

Stockholm Syndrome: A Psychiatric Diagnosis or Just a Myth?

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ABSTRACT

Stockholm syndrome is a condition in which hostages develop a psychological bond with their captors during captivity. Stockholm Syndrome results from a rather specific set of circumstances, namely the power imbalances contained in hostage-taking, kidnapping, and abusive relationships. Emotional bonds may be formed between captors and captives, during intimate time together, but these are generally considered irrational in light of the danger or risk endured by the victims. Stockholm syndrome is a "contested illness" due to doubt about the legitimacy of the condition. It has also come to describe the reactions of some abuse victims beyond the context of kidnappings or hostage-taking. Stockholm syndrome can be argued as "another method of coping with the stress and danger...similar to some forms of coping in that the participants do not directly address the problem but find a way to cope with the situation by identifying with the aggressor.

KEYWORDS: *Hostages, psychological, captors, captivity, contested illness*

1. INTRODUCTION

Stockholm syndrome is a psychological response wherein a captive begins to identify closely with his or her captors, as well as with their agenda and demands. Psychologists who have studied the syndrome believe that the bond is initially created when a captor threatens a captive's life, deliberates, and then chooses not to kill the captive. The captive's relief at the removal of the death threat is transposed into feelings of gratitude toward the captor for giving him or her life. The survival instinct is at the heart of the Stockholm syndrome. Victims live in enforced dependence and interpret rare or small acts of kindness in the midst of horrible conditions as good treatment. They often become hyper vigilant to the needs and demands of their captors, making psychological links between the captors' happiness and their own. Indeed, the syndrome is marked not only by a positive bond between captive and captor but also by a negative attitude on behalf of the captive toward authorities who threaten the captor-captive relationship. The negative attitude is especially powerful when the hostage is of no use to the captors except as leverage against a third party, as has often been the case with political hostages.

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By the 21st century, psychologists had expanded their understanding of the Stockholm syndrome from hostages to other groups, including victims of domestic violence, cult members, prisoners of war, procured prostitutes, and abused children. The American Psychiatric Association does not include Stockholm syndrome in its Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM).¹ It can happen between strangers and occurs more often approximately up to 30% of people who are kidnapped will form some emotional bond with their captors.

Stockholm syndrome is a condition that causes hostages to develop feelings of loyalty and affection for their captors. It has many different names, such as "capture-bonding," where the victim's emotional

¹ The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM; latest edition: *DSM-5*, publ. 2013) is a publication by the American Psychiatric Association (APA) for the classification of mental disorders using a common language and standard criteria. It is used mainly in the *United States*.

attachment with the kidnappers starts off as one of fear but eventually develops into trust and even love.²

There are four key components that characterize Stockholm syndrome:

- A hostage's development of positive feelings towards the captor
- No previous relationship between hostage and captor
- A refusal by hostages to cooperate with police forces and other government authorities
- A hostage belief in the humanity of the captor, ceasing to perceive them as a threat, when the victim holds the same values as the aggressor.

2. BACKGROUND

In 1973, Jan-Erik Olsson, a convict on parole, took four employees (three women and one man) of Kreditbanken, one of the largest banks in Stockholm, Sweden, hostage during a failed bank robbery. He negotiated the release from prison of his friend Clark Olofsson to assist him. They held the hostages captive for six days (23–28 August) in one of the bank's vaults. When the hostages were released, none of them would testify against either captor in court; instead, they began raising money for their defense.³

Nils Bejerot, a Swedish criminologist and psychiatrist coined the term after the Stockholm police asked him for assistance with analyzing the victims' reactions to the 1973 bank robbery and their status as hostages. As the idea of brainwashing was not a new concept, Bejerot, speaking on "a news cast after the captives' release" described the hostages' reactions as a result of being brainwashed by their captors. He called it Norrmalmstorgssyndromet (after Norrmalmstorg Square where the attempted robbery took place), meaning "the Norrmalmstorg syndrome"; it later became known outside Sweden as Stockholm syndrome.⁴ It was originally defined by psychiatrist Frank Ochberg to aid the management of hostage situations.⁵

