How Brain-Based Behaviors Tend to Unfold Over Time

Freezing
(scientific def.)

Detection Freezing
• Everything stops
• 1-3 seconds

Shock Freezing
• Can follow detection
• Blank mind, no behavior options to choose from
• Can last several seconds

No-Good-Choices Freezing
• Can follow detection or shocked
• Only “bad” choices of extremely passive vs. reactive behaviors
• Seconds to minutes

Habit Behaviors
• Usually passive and ineffective (no self-defense training)
• Face-saving and submission habits we’ve all learned
• From gender socialization (e.g., “nice girl” habits)
• From childhood abuse experiences

Rational, Deliberate Behaviors
• Less likely with more stress and trauma, due to impaired prefrontal cortex
• If do happen, not necessarily effective – and then it’s back to reflex and habit behaviors

Extreme Survival Reflexes

Escape (seems) impossible, intense fear and/or horror

Dissociation: Can kick in early, spaced out and/or autopilot habit behaviors

Tonic Immobility: Paralyzed, muscles rigid
Collapsed Immobility: Muscles limp, dizzy/pass out

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