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**Whistleblowing –
and the loss of the good self**




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Jimmy Savile




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Zeebrugge ferry disaster



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The Story of a Whistleblower

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OUTLINE OF THIS TALK:

1. TERMS AND DEFINITIONS
2. QUESTIONING THE EXISTING VIEW
3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK
– *PSYCHOANALYSIS*
4. CASE
– *MID STAFFORDSHIRE NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE TRUST*
5. IMPLICATIONS AND QUESTIONS

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TERMS AND DEFINITIONS:

WHISTLEBLOWING:

- Informing on illegal and unethical practices in the workplace
- An ethical act
- Issues of significance

STIGMATIZATION:

- Creating an identity that is ‘tainted ...[and]...discounted’
- Creating a ‘spoiled identity’

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EXISTING VIEW

Whistleblowers are hated and stigmatized because they represent the 'other'

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MY VIEW:

Whistleblowers are hated and stigmatized because they represent:

the 'other'	(consciously)	'bad/evil'
'lost self'	(unconsciously)	'good/ethical'

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THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK
using ideas from psychoanalysis:

'projective identification' (Klein, 1946)
'attacks on linking' and 'arrogance' (Bion, 1967)

THE 'LOST GOOD SELF'

- The *loss* of the functions of knowing, honesty and integrity – access to the truth
- The *loss* of the function of doing the work properly

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THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK:

CONSEQUENCES:

- Feeling of failure
- Persecuted frame of mind
- Shame and guilt
- The turn to hatred
- Whistleblower becomes the problem/ 'shoot the messenger'
- Stigmatization of whistleblower

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CASE:
Mid Staffordshire National Health Service Trust




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Francis Report




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Francis Report:



- Terrible standards of care
- Culture of denial
- Blame-led culture

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Whistleblower: Helene Donnelly



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Whistleblower: Julie Bailey



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Implications and Questions

- Why do we turn against those who make (legitimate) complaints?
- Why do we turn against those who have a different view?

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Thank you



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