

Towards a psychological profile of womb twin survivors.

A list of characteristic statements, related to particular attitudes, behaviours, feelings and relationships, was gradually pieced together from stories told by womb twin survivors, mainly by email and mainly through the wombtwin.com website. This list became the second part of a research questionnaire; the first part being a list of signs and indications of a twin pregnancy, that ended with a sole survivor. It took many years to create the website because it was difficult to discern what was characteristic of wombtwin survivors from what was simply human nature.

Gradually a short list of commonly-held feelings emerged. A longer list has been gradually collated and pruned, according to how commonly they are felt by the respondents.

Some womb twin survivors have definite proof of their twin and some do not. Only the respondents who had proof were included in this analysis. There were shades of response to the list of statements, from A which was the strongest to D which was the weakest. Only the As and Bs were chosen. The top five answers, made by people with proof of their lost twin and who answered A or B, were discovered. The picture that emerges from this analysis is distinct and seems quite reasonable, as long as one assumes that some kind of pre-birth impression of the lost twin does remain in the mind of the survivor.

SOMETHING MISSING

76% agreed strongly with: "All my life I have felt as if something is missing." So many emails used exactly that form of words. A missing Something may be replaced by things or activities, such as shopping, collecting or even hoarding. A missing Someone may be felt as a deep and perpetual sadness; a seemingly unfounded sense of loss or grief. A missing part of oneself may be experienced as inner emptiness or only being half alive.

REJECTION

73% agreed strongly with "I fear rejection." Womb twin survivors define rejection as being found wanting or even completely useless and therefore not worthy of attention or love - rejection can also be interpreted as being ignored overlooked and treated by other people, especially those in close or family relationships,

as if they "don't exist." To be ignored and dismissed in this way is experienced by womb twin survivors as being extremely painful. The fear of rejection keep womb twin survivors in unsuitable relationships, they may tolerate abuse for years and may decide to be people pleasers, craving closeness, praise and affirmation.

POTENTIAL

70% agreed strongly with this idea: "I know I am not realising my true potential." The life of the womb twin survivor is characterised by constant acts of self sabotage. Missed opportunities, unmade decisions, unchosen choices all hang heavy and are often ruminated upon - the "might have beens. A sense of the person you could have been; if only. A yearning to achieve something extraordinary, to reach for the stars and be famous, against which ordinary life seems dull and cheap. A sense of bitter disappointment and let down, both in the way the world is made and in the way one has lived one's life, is common, if not constant.

DIFFERENT

65% gave a strong response to: "I feel different from other people." Womb twin survivors are common but they are unusual. One in eight people is a womb twin survivor but that means that about 85% of the population are not, and are unlikely to be able to understand the feelings of a womb twin survivor. There can be whole families of womb twin survivors over several generations with hardly a living pair of twins among them, but there can be other families and groups where there are very few womb twin survivors: in that case they stand out as unusual, if not weird, and may be referred to as such.

SEARCHING

68% agreed strongly with the statement: "I have been searching for something all my life but I don't know what it is". The search presents itself as a kind of restless seeking, and may be evident from an early age, . Wombtwin survivors may frequently change jobs, move house or even countries; that may be rootless, travelling extensively; they may constantly forming new relationships looking for that mysterious Something is another person. It is a fruitless search, for what is being searched for can never be found. It is the lost twin, who is lost forever and will not return.

ALONE

65% agreed strongly with the statement: "Deep down, I feel alone, even when I am among friends." This is a paradoxical kind of loneliness, that has nothing to do with how many friends you have, or how much you may be loved cherished and admired. If you are a womb twin survivor and are not of the most well known people in the world, it will bring no happiness because there is always that inner, deep sense of isolation and feeling alone. This may be reflected in a practice of self isolation, in pushing people away, as if to deliberately maintain a sense of loneliness.

ABANDONMENT

65% agreed strongly with the statement "I fear abandonment." Sooner than be abandoned the womb twin survivor will hang on and hold tight to friends and family, and carefully nurture relationships, even buy friendship. When people leave, this is a problem; goodbyes are extremely difficult. Just being left alone is very hard. Paradoxcially, to confront this deep fear, the womb twin survivor may suddenly abandon friends and family and simply leave - emigrate to another country, disappear or cut off all contact, leaving a sense of abandonment and bereavement behind them.

There are many other statements in this list. To see the whole list and discover your own feelings for yourself, if you are a womb twin survivor, do try the questionnaire yourself. Just go to my website WWW.WOMBTWINSURVIVORS.COM and click "THE PROJECT."

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