# ONE PERSON'S (OVERLY COMPREHENSIVE) TAKE ON THE HISTORY AND IMPACT OF DISSOCIADID

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#### Introduction

With the intensity and impact of some of DissociaDid's most recent actions, I'm hoping that some of their supporters might be more willing to take a critical look at their platform. In turn, I'm hoping that this piece opens the gate for different opinions on some nuanced situations. This piece will be ridiculously long in an effort to be as comprehensive, nuanced, and fair as possible - so no hard feelings at all if you stop reading here (that being said, a lot of these issues overlap, so to get the most complete picture reading all of the sections would be advised). Just as much as I am writing this as an introductory perspective to the controversies of DissociaDid, I am writing this as a therapeutic exercise for myself in dealing with the recent frustrations of DD's actions. That being said, this is no one's opinion but my own. I am in no way suggesting everyone should share my perspective or that mine is the only correct one, I am simply hoping that my thought process could potentially illuminate to those who disagree why so many of us have issues with DissociaDid's actions and messaging. And, on the off chance DD/Kya does read this: I hope you are able to read this with an open mind. I am not trying to attack, nor harass, you, and although it may be hard to believe I want what is best for you and for the community. If reading this entire piece will be too destabilizing, please skip to the very <u>last section</u>. I hope it will read as an even take on a complicated situation. But before we continue on, allow me some disclaimers.

#### **Disclaimers**

I want to start off with a few disclaimers, to set the tone of the piece, state my goals, and introduce some caveats now in the hopes I won't have to provide as many as I go along:

First, this is going to be long - so no hard feelings if you stop reading now, or quit at any point in the piece. I'm mostly writing this to get these thoughts off my chest so I'm not overly concerned on being concise, but I'm also hoping that maybe one, just one of DD's ardent supporters reads this and starts to think more critically about some of these points, and because of that hope I want to be as comprehensive as possible.

For the purpose of this piece, unless specifying a specific alter, I will be referring to our subject as DD. I'm doing this for a few reasons: 1) DD is just shorter to type than DissociaDid or even Kya (hey it's longer by one letter and I'm lazy, what can I say), 2) I am going to be discussing situations, events, and quotes from many different periods in DD's public life and due to the many evolutions, additions, and subtractions of different alters in the equation I don't want to accidentally misname or misgender anyone at any point, and 3) I want to emphasize that although alters can appear and feel to be very separate entities, completely their own person, in reality all alters are parts of a single whole, one brain that has been unfortunately separated into parts. They may function separately, but they are still just one person - this ties hand in hand with system responsibility and how if one alter says or does something inappropriate, it is the responsibility of the system as a whole to address and rectify this, even if it occurred without the rest of the system's knowledge or wanting. This is a concept <u>DD preaches</u> and adamantly follows/suggests others follow, so I'm hoping I won't need to argue my point on applying it as a concept to DD. Similarly, despite what DD claims about their different accounts on different platforms, "DissociaDid" is not a project separate from their public identity. I'll discuss this more later, but "DD" the brand and "Kya" the person are inherently and irrevocably tied together, so I feel comfortable using DD to refer to the whole person/the whole person's online activities. And a very minor 4) is that "DissociaDid" and "Kya" keep flagging as misspelled words on my computer but DD is fine, so it's easiest all around.

The next point I want to emphasize, and I hope remains clear throughout, is that I do not hate DD. I don't think they are evil, or actively seeking to harm people or children, or anything like that. In fact, all of my sections will more or less follow this format: the situation/controversy -> a generous and theoretically possible reading that explains the situation -> why I think the "generous reading" is or isn't the case. I am purposefully setting up this format to show the nuance of these situations, to show that I am not automatically thinking the worst of DD and I am actively trying to think through these situations and give DD the benefit of the doubt when possible, and finally to show that I am aware that no one but DD and hopefully their therapist truly knows the full story or the actual intent of anything. No matter how transparent and open DD is, or how

much we do or don't take what they say at face value, we can never know anything for sure, as we will always be on the outside looking in. I try to avoid rampant speculation, although of course in discussing any public figure some speculation is unavoidable.

I don't expect anyone who actually reads this to take what I say at face value. I am going to do my best to include sources when possible, although considering DD has years of detailed content out there and DID research can be unwieldy or behind paywalls and therefore difficult to link, please be kind. I am doing my best, and if something is not sourced and should be, please let me know and I will edit to include it. I am not and will not try to hide or obscure anything, and I don't expect people, especially anyone who comes here with opposing viewpoints, to just accept what I'm saying. That being said, some points I make I would consider as basic common sense, and thus will not be directly cited.

And finally, I hope this doesn't really need to be said, but this piece is entirely my opinion, and does not represent all of the views and opinions of the r/DissociaDid sub, or any of the other communities that discuss DD or DID. In fact, I anticipate some points I make will be agreed and disagreed with by both DD's supporters and critics - or, at least, I hope. Neither group is a monolith in opinion, and should not be treated as a hive mind for or against DD. This monstrosity of words is entirely my thoughts and opinions based on the information I have now (1/13/2023) and I reserve the right to change my thoughts and opinions - in fact, I hope I do. I welcome any discussion or discourse on anything I say here, as long as we keep it helpful, healthy, and civil. In that vein, I am also not claiming to know or remember everything that has been said or done or found out or retracted...the list goes on. I am not omniscient nor comprehensively versed on DD in their entirety. If I've missed something, or gotten something wrong, please let me know and I will rectify the mistake.

With all of that being said, thank you for reading this far - and I appreciate you continuing to read further. If you think I missed anything, or if I end up misquoting, misattributing, misgendering, etc. anyone at any time please correct me - your help and feedback is welcome! So is your discourse, so I'd appreciate any thoughts you have. All I ask before you continue is to read with an open and critical mind, and maybe we can meet in the middle. Thanks, and happy (?) reading!

#### "DissociaDid" the Brand vs. DD/Kya & Co the Person/System

One of DD's common complaints with the criticism they get is that they as a person, alter, and/or system are separate from the brand DissociaDid, which they consider to be its own separate project. Let's examine the validity of that belief. This examination starts with the very beginnings of DissociaDid.

When DD first started their Youtube channel, their channel focused on some education content surrounding DID, as well as their own experiences with the disorder. They shared *their* alters, *their* inner world, *their* symptoms, *their* past traumas and experiences, *their* funny anecdotes and frustrating realities of DID. Along the way they have shared other diagnoses and difficulties *they* deal with, they have shared more about *their* childhood and causes of *their* DID, they have shared *their* splits and fusions, *their* personal relationships - romantic and otherwise - and *their* fears, hopes, and more. Their content was personal, and still is personal. Your brand is what your content is; so their brand is their personal experiences. Their brand is them. This fact makes it incredibly difficult to entertain the idea that their brand and their personal life should now be treated as separate entities.

Not to mention, when DD first joined the internet as "DissociaDid", it wasn't just the name of their channel, or their brand. It was the name of their system. For years, DD identified as the DissociaDid System. This is equivalent to a youtuber naming their channel FirstnameLastname, which is not unheard of nor uncommon on Youtube. DD named their channel, and their brand, their personal identifier at the time. This only furthers the idea that their brand cannot be separated from their actions as a "private person on the internet", no matter how much they wish it could be so. For the record, I do understand that DD no longer uses DissociaDid as their system name. This does not negate the fact that those were the conditions and intent under which their public life as a creator was started. Nor has their content changed from sharing private thoughts and feelings, and focusing on personal experiences.

Another note on their wish to separate their various accounts and platforms from one another is the fact that they continue to link, reference, and plug their different accounts across their different platforms. They do not separate their accounts and platforms, and yet they expect us to.

Please understand, I absolutely get their wish to separate themselves from their brand, especially considering the backlash they have gotten on their public choices. It must be exhausting to ensure each video, each caption, each comment you make on the internet is accurately and effectively representative of both you and your brand (even though DD doesn't appear to be taking that precaution). When your brand and your personal identity are inseparable, you have to think about every presence you have on the internet. I would hate that. The only reason I'm writing this and considering (and ultimately) sharing it online is because I am reasonably certain that this piece and my reddit account will remain anonymous and unlinked to my "real" life, or any public presences I do have. But I also haven't chosen to put the details of my life out there on the internet to gain an audience and profit off of (whether in attention, clout, or money, profit has been gained).

DD and DissociaDid are irrevocably connected - and they always will be, unless DD takes active and clear steps to change that. Steps that could include, and would frankly be the bare minimum, privatizing accounts meant exclusively for personal and non-brand use, and completely changing their brand content direction to no longer involve anything personal or private. If these steps were taken, for me that would be a sign that DD is no longer interested in profiting off their personal life experiences, and are making decisive moves to take a step back from their public persona in favor of becoming a "private internet citizen". It is possible, but not on the path DD is currently pursuing - and until those or similar steps are taken, all of DD's accounts and presences online will continue to represent them and DissociaDid because for all intents and purposes online, they are the same. And as such, I will be discussing content from all of their accounts and platforms as applicable to, representative of, and the responsibility of DD.

