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THE PRACTICE OF SHUNNING AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

📅 11th November 2016 👤 admin

**BY DR SAVIN BAPIR-TARDY**

Humans are most commonly considered to be social beings by nature. This makes an individual's social life critical in their mental well-being. In fact, an individual's survival depends on having strong long-lasting relationships, based on mutual trust. Taking into account the importance of our social life, it would be obvious to state that when this is taken away, it can

have harmful effects on an individuals' mental wellbeing.

This need is often used by communities, their leaders to be more specific, to ensure that everyone is obeying the same collective views. Failure to do so is often punished, by the person being banished from the community. This phenomenon is often referred to as shunning or ostracism. Essentially shunning is a form of social shame and humiliation.

More specifically, shunning or ostracising is a form of abuse. It is discrimination and silent bullying. Unfortunately, often people who have been shunned also face other forms of abuse, ranging from death threats and physical assaults to murder.

In everyday language we use shunning and ostracism as being synonymous. However, shunning is a form of ostracism. Ostracism comes from the Greek word '*ostrakismos*' and this was a technique that was used under the ancient Athenians where citizens who posed a threat to the state were banished from Athens for 10 years.

Human history is rich in examples of ostracism being used within communities and institutions to enforce conformity, punishment or control, or all the above, in order to ensure their identity as a collective group. This means that there is no room for individual thinking or beliefs that go against the collective beliefs or rules.

The phenomenon of shunning and ostracising has often been linked to cults. It is a tactic that is used as a form of punishment for those who are perceived to have transgressed, questioned any of the community's beliefs or who do not share the same collectively held beliefs.

Shunning is often implemented by community leaders. They encourage families to also shun their family members, including their children. Failure to do so implies a loss of honour within the community and families who refuse are likely to be banished as a whole because they have lost their honour within the community and the community as a whole feel that they had been dishonoured.

Shunning or ostracism is not limited to cults and is often used in communities where there is a high prevalence of "honour" based violence. This practice is encouraged and continues to be implemented by those who hold some form of authority in the community.

For example, in a recent documentary by Deeyah Khan — 'Islam's Non Believers' — Omer El-Hamdoon makes the statement that the Muslim community is only based on the religion and one must expect to be shunned. Yet

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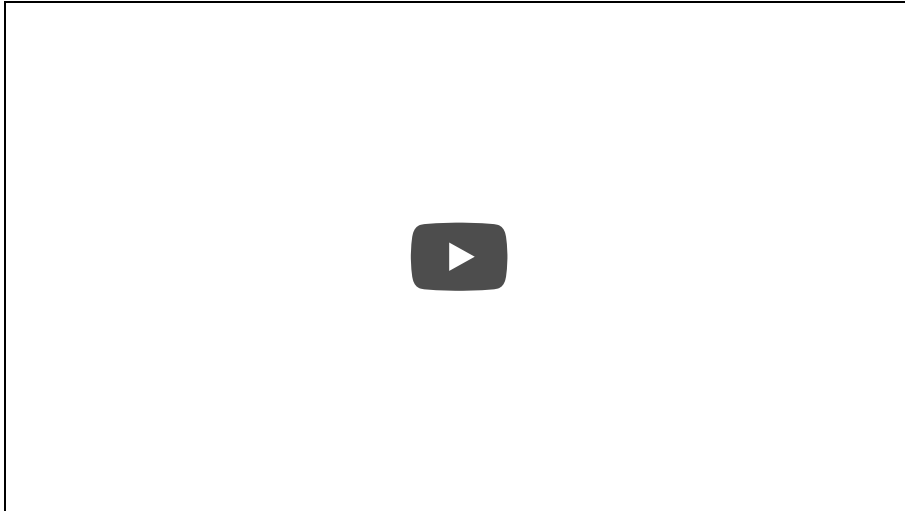
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there was a denial of this being a form of discrimination. His statement reinforces the 'us versus them' mentality and most importantly in that process it promotes and normalises shunning to the audience. This is a common example of how community leaders encourage and normalise shunning to its members.



