

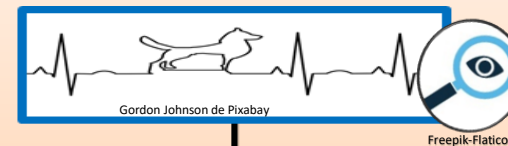
COMPLEX TRAUMA: THE ALARM SYSTEM



In the face of a potential danger, the brain and body act together to keep us alive.

The human response to danger is normal and adaptive. It is not a choice, but a biological survival strategy.

WHEN THE ALARM SOUNDS, THE THINKING BRAIN DOES A SCAN TO ASSESS THE SITUATION.



The thinking brain stops and gives way to the acting brain, which sends a message to the body that releases the necessary hormones to give it the strength to defend itself.

The thinking brain calms the acting brain and finds a solution to the situation.

A survival strategy is therefore chosen:

FIGHT Aggressiveness, irritability, anger, opposition, argumentative, shouting, disrespectful, violent behaviour towards objects or people.

FLIGHT Hiding, running away, withdrawing, isolating.

FREEZE Impression of great calm, of being switched off without emotion/behaviour, passivity, unable to move/speak, dissociation, no longer feeling the body.

SUBMIT Powerlessness, excessive conformity, doing everything to please the other, denying one's needs and always wanting to help the other, giving everything to the other even to one's own detriment, acting according to what others decide.

When a youth is exposed to traumas, a series of biological reactions are automatically set into motion in response to the fear triggered by the events. Since the youth's alarm system has been solicited so often, it becomes defective. The thinking brain thus stops assessing the situation and reacts as though the danger is always present.