

White Paper: From Protection to Safety

Out of Systems of Fear Through Connection



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Status: released

Version: 1.0.0 (build 6)

Date: 2026-07-16

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OrgIQ Manifest: Passion for People builds Systems for Success

OrgIQ—Organizational Intelligence (Quotient)—is a framework that redefines how we see organizations. At its heart lies a simple but profound shift: to think from the perspective of the individual. Every person experiences their own reality, shaped by their network of relationships. Each perspective is unique. There is no single right or wrong.

An organization is the superposition of all these *Networks*. This is complexity. We can never fully model or control it—but we can give it direction and purpose. Intelligent organizations embrace this complexity rather than ignore or oversimplify it.

When we focus on human complexity, the range of possible solutions expands dramatically. Business practices and structures can be brought into harmony with the natural dynamics of human relationships, psychology, and social interaction.

Our manifesto is rooted in lived experience. We have seen the transformative power of genuine connection, individuality, and purpose-driven leadership. OrgIQ helps create environments where empathy, understanding, and mutual respect thrive—where people feel seen, heard, and valued. This sense of emotional safety is the foundation on which individuals and groups reach their full potential.

We believe in value over control. Control breaks perspective, creates overhead, and breeds mistrust. Relationships and trust, on the other hand, unleash extraordinary productivity and fulfillment. Purpose is not measured by words, but by results.

Join us in redefining organizational excellence. Let's build intelligent systems, embrace complexity, and make space for purpose and joy. **Welcome to OrgIQ—where the true potential of your people becomes the strength of your organization.**

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Essence—From Patriarchy to Safety

For years, patriarchy has been debated. Often emotionally, often morally and often rightly so. And at the same time, it remains surprisingly unclear what we are actually talking about.

When you strip the term down to its core, you do not arrive at men, power, or history. You arrive at a state.

Patriarchy is protection mode.

A system perceives danger and organizes itself accordingly: control, hierarchy, dominance, clear boundaries. Fast, efficient, survivable. Under acute threat, this is not only useful, but necessary. Without protection, no system would last long.

Its counterpart is neither a political system nor a romantic idea. It is another state.

Matriarchy is relationship mode.

A system experiences safety and organizes itself accordingly: trust, closeness, cooperation, soft coordination. Not because it is naive, but because there is no acute danger. Energy does not have to flow into defense; it can flow into connection and development.

Both belong together. Every healthy system can protect and connect. Like a body: a clear boundary to the outside, living collaboration on the inside. The problem begins where this balance tips. And that is exactly where we are right now.

We see protection mode everywhere. In relationships, in teams, in politics, in debates. Control replaces trust. Morality replaces connection. Positions harden, spaces become narrower. Not because people have become “worse,” but because systems perceive danger.

And when a system perceives danger, it does exactly what it is meant to do: it protects itself. That is the decisive shift in perspective. We no longer have to ask who is to blame. We have to ask where safety is missing.

Because a system in protection mode cannot be changed through appeals. You cannot tell it to relax. On the contrary: pressure only increases the perceived danger. That is why many current attempts at solutions fall short. They fight symptoms, but often reinforce the state from which these symptoms arise.

What is missing is not less protection. What is missing is more experienced safety. More spaces in which connection is possible without risk. More experiences in which trust holds. More systems that are stable not only because they control, but because they hold together.

We do not need less patriarchy. We need more matriarchy. Not as an ideology, but as an experienced capacity. As a state. As a lived reality inside our systems. Only when safety emerges on the inside can protection on the outside become meaningful.

The Balance of Matriarchy and Patriarchy

“Patriarchy is cool”

People have been complaining about patriarchy forever. Rightly and wrongly. Both at the same time. Because most of the time it is completely unclear what is meant by it and why complaining about it feels right.

A short story to explain: A four-year-old sister was attacked by a dog. When her six-year-old brother saw it, he stepped in between. Both survived, but he also had severe bites on his face. When asked why he did it, the boy said, “If one of us had to die, it should have been me.”

In every real story, motives naturally overlap. The willingness to sacrifice is more about testosterone, but the reaction to danger, meaning protection, is the core of patriarchy: A danger comes from the outside and I try to protect us from it. If necessary, I sacrifice myself. And because men are more replaceable, this task was linguistically assigned to fathers. Patriarchy is protection from danger. Assigning tasks and behavior patterns to a gender is, of course, sexist and misleading—but the underlying function is real.

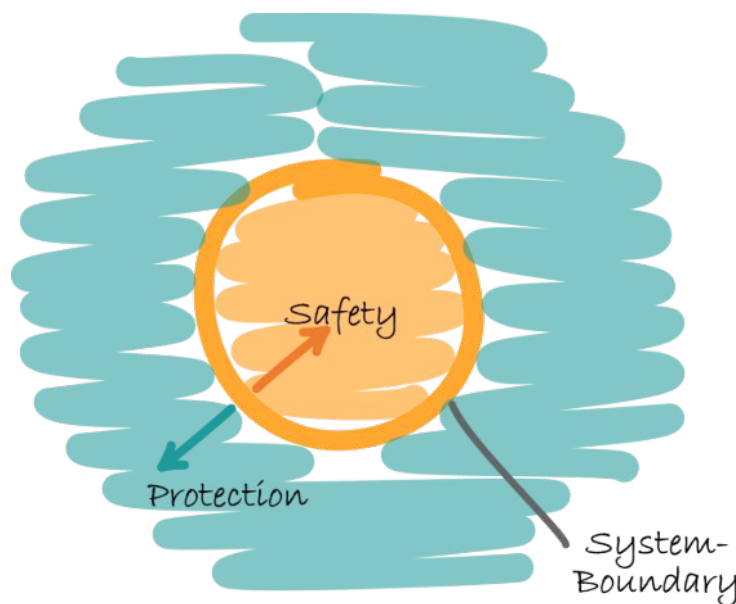


Figure 1: Intelligent systems want safety on the inside and protection from the outside. Protection only where it is necessary. For this to work, we need a clear system boundary.

But let us stay with the terms for a moment longer, until we have a better understanding.

Matriarchy is therefore the “opposite.” While patriarchy is supposed to deal with attacks from the outside, the task of matriarchy is to create structure and order on the inside. Matriarchy organizes safe togetherness.

And here we already have one of the interesting word pairs: protection and safety. To us, they sound similar, but they are very different. They have different mechanisms.

I need protection where danger threatens. Safety is the state in which we hold together.

Where protection relies on violence, strength, weapons, power, and control, safety is based on connection, trust, closeness, cohesion, and collaboration.

Both serve the survival of the system, but one organizes the internal interplay, while the other makes sure that nothing enters the system that could destroy it.

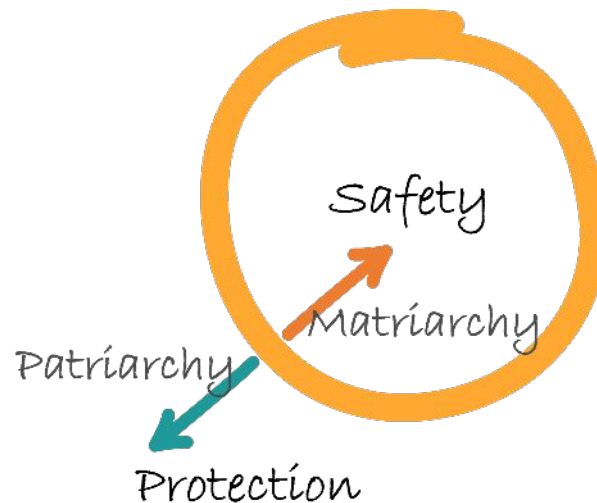


Figure 2: Protection under threat, safety always.

We also find this in the body: the interplay of the organs is shaped by trust. It is optimized for closeness, connection, and collaboration. But there is a clear system boundary and response patterns that ensure the body remains intact.



Figure 3: Like Yin and Yang: Every system needs the interplay of both parts

And yet there are still internal protection mechanisms that respond when a threat is detected on the inside. Then the inner system can also go into panic.

Using the old terms, the internal organization of the organs would therefore be “matriarchy,” and protection toward the outside (including the skin as system boundary and all defense mechanisms) would be “patriarchy.”

The moment something enters us (bacteria, viruses, knives, ...), the inside can also enter a state of emergency. Then we also have “patriarchy” on the inside, because we can no longer trust.

First marker: When we see “patriarchy” inside the system something has gone wrong. The system and the system boundaries have been violated. There is a state of emergency.

“Patriarchy is good”

Let us look again at the opening thought. What was your first reaction? Your first feeling?

Your first impulse shows whether you yourself follow the patriarchal pattern of thought or not. Were you in defense or resistance? Was your first impulse to be against it? Good, then you yourself are in protection mode.

Which does not mean it has to stay that way. You make that decision today.

Freely following the Chinese proverb, the best time would have been 10 or 20 years ago, but the second-best time is now. So I am glad you are here.

Patriarchy describes our **Gecko** (brainstem), and for that reason the term is sexist and misleading. It includes all behavior patterns, methods, techniques, and tools we use to **protect** and **defend**. These are the famous *fight*, *flight* and *freeze* patterns. (We will go into this in more depth further below.)

When we see or feel danger, we automatically switch into Gecko mode, into “patriarchy.” We protect, and in doing so we also decide over others. Everything else is subordinated to the perceived danger.

Matriarchy is another basic state. That is the **relationship mode**. It is **connection**, trust, and from that, safety in the pack.

Even if they sound similar to us, protection and safety are opposites. From the pack perspective, they point in different directions. Protection is directed against danger or threat from the outside. I secure the system. Safety is the state of peace and relaxation, of cohesion and shared direction inside the system.

When we demand safety (on the outside), we are lost. We have understood neither side and are in “patriarchy”. Whenever we want to impose something on others (people we do not even know), we are in fear and in patriarchy.

Outside our system boundaries, there can be no safety. We cannot make a statement. If I have no data to calculate a probability, then I should assume a neutral environment. Often I do have data, and then I honestly adjust my assessment.

Safety is calculated by our Limbi (our emotional/social intelligence). It is a probability function: How likely is it that I am safe in the current environment? This can range between 100 and 0 percent. In practice, it is more likely between 87 and 13 percent. We rarely find the extremes.

Relationship and attachment mean that I have environments in which I can make a very good statement and, at the same time, have a very high level of safety. In many families and environments we are forced into, we may have a lot of data, but low safety. The core idea of the pack is that both come together.

If you have not experienced a safe environment and want to force it out of desperation (instead of building it), you yourself move into external control and create insecurity for everyone else. And you do it with completely good intentions.

If you experience the sentence “Patriarchy is good” as an attack and respond with defense, then the sentence has attacked part of your worldview (or belief). So you go into defense mode, into self-protection. You respond with “patriarchy.”

In that situation, the Gecko is actually not needed. The reaction tells us another story as well.

When I write this so casually, there is no danger for you at all. If you still react, if your Gecko is hyperactive, then that is a warning light. And this warning light shows that safety is missing.

Patriarchy (or Gecko) is the **emergency mode**. Matriarchy (Limbi, or safety through connection) should be the basic state.

Calling for “less patriarchy” misses the point completely. If we live protection mode on the inside, we do so because safety is missing. Protection mode is meant to fill the vacuum of missing safety.

Especially systems without a clear boundary tend toward “patriarchy” everywhere. Because they have no safe “inside.” That again has nothing to do with men or women, but with the Gecko. Incidentally, it is especially active in women, which in turn infects men. Further below, we will see why this is the case and why it also makes sense.

If we want to have less fear, we need to build more safety. In other words: develop and apply relationship skills. And have clear system boundaries.

I do not get rid of darkness by saying “make less darkness.” It only works by adding more light. And it is the same here. We have to actively build safety; then insecurity disappears.

Insecurity does not exist

Insecurity is the absence of safety. Let us take a scale from 10 to 0. And 10 means that we are very sure of our safety. (Which is only another representation of the probability function above.)

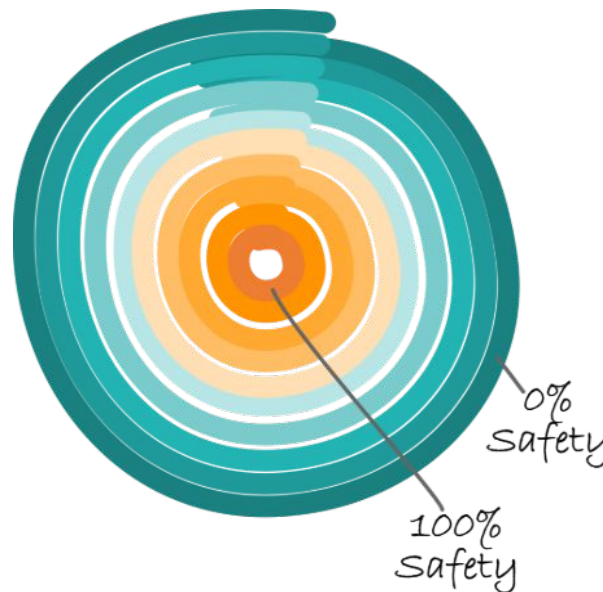


Figure 4: In a healthy system, I have a core of high safety (meaning a lot of data and confirmed safety). With less data (or confirmed insecurity), safety decreases toward the outside. This is a system view.

Almost all of us experience the 10 as a baby. The question is for how long, because at least the “Every Child Can Learn to Sleep” approaches—and many other well-intentioned parenting tips—disturb precisely this safety early on. And that is completely unnecessary.

