation is a symptom found in many disorders such as PTSD, Dissociative disorder, and Dissociative identity disorder. Dissociation has also been found as a symptom of anxiety and ADHD. Surprisingly, its occurrence is not rare, as studies indicate that up to 75% of individuals experience dissociation at least once in their lives, with 2% developing disorders. Notably, women are more susceptible, and often diagnosed due to higher instances of abuse. Delving into the complexity of dissociation, recent research suggests that a significant number of individuals with dissociative symptoms remain undiagnosed or misdiagnosed. A study titled "Deconstructing dissociation: a triple network model of trauma-related dissociation and its subtypes. Neuropsychopharmacology." by Lebois LAM, et al. (2022) explores these subtypes through a network-based brain connectivity "fingerprint," offering potential insights for efficient monitoring of recovery and improved treatment methods.

Have you ever found yourself at destination with no recollection of how you got there? Or wondered about the mysteries of what unfolds in your body during daydreams? These scenarios exemplify subtypes within dissociation. Specifically, depersonalization and derealization are identified as feelings of detachment or disconnection from one's sense of self, body, and environment (Lebois LAM, et al. 2022). Some liken the experience to observing oneself through the eyes of another person. While studies using the Triple Network model are delving into the neurobiology of dissociation, there remains a gap in understanding the full spectrum of

dissociative experiences within the context of other psychiatric conditions (Lebois LAM, et al. 2022). The incomplete understanding of dissociative experiences often leads to stigmas and misconceptions, contributing to the underdiagnosis or misdiagnosis of many patients. The Triple Network model of psychopathology serves as neurobiological framework for pathological dissociation, offering insights into cognitive and affective dysfunction across various psychiatric conditions. This model comprises the right-lateralized central executive network (rCEN), responsible for reasoning, attention, inhibition, and memory; the medial temporal subnetwork of the default network ((DN), involved in autobiographical memory and recollection of past events; and the cingulo-opercular subnetwork of the salience network (SN), which plays a role in experiencing emotions derived from information about the social setting (Lebois LAM, et al. 2022). These three networks often interact, and depending on the subtype of dissociation the symptoms would have inappropriate salience detection in either direction, thus making it difficult to provide connection across various psychiatric conditions.