

Advance Title Information

The Writer's Guide to Psychology

How to Write Accurately About Psychological Disorders, Clinical Treatment and Human Behavior

by Carolyn Kaufman, Psy.D.

Publication Date: December 2010

\$14.95 (\$16.95 Canada) • Paperback • 6" x 9" • 230 pages

ISBN 978-1-884995-68-2 • Writing/Reference BISAC LAN014000

Illustrations • Bibliography • Index

"This book should be in every writer's professional library."

—*New York Journal of Books*

"Thoughtful, scholarly, comprehensive, and a boon to writers aiming for accuracy." —Jonathan Kellerman

Writers frequently write about mental illness and psychological motivations, but all too often they use terms and concepts that are clichéd, outmoded or just plain wrong.

Written by a clinical psychologist who is also a professional writer and writing coach, *The Writer's Guide to Psychology* is an authoritative, accessible, fun, and easy-to-use reference to psychological disorders, diagnosis, treatments, psychotherapists' work and what really makes psychopathic villains tick.

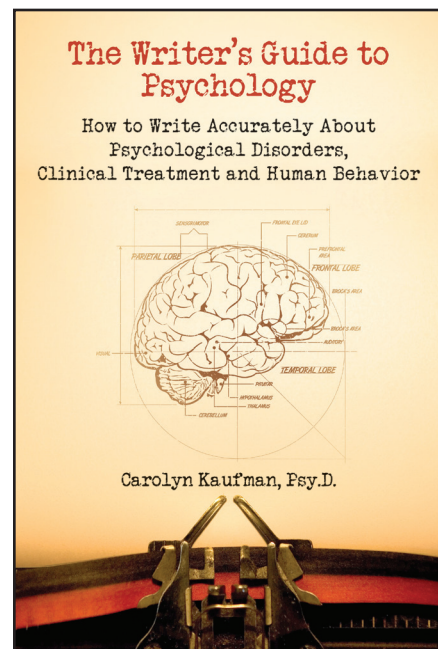
Did you know that serial killers are almost never psychotic? That modern electroshock therapy doesn't cause convulsions? That many psychotherapists think examining your childhood is unimportant—or even irrelevant—to therapy? Those are just a few of the hundreds of myth-busting facts in *The Writer's Guide to Psychology*.

The only reference book on clinical and counseling psychology designed specifically for the needs of writers, *The Writer's Guide to Psychology* presents specific writing dos and don'ts to avoid the psychobabble clichés and misunderstandings frequently seen in popular writing. The book's extensive sidebars include Q&As from real writers, information on controversial treatments and issues, tips for using realistic psychology to create complex and compelling characters, and *Don't Let This Happen to You!* boxes that humorously expose mortifying mistakes in fiction, film and TV ... and teach readers how to get it right in their own writing.

Written in an approachable, easy-to-understand style that's perfect for both in-depth study and quick answers to specific questions, *The Writer's Guide to Psychology* is a unique combination of accurate psychology, myth-busting information and practical guidance that belongs on every writer's reference shelf.

Audience: Published and unpublished fiction and nonfiction writers, and any reader who wants to learn more about psychology

About the Author: Carolyn Kaufman, Psy.D., is a clinical psychologist, a professor of psychology, a writing coach, and an author. Regularly quoted by journalists as an expert psychological source, Kaufman has written articles for *The Writer*, *Woman's World*, *Fiction Factor* and *FreelanceWriting.com*, and writes the "Psychology for Writers" blog for *PsychologyToday.com*. Kaufman is an assistant professor at Columbus State Community College in Ohio.



Quill Driver Books

An Imprint of Linden Publishing

2006 S. Mary St.

Fresno CA 93721

(800) 345-4447 • Fax (559) 233-6933

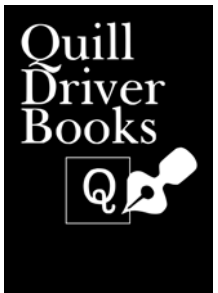
QuillDriverBooks.com

Contact: Jaguar Bennett, Marketing Director
Publicity@QuillDriverBooks.com

Quill Driver Books is distributed to the book trade by IPG, Baker & Taylor, and Ingram, or by calling 1-800-345-4447.

