



**GGD**

Amsterdam

# Golden rules for dealing with victims of extreme intimidation and harassment in home environments

Michael Willemsen



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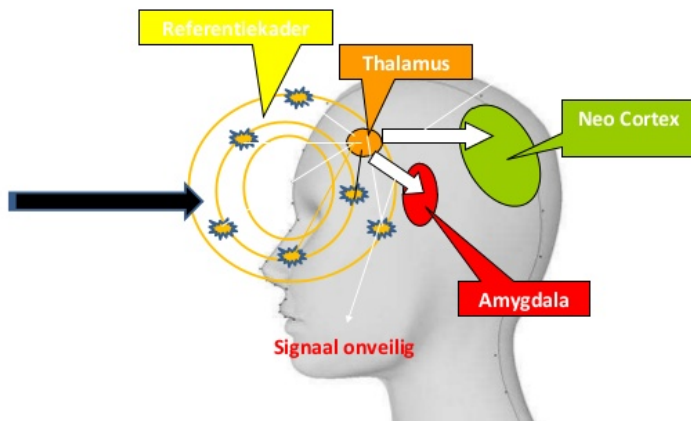
## Severe Harassment Victims

- **Starting point:** victims are well functioning, healthy citizens of Amsterdam who are, as a result of the Harassment situation, at risk of losing their sense of security or have lost their sense of security.
- A consequence is the danger of dysfunction and the health risks that go with it.
- Furthermore: people with certain types of health problems are:
  - high risk:
    - land easier in conflict situations
    - are nevertheless still the victim



## How do health problems arise through severe intimidation?

Detect → React → Communicate



Signal 'unsafe' → Amygdala = fight, flight, freeze

- Chronic stress → undermines physical and mental health
- Chronic sleep deprivation → can lead to health problems
- Capability – workload becomes unbalanced





## Severe intimidation health risks

### ■ Psychological complaints

- Symptoms of depression
- Hightened emotions: anger, desperation
- Continual fear, anxiety, tense and on a high alert, stress, PTSD related complaints
- Suicide or thoughts of suicide

### ■ (Psycho) somatic complaints

- Sleep disturbance
- Migraine
- Upset stomach, loss of appetite and weight loss

### ■ Social consequences

- Estrangement: Family and friends stay away, children can't invite friends home
- The environment is "tired" of always the same story



## What can the professional do for the victim?

- Recognition, being heard, being taken seriously
- Support
- Quick, structural and appropriate solution for the problem
- Information, explanation and clarity
- A clear process: one contact point, accurate documentation, continuity
- Victim participation



**How to deal with victims**





## Golden rules

1. Assure the victim, recognize his or her suffering
2. Take the time and listen to what the victim wants to say. Record the information carefully.
3. Involve victims in the process, clarify the Severe Harassment Approach, provide information and opportunity to participate.
4. Don't hesitate to repeat the structure and procedure of the approach several times
5. Handel firmly and decisively, call in help if needed quickly . Be carefull with promises.



## Golden rules

6. Support victims by helping them get back their feeling of self – controle.
7. Always give victims the opportunity to furthur discuss their health problems with a health professional.
8. Offer practical assistance in achieving recovery on a financial and personal level.
6. Be careful what you promise, do as you promise!!!
7. At the end of a harrasment case: closure for the victim. Make sure the victim understands.

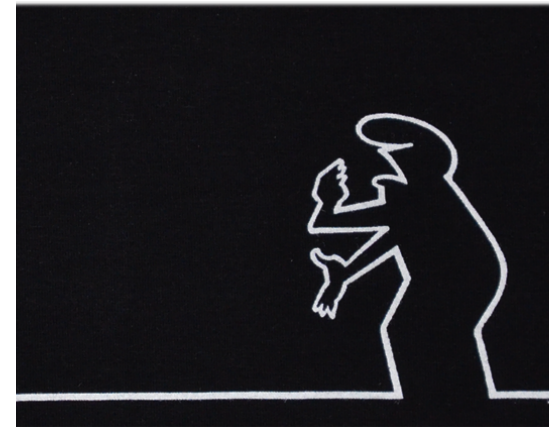




Part 3: dealing with victims with special needs

## When it gets complicated

- Some victims need more professional help than others.
- How do you monitor (guard) your limits and avoid getting too immersed in a case?
- What works best and in which situation?





## Victims can react in certain ways

- **Emotional victims**  
→ Requires empathy and space
- **Suspicious and / or confused victims**  
→ Always requires a mental health professional assessment
- **Aggressive victims**  
→ Show understanding but reject any kind of aggressive act
- **Externalizing, intimidating victims**  
→ Requires boundary setting and mutual respect
- **Obsessed victims, who get lost in details**  
→ Take your time, listen to their questions, refer to the procedure



**Need to know more?  
Contact?**

**Michael Willemsen**

[mwillemsen@ggd.amsterdam.nl](mailto:mwillemsen@ggd.amsterdam.nl)