# **Diagnosis**

I am not in the business of arm chair diagnosing, so this will not be a discussion on what diagnosis' DD may or may not have. To my knowledge, DD has publicly claimed to have: PTSD, cPTSD, DID, and BPD. While I can appreciate DD positioning themselves as a mental health educator and advocate claiming to share both accurate

psychological information as well as personal symptoms and experiences with mental health does open up a conversation on the validity of the diagnoses they claim, I am not personally comfortable speculating on that validity. So while I will not be discussing whether or not I believe DD has DID or BPD or anything else (I will be focusing on DID throughout this as that is the focus of their platform, and the diagnosis they have shared the most about), I will eventually be discussing some of the symptoms DD shares and shows, and how those line up with the diagnoses claimed - beyond that, you are free to draw your own conclusions.

But for now, let's look not to the quality of their diagnosis, but the process of getting it. As has been documented in numerous places, over the years DD has shared multiple stories on how their diagnosis of DID came to be, some of which's details conflict and combat with each other. As I will throughout this piece, first I would like to give a generous read to the situation: as those who are familiar with Dissociative Identity Disorder and its symptoms will know, unreliable memory is a hallmark of the disorder, not only between parts, but (in some cases) particularly surrounding the knowledge of the DID itself if that information could be stressful or unsafe to the system or a particular part to know at the time. It is not out of the realm of possibility that DD is not having trouble remembering or "sticking to the story" because it is a lie, but rather because they could have at different times remembered different details in their diagnosis journey. Similarly, other systems have shared online how once they have received and emotionally accepted a diagnosis, previously suppressed memories of receiving the same diagnosis at a prior occasion have surfaced. It is possible that this same thing has occurred with DD's diagnosis journey, and the different stories shared are actually all true instances that at different times were suppressed or remembered, resulting in different parts of DD's system remembering and sharing different truths throughout the years.

While all of that is in line with the disorder and perfectly plausible, there is more evidence that refutes it than not. One of the biggest red flags against the generous read in my opinion, is that considering how much DD shares of their symptoms and evolution throughout the years, and given the controversy they are aware of and (I have to assume) would very much like to squash surrounding their diagnosis, I see no situation

in which DD would not publicly share this reason for their diagnosis inconsistencies. It has been demonstrated several times over now that while DD will not take responsibility for or adequately address controversies or criticisms, they will still acknowledge the criticism and defend themselves/provide excuses for it, or reasons to dismiss it. Since we know this to be true, we can also assume that were memory issues the real reason behind DD's inconsistent stories on how they received their diagnosis of DID, DD would have already shared this. For me, this is a big clue that the generous read is not the reality of the situation.

I can also agree with DD and supporters of DD that no one owes anyone proof of their diagnosis. Not even public figures in the community owe anyone proof of their diagnosis. I consider that personal, private, and protected information that the public has no right to demand. I have no interest in releasing medical information about myself, and I hope that this point can be an early indicator that I do not hold DD to unrealistically high standards, or that I am "out to get them" or extremely biased against them. The simple truth is, they don't owe us anything.

(TANGENT ALERT: That being said, and while only tangentially related to DD as a whole, I would like to note that this does not mean I support self-diagnosing either.

DID is an incredibly complex trauma-based disorder. It is covert in nature, complicated to differentiate from other disorders that can share symptoms, and difficult to ensure that symptoms are not being misinterpreted. I do believe it exists, I do not think it should be nearly as controversial in the psychology field as it is, I do wish more research was focused on it, and I do believe that a lot of professionals are severely undereducated or misinformed on the disorder, and dissociative disorders in general. It is not something that one can diagnose by themselves, no matter how much research and introspection. While a massive tangent, I encourage anyone reading this who currently believes or suspects they have DID and has yet to involve a professional to do so as soon as you can. I know mental health resources can be incredibly and unfairly difficult to access, but they are vital to proper assessment, and consequently effective and successful help. I believe this tangent is worth including due to the current climate of the online DID community, a climate that DD actively helps foster. After noting that potentially

controversial and very personal opinion, I would once again like to reiterate that I don't support speculating on the validity of others' diagnoses.) Alright, all *that* being said:

While I do stand firm that DD does not owe the public proof of their diagnosis, it is also a consequence of making your mental health public that people will be interested in and want proof of a diagnosis. It is also not a consequence that DD disagrees with the fact that they have provided stories and details of their diagnosis journey, whether truthful and consistent or not, indicates that DD understands the want of this proof and has willingly engaged with it. DD has opened the doors for people to examine and find fault in their diagnosis/diagnosis journey. So, pointing out the conflicting details of their diagnosis, conflicting details which bring the diagnosis itself into question, is an entirely acceptable thing to do. And with no reasonable explanation for the conflicting stories (in fact, I don't believe that DD has even acknowledged the inconsistencies at all? But I by no means claim to have comprehensive awareness of their actions or timeline, and could be wrong. Please share if I have gotten anything throughout this piece wrong - I'm not interested in letting any of my points stand on misremembering or misinformation). we are left to wonder if DD is lying about receiving a formal diagnosis for this disorder, which calls into question their credibility as a whole. I won't be ending this section with a proclamation on whether or not they are lying, but I do think it is more than reasonable to count this situation under "suspicious activity".

Now, to discuss the diagnosis journey for DID itself. Here I will admit I am relying a great deal on the evidence already compiled by others, because I simply don't have the time to redo that work, nor the sleuthing skills. I am confident that all of this information has been verified, is accurately reporting what is often DD's own words, and has been replicated by others which is as peer reviewed as this is going to get. Also a note on accuracy, I will be discussing their diagnosis journey (and events throughout this piece) in chronological order NOT necessarily the order in which DD reported the details. So for example, if I am discussing two stories, one set in 2010 but told in 2018, and the other set in 2012 but told in 2016, I will be discussing the 2010 story first and the 2012 story second, despite that being the opposite order in which they were initially shared. Just hoping to jump ahead of any potential confusion. Forging on with that clarification:

- DD first reports being introduced to the possibility of DID by a therapist in late 2014 or early 2015, after a hospitalization due to a suicide attempt. (While evidence/sources for this can be found in multiple places, I am going to reference this timeline most often because 1) it is beautifully and succinctly compiled and 2) it is already pinned on the r/DissociaDid sub, which suggests it has been scrutinized for accuracy. All credit goes to those lovely redditors for their efforts.) This story later changes to take place in the same time frame with the same impedance, but instead of being introduced to DID through their therapist, DD is the one to introduce the idea of DID \*to\* the therapist, and claimed that same therapist didn't know what DID was initially. This, we can consider the first inconsistency.
- The second inconsistency and the one DD points to the most as proof of their diagnosis is their time at the Pottergate Centre. According to DD, they were diagnosed with DID by therapist (he calls himself a psychotherapist, but those are synonymous terms) Remy Aquarone in late January, early February 2017. DD claims this diagnosis is official. DD has stated that this process took a total of four hours, and cost thousands of dollars. The first issue with this statement is the idea that Remy Aquarone, or the Pottergate Centre, can provide an official and conclusive diagnosis. Unlike the United States healthcare system where therapists can diagnose clients for insurance purposes, the NHS (the British healthcare system) requires a diagnosis from a psychiatrist to access services. By Remy Aguarone's own admission, he is not a psychiatrist and thus cannot provide a usable diagnosis within the NHS. Pottergate's own website says: "As a next step ask us to send you 2 screening instruments that you can complete and return to us for scoring. They are the DES (Dissociative Experience Scale) and the SDQ20 (Somatoform Dissociative Questionnaire). We will send you a report outlining the levels of dissociative symptoms and an indication of the likelihood of your having a dissociative disorder...While screening instruments can give you an indication of the levels of your symptoms it is **not a formal diagnosis**. We believe it's important for a number of reasons to consider having a proper diagnosis. ... This may be the first step in getting appropriate treatment for your

condition (especially if you are hoping to get help through the NHS)." In essence, the Pottergate Centre provides recommended diagnoses that can open the door to an official psychiatric diagnosis, however they cannot and do not provide that official diagnosis. So while Remy Aqaurone and the Pottergate Centre may have thought DD had DID, they cannot provide the official diagnosis DD claims to have, and needs in order to pursue treatment. DD has provided no evidence that they did in fact go on to pursue an actual diagnosis - and since they have provided this information so far, we can assume they would present an official diagnosis as well were they given one.

• The second issue with the Pottergate Centre is the controversies that surround it and Remy Aquarone. The Pottergate Centre is known in the area as being a center that will give you the "diagnosis" you want as long as you can pay for it. There are also some issues of larger unfounded conspiracies that Aqaurone, and by extension, Pottergate, support. For the sake of length I am not going to detail all of them, but more information can be found through a simple google search, and just a sample of a few articles concerning the topic discussed.