Distributed in Canada by Manda Group.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Book Publication Date: December 2010
Media Contact: Jaguar Bennett
Quill Driver Books
(800) 345-4447
Publicity@QuillDriverBooks.com
digital cover image available

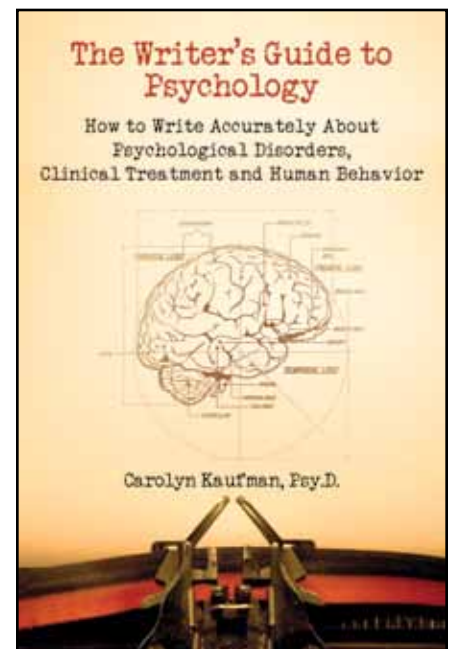


With accurate answers from a real shrink, new book *The Writer's Guide to Psychology* is a unique and indispensable reference guide for writers

**“Thoughtful, scholarly, comprehensive, and a boon to writers aiming for accuracy.”
—Jonathan Kellerman, psychologist and author of the Alex Delaware mysteries**

Let's say you're a writer with a great idea for a story about a deranged killer. He's psychotic ... or should that be psychopathic? Wait, shouldn't you give him a traumatic childhood, too? Or are you missing a better option? And how can you be sure you're using all these psychological terms correctly? Writers love to write about mental illness and psychological motivations, but all too often they use terms and concepts that are clichéd, outmoded or just plain wrong.

But modern readers are likely to have experienced psychotherapy themselves, they know more about psychology than ever before, and they're increasingly intolerant of authors' mistakes. To be credible to a modern audience, writers need to get their psych right—and that means they need the crash course in real-world, scientific psychology found in the new book



The Writers Guide to Psychology: How to Write Accurately About Psychological Disorders, Clinical Treatment and Human Behavior (Quill Driver Books, December 2010) by Carolyn Kaufman, Psy.D.

Written by a clinical psychologist who is also a professional writer and writing coach, *The Writer's Guide to Psychology* is an authoritative, accessible, fun and easy-to-use reference to psychological disorders, psychotherapists' work, diagnosis, treatments, and what really makes psychopathic villains tick.

Did you know that serial killers are rarely psychotic? That modern electroshock therapy doesn't cause convulsions? That many psychotherapists think examining your childhood is unimportant—or even irrelevant—to therapy? That hypnotized people are awake and aware? Those are just a few of the hundreds of myth-busting facts in *The Writers Guide to Psychology*.

—more—

The only reference book on clinical and counseling psychology designed specifically for the needs of working writers, *The Writer's Guide to Psychology* presents specific writing dos and don'ts to avoid the psychobabble clichés and misunderstandings frequently seen in popular writing. The book's extensive sidebars are packed with even more information: Q&As from real writers, information on controversial treatments and issues, and character-building tips—plus *Don't Let This Happen to You!* boxes that humorously expose mortifying mistakes in fiction, film and TV ... and teach you how to get it right in your own writing.

Based on her years of experience coaching writers, Kaufman also provides concrete examples and suggestions on how to use realistic psychology to create deeper, more complex and more compelling characters. Readers will learn how to psychologically profile their characters to create strong motivations; generate realistic, surprising and interesting character interactions; and propel character-driven storylines.

