



## **MULTIPLE PERSONALITY DISORDER**

In the autumn of 1990, reporters nationwide gathered in Oshkosh, Wisconsin. They hoped to meet Emily, Franny, John, Ginger, Eleanor, Leona, Frank, Beth, Sam, and 34 other personalities occupying the mind of Sarah, an alleged rape victim. Oshkosh prosecutors argued that the accused rapist exploited Sarah's mental disorder by coaxing one of her personalities, a flirtatious 20-year-old named Jennifer, into having sex with him. A jury convicted the man of second-degree sexual assault. The verdict was later overturned.<sup>1</sup>

In the summer of 1983, the bodies of Rod and Marilyn Carlson were found beside a road in Douglas County, Colorado. Both had been shot execution-style in the back of the head. Ross Carlson, their teenage son, was later charged with the murders. Shortly after the arrest, a psychiatrist diagnosed the teenager as a victim of Multiple Personality Disorder. Eventually, therapists identified as many as 10 personalities residing within Carlson. His attorneys later argued that Carlson's parents were abusive people who forced their twisted religion on their only child, causing him to develop the diverse characters as a defense mechanism. But prosecutors painted Carlson as a cold-blooded killer. The six-year drama ended in 1989 when, at age 25, Ross Carlson died of leukemia.

The stories of Sarah and Ross Carlson have generated huge public interest in the phenomenon of Multiple Personality Disorder (MPD). In addition to these unprecedented cases, films like *Sybil*, *The Minds of Billy Milligan*, and *The Three Faces of Eve* have brought the issue of dissociative disorder into the media spotlight.

### **WHAT MPD IS:**

MPD is a mental condition in which the personality becomes fragmented ("dissociated") into two or more distinct identities, each of which may become dominant and control behavior from time to time to the exclusion of the others. These identities are called "alter personalities" (often simply "alters") and each maintains its own integrity of characteristics and habits. Each has its own age, name, sex, intelligence, and personal tastes.

People suffering from MPD usually endured devastating traumas in childhood,

such as incest, abuse, and ritual torture. Their minds were shattered by feelings of guilt, shame, and terror. These emotions, along with the need to survive in the presence of dangerous circumstances, caused them to subconsciously divide their minds into alters to keep their condition hidden and to protect them-selves from further harm. Certain information, memories, and feelings were encapsulated in specific personalities.

MPD allows abused individuals like Sarah and Ross to deal with the past by containing hurtful memories in various personalities. These alters cope like the pieces of a pie. Each piece has a limited amount of coping power. When that limit is reached, the switch to another alter occurs.<sup>2</sup> Through effective integration therapy, the disparate pieces can be put back together to allow the person to reclaim a normal life

#### HOW MPD OCCURS:

According to Dr. James Friesen, author of the book, *Uncovering the Mystery of MPD*, about 97 percent of multiples suffered some type of serious abuse at young ages.<sup>3</sup> Victims of such mistreatment create altered personality states to absorb the emotional anguish and physical pain.

Dr. Walter Young, clinical director of the National Center for Treatment of Dissociative Disorders, explains that children can't run away from abuse. They have nowhere to hide but inside their heads. According to Young, "As the victim grows up, the separate personality becomes more autonomous and available for everyday use...".<sup>4</sup> Breakdown of this coping mechanism can produce severe symptoms, including suicide ideation, depression, mental confusion, and intrusive thoughts or voices.

Most victims of MPD are bright and artistic. Many are incredibly gifted. It is this high level of intelligence that allowed them to dissociate to protect them-selves and function during the abuse. Most suffer feelings of fear, confusion, alienation, and rejection. Many harbor an inability to trust, and some feel intense self-hatred. Because each individual personality is complex and integrated with its own unique behavior patterns and social relationships, many host bodies lose track of time when a particular alter is manifesting ("out").

#### MPD AND SATANIC RITUAL ABUSE (SRA):

Many victims of MPD emerge from families which were involved in some form of the occult. Perhaps the most traumatized of MPDs are victims of Satanic Ritual

Abuse (SRA). An estimated 25 to 60 percent of multiples have been subjected to ritual torture, sodomy, and mutilation. Conservative projections of ritual survivors have reached 100,000 in the United States alone.<sup>5</sup>

Satanic cult programmers may purposely create alters in these subjects through the use of triggers, words or symbols which evoke a previously im-planted response. For example, an SRA survivor may be programmed so that every time he sees the color red a self-mutilating alter will come out and cut the body. Some victims are subjected to mock communion, are told they will die on a certain date, or are systematically tortured or mutilated. Often, certain alter personalities of those victimized by satanic ritual abuse are programmed to continue attending ceremonies to ensure loyalty to the cult.

### HOW MPD IS TREATED:

MPD disrupts the victims comprehensive identity and total memory system. These traumatized multiples lose contact with the person God meant them to be. To heal, they must focus on wholeness and truth. The Christian community is the perfect haven for MPD victims to be unconditionally loved and accepted. In Psalm 17:8-9, God encourages MPD victims to seek his protection: "Hide me in the shadow of your wings from the wicked who assail me, from my mortal enemies who surround me."

Although some secular clinicians and even members of the Christian community doubt the existence of MPD, professionals say diagnoses are on the rise. To skeptics, scars, markings, and increasing reports that correlate between what patients tell clinicians testify to the reality of dissociative disorders. Regardless of what critics say, the emergence of MPD is becoming so great that it can't be ignored. It is the responsibility of every concerned Christian to minister to those in emotional bondage and let them know that the Lord "Heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds" (Psalm 147:3).

1. Chris Waddington, "Multiple Personalities," Rocky Mountain News, 4 February 1992, p.27.
2. James G. Friesen, "Treatment for Multiple Personality Disorder. Integrating Alter Personalities and Casting Out Evil Spirits," The Journal of Christian Healing, vol.11., no.3, Fall 1989, p.6.
3. James G. Friesen, Ph.D., Uncovering the Mystery of MPD, Here's Life Publishers, San Bernardino, California, c 1991, p. 38, 42.
4. Chris Waddington, "Multiple Personalities," Rocky Mountain News, 4 February 1992, p.27.
5. James G. Friesen, Ph.D., Uncovering the Mystery of MPD, Here's Life Publishers, San Bernardino, California, c 1991, p.209.

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