In this way, one safety after another is taken away from us over the years. And nobody means harm; it only happens because our parents themselves do not know more safety. So if they are a 4 on the absolute scale (meaning that is the maximum safety they have experienced, know, and consider possible), then that is their subjective 10. And they cannot pass on more than that.

That is why the children also end up at a 4. More is not possible in that environment.

The worldview of a dangerous or hostile world is the experienced absence of safety. The world perceived as dangerous is around 5–3, and from 3–0 it becomes a world perceived as hostile.

A world perceived as friendly is 10–6. We call that range safety. These people know areas (larger than their blanket and their smartphone) that are safe.

The smaller the number, the smaller the system we consider worth protecting. At 0 and 1, it is only about our inner pain. This is the image of the knife in the leg. If a knife is stuck in our leg, then everything revolves only around that pain. It is the same with our psyche.

At 3 to 5, it is different aspects (layers) of ourselves that we want to protect.

From 6 onward, more and more people are gradually added. At 10, we have a perspective that actually includes all people. That is then real (unconditional) love. We can see the potential and the wound in every person. How they should be in the world, what place they should fill, and what prevents them from doing so.



Figure 5: The lower my safety, the smaller my system. The circles here are meant to show the system size at the respective level of safety. Under high insecurity, only my pain is safe, or perhaps me under my blanket. Under high safety, it is several people, my pack, or even larger groups. Compared with the figure above, we are not looking at one system here, but comparing systems with different levels of safety. Depending on the maximum safety in my system, this is the color and size of my initial circle from above.

“Love is the unconditional interest in the development of the beloved person.”
(Gerald Hüther)

Love, then, is the tool that creates safety.

In insecurity, we ourselves create insecurity. We are a burden on the system. We are dysfunctional. And as love grows, we become safer and build functional systems.

Dysfunctionality is just another word for being in protection mode in the places where we should be creating safety. Instead of patriarchy, we should say protection mode, fear patterns, or insecurity.

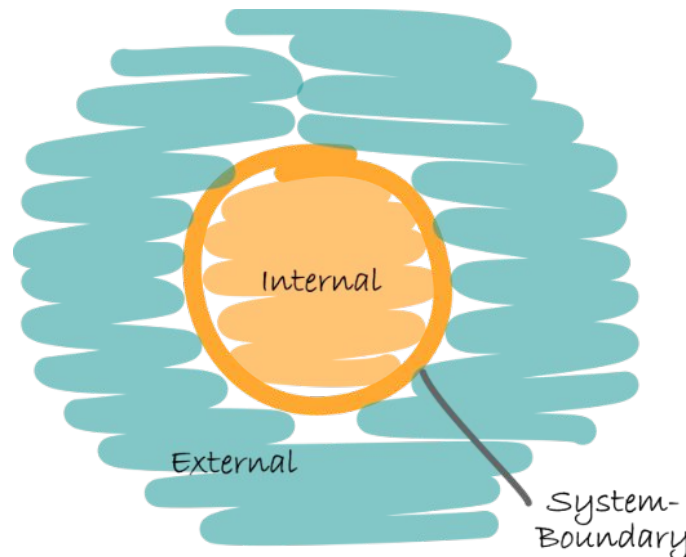


Figure 6: System boundary with inside and outside. Inside safety; toward the outside, we simply have to see. Response depending on the data available.

In a safe system, our pack, we have matriarchy on the inside: a pattern based on trust that creates and deepens safety. So instead of matriarchy, simply safety.

This gives us an inner “we can do this together.” And when an earthquake or another threat comes from outside, we will resist it together from this inner strength and be there for one another. When there is danger from the outside, we need a protective function; there it is useful.

No safety without a boundary

Trust is something that takes time. The core idea of trust is that I can sleep without worry. In an environment where there are no doors. I know that no one from my pack will harm me, that I will not be left behind, and that I will be taken care of if there is danger.

I do not decide these things in three minutes. It takes time until I am sure. And it is decided in the small moments. And in the essential moments: under pressure and stress, at the breaking point. All of this is relationship. Is there truly mutual seeing, hearing, understanding, touching? Because in every opportunity for contact (the Gottmans call this a “bid for connection”) I can turn toward or turn away. Every turning away is betrayal. A breach of trust.

Our **Limbi** (the limbic subsystems) keeps the books. If we are functional on the inside (meaning whole, which means we know safety), then our trust is oriented toward the worst moments. Because we want to know what is possible. What is the minimum social behavior this person is capable of? That shows us the truth.

That is why system boundaries are so important. And trust-building. Without clear boundaries, we no longer know what our system is. What is inside and what is outside?

Let us imagine a pack as a graph. This could be a family, team, company, or association. The people are the nodes, and the relationships among them are the edges, the connecting lines.

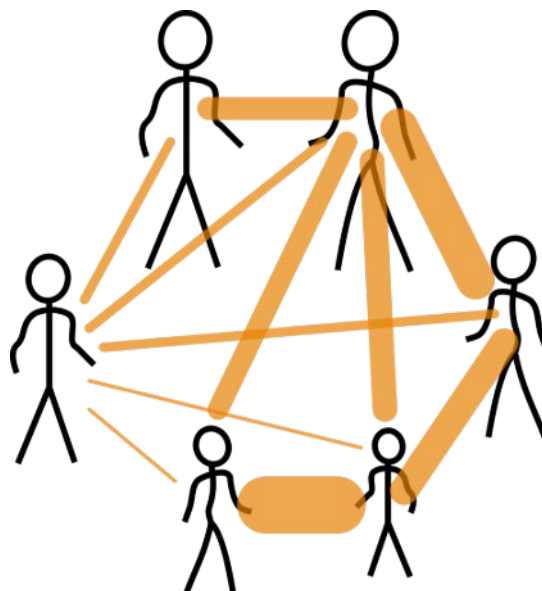


Figure 7: A simple graph of a family and the possible relationships (already shown here in different qualities).

Trust exists along the edges, meaning personal relationships. Of those, we humans have humans about 5 close and 10 loose ones. That is our cognitive and time capacity limit. In the 5 close relationships, we can make a statement about trustworthiness. If we use the scale from 10 to 0, the main point is that we can say where someone stands. And yes, unreliability can be an issue, but it is not a problem if I know it.

Betrayal, however — someone who wants to harm our pack — cannot be tolerated. If we do not have the same goal, we are not in the same pack. So the *Why* (what for) is relevant. In all other points, we can rub against each other.

- ▶ The system boundary is defined by *purpose* and the values. That decides what is inside or outside the system.
- ▶ Whoever comes in must show (and prove) that they belong; that is, that they share *purpose* and values.
- ▶ Never does everyone have to connect with everyone, but everyone has to connect with someone! Because without close attachment in the system (pack), I do not belong. I trust no one and no one trusts me.
- ▶ The overall cohesion comes through indirections: I trust you (safety ≥ 6 and close circle), and you trust the other person. Then I am also *safe* with them.
- ▶ These indirections may extend over one or two levels; after that, they become thin. If they only go through loose contacts, I lack data. Missing data means decreasing safety.

- The basic idea is the calculation of a probability. Small groups with clear safety are easier; large groups offer more protection, but in principle less safety. The upper limit from economics is probably around 40 people. Relationships between groups create overlaps. This is how larger structures can also become safe.

Patriarchy and matriarchy in the brain

When we talk about patriarchy today, it is often about privileges. Patriarchy is assigned to men and placed under the assumption that men benefit from it.

And men are afraid of matriarchy because they think women benefit.

The irony: The thought alone that someone “benefits” shows that we live in a fear structure. So whenever we are afraid and react from fear — the survival mechanisms from fear are *Fight, flight, freeze* — means we are in “patriarchy.” And that is only about survival. Noonebenefits because everyone remains in fear. That means also the entire current feminist movement is patriarchal.

To understand a bit better what exactly is happening there, let us return to our story. We have the two siblings, and the six-year-old is willing to sacrifice himself for his sister. To protect her. And I think everyone finds that good and admirable. (Apart from the fact, of course, that it would have been better if this situation had never arisen.)

But when the boy throws himself between the dog and his sister, he is also exercising external control. He decides on behalf of his sister that she does not want to be bitten by the dog and may even push her aside. Still, we would probably all conclude that this was appropriate and justified in that situation. Right?

Now let us take another situation. The two are sitting in front of the phone or tablet and watching a series. And the brother (two years older) thinks, “this is not good for you,” and covers his sister’s eyes or turns off the tablet. Is that still appropriate and justified?

We can ask the same question about every intervention by parents. When is it appropriate, and when does the violation of self-determination weigh more heavily?

Basic needs

To understand the whole setting even better, we take a short excursion into our inner world. At our very core are the emotional or psychological basic needs. The central need is bonding, and from real, healthy **bonding** emerge **safety**, **self-worth** and **self-determination**.

These three elements can unfold and develop. At the same time, they are **markers** for the **quality** of the **relationship**. If we violate safety, self-worth, or self-determination, we also violate the relationship.

For safety, we can distinguish the 4 stages: safe to *be*, safe to *learn*, safe to *contribute* and safe to *question* or to *criticize*.

Because not every contact is a relationship. *It is a relationship when I am safe*. When there is trust and closeness.

But when I experience power, control, and external determination, I know that I cannot trust and that I am not trusted either. Above all, I learn through this that I cannot trust myself.

Protection (usually through power, control, rules, violence) is always abuse when the external determination is not justified. When there was no attack from the outside. And why do we see it this way? This also has to do with our brain. And our model here is deliberately simple, but entirely sufficient, even if it is already 70 years old.

We use the *triune brain* or Gecko model everywhere as an entry point. For the first steps into neurology, it is entirely sufficient because it explains observations and perceptions well. And it is easy to remember.

A first deepening for advanced readers is the motivational systems of Panksepp. He describes seven sub-functions of Limbi. We notice that the boundary between Limbi and Gecko becomes blurred when the systems are in negative energy.

The current state of research moves toward networks and *predictive processing*. We have dedicated a separate white paper to that, but as an architecture pattern for intelligent organizations.

So we use the models as needed. Because models are always only images used to explain a particular perspective. And we always take the simplest one that serves the current purpose. Models are never correct, but if we use the right one in the right place, they are useful.

In the story with the dog, our Gecko reacts. That is our brainstem (or reptilian brain) and a very old part that is very simple but extremely fast and does everything to keep us alive.

Existential threats (here, the dog) are recognized as such, and we go into *fight, flight* or *freeze*. Depending on what our Gecko considers appropriate in the situation.

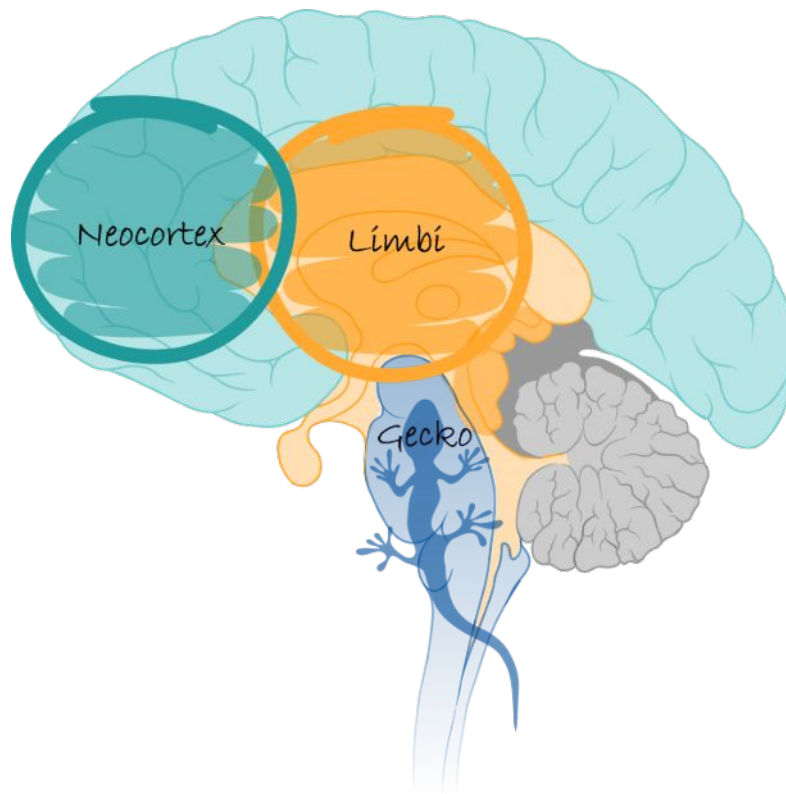


Figure 8: An image to get to know Gecko and Limbi.

And this usually happens so quickly that it completely bypasses our consciousness.

Bonding, connection, and all social (or emotional) intelligence tend to be located in Limbi. This is a group of several systems responsible for building and maintaining a safe environment. Our social brain, or the connection brain. This is also the place where psychological basic needs come into play.

With this simple image, we can also understand why we find the intervention with the dog okay, and probably other interventions (external determinations) not okay.

With the dog, we also react even when we only hear the story, with the Gecko. Survival comes first. But when life is not directly threatened, protection should not be lived in the family; safety should. There, interference is a violation of self-determination and therefore a violation of the relationship.

If processing gets stuck in the Gecko, we understand interference. If it continues into Limbi, the irritation about interference (external determination) outweighs it. When we experience people manipulating us (here, creating an abstract fear to justify interference/external determination), all warning lights go on in a healthy Limbi.

