

APPLICATION OF SURVIVAL STRATEGIES TO DEFINITIONS AND CATEGORIZATIONS OF TRAUMATIC STRESS AND FULFILMENT PHENOMENA

In previous workshops we have used Tables 1 and 2 to trace symptoms back to their origins, and to make sense of them. This was a horizontal use of the Tables.

In this workshop we will use the table vertically to categorize traumatic stress and fulfilment phenomena, and to refine our words. So we will overlap with linguistics as well.

Pleasures and Satisfactions; Unpleasures and Stress/Distress

In trying to assess human motivations, some philosophers have postulated pleasures and unpleasures. Hedonists have advocated the pursuit of pleasures over the centuries. The Epicureans saw unpleasures as evil, to be avoided. Freud's pleasure principle postulated that human motivation was to seek pleasure, and Skinner believed that learning was conditioned by pleasant and unpleasant consequences of behaviour.

TABLE 2: SURVIVAL STRATEGY COMPONENTS

APPRAISAL OF MEANS OF SURVIVAL	SURVIVAL STRATEGIES	SUCCESSFUL / ADAPTIVE RESPONSES				UNSUCCESSFUL / MALADAPTIVE RESPONSES				TRAUMA RESPONSES
		BIOLOGICAL	PSYCHOLOGICAL	SOCIAL	JUDGEMENTS	BIOLOGICAL	PSYCHOLOGICAL	SOCIAL	JUDGEMENTS	
MUST SAVE OTHERS	RESCUING PROTECT PROVIDE	↑ ESTROGEN ↑ OXYTOCIN ↑ OPIOIDS	CARE EMPATHY DEVOTION	RESPONSIBILITY NURTURE PRESERVATION	RESPONSIBLE GIVING ALTRUISTIC	SYMPATHETIC & PARASYMP AROUSAL	BURDEN DEPLETION SELF-CONCERN	RESENTMENT NEGLECT REJECTION	IRRESPONSIBLE NEGLECTFUL EGOTISTIC	ANGUISH COMPASS FATIGUE CAUSED DEATH
MUST BE SAVED BY OTHERS	ATTACHING PROTECTED PROVIDED	↑ ↑ OPIOIDS	HELD, CARED FOR NURTURED LOOKED AFTER	CLOSE SECURE CONTENT UNION	WORTHY DESERVING LOVABLE	↓ OPIOIDS	YEARNING NEED CRAVE ABANDONMENT	CRY INSECURE DEPRIVED SEPARATION	UNWORTHY ENCUMBRANCE REJECTABLE	HELPLESSNESS CAST OUT LEFT TO DIE
MUST ACHIEVE GOAL	ASSERTING COMBAT WORK	↑ E, NE ↓ CORTISOL ↑ IMMUNOCOMP	STRENGTH CONTROL POTENCY	WILL HIGH MORALE SUCCESS	STRONG CAPABLE SUCCESSFUL	↑↑ E, NE DEPLETION E, NE ↑ BP, ↑ CHD	FRUSTRATION LOSS OF CONTROL IMPULSIVE	WILLFULNESS LOW MORALE FAILURE	INADEQUATE INCOMPETENT FAILURE	EXHAUSTION "BURN-OUT" POWERLESSNESS
MUST SURRENDER GOAL	ADAPTING ACCEPT GRIEVE	PARASYMP AROUSAL ↑ CORTISOL	ACCEPTANCE SADNESS GRIEF HOPE	YIELDING MOURNING TURN TO NEW	PITIFUL SYMPATHY TRIBUTE	↑ CORTISOL ↓ IMMUNOCOMP ↑ INFECTION, ↑↑ CA	OVERWHELMED DEPRESSION DESPAIR	COLLAPSED WITHDRAWAL GIVING UP	WEAK PATHETIC DESPICABLE	DAMAGED GIVEN IN SURRENDERING
MUST REMOVE DANGER	FIGHTING DEFEND RID	SYMP AROUSAL ↑ E, NE ↑ BP	THREAT REVENGE FRIGHTEN	DEFERENCE WOUNDING RIDGANCE	BRAVE Noble HEROIC	↑↑ SYMP AROUSAL ↓ CORTISOL	HATRED PERSECUTION KILLING	ATTACK ERADICATION DESTRUCTION	VIOLENT WICKED MURDERER	HORROR EVIL MURDER
MUST REMOVE ONESELF FROM DANGER	FLEEING RUN, HIDE SAVE ONESELF	SYMPATHETIC & PARASYMP AROUSAL	FEAR TERROR DELIVERANCE	RETREAT FLIGHT ESCAPE	PITIFUL VULNERABLE REFUGEE	NE DEPLETION ↑ E & CORTISOL	PHOBIA PARANOID ENGULFMENT	AVOIDANCE PANIC ANNIHILATION	TIMID FANCIKY COWARD	"INESCAPABLE SHOCK", BEING HUNTED, KILLED
MUST OBTAIN SCARCE ESSENTIALS	COMPETING POWER ACQUISITION	↑↑ TESTOSTERONE SYMP AROUSAL	WINNING STATUS DOMINANCE	CONTEST HIERARCHY POSSESSION	SUPERIOR RESPECTED HONORED	↓ TESTOSTERONE ↓ FEMALE HORMS ↑ CORTISOL	DEFEAT GRIED, ENVY EXPLOITATION	OPPRESSION STRUGGLE FLUNDER	INFERIOR CONTEMPTIBLE HUMILIATED	TERRORIZATION MARGINALIZATION ELIMINATION
MUST CREATE MORE ESSENTIALS	COOPERATING TRUST MUTUAL GAIN	↑ OPIATES ↑ BP, E, NE	MUTUALITY GENEROSITY LOVE	INTEGRATION RECIPROCALITY CREATIVITY	TENDER FORNANT BEAUTIFUL	↓ OPIATES ↑↑ PARASYMP AROUSAL	BETRAYAL SELFISHNESS ABUSE	DISCONNECTION CRASHING DISINTEGRATION	DECEIVER ROBBER PERVERSE, UGLY	FRAGMENTATION ALIENATION DECAY