This analysis was provided by Nils Bejerot after he was criticized on Swedish radio by Kristin Enmark,

² Full report available at <https://www.cbtcognitivebehavioraltherapy.com/stockholm-syndrome/>

³ Adorjan, Michael; Christensen, Tony; Kelly, Benjamin; Pawluch, Dorothy (2012). "Stockholm Syndrome As Vernacular Resource". *The Sociological Quarterly*. 53 (3): 454–474. doi:10.1111/j.1533-8525.2012.01241.x. ISSN 0038-0253. JSTOR 41679728. S2CID 141676449

⁴ Bejerot N (1974). "The six day war in Stockholm". *New Scientist*. 61 (886): 486–487.

⁵ Ochberg F (8 April 2005). "The Ties That Bind Captive to Captor". *Los Angeles Times*.

one of the hostages. Enmark claims she had strategically established a rapport with the captors. She had criticized Bejerot for endangering their lives by behaving aggressively and agitating the captors. She had criticized the police for pointing guns at the convicts while the hostages were in the line of fire and she had told news outlets that one of the captors tried to protect the hostages from being caught in the crossfire. She was also critical of prime minister Olof Palme, as she had negotiated with the captors for freedom, but the prime minister told her that she would have to content herself to die at her post rather than give in to the captors' demands.^{[6][7]}

3. CASE STUDIES

Mary McElroy Case

Mary McElroy was abducted from her home in 1933 at age 25 by four men who held a gun to her, demanded her compliance, took her to an abandoned farmhouse and chained her to a wall. She defended her kidnappers when she was released, explaining that they were only businessmen. She then continued to visit her captors while they were in jail. She eventually committed suicide and left the following note: "My four kidnappers are probably the only people on Earth who don't consider me an utter fool. You have your death penalty now – so, please, give them a chance."⁸

Patty Hearst

Patty Hearst, the granddaughter of publisher William Randolph Hearst, was taken and held hostage by the Symbionese Liberation Army, "an urban guerilla group", in 1974. She was recorded denouncing her family as well as the police under her new name, "Tania", and was later seen working with the SLA to rob banks in San Francisco. She publicly asserted her 'sympathetic feelings' towards the SLA and their pursuits as well. After her 1975 arrest, pleading Stockholm syndrome did not work as a proper defense in court, much to the chagrin of her defense lawyer, F. Lee Bailey. Her seven-year prison sentence was later commuted, and she was eventually pardoned by President Bill Clinton, who was informed that she was not acting under her own free will.⁹

⁶ Westcott K (22 August 2013). "Lyssna på Kristin Enmark prata med Olof Palme under gisslandramat". *BBC News* (in Swedish). Retrieved 5 October 2015.

⁷ Enmark, Kristin (24 June 2020). *Jag blev Stockholmsyndromet*. Stockholm: SAGA Egmont. ISBN 9789185785964

⁸ Bovsun M (11 July 2009). "Justice Story: The lady and her kidnappers". *NY Daily News*. Retrieved 8 April 2018.

⁹ Adorjan, Michael; Christensen, Tony; Kelly, Benjamin; Pawluch, Dorothy (2012). "Stockholm Syndrome As

4. LIMA SYNDROME

Stockholm syndrome is a two-sided coin and doesn't always just apply to the hostages and victims- it can also apply to the captors. Captors feel empathy for their victims.¹⁰ An inversion of Stockholm syndrome, called *Lima syndrome*, has been proposed, in which abductors develop sympathy for their hostages. An abductor may also have second thoughts or experience empathy towards their victims.¹¹

Lima syndrome was named after abduction at the Japanese embassy in Lima, Peru, in 1996, when members of a militant movement took hostage hundreds of people attending a party at the official residence of Japan's ambassador.¹²

5. Comparison between Lima syndrome and Stockholm Syndrome

In Stockholm syndrome, an individual develops positive feelings toward their captor or abuser. It's the opposite of Lima syndrome.