Returning to our terms patriarchy and matriarchy, Gecko is the toolbox for patriarchy — meaning *skills* and reaction patterns — while our Limbi is the toolbox for matriarchy. We all — completely independent of gender and age — have both. And this is not a division of tasks between men and women; it is about using the right patterns and *skills* in the

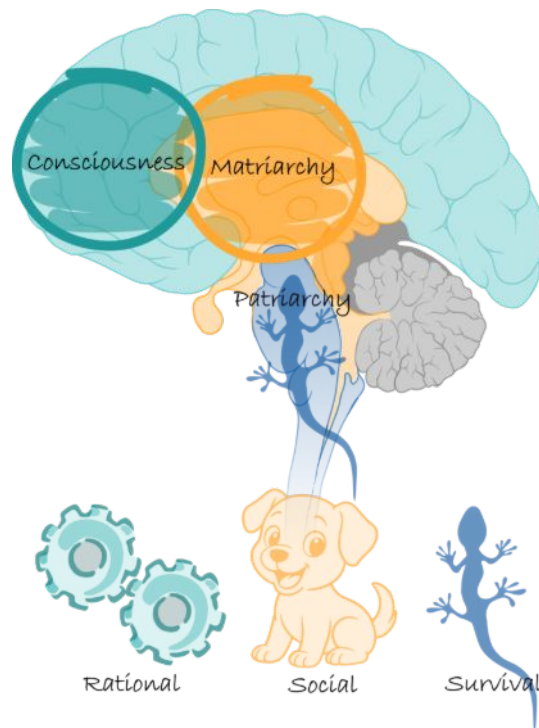


Figure 9: A simple model of the brain.

right context. And now that sounds easy. We all have both parts in the brain; we could (even entirely analytically) look at what context we are in and then apply either Gecko (rather automatically) or Limbi (also semi-automatically, if we are not in fear).

But when we look at the world, we see that almost everywhere there is fear — meaning patriarchal patterns and structures. Mistrust, rules, control, power, being right, and deciding over others. While our Gecko is obviously hyperactive, our Limbi does nothing (at least nothing good). How can that be?

“Matriarchy is even cooler” — unfortunately, we just can’t do it

Of course it should say “Limbi is cooler.” And this is not about the Gecko being bad, but a constantly active Gecko should not be normal. The world we shape, especially our togetherness, should be shaped by Limbi. But for that we need a few things.

- ▷ Clear systems with clear boundaries
- ▷ The ability to understand (to assess well) where I currently am
- ▷ The skills to respond appropriately to the system

We only see Gecko (that is, patriarchy) because it is the emergency program. When everything else collapses, we all go into Gecko mode. Limbi (matriarchy) is a higher-energy state. A conscious program. While Gecko is survival mode, the autopilot, Limbi is life mode. Active, conscious, and alive. And we only manage that when we have a minimum level of safety.

One thing that bothers me about the thought patterns of patriarchy and matriarchy, besides the sexism, is that they are binary thinking. There is one state or the other. And for a simple introduction like this, that is sufficient. This gives us a simple world: one circle and therefore an outside and an inside.

The problem, however, is that safety arises in relationships. Every single relationship has its own “safety level.” All of this can also change continuously, but I cannot command it for a group. (That would immediately be patriarchy again.) Whenever I demand something from others, I am in external determination and in patriarchy. So all forms of *Princess treatment* and *entitlement*, just like dominance behavior, are patterns of insecurity, thus patriarchal.

If we use circles, then we should use many circles. To simplify this again, we use the scale from 0 to 10. Or from 0% to 100%. (We already had that above.)

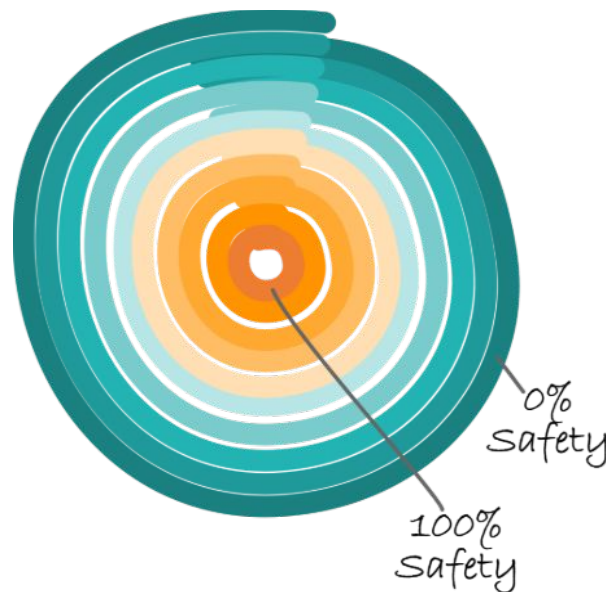


Figure 10: Safety is gradual and fluid. Of course, we can roughly divide it into two colors here, but intelligent systems respond with finer adjustment.

So we have a shell model that tells me how safe the current shell is right now. I can be 100% safe or 0% safe. In everyday language, we use the word “insecurity” when we are below 50% safety.

Orange here stands for safety and turquoise for insecurity. Dark orange is safely safe. Dark turquoise is safely unsafe.

So between 7 and 12 years of age, we should be able to recognize (feel) without difficulty which circle our environment currently corresponds to. This is not about absolute precision, but about speed and the right order of magnitude.

Alongside recognizing it, we should also have the abilities to behave appropriately. That is, to apply reaction patterns that fit the respective circle.

If we can do both, then we are socially mature.

If we have a safe environment, our nervous system can relax. We have time and energy that go beyond self-protection. Art, culture, stories, encounter are signs of a relieved nervous system.

Because safety means the effort of self-protection is distributed across many shoulders.

A new view of trauma

We come into the world with the potential for 100% safety. While babies are still granted this, very early on, perhaps from age 3, it becomes about preparing us for the real world. *The seriousness of life*. Life is not a wish concert, a pony farm, or a piece of cake. So better an early disappointment than dreaming of a beautiful world. This is where the basic transmission of worldview between generations already takes place.

Educational goal: Best to become tough. Then you can take things and survive.

This is meant lovingly. It is simply the maximum of love (and worldview) that these parents know and can imagine. Each of us thinks that the maximum safety we have personally experienced is the 10 on the absolute scale. That is the big problem: we do not see our safety, our worldview, on the absolute scale. Because then we would know that there is more.

When we talk about abuse, it is the violation of basic needs. The violation of safety is always affected by it.

How this safety is violated is completely irrelevant to the result. Currently (2024–2026), there is much talk about sexual abuse. Usually, this means assault. Yes, that is an issue. But it is only a very narrow segment. All other forms of abuse lead to exactly the same result. The form of the inner injury (to the basic needs) is the same. That is why we may see and evaluate them all equally.

What is interesting is that only about **10% of abuse arises through assault** (regardless of the area). The much larger **90% is withholding**.

As with food: I can overfeed someone or let them starve. In between lies self-determination. And letting someone starve emotionally is common. Not because it is meant maliciously, but because the parents (or whoever is in that position) do not know it any other way themselves.

We can explain this best with language. Suppose there is a basic active vocabulary of 3,000 words. But language at native-speaker level would have 50,000 active words. Here, 3,000 corresponds to insecurity and 50,000 to safety (90%+). If the parents themselves have only learned 3,000 words, then they will teach them to the children and not more. Because they do not even know that there is more.

So the children grow up in the world of 3,000 words. And they also do not know that there is more. Yet we feel our limitation all the time.

Then there is also the over-protection. Parents who keep everything away from their children until they are 23. They grow up in a worldview of *entitlement* and *princess treatment*. So 100% pony farm, but no safety, because protection comes from fear.

Both lack safety. They start with the potential for safety, but it is not fostered or developed. It is even actively dismantled. Parents do this with the best intentions. Because we automatically transfer our worldview to our children. Worldview here means: Which circles can I see? In the existence of which (maximum) safety do I believe?

My worldview is the upper limit I consider possible.

This gives us a good image for trauma: Trauma means that danger was brought into the area defined as safe. Everything from 10 to 6 is gone. It no longer exists for me. Exactly where I should be safe, there is no safety anymore. How exactly this happens — how safety is withdrawn and destroyed — is completely irrelevant. Whether danger is actively experienced, whether insecurity is created through protection mechanisms, or whether safety is simply withheld. The result is always the same.

In this image, we can also look again at the terms *coping* and *healing*.

Coping means: becoming comfortable in danger (fear/pain/disappointment). This can also be the *faking* of safety. We are at level 3 but act as if we had level 7. We cannot think safety, but at the same time we act as if we had it. Imitation. We perform on the outside what is missing on the inside. This also gives us the definition of culture:

*Culture is the set of implicit shared tools and patterns
for dealing with with emotional insecurity.*

Healing means that I try to regain safety step by step. When we talk elsewhere about the stray cats (meaning the whole avoidance topic), it is about safety. Some want to remain in insecurity because they believe in nothing. And at that point their toolbox for dealing with the world is already empty. (Except, of course, for "culture.")

But the *stray cats* are the **secret heroes**. They know no safety, but they have hope. That is why they try things out. In small steps, they want to expand their safety, level by level, just a little.

They build trust by carefully collecting data points. Always ready to flee.

Through the developmental phases of the brain, the initial worldview is built up by age 10/12. After that, from 12 to 16, we have a good chance for an update.

During that time, we should leave the family and get to know new contexts. There we can test our assumptions about the world.

We still see parts of this: From that age onward, people turn more toward the peer group. But because our structures keep us in school and family (until 18/20), we usually miss the great opportunity this period offers.

That is why most stray cats are on the move only until their mid-twenties at most. Even after that, nothing is impossible, but it becomes increasingly difficult and costly. And because our brain wants to save energy, these actions tend to be avoided.

The longing to be seen

As social beings, our greatest (existential) fear is losing our pack. Because alone we do not survive. From this basic thought — from biology — mutual seeing, hearing, understanding, and touching makes sense. I continuously check and confirm ongoing belonging. Our Limbi drives this, and when everything is good, our Limbi is calm. When we are rejected, Limbi becomes restless. When we are invisible, Limbi is in panic.

In the papers on *avoidance* and *ghosting* we have dealt with these parts in detail:

https://orgiq.org/home/downloads/attachment/orgiq_whitepaper_avoidancepattern_release_de/,

https://orgiq.org/orgiq_whitepaper_straycatmodel_release_de/

So when we are not seen, this is the worst state for us humans. That is why people do everything to be seen. First as human beings, and if that does not work, in any form and role that is rewarded.

Now the topic of safety comes in as well. It is not only about superficial perception, but about being truly seen. And accepted. So people see me and sincerely say, “Good that you are with us.” I can truly be myself and do not have to bend myself so that I am allowed to belong. Then I am in the first stage of safety, and all of that which we saw above (the “please do not be yourself, but be like this”) does not happen.

If we are not seen in this way (which, depending on how you count, is the case for 76–98% of us), then we look for a replacement. A substitution that looks exactly the same, calms us for a moment but is ineffective at its core. Which is why we need more and more of it so we can forget our emptiness for a moment.

Every word for substitution or replacement can be misunderstood. Because sometimes a replacement is something fully adequate. I have no wheat flour and use spelt instead. Then I may have to watch and adapt a few things, but at its core it is a full replacement.

That is precisely *not* what is meant here. Instead of a great meal, we only have a picture of a great meal. It looks wonderful, but it does not make us full. I can still post it on social media, but it is not real and it does not satisfy.

And the substitute for visibility is attention. I get my *likes* or whatever my source of energy looks like. It does not make us full, but it numbs us enough. And it is usually the only thing we still know. Then we are in survival mode and in the “ego,” as most people say. Yet these are only defense and survival strategies.

The classics

- ▷ Self-harm
- ▷ Devaluation of others (this is the source of bullying)
- ▷ Shining through possessions and performance
- ▷ Escaping into other worlds (books, series, computer games, ...)

But there is one area where boys and girls differ. When girls want attention, they make themselves naked. So sexualization and hyper-sexualization, especially among children and adolescents, is the desire for visibility. There are also boys who try this¹, but the “male scream” for attention is Violence. Boys and girls each use their respective biological strength.

Even there, everywhere, the same applies: even resistance is attention. Better than being invisible.

The fries story

1 That is the reason for the much-cited dick pics. That is done only by emancipated men who believe that the same rules should apply to everyone. Which quite obviously is not the case.

Imagine you are hungry. And whenever you are hungry, you only get fries. At first that is probably cool, but by day 3 at the latest it becomes disgusting. Actually, you like fries. Or rather, you used to like fries, but always and only fries is simply terrible.

Can you feel that? You no longer even want to become hungry. Something beautiful has been spoiled for you because you get it all the time and exclusively. Completely understandable that you no longer want it.

Do you think everyone can understand that? That everyone can feel it?

Probably yes, with one exception: people who are starving. People who get nothing at all. For them, fries are still heaven, and they will not understand you.

This is a major divide between men and women: women complain about one-sided attention (sexualization). And rightly so. (Although later, with marker #4, we will see that it is partly self-created. I can only see what I am able to see.)

But for people who are invisible (about 80% of men), sexualization would be paradise.

And those are exactly the ones trying to get it through the much-mentioned dick pics. Which of course does not work, because there are different reward systems.

