

Depressions

as a consequence
of the
Perpetrator-Victim-Splitting

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Agenda

- ▶ Symptoms of depression
- ▶ Victims and perpetrators – definitions
- ▶ Victim- and perpetrator attitudes as surviving strategies
- ▶ The victim-perpetrator-splitting
- ▶ Ways out

Symptoms of Depression

- ▶ feelings of senselessness
- ▶ no energy
- ▶ emptiness
- ▶ numbness
- ▶ tiredness
- ▶ lack of concentration
- ▶ lack of appetite
- ▶ lack of self confidence
- ▶ difficulties to sleep well
- ▶ pessimism
- ▶ avoiding new bonding relationships
- ▶ escape into spiritual realms
- ▶ denied aggressions
- ▶ somatic illnesses
- ▶ risk to enjoy suffering
- ▶ suicidal tendencies



„Perpetrator“ and „Victim“

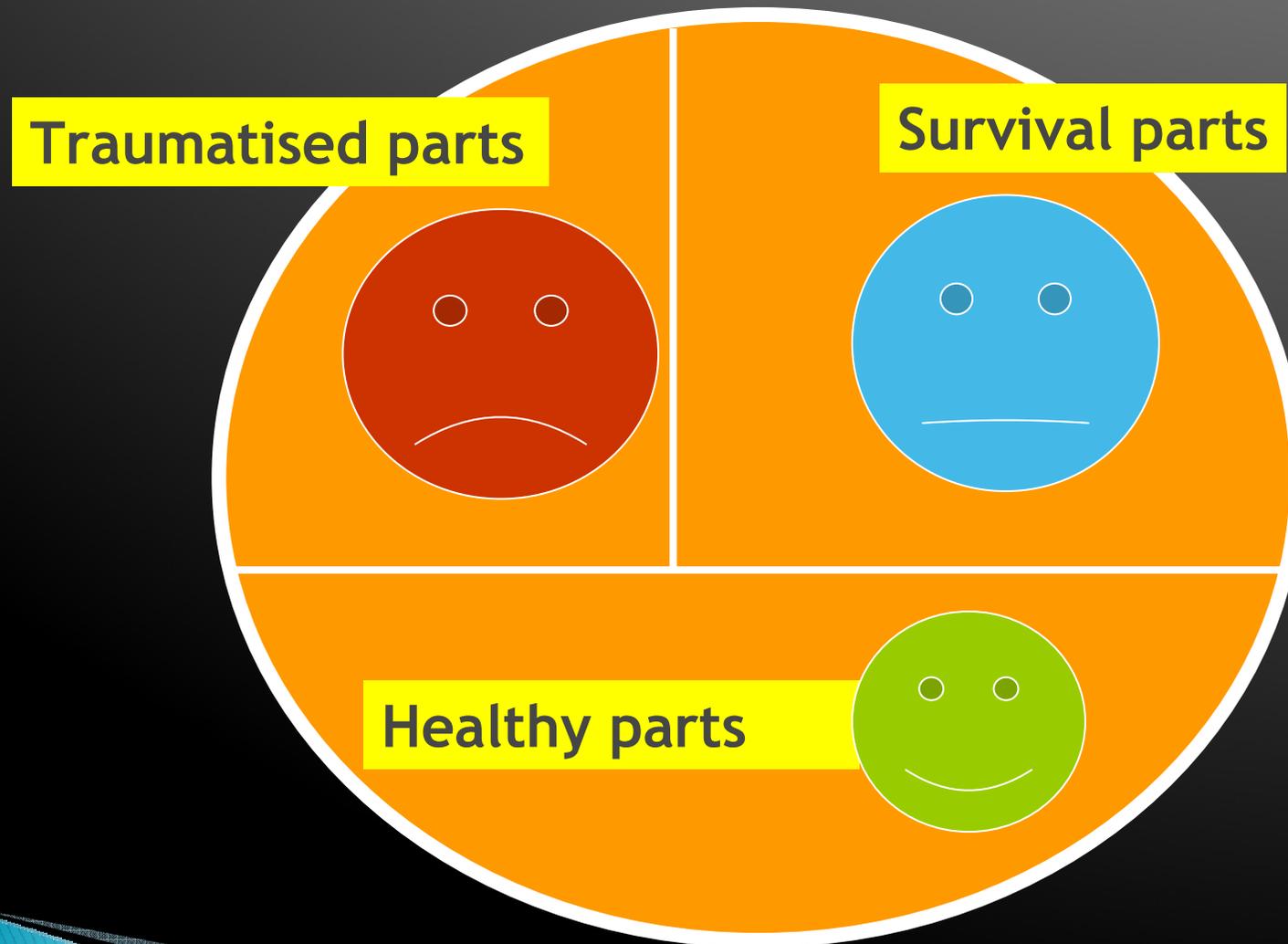
- ▶ Someone becomes perpetrator if he applies harm to someone else (violence, murder, theft, betrayal, dishonesty) or does not give the necessary support (lack of food, contact and love).
- ▶ Someone becomes victim by experiencing harm to his body and his psyche (from natural disasters, from other human beings).

