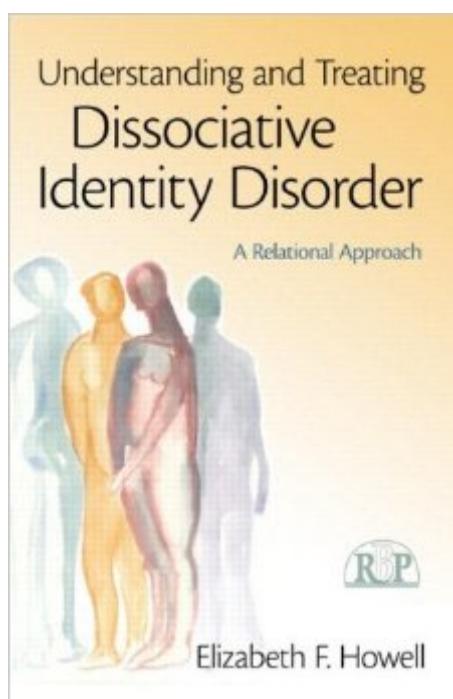


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# Understanding And Treating Dissociative Identity Disorder: A Relational Approach (Relational Perspectives Book Series)



## Synopsis

Building on the comprehensive theoretical model of dissociation elegantly developed in *The Dissociative Mind*, Elizabeth Howell makes another invaluable contribution to the clinical understanding of dissociative states with *Understanding and Treating Dissociative Identity Disorder*. Howell, working within the realm of relational psychoanalysis, explicates a multifaceted approach to the treatment of this fascinating yet often misunderstood condition, which involves the partitioning of the personality into part-selves that remain unaware of one another, usually the result of severely traumatic experiences. Howell begins with an explication of dissociation theory and research that includes the dynamic unconscious, trauma theory, attachment, and neuroscience. She then discusses the identification and diagnosis of Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID) before moving on to outline a phase-oriented treatment plan, which includes facilitating a multileveled co-constructed therapeutic relationship, emphasizing the multiplicity of transferences, countertransferences, and kinds of potential enactments. She then expands the treatment possibilities to include dreamwork, before moving on to discuss the risks involved in the treatment of DID and how to mitigate them. All concepts and technical approaches are permeated with rich clinical examples.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This book is the best I have read on the subject of dissociative identity disorder and other

dissociative states. It is a brilliant summary of the history of understanding of the subject plus contains the author's original ideas on diagnostic categories and treatment as well as fruitful examples from her work. She clearly has a lot of respect for her clients' traumatic experiences and courage as well as a keen intellectual mind. This book is not an easy light read but it is clear and very readable for someone at all versed in the subject or ready to become so. It is a great addition to the work Howell previously did in the history of the concept of dissociation and trauma as a way of understanding both conditions of injury and a general concept of how the mind works. As an earlier reviewer here noted we are not born unitary and then break apart, everyone faces the task of creating a workable semblance of wholeness. Some have it easier than others based on life experiences. I also strongly recommend Howell's earlier book *The Dissociative Mind*. Nearly every paragraph in both books are gems that can be examined with many intriguing facets to explore.

This is a very well-written book. It is written for clinicians, and has a psychoanalytic bend to it, but this author has the most thorough understanding of DID and the current research being done today that I have ever read. As someone with DID, I appreciate the work she is doing to move the research, thinking, and treatment along when it comes to DID. There are some parts that a non-clinician or non-psychanalysts may not get, but the book is still very interesting and worth the read for someone wanting to read about DID at a higher level. Also, it has a section in it that explains what it is like to have DID that is superior to all of the many books I have read on the subject. This author gets it, and I am sure her patients are fortunate to have someone who has put so much into understanding and treating DID.

This book is written clearly and the information is beneficial for both clinicians and clients alike. The topic has been well-researched, both historically and practically speaking. I have read information about DID here that I have yet to find in other sources. Howell knows this disorder inside and out and it shows. She references the top names in the field of dissociation and points to other articles and books worth reading for anyone who wishes to review more literature on DID and the spectrum of traumatology from both the physiological and psychological perspectives. I highly recommend this book to those who want to broaden their knowledge base about the immediate and long term effects of trauma, and better understand trauma survivors and ways to help them, specifically in the case of severe trauma survivors who present with DID.

I ordered several books on this topic and although some of the other books are informative and

further one's understanding of DID beyond what is taught in programs designed to train professional counselors, this one I found to be the most helpful to get a quick basic understanding on what to be aware of when first meeting/interacting with individuals that present with a DID diagnosis or features.

I tried to read this book and was stumped lol. It really is for clinicians and not the normal reader. Make sure you have a dictionary for clinicians if you choose to tackle this book. Although the history of D.I.D. was very interesting and the experiences of patients within was enlightening.

As a therapist and a person with integrated DID, there isn't a false step in the book. She really "gets it." Her discussions of treatment are up-to-date and clearly written. She has built on the historical work of Putnum and Kluft, both of whom are experts on internal structure but are limited to treatment circa 1989. Ms. Howell has brought treatment up-to-date.

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