I am not dismissing the fact that the Pottergate Centre does provide some level of assessment, and as I am not speculating on DD's diagnoses themselves, I am not going to comment on the validity of these assessments. So there is some credibility there as an outside, professional source, albeit an unofficial one (and one under fire for being monetarily incentivized), has supported DD's assertion that they have DID. However, the fact that DD has knowingly and repeatedly presented this recommendation as an official diagnosis is concerning and suspicious at worst and misguided at best, especially since we can presume that DD would be aware that they would then need to go on and pursue an official diagnosis through a psychiatrist, given that they live and operate within the NHS as an otherwise disabled individual.

For what it's worth, I know the fact that Multiplicity & Me also went to the Pottergate Centre is often pointed to in defense of DD's diagnosis. However, M&M have shared that while they went to the Pottergate Centre to get their initial diagnosis reference, they did in fact go on to consult with and get diagnosed by an actual psychiatrist, a step DD has only recently shared that they also took. This video by M&M

is super helpful on that topic, and also discusses the need for an official diagnosis by a psychiatrist or certified psychologist.

In a recent video by DD titled "2 New Alters?! Makeup Tutorial & Q&A", DD mentions that they have received 2 separate DID diagnoses, one from Pottergate (which as discussed above should not be counted as a diagnosis but as perhaps a recommended avenue for a proper diagnoser to explore), and one from a psychiatrist within the NHS. This is definitely a step in solving the diagnosis dilemma, however: DD shares that they got this diagnosis years ago. If that were the case, and all throughout this diagnosis controversy DD had a solid diagnosis from a professional within the NHS, I would be very curious as to why they have not shared this prior to now. Certainly, this would clear up any question of their diagnosis, so once again it would behoove them to share it a long time ago. So why haven't they? (EDIT: This video is a clear example of that, in which they discuss in depth their Pottermore diagnosis, and no other.)

In a similar vein to the concerns over conflicting diagnosis stories, many concerns have been raised on the conflicting statements and details DD has provided on various topics throughout the years.

# **Conflicting Statements and Stories**

While not the most dangerous of issues with DD, their ever lengthening list of conflicting statements, stories, and actions is definitely damaging to their credibility as an honest and accurate content creator. Listing every issue or statement DD has denied, or contradicted, or contradicted then later denied, would be impossible. It would take an immense amount of time to compile and then link sources, and as much as I would love to have a resource so incredibly comprehensive, until this becomes my paying job it will remain out of my reach. However, I will be addressing some notable and some recent contradictions. For example, one of the biggest and the most recent is DD's littles and their internet exposure. Seen in a TikTok video shared on this reddit post (I don't use TikTok often and I want to avoid adding to DD's views/interaction counts when I can, so I am going to try to avoid linking directly to their TikTok when I can, although this will be at times unavoidable), DD directly writes "No. We've never shared any littles' names..." in response to a user correcting their previous statement on

protecting littles: "You really aren't as they've already been made public many times via fronting or names being exposed and your live making them triggered."

It is curious for DD to state that they have categorically never shared any names of any littles before, as there is concrete evidence that they have - evidence taken directly from their own content. This is not opinion based, or something that can be interpreted or misconstrued. In an old video about journaling, DD accidentally shares a page that shows names of several littles. DD also verbally says the name of at least one little in their video "Making Our Inner World On the Sims" (link - unsure if this is the original video with the little's name, or the edited version removing it). Speaking of the Sims original or edited video - it is very clear that DD knows that these accidental shares did in fact happen. I can state this conclusively, because DD stated it themselves conclusively. In this Youtube Community post, DD thanks a subscriber for pointing out that the name and some information about a little was shared in an unnamed video about alters, as well as in the Sims Inner World video, and both of those videos would be edited and reuploaded without the identifying information. DD put out a public statement acknowledging that information about littles was accidentally put out on the internet - and that acknowledgement is still up, which is why it is interesting DD feels they can so confidently claim the exact opposite in current TikTok videos. I have also seen references to littles' information being shared in one of DD's podcast episodes, but I haven't listened to any episodes and therefore cannot confirm or deny the accuracy of that, and I wouldn't know which episodes to go through to find that information. Such a blatant contradiction is only one of many for DD, and one of the reasons people who support DD often use to excuse it leads directly into the generous read.

As mentioned previously, memory issues go hand in hand with DID. The original littles snafu and acknowledgement happened three years ago, and memories are fallible. It is also accurate to say that due to the evolution of Chloe to Nin to Kya, the same person who dealt with the initial little leaks is not the same person now, and therefore they may not remember it.

It would be accurate to say that, if only that was how fusion worked. But unfortunately for DD, it's not. According to the <u>ISSTD</u>, fusion <u>is</u> "a point in time when two or more alternate identities experience themselves as joining together with **a complete** 

loss of subjective separateness". This "joining together" includes the lowering of dissociative barriers and the joining of knowledge and memories; meaning that if two or more alters have fused, the resulting alter will have ALL the memories of the previous parts. This is even confirmed by DD in TikTok videos, in which they have stated on different occasions that Kya retains all of Kyle's memories as well as Nin's, which by extension means that Kya also retains all of Nina's and Chloe's. If by DD's own admission they remember everything all of those alters would have remembered, then they should absolutely remember the accidental leak and rectification of sensitive information on littles. Not only should they remember this situation by their own admission, but this is no casual situation - in a comment on their youtube community post, DD characterized this mistake as "a real safety risk for us". Even if Kya has trouble accessing these memories, I am even more hard pressed to believe that Jade (or any other alter) doesn't remember when Jade has been incredibly vocal and protective of littles, even threatening at times. Again, I'll concede that it was likely Kya, and not Jade, who made the claim that they have never shared information about their littles, and thus while Jade may have access to that information, Kya may not. While I find this scenario to be highly unlikely, I would proffer that even if it were true, DD as a public figure has a responsibility to confer with their system at large to ensure their statements on matters as serious as this are the truth - or at the very least to publicly edit and correct their beliefs if another alter knows them to be false after posting.

Putting the matter of remembering past actions or not aside (although I believe my evidence firmly spells out that they do in fact remember, and if they legitimately don't something more severe than typical dissociative memory is at play), why are they so defensive about this? Humor me with a thought exercise: If I stated multiple times that I didn't want any information on my littles on the internet and that it would be an extreme safety risk if there was, and then several people reached out to let me know that some information was already out there, would my first instinct - knowing that a major feature of my disorder is to forget things - be to deny and become defensive, attack and bully those who pointed it out, and label the comments victim blaming? Or would my first instinct, knowing that I often don't remember important information or events in my life, be of concern, possibly confusion, and to investigate whether this is true or not -

because if it were true, I would consider it to be really, really bad? Would that extra time I spent investigating that suggestion not be worth it for my safety if I were truly that concerned about keeping that information private? Which of these two actions say traumatized, triggered individual scared for their safety, and which says entitled, self-focused content creator scared to take personal responsibility for mistakes or to be seen as fallible like any other human?

This recent situation regarding littles is by no means the lone example of their contradicting themselves despite reliable evidence: one example we've already examined is their discussion of DID with a therapist, and whether the therapist introduced DID to DD, or vice versa. Another example is DD claiming one of their alters, Amira, never spoke with an Indian accent despite video evidence proving otherwise (there will be a deeper discussion around this later on, and sources will be provided then). Similarly, in a video posted on September 9th, 2018 entitled "Dissociative Identity Disorder | A Day in the Life" (I am having trouble finding this video as it seems to no longer be available on their Youtube channel and my internet sleuthing skills are not great, please share the link if you have it), DD briefly mentions a parent driving them to therapy for DID, and <u>alluded that their parents</u> were supportive. In other old videos, DD has stated outright that their parents were supportive and did not contribute to their trauma, while more recent videos suggest otherwise. Not only do more recent videos suggest their parents caused or at the very least neglected their trauma, but DD has shifted multiple times what their trauma, or the "genre(s)" of their trauma, are. Both of these inconsistencies are not abnormal for a trauma survivor still early in their path to recovery - in fact, to an extent they can be expected. However, DD's complete denial that they have ever contradicted themselves when it comes to topics like trauma make it difficult to attribute simple ignorance or innocence to these contradictions. DD's complicated claims of past traumas are worth discussing in more depth, which we will do later on. Another recent and excellent example of this is DD denying they have ever discussed or alluded to BDSM. This statement was made in the infamous and now privatized 4 hour video made in conjunction with another DID creator (I'm unsure whether the other creator would want their name mentioned here or not, and will thus not name them unless told otherwise by said creator). However, this statement can be

proven untrue in several ways: one is in a now gone video featuring Nin and a member of their partner system at the time, in which dynamics and play were discussed, another is in this <u>comment</u> made by DD, also discussing their dynamics with the specific partnered alter.

