

MAGGIE WALTERS

Author | Speaker | Mental Health Awareness Advocate



MAGGIE IS AVAILABLE FOR:

- Media interviews
- Podcast interviews
- Mental health conference presentations
- Writers festival appearances
- Library talks
- School talks
- Book Club calls

ABOUT MAGGIE

- Maggie Walters (via the UK, US, Sydney and the Blue Mountains) now lives in the Northern Rivers of NSW, with her husband and three children.
- Her debut memoir *SPLIT A Life Shared: Living with Multiple Personality Disorder*, is scheduled for release May 16, 2024.
- As a small child, Maggie was subjected to trauma that caused her to develop personalities (known as alters) to ensure her survival. It was not until many years later, struggling with anxiety, an unpredictable temper and an inability to make friends, that a qualified therapist diagnosed her as a trauma survivor with Multiple Personality Disorder, now known as Dissociative Identity Disorder.
- Her love of the written word is something that has always been in her heart. But it wasn't until she began her healing journey that she was able to cohesively share her story in words. *SPLIT* is the culmination of a healing journey that she chooses to share to inspire and encourage others and confront stereotypes around mental health.

For more details and to book Maggie for your event
or to invite her for an interview,
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About the memoir ...

SPLIT

A Life Shared: Living With Multiple Personality Disorder

How does a child survive years of unimaginable abuse? She splits. And splits again. And again. And again. And she does survive. But not without consequences.

As a young adult, years after her physical abuse has ended, Maggie Walters struggles with an unpredictable temper and socially difficult behaviour. After several false starts she finds a therapist who she trusts, just enough, to start talking about the childhood locked away behind the anger and isolation she learnt to live with.

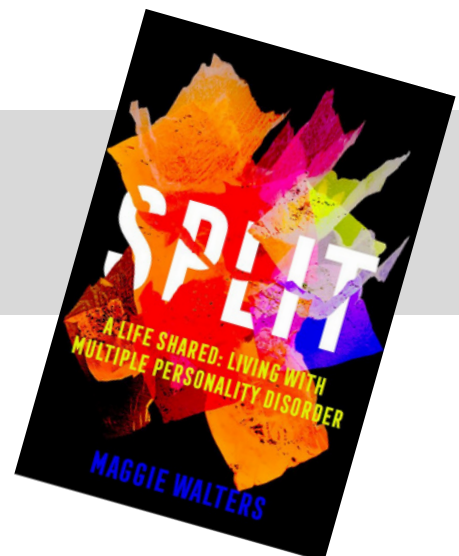
Eventually she is diagnosed with Multiple Personality Disorder, MPD (now known as Dissociative Identity Disorder or DID).

Gradually she understands: it was not Maggie who survived her childhood. The instinct to survive created an alternative identity called Annie, who, with a myriad of other 'alters', lived through the abuse inflicted on her.

Decades later, with a husband and three much-loved children, Maggie strives to live a normal life despite a past which has left her internal world with a hidden, dark secret. Every day, unseen by those around her, trigger incidents fill her head with voices, the chaotic remnants of her other selves who lived the childhood she couldn't. This is the 'normal' which Maggie has learned to live with.

In SPLIT Maggie tells the story of managing this 'normal', of understanding and accepting her past, and standing strong in the life she has built from the ashes of her broken childhood.

This is a story not only of survival, but of self-acceptance, of the triumph to simply live.
You will not read another book like it.



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What people are saying about **SPLIT** ...

Michelle Tom, author of *10,000 After Shocks*

A rare and fascinating journey into the origin and turmoil of living with Multiple Personality Disorder—a candid, often harrowing account of the enduring power of the human spirit. Sometimes shocking, often enlightening, always compelling.

Alan Close, author of *Before You Met Me*

SPLIT is a book to inspire and inform every trauma survivor who doubted they had a future, every family member or supporter who wondered what they could do to help, and for anyone wanting to understand and reduce the stigma around mental health struggles.

Lee Kofman, author of *The Writer Laid Bare*

In her work, Maggie consistently engages with tough, complex themes – childhood abuse, mental illness, adoption, migration – and she does so bravely, unflinchingly, with a deep commitment to making art out of the difficulties she’s lived through. I have no doubt readers will benefit from her insight into issues that many people have struggled with but remained silent about. Her writing can do much good in the world.

**Dr George Blair West, Psychiatrist and
co-author of *The Girl in the Green Dress***

I hope you will find that the book you are about to read engages you and fills you with fascination in equal parts, as it did me. It is also at times, a harrowing read, but then if it was not there would be no inspiration, no ‘rising above’ – the valuable gift that real life accounts such as this have to offer us.