It's believed that Stockholm syndrome may be a coping mechanism to help someone process and accept their situation during a period of trauma.

While Lima syndrome is poorly defined, there are four characteristics Trusted Source that are often associated with the development of Stockholm syndrome. These are when an individual:

1. believes that there's a threat to their life that will be carried out
2. perceives value in small acts of kindness from their captor or abuser
3. is isolated from views or perspectives other than those of their captor or abuser
4. doesn't believe that they can escape from their situation

There's more research into Stockholm syndrome than Lima syndrome, although it's often limited to small studies.

Vernacular Resource". The Sociological Quarterly. 53 (3): 454-474. doi:10.1111/j.1533-8525.2012.01241.x. ISSN 0038-0253. JSTOR 41679728. S2CID 141676449.

¹⁰ According to an article in the 2007 FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin, crisis negotiators are encouraged to develop the notion that the captor can have positive feelings towards the victims, too. It's supposed to improve hostage survival.

¹¹ "PERU: Tale of a Kidnapping - from Stockholm to Lima Syndrome | Inter Press Service". www.ipsnews.net. 10 July 1996. Retrieved 23 February 2019.

¹² Kato N, Kawata M, Pitman RK (2006). *PTSD*. Springer Science & Business Media. ISBN 978-4-431-29566-2.

In addition to kidnapping and hostage situations, research indicates that Stockholm syndrome may arise in the following situations:¹³

- **Abusive relationships:** This can include any form of physical, emotional, or sexual abuse. A 2007 paper notes that it's possible for those experiencing abuse to form an attachment to or cooperate with their abuser.
- **Sex trafficking:** A 2018 study Trusted Source analyzing interviews with female sex workers found that many of their personal accounts of their experience were consistent with aspects of Stockholm syndrome.
- **Child abuse:** A 2005 article Trusted Source notes that the emotional bond that can develop between a child and their abuser may enable the abuser but also protect them long after the abuse has stopped.
- **Sports:** A 2018 paper explored the relationship dynamics between athletes and coaches that utilize abusive coaching methods and how it can be an example of Stockholm syndrome.

It's also important to remember that every individual reacts differently to stress and trauma. As such, not all people will develop Stockholm syndrome when placed in one of the situations above.

While Lima syndrome has been observed in kidnapping and hostage-taking scenarios, it's currently unknown if it can develop within the four additional scenarios discussed above.

6. SYMPTOMS OF STOCKHOLM SYNDROME

The world has heard of Stockholm syndrome, but many people are not familiar with the symptoms. Some common symptoms include a strong attachment to the captor and an intense fear of escape. This blog post will be discussing how Stockholm syndrome is caused, what it's like to have it, and some ways you can help yourself or someone else who may be experiencing these symptoms.

It's a strange phenomenon to experience Stockholm syndrome. It's not just an individual who is in love with their captor, but rather someone who has been taken hostage by their kidnapper and starts to feel affection for them. Stockholm syndrome can be defined as "a paradoxical psychological response to trauma wherein the victim shows empathy and concern toward the abuser."¹⁴

¹³ Lima Syndrome: Definition, Examples, vs. Stockholm Syndrome (healthline.com)

¹⁴ seemingly absurd or self-contradictory.

The symptoms of Stockholm syndrome include feeling sorry for or defending your captor; having feelings of loyalty or fear towards your captor; being afraid when you are near people outside of the relationship, etc. Anybody can develop this disorder after being abused, threatened, intimidated, or even deprived of food and water because it affects how one thinks about themselves and others around them.

