

# *Athens*



**Psychotherapists,  
aggression and violence**

**... risky business**



# Agression and violence (1)

- aggression =
  - an emotional state
  - a state of awareness
  
- violence =
  - behaviour
  - what we do

# Agression and violence (2)

aggression

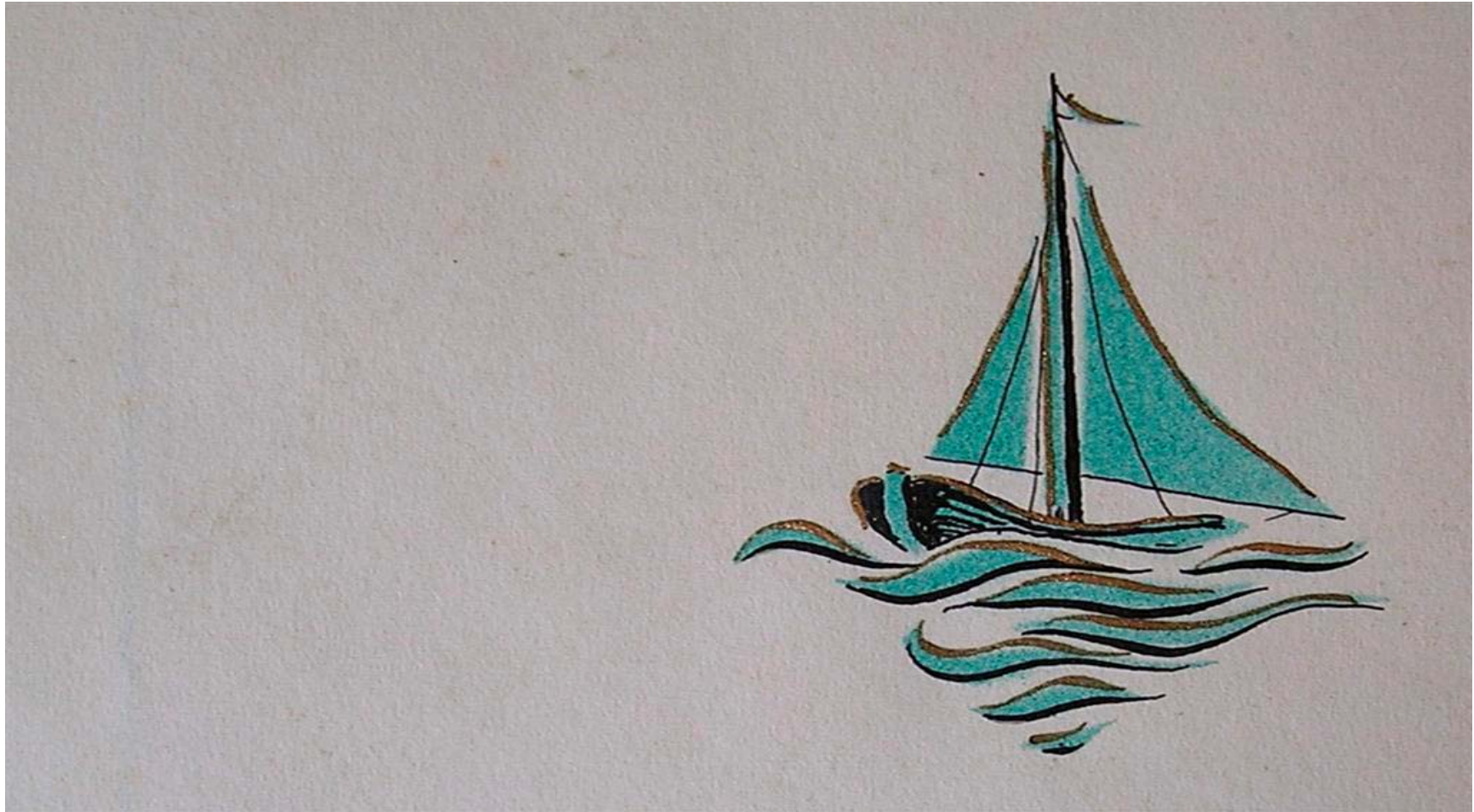
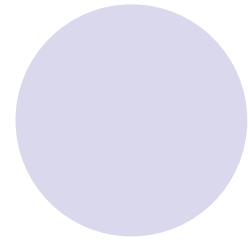
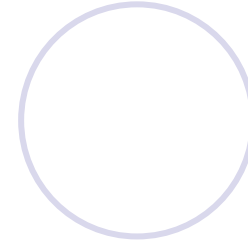
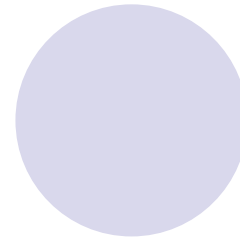
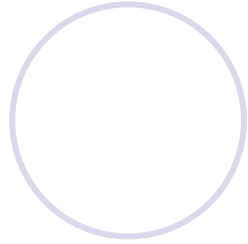
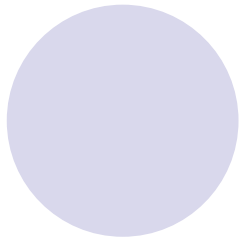
culture  
ethics  
politics  
religion

violence



# Agression and violence (3)

- Perls:
  - aggression as a condition for creativity
  - aggression is energy
- “The ability to express ourselves and to create”
- Ad gredere: to go to