No one expects a creator with DID, especially one still on their path to health and recovery, to be flawless and polished at all times. People with DID have memory issues, no one is denying that, or blaming them for it. However, the issue many people take with these examples are DD's continued denial in the face of their own evidence, and how they often attack or twist the criticisms and observations of others. These provable, verifiable inconsistencies and contradictions have stretched DD's credibility to the point that it is only responsible to consider whether these situations truly arise from memory issues (especially when DD claims not to have memory issues with certain alters and situations), or from wanting to deny and avoid responsibility. Many other mental health creators with DID have also demonstrated that creators can struggle with DID and the symptoms therein while successfully sharing the consistent truth with their audience. accepting criticism and taking action when necessary, and that it is possible to deal with memory issues while retaining the trust and good faith of their audience. Others have done it, and DD could to, if they wanted to. So while yes, there are plausible explanations for some of these situations, the pattern of behavior that can be documented several years back and DD's continued unwillingness to adapt their statements when proven otherwise with their own content conceivably brings into question enough of their actions and motives that it throws suspicion on DD as a whole. Their inconsistencies burn their credibility, to a level that is hard to ignore.

#### **Boundaries with the Internet**

While tempting, I am not going to go into too much depth here on one DD's latest videos concerning their boundaries with the internet and their opinions of the r/DissociaDid subreddit. Some boundaries they attempted to set, I can understand. Their view of the subreddit, I am hard pressed to find anything I can agree with and frankly I'm not currently interested in watching that video again to formulate coherent and shareable opinions - perhaps once I have finished this entire piece I will come back

here and expound further. But for now, I'd like to address not *what* boundaries they put in place with the internet, but the *idea* of setting boundaries with the internet at all.

Boundaries, as defined by <u>connectepsychology</u>, are "a conceptual limit between you and the other person. Simply put, it's about knowing where you end and others begin. Knowing what's yours and what's not. Acknowledging that every adult is responsible for themselves." In psychology, the setting of boundaries (example) comprises of acknowledging when a behavior is no longer acceptable to you, addressing this behavior with the 2nd party and requesting it end, and thirdly, stating what **you will do** in response if this boundary is crossed. A boundary, therefore, is not simply stating what would not like others to do in relation to you, and demanding they comply. It is not an expectation that everyone will do what you want. A boundary is when you let others know how **you** will respond if they cross the line you have drawn. An example of this is telling a controlling relative that if they attempt to influence your decision when you have asked them not to, you will no longer share your decisions with them. This is a good boundary because it 1) addresses the behavior you wish to stop and requests the family member do so: you do not like it when they attempt to influence a decision you have made and you would like them to stop, and 2) states what you will do if they continue the boundaried behavior: you will no longer involve them in your personal decisions.

This very important last step is often forgotten when setting boundaries, ending up in someone simply stating what they don't like and demanding their requests to be followed, without taking any responsibility for their own behavior if and when this line is crossed. A demand is not a boundary - this is a very common trap DD seems to have fallen into. DD has shared with us a list of their personal boundaries between friends and acquaintances, which comprised of demands and lines drawn, with no mention of the consequences but the simple expectation that their wishes be followed. DD has also shared with us a list of the boundaries they have "drawn" with the internet at large, comprised of the same demands, expectations, and failures to set *actual* boundaries. Here I have put "drawn" in quotations because now that we have discussed what a boundary actually is, it's time to address the idea of setting a boundary the entire internet is expected to follow.

It is impossible to set a boundary with the internet. It's the internet. It is a vast sea of different people, different opinions, different motivations, and who knows what else, all often hidden in anonymity. Again: it's the internet. There will always be trolls and haters, just as there are fans and reasonable critics. The idea that you can control the way the internet interacts with you and your content is frankly absurd, and will never be achievable. What you can do, however, is control how you will react when the internet engages in behavior you don't agree with, i.e. setting boundaries with yourself on how you interact with the unwanted aspects of the internet. Examples of these personal boundaries include not reading comments, privatizing certain content, keeping certain aspects of your life/experiences off the internet, and simply not engaging when trolls bait you. Setting boundaries with yourself is perfectly acceptable, if not encouraged. Setting expectations with your audience and hoping that your request that certain behaviors are or are not engaged in on your platforms and accounts is respected is reasonable. Setting "boundaries" (here "boundaries" is in quotes because of the above discussion on what boundaries actually are, while noting that DD has not actually fulfilled those requirements) with the internet and then crying harassment, bullying, victim blaming, and ableism when the whole of the internet does not comply is not reasonable, and not healthy or helpful for anyone involved.

Now, do I approve of all of the internet's behavior? Of course not, and I hope that that does not need to be said. But just in case it does need to be said: I do not and never will support the actual bullying, harassment, or trolling of content creators or anyone on the internet. I do, conversely, support constructive criticism respectfully presented for the betterment of the platform and community and don't agree that is equivalent to sadistic bullying. Frankly, even constructive criticism voiced in frustration with an unfortunate tone is still not sadistic bullying.

I wish the digital world were a friendly, safe place where everyone had good intentions. But that will never be the reality, and so we all have the personal responsibilities to protect ourselves accordingly. I sincerely hope DD is able to set realistic boundaries with themselves and their own engagement for their own health, safety, and sanity. The world can be a nasty place, and no matter what we do we will never be able to change that behavior, only our own.

#### **Past Controversies**

I am not going to go into a great amount of depth here, as these main points are well known and have been rehashed over and over; essentially I don't think there's anything new I can say or any more nuance I can add to these situations - plus a lot of the actual people involved have shared their piece about the events. But, for the sake of comprehensive coverage, we will be briefly delving into DD's past controversies, which I will break down into these categories: Racism/Insensitivities, Trauma Co-oping, Team Pinata (who from here on out will be referred to as TP for brevity and the want to avoid repeated exposure to a distressing subject), Public Relationships/Friendships, and The Big Break (the big events following the Trisha Paytas fallout).

 For several years now, we have known about the issues surrounding DD and race. These issues primarily fall on: Nadia claiming to be Native American and actively claiming and practicing unique and sacred practices from Native American religion and culture (here I will pause and point out that there is no single Native American religion or culture. The US has a diverse array of indigenous peoples. However, I don't know the specifics of what Nadia identified as, and honestly I'm not sure that Nadia/DD identified past Native American, which is an issue all on its own, so I will just be using the term Native American in association with Nadia to remain consistent with DD's own rhetoric), Amira claiming to be Indian and speaking with an Indian accent, and Gregory claiming to be Asian, and was initially depicted with negative stereotypical traits associated with Asian men (I say initially because it seems like DD is talking about Gregory more recently, and while I don't know any details about that I would be very surprised if DD was portraying Gregory the same way they originally did, considering everything. However, I'm not saying they aren't, I just don't know). Outside of these unfortunate actions, further issues arose when this racism was pointed out. DD has repeatedly denied racist actions that their own content proves untrue, has attempted to silence those critiquing their behavior (mostly through deleting comments they didn't like, and if not encouraging, at the very least not discouraging fans from attacking dissenters), using POC voices and insight for their own gain and then dismissing them, etc. At one point DD seemed to hear these critiques and understand them, promising an informed apology and a video on the topic. While an apology briefly appeared on their tumblr account (it appeared on no other account, and tumblr was their lowest followed platform by a large margin), it was subsequently deleted and a video was never made. There are a lot more details, situations, people, etc involved in this, which can all be seen detailed and cited by others here, here, here, here, here, here, and here. Please note that the brevity with which I am discussing this (or any other topic in this section) does not indicate a lack

# of impact. These situations and concerns are very serious and should not be taken lightly. A quick generous read on this situation:

- Look. People make mistakes. They act ignorantly, they learn, they grow. No one is perfect, and everyone has more learning and growing they need to do. And while people should absolutely be held responsible and accountable for their actions past and present, they should also (within reason) be given the chance to apologize, take accountability, and better themselves. But that's about as generous as this gets, in large part due to (just like most other situations with DD) how DD responded once their ignorantly racist/insensitive actions were pointed out. Their denial, contradictions, refusal to own up to their actions and the harm their words caused, trivializing of real concerns, using and dismissing POC creators and systems, and so much more move their actions past unfortunate ignorance into a real problem. To this day DD has still not issued an apology on this topic that has not been hidden, quickly deleted, or rooted in excuses and self-victimization. While they have deleted most of the offensive content and it seems, "fixed" most of the issues, the fact that they have yet to truly recognize the harm they caused is an issue that can't be ignored.
- There has also been lot's of discussion on DD's narrative both of their past traumas, as well as the way their system functions and presents itself in the "inner world". Here, let me preface by saying this is the issue surrounding DD I know the least about. This is in large part due to the content I would need to read and make myself available to and the harm I believe it could cause me. I am not in a place where I am willing to destabilize myself for the sake of DD's controversies, and I do have enough confidence in the surface evidence I have seen on this subject to believe that it matches the source material like multiple, multiple, people have shared and cited. It is my understanding that there is evidence that DD discussed others' trauma histories and the like with people in a facebook group as well as privately in messages, and those specific and traceable details later showed up in DD's narrative, when they were not there previously (see the links in the comments of this post). This pattern is especially believable of late, when we have seen <u>DD recently do this</u> with a <u>physical</u> symptom. (Here, again, I will be proactive and admit that this is very much speculative. However, I don't think that due to the repeated patterns that this speculation is particularly far-fetched, and thus I am comfortable dipping my toe in.) DD has been known to not just co-op others' trauma as their own, but is suspected to have copied parts of their own system and inner world from two books on SRA/DID: Wheeler's "The Illuminati Formula Used to Create an <u>Undetectable Total Mind Controlled Slave</u>" and "They Weren't Butterflies: A

