

# DES-II AND DES-TAXON SCORING AND INTERPRETATION

## Scoring Instructions for the DES-II

Add the percentage of each of the 28 items together and divide that number by 28. This is the DES-II score. Scores range from 0 to 100.

## Interpreting the Score of the DES-II

The following are mean scores on the DES-II for various diagnostic groups. Although Complex PTSD is not in this data, most clinicians concur that Complex PTSD scores are generally higher than PTSD and lower than Dissociative Disorders.

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

The higher the DES-II score, the more likely it is that the person has DID. However, in a sample of 1,051 clinical subjects, only 17% of those scoring above 30 on the DES-II actually had DID (Carlson et al., 1993). The DES is not a diagnostic instrument. It is a screening instrument. A high score on the DES-II do not prove that a person has a dissociative disorder, it only suggests that further clinical assessment for dissociation is warranted. DES scores should be reported as within or not within the range for the clinical diagnosis. The DES-II is divided into three major categories of dissociation: absorption/imaginative involvement, amnesia, and depersonalization/derealization.

**Amnesia** : Items 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 24, 25, 26

**Absorption/imagination**: Items 1, 2, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 23

**Depersonalization/derealization**: Items 7, 11, 12, 13, 19, 27, 28

These three categories help further tease out the likelihood of a dissociative disorder. Those with amnesia and symptoms of intrusions of dissociative parts are more likely to have a dissociative disorder than are those who score higher mostly on absorption items.

## DES-Taxon

The DES-Taxon (DES-T) is an eight item measure drawn from the DES-II that determines whether the individual score is related to pathological dissociation (Taxon), or to more normal dissociation that likely does not indicate a dissociative disorder. The taxon is based in Items 3, 5, 7, 8, 12, 13, 22, and 27.

## **Scoring and Interpreting the DES-Taxon**

Use the DES-Taxon Calculator (excel file) to calculate the DES-T score. Enter each item score of the DES into the calculator in Column E. The probability of the individual belonging to the pathological taxon will automatically be calculated by the program in Column F. The DES-T score will automatically appear in Column E, Line 32. For example, if the DES-T is 86.778, the likelihood of the individual having a dissociative disorder is just over 86%.