Clients

- Violent **clients**

# Ego-document



A decorative graphic at the top of the slide consists of two groups of circles. The left group has a solid light purple circle on the left and an empty light purple circle outline on the right. The right group has a solid light purple circle on the left, an empty light purple circle outline in the middle, and a solid light purple circle on the right. The word "Clients" is written in blue text over the first solid circle.

**Clients**

- Violent **clients**

- Violent **stories**

# Attitude



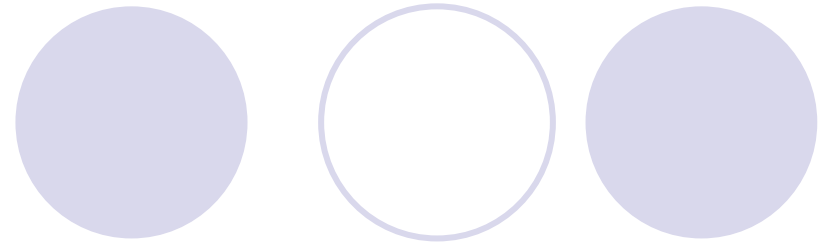
- Acceptance
- Listening
- Containing

● Empathizing

● Including



**Co-Experiencing**



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Clients

- Violent **clients**
- Violent **stories**
- Violent **therapists**

A decorative graphic at the top of the slide consists of six circles arranged in a horizontal line. The first circle on the left is solid light blue and contains the word 'Benifits' in blue text. The second circle is an outline. The third circle is solid light blue. The fourth circle is an outline. The fifth circle is solid light blue. The sixth circle is an outline.

# Benifits

- Increase of **self-confidance**
- Increase of **sensibility** and **alertness**
- **Personal growth**
- Relationships more **real**, **genuine** and **profound**

# Costs



- Therapists have **more** than a general population **psychological problems** and they **do not recognize** this or certainly **not in time**.
- 25% of the American psychiatrists describe themselves as **suicidal**.  
1 out of 16 attempted suicide.
- 82% of the therapists report **marital problems** (divorce ratio: 51%)
- psychotherapist report **low emotional investment** in their own family
- After 25 year almost 1 out of 2 psychotherapists experiences his or her **professional life** as **unsatisfying**
- More then in other professional groups psychotherapists **doubt** their **choice of career**.

# Secondary Traumatization (1)

- Indirect experience of a trauma through the process of being a witness to another person's story
- Normal, inevitable
- Effects can be modified or reduced

# Secondary Traumatization (2)

- Secondary Traumatization is a **slow**, **cumulative** process that occurs over the course of hearing **many** personal stories of tragedy, loss and pain



## Other models

- compassion fatigue (Figley)
- vicarious traumatization (Pearlman & Saakvitne)
- soul sadness (Chessnick)
- secondary traumatic stress (Stamm)



## Case (1)

1. Numerous stories about incest
2. Intrusion of work related issues in private life
3. Offender is an acquaintance
4. Ethical dilemma
5. Eating problem, sleeping problem,
6. Isolation, avoidance
7. Safety shift
8. Intrusive thoughts and images
9. Low self esteem, self criticism

A decorative graphic at the top of the slide consists of six circles. The first circle on the left is solid light blue and contains the text 'Case (2)'. The second circle is an outline. The third circle is solid light blue. The fourth circle is an outline. The fifth circle is solid light blue. The sixth circle is an outline.

## Case (2)

- ID

- Own bodily and emotional signs are not registered

- EGO

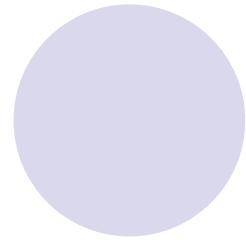
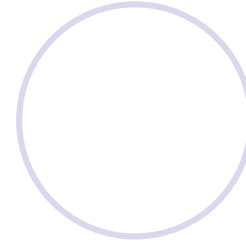
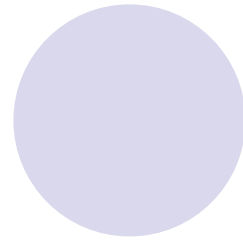
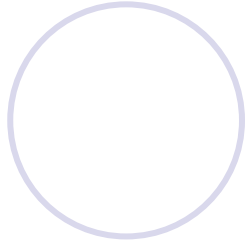
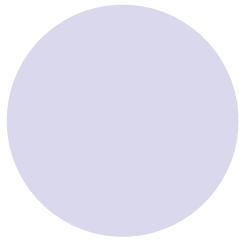
- Denial of her own needs
- Over-identification