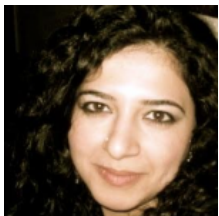
It is well-documented in research from social psychology that people obey orders that are given from someone in authority. If those in authority are encouraging shunning, people will obey this, regardless of the psychological distress and the damage that it may have on the family.

Adding to this, shunning is a powerful tool for social influence, so leaders use it to ensure that people will obey them, in order to maintain their membership within the community. Let's not forget, humans are social beings and the prospect of facing social humiliation, shame and rejection are not a prospect that we aim for — in fact, we would do anything to avoid it.

The psychological consequences of being shunned can best be explained as a social death penalty. The immediate effects are isolation from family and the community. There is an attempt to make sense of why this is happening to them. How could the family have rejected them? The person then starts to attack their sense of self, which is also why shunning is often perceived as the death of personhood. This leads to feelings of helplessness, hopelessness and worthlessness, depression, low self-esteem, suicidal ideations and self-harming behaviours.

Also, researchers in psychology have observed a high prevalence of PTSD amongst people who have been shunned. To get a more clear idea of the pain that shunning can cause, researchers have observed that even being a bystander to shunning can have dire psychological consequences. The psychological consequences of being shunned are long. Although, externally there may not be any wounds, internally the wounds are deep and long-lasting.

Working therapeutically with people who have been shunned is very challenging. All of the negative beliefs that they hold about themselves are often, in the eyes of the victim, reinforced by the act of being shunned. Also, individuals who have been shunned live with psychological agony, often for the rest of their life. In the long term, shunning becomes a long-term psychological torture.



Dr Savin Bapir-Tardy is a counselling psychologist at the the Iranian and Kurdish Women's Rights Organisation (IKWRC) and a lecturer in psychology at the University of West London.



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Kirill
🕒 25th May 2020 at 10:48 pm

I would give anything to get Vendetta on those shunning me, abusing me, mocking me, the longer they continue, and the more getting into this sceeme. Actually, it only makes me more and more angry, and the more irritated and angry i get, the more i fear, despite me being a kind person, I will rnd upp killing prople and end up in jail.

What right do they ever have treating others continuisly like that, also, if one has failed miserably. Yes, some kind of sentence and one time reprisal, is fine and ethically righteous, but not a lifetime woth !

If an arm for a nail, is their righteousness, pain for pain is equality.

Any endless sentence means, those punished by the mob of abusers and mobbers, got their moral right, to equal their suffering and pain any way they can do so.
Its just fairnesd beneath the Gods.

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"On The Side Of Those Who Fight For Freedom" - One Law for All

🕒 16th April 2020 at 4:41 pm

[...] justifying the killing of apostates; the apostate label alone carries with it the grave risk of shunning and honour-related violence and [...]

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Jay
🕒 13th October 2019 at 5:05 am
Sheryll Thank you!

For taking a jumble of emotions and translating them into thought form!
However the lie is in the Patriarchal for my family
Father Bull Dog...
Father's who stole and lied
& his deception
& bought, their way through..

[Reply](#)

A Spiritual Trust Betrayed: My Experience of Clergy Abuse - Shema Koleinu שמע קולינו

🕒 27th November 2018 at 12:06 am

[...] shunning I experienced has taken nearly everything from me. According to The Practice of Shunning and Its Consequences by Dr. Savin Bapir-Tardy, the impact of shunning is severe and [...]

[Reply](#)



Sophie
🕒 14th July 2018 at 11:28 am

I have experienced a lifetime of shunning which causes severe PTSD. It is a complicated story, but the consequences for me now as an adult in my mid-thirties are intense. I was kept in solitary confinement for years

by my (vaguely Muslim) religious community as a child, and although I worked hard to get my life under control, I still face absolute terror at certain tasks, like creating written reports at work or giving presentations. PTSD seeps in and I have full-scale flashbacks of the imprisonment, chaos and abuse. Thankfully I have lovely managers who try to help me, but the fear of being ostracised for tiny, intangible mistakes — and then imprisoned, faced with death threats, and denied all access to human company — is one that I struggle to find solutions to.

Reply



Lisa Howard

26th April 2018 at 9:29 pm

I would like to know how to legally seek damages for shunning from my family.

