“WHAT IS ADDICTION, REALLY?” THE SWISS PSYCHOLOGIST ALICE MILLER ASKS. “IT IS A SIGN, A SIGNAL, A SYMPTOM OF DISTRESS. IT IS A LANGUAGE THAT TELLS US ABOUT A PLIGHT THAT MUST BE UNDERSTOOD.”

Gabor Mate, The Realm of Hungry Ghosts

ATTACHMENT?

➢ Attachment theory states that a strong emotional and physical attachment to at least one primary caregiver is critical to personal development.

➢ Derived from basic concept that the relationship with the primary caregiver(s) is important for later functioning and holds immediate importance to the child and its development.

“ATTACHMENT ESTABLISHES AN INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIP THAT HELPS THE IMMATURE BRAIN USE THE MATURE FUNCTIONS OF THE PARENT’S BRAIN TO ORGANIZE ITS OWN PROCESS”

Daniel Siegel
HARLOW’S (1958) RHESUS MONKEY, WIRE-MESH, EXPERIMENT.

SO WHAT?
- Monkey chose comfort over food-instinct when possible.
- Monkeys who did not have the comfort/attachment often were more ill and did not function as well.
- Monkeys kept in solitary, if allowed early on to build connection to others, had a chance to develop regularly.
- At first, researchers thought humans became attached to their caregivers (specifically the mother) because they were fed by them—not the case.
- Comfort and care are what initiated connection, not just food.
John Bowlby (work 1945-1985) is the father of attachment theory.

Fundamental premise: All persons need to bond securely to navigate healthy lives via relationships.

Main concept:
- Secure base: from which the child can launch out to explore the environment and have new experiences.

“ATTACHMENT THEORY HOLDS THE POSITION THAT IT IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR INDIVIDUALS TO COMPLETELY REGULATE THEIR AFFECTIVE STATES ALONE.”

Philip Flores, p. 3

Empathetic attunement
Teaching through modeling
Consistency
Nurturance
Structure & predictability
“OUR EXPERIENCE OF THE WORLD IS CONSTRUCTED AROUND THAT NOTION OF THE ISOLATED SELF, AND IT IS FROM THIS PERSPECTIVE THAT WESTERN SCIENCE HAS EXPLORED THE BRAIN. YET, EVEN THOUGH WE Cherish the idea of individuality, we live with the paradox that we constantly regulate each others’ internal biological states.”

-Louis Cozolino
Two person psychology

WE ARE WIRED FOR CONNECTION FROM BIRTH.
THE RELATIONAL BRAIN

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NEURONS
- Cells that process and transmit information through electrical and chemical signals.
- All throughout body and nervous system.
- Human brain contains 85-86 billion neurons. 16.3 billion in cerebral cortex, 69 billion in cerebellum.
- In brain neurotransmitters (various chemical) are used to convey certain messages.

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SOCIAL SYNAPSE
- Synapses are where two neurons come together and form a neuronal pathway.
- Synapses communicate via chemical signals that activate and influence another through biochemical messages.
RELATING BRAIN TO BRAIN EXPERIENCES, ESPECIALLY RELATIONAL ONES, FORM THE PATHWAYS OF NEURONS IN THE BRAIN.

Two person psychology

NEURONS THAT FIRE TOGETHER, WIRE TOGETHER.
THE INFANT AND CHILD BRAIN

➢ At this stage brain is passive recipient, waiting for experiences.
➢ High initial sprouting of neuronal synapse = pathways are forming!
➢ Pathways formed by EXPERIENCE, with 2 potential outcomes……..

BLOOMING:

AS EXPERIENCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL STIMULATION ARE PROVIDED, THESE OCCURRENCES SHAPE THE STRUCTURE OF THE BRAIN.

PRUNING:

IF CERTAIN EXPERIENCES AND AGE APPROPRIATE STIMULI ARE NOT PROVIDED, PRUNING OCCURS.
THE BRAIN IS AN ORGAN OF ADAPTATION THAT BUILDS ITS STRUCTURES THROUGH INTERACTIONS WITH OTHERS. TO WRITE THE STORY OF THIS JOURNEY, WE MUST BEGIN OUR GUIDEBOOK WITH THE THOUGHT: THERE ARE NO SINGLE BRAINS.

-Cozolino

THE DEVELOPING BRAIN

➢ Healthy development is determined by infant’s ability to attach itself to external object.
➢ Failure to attach=severe deficits on early organization of self.
➢ During first 5-6 months of life, in a healthy child, there is innate attachment seeking behavior to catalyze symbiosis and integration.
➢ Child learns how to regulate their own state of arousal and inner processing through interactions with another.