- Personality Functioning

- Exclusion of many coping strategies
- Fixation on specific coping style (= helping)

# Secondary Traumatization: some effects

- Exhaustion
- Diminished capacity
  - to listen
  - to make sound judgement
  - to think clearly
  - to help
- Cynicism
- Disillusion
- Despair



# Psychology Student data

- More **interpersonal stress**
- In their **original family** more:
  - Depression
  - Schizophrenia
  - Alcoholism
  - Character distortions
- They play **triangulated roles**
  - Carrier of burden, go-between, scapegoat, butt, lightning conductor, entertainer
- **Parentification**
- **Narcissistic motives**



# Risk features

- **trauma characteristics:** heavy stories have heavy consequences
- **client features:**
  - age, sex
  - young, vulnerable and powerless = more impact on the helper
  - suicidal, auto mutilation, addiction = more impact
  - transfer situations = more impact
- **therapist features:**
  - coping strategy
  - juniors
  - pioneers
  - female
  - traumatized (recognition, identification)
  - end of the line function

# Healthy coping reactions

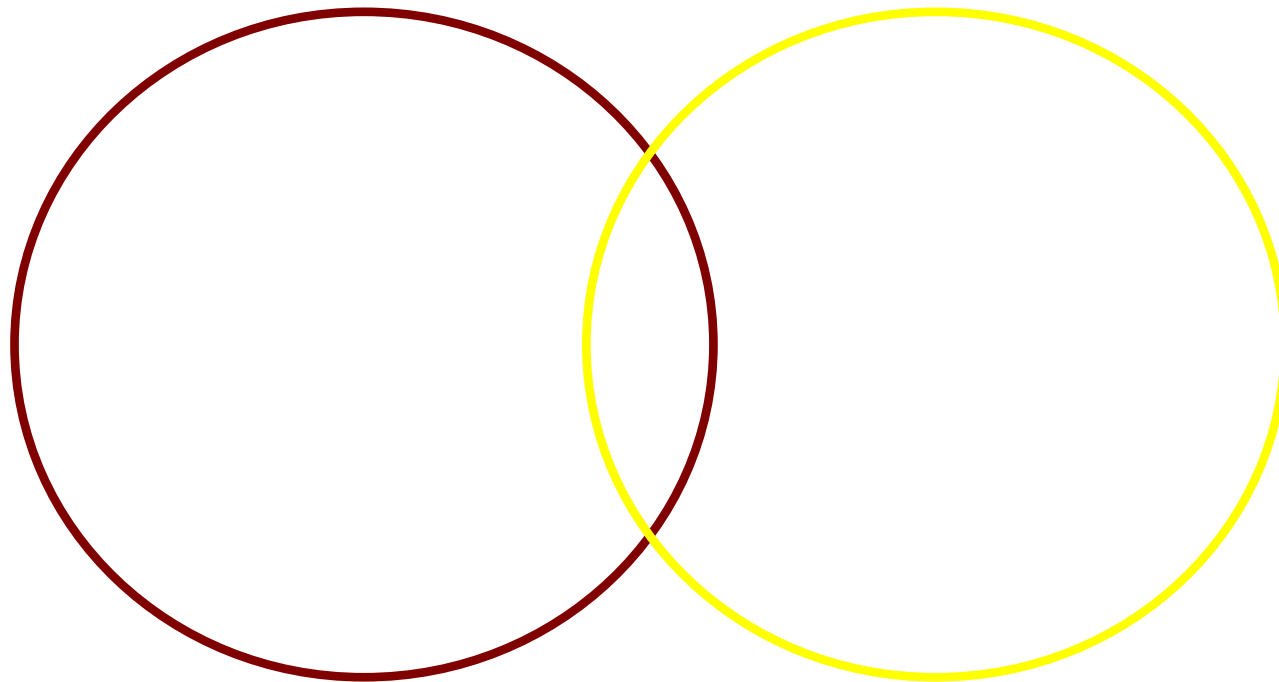
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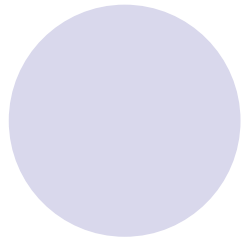
**Standoffish**

<b>Inclusion</b>	<b>Professionalism (craftsmanship)</b>
<b>Empathy</b>	<b>Stimulating Responsibility</b>

