



**ZONTA**

CLUB  
OSNABRÜCK  
WESTFÄLISCHER  
FRIEDE

MEMBER OF ZONTA INTERNATIONAL  
EMPOWERING WOMEN  
THROUGH SERVICE & ADVOCACY

## **Emergency bags for traumatized women**

People who have experienced a trauma - such as physical and / or emotional violence – are often emotionally thrown back into the experienced traumatic situation very quickly by so-called triggers, even if the traumatic experience is long over.

Triggers: These are e.g. words, noises, looks, smells etc. They can be triggers that cause panic, fear and uncontrolled behavior in those affected, like "out of the blue". Often they do not understand themselves and their behavior, which contributes to massive uncertainty. These reaction patterns are related to the fact that people experience massive powerlessness during a traumatizing event in which previous coping patterns do not work, the brain switches to survival mode and does not save the trauma situation as a whole, but - as in shock - only excerpts (fragments) such as words, smells, noises, etc., which usually remain unconscious. Exactly such fragments are called triggers, which can "work" for a lifetime and which can sometimes cause extreme stress to those affected.

### **But those affected can do something!**

In order to stabilize yourself in such "trigger situations" with the sometimes overwhelming feelings of fear and panic, there are emergency bags. These are individually filled with objects, fragrances, etc., which those affected can then fall back on quickly in order to regulate themselves and to get out of the feeling of numbness or panic. In this way - unlike in the traumatizing situation - you get a feeling of security again to be able to influence things. In trauma therapy, one speaks of self-empowerment.

We are pleased that by financing the emergency bags we can support the important work of the Osnabrück women's advice center in the stabilization groups for women affected by trauma.

**Cornelia Streb-Baumann,**  
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