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Structural Dissociation and the Treatment of Chronic Traumatization

Onno van der Hart Ellert R. S. Nijenhuis Kathy Steele

Based on the theory of structural dissociation of the personality in combination with a Janetian psychology of action, the authors have developed a model of phase-oriented treatment that focuses on the identification and treatment of structural dissociation and related maladaptive mental and behavioral actions.

"What an exceptional book! The step-wise didactic clarity and innovative content of The Haunted Self alone would suffice to justify making the book required reading material for all health professionals encountering trauma victims. However, it is also a remarkably thrilling reading experience, reminiscent of the "haunted-house" stories of my youth. One finds oneself led to familiar areas through "hidden stairways" and suddenly comes to perceive and comprehend things from unexpected angles. There is a refreshing undercurrent of humility to the book - the reader feels encouraged to examine and comment freely. Without seeking to replace or compete with other trauma theories

or treatment modalities, the authors present an over-arching and unifying conceptual approach to comprehending the psycho-biological underpinnings of a highly variable and challenging population of patients, who quite commonly present with a complex and confusing array of atypical and changeable clinical and therapeutic issues, only partly addressed by current diagnostic criteria and treatment guidelines. The structural conception of dissociation enhances ones understanding not only of PTSD and Complex PTSD, Dissociative Identity Disorder and cases of severe protracted physical and sexual abuse, but clarifies the contribution of trauma to Borderline Personality Disorder, Somatoform Disorders and certain physical syndromes characteristically associated with emotional trauma and stress." -Dr Mike Matar, MD (Psych)

Key Features:

- The essence of trauma-generated structural dissociation of the personality, including an explanation in terms of Pierre Janet's action psychology
- Its manifestation in positive and negative, cognitive-affective and sensorimotor, dissociative symptoms
- Its complexity in various trauma-generated mental disorders, ranging from simple PTSD to DID
- Its maintenance by a series of inner-directed phobias, with the most fundamental one the phobia of traumatic memories
- Its treatment in terms of the standard of care, that is, phase-oriented treatment, including systematically overcoming these phobias

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:



Onno van der Hart, PhD is a psychologist, adult psychotherapist (retired) in private practice and researcher; he is Emeritus Professor of Psychopathology of Chronic Traumatization at the Department of Clinical and Health Psychology at Utrecht University, the Netherlands. He is a scholar in

Pierre Janet Studies and is a past President of the International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies (ISSTS). Both nationally and internationally, he is a clinical consultant and trainer on diagnosis and treatment of complex trauma-related disorders. He is the recipient of a number of awards for his clinical and published works. Apart from having co-authored with Ellert Nijenhuis and Kathy Steele *The Haunted Self: Structural Dissociation and the Treatment of Chronic Traumatization (Norton, 2006),* with Suzette Boon and Kathy Steele, he wrote *Coping with Trauma-related Dissociation: Skills Training for Patients and Therapists (Norton, 2011),* and with Kathy Steele and Suzette Boon, *Treating Trauma-related Dissociation: A Practical, Integrative Approach (Norton, 2017).* Online Program: \$99.00 (book needs to be purchased separately via our site)

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"A brilliant book – the authors deserve our congratulations for grappling with some of the most complex and perplexing phenomena that psychotherapists are likely to encounter. In an intellectual tour de force, the authors provide a unifying theory that identifies a disturbance of the self as the core problem for the whole spectrum of trauma-related disorders. This theory is in turn closely linked to a highly sophisticated understanding of assessment and treatment. No trauma therapist will fail to benefit from the authors' collective insights and wisdom."

- Chris R. Brewin, Professor of Clinical psychology, University College London

"After 100 years of descriptions, we are now beginning to understand what dissociation says about our mind, and how to treat it. This book is a brilliant and highly accessible account of this most fundamental concept of modern day psychiatry and psychotherapy."

- David Servan-Schreiber, MD, PHD – Clinical Professor of Psychiatry, University of Pittsburgh – Author of Healing Without Freud or Prozac and The Instinct to Heal

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