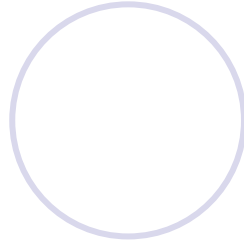
# Blue zone: healthy coping styles

I and You

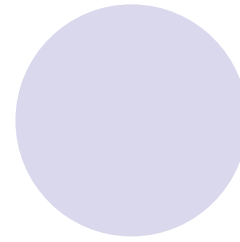




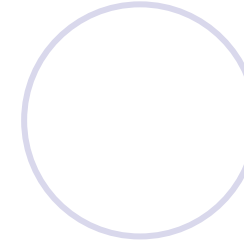
**Confluent**



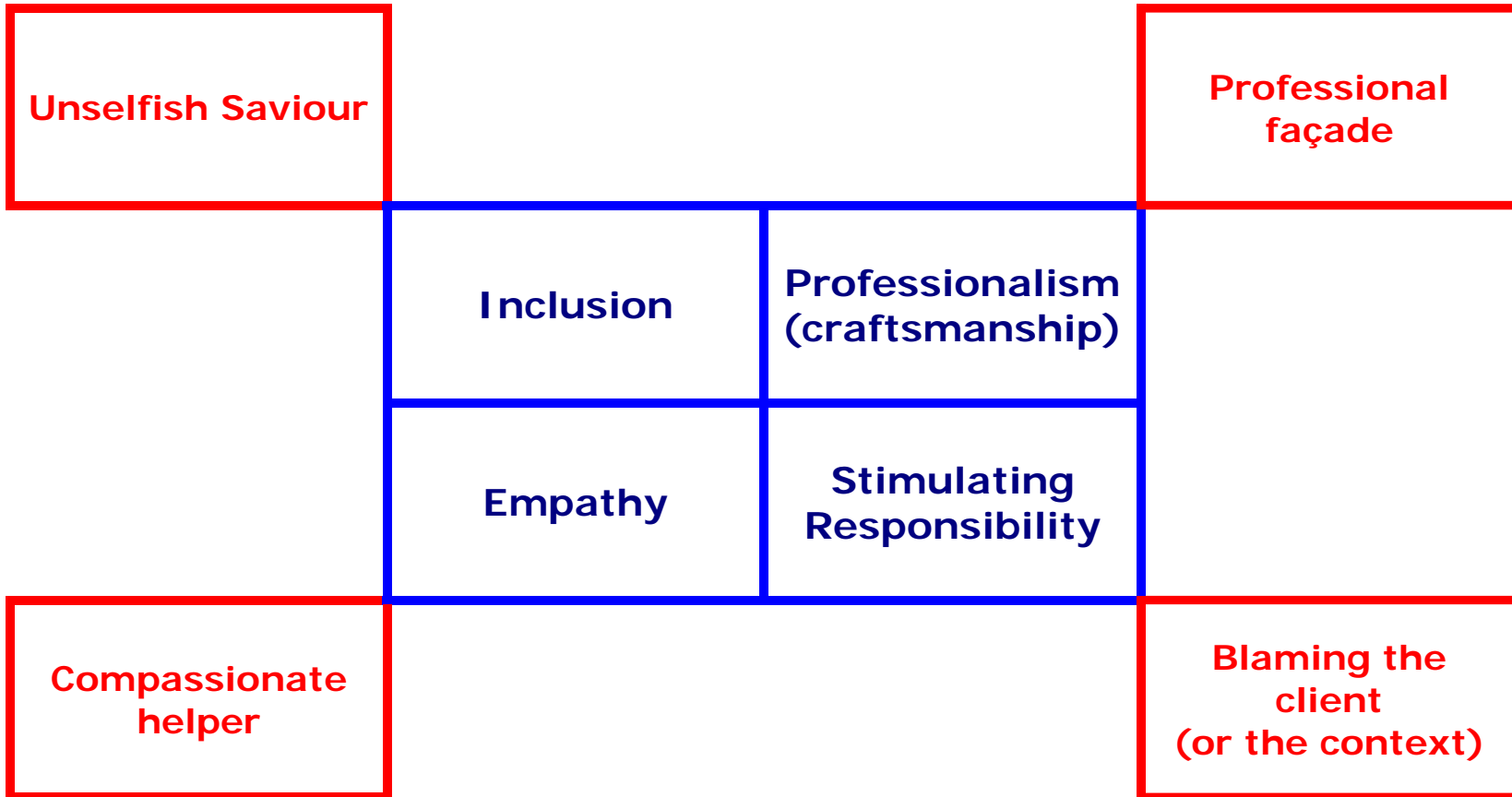
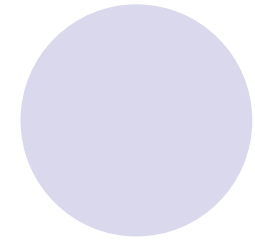
**Involved**