The Writer's Guide to Psychology is also the easiest way for any reader (and not just writers!) to get acquainted with modern theories of mental illness and current psychotherapeutic practice. Kaufman presents a clear and understandable overview of psychological disorders from mild depression to the most violent psychopathy. Kaufman explains both typical and cutting-edge treatment options, ranging from traditional talk therapy to the latest developments in psychiatric medications—and debunks common misconceptions about mental illness every step of the way.

Kaufman also gives an extensive description of how psychologists, psychiatrists and psychotherapists do their jobs in the real world, with explanations on how mental health professionals are trained, what degrees they hold, different treatment methods and philosophies, and the legal and ethical standards under which they work.

Written in an approachable, humorous and easy-to-understand style that's perfect for both in-depth study and quick answers to specific questions, *The Writer's Guide to Psychology* is a unique combination of accurate psychology, myth-busting information and practical guidance that belongs on every writer's reference shelf.

About the Author: Holding both a bachelor's degree in writing and a doctorate in psychology, **Carolyn Kaufman, Psy.D.**, is a clinical psychologist, professor of psychology, writing coach and author. Regularly quoted by journalists as an expert psychological source, Kaufman has written articles for *The Writer*, *Woman's World*, *Fiction Factor* and *FreelanceWriting.com*. Kaufman is an assistant professor at Columbus State Community College in Ohio. Kaufman writes the "Psychology for Writers" blog for *PsychologyToday.com* and offers psychological information for writers on her website, *ArchetypeWriting.com*.

Book Details:

Title: *The Writer's Guide to Psychology: How to Write Accurately About Psychological Disorders, Clinical Treatment and Human Behavior*

Author: Carolyn Kaufman, Psy.D.

Publisher: Quill Driver Books, an imprint of Linden Publishing

Publication: December 2010, \$14.95 (\$16.95 Canada), Paperback, ISBN 978-1-884995-68-2

Writing/Psychology, 230 pages, 6" x 9"

Available from bookstores, online booksellers and Quill Driver Books,
2006 S. Mary St., Fresno, CA 93721 • 1-800-345-4447 • QuillDriverBooks.com

About Carolyn Kaufman

Author of *The Writer's Guide to Psychology*



Carolyn Kaufman, Psy.D., was pursuing a bachelor's degree in writing when she discovered how much an understanding of psychology could add to her stories. By her senior year, she'd not only subjected most of Shakespeare's plays to psychodynamic analysis, she'd decided to pursue her doctorate in clinical psychology.

Kaufman received her Bachelor of Arts in English/Writing from Otterbein College and her clinical Doctorate of Psychology (Psy.D.) from the APA-accredited Wright State University School of Professional Psychology. She completed her internship at the University of Pittsburgh in Pennsylvania.

As a therapist, she has worked with individuals, couples, and groups, with specialized training in issues relevant to college students, crisis intervention, domestic violence, media psychology, and relationship problems. Her areas of interest include crisis and trauma, relationships, creativity, business psychology, and media psychology.

Kaufman is an assistant professor at Columbus State Community College and also teaches at her alma mater, Otterbein. She always emphasizes the practical application of psychology to everyday life, which has transferred well into her work with writers.

In addition to her job as an assistant professor, she works with writers and serves as an expert source for journalists, and has been quoted in *Marie Claire*, *Wired*, *USA Today*, *Shape* and *The Boston Globe*. She has written articles for *The Writer*, *Woman's World*, *Fiction Factor* and *FreelanceWriting.com*. Kaufman writes the "Psychology for Writers" blog for *Psychology Today* (www.psychologytoday.com/blog/psychology-writers), where she regularly posts on misconceptions of psychology in popular culture, fiction, film and television; what clichés and misinformation writers should avoid; and how to write accurately and authentically about psychological topics. Kaufman also offers psychological information for writers and advice on using psychology in fiction at her website, *ArchetypeWriting.com*.



For more information on *The Writer's Guide to Psychology* (Quill Driver Books, December 2010) or to arrange an interview with author **Carolyn Kaufman**, please contact Jaguar Bennett at Quill Driver Books: Publicity@QuillDriverBooks.com • (800) 345-4447

Advance praise for *The Writer's Guide to Psychology*

"*The Writer's Guide to Psychology* serves as not only a thorough guide for the novice, but also as a quick refresher for the clinical professional. This book should be in every writer's professional library and every clinician's too—whether writers or not!"

