

ANATOMY OF A TRAUMA - FREEDOM

Frank Morris

This article reveals steps for freeing people from traumas. Feeling and thinking strategies and tactics are provided.

Outline:

- I. Reversing the Anatomy of a Trauma
- II. General Strategic ideas for freedom
- III. Specific tactics for trashing old traumas
- IV. Life after trauma resolutions
- V. Final thoughts

Introduction:

It is liberating to know that grown adults can free themselves from the chains of childhood. Use of the Anatomy of a Trauma and observation of its results is a good example of that. In the following, it is recommended that a person plagued by a trauma is given space, time, and care for the ugliness of the past to be removed. Friends or professionals who are with them must make sure that there is total privacy as the trauma is resolved. Further, confidentiality in the future is a non-negotiable reality.

I. Reversing the Anatomy of a Trauma.

When we recited the sequential steps of The Anatomy of a Trauma we were also showing therapeutic processes: deliberate slowness in the recitation of the original situation (step one), careful questioning to ascertain how a child of a certain age perceived what was going on (step two) and all the rest.

Here we shall add several other points. Step three, the catastrophic fantasy, may need to be highlighted by questions such as "Did that catastrophic fantasy actually happen?" For instance, a boy may have thought that if he did not go into humor when his drunk dad came home, that his father may have killed his mother. The point is to carefully check out the fantasy. Again, the horrific nature of a child's fantasy may well have been the actual truth. Dad may have killed the mother, etc. "If you had cried, would you have cried forever?" "If you had expressed your anger, would your mom have sent you to an orphanage?"

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A second point is to understand that feelings crushed to the earth in childhood may need major expression. A person may need to have wracking sobs, furious rage, or scream with protest. Though it may seem weird at first to the student, sometimes people need permission to go to an amusement park and scream with excitement on the roller coaster. They may have refused to feel excitement since children and need the experience.

II. General Strategic ideas for freedom

Part of our difficulty in giving full strategies is that they will probably be suggested by the careful questioning of each phase of The Anatomy of a Trauma. The greatest strategy is, of course, your willingness to sit, listen, and be with a person gently while their particular trauma is felt out. It is critical that you allow the person to feel what is left in their body, re-think old decisions, and give permission for new behavior. For instance, you may want to give specific homework that shows the old trauma has been released.

Another strategy is to redact history. In other words, the person is taught ways to re-invent childhood. This involves several steps. The first is to develop a story that would be more desirable than the one actually experienced. The person is then instructed to tell others that story in a congruent manner. Finally, a person is taught to replace, at each moment the old pictures-sounds-feelings come to mind, the old story with the new one. This is an enormously powerful technique.

The final strategy is to grow up and surrender childlike forms of thinking. This means that loyalty is not to the gene bearers, per se, but to life. In other words, moms and dads may be so cruel that they do not deserve the title of mom or dad. A person with a horrible set of traumas may have to choose a new mom or dad. A thorough knowledge of the history of life and evolution puts the last generation in its proper perspective - merely the last forty years of a four billion year history of life. To give up childlike absorption with parents and let them go is a court of last resort. Again, some do not deserve to be called parents if they continually abused. We here suggest that they be cataloged and left to the fate of history while the person finds new nurturing parents, new role models, and new Presuppositions.

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III. Specific tactics for trashing old traumas

We can highlight several of these:

- Yell it out
- Breathe it out
- Emotionally express it out
- Imagine it away

Some traumas will be released by sound. A person may need to let loose with a ferocious scream that reverberates up from the depth of the body. There are all kinds of sound deep in the heart of traumas and no list can be adequate. Rather, a given individual needs to be given permission to express, with sound, what is deep within the body.

Another tactic is for the person to tell the trauma to you all over again while occasionally taking breaths as if he or she was on a seashore enjoying nature. Sometimes the person needs to do deep breathing and have the body experience, for a new redeeming time, what needed to be felt long ago and faraway. It is important for a person to know The Complexity and Modularity Page and also have an awareness of SASHET Page.

Perhaps enough has been said about emotionally expression of the original trauma's held-in feelings. Questions need to be asked about each of the six feelings, however. "Is there any sadness still left back there? Anger? Scare? Happiness? Excitement? Tenderness? Though it may sound strange to include the more positive feelings, they still need their opportunity. One can never know exactly what is held in with a given situation.

Finally, it is radically important for the person to use their imagination in two regards: one in terms of the trauma of the past and one in terms of future visualizing. We have had people re-do the old scene where they fantasize new options of feeling expression in the old scenes, for instance. In those cases we have the original perpetrators frozen and deaf so the child can express out what was needed. The idea is to install, in the old pictures, new creative and redeeming pictures. We do a lot of in ner child work at this point, but shall leave that for future articles.

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IV. Life after trauma resolutions

II. As for the future imaging, it is critical for the person to visualize new behaviors. With a one hundred billion neuronal brain capable of immense visualization options (see a purple giraffe drinking coffee on the west bank of Paris at a sidewalk cafe), it is altogether proper for the person to imagine new behavior. "Let's use your imagination now as you close your eyes and tell me how you will be different with ...(your spouse) ... how will you talk ... act ... express love ... encourage play "... etc.? The idea is to get the person to develop a new mental model, one that is an unconscious pattern, and can be done involuntarily and naturally.

V. Final thoughts:

Liberation Psychotherapy is best seen as a whole. The Anatomy of a Trauma is an integral part of healing people from childhood, but it is also critical to provide models for fluid and meaningful living. We take the position that if one simply concentrates upon pathology, it may grow and consume the picture. Thus, our approach to psychotherapy continually offers other options, Explanations of Life in Psychotherapy Terms, How to Reshape Your World with Presuppositions and other papers showing a more vital way to enjoy our short journeys.