- Monarch Survivor's Story". There are several unusual elements in DD's system/inner world that are not just similar to these books, but exactly the same. Details can be found in the links throughout this paragraph, and I won't be detailing them further here. I also, honestly, don't have much of an opinion on whether some of this content/genre of trauma is real or possible as I haven't done any of my own research, and I don't find that argument particularly relevant in this discussion. My generous read here would be that coincidences are entirely possible and even plausible, but that quickly falls apart in the frequency and specificity of the evidence presented so I won't spend much time expounding on that possibility.
- Supporters and criticizers alike, we also are all well aware of the TP situation. To summarize briefly: TP was for a time the partner system to DD. It came to light that TP drew CP and custom fetish content involving minors or minor characters that were "aged up". Most of this content centered around TP's sneezing fetish. TP (and DD) also involved their audience in this fetish without anyone's consent by posting and promoting a video in which they showcased how different alters sneezed. To be clear here, regardless of personal opinions on fetishes or even more specifically sneezing fetishes, the issue here is the unknowing and unconsenting involvement of others and the content surrounding children and minors, not the existence of the fetish in and of itself. I am not here to kink shame, I am here to shame what someone does with that kink. DD's controversial role in this appeared when it was discovered that DD most likely knew about this situation before the bombshell dropped for their audiences and supported it (promoting the sneezing video), as well as their continued support of TP, trivializing the serious nature of the issue and the harm done, and making excuses for both TP and themselves. To be honest, I don't believe there is a generous read here. This is a real problem, real harm was done, and DD continues to support TP publicly on their platform - recently they have independently brought up and romanticized TP. There is also evidence that TP continues to follow DD to this day, which, partnered with DD's increase in talking about them lately, brings up the concern that they are still involved. This is wildly speculative, so I won't comment on that possibility any further, other than to say it is, of course, possible (although hopefully not likely).
- Aside from romantic and sexual relationships with TP, DD has had several public friendships/creative partnerships. There is a pattern in these relationships of DD using other creators to their advantage and then ditching them or turning on them when they've gotten what they wanted. The most recent example of this is with a specific DID creator that pursued several creative endeavors with DD as friends including a podcast and a <u>4 hour long apology video</u>. Like in a previous section, I won't be naming names of other creators and discussing personal situations

unless they want me to (although I will be accurately labeling the evidence below), as the focus of this is DD. Interpersonal conflicts can be complex, gray, and messy (especially when the individuals involved are traumatized and dealing with mental illness), and as outsiders looking in we can only go off what those involved share. With this in mind, I won't be discussing these events other than to note that DD has a pattern of setting one sided boundaries, using people to their advantage and then publicly turning on them on a dime, and editing evidence/sharing half-truths (and "not allowing" others to share the evidence of their side). One could argue that some of these situations and behaviors could be classified as manipulation - some even verging into emotional abuse. I am not saying that conclusively as both of those terms imply a motive we can not know for sure, but suffice to say I am open to that discussion. In lieu of me summarizing all of these situations, below is a list of evidence spanning several situations with different creators (some of which are links to other creators' content/own words):

- O Bobo & Co's 2020 Livestream, an archive of video reactions from several different creators, a comment by the Entropy System, a comment left by Multiplicity & Me, on being in the Anthony Padilla video, a reddit post statement from Axolotl in Trenchcoats, BraiDID shares that DD doctored screenshots (the screenshots in question), BraiDID's Youtube community post, a link to DD's Youtube Community Page (I believe the posts speak for themselves), recent bullying behavior
- There are mounds more comments and videos and statements that show these patterns playing out that I know I've seen, but I'm having a hard time finding links for everything, so if anyone has access to more links that would be helpful, please send them my way and I'll add them.
- The Big Break is the term I'm using to describe the fallout after multiple situations came to a head and DD temporarily left the internet. Some of the factors that lead to this include the <a href="Anthony Padilla interview">Anthony Padilla interview</a>, <a href="Trisha Paytas's video">Trisha Paytas's video</a> and DD's <a href="Trisha Paytas's video">Trisha Paytas's video</a> and DD's <a href="Trisha Paytas's video">Trisha Paytas's video</a> and DD's <a href="Trisha Paytas's video</a> and DD's <a href="Trisha Paytas's video">Trisha Paytas's video</a> and DD's <a href="Trisha Paytas's v

statements that came out of that time, I find it particularly important due to the manipulative nature of the text. At a time in which DD was actively blaming the internet for hurting them and pushing them offline while simultaneously encouraging a parasocial relationship with their fans that centered around their fanbase supporting them emotionally and financially, tweeting "We'll try to stay alive" and then disappearing off the internet for a significant period of time was incredibly manipulative and caused a large amount of emotional distress amongst their supporters. DD cultivated an atmosphere of responsibility - specifically, DD's fans responsibility for DD's well being - and this tweet was in poor taste and poor judgment.

o A generous read of this situation is relatively easy, however. There is no denying that DD was targeted and bullied by internet trolls during that time. The attention from outside the DID community that interacting with Anthony Padilla and Trisha Paytas brought both shone a light on DD's bad behavior, but also put a target on DD. While I absolutely do not agree with DD's entire characterization of how they were treated during that time period (for example, I do not agree with how DD is implying that the internet "killed off" Nadia - I put that in quotations because an alter cannot die. They can split, they can fuse. They cannot die. Period.), I don't think we can deny that mistreatment did occur. Dealing with such an intense and guickly escalating situation like that could destabilize anyone, let alone someone with a trauma history. At the time, DD was likely not functioning with 100% emotional rationality and cognitive differentiation from their situation. I know I wouldn't be, if I were in their shoes (although, I will reiterate as stated before - I know that about myself and thus would not open myself up to a position in which a situation like that could occur. And that's on personal boundaries with the internet). There is a genuinely good chance that DD's tweet was not meant to be manipulative, but was unfortunate wording from someone deep in crisis. And this generous read I'm actually not going to dispute. I think that very well could be the case, and it would be understandable. Do I agree with it? No. It shouldn't have happened. I think it was a bad and unfortunate move because whether intentional or not, the effect was manipulative. To me, if the tweet was purposefully manipulative then that was a shockingly cruel thing to do to their fans, but if it was instead accidentally manipulative as a result of bad judgment, I think it stands as another example of knowing yourself, knowing the responsibilities of being a content creator, and not putting yourself in that position unless you (and perhaps your therapist) are confident you can handle all the possible situations that come with that.

 The many things that went on during the time period of the Big Break are best chronicled <u>here</u> and <u>here</u>. There are more issues than the one I discussed, but that one was particularly impactful for me and I felt warranted a bit of a spotlight.

### **Concerning Littles and Their Treatment**

DD and their outlook on child alters is a concern that has been popping up more and more within the community. There are a couple aspects of this to address, so first I would like to discuss what child alters, or littles, actually \*are\*. According to did-research.org, a website put together as a broad resource for DID based on academic research and clinical guidelines, "Alters in dissociative identity disorder (DID) often consider themselves to be a different age than the physical body of their system." Here we can see that current, peer-reviewed research supports the idea that alters can associate with ages that the physical body is not. This is supported by many in the field and is seen throughout research: so just as throughout this piece the existence of DID is not up for debate, neither is the existence of child alters. What does come up for debate, is the exact nature and capabilities of child alters, and thusly their treatment within the system and the world at large.

DD treats their child alters, or as they prefer to refer to them, their littles (this term is widely accepted within the DID community and is even seen in some research. While I personally prefer the term "child alters", for the sake of having less characters to type I will be referring to this category of alter as "littles" from this point onward.), as equivalent in maturity and capability to actual children. "Actual" here meaning human beings physically and developmentally aged in the children's category of the human life cycle. I know that's wildly pedantic and unnecessary to specify, but my aim throughout this piece is to leave as little room as possible for misinterpretation or false extrapolation - although I am aware this is the internet and this is most likely a fool's errand.

This equivalence can be seen in the many times DD has publicly talked about their littles' existence, including but not limited to directly stating that their littles have child-like levels of competence, the need to protect littles from specifically child-predators, and referring to themselves as "alter parents" to their littles. Beginning with our generous read, there is evidence that littles can have the mental and emotional

skills of a child, or could be mentally stuck in the moment in time when the physical body was an actual child: "Alters which are younger than the body may be mentally frozen in time at the point of their creation or an experience of intense trauma. They may be stuck in an eternal flashback or refuse to accept that anything has changed since the period of time during which they experienced trauma. Some child alters have not been active since the body was young and so never had the opportunity to grow or develop. Other child alters might cling to a few happy childhood memories or represent a childlike innocence and sense of wonder that the actual traumatized child never got the chance to cherish." (did-research.org article, "Alter Ages") This observation does lend credence to the notion that littles need to be protected more than the average adult alter. Littles are considered vulnerable parts - they can often be more easily manipulated, they are often trauma holders, and even in healthy systems with robust communication littles can continue to have difficulty with communication or agency. In this regard, DD is absolutely within their rights and perhaps within their responsibilities to protect their littles exposure to the internet, and the internet's access to their littles. Their commitment to safety is commendable, and I don't think anyone is questioning the value in that.