- Stockholm syndrome is a form of psychological trauma that occurs when hostages develop feelings of trust or affection for their captors.
- The hostage may feel gratitude, sympathy, and even love towards the captor.
- Other symptoms include positive thoughts about the kidnapper and negative thoughts about police officers or rescue workers who are trying to free them from captivity.
- Symptoms usually occur in situations where victims have been isolated from family members, friends, or other people they know well.
- It can also be caused by physical abuse such as being beaten by captors.
- There has not been enough research done on how Stockholm syndrome affects children but experts believe it could be more difficult because children tend to identify more with their parents than adults do with their kidnappers.¹⁵

7. CAUSES OF STOCKHOLM SYNDROME

In theory, there are a few components that together cause Stockholm syndrome:

- No prior relationship between the captor and the victim.
- A victim develops positive feelings toward the captor.
- Complete isolation from anyone but the captor.
- A victim's belief that their captor has humanity and mistaking their captor's kindness for genuine care.
- Believing that the captor can kill the victim at any time.
- A refusal on behalf of the victim to cooperate with police and other authorities (if in a hostage situation).¹⁶

¹⁵ Alexander DA, Klein S (January 2009). "Kidnapping and hostage-taking: a review of effects, coping and resilience". *Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine*. 102 (1): 16–21. doi:10.1258/jrsm.2008.080347. PMC 2627800. PMID 19147852

¹⁶ Stockholm syndrome: A complete guide to this curious syndrome by Anna Bohren. Available at <https://yourbrain.health/stockholm-syndrome/>.

The psychologists who have studied Stockholm syndrome believe that it begins when a bond is created between the captor and victim by initially and deliberately threatening the victim's life, then choosing not to kill them. The relief that the victim feels is then switched into feelings of gratitude and arrogance toward the captor.

8. TREATMENT OF STOCKHOLM SYNDROME

The most common treatment for Stockholm Syndrome is Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT). This therapy helps the victim of Stockholm Syndrome to make a distinction between their feelings and thoughts, as well as recognize that they are not obliged to be passive or submissive in response to abuse. The goal of this therapy is for victims of Stockholm Syndrome to start feeling empowered and like they have control over their lives again.

The main objective when treating someone with Stockholm Syndrome is to create an environment where the victim feels safe enough to share their story without being judged or criticized. It's also important that loved ones understand why it might be difficult for them to leave the relationship with an abusive partner despite any desire they may feel.

There is no known cure for Stockholm Syndrome, the psychological condition whereby hostages feel empathy and compassion for their captors. While there are many treatments that have been tried to help victims of this trauma, most fail due to the complicated nature of Stockholm Syndrome.¹⁷

In order to better understand why these treatments often don't work, we need a deeper understanding of what causes Stockholm Syndrome in the first place. Studies on hostage situations like those that occurred during 9/11 show that they usually last between 3-5 days before being resolved or ending tragically.

- Stockholm Syndrome is a psychological condition where hostages develop an emotional attachment to their captors.
- Symptoms of Stockholm include positive feelings about the kidnapper, negative feelings towards law enforcement, and avoidance of other people.
- Treatment for Stockholm Syndrome includes psychotherapy and medication.
- The prognosis for individuals with Stockholm Syndrome is good as long as they receive treatment.

¹⁷ Åse C (22 May 2015). "Crisis Narratives and Masculinist Protection". *International Feminist Journal of Politics*. 17 (4): 595–610. doi:10.1080/14616742.2015.1042296. S2CID 141672353

- Stockholm Syndrome is a mental disorder in which hostages develop feelings of trust or affection for their captors.
- Symptoms include anxiety, depression, and suicidal thoughts.
- The best way to treat Stockholm Syndrome is with therapy sessions that allow the victim to work through their trauma in a safe environment.
- It's important for victims not to avoid reminders of the traumatic event because this can lead to PTSD and other mental health disorders.¹⁸
- Treatment usually takes place over an extended period so it can be tailored to each individual's needs.
- Therapy sessions are confidential and private so they provide a safe space where victims don't feel judged or ashamed about what happened during the abduction.

9. CRITICAL ANALYSIS

Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM 5, 2013)

The DSM-5 is widely used as the "classification system for psychological disorders" by the American Psychiatric Association.¹⁹ Stockholm syndrome has not historically appeared in the manual, as many believe it falls under trauma bonding or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and there is no consensus about the correct clarification. In addition, there is no extensive body of research or consensus to help solve the argument,²⁰ although before the fifth edition (DSM 5) was released, Stockholm syndrome was under consideration to be included under 'Disorders of Extreme Stress, Not Otherwise Specified'.²¹ The work was updated in 2013, but Stockholm syndrome was not present.²²

¹⁸ Kato N, Kawata M, Pitman RK (2006). *PTSD*. Springer Science & Business Media. ISBN 978-4-431-29566-2.

