

TRAUMA WISE —LEADERSHIP—

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THE 6 FAMILIAR STAGES OF THE HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL, SECRETLY IN DESPAIR CROWD

I've been interviewing the "Highly Successful, Secretly in Despair" crowd since 2015. I actually got the language "Highly Successful, Secretly in Despair" from them.

Fast forward through 10 years of this type of ongoing research, alongside my own personally lived experience and one can start to see the shape of a pattern or two.

- Shannon Eastman, 2024



3

Highly Successful,
Secretly in Despair
As long as I am busy, this feels great. I love the dopamine hits, I love all of this output I get to call purpose, and what a sense of achievement, in spite of...

4

Highly Functioning, Secretly in Despair
The downgrade happens as the Mind-Over-Matter & ignoring the inner conflict takes a toll on the Body. Disease, Disorder & Dysregulation gets a lot louder.

2

Distraction makes me forget. That feels good.
The inner conflict numbs when I am always moving, staying busy and achieving lots, so lots more achievement it is, thanks.

5

Unsuccessful, Dysfunctional and very much in Despair
It creeps in until one day you notice that this is all there is. The Body moves into Ventral Dorsal. So shutdown & prolonged freeze states are in operation.

1

Feelings of Overwhelm Doesn't Feel Good...
When we don't like how something feels in the body, that inner conflict is channelled into an addiction, like work! (you know, to avoid actually facing yourself).

6

Oblivious, Insidious and Self Isolating.
We can still be oblivious to our human 'grinding-to-a-halt" as we move deeper into self isolation. We rationalise it as solitude & "protecting our peace."



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