However, question does lie in their classification of littles as equal to real children. It is important to remember that while littles are stuck in a younger age and a more traumatic time, they are still a part of an adult brain. According to did-research.org, "child alters might take on a great deal of responsibility and be capable of driving, doing taxes, or even helping the adult host to accept their traumatic past. The age of these young alters may or may not match their maturity or level of skills, and it may be that some child alters have skills and wisdom of those far beyond their years while still having the same childlike wants, needs, perceptions, and general enjoyments of children closer to their perceived age." While we cannot assume that any of DD's littles possess these mature capabilities, this does provide insight into the difference between alters who are child-aged, and children. Littles are simply not the same as children, and while they should be protected and at times treated as such, we should avoid entirely conflating the two. DD's subscription to this conflation can be seen in their mention of needing to protect littles from, specifically, child predators. Littles may act and think like

children, but physically they are not children. They are vulnerable, and absolutely should be protected from predators in general or anyone willing to use their vulnerability against them, just like any other vulnerable part, - please hear me when I say that. However, the idea that specifically predators who target actual children would target a child-like dissociated part of an adult who looks and functions in the majority of the day to day as an adult is simply an unfounded strawman argument.

Another issue with DD's handling of their littles is the notion that they don't "allow" their littles to front while actively streaming or interacting online, or they only "let" certain mature littles front as long as there is "adult supervision". While it is believed that some systems can gain some level of control over switching with extensive healing and help from a therapist (some systems can even go further and gain the ability to "plan" or negotiate switches within the system - this however is very, very difficult to achieve and not by any means a given that systems possess this ability), because of the difficulty of this and the very low prevalence of it occurring within systems at all (from the ISSTD, please see their website for their extensive list of cutting edge and peer reviewed sources: "It is uncommon for a person with DID to feel that they have control over 'switching' between identities") means it would be unwise of us to assume DD has this ability without further review. At the same time, due the phenomenon's existence at all, we cannot immediately presume that DD does not have the capability to control their switches. However, if they do, it would be highly unlikely that they have such a complete control over their switches that their confidence in this protective measure is warranted in fact, the recent incident with a little accidentally getting triggered on a live stream would suggest that they do not have the control they are alluding to.

This brings their phrasing of "allow" and "let" when it comes to littles into an uncertain light. Unpredictable and uncontrollable switches are, similar to memory issues, a hallmark of DID. And while, as discussed above, some control can be gained over this disruptive symptom with a lot of time, effort, and successful mental health treatment. It is concerning that DD is so confident in their ability to control their littles, as this either implies that DD's symptoms do not align with the widely accepted symptoms of their disorder (an issue that has been raised several times over the ways they present multiple symptoms) and thus their credibility continues to stretch, or their

confidence in this protection of their vulnerable parts is misguided and perhaps even dangerous.

I would like to pause for a moment here and clarify in no way is any of this an attack on DD's littles. I have not discussed the actions or existence of their littles, I have not participated in the spread of any information or misinformation concerning their littles, and I have not blamed their littles for anything. I am suggesting that their conception of their littles and their vulnerabilities is a bit extreme, and for all their concerns and focus on protecting their littles, they do not appear to be taking the adequate steps to do so. Adding in simple measures to their live streams (using live streams here specifically because of the recent incident involving one of their littles, and because due to the live and unfiltered nature of streaming, it is the least predictable and controllable way for them to interact with the internet, and therefore has the biggest potential for danger) such as allowing mods to end streams when unsafe circumstances arrive for DD and/or their audience and DD is not able to do so, are perfectly reasonable, technically easy, and a proactive step in protection that one can assume DD would support.

# **Unhealthy Behaviors**

Now I would like to delve into a topic I am calling "Unhealthy Behaviors". These are behaviors that are not supported on the path to healing and therefore ultimately unhealthy for DD, but are also negatively impacting DD's community and the surrounding DID community, and are thus unhealthy for others as well. Some of the behaviors include engaging in ED (Eating Disorder) tactics, bullying, and inappropriate expressions of sexuality.

I cannot claim to be very familiar with ED behaviors, but due to DD's recent and continued actions, I have become very familiar with body checking. Body checking consists of "seeking information about your body's size, shape, appearance, or weight". While I can't (and wouldn't if I could, as I don't want to spread information that could trigger others to develop unhealthy behaviors) link to images of body checking photos, many people have pointed out that several of DD's TikTok's or Instagram posts have featured poses or angles that were popular on the ED/body checking sides of Tumblr. Folks in various comments have pointed out that DD's habit of body checking specifically in corsets has directly harmed some of their fans and promoted behavior that is harming them. (see the comments in this post and this post) In the past, DD has

also <u>put out content</u> about actively restricting, even going so far as to tag the post as eating disorder related.

Here, my generous read mostly displays my ignorance on the subject and shows my dependence on the certainty of those more acquainted with these behaviors and the Tumblr Days of Old. Could these specific poses or angles in photos and videos be a coincidence, and not intended to be a form of body checking? Perhaps, they very well could be. However, I can't really comment on how great that possibility is, as I haven't seen the original content it is based on. Those in the know, however, seem decently confident that these are not coincidences - and that, partnered with the real testimonies in comment sections on how these displays have actively harmed people or encouraged ED behavior in their fans, leads me to believe that DD knows what they are doing in this situation, and it is more than mere coincidence.

One of DD's biggest unhealthy behaviors is their habit of bullying those who criticize them, or even those who simply bring something not entirely positive to their attention. DD unfortunately has a long history of this, and it would be impossible to recount all of the damage they have caused to POC creators during the racism controversies, to other DID systems and creators after the Anthony Padilla and Trisha Paytas fallout, and to many folks who have dared to point out their mistakes - even the innocent, accidental ones. This is most easily seen and cited in the recent events surrounding the targeting of an individual on TikTok, so that is what we will focus on here. In summary, someone on TikTok commented on one of DD's videos after the little live stream incident, NOT commenting on their littles, but instead reflecting the fact that DD has exposed their littles to the public before. This was clearly not an attack on the littles or anything the littles have done, but simply correcting DD's statement that they have never shared any information regarding littles before, no exceptions. DD took this as an attack and an attempt at harassing their littles, and responded by bullying the commenter based off of a TikTok video in which they discuss not liking themselves as a consequence of an abusive relationship. When the uncalled for response was pointed out, DD doubled down, claiming that it was not bullying, and essentially that even if it was it was deserved because the commenter was bullying them first. This story continues on with DD getting multiple chances to recant and apologize, but instead they double down and defend their behavior each time. This behavior is inexcusable, and uninterpretable. DD attacked a commenter. They bullied them and took advantage of a past traumatic situation. The comments, videos, and effects are well documented, and can be seen compiled excellently here. Once again, I am avoiding directly naming anyone involved, although the commenter's own experiences are shared in the previous link. This is simply because I haven't asked permission to share the names of people involved in all of these various situations, and because I want to keep the focus on DD. Just a reminder that if you are one of the people involved in any of these situations and

would prefer to be named or have your own words linked and they aren't, please let me know and I will adjust accordingly.

The above situation illustrates DD's recent patterns of receiving any critique, no matter how polite or neutral, to be bullying and harassment and responding in a hostile attack. It's a concerning pattern, as it suggests DD cannot differentiate between what is a reasonable counter point, and what is actual bullying and harassment - something they themselves are engaging in. This point of view is also seen in the recent <u>video</u> on DD's Youtube channel, addressing the <u>r/Dissociadid subreddit</u>. DD characterizes the entire sub as sadistic, misogynistic bullies. One can only hope that DD is in fact not personally seeing the sub and is instead receiving a distorted picture from a friend who does view the sub, because if they are truly viewing all of the content on the sub in that manner, one can reasonably speculate that some severe distortion in perception is occurring.