Attention is currently the strongest currency. Every business wants to get a bit of our attention. And this is new, because for most of the time attention was reserved for interpersonal contact. It was the *safety check* in the pack. It was a building block in relationship-building. Now the aid has become the replacement. There too, we remain stuck on the surface.

This also explains why we invest so much time, energy, and money into everything that generates attention. The role, facade, and mask we create and maintain for attention has become much more important than actual life. We need unconditional love and acceptance. If we do not get it, attention has to do.

This leads to the current strategy: Great packaging is important because no one is interested in the content anymore anyway.

And with that, attention is also a perfect metric for the absence of connection. The more I invest in attention, the more certain it is that I have no connection. Neither with myself nor with anyone else. We do not want to use this as a judgment, only as a way to understand.

My standard is simple: I look at actions and ask, "Does this action create connection? Does it build trust, or does it disturb trust?" If it does not build connection, I will point it out and I will not continue supporting this path. So I am not saying you are not allowed to run into the wall. But I will tell you that you are doing it and that there is a door. And I will take the door.

The pointer may happen in a funny, playful way, but when we do things through which no connection is created, they are meaningless. Or a transition. The goal should be to learn relationship again. Out of fear and into the ability to build safety.

Inner emptiness is the gap we leave in the world

So what is all this for? Why are we built this way? It could all be so beautiful and easy, but somehow we humans do not really manage it.

A rabbi comes to God: "Lord, I would like to see hell and also heaven." — "Take Elijah as your guide," says the Creator, "he will show you both." The prophet takes the rabbi by the hand.

He leads him into a large room. All around are people with long spoons. In the middle, boiling on a fire, there is a pot with a delicious meal. Everyone scoops from the pot with their long spoons. But the people look thin, pale, miserable. No wonder: their spoons are too long. They cannot bring them to their mouths. The wonderful food cannot be enjoyed.

The two go outside. "What a strange room that was," the rabbi asks the prophet. "Hell," is the answer.

They enter a second room. Everything is exactly like in the first. All around are people with long spoons. In the middle, boiling on a fire, there is a pot with a delicious meal. Everyone scoops from the pot with their long spoons.

But there is one difference from the first room: these people look healthy, well nourished, happy. "How is that possible?" The rabbi looks closely. Then he sees the reason: these people put the spoons into one another's mouths. They feed one another.

Then the rabbi knows where he is.

The magic word is *Community Actualization*. Probably coined by Maslow after he had been with the Siksika. There he experienced what a culture looks like when it is designed so that the community continually develops into its best natural version.

Everything else we wish for (less poverty, violence, addiction, pain) is a side effect of that. Or the other way around: these are warning lights that society is optimizing for the wrong goal.

Self-Actualization (meaning the realization of one's own best natural version) is only the means to get into *Community Actualization* (the realization of the pack's best natural version). But when we are stuck in Gecko, *Self-Actualization* becomes superficial *Self-Care*. And this tiny difference (am I in fear and focused on myself, or am I in connection and focused on everyone, myself included) is the difference between hell and heaven.

The image behind this is a puzzle. Every piece is unique, but connected. And all unique pieces together create the picture. If all pieces are the same, there is no picture. **If we cannot take our place, we feel lost and empty.** Our inner emptiness is therefore the gap we leave in the world.

Love means seeing the uniqueness in ourselves and in others. With the puzzle worldview, there is also no competition and no comparison. Devaluing, comparing, and judging come from the assumption that we all have to conform to one uniform ideal. But then we would have been made that way. Both religion and biology (mutation and selection) tell a different story. Not the norm, but uniqueness, experimentation, is the recipe for survival.

We find the same idea in mathematics, in game theory: there, a distinction is made between *finite* and *infinite games*. In other words, finite or infinite games. Life is an *infinite game*. There are no rules, no winners; it is only about staying in the game.

Finite thinking comes from insecurity (pain). I want to win. It is about direct comparison, my (wounded) ego. I cannot see or care for a larger system.

Infinite thinking goes beyond me and beyond generations. I will sacrifice short-term successes for long-term survival. I think in *Community Actualization*, in change.

If you forget everything else, remember this: it is never really only about us, but about the pack, the puzzle, the whole picture. Our collective *Purpose*: us as a social community. We are built to do everything we can so that we can take our place there. That is the perspective of love: a functioning system!

When we are prevented from doing that, we become desperate. When we are stuck in the "I," we are also stuck in pain, insecurity, survival mode, fear, the Gecko, patriarchy.

Woman and Man. Gender Dynamics

Now that we also know that patriarchy and matriarchy are inside all of us, we can observe ourselves: where are we acting from fear, and where from genuine connection?

And all of us should live much more matriarchy — meaning safety. Yet there are also a few things that do have to do with sex. Above all with our biological function in the population, and that is why we can tie most of these themes to our sex hormones. Here too, we should not think in binary stereotypes, but in scales. So we are not talking about absolute mechanisms, but about visible tendencies, with exceptions and deviations always existing.

Excursus: “*Beauty and the Beast*” and Horse Girls

Let us begin with an interesting topic in the **protection logic**. Especially as a woman, I look for the “strongest protector.” Let us again take a simplified Stone Age model and see where we still find parallels today. So I — as a woman — know from my biology that I am physically inferior. The more beautiful I am, the more men want me. And if necessary, they take me by force and I cannot do anything about it. Because morality does not exist yet. Whatever works is done. But because I want to be self-determined, I choose someone who watches over me. In addition, I am beautiful and therefore allowed to choose the best one, the one I want. Which, by chance, also leads to the mixture of the best genes.

If I can choose, then I will choose the strongest. The person who can protect me best. The “monster” everyone else is afraid of. I tame this monster, and then all of its wild, untamed power is available to me. Protection logic therefore has an indirection. I do not have to be strong; I have something or someone who is strong for me.

So we have two different dimensions of attraction: fertility (female) and strength or aggression potential (male).

We also find protection logic in laws, morality, and every other form of proxy violence. There, institutions take on this role. Access to institutions then determines who is protected and how well. Because throughout human history, this access has always been very unequally distributed. It still is.

So far, so logical. Simplified, but it gets to the core. And we still see this today in many places. With this logic, we move into old stories of the tamed monster, to the horse girls (the film *Ostwind* is a nice example), all the way to the *Bad Boys*.

Bad Boys and the Dark Triad

What we see as the “monster” or as untamed changes a lot over time. In the past it may have been the strongest club swinger; today, for some time now, we have seen that men of the “Dark Triad” (meaning psychopaths, narcissists, Machiavellians) trigger the most attraction.

All three types (and especially mixtures of the types) are men for whom no rules apply, who see themselves as outside the system. This is perceived as strong, free, and self-determined. Of course, nobody wants this behavior in a relationship, but the idea is that the monster is tamed. So outwardly wild, strong, and free, but inwardly safe and gentle. Controlled.

The women who get involved with the *Bad Boys* because they think they will be the first (and only) one who can tame the guy are following biology. They are looking for the most dangerous or strongest man. The one who is the greatest threat. Here it does not work, but the drive is the same. Because the *Bad Boys* symbolize the untamed power best. They are the ones who most seem as if they have character and play outside the rules.

We all know that the taming of psychopaths, narcissists, and Machiavellians does not work, but the idea is generally good and would also succeed in healthy (meaning functional) systems.

Let us stay briefly with the horse girl, because it is an archetypal image. The girl’s dream is to tame the impetuous and wild stallion. “Everyone is afraid, everyone fails, but I am the chosen one; he follows me, and this incredible power is available to me alone.” This is the heroine’s story. In worldview terms, this is Tribal Leadership Stage 3.

The three elements are important here:

- The **untamed power**, which no one else can channel.

- ▶ I am the **chosen one**. It follows from this: for everyone else, it is a threat; only for me it is not. That is where the benefit comes from.
- ▶ There is a **connection**, but **no deep connection**. It is still the world of use. A transaction: beauty (and innocence) for power and wildness.

If we now look at this from the parents' perspective, then this search for monsters, beasts, and threats starts very early. Since today we tend to keep children small forever in order to protect them, it feels far too early for the parents. But it is a clear sign of the longing to finally be grown up. To finally be valuable. This search is part of separating from the parents. But because today we prefer to raise children into dependency and learned helplessness, we try to suppress this leap. "They are still children." The parents' reaction is therefore usually destructive. Out of their own pain, but also because society demands it. For the suppression of female sexuality and energy remains a major issue.

The history of genital mutilation in girls or women is justified by the suppression of their pleasure. We are afraid of the natural form of female pleasure.

That is why I am always skeptical of all "protection programs" whose goal is to control or suppress female sexuality or pleasure. Whether I do it with a knife or through shaming, pressure, exclusion, ultimately makes no difference. We think we know better than nature. And that is usually not the case. Especially not when the trigger is a diffuse fear. With the justification that we have been doing it this way for 1,000 years. That is a little thin.

The resistance of parents and society looks like this:

- ▶ "Do not be the way you are"
- ▶ "You are still little; you do not know what you are doing"
- ▶ "That has never worked; everyone else has failed"
- ▶ "Find someone nice"

From the parents' perspective, it is logical: because the monster the girl wants to tame will not let itself be tamed by the parents. So from the parents' perspective it is a danger; from the girl's perspective, a hope.

Agency (unfolding)

All *coming-of-age* stories share exactly this pattern: I can do something all the adults cannot manage. This is the great longing and the great truth: yes, the next generation can do it better because it has a different starting point, and therefore a different perspective. We would only have to let them.

But because we claim sovereignty over violence, we say, "first become like me, then you will understand why it does not work." But that is a transfer of worldview. It wastes the chance for a societal update.

Renewal is blocked and reprogrammed into petrification. This too works through attention and reward.

Advantage of the next generation: *They lack experience* (because not everything still applies).

Risk of the next generation: *They lack experience* (because some things still apply).

Solution: therefore encounter as equals. It is about regularly reviewing goals and constraints. Everything may have changed, and that is okay. But some parts may also remain constant. Across thousands of years. That is okay too.

What the parents destroy in the process is the person's worldview. First and foremost, self-efficacy and unfolding. In addition, the resistance usually makes it over time usually worse. Because the basic program is biological, so it remains. It keeps running in the background. But not calibrated.

The parents' reaction creates conformity on the outside, but resistance on the inside. The search for the "untamable" tends to become stronger, as does the desire to be special and unique. Unless the conformity goes so deep that the person breaks completely.

Why do these parenting tips belong here?

First, because they are useful, and because they show how our patterns (and worldview) are transmitted. Parents react with fear because they themselves are in fear. And the horse-girl pattern is also a fear pattern.

So the resolution is building safety. Because when I come from safety, I do not need to “tame the monster.” I am *safe* in the community. So the need is different, and *safe* parents would also react differently because they would recognize the need (and their own failure).

Why it is okay that women are afraid alone in the park

That sounds bad again, but we should all have fear there. On top of that, our fear systems are different. With the title, I want to address unrealistic expectations rather than demand naive safety. If we want to live without fear, then we have not understood safety yet. Then we are stuck in a childish expectation that we finally want parents who protect us from everything. Emotionally, we are still three years old.

We find this in men and women.

Who is dangerous?

Let us begin with an often-used example: we encounter a group of men and a group of women in the evening or at night. Which one feels “better” or “safer”?

The answer is almost always: “The women are *safer*.” From this, people conclude that men are the problem. For everything and anything. And that violence also only comes from men. Thought through to the end: a society without men is peaceful.

This thinking removes all of us from the gene pool; that may be good for the world, but biology probably had something else in mind.

And here we come to a first interesting observation:

*If biology is supposed to subordinate itself to our rules,
then we are stuck in feudal thinking.*

We see humans as defective machines and have to program them correctly. It is the deepest form of dehumanization, yet it sells itself as civilization and progress. We learn all our lives that we have to fight against ourselves, and that this is honorable.

It is systematized self-harm. Something like an “honorable suicide in installments.”

The observation with the groups of men and women is correct, but the conclusion is wrong. Unless we come from the perspective of “only women are good.” If we take women as the standard, then men of course come off badly. So let us therefore come to the biological value of man and woman.

What is our value?

For women, it is fertility. It automatically makes them the most valuable resource. Absolutely worth protecting.

There is that word again. And that is also our biology: in general, we want to protect girls and women, which of course also means external control.

As humans, we tend to want to decide for women when we see that they are putting themselves in unnecessary danger. In a perception of the world as dangerous or hostile, this is unfortunately almost always the case, which leads to women always needing protection and therefore being externally controlled.

So while women’s value comes through fertility, for men it is dangerousness or the potential for aggression. That is their job. The more dangerous, the better. The background to this is, of course, protection. In other words: the ability to protect.

And as we have already seen above, the dangers have changed, so protection looks different today — but biology still reacts to proven patterns.

And that is why we react differently to a group of women than to a group of men. While women are perceived as harmless (that is, without “harm”), unknown men are a danger. (The thing about harmless women has changed with weapons and tools, but here we are only talking about biology.)

Men lose their perceived dangerousness only once I know them. Then I can learn that they are either also harmless, or that they are very dangerous. If they are dangerous, I want to know whether they are on my side. That applies to men and women alike. The strategies, however, are different.

As a pack, we want the most dangerous men who can direct their aggression. They live it outward when needed, but not inward. That is why self-control is an important *skill*. And the same applies to women: I do not play with the stick of dynamite. We respect it. We know when we need it. And otherwise we handle it with care.