THE TYPE OF EMOTIONAL ATTUNEMENT PROVIDED BY SECURE ATTACHMENT ACTUALLY INCREASES BLOOD FLOW TO THE PREFRONTAL AREAS OF THE CHILD’S BRAIN, RESULTING IN THE GROWTH OF NEURAL TISSUE

-Flores
THE BIGGEST LOSS IS NOT THE LACK OF ATTACHMENT ITSELF, OR THE ABUSE, OR THE NEGATIVE EVENT; THE BIGGEST LOSS IS NOT HAVING THAT BASE TO DISCOVER YOUR OWN ESSENCE.
Slide 43

DISORGANIZED

Slide 44

EARNED

SECURE

Slide 45

EXERCISE

- Pair up
- Ask for 5 adjectives to describe one of their primary caregivers (can be fictional)
- Practice reflective listening, empathetic attunement... counseling skills
- Lead partner to identify a specific life example that exemplifies each adjective
- See if you can identify which attachment pattern the partner is displaying.
### Attachment Style

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attachment Style</th>
<th>Parental Approach</th>
<th>Resulting Adult Characteristics</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SECURE</td>
<td>Aligned with the child; in tune with the child's emotions</td>
<td>Able to create meaningful relationships; empathetic; able to set appropriate boundaries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AVOIDANT</td>
<td>Unavailable or rejecting</td>
<td>Avoids closeness or emotional connection; distant; critical; rigid; intolerant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AMBITENT</td>
<td>Inconsistent and sometimes intrusive parent communication</td>
<td>Anxious and insecure; controlling; blaming; erratic; unpredictable; sometimes charming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DISORGANIZED</td>
<td>Ignored or didn't see child's needs parental behavior was frightening/traumatizing</td>
<td>Chaotic; insensitive; explosive; abusive; untrusting even when craving security</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Slide 47

THESE PATTERNS MOST OFTEN ARISE DURING:

- STRESS
- ANXIETY
- CONFLICT
- DISTRESS
- ETC.

### Slide 48

INSECURE ATTACHMENT DOES NOT NECESSARILY = MENTAL DISORDERS OR SUBSTANCE ABUSE
ADDICTION AS AN ATTACHMENT WOUND

The Kid Care Canada Society, "Roots of Addiction"

"WE DON’T HAVE RELATIONSHIPS, WE TAKE HOSTAGES" - AA
THOUGHTS?
INDIVIDUAL VS SOCIAL RECOVERY?
OPPOSITE OF ADDICTION=CONNECTION?

OPPOSITE OF ADDICTION =CONNECTION!

- Lack of healthy/quality attachment in childhood= vulnerability. Vulnerable individuals often unable to regulate affect—many times unable to even identify what they feel.
- Without internal resources to draw from one remains unable to confront pain. Turns to external "attachments" to escape pain.
- Since shaming, painful, rejecting, etc. relationships have contributed to deficit in resources (insecure attachments)...they don't turn to others.
- Isolation and hunger for connection leads to intolerable emotions, which fuels further lack of connection and unstable/unhealthy relationships.
- With few options, the right environment, the right genetics, etc. some turn to alcohol, drugs and other external sources of regulation (food, sex, work, gambling, etc.).
- Cycle continues until insecure self-structure is healed and healthy human/spiritual attachments are formed. =Earned-secure attachment.
RECOVERY = DETACHING FROM DESTRUCTIVE ATTACHMENT TO & DEVELOPING THE CAPACITY FOR HEALTHY INTERPERSONAL ATTACHMENTS

CONCEPTS TO REMEMBER

YOU WILL ALWAYS ATTACH TO SOMETHING
THE QUALITY OF EARLY ATTACHMENTS AFFECT THE EXTENT SOMEONE CAN FACE EMOTIONAL PAIN.

BEING COMPLETELY SEPARATED & DEPENDENT ON SELF IS NOT THE GOAL!

THE NEED FOR ATTACHMENT IS A LIFELONG PROCESS, NOT JUST PHASE.
Mature relationships must be achieved through an interactive process of mutual agreement and consent.

You must change it up!

Our brains link with those of people close to us, in a silent rhythm that makes up the very life force of the body. These wordless and powerful ties determine our moods, stabilize and maintain our health and well-being, and change the structures of our brain. In consequence, who we are and who we become depend, in a great part, on whom we love.

“A General Theory of Love,” Lewis
SO WHAT THE !&%$ DO I DO ABOUT IT?

FIRST THINGS FIRST...
STAY CLEAR FROM BLAME

AT THE SAME TIME...
WADE INTO VULNERABILITY & RELATE THROUGH EMPATHY
EMPATHY IS FEELING WITH SOMEONE

---

HALLELUJAH!
NEUROPLASTICITY
NEUROPLASTICITY

HALLELUJAH!

EXPLORE

THERAPY
FACE THE PAIN

HARD WORK PAYS OFF...

CONNECTION, CONNECTION, CONNECTION!

THE KEY IS...
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REFERENCED AND SUGGESTED MATERIALS</th>
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<tr>
<td>Mate, Gabor. Addiction (video). Kid Care Canada Society.</td>
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