

In the book, "The Wisdom of Psychopaths," author Kevin Dutton describes how psychopaths, as predators, have an ability or talent for recognizing vulnerable people. These can be people who have already been traumatized by violence, sexual assault, domestic violence and other traumatic experiences. These previously victimized people are vulnerable to further victimization. In addition, a person who has Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) as a result of a trauma, may also experience dissociative symptoms. This makes people less likely to be believed, or they think others won't believe them. Their memory problems can make them a less than reliable witness. There is also a stigma associated with mental illness. This adds to the victimization experience and decreases self-esteem and productivity. Merely having to testify against the person that harmed you can in itself be traumatic, adding to the original trauma.

Dr. Bessel Van den Kolk, MD, describes in his book, "The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind and Body in the Healing of Trauma," how depression and anxiety can have physical impacts, which include but are not limited to, lowered immune response, and decreased cardiovascular health. He goes on to cite research that demonstrates potentially permanent changes in the way our personality changes in reaction to trauma. We become wired to be more vigilant, suspicious, easily triggered by things that remind one of the traumatic events. These are also symptoms of PTSD. Change can happen, and the permanent effects of trauma can be reversed through proper treatment.

The desire for justice is a very important aspect of healing. This is not an abstract idea and prison is not merely to prevent further danger that can come from allowing dangerous psychopaths to remain free. In fact, justice is important in restoring a sense of safety in the world and in one's environment. This is in stark contrast to injustice which creates the exact opposite experience. Injustice causes one to doubt the validity of one's experiences. Contrary to common misconception, the role of Law & Order is not for revenge but is a necessary component of creating a just society. Witnessing or reading about injustice can be painful. It feels profoundly wrong and the world itself can feel dangerous. This can effect one's faith, cause discomfort just in knowing that justice was not served.