¹⁹ Adorjan, Michael; Christensen, Tony; Kelly, Benjamin; Pawluch, Dorothy (2012). "Stockholm Syndrome As Vernacular Resource". *The Sociological Quarterly*. **53** (3): 454–474. doi: 10.1111/j.1533-8525.2012.01241.x. ISSN 0038-0253. JSTOR 41679728. S2CID 141676449.

²⁰ Robinson, Ashley (28 February 2019). "What Is Stockholm Syndrome? Is It Real?". *PrepScholar*.

²¹ Adorjan, Michael; Christensen, Tony; Kelly, Benjamin; Pawluch, Dorothy (2012). "Stockholm Syndrome As Vernacular Resource". *The Sociological Quarterly*. **53** (3): 454–474. doi:10.1111/j.1533-8525.2012.01241.x. ISSN 0038-0253. JSTOR 41679728. S2CID 141676449.

²² American Psychiatry Association (2013). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders: DSM-5* (5th ed.). Washington: American Psychiatric Publishing. ISBN 978-0-89042-555-8.

Namnyak et al. (2008)

A research group led by Namnyak has found that although there is a lot of media coverage of Stockholm syndrome, there has not been a lot of research into the phenomenon. What little research has been done is often contradictory and does not always agree on what Stockholm syndrome is. The term has grown beyond kidnappings to all definitions of abuse. There is no clear definition of symptoms to diagnose the syndrome.²³

FBI law enforcement bulletin (1999)

A 1998 report by the FBI containing over 1,200 hostage incidents found that only 8% of kidnapping victims showed signs of Stockholm syndrome. When victims who showed negative and positive feelings toward the law enforcement personnel are excluded, the percentage decreases to 5%. A survey of 600 police agencies in 1989, performed by the FBI and the University of Vermont, found not a single case when emotional involvement between the victim and the kidnapper interfered with or jeopardized an assault. In short, this database provides empirical support that the Stockholm syndrome remains a rare occurrence. The sensational nature of dramatic cases causes the public to perceive this phenomenon as the rule rather than the exception. The bulletin concludes that, although depicted in fiction and film and often referred to by the news media, the phenomenon actually occurs rarely. Therefore, crisis negotiators should place the Stockholm syndrome in proper perspective.²⁴

Robbins and Anthony (1982)

Robbins and Anthony, who had historically studied a condition similar to Stockholm syndrome, known as *destructive cult disorder*, observed in their 1982 study that the 1970s were rich with apprehension surrounding the potential risks of brainwashing. They assert that media attention to brainwashing during this time resulted in the fluid reception of Stockholm syndrome as a psychological condition.²⁵

²³ Namnyak M, Tufton N, Szekely R, Toal M, Worboys S, Sampson EL (January 2008). "'Stockholm syndrome': psychiatric diagnosis or urban myth?". *Acta Psychiatrica Scandinavica*. **117** (1): 4–11. doi:10.1111/j.1600-0447.2007.01112.x. PMID 18028254. S2CID 39620244.

²⁴ Fuselier GD (July 1999). "Placing the Stockholm Syndrome in Perspective". *FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin*. **68**: 23. ISSN 0014-5688 – via Google Books.

²⁵ Young EA (31 December 2012). "The use of the "Brainwashing" Theory by the Anti-cult Movement in the United States of America, pre-1996". *Zeitschrift für Junge Religionswissenschaft* (7). doi:10.4000/zjr.387.

