



The Disintegrating Self: Psychotherapy of Adult ADHD, Autistic Spectrum, and Somato-Psychic Disorders

By Phil Mollon

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Conditions such as ADHD and autistic spectrum traits are increasingly recognized among children – but the problems that such people face as adults are less commonly appreciated. Many clients present with traits of ADHD and the autistic spectrum (these often occurring together) but such characteristics may not be recognized by psychotherapists, psychologists, counselors or psychiatrists. As a result, the clients are not given the understanding or assistance they need and deserve. Much time and effort may be wasted on a spurious search for psychodynamic reasons for problems that are essentially rooted in neurobiology. Another frequent and adverse outcome is the relegation of the client to a diagnosis of "borderline personality disorder".

This book outlines what happens in the brain of the person with ADHD, how this affects behavior, emotion, thought processes, and regulation of impulses – and how these affect other people. Those with ADHD are often driven to be argumentative, are prone to depression, anxiety, sensation-seeking and addictions. Such traits are not entirely psychodynamically driven but reflect the insufficiently aroused brain seeking stimulation, novelty, and pleasure. The picture presented by people with ADHD of their childhood or current environment may express honestly held but extremely subjective perceptions that are distorted by their own brain states and challenging behaviors.

Several other conditions that are frequently missed by psychotherapists are also addressed. The "porous personality" and the "prey-predator dynamic", which play a significant role in recurrent self-harm, are described for the first time.

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Editorial Review

Review

'This seminal book will cause a paradigm shift in the understanding and treatment of ADHD and autistic traits for all those who exist with or work with these conditions. It is holistic, rigorous, and combines up-to-the-moment neurobiological and energy understanding together with classical psychoanalytic underpinning.'- Valerie Sinason, President of the Institute of Psychotherapy and Disability, and author of Trauma, Dissociation and Multiplicity'Phil Mollon invites us to accompany him on his journey to conceptualise ADHD and autistic spectrum conditions in an integrative manner - allowing a classical psychoanalytic perspective to combine with concepts from Bion and attachment theory, drawing bridges between these and psychobiological research, exemplifying all of this with clinical vignettes. He balances the research from neuropsychology, psychiatry, and psychoanalysis with a deep humanistic perspective. It will be extremely helpful for clinicians.'- Edgard Sanchez, consultant psychiatrist and psychotherapist at King's College, London'ADHD and autism spectrum disorders are common conditions that every psychoanalytic clinician must contend with. But traditional psychoanalytic theories and therapies for these disorders are mutually contradictory and woefully disconnected from the mainstream of recent research, relating to other treatment modalities and brain science. Phil Mollon has digested this vast and disparate body of knowledge - both practical and theoretical - and integrated it with his own considerable clinical experience in a way that is immediately and concretely useful to us all.'- Mark Solms, psychoanalyst and Professor in Neuropsychology, University of Cape Town, South Africa

About the Author

Phil Mollon is a member of the Independent Group within the British Psychoanalytical Society. He is also a clinical psychologist, and trained in psychotherapy at the Tavistock Clinic. His interests have included Heinz Kohut and Self Psychology, trauma and traumatic memory, dissociative states of mind, shame, and disturbances in the experience of self. He is on the Advisory Board of the New York Institute for Psychoanalytic Self Psychology. He works primarily within the British National Health Service, in Hertfordshire.

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