Maladaptive daydreaming: a story for survival

Pilar de la Vega

Abstract

This French-Swiss study focuses on "rêveries diurnes inadaptées, the translation of which comes from the English "Maladaptive daydreaming". These are defined as excessive daydreaming activities, which can replace human interaction and/or interfere with academic or vocational functioning. The aim of this study is to understand this phenomenon by investigating its traumatic history. Analyses were performed on a sample of 583 participants, retrieved from international data from the study by Bigelsen, Lehrfeld, Jopp and Somer (2016). Within this sample, 435 participants identified themselves as compulsive dreamers or "MDers" and 142 did not and were the control group in this study. The analysis focused on 162 self-identified MDers who have identified a catalyst trauma, and on 164 self-identified MDers who did not identify a catalyst trauma and represented the control group. The results indicate associations between the development of MD and the existence of specific traumas. This relationship is reinforced by the predisposition of dissociation, elements of compulsive repetition.