**Standoffish**

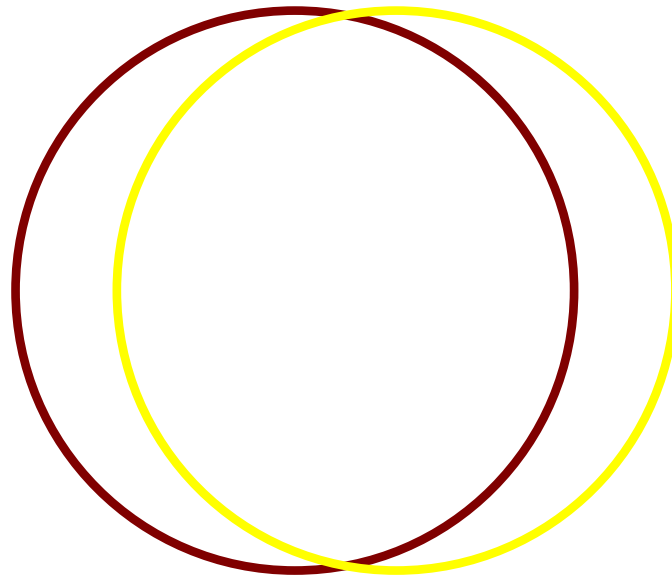


**Distant**



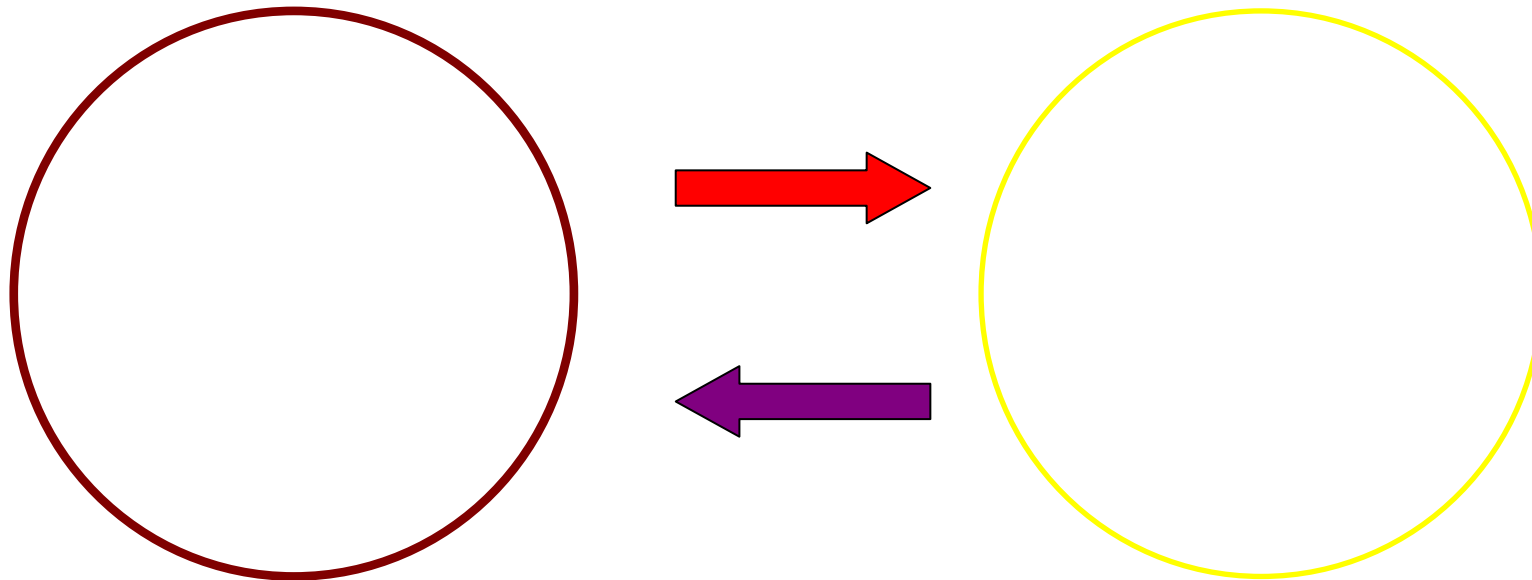
# Confluence: fusion, merger, symbiosis

**I = You = WE**



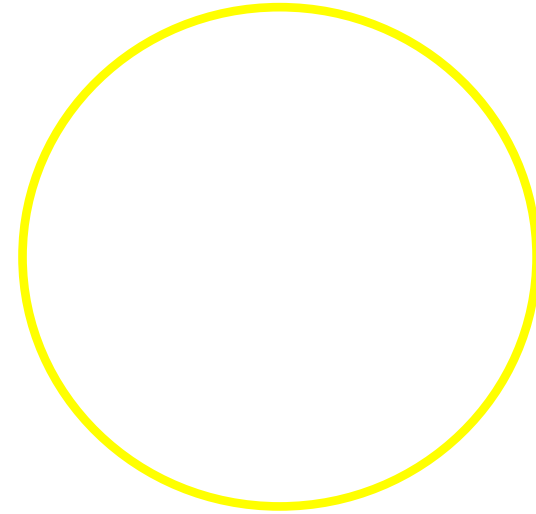
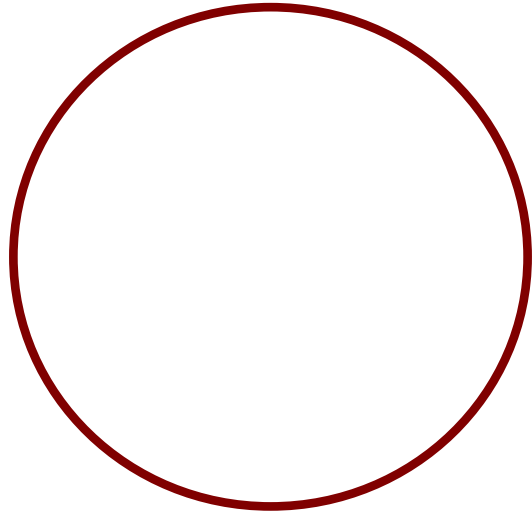