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If we look at table 2 we will note that the left half indicating adaptive survival strategies describes human pleasures, while the maladaptive right half describes human unpleasures. As in the workshop on biopsychosocial aspects of survival strategies, the pleasures and unpleasures described can be very intense.

Let us look at physiological, psychological and social pleasures and unpleasures. We will see how survival strategies help us to categorise them in a rational manner.

Categorization of Physiological Pleasures

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| ✧ Rescuing | ✧ <i>Feeding, touching, holding</i> |
| ✧ Attaching | ✧ <i>Being fed, touched, held</i> |
| ✧ Asserting | ✧ <i>Achieving food, shelter, territory</i> |
| ✧ Adapting | ✧ <i>Sobbing, weeping, adapting</i> |
| ✧ Fighting | ✧ <i>Ridding unpleasant sensations</i> |
| ✧ Fleeing | ✧ <i>Feeling safe and secure</i> |
| ✧ Competing | ✧ <i>Dominating, taking</i> |
| ✧ Cooperating | ✧ <i>Interconnection, sexual pleasure</i> |

Categorization of Physiological Unpleasures

- | | |
|---------------|-------------------------------------|
| ✧ Rescuing | ✧ <i>Sucked out, empty</i> |
| ✧ Attaching | ✧ <i>Craving food, touch, space</i> |
| ✧ Asserting | ✧ <i>Constrained, held back</i> |
| ✧ Adapting | ✧ <i>Collapsing, crumpling</i> |
| ✧ Fighting | ✧ <i>Exploding, hitting out</i> |
| ✧ Fleeing | ✧ <i>Terror, freeze</i> |
| ✧ Competing | ✧ <i>Crushed, scooped</i> |
| ✧ Cooperating | ✧ <i>Disconnection, used</i> |

Let us now put biological pleasures and unpleasures together.

Physiological Pleasures and Unpleasures

⌘ Rescuing	⌘ <i>Feeding, touching, holding</i>	⌘ <i>Sucked out, empty</i>
⌘ Attaching	⌘ <i>Being fed, touched, held</i>	⌘ <i>Crawling food, touch, space</i>
⌘ Asserting	⌘ <i>Achieving food, shelter, own space</i>	⌘ <i>Constrained, held back</i>
⌘ Adapting	⌘ <i>Sobbing, weeping, adapting</i>	⌘ <i>Collapsing, crumpling</i>
⌘ Fighting	⌘ <i>Ridding unpleasant sensations</i>	⌘ <i>Exploding, biting out</i>
⌘ Fleeing	⌘ <i>Feeling safe and secure</i>	⌘ <i>Terror, freeze</i>
⌘ Competing	⌘ <i>Dominating, taking</i>	⌘ <i>Crushed, scooped</i>
⌘ Cooperating	⌘ <i>Interconnecting, sexual pleasure</i>	⌘ <i>Disconnection, used</i>

The following summarizes psychological pleasures and unpleasures in Table 2.