Anna Featherstone, founder, Bold Authors

Illuminating, absorbing, harrowing and hopeful, this beautifully written memoir will keep you reading, feeling, and thinking to the very last page.

An unflinching, exquisitely written story revealing an extraordinary way of being in the world.

MEDIA KIT

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ABOUT DISSOCIATIVE IDENTITY DISORDER (DID)

previously known as Multiple Personality Disorder (MPD)

- Approximately 1.5% of the population internationally has been diagnosed with dissociative identity disorder.
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK568768/>
- DID and dissociative disorders as a whole are more common in clinical settings, affecting between 6% and 10% of inpatients (Horen, Leichner, Lawson, 1995; Ross, Duffy, & Ellason, 2002). <https://did-research.org/did/basics/prevalence>

Extracted from the Foreword to SPLIT

as provided by Dr George Blair West (Psychiatrist and co-author of The Girl in the Green Dress)

- ‘If I was asked to capture DID in one sentence, I would say: ‘It’s testimony to how the human mind really can develop superpowers ... and fly away’. This is the most important thing to understand about this condition, previously called Multiple Personality Disorder (MPD). It is not a mental illness, it is, perhaps, the most powerful adaptive response that the human mind is capable of.’
- ‘How common is it? Sadly, much more common than was thought – just over one percent of the population here in the West – giving us at least 250,000 cases in Australia. Its prevalence predictably tracks extant child abuse.
- ‘The perpetrator takes pride in dismantling the child, literally breaking the self, to have a compliant victim, in every sense of this word. DID allows the true, innocent essence of the child to hide, safe from the unknowing abuser. It is a truly glorious fuck you to the abuser who has no idea of the light, self-love and strength that is protected and quietly waiting. This essence knows the truth. It knows that this abuse was neither deserved nor just at any level. It waits, with great patience, knowing this truth, until one day the war is over and the quest for healing can begin.’

When I started my psychiatry training nearly 40 years ago, MPD, as it was then known, was not even vaguely understood. It was seen as a weird footnote at the very extreme end of ‘crazy’ in psychiatry.

Dr. George Blair-West

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Facts about SPLIT ...

- An early draft of SPLIT was longlisted for The Richell Prize.
- The cover of SPLIT was designed by award-winning cover designer Hazel Lam who also designed the cover of Holly Ringland's 'The Lost Flowers of Alice Hart', Julia Baird's 'Phosphorescence' and 'All That's Left Unsaid' by Tracey Lien .
- Maggie received 14 letters of rejection from agents and publishers, being told several times that it was an engaging story with good structure and needed to be told. BUT, as a memoir, without being a celebrity or having a social media following they didn't believe there was a viable market for it.
- The working title for SPLIT was Postcards From Home, referring to the postcard type memories that Maggie would have access to from the alters.
- The first draft of SPLIT was just over 70k words. After the first draft, it was edited back to less than 36k. After working on a deeper, linear structure, it came in at over 86k words.
- Maggie writes in a mosaic style - utilising both prose and poetry - to emphasise the chaotic nature of the way her brain functions.

Facts About Maggie ...

- Maggie was trying to write fiction when she had a sudden change of direction. Ask her about it.
- Maggie's favourite drink is lemon ice tea or a rum and coke.
- Maggie came to the Northern Rivers of NSW via the UK, US, Sydney and the Blue Mountains.
- Maggie has three gorgeous children adopted from the Philippines and if you ask her about them, she may never stop talking!
- She is currently working on a 2nd book, focusing on the challenges of adoption, parenting with a trauma history and the consequences of generational abuse.
- Favourite book is **The Erratics** by Vicki Laveau-Harvie, and go-to poet is Rod McKuen.
- Maggie is a music lover, from ZZ Top to Beethoven, or Simon & Garfunkel and Lauren Daigle... if it's good music, she loves it!

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TOPICS I'M KEEN TO TALK ABOUT:

Mental Health

- Stigmas around mental health in today's society
- Living with MPD/DID
- What it means to be dissociative
- How writing has nurtured my healing journey

Writing/Memoir

- Why write memoir? Making the ordinary extraordinary.
- Turning to writing as a career in the 2nd half of my life
- Personal benefits of writing your story and how I used MPD to enrich my story
- What do you want your story to do? Be published? A family heirloom?

On Choosing Indie Publishing

- Why did I choose to go this direction, pro's and con's (including it's a personal choice – do what is right for you).
- Seeing indie publishing as a business and finding creative balance.
- Making sure that you get the right support to produce a quality product.

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