The anti-male society

Civilization as we know it is a deeply *de-masculinized* society. What defines a man is rarely needed. So the core feature of men is useless, while the core feature of women is still valuable. We have institutionalized protection, or removed a large part of the dangers from the world. We will leave it at that for now. There would be a lot to write about this, but that is not our topic.

So: We are all afraid of strangers. That is why we are meant to greet each other and smile. If I do not do that, I signal “danger.” And we must not deceive ourselves: women are just as violent as men, but differently. Only in immediate physical violence are they

We already had this above: **The tamed monster**

What does the beautiful and clever woman do? She chooses a protector, a tool. The one with the best genes she can get. The more beautiful I am, the more likely I am to tame the monster.

This image runs through fairy tales and girls’ books. The great stallion that is a danger to everyone else, but with me he will gently eat out of my hand and I can ride him. The same story also appears in *Game of Thrones* with *Khaleesi*. And also in *Frankenstein* and *Nosferatu*.

To understand the rest, we have to return once more to the probability function. Safety increases the better my data situation is. And the safer we are, the better cooperation becomes.

In uncertain environments we are all afraid, and rightly so. Because we cannot make a reliable statement. **Fear is only a mirror of the “safety probability.”** The lower the safety probability, the greater the fear. And our fears are different, but existential in their own way.

Men form a “danger hierarchy.” It should be recognizable who the best warrior is. The best attacker, but also the best protector. And that is how we all perceive men. Men among themselves too.

Men are not safe and are not supposed to be safe when they are strangers. They are warriors. If I do not see them as warriors, then they are already out of the gene pool.

Women as the most valuable resource

But testosterone has taught us that men are not self-sufficient. The hormone makes a man’s sense of life always defined through a woman defined. No matter how big, strong, and powerful he is, a man is by nature a servant of woman, because in himself he is useless.

That is why therapeutic approaches also need to be different. A men-only group is okay at the beginning, but then men need meaning, a catalyst. A friend once told me a long time ago, “Men cannot heal without women.” And I think that is true.

When men hurt women, it is because they are suffering precisely from this wound —from rejection and from not being seen —or from the inner contradiction. From serving. Because on the one hand men want to do everything for women, but on the other hand they have been told that they are supposed to rule over women². This is a severe con-

2 Men tend toward dominance patterns in fear. Not all, not always, but some go to fight first. Some women do as well, but men are 5.6 times stronger, so it is more dangerous with men. Contradictory programming leads to inner fragmentation. That then creates more fear and insecurity again. That is why we should train all boys and men for the man and the monster. Girls, of course, too — each according to need. Because the woman has a monster as well. See Gecko/Limbi, safety/danger, matriarchy/patriarchy.

tradition. Maximum confusion and inner fragmentation. There again applies “I want you to feel the way I feel.” The more insecure a man is (in his own way, in his identity, wounded), the more insecure he will make the women around him (wounding them in their own way, in their identity).

Without the reward and incentive provided by women, men would still be living in caves. Probably without fire. This very practical perspective is often underestimated. Everything men have done in world history, they have done for women. And not for what women say, but for

Therefore: Dear men, no, we are not meant to rule. We are meant to cooperate within our system, ideally even to collaborate, and women have the *lead* anyway. When women are safe, we can also assume that they will give a good direction. But that applies to all of us. Only in safety are we intelligent.

Now that we have understood men, it is also clear what women’s fear is about:

*women have more fear in these situations because they are more valuable.
Fear helps me treat myself carefully as a resource.*

The call for protection when safety is missing

The desire for generic safety is absurd and dysfunctional. A sign of emotional immaturity. I want the perfect safe world because I am too lazy (or unable) to build relationship.

Safety comes from relationship, and the ability to build and maintain relationships is limited. So I can only be safe where I know the people and environment around me and can trust them. Trust means that I have enough relevant data points. A conscious insecurity outside my close circle is healthy and reasonable. It has always been that way, and it may remain that way.

But since safety is a probability function, we should also look at it that way. If the values of this function socially (or within my pack) keep getting worse, then we must respond and learn from it. Then the system is not healthy.

The man’s job in a system is the “warrior.” He is supposed to be a danger. The more dangerous, the better. But targeted and directed. He should know how dangerous he can be and be able to let the monster inside him off the leash or keep it on the leash. He decides when he kills whom.

Obstacles to Balance

If everything were easy, we would not have these problems. So how is it that we all follow patterns we do not like and that do not make us happy, yet still assume that this is simply how the world is?

Challenges

Cities are to blame!

Humans are more made for packs. A manageable number of people, you get to know each other deeply, everything is *easy*. Then there are the *super-connectors*, historically traders or other people moving from place to place, who could create and maintain many bonds. They established the connections between the clusters (packs).

Everyone had their safe area, and those areas were loosely connected or hostile to one another. Of course this is simplified, but it only needs to give us a feeling. In a safe space, you give each other confirmation every time you see one another. A brief word, a smile, a touch. This gives us 100 to 1,000 small or *safety* checks.

When one of us walks through the pedestrian zone today, our Limbi receives about 700 times per minute a “you are not *safe*” signal. There are people, and there is no greeting, no smile, no eye contact. Even if everyone yelled at me, it would be better than being ignored. Because being ignored means I am not even worth rejection anymore. Ignoring is a “go die.”

When we encounter another person, our Limbi wants to know whether we are safe or not. Friend or enemy. There is no neutral. The basic thought in the pack: Can I sleep and still be safe? Would I be protected? Would they wake me and take me along if they fled?

At its core, this is about Gecko questions (all existential fear; survival mode). Our success formula, however, is that we can create social cohesion so that we do not have to face danger, the saber-toothed tiger, alone. But for that, we must be able to trust. Our Limbi binds us together, and in the face of danger we start Gecko mode — but together.

And for the questions “Do I belong? Am I safe here?” anything that is not a clear yes is a no and therefore unsafe. So when we meet people and receive no sign that they mean well, that is a signal to our Limbi that we are not safe and that they are potential enemies. When we walk through a pedestrian zone and, within a minute, hundreds of people send us no safety signal, this does something to us.

And the problem is real: Group size has led to people suddenly being inside the group who are not *safe*. Not only can we make no statement about them; there are people who want to harm us. For whatever reason. And if we cannot recognize them, then we have a fundamental issue. Then we are always unsafe. There is no pack anymore.

We need clear markers. Where trust is missing, we need a “substitute.” Norms, morality, coats of arms, uniforms, skin color, gender, age. *All stereotypes serve to create an artificial substitute for trust.* In business, these are norms and standards. And audits or assessments are a substitute action for trust. Accreditation means that we have agreed to trust the auditors/assessors. They check for us, and when they say it is good, we believe it too.

Rationally, all of this is completely coherent. Emotionally, however, it is naked fear until we have gotten to know the people a little. And the better trained our Limbi is, the easier it becomes and the safer we feel.

That is why functioning integration would be a prerequisite for migration: We need a clear inside/outside so that safety can emerge. Values, a shared language, and relationships can help here. These can absolutely also be proxy relationships. Because our capacity is limited: on average 5 close contacts, 10 loose ones, and 150 superficial ones.

It is clear that 80 million people cannot blindly “trust” one another. Trust is a relationship topic. So we need our packs and the *skills* to build packs. How do we find the people who fit us? Where can safety exist?

Modern society can function if everyone has their pack. Probably several. And between the packs there are overlaps. Politically, it is important that no one is without connection, and that larger groups are not disconnected.

If we imagine society as a graph, then it should be a well-connected graph. As soon as there are several separate graphs or large subgraphs that are only loosely attached, we have a problem.

Technically, the relationship has to happen on a human level. But it would be good to keep the result in view politically.

This applies to all organizations. It must be clear who is inside and who is outside. There must be an initiation. For that, the boundary must be clear (e.g. *purpose* and values). So we have what connects us, but then relationships also have to emerge. We can imagine it like this: every new element of a system must have relationships after the probation period. There are sponsors within the system who say, “I have known this person well enough for this period, have enough data points, and can vouch for them.”

It is clear that this requires some new *skills* and *tools*. But once you have made the shift into the Limbi world, the solutions are not that hard.

The transition period is interesting. When the matriarchy *skills* (that is, Limbi and the systems for safety) are being rebuilt, we will have developmental stages there. And also a broad spread between people in the learning process. Because we all have different starting points. That depends on my history and my abilities. The more distrust I have toward others, the more distrust I carry within myself. And when we carry so much distrust within us, we trust neither our judgment nor our feeling. We tend to seek protection and control instead. So I live in fear (danger mode or patriarchy). Everyone can get out of this, but sometimes it can take a while until enough new experiences have been made.

I have seen this in team recoveries: slow progress can be destroyed very easily. There is a phase of instability. That has to be clear. And especially when management and experts collide, the experts are often already further along. Management that at that point acts from the old world can destroy a lot in the handling of layoffs. They sustainably destroy every form of *safety*. Not the layoff itself, but how we do it in practice.

What is the right way? When a team member clearly and permanently shows that they have no interest in the shared values and direction, then that team member promotes themselves out of the system. I leave the system boundary. A termination then merely mirrors that, but everyone has already seen who made the decision. This only works, however, if I have clear and visible boundaries and if they are also part of operational work. So if we continuously steer through *purpose* and values, then it becomes visible who is inside the system and who is outside.

In very few organizations (whether school, church, family, or company) are these things truly clear. *Purpose* and values never make it beyond the poster. Then steering happens ad hoc from the ego (that is, from fear, desperation, overwhelm, ...). When everything is fine, nothing happens; but when I am stressed, it escalates immediately. We see and feel the absence of leadership, direction, and system boundaries.

In the best case, we see trust — and therefore a form of safety — in the teams. That then already follows the natural relationships. The higher the relationship quality, the higher the safety. The less we disturb this, the better it is for us.

When we work with this consciously, making belonging visible, it becomes interesting. Regular trust rating can be one option. Then works council issues quickly come up, and they too come from fear and distrust. I can meet them technically, or I can first create safety there. Ratings are about “outsiders” — those without connection — or about the minimum values. Never about individuals. Both are warning lights that show me what is still possible in the system. We only measure the system.

Hurdles

For most of us, perceiving the world as dangerous or even hostile is normal. So normal that we no longer notice it. Even when we are stuck in that worldview, we already see changes — which of course do exist — and think, “Hey, this is already healing.” But the worldview is the same; only the pain has been arranged differently. In this worldview, inner peace is already the balance between pain and numbness.

An illustration: We are all born seeing. But because everyone around us wears a blindfold, we get one too. As compensation we receive a walking stick and everything else useful for getting by.

Because it works for everyone. Our eyes are there, but untrained and unused.

And of course we notice that it is not perfect. We can vaguely remember that life used to be easier. That there was something like seeing, that we did not need the stick — but the memories are blurry.

And people keep coming along with a new idea for how to make our walking stick better. Constant ideas for making not-seeing more comfortable. (One external emotional regulation after another.) And of course we try and evaluate them. We try to find the best one.

We spend our whole lives searching for the best way to be blind.

But the real answer would be: seeing! Yet when we ask someone what it is like to see, all we hear is that our stick will be taken away. And of course we do not want that. The stick is the only thing in our life that we trust. We will never give it up. An update, gladly — but the stick stays.

And that is completely logical from the perspective of not-seeing. All aids(all sticks) are completely logical from the perspective of not-seeing. But from the perspective of seeing, it is different. There we do not need any of it.

That is the magic: As soon as you can see, you will set the stick aside and say, “I don’t need it anymore.” No one takes it away from you. You decide yourself. But with enough seeing, you notice that everything changes.

It is the same with safety. You had safety, and little by little it was taken from you. Only because everyone else no longer had safety either. So we learn techniques and use tools for getting by in non-safety. And there we are easily open to an update, another external emotional regulation. Because we understand those.

We remember: Culture is the set of implicit shared tools and patterns for dealing with emotional insecurity.

But when people talk about safety, we feel as if everything that protects us is being taken away. Our safety substitute. The stick in the blindness image. But in reality, trust and connectedness are simply something entirely different from everything we have known so far.

Can you imagine a relationship based on unconditional love and acceptance?

So both sides are capable of love (“the unconditional interest in the unfolding of the loved person”), meaning love for each other and for themselves. And in addition, they can see, hear, understand, and touch each other.

I am open (to be seen), but also interested (to see).

Because most of us only know the world of non-safety, we are blind. We cannot imagine safety (the seeing in the story). It is more like: when we have a great stick, we already think, “This is seeing.”

The challenge here is that, personally and socially, we discover thinking patterns that show: “Hey, look, you are always looking for protection; there is no safety in your life.” We recognize patterns of thought that feel completely normal to us, but from the perspective of safety are very clear markers of non-safety.

Detailed Markers

Let us get to know some markers. This is more of a chapter for working with and looking things up, rather than reading it in one piece. A reference work for anamnesis and diagnosis. But perhaps also for recognizing ourselves. Because even if it is uncomfortable, it still holds true: the only person you can change is yourself.

Protection Mode vs. Safety Mode

Where do we have systems of danger? What are the markers?

