

Survival Strategies Table

The table below (based on tables in From Survival to Fulfilment, and Trauma and Fulfilment Therapy), lists specific appraisals which evoke one or other of eight survival strategies. They are respectively Rescue and Attachment, Assertiveness and Adaptation, Fight and Flight, and Competition and Cooperation, forming four complementary pairs.









Survival strategies are listed according to their adaptive and maladaptive, biological, psychological and social characteristics. The lines between them are for the sake of clarity, rather than depiction of facts. Adaptive and maladaptive survival strategies oscillate, and biological, psychological and social responses act as functional biopsychosocial units. Similarly, the apparently static divisions in the table belie the dynamism within it and its three dimensionality.

The first line for each psychological and social description of survival strategy responses (and the first line under the survival strategy name in column 2) refers to physical survival, while the second to provision of resources. The third lines (bold and underlined) are combinations of both. Words may appear to be ambiguous or relevant across survival strategies. This may reflect some characteristics which survival strategies share, or insufficient honing of language.

The table lists traumas which may arise from each unsuccessful survival strategy. The arrows to the right indicate interactions with defences and illnesses; to the left of the table, interactions within traumatic situations.

Adaptive and maladaptive judgments of worth are included to give a sense of survival strategy ramifications.

Survival Strategy Components

Appraisal of Means of Survival	Survival Strategies	Anatomical Substrate	adaptive / coping responses				Maladaptive / not coping responses				*Trauma
			biological	psychological	social	*judgments of worth	biological	psychological	social	*judgments of worth	
1. Must Save Others	rescue protect provide 	thalamus cingulate gyrus	↑estrogen ↑oxytocin ↑opioids	care empathy devotion	responsibility nurture preseRvation	responsible giving altruistic	ergotropic & trophotropic arousal	burden depletion self-concern	resentment neglect rejection	irresponsible neglectful egotistic	anguished compassion fatigue caused death
2. must be saved by others	attachment protected provided 	hypothalamus cingulate gyrus	?↑opioids	held, cared for nurtured looked after	close, secure content union	worthy deserving lovable	↓opioids ↑crf	yearning need, craving abandonment	cling, insecure deprived separation	unworthy encumbrance rejectable	helplessness cast out left to die
3. must achieve goal	assertiveness combat work 	hypothalamus lateral tegmentum	↑e, ↑ne ↓cortisol ↑immunocomp.	strength control potency	will high morale success	strong capable successful	↑↑ergotropic ne depletion ↑bp, ?↑chd	frustration loss of control impotence	willfulness low morale failure	inadequate incompetent failure	exhaustion burn-out powerlessness
4. must surrender goal	adaptation accept grieve 	hippocampus septum	↑trophotropic ↑pit-adrenoc ↑cortisol	acceptance sadness, grief hope	yielding mourning turning to new	pitiful sympathy tribute	↑cortisol ↓immunocomp ↑infection?↑ca	overwhelmed depression despair	collapsed withdrawal giving-up	weak pathetic despicable	damaged given-in succumbing
5. must remove danger	fight defend ret 	hypothalamus med-tegmentum amygdala	↑ne, renin, e ↑pit-adrenoc ↑cortisol	threat revenge frighten	deterrence wounding riddance	brave noble heroic	↑↑ergotropic arousal opioids vary ↓cort	hatred persecution killing	attack eradication destruction	violent wicked murderer	horror evil murder
6. must remove oneself from danger	flight run, hide save oneself 	hypothalamus amygdala cingulate	↑erg & troph ↑da, b-end ?↑serotonin	fear terror deliverance	retreat flight escape	pitiable vulnerable refugee	ne & da depletion ↑e & ↓cortisol	phobia paranoia engulfment	avoidance panic annihilation	timid panicky coward	inescapable shock being hunted, killed
7. must obtain scarce essentials	competition dominance acquisition 	hypothalamus hippocampus septum	↑testosterone ↑ne & e	winning status power	contest hierarchy possession	superior respected honored	↓testosterone ↓fsh & lh ↑acth	defeat greed, envy exploitation	oppression struggle plunder	inferior contemptible humiliated	terrorization marginalization elimination
8. must create more essentials	cooperation trust mutual Gain 	amygdala temporal & cingulate gyri	↑opiates ↓bp, e & ne ↑trophotropic	mutuality generosity love	integration reciprocity creativity	tender poignant beautiful	↓opiates ?trophotropic overactivity	betrayal selfishness abuse	disconnection robbery fragmentation	deceived seduced perverted	disintegration alienation decay

E, epinephrine; NE, norepinephrine; immunocomp, immunocompetence; pit-adrenoc, pituitary-adrenocortical axis; erg, ergotropic system (arousal system including sympathetic nervous system); troph, trophotropic system (relaxation system including parasympathetic nervous system); BP, blood pressure; DA, dopamine; B-end, Beta endorphin; CRF, corticotropin releasing factor; CHD, coronary heart disease; CA, cancer; FSH, follicle stimulating hormone; LH, luteinising hormone; ACTH, adrenocorticotropic hormone :