Another category of unhealthy behavior DD is engaging in is inappropriate expressions of sexuality. This is most often demonstrated in two categories: implied nudity and inappropriate content rating for their established audience. The latter I discussed in a previous reddit post, so please allow me to link to my own post here (if you haven't read it, I suggest you do, just because it spells out my reasoning more plainly and sequentially than I do here). Basically, my concerns in that post boil down to: Mara's TikTok account is undeniably sexual/sensual in nature. I personally think to categorize it as porn or even light porn is a bit extreme, but to say it is completely innocent and devoid of sexual innuendo is also extreme. Some of the content on Mara's TikTok includes: Mara suggestively humping the air (twice), lots of tongue action, and a discussion of hypersexuality. While the account is marked 18+ which is a great thing, there has been lots of very valid discussion on whether that is enough to deter DD's regular audience from viewing potentially triggering material. I will be discussing DD's responsibility to their audience in more depth later on, but the short answer is: no. DD's audience is undeniably comprised of traumatized individuals accustomed to a PG-ish content rating across platforms. By promoting and including Mara's TikTok across platforms as well, DD is telling their audience that this account is just as safe as all their others, which is not true. There is nothing wrong with exploring your sexuality and taking power back - in fact I think that's an incredibly difficult and important thing to do. But there is a problem with doing it in a manner that does not protect vulnerable individuals from being pipelined directly into content that could be harmful for them, just as there is a problem with attacking and blaming when it is pointed out that you were unknowingly using a song by a known pedophile that victims have specifically spoken out against, and just as there is a problem with mocking a concerned commenter. Denying that this account is sexual in nature is frankly absurd, and only escalates the problem. DD is allowed to be a 3-dimensional person that can want multiple things, one of which being to explore and reclaim their sexuality - no one is saying they can't. However, DD is

attacking and mocking those who are concerned that literal children or otherwise vulnerable adults will be accidentally exposed to content that is adult and mature in nature - and aggressively so - when very simple measures can be taken to ensure that is avoided. One of those measures, for example, is privatizing the account. The Demoness account has over 20,000 followers on TikTok. Privatizing that account will not remove that audience. They are there. They are supportive. If the purpose of the account is for Mara to reclaim her power from the internet specifically as DD claims, why is 20,000 internet strangers not enough to do that? DD has stated that they can't privatize it for that reason, as privatizing would make it for just a few friends. How so? The account already has a large following, and anyone at a later date who is aware of DD and thus eventually aware of the account that wishes to view mature content can easily request to follow it. And as I stated in my Reddit post, I believe that that measure is all that is needed. It keeps triggering and mature content out of the TikTok funnel to children, it keeps it out of the algorithm funnel to DD's vulnerable audience members, and it absolves DD of further action to ensure children don't see the content. This is not "parenting", this is common sense. This is keeping content rating consistent across accounts and platforms accessible by the general public - something that is expected and followed by other content creators, mental health related or not. It is not too high of an expectation, and you can probably tell that is a hill I am willing to die on. And just for the record, none of this even remotely means that I (or anyone else on the DD subreddit, as far as I can tell) want DD to start an Only Fans, as DD has claimed.

The other issue regarding sexuality is the very common occurrences of implied nudity throughout DD's content. This is something that has honestly bothered me for years, all the way back to DD's early youtube videos. Just look at the thumbnails for the following videos: What is Dissociation?, Scared of Your DID?, Advice for New Systems, Terminology and Lingo, Meet the Alters: Jade, and New Alters?!. That's six videos off just a quick browse that feature implied nudity in the thumbnail, and throughout most if not all of the video footage. TikToks also feature implied nudity often: here, and most infamously here. Now, I don't know about you, but personally I feel like that's a lot of instances of implied nudity - and some of them, frankly, go beyond implied nudity. Nothing definitively inappropriate is ever shown, but in some of those videos it is clear thanks to the angle that the nudity is more than implied, it is simply out of the frame. The last video is perhaps the most talked about due to featuring both implied nudity and performing as a little. Many people have shared concerns that this video panders to a very specific audience, one involved in the fetish community. (Other concerns on this topic can be seen in this <u>vlog</u> with DD and TP, and is fed into by other concerns on interacting sexually with minors on TikTok) DD has lashed out against this view, claiming that people are sexualizing their littles, or claiming that they are

sexualizing their own littles, but I don't believe that is the case. It is clear in the video that it is not displaying their actual littles, but they are performing as their little for effect, for the story, etc. However, just as I find all the many cases of implied nudity to be strange, excessive, and needless, I find it doubly so in content in which littles are being portrayed. How hard is it to put on a shirt? Especially since DD is so ardent on protecting their littles and considers them to be essentially actually children. This is just another strange inconsistency that makes DD hard to believe in totality.

My generous read concerning the frequency of implied nudity would be my recollection that DD has once addressed this issue, and they stated that due to their chronic fatigue syndrome (see: ME/CFS), sometimes they are simply too tired or unable to wear clothes. I honestly don't know what to say about this. I can't link it as I don't remember where I heard or saw them say that, but I don't find that reason credible in the slightest. I try to avoid getting personal in this but as someone with several chronic illnesses that cause severe fatigue, and knowing other folks with the same struggles, never once have I experienced or known someone to experience the frequent inability to wear a shirt. And even if that were the case, I would simply not film myself during those periods - not only because I don't think implied nudity is needed or entirely appropriate for the content DD puts out, but if I was so tired I couldn't put on a shirt, I would also be much too tired to hold my phone up to film, or to formulate thoughtful responses, etc. I don't want to venture into ableism and obviously I don't know DD's health history, but it just seems implausible to me. So while I suppose I am dismissing this generous read due to personal and speculative reasons, I feel confidently grounded in my incredulity. And none of this, for the record, is me questioning their chronic fatigue diagnosis, simply their reason for their constant lack of clothing (or as more often in their youtube videos, seemingly purposeful lack of appearance of clothing). But ultimately regardless of their reason and its validity, due to the content and platform DD has cultivated (one focused on trauma and mental illness, one populated with trauma survivors and vulnerable individuals, theoretically based in education) the nudity whether implied or actual, purposeful or accidental - is nothing but inappropriate.

# **Responsibility to Their Audience**

A lot of what I've discussed here can be followed up with one question: so what? So what DD potentially exposes their audience to content that is inappropriate for them, so what DD contradicts themselves often and reacts harshly to the level of criticism any creator can expect from the internet? So what.

Well, it all comes down to DD's responsibility to their audience. DD is a content creator online, a public internet figure. All people in that position, regardless of content or target audience, have some inherent responsibilities that come with their position of power, profit, and influence. One of those responsibilities is honesty and authenticity. Another is to respect their audience. Another, to be aware of their privileges and

ignorances, to be accountable for their actions and grow when they make a mistake. All of these I would consider the basics of having a platform on today's internet regardless of content genre - but these responsibilities are all the more important (and expected) from content creators focusing on mental health as DD does. DD focuses not just on mental health, but on trauma. There is weight to that subject, and that weight makes the responsibilities to be honest, accurate, accountable, and consistent all the more important. This is not a standard I hold just DD to, nor is it too high a standard to hold anyone to. These are the expected standards, the inferred social contract we all agree to when creating and interacting with content online.

I am once again going to refer to my previous post on DD's responsibilities to their audience. Please, indulge me in quoting myself (and if you have already read it, feel free to skip to the next paragraph): "DD does have a responsibility to their audience for the content they put out, whether that is Youtube videos, TikToks, or just comments. That is a responsibility inherent to any public figure who has gone out of their way to cultivate an audience and profit off their content - but more than that, DD is a mental health advocate/creator - and even more than that, they are a mental health advocate/creator focused on trauma. They discuss trauma, techniques to deal with it, etc. They male content around their own experiences with trauma, and they pride themselves on creating a community of trauma survivors and trauma informed advocates. That means, guite literally, that a good portion of their audience is, frankly, vulnerable, and has vocally thanked DD for creating a safe space for them to learn, connect, and process. Over and over on every video they make, you can see comments from tons of folks thanking them for the safe space, for creating an environment for them to learn about themselves, for showing things can get better, etc. ... Once you as a creator, no matter who you are, go out of your way to cultivate a specific audience and create a safe space for them, I'm sorry but you have a responsibility to maintain that safe space for your audience. That space does not get to be safe for just you, especially at the detriment to your audience. It doesn't matter who you are, or what you are going through. You decided to make your life public and you decided to take on the trust and attention and parasocial relationships that come with that. ... DD has a vulnerable, traumatized audience - regardless of their age. Due to the nature of their content, it's decently safe to assume that some of their audience's trauma is sexual in nature. It makes sense to me that a bunch of folks who have sexual trauma or have otherwise been traumatized, and have come to expect DD's various profiles to be (as advertised) safe for those struggling with and healing from mental health issues, would have some adverse reactions to seeing a creator they have come to rely on as sensitive and trauma informed, not only put out sexual content ... but then deny and shame their audience when they voice discomfort ... It frankly astounds me that someone with the trauma history DD has said they have, would not be more sensitive to that."

While that post is centered around the Mara controversy discussed in the previous section, many of its points still stand on their own when discussing DD's responsibility to their audience. Due to their content and the audience they have sought after and successfully cultivated, DD has a responsibility to maintain a safe space for that audience. In this case, a safe space would consist of an open and supportive environment, content consistent across all platforms (consistent in maturity ratings, for example), honesty and transparency, accountability, and educational accuracy. While this is certainly not the end all be all list, and others may have elements they wish to add or consider some of the listed elements unnecessary for a safe space, it's the list I'm working with, so let's go with it for the time being.

