



Week 5 – Recognizing Disassociation and how to Re-associate

- **What is disassociation?** -

Disruption in the usually integrated functions of consciousness memory, identity, or perception of the environment.

- **Is it healthy to dissociate?** - It is a regular function of the human brain to be able to detach from reality and cling to something reassuring to avoid anxieties.

- **Causes of disassociation** - _____, _____, _____

- **Forms of disassociation**

- Mild - *Common, everyday levels of absent mindedness.*
 - Tune out in the middle of a conversation
 - Feel that sometimes your mind has been on autopilot
 - Spacing out
- Moderate – *Person with a potential dissociative disorder*
 - Can't recall anything you said or did in the last three hours
 - Found yourself wandering in a new place with no idea of how you got there
 - Your waking life felt surreal, like you are watching it play out in front of you.
- Severe – *People with dissociative condition, their experiences include:*
 - Inability to remember what they did in a period of time (minutes to days)
 - Unusual emotional and physical numbness
 - Told by other that you go into a 'trance-like' state
 - Out of body experiences like watching self from the outside
 - Disconnection from physical surroundings
 - A sense that the world does not feel 'real' (ie: like a dream or being in a movie")
 - Confused sense of self (ie: identity)
 - Not recognizing yourself in the mirror

- **Purpose of dissociation as a coping strategy**, is to avoid feelings of _____,
_____, _____, _____ or _____.
- **What causes dissociation without trauma?**
 - Any overload response – break-up, losing your job
 - Extreme stress
 - Anxiety – Intense, excessive, and persistent worry and fear about everyday situation. Fast heart rate, rapid breathing, sweating, and feeling tired may occur.
 - Any constant, low-level stress that puts a strain on your nervous system and eventually may cause you to dissociate to protect yourself. It happens mostly at a level that you are likely not aware of.
 - Certain sights, sounds, smells, touches, and even tastes can set off, or trigger, a cascade of unwanted memories and feelings.
- **What is fight, flight or freeze and fawn vs. disassociation?**
 - Fight - _____
 - Flight - _____
 - Freeze - _____
 - Fawn - _____
 - Disassociation - _____

- **Symptoms of fight, flight, freeze, fawn** _____
_____, enabling you to rapidly defend yourself from a real or
perceived danger.

Steps to reduce dissociation and increase self-awareness

Mindfulness Practice:

- 1) Use your five senses. Name 5 things you see, 4 things you feel, 3 things you hear, 2 things you smell and 1 thing you taste. This can be done anywhere.
- 2) Mindfulness walk. Notice how your body feels with each step, take your time paying close attention to physical sensations throughout your body.
- 3) Slow your breathing. Close your eyes and breathe in and out, slowing counting up and down from 10. This will help you relax and aids clearer processing of thoughts and emotions.
- 4) Write in a daily journal. Recall your day in detail. Make a point of noticing any dissociations that may have occurred and try to recall any thoughts or emotions before, during, or after it.

The goal is not to clear your mind or stop thinking, but to be more aware of your thoughts and feelings rather than getting lost in them.

- Reading the vibrational resonance of disassociation via our empathic abilities
- Resonances change as people talk accessing different layers and dimensions
- Lots of trauma=they're good at hiding disassociation
- When we notice that we have disassociated..... we can reverse the events and ask what the trigger was.

Homework:

- Notice what situations you disassociate in. What about that situation triggered the response? A conversation, event, person, smell, etc.
- See if you notice when other people disassociate
- Notice the vibrational resonance of other people when they're talking. Do you notice it changes at times? Did it change when they disassociated?

Next week: How to let your abilities serve you.

Reference: [Strategies to Reduce Dissociation - Staying Present \(newviewpsychology.com.au\)](http://newviewpsychology.com.au)