**Blaming, struggle, fight**

**I against You**

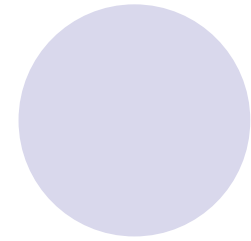
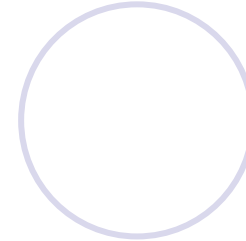
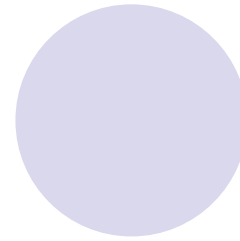
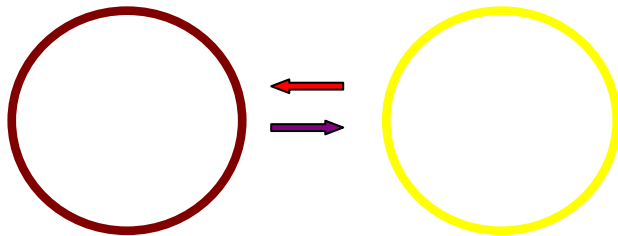
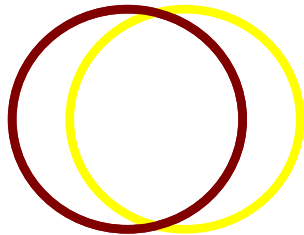
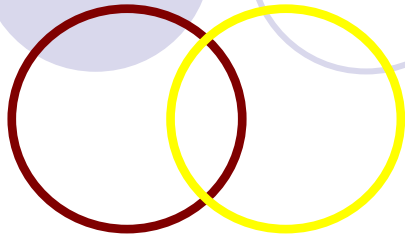


