



## Psychological Perspectives on Terrorists, Victims and Society

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### DESCRIPTION

Terrorism is intended to instil fear and uncertainty among the general public. This fear can spread quickly and is not limited to those who are immediately touched by the incident; it can also affect family members of victims and survivors, as well as those who are exposed to televised footage. Psychological trauma is frequently more common than physical injuries as a result of a terrorist attack. Understanding the psychological implications of terrorism is crucial to the nation's efforts to establish pre-event, event, and post-event intervention techniques that will limit the negative psychological effects of terrorism.

According to academics, the psychology of terrorism is shaped more by theory and opinion than by sound evidence. However, a lot of psychologists are beginning to compile credible evidence. They've discovered that looking at terrorism through the lens of political and group dynamics and processes is more useful than looking at it through the lens of individual dynamics and processes, and that universal psychological principles such as our subconscious fear of death and our desire for meaning and personal significance may help to explain some aspects of terrorist acts and our reactions to them.

Eventually, such data could aid in the difficult task of preventing terrorism. According to the results of psychologists, assuaging people's fears of cultural destruction, underlining our shared humanity or exposing the gap between the dream and reality of terrorist activity could deter would be terrorists from resorting to violence.

In fact, employing calm discussion and a helping hand to persuade terrorists out of committing violence is no longer an

idealist's pipe dream, but rather the goal of an increasing number of "de-radicalization" organisations around the world. Psychologists have studied terrorists' personal features for years, looking for hints that might explain their readiness to participate in violence. Most terrorists are no longer considered "pathological" in the classic sense. Surprisingly, many of the motivations for terrorism and responses to terrorism may be motivated by an unconscious fear of death. Culture and religion are used by people to shelter themselves from a fear of death that exists on the outskirts of consciousness.

The extent to which individuals believe they have knowledge of and control over an external occurrence, as well as how familiar and terrible the event will be, influence risk perceptions. Terrorism can impair societal functioning in a unique way, in addition to its particular attribute of aim. Terrorism has the potential to erode a sense of community or national security, to harm morale and cohesion, and to expose racial or ethnic, economic, and religious gaps in our society, as seen by the rise in hate crimes.

### CONCLUSION

Terrorism, a subset of human-caused disasters, can have a particularly devastating impact on psychological functioning. Terrorism carries with it a potentially greater impact than other disasters on distress responses, behavioral change, and psychiatric illness by virtue of the unique characteristics of terrorism events. Terrorist attacks, and the threat of a terrorism event, may also result in more severe psychological consequences than other types of traumatic events due to a perceived lack of control.

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