Psychological Pleasures and Unpleasures

⌘ Rescuing	⌘ <i>Caring</i>	⌘ <i>Abandoning</i>
⌘ Attaching	⌘ <i>Cared for</i>	⌘ <i>Abandoned</i>
⌘ Asserting	⌘ <i>Potent</i>	⌘ <i>Impotent</i>
⌘ Adapting	⌘ <i>Hoping</i>	⌘ <i>Despairing</i>
⌘ Fighting	⌘ <i>Ridding</i>	⌘ <i>Hating</i>
⌘ Fleeing	⌘ <i>Safe, secure</i>	⌘ <i>Engulfed</i>
⌘ Competing	⌘ <i>Winning</i>	⌘ <i>Defeated</i>
⌘ Cooperating	⌘ <i>Loving</i>	⌘ <i>Abused</i>

The following is categorization of social pleasures and unpleasures.

Social Pleasures and Unpleasures

⌘Rescuing	⌘ <i>Preserving</i>	⌘ <i>Rejecting</i>
⌘Attaching	⌘ <i>United</i>	⌘ <i>Separated</i>
⌘Asserting	⌘ <i>Succeeding</i>	⌘ <i>Failing</i>
⌘Adapting	⌘ <i>Mourning</i>	⌘ <i>Giving up</i>
⌘Fighting	⌘ <i>Detering</i>	⌘ <i>Destroying</i>
⌘Fleeing	⌘ <i>Escaping</i>	⌘ <i>Caught</i>
⌘Competing	⌘ <i>Winning</i>	⌘ <i>Defeat</i>
⌘Cooperating	⌘ <i>Producing</i>	⌘ <i>Stagnant</i>

Categorization of Traumas

Categorization of traumas is another application of Table 2. It indicates that traumas are not undifferentiated inchoate states but specific survival strategy failures. Each traumatic state has been denoted as *the* essence of trauma at some time, but any one or combination can describe particular trauma states.

[[For instance, NE was suggested to be associated with the intrusive phase, while serotonin and endogenous opioids with the numbed phase (van der Kolk and Saporta, 1993). Recently hippocampal damage and resultant dissociation were suggested to be central (p 88). Specific psychosocial precedents have included inescapable shock (van der Kolk, et al, 1984), helplessness (van der Kolk, 1987), and loss of control (Garber & Seligman, 1980). It is likely that all these factors are significant to variable degrees in different circumstances.]]

Categorization of Traumas

- ✧ Rescuing
- ✧ Attaching
- ✧ Asserting
- ✧ Adapting
- ✧ Fighting
- ✧ Fleeing
- ✧ Competing
- ✧ Cooperating
- ✧ Allowed, caused death
- ✧ Aloneness, helplessness
- ✧ Powerlessness
- ✧ Overwhelmed, damaged
- ✧ Murder
- ✧ Annihilation
- ✧ Elimination
- ✧ Disintegration

Applications to Other Categorizations

Anxiety

Each survival strategy has its own specific anxiety. Each has been seen at some time as *the* hallmark or signal of impending trauma.

The following are the types of anxieties in order of the survival strategies in Table 2.

Categorization of Anxieties

⌘ Rescuing	⌘ <i>Anguish</i>
⌘ Attaching	⌘ <i>Separation anxiety</i>
⌘ Asserting	⌘ <i>Performance anxiety</i>
⌘ Adapting	⌘ <i>Anxiety of being overwhelmed</i>
⌘ Fighting	⌘ <i>Anxiety of causing damage</i>
⌘ Fleeing	⌘ <i>Persecution, Annihilation anxiety</i>
⌘ Competing	⌘ <i>Defeat Anxiety</i>
⌘ Cooperating	⌘ <i>Anxiety of alienation and falling apart</i>

Probably each anxiety has a somewhat different feel, and physiological variation. While some anxieties have specific designations, others need to be described long hand, because of lags in common language. The same is true for other categorizations.