Jess Hill (2019)

In her 2019 treatise on domestic violence *See What You Made Me Do*, Australian journalist Jess Hill described the syndrome as a "dubious pathology with no diagnostic criteria", and stated that it is "riddled with misogyny and founded on a lie"; she also noted that a 2008 literature review revealed that "most diagnoses [of Stockholm syndrome] are made by the media, not by psychologists or psychiatrists." In particular, Hill's analysis revealed that Stockholm authorities — under direct guidance from Bejerot — responded to the robbery in a way that put the hostages at greater risk from the police than from their captors (hostage Kristin Enmark, who during the siege was granted a phone call with Swedish Prime Minister Olof Palme, reported that Palme told her that the government would not negotiate with criminals, and that "you will have to content yourself that you will have died at your post"); as well, she observed that not only was Bejerot's diagnosis of Enmark made without ever having spoken to her, it was in direct response to her public criticism of his actions during the siege.²⁶

10. TIPS TO AVOID STOCKHOLM SYNDROME

If a family member is suffering from Stockholm syndrome, the best thing to do is to suggest therapy and possibly medication. It's essential not to become angry with them. Remind yourself that they are how they are because they were trying to keep themselves alive.

Sadly, one cannot change their genetic makeup and be 100% sure they can prevent Stockholm syndrome in the event of abuse or a kidnapping. However, there are some preventive measures one can try.

- **Don't forget reality.** Regardless if the abuser says they love you or your kidnapper gives you good meals; remember that they still hit you or that you're still being kept against your will.
- **Don't trust them.**
- **Think about your escape.** Fantasize about it even if it doesn't seem possible. To achieve, you must conceive and believe.
- **Stay emotionally distant.** While maybe not possible in abusive relationships, in kidnappings it's essential to remain emotionally distant.

²⁶ See *What You Made Me Do: Power, Control and Domestic Abuse*, chapter 2, "The Underground", by Jess Hill; published June 24, 2019 by Black Inc.

11. STOCKHOLM SYNDROME IN TODAY'S SOCIETY

While Stockholm syndrome is commonly associated with a hostage or kidnapping situation, it can actually apply to several other circumstances and relationships.

Abusive relationships: Research has shown that abused individuals may develop emotional attachments to their abuser. Sexual, physical, and emotional abuse, as well as incest, can last for years. Over this time, a person may develop positive feelings or sympathy for the person abusing them.²⁷

Child abuse: Abusers frequently threaten their victims with harm, even death. Victims may try to avoid upsetting their abuser by being compliant. Abusers may also show kindness that could be perceived as a genuine feeling. This may further confuse the child and lead to them not understanding the negative nature of the relationship.

Sex trafficking trade: Individuals who are trafficked often rely on their abusers for necessities, like food and water. When the abusers provide that, the victim may begin to develop positive feelings toward their abuser. They may also resist cooperating with police for fear of retaliation or thinking they have to protect their abusers to protect themselves.²⁸

Sports coaching: Being involved in sports is a great way for people to build skills and relationships. Unfortunately, some of those relationships may ultimately be negative. Harsh coaching techniques can even become abusive. The athlete may tell themselves their coach's behavior is for their own good, and this, according to a 2018 study, can ultimately become a form of Stockholm syndrome.

12. STOCKHOLM SYNDROME IN INDIAN ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

This concept has been extended to organisational culture, also known as the *Corporate Stockholm syndrome* where employees of a company start to identify with, and are exceedingly loyal to, an employer who is manifestly hostile to their self-interest (Adorjan et al 2012; Ullrich 2014; Logan 2018). This has become an area of interest in health and labour economics because of the severe health ramifications. India has been consistently ranked among the worst countries for workers' rights (see the ITUC Global Rights Index).