Context	Protection mode (perceived danger)	Safety mode (experienced safety)
Parenting / family	"Because I said so." / punishment / control / threats / comparison with other children / withdrawing love as pressure	"I am here." / boundaries with explanation / interest in inner life / mistakes as learning space / closeness remains stable
	Child functions or rebels /only a few feelings are allowed; the rest are suppressed or invalidated	Child shows themselves (even the unpleasant parts),all feelings may be shown and learned (real internal emotional regulation emerges because there are enough data points)
	Parents are "right"	Relationship(mutual seeing, hearing, understanding, touching)has priority /whatever happens, we still have the 12 real hugs per day
Couple relationship	wanting to be right / looking for blame / withdrawal or attack / jealousy / control ("Where were you?")	wanting to understand / taking responsibility for one's own feelings / openness / being allowed to show insecurity
	Closeness is used or avoided	Closeness is maintained
	Conflicts escalate or are avoided	Conflicts lead to more connection
	withdrawal of love	devotion
Team / company	micromanagement / reporting mania / internal competition / silos / blame culture	trust in personal responsibility / transparent communication / mutual support
	meetings = status & justification	few meetings = alignment & learning /real collaboration (things emerge and are not merely planned)
	mistakes are hidden	mistakes are used
	leadership = control	leadership = orientation & giving space /system design (creating a functional environment)
Association / community	power struggles / clique formation / "who belongs?" / informal hierarchies	belonging / open participation / difference is integrated
	engagement is evaluated	engagement is appreciated
	conflicts become political	conflicts are clarified personally
Society / politics	polarization / enemy images / "us against them" / strong leaders / simple solutions	dialogue / diversity of perspectives / complexity is endured
	safety through control (laws, surveillance)	safety through trust (cohesion, participation)
	moral superiority	curiosity about other perspectives
Church / faith spaces	dogma / guilt / obedience / "this is the right way" / fear of deviation	search for meaning / personal experience / questions are allowed / community
	Pharisaism (we build rules around rules so that we can be sure to do everything right), which puts us in fear systems (protection) / only the outside counts; what the heart does is not seen as relevant because it is not visible	relationship focus (relationship with God, but also with one another; it is not about perfection but about being real; outside and inside are coherent; it matters that the heart is present)
	authority is not questioned	authority serves orientation
	belonging is tied to conditions	belonging is given

Context	Protection mode (perceived danger)	Safety mode (experienced safety)
Education / school	grades as pressure / comparison / adaptation / fear of mistakes	learning from interest (curiosity, intrinsic motivation) / individual development / mistakes as part of the process
	teacher knows, student follows	learning as a shared process
	“right vs. wrong” dominates	“understanding vs. discovering” dominates
Friendships	usefulness / expectations / unspoken deals / withdrawal in conflict	honesty / mutual support / holding conflict
	closeness is rationed out of fear	closeness is allowed to grow
	roles (the funny one, the strong one...)	real people
Self-relationship	self-criticism / pressure / perfectionism / functioning / avoidance	self-acceptance / perception / taking needs seriously
	self-care is sold as self-love (I use coping mechanisms to make my situation bearable); I circle around my deficit (slave to my inner pain)	real self-love, because I want to continuously improve my situation; I have an unconditional interest in my own unfolding (because then I am at my best for the world)
	feelings are suppressed	feelings are integrated
	value = performance	value = being
Body / health	ignoring signals / overload / “push through”	perception / regeneration / balance
	symptoms are fought	causes are understood
	fight against the body	cooperation with the body

If we are honest, something happens while reading: “Ah... yes. I know that. And that too. And unfortunately that as well.”

And then comes the real aha moment: **I am not only a victim of “patriarchy” — I myself am regularly in protection mode.**

You see the same pattern in all areas. Protection mode creates a “simple” world. Clear, fast, hard. Everyone aligns with one head, and for the head it is okay.

Safety deals honestly with complexity: We are open, we take our time to build relationship, and that makes us stable in the long run.

We see these patterns everywhere. In families, in relationships, in companies, in politics. And again and again we realize: it is not “the others” who live in patriarchy. It is a state we all switch into as soon as we perceive danger. So the question is no longer: “How do we fight patriarchy?” But rather: **“Where exactly do we not feel safe — and what would real safety mean here?”**

Categories

Markers in protection

Let’s walk through this for the world as we know it ...

- ▶ **View of the world: Control** as the default: “We need to have this under control.”, “You can’t just let this run like that.”, “This needs clear rules.”
 - ▷ At first, that sounds like responsibility. And it is — in protection mode. The marker is not the word “rules”, but the underlying assumption: 🧪 If I do not control it, something will go wrong.
- ▶ **View of people: people become functions**: “He doesn’t contribute anything.”, “She is difficult.”, “We need someone there who works.”
 - ▷ Here, the human being is reduced. Not consciously, not maliciously — but practically.
 - ▷ 🧪 The marker is: I no longer see you, but your effect on my system. This is classic I-It.

Detailed Markers

- ▶ **View of the new:** fast **classification** and **judgment** instead of real understanding: “That’s just how he is.”, “Those are just that kind of people.”, “Typical.”
 - ▷ The brain saves energy. It categorizes.
 - ▷  Marker: I have classified you before I have really understood you.
- ▶ **View of boundaries:** safety through strength in the form of **rules** or external control: “Someone needs to put their foot down.”, “You can’t put up with everything.”, “Otherwise they’ll walk all over you.”
 - ▷ This is a very deep reflex.
 - ▷  Marker: Safety comes from dominance, not from relationship.
- ▶ **View of encounter/trust:** **Mistrust** as the basic assumption: “They’ll only exploit it anyway.”, “If you are kind, you get taken advantage of.”, “That’s just how people are.”
 - ▷ This often feels like realism, but it only shows the normal state within that worldview.
 - ▷  Marker: I assume that others might work against me. (Because I am like that myself.)
- ▶ **View of misconduct:** mistakes must have **consequences** : “This can’t just be allowed to pass.”, “There have to be consequences.”, “Otherwise they’ll never learn.”
 - ▷ Here, learning is replaced by pressure. Because when I am in fear myself, this is the only tool I have.
 - ▷  Marker: Change comes through sanction, not through insight.
- ▶ **View of contradictions:** morality as a **control instrument**: “That is not okay at all.”, “You simply don’t do something like that.”, “That is just wrong.”
 - ▷ Morality is not the problem. But it is often used to assert one’s own position. So morality helps us freeze systems and make them rigid.
 - ▷  Marker: I judge faster than I understand.
- ▶ **View of heart & brain:** professionalism/**rationality** comes first: “This isn’t personal.”, “This is about the matter at hand.”, “Feelings have no place here.”
 - ▷ That sounds professional, but above all it is dehumanized. I want the human being as a machine, without feelings. Then I can hurt without shame.
 - ▷  Marker: I separate the human being from the action — and lose the relationship in the process.
- ▶ **View of success:** **scarcity logic**: “If he wins, I lose.”, “There cannot be enough for everyone.”, “Someone has to step back.”
 - ▷  Marker: I think in competition, not in coexistence.
- ▶ **View of conflicts:** I have to **know better**: “I know what is good for you.”, “Just trust me.”, “I have more experience.”
 - ▷ This can even be meant caringly, but it is external control. And it comes from one’s own worldview.
 - ▷  Marker: I place my perspective above your reality.

I assume that these sentences, thoughts and views (beliefs) are not foreign to anyone. We are inoculated with them from childhood on. This is the world of insecurity.

That is why we try we create an illusion of control and of a controllable world. We play God and make the rules for everyone else. Everything is supposed to submit to us. The problem: because we do not all want the same thing, we are in conflict, and a small few take over the definition of “what we want”.

Fear creates environments of control and rules. A few prescribe for many what is right and wrong. Enforcement happens through power and violence.

Note: So-called **system disruptors** are children who “sense” or understand this. Far too early. Whether rebellion, addiction or depression: all of them are looking for an alternative to the system of fear and violence. We are looking for connection and creation. A real alternative system.

Because more protection, violence, fear and rules lead to more violence, fear and rules. More connection leads to more connection. And it is probably true: even the best relationships we have ever experienced or seen may be only 12% of what is possible. Connection is an unexplored field.

Only courage for complexity, for the world, and also for uncertainty, can be the reversal. Accepting the inherent uncertainty and complexity of the world and facing it together is the *game changer*.

The willingness to accept uncertainty creates safety.

Categories with Safety Update

Worldview: Orientation instead of control

In safety mode, I no longer try to have everything under control. I want to understand what is really going on — and then act meaningfully.

“Competence is the ability to act creatively and self-organized in open-ended, unexpected situations.”

John Erpenbeck

Examples:

- ▶ Something goes wrong in the team → instead of immediately introducing new rules: “What exactly did not work here?”
- ▶ A child freaks out → not “That’s enough!”, but: “What got you so worked up just now?” (Seeing the cause instead of the warning light)
- ▶ A relationship is strained → not “We need to clear this up”, but: “What is actually happening between us right now?”

Image of humanity: Seeing the human being instead of the function

The human being is no longer a means to an end, but the starting point.

Examples:

- ▶ A colleague delivers poorly → not “unreliable”, but: “What is currently preventing you from giving your best?”
- ▶ A partner withdraws → not “no interest”, but: “What is going on inside you right now?”
- ▶ A friend cancels a meeting → not “noncommittal”, but: “Is everything okay with you?”

Dealing with the new: Curiosity instead of classification

I can tolerate not knowing something yet.

Examples:

- ▶ Someone reacts in an unfamiliar way → not “typical”, but: “I don’t know this from you — what is going on?”
- ▶ A new opinion in the room → not arguing against it immediately, but: “How did you arrive at that point?”
- ▶ A child disagrees → not “disrespectful”, but: “What do you see differently than I do?” (because here we have the chance for an update, because the child is fresher in the world, has a different starting point, and can see the current situation more clearly and less burdened)

Boundaries: Clarity instead of dominance

Boundaries remain — but without pressure and devaluation.

Examples:

- ▶ „When I am addressed like that, I cannot continue the conversation.” (calm, clear, without attack)
- ▶ “I will not participate in that.” (without a loop of justification)
- ▶ Leadership: “This is the direction — and I am open to better ideas.”

Trust: Advance trust instead of mistrust

I do not start with the worst case.

Examples:

- ▶ A new employee → do not immediately control them, but first trust them to be capable
- ▶ Partner running late → not “What is wrong?”, but “I am curious what happened” (the emphasis matters, also when reading; it shows which mode we are in)
- ▶ Someone makes mistakes → not “on purpose”, but “okay, what happened?” (the search for the cause in the system, in onboarding, in the inner state)

Mistakes: Learning instead of sanction

Mistakes are information, not a threat.

Examples:

- ▶ Project fails → “What do we take with us for next time?” (Although in a learning environment we learn earlier, are open, and therefore also change course earlier.)
- ▶ A child lies → not just punishment, but understanding: “What made you do that?”
- ▶ Relationship: argument → not “who is right”, but “what have we learned about ourselves?” (or about the state of the relationship; where did we lose each other?)

Contradiction: Understanding instead of moral judgment

I can hold several truths at the same time. Often a “both-and”.

Examples:

- ▶ Political discussion → “I see why this matters to you — even if I see it differently”
- ▶ Conflict in the team → both sides are heard without immediately judging
- ▶ Relationship → “I understand your point — and at the same time I need something else”

Heart/brain: Keeping the relationship instead of separating

The factual issue and the relationship are not played off against each other.

Examples:

- ▶ Giving feedback → “This does not work as it is — and you matter to me”
- ▶ Argument → not withdrawal or attack, but staying in contact
- ▶ Leadership → clear direction without devaluing the person (after all, we are steering the system, not the people)

Success: Thinking possibility instead of scarcity

I look for solutions, not winners.

Examples:

- ▶ Resources are scarce → “How can we solve this in a way that works for several people?”
- ▶ Relationship → not “my needs vs. your needs”, but “how do we bring both together?”
- ▶ Team → think complementarity, not competition

Conflicts: Encounter instead of knowing better

I do not have to be right in order to be effective.

Examples:

- ▶ Coaching / leadership → “What do you think yourself?” instead of “I’ll tell you how it works”
- ▶ Relationship → “Help me understand” instead of “You should...”
- ▶ Everyday life → ask real questions instead of providing answers

Core idea

*In safety mode, I no longer try to control the world.
I try to understand it — and to stay in relationship.*

And the interesting thing is: at first, this feels naturally more unsafe. Because it is unfamiliar to us. In the long run — if we hold on long enough — it is safe. At this point, we confuse unfamiliar with unsafe.

Control or regulation?

While we know control well — precisely because it is a protection system — we have little experience with its counterpart: safety. Yet that is the basic state all around us: regulation. Weather, forest, or cell: all elements are in constant regulation with one another. We respond to changes in our environment as quickly as possible and as minimally as possible. Balance is the state of regulation. Everything keeps changing and yet remains in balance.

Every real relationship is regulation. We constantly respond to one another. There is friction, closeness, growth. A looping process.

The moment we try to put this into a contract — marriage, for example — we want “safety”, but lose exactly that. Because we cannot force relationship. It is a daily giving of ourselves to one another. And any form of coercion kills that immediately.

The two basic principles

- ▶ Either I want to order the world (meaning: I shape the world according to my ideas, or I expect the world to behave according to my ideas) and I am constantly disappointed or irritated.
- ▶ Or I regulate. I have my idea, but I remain in constant interaction. Perception and adaptation.

The path toward joy in safety

Safety is a strange concept. Everyone wants it — and at the same time many are afraid of it. Because real safety means the end of control. It means being able to let go of control. And for a system that is used to protection, that feels dangerous at first. And it is dangerous, because we cannot let go of control without having something else. (Remember the image of blindness with the cane above, see [Hurdles](#).)

That is why safety does not emerge through decisions, but from experiences. Not through “trust me”. But through repeated moments in which nothing bad happens, even though it could have.