**Professional façade, abandon,  
flight**

**I abandon You**



# Summary



**Inclusion:**

**I and You**

**Confluence:**

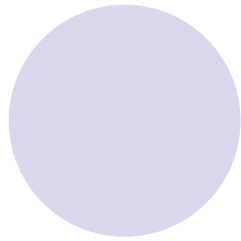
**We**

**Opposition:**

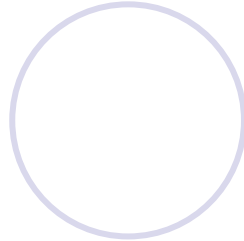
**I against You**

**Isolation:**

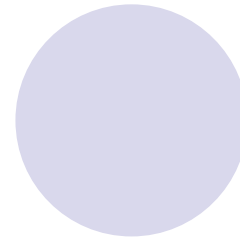
**I abandon You**



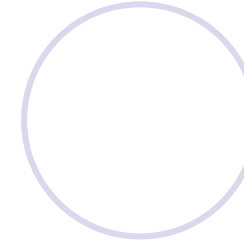
**Confluent**



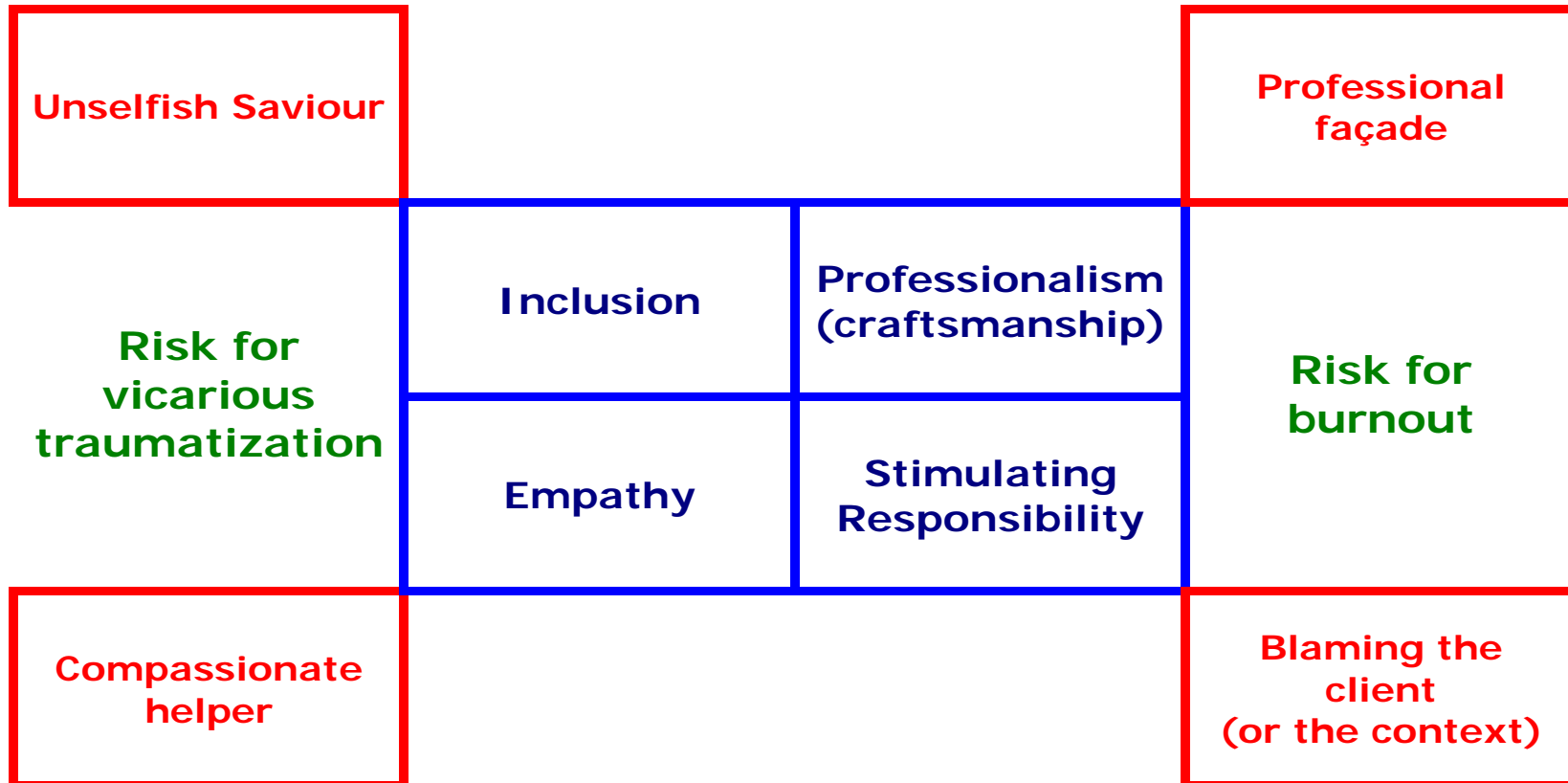
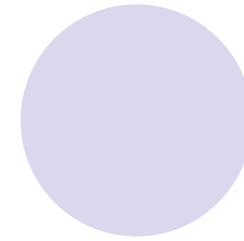
**Involved**



**Standoffish**



**Distant**



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# Numbers

- **Burnout:**

- 95 % stay in office if working conditions change

- **Secondary Traumatization**

- 50 % make a career shift outside the non profit sector
- 25 % make a career shift but inside the non profit sector

**ONLY**

- 25 % stay in office

A decorative graphic at the top of the slide consists of two overlapping circles on the left and three separate circles on the right. The leftmost circle is solid light blue, and the one it overlaps is a white circle with a light blue outline. The three circles on the right are arranged horizontally: a solid light blue circle, a white circle with a light blue outline, and another solid light blue circle.

