

## **Estranged from oneself, estranged from the others: Investigating the effect of depersonalisation on self-other mirroring**

### **ABSTRACT:**

#### **Background**

Depersonalisation is a very common dissociative experience, typically characterised by a feeling of being detached from one's self, body and the world and 'watching' oneself from a distant viewpoint. Despite its high prevalence in the general population and the significant distress it triggers, little is known about its underlying mechanisms and phenomenological markers. It is crucial thus to address the experience of depersonalisation because, as one person with DP strikingly puts it, a disorder that makes you feel invisible, is invisible in society (Perkins 2021).

#### **Aims**

The overarching goal of our project was to explore the relationship between the experience of depersonalisation (DP henceforth) and sensorimotor processing of self and other.

#### **Method**

We used a combination of behavioral, psychophysiological and phenomenological qualitative measures to look at how the subjective feeling of being estranged of *oneself* affects and is affected by the experience of being estranged from *others* in depersonalisation.

#### **Results**

Our studies provided further evidence for impaired bodily self-processing in depersonalization. Specifically, perceiving self-related stimuli in depersonalisation seems to impair rather than enhance self-related information processing.

#### **Conclusions**

The scientific outputs from our project provide us with a rich, comprehensive and coherent first view of how the experience of depersonalisation affect self and other sensorimotor processing. Our project's results lay the ground for future progress in developing potential body-based therapeutic interventions aiming at alleviating the distressful experiences of depersonalisation.

#### **Keywords**

Bodily self, Depersonalisation, Touch, Facial mimicry

### **Published Work:**

Ciaunica, A. (forthcoming, 2022). (Des)Integrating the self – Atypical multisensory integration of self- and world perception in depersonalisation and psychedelic experiences. In L. Chris & G. Philip (Eds.). *Philosophical Perspectives on the Psychedelic Renaissance*. Oxford University Press.

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