The path into safety is not a leap. It is a transition. And this transition has patterns that show up in surprisingly similar ways in relationships, parenting, and teams.

At the beginning there is protection. Two people get to know each other. A child comes into the world. A new team forms. Nobody knows exactly how the other person ticks. So the systems stay alert. Boundaries are clearer, communication is more explicit, behavior is more careful. That is healthy and normal. Okay, with a baby we have a special situation, but as soon as character begins to show, the same mechanism appears there too. Even small children experience the “you did not used to be like this” symptom: rejection because they begin to show themselves.

Many systems stop exactly there. They organize themselves permanently in protection mode. Relationships remain cautious. Teams remain political. Children learn to adapt instead of showing themselves. Everything somehow works — but nothing becomes truly deep.

We confuse familiarity with trust.

The transition into safety succeeds only when something is added that is stronger than fear: reliability. Reliability is the foundation of safety. Not big words, but small, repeated experiences. I show myself — and I am not devalued. I make a mistake — and the relationship remains. I take one step closer — and you do not move away. That is how trust emerges. Through repetition and consistency. Trust, too, is ultimately just math. A probability function.

In relationships, this becomes very concrete. At the beginning, there needs to be consent, clarity, agreements. Two systems check whether they can feel safe enough with each other. But if this state remains, no “we” emerges. Then it remains two people cautiously coordinating with each other. Safety comes with devotion. When we move out of self-protection and into giving. Into “I want your needs to be fulfilled because you matter to me”. Then closeness no longer has to be renegotiated every time, but is part of the relationship.

In parenting it is similar. At the beginning, the child needs care and protection. A baby is completely dependent. But if we as parents focus on unfolding, then the child will, step by step, move into creation. It can show itself, try things out, contribute, and also question things critically. All of that without losing connection, but by strengthening it.

If I am safe only when I am “right”, I learn adaptation. If I am safe even when I am difficult, I learn relationship. And that is exactly the difference that runs throughout life.

In teams this becomes especially visible. Many organizations are extremely good in protection mode: processes, control, reporting, clear responsibilities. This works — as long as stability is needed. But real performance only emerges when the system comes into safety. When information can flow freely. When mistakes are allowed to become visible. When people do not work against each other, but think together.

This does not happen through a new *framework*, but through lived safety in everyday life. The path there is surprisingly unspectacular. Less judgment, more understanding. Less control, more clarity. Less reaction, more presence. And above all: fewer big changes, more small stable experiences. Safety does not grow through one-off events. It grows through consistency.

And the principle is simple: I always work on the new (understanding, clarity, presence), which makes the old automatically, almost magically, become less. This order matters for safety. Otherwise it simply creates a new insecurity in a different disguise.

When I experience ten times that I can show myself without everything tipping over, my system changes. When I experience a hundred times that connection remains stable, my body begins to store this as the new normal state. And of course the “critical” moments count especially. The difficult situations where something is at stake.

The long-term effect: Protection becomes optional. Not because it is wrong, but because it is here and now no longer needed. And suddenly it is there: joy in safety. Not the calm after tension, but the lightness that emerges when nothing has to be defended anymore. That is the state in which systems truly begin to live.

Sensitive topics from a new perspective

Consent

Consent is one of those words where everyone nods at first. Of course. We need it. Without consent, things quickly become intrusive or even dangerous. So we learned: ask. Get a yes. Play it safe. And that is good. Truly.

But when we look more closely, we notice: consent is not the goal. Consent is a tool. And one that can be assigned quite clearly. Consent belongs in protection mode. And consent is a lower boundary. An emergency system.

Consent is the answer to a situation in which it is not yet clear whether I can trust. In which my system says: "Careful. This could become dangerous." I still lack data. So we build an explicit bridge. We say out loud what is clear in a safe system. We protect ourselves. We get a "yes" so that we avoid misunderstandings.

When we read this, it should become clear that consent is necessary only in desperation. As long as I have no data, I have no relationship. So I should not force closeness either. I only do that when I am desperate.

Actually, the path would be this: we get to know each other, we feel our way forward, we clarify things, we build trust. And at some point something unspectacular and at the same time decisive happens: Trust emerges. And with it safety. We have more data points, our prediction becomes safer. We can say with confidence (with sufficient probability) that we are safe. This happens slowly, in small steps.

With people in trauma, it is even different: they are looking for familiar injury. The repetition of the familiar situation. Unconsciously, of course, because consciously nobody wants that. Our Limbi usually recognizes the possibility of a known/familiar injury very quickly. Because insecurity is easier to recognize than safety.

And we respond to this insecurity with attraction. (As Nicole LePera says: "Sexual attraction is unresolved trauma.")

All of this bypasses our consciousness. And yet yes, we knew from the beginning that this person would do the job and serve our trauma; that is, reliably create the familiar pain in us. Since we generally often change the people who are supposed to do this job, we have become really good and fast at it on the meta-level.

Then something emerges that is hard to describe, but immediately recognizable when it is there: a "we". Not merging, not losing oneself. But a shared space. Soft inside, clear outside. We belong together. Real encounter. I no longer have to constantly ask "May I?", because I already sense what fits for us. Because we know each other. We have moved from skeptical transaction to devotion. We have chosen each other.

And this is exactly where the rupture begins that we are seeing more and more often. Consent no longer disappears. It stays. Even when relationship should actually have long since emerged. Or at least when the possibility of relationship could exist. We forced something too early and remain stuck there, because forced closeness is a breach of trust.

Then a strange dynamic emerges: two people are familiar — but not close. They coordinate, they are respectful, they do everything "right". And yet something is missing. It is the state of irrelationship. Outwardly everything is right, but inside it is empty. No connection, no trust. A bit like being a guest in your own living room. You come in. But you never quite know how long you are allowed to stay.

It feels almost safe. But it is not. Because what is missing is the actual safety: the one in which I do not merely behave correctly, but can truly show myself. In which I do not constantly have to think along whether I am crossing a boundary, but can trust that we will regulate it together.

Safety in relationship means that both can be there unfiltered. We know each other's needs and it matters to us (and feels beautiful!) to fulfill those needs³.

*Devotion means that your needs are as important to me as my own.
Of course, this must always be true for both.*

³ We should still distinguish needs from wishes. Especially in dysfunctional systems, these can be very different things.

Consent protects us from hurting each other when we want closeness too quickly. But it does not replace relationship. And when consent becomes the permanent state, that is not a sign of maturity — on the contrary: the system has not come into safety. It has remained in protection mode.

This is not an accusation, but a description of state — and therefore an opportunity. Seen through this lens, it is logical. People who pay strong attention to consent have good reasons. They have experienced that boundaries were not respected. That closeness can tip. That trust is expensive.

Only in the long run this creates a paradoxical effect: the very thing meant to protect them prevents real closeness from emerging. Not because consent is wrong, but because it is not released when it actually could be. And with that we are back to the real question. Not: “Do we need consent?” But: when does protection become safety? When is the moment when I no longer only pay attention to not being hurt, but begin to feel that I can encounter?

This is not a cognitive step. Not a conversation you have once and then it is done. This is experience. Repeated. Un-spectacular. Almost boring. I show myself a little more — and nothing breaks. You come closer — and I do not go away. We make mistakes — and still remain connected. That is how safety emerges.

Only then does consent become what it should actually be: not the foundation of the relationship, but its safety net. There when needed. Invisible when not needed. The little warning light that comes on when relationship has broken.

Consent makes encounter possible. Safety makes relationship possible.

And when we confuse the two, we get something in between. It somehow works. But it never feels like home.

Victim energy

Insecure Systems amplify certain forms of self-presentation because they generate attention. This is not out of malice or stupidity. It happens, because systems — whether social media, teams, families, or whole societies — are incredibly good at reacting to resonance. What is seen gets repeated. What is rewarded gets amplified. And what is amplified eventually becomes the norm.

The problem begins the moment attention becomes the most important currency.

Of course this is a gradual process. We cannot really see at what point it became dysfunctional. At what point did the downward spiral suddenly become so destructive? And then we reach the point where it is no longer about what is true. It is about what works.

I no longer show what is, but what gets me seen. A curated, filtered, adapted and polished version of myself. A role I play. Or many roles. The roles that get the most applause. Depending on the stage.

Complexity has a hard time. Contradictions too. They are hard to explain, hard to sell, hard to understand, hard to “reward.”

Because we are not truly seen as human beings, we show a role that secures attention for us as a substitute currency.

So systems — and we inside them — quickly learn: What works?

One example we see often right now is the victim role. Not because people suddenly suffer more than before. But because certain expressions of suffering receive especially much attention. They are unambiguous, emotional, and easy to connect to.

The system reacts to this. And then something paradoxical happens: the expression of pain becomes louder, stronger, more frequent — but actual being understood does not increase. On the contrary. It disappears. Because when many similar signals are sent at the same time, the system loses its ability to distinguish. Everything sounds equally urgent. Equally important. Equally true.

And exactly then, those who are truly affected suffer the most. Not because people do not want to believe them. But because the system is overwhelmed. Because it can no longer recognize the differences cleanly. Because genuine experience lands in the same channel as amplified performance. And because suffering is rewarded, the stories have to be -

come worse and worse. When attention is the scarce resource, we adapt. Often unconsciously. We become a little louder, a little extreme, a little over-driven. We cut away everything that does not have immediate impact. You can see this everywhere. More “suffering” leads to more reward. Whoever is true disappears.

It is like an over-driven audio signal. When everything is loud, nothing is clear anymore. Trust is lost. Not only in others, but also in the system itself. In the possibility that what I show will actually be seen. And this does not only affect pain.

Success is exaggerated because it is seen. So performance is staged. Strength is rewarded, so vulnerability is hidden or used strategically. Moral clarity gets attention, so positions become more radical. Self-optimization is celebrated, so one’s own life becomes a project. Always the same pattern: I am seen for what works — not for what is.

And that has a price. Because attention is not a substitute for relationship. For a moment it feels similar, but it does not carry us. It does not calm us. It does not create lasting connection. It is a short impulse, not a stable state.

Being seen is something else. Being seen means that someone understands my context. Holds my contradictions. Perceives not only the obvious, but also what lies beneath it. Without me having to formulate it perfectly or intensify it. This happens only in safety. And that is exactly what is missing in systems that react strongly to attention. There it is about effect, not perception. About resonance, not relationship.

Maybe this is the simplest difference: I get attention for what stands out. I am seen for what is really there. And as long as systems primarily react to the first, we will keep trying to make ourselves fit. Become louder. More extreme. Over-driven. Not because we are dishonest, but because we want to be seen and are desperate. Then we take what we can get. Even a cheap substitute.

The additional side effect is that we lose life competence. Victim energy is practical, but it kills all agency and shaping. We lose resilience and responsibility. In that sense, too, we become passive and become a role: we act as if our life were a script that our audience writes.

I can only be sexualized if I sexualize myself.

The thought is clear once I have understood sexuality and sexualization. That is, once hostile and friendly worldviews are familiar to me.

The concept is simple, like with the layers above: my worldview is the upper limit of everything I can see in the world. The smaller my worldview is, the smaller I make everyone else. If I can only count to 5, then, for me, everyone else can only count to 5 too, because there is nothing beyond that. That is the meaning of worldview: I reduce everything and everyone until they fit into my worldview. Otherwise I cannot see them.

And the hostile worldview is smaller than the friendly one. *Sexualization comes from and exists only within a hostile worldview.*

Sexualization usually emerges through others (parents, protectors), in order to protect me. Out of well-intentioned protection, my sexuality was split off from my soul, from my value. And we already know that protection is the opposite of safety. These people therefore brought perceived danger into the inner system. As a result, I am now in fear mode and look for strategies there: variants of *Fight, Flight or Freeze*.

*Protection mode comes from fear and defense.
When I apply protection within the system, I destroy safety and spread fear.
This happens mainly when safety was missing or has eroded over time.
Safety must be cared for. That is relationship care.*

In sexualization, I am supposed to be an androgynous being in everyday life (family, dealing with parents, at school, ...). Sexuality has no place there. I am still too young for it, or it is simply completely unclear how to deal with it. So: ignore it. Suppress it and fade it out. Where I showed myself as a valuable human being, my sexuality had no place. Sexuality comes later at some point. My feelings (and biology) are invalidated. And either I bring them under control through

control (suppression), or I live them out somewhere else. Like Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. The story is from 1886, so it is a well-known theme. And in sexualization we could translate Dr. Jekyll into the “Friend Zone” and Mr. Hyde into the “Fuck Zone.”

The lesson: my desire and needs are bad. They have to go away. For this I have created an alter ego that I hide from the world. And I can switch back and forth between these two roles as needed.

But they never exist at the same time. *Friend-Zone* (I am a human being, but without physicality and intimacy) and *Fuck-Zone* (I am a sex object to satisfy my desire, without soul and intimacy) have no overlap. For me, there is no real intimacy. There is emotional neediness and physical neediness. But real encounter is not possible. It does not exist in the hostile worldview.



Figure 11: We already used the Yin-Yang variant earlier. We have different poles, and we should integrate them within us and between us. Wherever we filter (or otherwise suppress) instead of integrating, we apply violence.

