

## **Alters/Parts in DID**

This is not a comprehensive list of Parts in a system. A more comprehensive list of Parts/Alters and their roles can be found [here](#).

**Animal Alters:** Yes, they are real. Animal alters are just as important as human alters as they can still protect and provide comfort. Animals like wolves, sharks, lions and bears are often seen to be strong and brave, this may help with feeling safe and protected. Animals like bunnies, cats, ducks and hamsters are seen to be soft, cuddly and gentle. This can provide joy and happiness to the system.

**ANP:** Apparently normal parts are alters who seem to function without memories of trauma or any struggles with mental health. They appear to be completely fine and function as a normal person living a normal life.

**Avenger alters:** This alter holds the rage from childhood abuse and may seek retribution from the abuser. They tend to express the anger of the entire system and can be hostile.

**Fictives/Factives:** Fictives are characters from video games, movies, books, tv shows or other forms of media that a child has a strong attachment to and replicated in order to feel safe and happy in times of trauma. Factives can be actors, singers, dancers, or just regular people that the child looked up to and formed in times of trauma.

**Fragments:** Unlike alters, fragments are less 3D and may have only been created to serve one very specific purpose (cooking, cleaning, writing, exercise, showering, etc). They are smaller parts and have less responsibilities than that of alters but they are just as valid and important.

**Gatekeepers:** As this disorder is formed from serious traumatic events, these memories can be damaging and scary. It is a gatekeeper's job to keep memories (and sometimes alters) away from the system to reduce the risk of flashbacks, new trauma, stress and worsening symptoms.

**Host:** The alter who holds the body/fronts most of the time. There can be more than one host in a system.

**Internal Self-helper:** Much like caretakers and protectors, these alters are caring, helpful and understanding. They focus on keeping the inner-world safe, enjoyable and clean as well as keeping check that everything goes to plan.

**Introjects:** These alters can be positive or negative with no in-between. A positive introject could be someone who looked after the child at times of distress (mother, friend, older sibling, etc), these alters are there to continue protecting the person with DID from similar situations and can often be very helpful. Negative introjects are often the someone who was the cause of trauma in the first place and this can be very distressing for DID systems.

**Little's:** These alters are between ages 0-9. They are infants and children who are possibly stuck in the age of trauma or trauma time. This isn't always the case but most often is. Little's can also

be a distraction from trauma and memories and be completely carefree, happy, and living the childhood we missed. Child and adolescent alters are young, and are often the first discovered in therapy and are the most common type of alter. These alters emerge to handle the abuse that the original personality couldn't tolerate. A alter may be referred to as a "little" if the alter acts seven years or younger.

**Middles:** This is the term given to teenage alters. These alters can represent rebellion, freedom, sexuality and other similar things that come with being in the stages of adolescents. These alters will naturally be very proud of who they are and be authentically themselves no matter what. This can be an escape for DID systems.

**Non-human alters:** Much like animal alters, these parts can be created to provide, joy, protection or comfort. Dragons, fairies, goblins, wizards, unicorns, Pegasus or vampires can all be alters just like anything else. These mythical creatures can often be created due to what a child is able to imagine at this time of trauma to help distract from reality.

**NPC:** This term means "Non Playable Character" and is often seen in video games. As the name suggests they are not a normal alter but their role is to fill in gaps in the inner-world. Any of the types of alters I have written about above can also be NPCs and solely live in the inner-world.

**Opposite sex alters:** The purpose of having alters of the opposite sex or gender can be different across all systems. They are important and need to be accepted as part of the system like all others.

**Protector or rescuer alters:** These alters can be of any age and were created to save the original person from intolerable situations. These DID alters are often tougher and braver than the original personality.

**Perpetrator alters:** Modeled after the abuser, these dissociative identity disorder alters direct their hostility outward rather than inward towards other personalities.

**Persecutors:** These alters are often called "bad alters" or "evil alters" because of what they were created to do. Persecutors are alters that are often more negative and difficult for the whole system and those in the external environment. Persecutors create negative messages blaming the original identity for the abuse and telling them they need to die or pay for it. They may self harm, leave scary notes, yell at others, destroy things externally that create joy, disagree with others about everything, be angry, overly sexual or emotional. Persecutor alters are modeled after the abuser. Often the host will act on these negative messages and self-harm or even attempt suicide. This is often when the person is first introduced to the mental health system.

**Sexual Alter:** These alters can be created to make the body feel "loved", "accepted", "confident", or "normal". I put these in quotes as this all depends on the individual. These alters tend to be in late teen years or early twenties, but can be of any age.

**Supernatural alters:** Angels, demons, ghosts, gods or spiritual beings can be created as a form of guidance and escape for the physical world. They are seen to be strong and influential beings that are there to protect.