²⁷ Traumatic entrapment, appeasement and complex post-traumatic stress disorder: evolutionary perspectives of hostage reactions, domestic abuse and the Stockholm syndrome - PubMed (nih.gov)

²⁸ Does the Stockholm Syndrome affect female sex workers? The case for a "Sonagachi Syndrome" (nih.gov)

A fragmented society, massive unorganized sector, and weak state capacity can be a breeding ground for labour force exploitation (Harriss-White & Gooptu 2009). In this article, we present evidence of Stockholm syndrome in Indian corporate culture from a small pilot study. This study should be seen as a precursor to more rigorous research that may be conducted in the future. One would believe that the amount of time an employee spends with an employer is inversely proportional to the level of abuse, which means that if an individual is treated well in an organization, he continues to work loyally in the firm and vice versa. Corporate Stockholm syndrome is quite prevalent in Indian organizational culture. Searching for a rationale, for most people, due to the immense value that work holds, the threat of losing one's job is a powerful motivation to comply at the beginning. However, with time the employees get emotionally attached to the workplace and develop loyalty towards it.

Camaraderie and moral suasion - the view that it was the organization that offered them a monthly salary and the little sacrifice they made was for the good of the organization - helps them justify the abuse. They also believe that it was inevitable while working in a project and was sometimes necessary for the success of the project. This deep loyalty leads them to rationalize the poor treatment of the employer as a necessity for the good of the organization. Some of the employees may even develop a belief that some form of abuse is a norm across the industry irrespective of the company they work for.²⁹

It must also be noted that the respondents represent the upper segments of Indian employees in terms of salary, who have not only argumentative power but also the capability of switching jobs. We are of the opinion that if this is prevalent at the very top, then significant concerns would lie in the unorganized industrial sectors. With that being said, since people suffering from corporate Stockholm syndrome most often do not realize about the plight they are already in, no easy solution can be found.³⁰

13. CONCLUSION

Stockholm Syndrome is a vague condition, in the sense that there are many disputes as to whether it is a real mental condition or whether it is a staged behavioural change in the victim in order to increase chances of survival during captivity. In any case,

²⁹ Stockholm Syndrome in Indian Organizational Culture by Tapishnu Samanta and Manish Kumar Singh.

³⁰ Full report available at "The Leap Blog: Stockholm Syndrome in Indian Organizational Culture (theleapjournal.org)"

during dangerous circumstances where the victim's life is in jeopardy, it is essential for them to display affection towards the abductor, whether this is put on or has really developed within the subject's mind. Arguably the most influential factor in the development of Stockholm Syndrome is the small kindness perception, which leads to the abductee thinking that the abductor is a kindhearted person with good values, when in reality this is not the case.³¹ There are many instances of Stockholm Syndrome, one of the most famous being Natascha Kampusch, in which she explains her feelings of love and affection towards her abductor Wolfgang Priklopil.³² The perceived inability to escape and infantilization are two other factors which combine with the smaller elements to cause a positive identification with the captor. There are factors which may cause an undesired effect on the victim, such as timing of violence and pre-existing stereotypes, and these must be avoided by the abductor if they want the subject to obey them. Treatment for the syndrome proves successful, as the statistics for PTSD antidepressants and mixed therapy show, but in both my opinion and most psychotherapists', it is much more beneficial for the subject to take non-medicinal treatment first, in the form of cognitive behavioural therapy.

The degree of success in treatment depends on the patient themselves, as treatment differs between each person. The syndrome occurs in day to day situations, such as abusive relationships, and in order for the syndrome's cures to be fully developed, awareness about this strange mental condition must be raised so that it can be identified within families and friends more often.

The subject of Stockholm syndrome, fueled, in part, by a number of high-profile cases, has generated a lot of discussion and opinions. Many people find the phenomenon as difficult to understand as it is fascinating. Although, at first, this psychological process may appear complex and uncontrollable, further exploration with those experienced in the area of crisis negotiation revealed that the condition and its effects can serve as a useful tool in successful outcomes. In understanding the basis behind the mental state and behavior of both the hostage taker and the captive, law enforcement agencies can place Stockholm syndrome in the appropriate perspective and see it as a catalyst in improving the training of

³¹ Does Stockholm Syndrome affect all abductees' minds? - Philosophy essays - EssaySauce.com Free Essay Examples for Students

³² Stockholm Syndrome - Term Paper (termpaperwarehouse.com)

hostage negotiators and encouraging peaceful resolutions.

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