Going to work, living in a community in a different state instead of helping family where they live is just the tip of the iceberg according to my so-called adoptive family. I am gossiped about in a negative manner to absolute strangers and amongst themselves to anyone who will listen. I am harassed at work, in public places, in doctors offices etc.

All ways the same message you should move to live with family to help,them and you should call them.

I am 53 years old.

It has been going on for almost 30 years.

Reply



Malana Scott

30th January 2020 at 5:42 pm

Don't understand why but it's evil ,where do I get help

Reply



Elizabeth

16th August 2020 at 1:39 am

I separated then divorced my husband because he was sexually violating my three daughters. Oblivious, at first, I walked in on him with my two oldest; he would NOT stop.

His family & the church we attended began immediately to shun me, which spread to like-belief siblings in my family which eventually spread to "all but one of my siblings."

Programmed by their father, grandparents, aunts & uncles, my children have continued the practice because I developed Complex PTSD trying to be strong for my girls, earn a living and providing them with emotional support growing up;

but the practice of "Shunning" is very contagious.

I live in constant pain, nightmares, with horrific triggers to my PTSD. I suffer all the mental health symptoms described in the article above.

And, now that I'm retired, my physical health is taking a beating, I believe as a result of this long-term form of "VIOLENT ABUSE."

Reply



Gareth

24th March 2018 at 9:04 am

I feel i've been shunned and rejected my whole life from day 1.I long to be received,embraced and welcomed by others. Because of it i now reject and shun as the active participant to preempt being rejected and shunned which i find unbearable. I go the ultimate. I haven't travelled abroad in 33 years and am adamant that i won't ever again. This is,essentially,a shunning and rejecting of the world and life itself. It's the best,but a very poor,way to relate. I can't or won't think of anything better. Significantly,the only time i think differently is when i periodically take mdma. This makes me think the polar opposite.

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Sheryll

🕒 5th March 2018 at 1:43 am

Why don't we have FBI and police office being called in to the shunning meetings....

You a person on the street decides to org a bunch of folks. Together bday sY I want you to Maliciously go after this person . Here his name ,, Y'all know he lives works and we're all thier are ... Tbis meaning of and I want all y'all to mercifully go after them ... these folks in cults leading shuns are crimminal .. they need to be in jail that's the they Freedom to leave a a place works ... They get in convegatuon someone needs to take out thier phone and st I'm witnessing my peaches get up and sick a about 209 folks on this person and try to manipulate Gods word for everybody to after him in this land to freely leave religion. And hefe is name weee he did at... becauE it's against the law....

[Reply](#)



Sheryll

🕒 4th March 2018 at 3:25 pm

Shunning is taken from evil ... this is drugs ... the thought you don't need college and run around preaching door instead ...

These folks don't have the right interpretation of shunning...
A group of was lead by a long term drug user from RLDS whom was brainwashed to participate in group bullying .. I'm certain she dosent know what shunning evil as pertaining to illegal drug use.. or shun the practice of group bullying as an evil practice

[Reply](#)



Sheryll

🕒 4th March 2018 at 2:05 am

I'm not sure if my adult siblings I suspect stole my car so they could honor their mother in the front honor seat at my daughters wedding while claiming to be children honoring Thier mother idk if they ..need adult jail or juvenile jail for adults whom haven't grown up.....

[Reply](#)



Sheryll

🕒 4th March 2018 at 1:24 am

Yes... designed to give power to the ones organizing the abusive shunning..

I've been shunned with crimminal instructions ...
The crimminal instructions were that I don't deseve anything .. and so some out of the group of shunners stole my car.. before my daughters wedding .. they tried to steal my kids before shunning me..
and have engaged in org crimminal bullying and harassment with rumors ... and open back turning ..
This not in a third world but in Texas ...with folks whom by profession teacher, police officer whom engaged in bullying and org crimminal act , honoring their mothers crimminal bullying and deciding to join.... with the excuse they are children of God.and must honoring their mother...
I'm totally serious it's org crimminal activites by adults all claiming they are honoring thier mother they are children of God by participating ...these are some unstable adults ...
I've been called evil spirit , dead to them, by folks whom know better ..
it's not the shunned that have problems ... it's the shunners ..

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