

Attachment Injuries

Incidents of betrayal, abandonment, or violations of trust that leave 'footprints' in the sand. These incidences can leave a partner redefining the safety and security of the relationship.

An attachment injury can ultimately lead one party in the relationship to redefine the bond as insecure. The incident usually occurs when one individual is in dire need of their partner's comfort - the event(s) can be then be perceived as relationship traumas. *The event is not always purposeful.*

Let's take a look at some examples

1

Partner is not present during childbirth

2

Partner has an emotional, physical, or sexual affair(s)

3

Partner leaves for extended periods of time

6

Partner abuses other partner

5

Partner walks away in time of grief

4

Partner drops communication suddenly

What this relationship trauma does is creates a barrier in the processing of such event(s), making it difficult to build safety and healing in the attachment injury(ies). These are events that might often resurface in times of great distress.

Steps to Change

1

The therapist begins to help the injured partner articulate the raw emotion of the experience of their partner's behaviors or actions.

The injured partner is then able to tie the emotion to the experience and access attachment fear and longings associated to the event(s).

2

3

The opposing partner is able to acknowledge their partner's pain and understand the significance of the injury(ies).

The opposing partner is also able to articulate the injury(ies) and is able to express guilt related to unmet needs and fear of potential loss.

4

5

The opposing partner is able to express themselves emotionally and empathetically; they take responsibility and express remorse.

The injured partner is then able to reach to the other partner and ask for comfort in the moment.

6

7

Therapist is able to integrate a bonding experience within the context of the trauma. Couples rewrite the narrative as a way to respond securely in distress.