# Prevention

- **Training institutes:**
  - Not only succes stories
  - Info about risk
  - Attention on coping
- **Employers and colleagues:**
  - Training facilities, intervison, supervision
  - Correction, alertness for signs of sec. trauma.
  - Job variation, job rotation
  - Combination work and private life
  - Appreciation
- **Partner, children and friends:**
  - Mandated to intervene
- **Self care:**



# Self care

1. **Physical** self care
2. **Psychological** self care
3. **Emotional** self care
4. **Professional** self care
5. **Balance**

# Physical selfcare



1. I eat regularly (breakfast, lunch, diner) and healthy.
2. I have physical exercises.
3. I have preventive medical care.
4. I have medical care if necessary
5. I go on sick leave when I am sick.
6. I have massages.
7. I dans, swim, walk, run, sport, sing or other amusing physical activities.
8. I take time for sex with myself or with a partner.
9. I get enough sleep.
10. I carry the cloths I like.
11. I take vacation
12. I make daytrips and take short vacations
13. I put the telephone of the hook



# Pshycological self care

1. I make time for self reflection.
2. I am in psychotherapy.
3. I have a diary.
4. I read stuff that has nothing to do with work
5. I do something without being an expert or responsible
6. I reduce stress in my life
7. I pay attention to my inner experience: my thoughts, my opinions, my convictions and emotions.
8. I show different aspects of my self.
9. I connect my intelligence with new areas: art exposition, sports event, theatre, etc.
10. I practice accepting the attention from others.
11. I say – now and then – no to new responsibilities.



# Emotional self care

1. I spend time with others if their company is amusing.
2. I stay in contact with the important others in my life.
3. I compliment my self,
4. I appreciate my self.
5. I love my self.
6. I read my favorite books again, I like to see good movies again.
7. I discover amusing activities, people, objects, relations, places and look them up.
8. I allow my self to cry.
9. I look for situations and people where I can laugh.
10. I show my indignation in social actions, letters, donations, protest, demonstrations.
11. I play with children.



# Professional self care

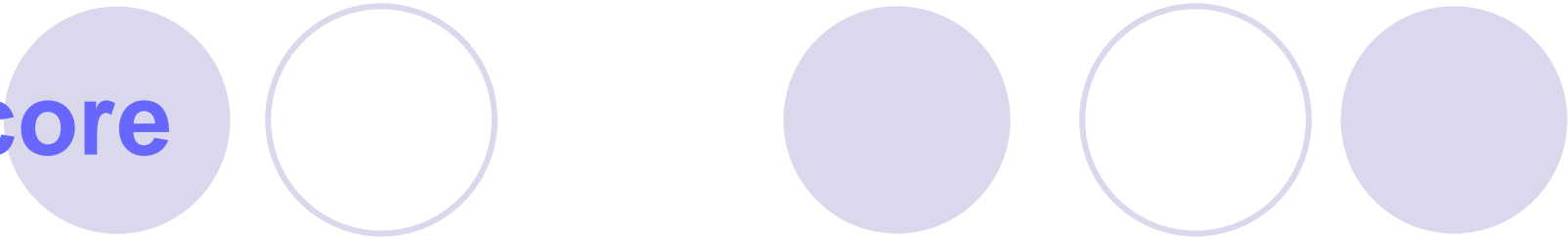
1. I take breaks during a working day (ex. lunch).
2. I take the time to talk to colleagues.
3. I take the time to finish assignments.
4. I find out which projects and assignments are exiting and rewarding.
5. I impose boundaries to my colleagues and clients.
6. I balance my case load so that no day or part of a day becomes too heavy.
7. I furnish my work space so that it is comfortable and agrees with me.
8. I am in supervision and supervision.
9. I negotiate with my employer about my professional and financial needs.
10. My colleagues are supportive.
11. I am professionally interested in other domains than trauma.

# Balance



1. I aim at a balance in my professional life and my working day.
2. I strive for a balance between work, family.

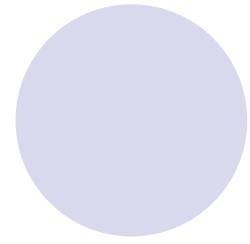
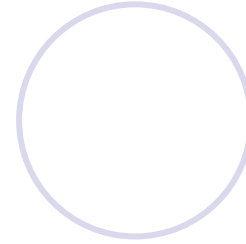
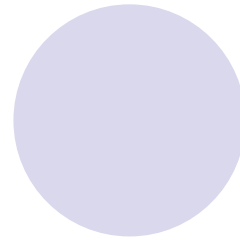
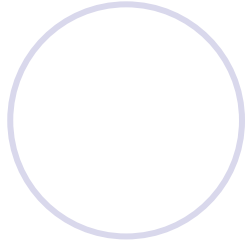
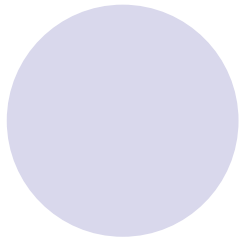
**Score**



- Often (5 points)
- Sometimes (4 points)
- Rarely (no score)
- Never (no score)
- Not applicable (no score)

# Score (2)

- **Physical self-care:** max. score is 65 score 4+5 =
- **Psychological self-care:** max. score is 60 score 4+5 =
- **Emotional self-care:** max. score is 50 score 4+5 =
- **Professional self-care** max. score is 55 score 4+5 =
- **Balance:** max. score is 10 score 4+5 =



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**Reference**

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Send an e-mail to

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