—June Goodwin, LCSW, *New York Journal of Books*

"Dr. Kaufman's unique book is an in-depth journey into the world of the human mind The book would especially benefit screenwriters, journalists, and particularly writers of psychological thrillers. But writers of all genres can learn a great deal from Dr. Kaufman's breadth of psychological insight. The style and information presented capture the reader from the first few pages of the book, leaving us wishing for more books by this captivating author. *The Writer's Guide to Psychology* is a persuasive tool for writers desiring to enhance their plots and create more accurate characters."

—Laura Schultz, LMFT, *New York Journal of Books*

"*The Writer's Guide to Psychology* is thoughtful, scholarly, comprehensive, and a boon to writers aiming for accuracy when depicting the world of abnormal psychology and clinical treatment."

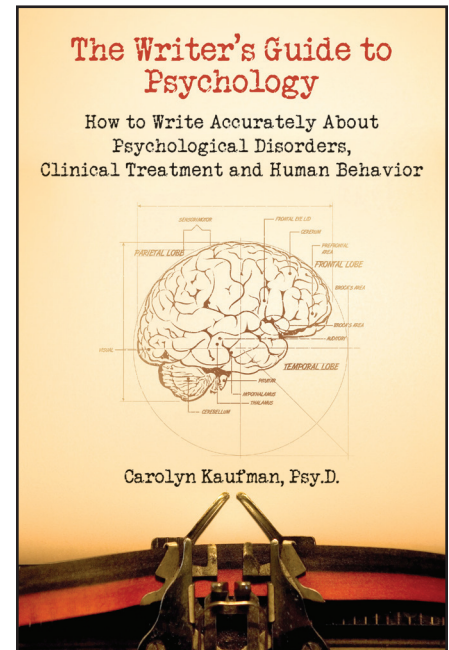
—Jonathan Kellerman, psychologist and best-selling author of the Alex Delaware mystery novels

"As a psychologist, a novelist, and a reader, nothing stops me reading faster than flat characters, phony fictional shrinks, and false diagnoses. Fiction writers can get all the help they need with these problems and more in Carolyn Kaufman's excellent reference, *The Writer's Guide to Psychology*."

—Dr. Roberta Isleib, clinical psychologist and author of *Deadly Advice*

"I wish Carolyn Kaufman had written *The Writer's Guide to Psychology: How to Write Accurately About Psychological Disorders, Clinical Treatment and Human Behavior* years ago! Every writer who even thinks about creating or explaining a character with a psychological disorder should have a copy on their desk, right next to their dictionary and thesaurus. A well-written, easy-to-read guide to understanding the most complicated of psychological disorders that's sure to help writers abandon the stereotypes and develop realistic characters."

—Jilliane Hoffman, former felony prosecutor with the Miami-Dade State Attorney's Office and best-selling author of *Retribution*, *Last Witness*, *Plea of Insanity* and *Pretty Little Things*



For more information on *The Writer's Guide to Psychology* (Quill Driver Books, December 2010) or to arrange an interview with author **Carolyn Kaufman**, please contact Jaguar Bennett at Quill Driver Books: Publicity@QuillDriverBooks.com • (800) 345-4447

Don't Let This Happen to You!

Excerpted from *The Writer's Guide to Psychology*

Even the most famous writers frequently misuse psychological terms and concepts. Here are some stunning mistakes from popular novels and films:

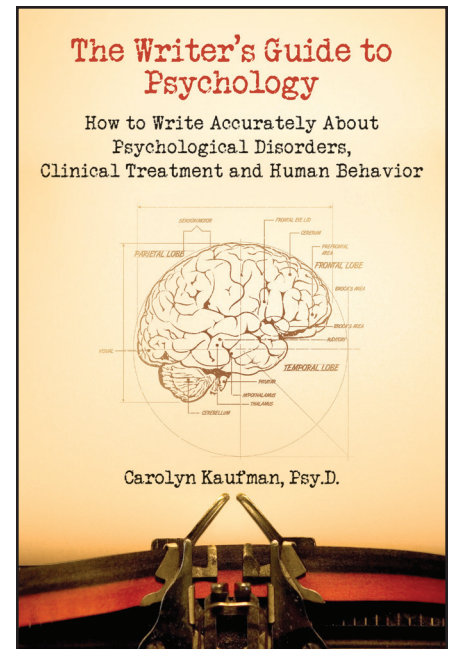
In *Unshapely Things*, Mark del Franco's detective says, "We have a disassociative personality acting out anger against victims who represent some kind of psychological trauma from the murderer's past." It sounds good, but there's no such thing as a disassociative personality—only a dissociative personality. There's also no indication in the book that the killer is dissociating; that is, experiencing a split in identity. The writer would have been better off suggesting the killer had an antisocial or narcissistic personality.

In *New Moon*, the follow-up to Stephenie Meyer's bestselling novel *Twilight*, the author repeatedly confuses hallucinations with delusions, using the two words interchangeably. "I was addicted to the sound of my delusions," the heroine, Bella, says. This is impossible, since delusions are ideas or beliefs. Hearing voices and seeing things both fall into the category of hallucinations.

In the film *The Devil's Advocate*, Charlize Theron's character, who's desperate to get away from what seem to be demonic hallucinations, easily barricades herself behind her breakable glass door and slashes her throat with a broken mirror. Despite all the screaming, yelling, and smashing of glass, it's only after she's bled to death that a staff member appears, apparently from another part of the hospital.

This is unrealistic on a number of levels. First, staff is readily available at all times in a psychiatric unit. Second, because patients can be extremely creative in finding ways to lock staff out or harm themselves, the hospital will already have taken extensive measures to prevent this. Third, most hospitals only allow visitors in common areas where the staff can keep an eye on things. Granted, staff members are sometimes reading magazines, chatting with each other, or dealing with a patient who's acting out, but they're also conscious of the potential dangers of glass in patients' hands. Therefore, it's unlikely that a patient would be allowed to keep a large, breakable mirror someone had brought her.

If your detective or psychiatrist character is arguing against multiple personalities (or any other diagnosis), be careful not to make up "typical" symptoms the way Jeffrey Deaver did in *The Bone Collector*: "The classic multiple personality is young and has a lower IQ." In fact, there is no "typical" IQ in people with DID, and while the disorder sometimes becomes less obvious around middle age because the person has learned to adapt to it, it does not spontaneously disappear as one gets older.



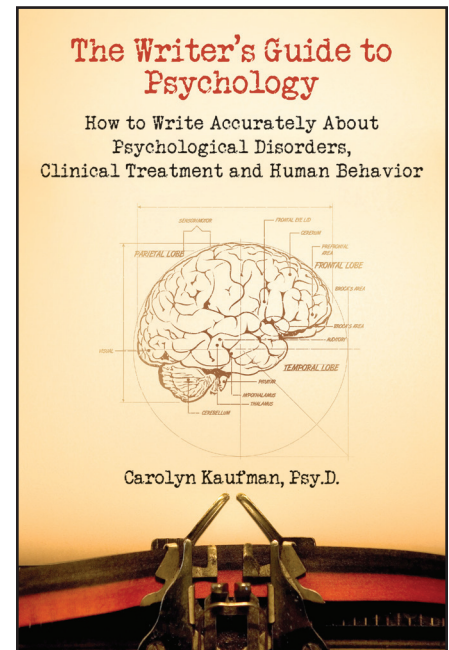
For more information on *The Writer's Guide to Psychology* (Quill Driver Books, December 2010) or to arrange an interview with author **Carolyn Kaufman**, please contact Jaguar Bennett at Quill Driver Books: Publicity@QuillDriverBooks.com • (800) 345-4447

What Messages Are Your Characters Sending?

Excerpted from *The Writer's Guide to Psychology*

Imagine spending an afternoon with your main character. What messages is he or she sending through paralanguage and nonverbals? Is the message he or she's trying to send always the message other people receive? Here are just a few examples of the types of things you might want to notice.