Refining of words

We can start to discern that the wealth of survival strategy language may enable clearer definition of symptoms often covered by an umbrella word in the common language. For instance, the clinical word anxiety may denote very different states. The same applies to depression which may stand for sadness, and despair (adaptive and maladaptive goal surrender), feeling defeated and oppressed (maladaptive competition), cast out and alone (attachment), unloved and alienated (cooperation).

Similarly, physical symptoms are too restrictively linked to specific conditions. For instance, chest pain is too often restrictively associated with coronary occlusion (assertiveness and fight end results), when it may also represent muscle tension (eg in flight), yearning and craving (attachment symptoms), choked up tears (goal surrender), and oppression (maladaptive competition).

The recently widowed wife of a famous man complained of heart pain. Encouraging an intimate description of the pain, including using analogies and metaphors, she came to describe it as an oppressive constriction in the chest. Asked what could produce such a feeling, she said, "As if someone was standing on your chest, not allowing you to sob." Tracing what might disallow her sobbing, it was the insistence on a public funeral, where she would have to maintain her composure. During discussion she realized that she had the right to insist on a private funeral, and allow a public memorial. The constriction lifted and she sobbed.

Some words seem to fit best in a specific place eg love in cooperation. On second thoughts, each survival strategy has its specific love.

Categorization of Loves

✂ Rescuing	✂ <i>Love of child, cared for person</i>
✂ Attaching	✂ <i>Love of parent, carer</i>
✂ Asserting	✂ <i>Love of work, comrades, colleagues</i>
✂ Adapting	✂ <i>Love of those lost</i>
✂ Fighting	✂ <i>Love of those we defend</i>
✂ Fleeing	✂ <i>Love of safety, security</i>
✂ Competing	✂ <i>Love of power, possession</i>
✂ Cooperating	✂ <i>Love of partner, friend</i>

As an experiment, we may take many human emotions and activities and see whether survival strategies help us to categorise them. Let us see whether they help us categorise relationship attitudes and interpretations of sexual activity.

You might find diff words to describe the core of particular relationships or sexual interpretations. What I am trying to convey here, is that survival strategies may clarify why certain adaptive but especially (sometimes

symptomatic) maladaptive attitudes may be grafted on to relationships and sexual intercourse.

Categorization of Relationship Attitudes

✧Rescuing	✧ <i>Caring</i>	✧ <i>Selfish</i>
✧Attaching	✧ <i>Cared for</i>	✧ <i>Uncared for</i>
✧Asserting	✧ <i>Successful</i>	✧ <i>Inadequate</i>
✧Adapting	✧ <i>Bereft</i>	✧ <i>Aggrieved</i>
✧Fighting	✧ <i>Protective</i>	✧ <i>Violent</i>
✧Fleeing	✧ <i>Boundaries</i>	✧ <i>Separation</i>
✧Competing	✧ <i>Dominant</i>	✧ <i>Submissive</i>
✧Cooperating	✧ <i>Loving</i>	✧ <i>Abusive</i>

Categorization of Sexual Attitudes

✧Rescuing	✧ <i>Care</i>	✧ <i>Selfishness</i>
✧Attaching	✧ <i>Cared for</i>	✧ <i>Uncared for</i>
✧Asserting	✧ <i>Potent</i>	✧ <i>Impotent, failure</i>
✧Adapting	✧ <i>Hope for new</i>	✧ <i>Depression, Despair</i>
✧Fighting	✧ <i>Defend, rid</i>	✧ <i>Violence, rape</i>
✧Fleeing	✧ <i>Avoid, escape</i>	✧ <i>Engulfed</i>
✧Competing	✧ <i>Power, dominate</i>	✧ <i>Exploited</i>
✧Cooperating	✧ <i>Love, creativity</i>	✧ <i>Seduction, abuse</i>

Relationships, sexuality, and even views of genitalia are influenced by adaptive and maladaptive survival strategies with which the relationships and sexual activity are imbued. We can start to see why mutual satisfying compatibility may be a major achievement.

In this workshop we saw how survival strategies can help us to sharper semantics in both trauma and fulfilment, and in the clinical field to sharper diagnosis and treatment. Yet they also help us generally in the life-trauma dialectic. In the next workshop we will take this further.