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#### What Will We Learn?

- Therapists will understand the personal impact of trauma and attachment upon one's therapeutic engagement.
- Therapists will develop an understanding of the reflective use of nonverbal communication as an attunement skill.
- Therapists will develop an appreciation of the ability to hold space and coregulate with others.
- Self-care, boundaries and compassion will be emphasized as everyday skills that enhance one's professional practice.

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#### What is Developmental Trauma?

It is multiple or chronic exposure to one or more forms of developmentally adverse interpersonal traumas. For example: abandonment, betrayal, physical assaults, sexual assaults, threats to bodily integrity, coercive practices, emotional abuse, witnessing violence and death.

**Developmental trauma disorder**, not yet officially recognized, results from child maltreatment and has many neurobiological consequences.



http://www.traumacenter.org/products/pdf\_files/preprint\_dev\_trauma\_disorder.pdf

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#### Attachment Strategies are Coping Strategies

Three attachment patterns are as follows:

- Type A: Avoidant
- Type B: Balanced
- Type C: Connection Seeking



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# Avoidant Coping Style Relationship Matters\*\*

#### What does the Avoidant Space Look Like?

- · People pleasing
- · Compulsive caregiving
- Shut down
- Provide minimal information about themselves



- · Avoid conflict
- · Minimize feelings of hurt
- Aloo
- Self-reliant

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#### Connection Seeking Style

- This strategy arises from having others respond unpredictably to our emotional expressions.
- We learn that by demonstrating threat or helplessness others will respond with greater predictability.
- We feel anxious without connection, and become preoccupied with relationships.



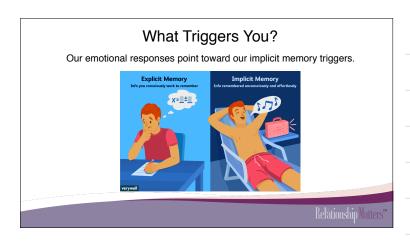


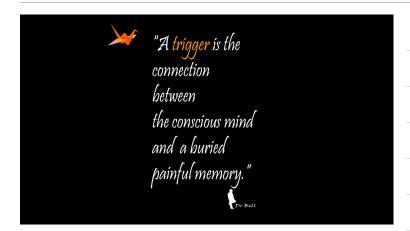
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## What does the Connection Seeking Space Look Like?

- Excessive worry about relationships
- · Fear of criticism
- Excessive need for approval
- Angry withdrawal or aggressive to solicit connection
- Frustration when others are not available
- Feel upset and depressed when receive disapproval
- · Fear of being alone
- Clinging, demanding, nagging, sulking

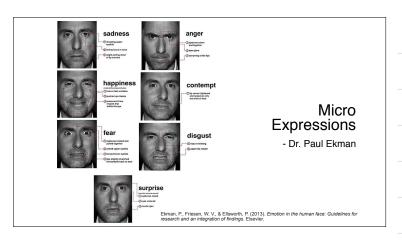
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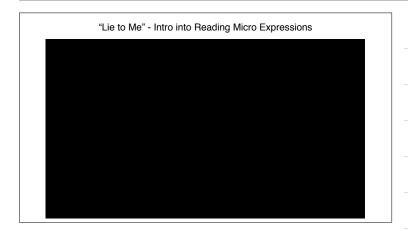


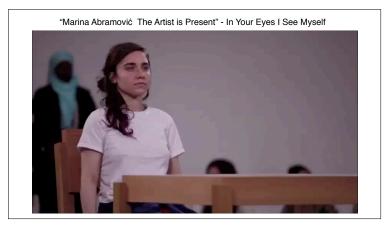




Shame







#### Attunement

- When there is mutual empathic attunement, the synchrony activates the attachment circuits.
- High quality attachment reduces negative affect (irritability, anger, fear and despair) and amplifies positive emotions (contentment, satisfaction).



Stiegler, J. R., Molde, H., & Schanche, E. (2018). Does an emotion-focused two-chair dialogue add to the therapeutic effect of the empathic attunement to affect?. Clinical psychology & psychotherapy, 25(1).

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#### The Healing Power of Holding Space



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#### Tone of Voice

- When we are under stress, our tone of voice changes, taking on a quality of irritability and frustration.
- This will immediately stimulate a defensive reaction in the listener's brain that will undermine the potential of having a productive dialogue even before the conversation begins.

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#### Compassionate Communication

- Brain imaging shows the more deeply we listen the more our brain will mirror the activity in the other person's brain. This helps the receiver feel understood and valued.
- Brevity followed by intense listening increases the receiver's understanding.



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#### Self-Care

"Scientists have shown that dopamine can be released by acts of kindness and expressions of gratitude."

- Hawn & Holden, 2012

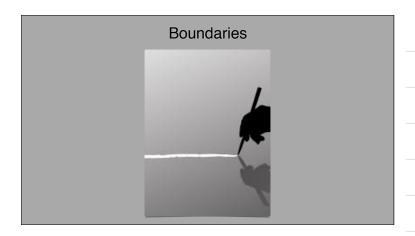


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### Self-Care is Critical for the Sustainability of Anything



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# Compassion in Action

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## Thank you!

www.kimbarthel.ca Twitter: @kimbarthelotr Facebook: Kim Barthel