- What does your character like to wear? What message is she trying to send with that clothing? Is she successful? Do others ever see her as unusual or trying too hard? (If your heroine is a leather-wearing badass, for example, what do the people in the local grocery store think of her? Remember, your character may be sending messages she doesn't intend to.)
- Does he have any tattoos or piercings? Why did he get those things? What was he hoping to convey to others?
- How does she wear her hair? Why?
- How does he carry himself? For example, does he swagger, slink, or tiptoe through life?
- What are her mannerisms? For example, does she twist her wedding ring, keep a vice grip on her purse, or dangle her shoe from the tips of her toes? What kinds of worries, needs, or hopes is she conveying with her mannerisms?
- What's his vocabulary like? Does he use a lot of slang, rely on intellectual jargon, swear a lot, or use clichés? What's he trying to convey with these speech patterns?
- What is her voice like when she talks? Do others have to lean close to hear her? Does she have an accent? Does she talk in a high, childlike voice or a husky smoker's voice?
- Does he ask questions of the other person or mostly focus on his own interests? Does he pay attention when the other person talks, or does he interrupt or get distracted?
- What is the emotional "flavor" of the afternoon? Is she basically an upbeat person? Or does another word fit her better? For example, she could be cynical, whiny, apprehensive, jittery, nonchalant, unemotional, moody, bad-tempered, gloomy, self-critical, self-pitying, shy, or childlike. How do others react to her attitudes?
- How does he treat other people? Is he sarcastic, rude, exasperated, flirty, overly friendly, pushy, or needy?
- What sorts of information does she share about herself? Is she reticent or secretive? A chronic provider of Too Much Information?
- How does he use technology, and what do those things say about him? Does he use an email signature? What desktop wallpaper does he use on his computer? What's the ring tone on his cell? Will he answer his cell if it rings while he's in the middle of something?



Heroes vs. Villains

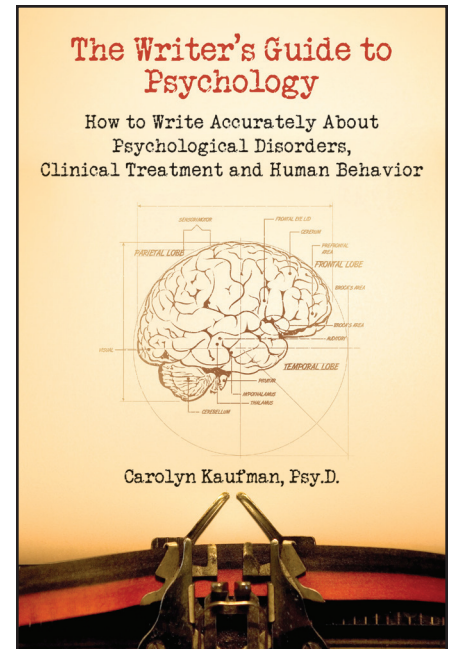
Excerpted from *The Writer's Guide to Psychology*

According to psychologist Roy Baumeister, most violence doesn't start with a wicked person attacking a hapless victim. Instead, it's the result of "reciprocal, mutual grievances and provocation" that escalate until one party hurts or kills the other. Nonetheless, each party sees itself as wholly innocent and the other as utterly evil. In reality, most people who do evil things are not actually evil people, nor are most victims completely innocent. But we still have a tendency to want to see things that way.

What this means is that your bad guy may be bad simply because you have chosen to take the hero's point of view. Consider, for example, the way Gregory Maguire turned *The Wizard of Oz's* Wicked Witch of the West into a sympathetic character by making her the protagonist of his book *Wicked*.

Well-written heroes and villains represent opposite sides of the same proverbial coin. A truly great villain represents the hero's dark side: his weaknesses, foibles, and dark desires. Conflict escalates because the hero is responding to the villain's last move, and the villain to the hero's last move.

In the science fiction television series *Farscape*, the villainous Scorpius wants exactly the same thing hero John Crichton does: to harness the energy created by wormholes. Both want the power for reasons so selfish that they're willing to inconvenience and even endanger those around them to get it. What makes Crichton the hero is not that he is incapable of evil, but that he is able to overcome the evil in himself—the evil that is represented by his nemesis, Scorpius. His eventual defeat of Scorpius is the symbolic defeat of his own dark tendencies.