So far, everything should be clear. And this worldview has two effects:

- ▶ If someone perceives me as sexually attractive, I automatically lose my value. Both cannot exist at the same time. (Not in my world.) My inner boundary, my worldview, sexualizes me as soon as I am fully seen.
- ▶ Only if I have a worldview of sexualization can I be sexualized. If I live in an integrated worldview of sexuality, then I never assume an “either/or,” but a “both/and.” If I really notice that someone else sees me only as a sexual object, then I know that her/his worldview is limited. I see the pain and the relational incapacity, but it has nothing to do with me.

If I have a large worldview, nobody can impose a smaller one on me⁴. Likewise, I cannot enlarge anyone else’s worldview for them.

⁴ The exception is during worldview-building and worldview updates. That is, between 7 and 12 and between 12 and 16. There we should have people with wide worldviews around us.

Markers for the absence of safety

Here is a summary of the last chapters as markers that we can easily apply. So this is only the short version for application; the deeper logic is in the more detailed lead-in above.

#1 Marker: Shame

Shame comes from judging. I judge when I do not trust (a disturbance in at least one of the trust dimensions). So I experience mistrust. Mistrust is a sign of insecurity. When I am insecure (do not belong to my pack), then I am a) a mistake and b) threatened.

Without a pack we have existential fear. Even if our neocortex cushions this, our Limbi/Gecko reacts sensitively to exclusion.

#2 Marker: Consent

When we talk about safety, we mean emotional or psychological safety. The concept is old, but the research on it is new. A large part of the empirical research goes back to Amy Edmondson. She is undisputedly the expert on the topic. On this basis, Timothy R. Clark defined a 4-stage model of safety (Inclusion, Learner, Contributor, Challenger Safety).

Inclusion Safety: Question: “Do I feel respected and accepted?” In Western organizations, about **60–70 %** report at least a moderate sense of belonging. But minorities report significantly less.

Learner Safety: Question: “Can I admit mistakes or ask questions?” Studies show: about **40–50% feel safe doing this**. Many people already feel inhibited here.

Contributor Safety: Question: “Can I really contribute my ideas?” Here the value drops significantly: about **30–40 %**. Many feel more like executors than co-creators.

Challenger Safety: Question: “Can I question decisions or leadership?” Here studies show the strongest barrier. Only about: **10–20 %** feel truly safe doing this. In hierarchical organizations even fewer.

Why do we now need Edmondson and Clark to talk about consent? We have already explored consent as a whole in detail. Here we only bring consent in as a marker. And **when I am stuck in consent mode, it means that I have not even reached Stage 1 of psychological safety.**

If we know the stages, we can apply this in practice to all markers. Real safety needs all 4 stages. Each stage is valuable and a beginning in itself, but there are still conditions attached, in the sense of role requirements. The basic pattern of the core wound repeats itself: “Don’t be you, be like this.”

#3 Marker: Victim mode

If we criticize victim mode today, a few people immediately come with perpetrator-victim reversal. And that is completely okay. Because when we think in perpetrator-victim models, then we have chosen a very simple worldview that can explain things, but has no solution space. So it is completely valid, but not useful — unless I want to remain stuck in the victim role. And therefore in fear and insecurity.

For everyone else, we choose a somewhat more complex worldview and therefore also a larger solution space. Because we already know: the larger the **space of understanding** of a worldview, the larger the **solution space** (or **space for action**, the *agency*).

Life is unfair and sometimes hard. The unfairness goes both ways: there is not always justice, and injustice is also unfairly distributed. We often think, “well, that person could really use xyz [meaning a punishment] right now,” but they seem to be doing well.

Now we can focus on the unfairness and insist on paradise for ourselves and then remain stuck in the trauma loop. That can supply us with pity energy, but it will never change anything. Also, when we demand that the world change so that we are satisfied, we are overstepping boundaries and become the problem ourselves. That is the core of external determination: **I do not want to take responsibility for my life, so everyone else should please do that and behave in the way that suits me.**

When we criticize victim mode, it is not about denying that injustice happened to you; but whatever you demand, it cannot be undone. And it is an even greater tragedy if you sacrifice the rest of your life to this injustice as well. Because if you are stuck in victim mode, you will probably also make sure that the injustice repeats itself for the rest of your life. Because it is a belief that the world is like this and that you have it especially hard. In this program your subconscious will do everything it can to make sure these beliefs remain true.

Back to the marker again: when someone demands paradise and takes no responsibility (agency/shaping) for their life, they transfer responsibility to others: "You have to be this or that way so that I can have a beautiful life." With that we have *Princess Treatment* and are emotionally at the level of a three-year-old. There is nothing right or wrong about that; it is what it is. It is a logical life path and a logical strategy. The best known strategy so far. But as a marker we know then when safety was lost and where these people stopped learning.

#4 Marker: Sexualization

One could write books about sexualization. Here we are interested in only one small aspect: sexualization robs us of affection.

Sexualization is the splitting off of sexuality from identity.

This happens when I am reduced to my sexual function, or when my sexuality is completely ignored. Here, too, the ratio is 1:9, from active to passive abuse. Most sexualization comes from the fear of abuse. From protection. And therefore from insecurity (or fear).

In the sexualized worldview, the rule is: you can either be sexy or valuable; both at the same time is not possible. That is the difference to sexuality. In the healthy worldview, I assume that I am sexy and valuable at the same time.

I can only be sexualized if I sexualize myself.

And because in sexualization physical closeness and value exclude each other, the sentence becomes understandable. They are two worldviews. When someone says something about me or my body, I react depending on the worldview differently ...

- ▷ Sexuality: I know that only one part is being looked at, and I complete the rest for myself. And I enjoy that part in a completely relaxed way. If I notice that the person is talking **only** about this part of me, then I know that the person does not have a developed sexuality and is suffering.
- ▷ Sexualization: then I assume that this person sees and means only my body, and not the rest of me. Because I make the same split. They are two roles that I play in different places, but never both with one person. Either body or soul.

If I complain about sexualization, then I have the worldview myself. It is like with all things: **We are only triggered when it touches an inner (repressed) truth.**

The worse effect is that this keeps everything physical inside sexualization. We rob ourselves of every form of human affection. Because encounter is mutual seeing, hearing, understanding and touching. We need all of it at the same time. Including our 8 or 12 hugs a day.

But when we have split the body from the soul, touch hurts us instead of healing us. Yet without touch that connects body and soul, we cannot heal.

“I was born with a friendly worldview into a hostile world”

It was about worldview, and someone is asked what their worldview is. The answer:

Original quote: “I was born with a friendly worldview into a hostile world”

Burst of laughter. Three minutes. At least.

Not meant badly. And it is important that the person still feels that I am on their side. But it is simply too good.

So then I wipe away my tears and am happy to explain what is going on. Because there is context. And people say things like that and believe them too. Completely okay, but still funny.

Since I stumbled upon Professor **William Moulton Marston**, I find his reduction brilliant. It was not really new, but his clarity inspired me.

*Dominance produces activity in an antagonistic environment
Inducement produces activity in a favorable environment
Submission produces passivity in a favorable environment
Compliance produces passivity in an antagonistic environment.*

He brought three things together: what we do, what we want, and which worldview it comes from. With this, I can use the action as a marker for the other elements. From observing the action, the worldview becomes visible. And that is worth gold.

- ▶ What we want: this is about forms of **activity** or **passivity**
- ▶ What we do: To achieve activity, I can be **dominant** or **persuasive**. In passivity, I can comply or follow.
- ▶ The worldview is either a **hostile** perceived environment or a **friendly** perceived environment.

A hostile or dangerous perceived environment means: I am in a world of fear and react from fear patterns. I am in Gecko mode, at the surface. In deficit, in mistrust. I want to protect and defend myself. My worldview is protection mode. And here we again have our two dimensions.

Protection mode: In situations in which we expect or perceive danger.

Relationship mode in safety. Safety is also not yes/no, but again a scale from 10 to 0. From 5 downward, we then speak of missing safety, meaning insecurity.

Because the friendly worldview does not say that there is no danger. It only knows areas that are not dangerous or hostile. And it knows that this is actually the basic state. In a healthy system, danger is the deviation, even if it occurs everywhere.

How does this work now?

When we apply Marston's sentences, we bring the three things together. Here as an example:

If I see **dominant** behavior, then I know that the person wants to **activate** others and themselves live in a **hostile** perceived environment.

Leading and Following

That is why leadership (because leading and following belong together) needs a friendly worldview (short for “a friendly perceived environment”). So what is the difference between compliance and following? **Compliance** (which is then the counterpart to dominance) is external. If I “obey” on the action level, that is completely sufficient. Whether the heart follows too does not matter. I do not even ask that question.

With **following**, it is about coherence. I follow internally and externally. I am truly in it.

What is the practical difference? **In compliance, people are on board as long as the pressure (the dominance) is there.** As soon as it drops away, they stop moving.

When people follow, they do not only follow me, but the idea. Out of conviction, they walk their path. It takes longer at the beginning, but after that I have the followers' entire own energy, as long as the direction is clear. The better I lead, the less I have to do.

Hostile worldview: The surface is enough

The task of a worldview is to explain what I experience and see. We are now doing this only for one very small area. We see that people behave well or badly. Sometimes they behave prosocially, sometimes antisocially. The hostile and the friendly worldview explain this very differently.

Hostile worldview: Human beings are evil at their core, but through pressure, fear and discipline they can be forced to behave socially. Good behavior is created by a higher authority. Without these authorities, we have chaos and destruction.

That is why, in this worldview, we are interested only in behavior, because we already know everything underneath it. We know that the apple is rotten and corrupt. The best we can achieve is a beautiful surface. Nothing more is possible.

Friendly worldview: I assume that human beings are social beings. All “antisocial deviations” come from a wound. The basic motive of all social interactions is: “I want you to feel what I feel.” Healthy encounter (a functional social system) means that we see, hear, understand and touch each other. If I have never developed these *skills*, or if they were even suppressed, then I show dysfunctional behavior. It is not even meant badly; in my pain (unmet basic needs), I want to be perceived.

Admittedly, the first worldview is much simpler. The second explains much more. Above all, it explains that with babies and children we should look more at unfolding than at shaping.

Education clearly reflects these two worldviews: the dominant education system (in the civilized world) was oriented toward shaping. I have to press the child into a standard form so that it functions properly. In a friendly worldview, I give a child a healthy environment so that it grows in every form and becomes the best natural version of itself. Like the body, the inner world is also simply allowed to grow.

“I was born with a friendly worldview into a hostile world”

Back to the beginning. This is true for all people with a hostile worldview. At the initial start, we are all open to everything. The baby is the blank sheet. If everything goes as planned, we then begin to build a friendly worldview because our environment is safe enough.

So: as soon as I see the world as hostile, I am myself in that worldview. The sentence simply says: “I see the world as hostile.” And at the same time this is legitimized, because of course I cannot do anything about the fact that the world is hostile. This shows so beautifully how powerful (and limiting) worldviews are: I cannot see anything that is not present in my worldview. The smaller the worldview, the blinder I am.

I-It and I-Thou — or: Protection and Safety in Relationship

Martin Buber described something very simple that is also incredibly deep. He says: there are two basic ways in which we encounter the world. I-It and I-Thou.

In I-It, the other becomes an object. In I-Thou, the other becomes a counterpart.

At first this sounds philosophical, but in everyday life it is super practically useful. In I-It, the other is something for me. A function. A role. An effect. Someone who helps me, disturbs me, benefits me, gives me energy or takes it away. I perceive you — but always through my perspective. You are part of my world, not truly a world of your own, but only functional for me. I need this in order to act, decide and organize. Every plan, every structure, every goal is based on I-It.

And exactly here the connection to patriarchy or the protection worldview becomes visible: I-It is protection mode. Because in protection mode I have to reduce. I cannot afford real encounter. I have to classify quickly: danger or not? Useful or disruptive? Controllable or not?

In I-Thou, something completely different happens. The other is no longer something for me. They are someone. A space of their own. A world of their own. Not fully understandable, not controllable, not reducible.

And this has a prerequisite: I have to be safe enough. Because in I-Thou I give up control. I can no longer fully classify you. I can no longer use you, fix you, or hold you still.

And now it gets interesting. Buber does not say: I-Thou is good and I-It is bad. He says: we need both. We cannot remain in I-Thou permanently. As soon as we begin to think, plan or structure, the Thou becomes an It again. That is normal.

The problem does not arise from I-It. The problem arises when we get stuck in I-It. Then exactly what you described happens. Relationships become functional. People become means.

I no longer ask: “Who are you?” But: “What are you for me?” And even closeness then becomes something I use. For validation. For safety. For energy. This can feel very similar, but it is not relationship.

In I-Thou, something else happens. I see you. Not only what you do or how you affect me, but you as a whole. With contradictions, with history, with depth.

And at the same time, something second happens: I am seen. Not because I present myself particularly well, but because I am there. That is the moment in which safety emerges.

And now the circle closes back to your model. When systems go into protection mode, everything shifts toward I-It. That is logical, inevitable. In the feeling of danger, I cannot afford real encounter. I need clarity, control, classification. So the world becomes functional. People become roles. Relationships become transactions. What once was alive becomes usable.

When systems come into safety, I-Thou becomes possible again. Not forced. Not as a technique. But as a natural state. I no longer have to control you. I no longer have to use you. I can let you be there.

Maybe this is the simplest translation: I-It asks: “What are you for me?” I-Thou asks: “Who are you — really?”

And maybe this is also the actual movement this is about: not from patriarchy to matriarchy. Not from one system to another. But from dealing with people as an “It” to encountering them as a “Thou.” Everything else follows from that.