



Dissociative Experiences Scale II (DES II) Description and Interpretation

Description: The dissociative Experiences Scale II (DES II) is a copyright-free, screening instrument. According to its authors, Carlson and Putnam, "it is a brief, self-report measure of the frequency of dissociative experiences. The scale was developed to provide a reliable, valid and convenient way to quantify dissociative experiences. A response scale that allows subject to quantify their experiences for each item was used so that scores could reflect a wider range of dissociative symptomatology than possible using a dichotomous (yes/no) format.

Interpretation: The Dissociative Experiences Scale II (DES II): When scoring, drop the zero on the percentage (e.g. 30%=3, 80%=8) then add up single digits for the client score.

Mean DES Scores Across Populations for Various Studies

General Adult Population	5.4
Anxiety Disorders	7.0
Affective Disorders	9.35
Eating Disorders	15.8
Late Adolescence	16.6
Schizophrenia	15.4
Borderline Personality Disorder	19.2
PTSD	31
Dissociative Disorder (NOS)	36
Dissociative Identity Disorder	48

Items for the DES for Each of the Three Main Factors of Dissociation:

Amnesia Factor: This factor measures memory loss. i.e. not knowing how you got somewhere, being dressed in clothes you don't remember putting on, finding new things among your belongings you don't remember buying, not recognizing friends or family members, finding evidence of having done something you don't remember doing, finding writings, drawing or notes you must have done, but don't remember doing. **Items: 3, 4, 5, 8, 25, 26**

Depersonalization/Derealization Factor: Depersonalization is characterized by the recurrent experience of feeling detached from one's self and mental processes or a sense of unreality of the self. Items related to this factor include feeling that you are standing next to yourself or watching yourself do something and seeing yourself as if you were looking at another person, feeling your body does not belong to you,

and looking in a mirror and not recognizing yourself. Derealization is the sense of a loss of reality of the immediate environment. These items include feeling that other people, objects and the world around them is not real, hearing voices inside your head that tell you to do things or comment on things you are doing, and feeling like you are looking at the world through a fog, so that people and objects appear unclear. **Items: 7, 11, 12, 13, 27, 28**

Absorption Factor: This factor includes being so preoccupied or absorbed by something that you are distracted from what is going on around you. The absorption primarily has to do with one's traumatic experiences. Items of this factor, include realizing that you did not hear part or all of what was said by another, remembering a past event so vividly that you feel as if you are reliving the event, not being sure whether things that they remember happening really did happen or whether they just dreamed them, when you are watching television or a movie you become so absorbed in the story you are unaware of other events happening around you, becoming so involved in a fantasy or daydream that it feels as though it were really happening to you, and sometimes sitting, staring off into space, thinking of nothing and being unaware of the passage of time. **Items: 2, 14, 15, 17, 18, 20**