- An open and supportive environment: the lack of this element speaks for itself, and can be seen in the discussions of bullying, accusations, overreactions, and mocking of critics and well-intentioned commenters alike.
- Consistent content across platforms and accounts: This element is almost achieved, save for Mara's TikTok account. Unfortunately, DD's handling of the backlash against that account does not inspire confidence that they understand the need for this consistency, nor are they willing to adapt to achieve it.
- Honesty and transparency: I would personally consider this element also fairly
  obvious in its failings. Throughout this entire piece we have touched on various
  falsehoods, from inconsistencies to downright contradictions. DD's history does
  not inspire confidence, and the more all of their controversies are taken into
  account, the more their credibility thins.
- Accountability: Once again, this one speaks for itself. From passing blame to self-victimizing, to calling false flags (such as ableism) and avoiding actually apologizing, DD has taken very little responsibility for the impact of their words and actions - and this doesn't seem to be changing any time soon, as DD is clearly well aware of the issues surrounding their platform and the many calls for a proper, public apology.
- Educational Accuracy: I debated giving this element its own section in this piece, as spreading misinformation is an issue DD has run into in the past. However, when I boiled the misinformation problems down to the basics, it was pretty cut and dry and thus succinctly summarized and cited, I think. Throughout DD's "educational" videos on youtube, misinformation has been pointed out and debunked by viewers. Here is an excellent breakdown of just a few examples. A particularly concerning aspect of this misinformation is that DD is aware of it, and yet continues to leave it up as fact. They recently uploaded many of their early videos. DD has chosen to leave all the misinformation in these videos, and hasn't even put a disclaimer that they have since learned more accurate information, or new research has indicated otherwise. This is a concerning choice, indicative that DD is not truly as committed to education as they like to claim, and perhaps

believe. While my personal preference would be to take down videos with false information, at the very least I believe it is their responsibility to edit the specific misinformation out, or at the *very* very least, start each video with a disclaimer so as not to continue to mislead viewers learning about an uncommon disorder already plagued by an incredibly high amount of misinformation and bad representation. This responsibility is perhaps uniquely important to DD, as they are the biggest name in the DID community. They are more likely than not the platform those interested in learning more about DID, or exploring their own DID will first encounter, so to knowingly leave up false information is in my opinion, reckless.

- Similar to spreading misinformation, DD has also been known to promote anti-recovery thoughts and themes, and has even gone so far as to encourage those who suspect they have DID to mislead mental health professionals and "doctor shop" until they get the diagnosis they want. This is a particularly dangerous idea to promote as DID is incredibly complex, and while introspection and research is helpful, does require a professional to assess the reality of the situation. DD has repeatedly encouraged young, vulnerable people to mistrust mental health professionals which serves to enforce their parasocial relationship with DD, and opens them up to believing and acting upon the misinformation DD continues to promote.
- For these reasons, I believe that DD has also failed this element in creating a safe space. For a start on combatting misinformation and exploring accurate and positive DID resources, check out the <u>ISSTD</u> (and for more comprehensive resources, check out the research they cite throughout their website), the <u>NIH</u>, <u>did-research.org</u>, and <u>NAMI</u>.

After taking a comprehensive look at DD's behavior throughout their time as a person with a platform on the internet, it is clear that despite what they may say, they have and had no intention of maintaining a safe space for their audience. Conversely, it appears as if DD expects their audience to maintain a safe space for *them* (seen most explicitly lately in their talk of "boundaries"). This continues the parasocial idea DD set forth during the Big Break, in which it felt as if DD's fans became caretakers for DD, supporting them financially, emotionally, and unconditionally.

# Response to Criticism

I've written this entire piece with one thing in mind: DD's response to criticism. Time and time again, as evidenced in almost every section, DD does not respond to criticism well. As discussed, DD takes every critique and comment, no matter how valid, polite, respectful, or neutral, to be harassment and bullying. They have cried <a href="mailto:ableism">ableism</a> and victim shaming in response to the recent live stream feedback, and they have

repeatedly positioned themselves as a victim of haters and trolls in response to comments of all types, including very polite (and even preemptively absolving) comments giving them a heads up about a TikTok audio with bad connotations. They have shared <a href="screengrabs of emails">screengrabs of emails</a> they deem as harassing, which were in my opinion, actually apologetic, friendly, and considerate. They have dramatized criticism into threats of <a href="scienger-violence">violence</a>, and have aggressively and publicly shared their side of a private fallout (including allegedly edited screenshots), while laying down a boundary that the other party involved could not do the same. Their perspective is nothing short of concerning, and if genuine, potentially very distorted.

DD has characterized anyone who disagrees with them as a troll from KF (Kiwi Farms) with actual malice in every word or comment. Here, I will allow myself one last caveat to note that some of DD's reactions and responses to KF are in my opinion very warranted. While I appreciate the archival work KF has done, I do not support the hateful attitudes that populate the site. Throughout this piece I have avoided linking to the site, and have never directly visited it myself. No matter the person or what they have done, sexism, racism, misogyny, ableism, homophobia, and more are never okay to bring into the conversation. Caveat over.

DD's response to criticism is, perhaps outside of their near constant contradictions and inconsistencies, the biggest red flag surrounding DD and whether or not they are trustworthy. DD has been given many opportunities to own up to the harm they have caused and rectify the various situations. Instead, they actively dig themselves deeper and deeper. The hostile nature that seems to have become second nature in DD when criticism is brought to their attention is not indicative of someone authentic, accountable, and dependable. It is not a trait displayed by someone who wants to learn and grow, and with the best wishes for their audience at the heart of their content and platform. Tangling with DD has become downright scary, and that is never an appropriate atmosphere for a public figure to foster.

# **Props to DD and Conclusion**

Now that we have reached the end of this piece, I would like to take the time to give some genuine props to DD. I don't believe DD is an evil person, I don't think everything they say is a lie and everything they do is for profit or to manipulate. I want to take a moment to recognize that DD has dealt with, and likely does continue to deal with, a large amount of trolls and genuine haters - perhaps more than your average content creator. Being a high profile creator with an incredibly stigmatized and badly stereotyped disorder can't be easy. After exposure to the wider internet outside of the DID community through Anthony Padillas and Trisha Paytas, they no doubt dealt with a lot of unwelcome and actually harsh comments and messages. That would be difficult for anyone to handle, (and has likely made them more sensitive to well-meaning critique) and even more so for a traumatized individual still working through their healing

journey. I'm sure some people did bully them, and try to doxx them. The internet is an unkind place, especially to those already perceived as suffering.

People have also come to assume the worst of DD. I'll admit that sometimes I think their words or actions are over-scrutinized. Their every move is evaluated for the worst possibilities, and those possibilities are often automatically assumed to be reality. It must be maddening to feel as if every move you make is unwinnable; damned if you do, damned if you don't (this is seen, I think, in DD's apology attempts. While I do still maintain these apologies were not adequate and comprehensive, nor perhaps genuine, DD has offered some apology for some of their mistakes. It's not enough, but it's not nothing.). I mean - the fact that I'm even writing this. I don't know how it would feel if someone wrote a 30+ page essentially dissertation outlining my mistakes and critiquing my history and motives. That's part of the reason I try to give DD a generous read, and evaluate what the possibilities truly could be - DD is still a person. A traumatized, mentally ill person. They are going to make mistakes, they are going to show some bad judgment and share things they shouldn't in the midst of crisis. That's what it means to be a person living with a dissociative disorder. They are going to forget things, misspeak, and change their mind. DD is, and I do not mean this negatively at all, mentally ill (this is not an insult, I'm not calling them "crazy", that's simply literally what having a mental health diagnosis - especially one as distressing and impactful as DID means), and from what they've been through, likely not completely stable. Hopefully, they are in therapy. I truly mean it when I say I want the best for them. I want them to be happy, and have a good life. And that means therapy, and being honest with yourself, and hard healing work - and perhaps that means stepping away from the internet to focus on yourself.

Please note that none of this negates anything I have discussed throughout any of the previous sections. I still believe that DD has many red flags, including a large amount of contradictions, bullying and other unhealthy behaviors, doubling down on distorted thinking and reactions, brushing aside concerns of racism and fetish content, and more. All of these are valid, and serious. My hope for DD is to work towards honesty, responsibility, and accountability. DD, if you are reading this, I hope you do what you need to do to heal and grow, and are one day able to come to the internet fully aware and accepting of the harm you have caused, whether directly or indirectly. If you are a fan of DD and are reading this, I hope this piece helps shed some light on why so many people take real issue with DD, and helps you begin to think critically about their actions. Every situation deserves nuance, but that doesn't mean every situation is acceptable.

I would like to take my final words to thank you for reading with an open mind - and to thank and give credit to all those who have done the hard and detailed work of compiling various pieces of evidence and sources throughout the years. I cannot take credit for the truly wonderful documents and media linked to throughout this piece, and

I'm impressed and grateful by the fruits of their labor. That being said, I want to remind everyone that these thoughts and opinions are no ones but my own - and if you take issue with anything said here and feel the need to respond (which anyone, especially DD, is entitled to do, given the response is in measure with mine), any criticism and complaint should be lodged against me. I am grateful to the archival and analysis work of others, but I am not interested in dragging anyone else into any potential dispute or disagreement.

#### **Sources**

\*\*This is not a comprehensive list of every video, post, and screenshot linked throughout this piece. This is mostly a guide on references and sources that held the most information, were the most frequently referenced, etc,\*\*

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