Intimate interpersonal trauma

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Human response to threat ....
Brain under threat........

- Cortex
- Hippocampus
- Thalamus
- Amygdala
- Hypothalamus

- Chemical release
- high arousal
The amygdala mediated response:

Success....?

Immediate Survival

1. ATTACHMENT

2. PHYSICAL INTEGRITY
Brain under threat........

3/1000 second after sensory input a pulse goes to cortex: “what are you making of this”.

'Cortical' suppress left hemispheric functioning.

High arousal

Chemical release
The amygdala mediated response:

Success...?

Immediate Survival

1. Attachment  2. Physical Integrity
Human defensive responses to threat....
The Five Fs:
Defensive fear responses

- **Friend**
- **Fight**
- **Flight**
- **Freeze**
- **Flop**

Types of defences:
- **active defences**
- **passive defences**
Attachment; its awfully useful....
Trauma bonds
Bonding is a survival strategy.....

The amygdala will prioritise the preservation of attachment over individual threat response.

There are many, many examples of love overcoming fear.........

Bonding / attachment is more vital to the survival of the human species than one individual’s life!
Trauma bonds
(or ‘Stockholm Syndrome’)

Foundation:

- Perceived threat to integrity.
- Harsh treatment interspaced with small kindnesses.
- Isolation from perspectives other than the ‘abuser’s’.
- Perceived inability to escape.
- Develops after only 4 days.....
Symptoms:

- Positive feelings toward ‘abuser’.
- Negative feelings toward potential ‘rescuers’.
- Support of ‘abuser’s’ reasons and behaviour.
- Inability to engage in behaviours that will assist release / detachment.
Trauma is cyclic.......
Relational patterns persist.

A psychologically healthy individual

An individual with a few ‘psychological knocks and scrapes’
A nice fit............
A poor fit.............

Feels empty
A nice fit
Man hands on misery to man....
(Phillip Larkin; ‘this be the verse’)

Feeling ‘bent out of shape’...

The professional

Highlighting the psychological injury
The challenge for professionals....
The new psychological shape....
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