- ▶ One can be a perpetrator consciously and unconsciously
- ▶ Harms can be small or big
- ▶ One can also be a perpetrator towards oneself

„Harm“ as a traumatic experience

- ▶ The victim feels helpless and powerless
- ▶ His stress reactions (fight or flight) make the harm even greater
- ▶ Blocking, freezing, dissociating, splitting are psychic emergency reactions in order to survive

Splits in the personality and identity structure after a traumatic experience



Sorts of Trauma

- ▶ Trauma of Existential Threat
- ▶ Trauma of Loss
- ▶ Symbiotic Trauma (pre-, peri-, postnatal)
- ▶ Traumatisation of a whole bonding system

Every sort of trauma can produce
a specific perpetrator–victim–dynamic

Being a Victim

- ▶ Having undergone a traumatic experience
- ▶ Surviving it by splitting
- ▶ Being a victim stays present in the psychic structure
- ▶ Trauma-surviving strategies become necessary

Victim Attitudes as a Trauma-Surviving-strategy (1)

- ▶ Denying being a victim
- ▶ Suppressing memories
- ▶ Suppressing impulses to fight back or run away, submissiveness
- ▶ Feeling guilty
- ▶ Feeling punishment is justified
- ▶ Disgust at ones own weakness

Victim Attitudes as a Trauma-Surviving-Strategy (2)

- ▶ Not seeing perpetrators as perpetrators
- ▶ Clinging emotionally to the perpetrators
- ▶ Protecting perpetrators
- ▶ Identifying with the needs of perpetrators
- ▶ Ideals of harmony and peace

Victim Attitudes as a Trauma-Surviving-Strategy (3)

- ▶ Suffering, lamenting, complaining without mentioning the real underlying reasons
- ▶ Self destructive behavior
- ▶ Chronic depression
- ▶ Chronic diseases

Being a perpetrator as a traumatic experience

- ▶ Bad conscience
- ▶ Massive feelings of guilt
- ▶ Huge feelings of shame
- ▶ Panic of being socially despised

Perpetrator Attitudes as a Trauma-Surviving-Strategy (1)

- ▶ Not perceiving the harm that has been done to another person
- ▶ Denying deeds and facts
- ▶ Not feeling guilty, feeling righteous and just
- ▶ Demonstrating a good conscience in social situations and in public

Perpetrator Attitudes as a Trauma-Surviving-Strategy (2)

- ▶ Blaming victims
- ▶ Feeling oneself as the victim
- ▶ Insulting victims
- ▶ Calling victims being ill
- ▶ Claiming an ideology that justifies perpetrator actions as a higher and socially justified duty
- ▶ Feeling satisfaction in destruction and aggression

Victim–Perpetrator–Splitting

- ▶ Split off victim experiences create perpetrator attitudes as survival-strategies
- ▶ Numbness towards oneself becomes unempathetic behavior towards others
- ▶ Victims become perpetrators and are not aware of their victim and perpetrator attitudes

Consequences of the Victim-Perpetrator-Splitting (1)

- ▶ Pendulum swings between victim- and perpetrator attitudes
- ▶ Alternating feelings of powerlessness und rebellious fury
- ▶ False atonement
- ▶ Revenge against innocent others
- ▶ Aggression and depression as normality in relationships
- ▶ Illusions of love as a fragile basis for living together with others

Consequences of victim–perpetrator–Splitting (2)

- ▶ A vicious cycle sucking in more and more people
- ▶ A vicious cycle going on for generations
- ▶ Violence, murder, incest and sexual abuse become normality
- ▶ Consequence: Traumatization of a whole bonding system that is dominated by trauma

Consequences of victim–perpetrator–Splitting (3)

- ▶ Personality disorders, Psychosis, Schizophrenia, Delusion, Self destruction, Dissoziative Identity Disorder,, Suicide
- ▶ Chronic diseases, e.g. autoimmune diseases,cancer
- ▶ Criminal behaviour

How to overcome the victim attitude?

- ▶ Acknowledging being a victim, i.e. feeling one's own trauma
- ▶ Perceiving and accepting the harm that has been done
- ▶ Feeling compassion for oneself
- ▶ Claiming compensation from the perpetrator
- ▶ Renouncing the need for revenge

Illusionary attempts to find solutions

- ▶ Revenge: Wanting to destroy the perpetrator
- ▶ Rebellion: fighting blindly against the perpetrator
- ▶ Forgiving: Trying to take away guilt and shame from the perpetrator
- ▶ Reconciliation: Ideals of harmony without integrating one's own victim or perpetrator trauma
- ▶ Going into the realms of spirituality

How to overcome the perpetrator attitude?

- ▶ Acknowledging facts and deeds
- ▶ Accepting guilt and responsibility
- ▶ Feeling the shame
- ▶ Feeling empathy towards the victim
- ▶ Offering compensation, making appropriate amends
- ▶ Renouncing the need for lifelong atonement

Living beyond victim–perpetrator attitudes

- ▶ Leaving systems that are caught up in perpetrator-victim-dynamics
- ▶ Healthy contact with oneself, healthy autonomy, clear boundaries
- ▶ Self respect, ability to deal with conflicts
- ▶ Living in constructive symbiotic relationships
- ▶ Creating win-win- instead of win-loose-situations
- ▶ Finding out what healthy anxiety, rage and love are



Literature

- ▶ Ruppert, F. (2008). Trauma, Bonding and Family Constellations. Frome (UK): Green Balloon Publishing.
- ▶ Splits in the Soul (2010). Frome (UK): Green Balloon Publishing.
- ▶ Ruppert, F. (2012). Symbiosis and Autonomy. Frome (UK): Green Balloon Publishing.