For more information on *The Writer's Guide to Psychology* (Quill Driver Books, December 2010) or to arrange an interview with author **Carolyn Kaufman**, please contact Jaguar Bennett at Quill Driver Books: Publicity@QuillDriverBooks.com • (800) 345-4447

The Truth About Dissociative Identity Disorder

Excerpted from *The Writer's Guide to Psychology*

When the DSM-IV was released in 1994, Multiple Personality Disorder (MPD) was renamed Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID). The change was intended to convey the psychological community's belief that rather than housing multiple "people" (personalities) in one body, people with DID have one single personality or identity that has been splintered by trauma.

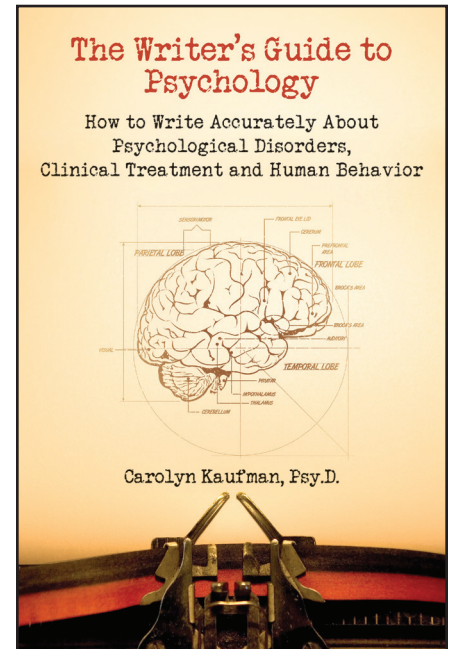
DID is usually caused by severe, recurrent, and sadistic childhood trauma. Over 70% of people with DID report that they were sexually abused, and close to 100% report sexual and/or physical abuse. A few people who have watched family members massacred during wartimes have also developed DID. What sets the accounts of people with DID apart from those of people who did not develop DID is how sadistically, creatively, and sometimes bizarrely they were tortured.

Because a part of the person's identity is walled off with the trauma, an "alter," which is another personality, is created. Each of these alters has a job in the system of personalities. One's job might be to do schoolwork, another to endure rape, another to be present during physical beatings. The more a particular personality is "out," the more it will develop its own interests, ideas, and idiosyncrasies, because more of life's experiences are being stored in that splinter of the personality.

The walls between personalities are called "amnesic barriers," and blocks of amnesia are the hallmark symptom of DID. Though some of the alters may be aware of each other, before treatment the core or birth personality is probably not aware of them. Instead, he has amnesia whenever an alter was out. At first the therapist may encourage the core and the alters to write notes to each other in a notebook, but eventually alters are usually able to talk directly.

Additional Information

- During childhood, people with DID are often accused of pathological lying, especially because they swear they didn't do things another person saw them do.
- Someone with DID may not realize until he reaches college or begins a career that other people don't experience these periods of amnesia.
- People with DID often have alters that are the "opposite sex" from the body. They also commonly have *child alters* who are developmentally stuck at a younger age than the body because they hold raw, unprocessed memories of abuse. In other words, they're emotionally trapped in the past. *Persecutory alters* are internalizations of the abuser(s); they treat other alters the same way the abuser did. In some cases, these alters may try to hurt or kill another alter, not realizing that they share a body.
- Children whose parents have DID are very aware of the changes in their parent, and are aware that they have several "mommies," for example. Just as spouses can learn to manipulate the disorder to their own ends, so can children. Children may figure out how to trigger more permissive personalities or claim the parent allowed something and just doesn't remember doing so.



For more information on *The Writer's Guide to Psychology* (Quill Driver Books, December 2010) or to arrange an interview with author **Carolyn Kaufman**, please contact Jaguar Bennett at Quill Driver Books: Publicity@QuillDriverBooks.com • (800) 345-4447