

THE WHOLIST PERSPECTIVE; A CLINICAL EXAMPLE (FILM)

In this workshop we will demonstrate clinical application of survival strategies along three axes. Biopsychosocial survival strategies along the three axes comprises the wholist framework.

Summary of the Wholist Perspective

The perspective is already present in the opening question. Other questions, such as, “What bothers you?” “Tell me all about your pain (other symptom).” “Tell me about your problems from beginning to end,” all invite a logical left brain recounting of conscious events.

I have already suggested this opening question- “Of all the things that worry you, what worries you the most?” Now I’ll say a bit more about it.

The way you say it, with symmetry and poetry, looking deep (hypnotically) into the person’s eyes, showing an emotionally curious face, opening your arms and hands as you say “Of all the things...” and closing them as you say, “...what worries you the most?” invites access to right brain as well as left.

At first patients may express puzzlement or confusion. “Of **all** the things?” they will check out. Then with trust, they let you in to the area of their minds that often matters most.

They will frequently reveal highly relevant whats, whys, and hows of their problems. Let them speak and note how their symptoms fit which survival strategies.

Make sense of the symptoms by tracing them back to their traumatic situation sources and the appraisals which evoked particular survival strategies at the time.

Make sure to cover biological, psychological and social aspects of these survival strategies.

Scan for other survival strategies, because they all appear in traumas.

Be alert to survival strategies radiating and permeating to morals, values, beliefs, and meanings; and to families and communities.

Be alert to what is absent – defences.

This is a right brain history. Let your own right brain resonate with it.

Then take a left brain history, including time lines of family history, personal history, and histories of symptoms.

Collate with your whole brain the patient’s right and left brain histories with your own right and left brain responses.

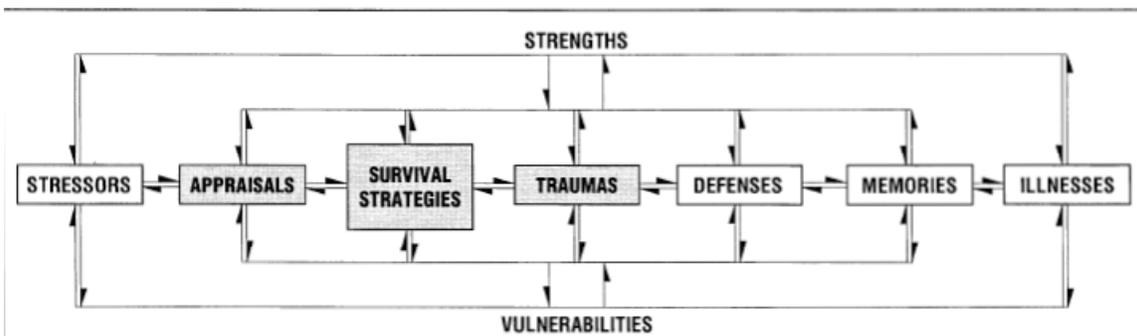
Triaxial Framework

These workshops have concentrated on survival strategies.

However, you will have noted that we covered survival strategies along three axes, which I call the triaxial framework.

We saw survival strategies in a process of being evoked and then progressing to maladaptive or insufficient pictures of stress, and trauma and illnesses. That progression or **process** comprises the **Process Axis**.

FIGURE 4: THE PLACE OF SURVIVAL STRATEGIES ON THE PROCESS AXIS



We saw that survival strategies had different feels, or ‘cultures’ according to certain **parameters**. The parameters included the nature of the stressors, time after traumatic stressor passed, the stage in the life cycle of the person affected including transgenerational consequences, and whether the unit affected was the individual, family, or community. These parameters comprise the **Parameters Axis**.

COMPONENTS OF THE PARAMETERS AXIS

1. FACTORS IN TRAUMATIC SITUATIONS
2. PHASES OF TRAUMATIC SITUATIONS

3. SOCIAL SYSTEM LEVELS INCLUDING HELPERS
4. DEVELOPMENTAL PHASES, TIME IN LIFE CYCLE AND TRANSGENERATIONAL

Lastly we saw that survival strategies radiated into elaborations of the mind that included moral, spiritual, and existential meanings. That axis we called the **Depth Axis**.

