

- 1 **Healing the Past:**
Early Trauma, Old Wounds & Healing
 LAUREN PORTER, BA, MSW
 CENTRE FOR ATTACHMENT
- 2 **The Influence**
 - Attachment is coming to know ourselves within the context of being known
 - To be genuinely understood, honored and cared for
 - This can make all the difference in life
- 3 **Effects on All Relationships**
 - Work, home, friendships, family
 - Our expectations, our reactions, our system of navigation - all influenced by our attachment histories
 - Scenarios...
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- 5 **Adult Caregiving**
 - Adult caregiving in relationships is reciprocal, rather than unidirectional
 - Behaviors from partners toward each other like that of parent toward child
- 6 **Adult Attachment Style**
 - Working models of childhood: early attachment experiences and style
 - Duration of the attachment relationship
 - Accessibility of the attachment figure
 - Attachment style of the partner
 - Life experiences along the way
- 7 **Role of Attachment Figure**
 - Nearby
 - Accessible
 - Attentive
 - If so, then the child (adult) feels loved, secure, confident and able to explore the environment and engage with others
 - Use of attachment behaviors to regulate proximity to the attachment figure
- 8 **Categories of Attachment**
 - Secure

- Insecure - Avoidant
- Insecure - Ambivalent
- Insecure - Disorganized
- Insecurity a function of level of avoidance and level of anxiety, in unique combinations

9 **Secure Meets Insecure**

10 **Secure Base & Safe Haven in Adulthood**

- Secure adults are more likely than insecure ones to *seek* support from their partners when distressed and to *provide* support to their distressed partners
- Insecure adults assess their partner's behavior during and after conflicts in ways that exacerbate rather than alleviate their insecurities

11 **Internal Working Model**

- Early attachment experiences form the lens
- Direct effect on adult relationships, choices and styles
- Especially the relationship with one's mother

12 **The Lens**

- Self-fulfilling prophecy feature of attachment
- Seek relationships that fulfill our expectations and that we're comfortable with, even if they provoke painful feelings
- A largely unconscious process

13 **Partner Selection**

- Adults identify responsive caregiving qualities as most 'attractive' when seeking long-term relationships
 - Attentiveness
 - Warmth
 - Sensitivity
- Despite this, many do not end up paired with secure partners
 - Confirming their existing beliefs about attachment relationships

14 **Basic 'Quiz'**

- A. I am somewhat uncomfortable being close to others; I find it difficult to trust them completely, difficult to allow myself to depend on them. I am nervous when anyone gets too close, and often, others want me to be more intimate than I feel

comfortable being.

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- C. I find it relatively easy to get close to others and am comfortable depending on them and having them depend on me. I don't worry about being abandoned or about someone getting too close to me.

17 **Emotional Regulation**

- Adults, too, rely on close relationships to assist with emotional regulation
- In times of heightened stress, the presence of an attachment figure allows for regulation and a return to stability to take place
 - Traumatic events
 - Death of a loved one
 - Loss of a job
 - Overwhelmed with anger
 - Feeling better via talking about it

18 **Adult Attachment Styles and Relationships**

- Influences relationship satisfaction, stability and communication
- Adults in secure relationships more likely to recall childhoods with parents who were affectionate, caring and accepting
- Secure adults described their parents as benevolent and nonpunitive

19 **Leaving on a Jet Plane**

- Naturalistic research under attachment stress with adults
- 108 couples surveyed and observed in an airport
- 57% separating; 43% flying together

20 **Attachment Behaviors in the Airport Setting**

- Brief hug
- Both hold each other for 5 minutes
- Eye-to-eye contact
- Tears in eyes
- Looking at watch
- Goes to the window and watches the plane
- Petting each other's head

- Crying
- Waving goodbye

21 **Constructing a Narrative**

- Not necessarily how your childhood was, but how you make sense of it
- Correlates with our ability to provide security for our own children, as opposed to following in unconscious patterns
- Requires insight, the ability to tolerate feelings, the ability to perceive honestly and the ability to take responsibility for our behavior
- Healing support needed

22 **Adult Attachment Interview**

23 **Implications for Parenting**

- The act of parenting – and the transformation from person to parent – evokes in us all that is still painful, but unconscious, in our histories

24 **How Change Occurs**

- Change results from self reflection - reflective capacity and functioning - the ability to stand back, observe, understand and work with one's behavior, motivation and needs in the context of relationships
- Ironically, the more aware we are of our process, the more we can change it
- New experiences literally change the structure of the brain

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