COMPONENTS OF THE DEPTH AXIS

1. BASIC INSTINCTS, DRIVES
2. SURVIVAL STRATEGIES
3. VIRTUE, ESTEEM, JUSTICE
4. BASIC MEANINGS
5. IDEALS, VALUES PRINCIPLES
6. CODES, DIGNITY, RIGHTS
7. BELIEFS, RELIGION, IDEOLOGY
8. IDENTITY
9. SYMBOLS
10. CREATIVITY, AESTHETICS
11. SACREDNESS
12. WISDOM, KNOWLEDGE, TRUTH

These 3 axes together comprise the **Triaxial Framework**.

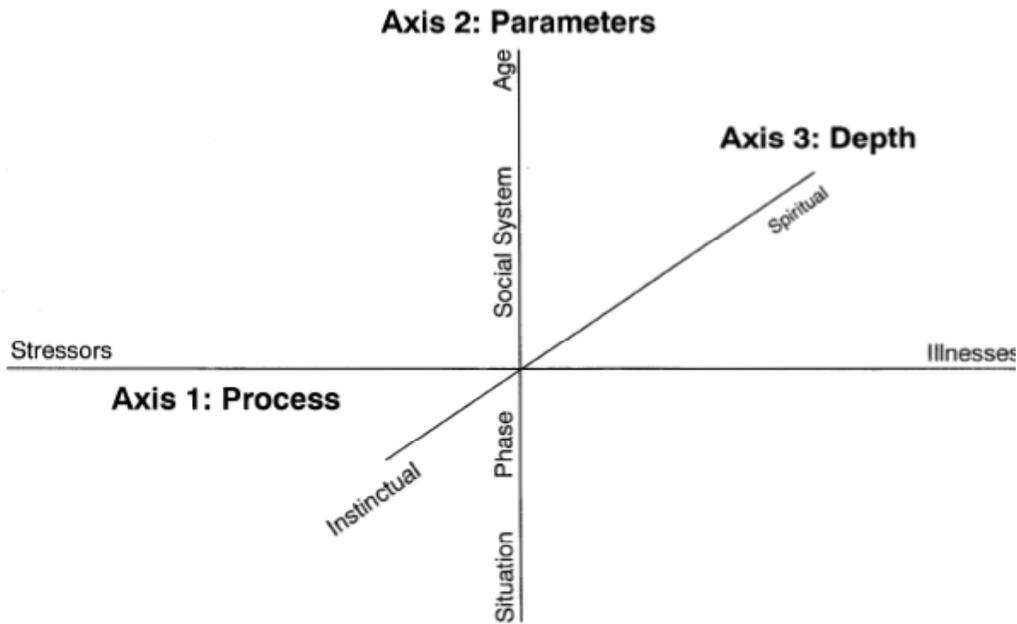
The components of the 3 axes can be denoted side by side, thus

Table 1: Components of the Triaxial Framework

<i>Process axis</i>	<i>Parameters axis</i>	<i>Depth axis</i>
1. Stressors	1. Factors in traumatic situations	1. Basic instincts, drives
2. Appraisals	2. Phases of traumatic situations	2. Survival Strategies
3. Stress Responses	3. Social system levels including helpers	3. Judgements and Morality
4. Strengths & vulnerabilities	4. Developmental phases	4. Basic meanings
5. Trauma		5. Ideals, values and principles
6. Defenses		6. Codes, dignity, rights
7. Memories		7. Spirituality, religion, ideology; beliefs
8. Illnesses		8. Identity
9. Secondary spirals		9. Symbols
		10. Creativity, esthetics
		11. Sacredness
		12. Wisdom, knowledge, truth

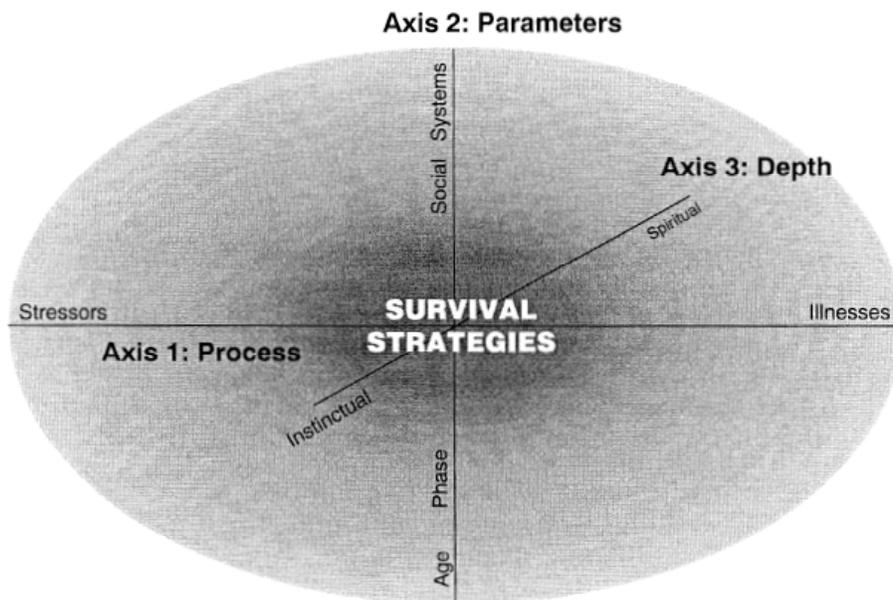
Or figuratively thus

FIGURE 1: TRIAXIAL VIEW OF TRAUMATIC STRESS



Radiation of survival strategies over the three axes can be depicted thus:

FIGURE 7: WHOLIST (TRIAxIAL AND SURVIVAL STRATEGIES) VIEW OF TRAUMATIC STRESS



Application of the wholist perspective to diagnosis

The right and left brain information can be interpreted into a wholist perspective language which can then be translated into common language. This will make conscious sense of traumatic stress and fulfillment manifestations.

If these manifestations are compared to light bulbs of various colours (survival strategies) and shades (biological, psychological and social) flashing on (reliving) and off (defenced) along the triaxial framework, then understanding the wholist perspective circuitry can allow to trace the bulbs to the original switch, and make sense of their signals. An apparently random mix of flashing bulbs can be interpreted and translated into a traumatic stress story.

In other words, by tracing survival strategy manifestations at particular triaxial points along the triaxial framework back through acute stress responses to their origins, sense can be made of the great variety of fulfillment and trauma manifestations.

For instance, if a bulb flashes yearning the circuitry partly represented in Table 2, may suggest an attachment distress due to unwelcome separation in the past. Similarly, the light bulb inadequate signifies a negative assertiveness judgment, which may indicate past failure and impotence.

Because the wholist language is in some ways richer and organizes more logically human nature than the common language, its translation can help to enrich, hone and categorize ordinary language.

[Application of the Wholist Perspective to some Philosophical Conundrums

Mind-body dualism

Biological, psychological, and social responses are different faces of the same energy ferment. Like time, space, and matter froze out of the original black hole, so biological, psychological and social froze out of the black hole of trauma.

Just like time, space and matter are difficult to view at the same time, so biological, psychological and social are difficult to research simultaneously. Yet biological, psychological and social are like different faces of a pyramid, constantly present at all points of each axis, and wherever they intersect.

Science - humanist rift

Specific points on the triaxial framework, especially on the process axis, lend themselves to left brain 'scientific measurements'. Examples are biological aspects of particular survival strategies.

The more the dynamics of the various axes are taken into account, especially the depth axis, the more we see 'human' complexities, representing right brain patterns. 'Scientific' or 'human' represent various views within the wholist perspective.

Perhaps bedside manner and placebo effects are the results of undetected fits and misfits of wholist perspectives of victims and helpers.

Reductionist - whole dichotomy

In the wholist framework any manifestation can be viewed along a range of perspectives ranging from unidimensional points through linear to multidimensional non-linear systems, to the total wholist perspective. The more restricted the view, the more reductionist it is, while the more the view incorporates the more whole it is.

As an example, a point view of illnesses on the process axis sees a particular biological, psychological or social illness comprised of a syndrome of symptoms. This corresponds to a phenomenological view of illnesses that answers the question what. What is this illness?

A wholist view takes in concomitant biopsychosocial manifestations, traces them all back to their survival strategy origins in traumatic situations, answers questions how and why as well as what, and explores the radiation of disturbances to the identity and meanings of the person and of those around him, over time.

Point views of illness search for point treatments, while wholist views of illness take in many potential points of various types of entry over time, place and person.]

Introduction to film

The film demonstrates application of the wholist perspective in a clinical situation.

The person I interview is an actress who met the real patient and modelled herself on her. The real person saw the film and said it totally reflected her. I would concur in that.

As the film proceeds, you will see the particular survival strategies and axes the content reflects being noted in the bottom left hand corner of the screen.