

Betrayals of Trust = Emotional Abandonment = Insecure Unsafe Attachment

Relationship conflict is seen as separation distress

Distressed couples:

Blame/Withdraw

Critical demanding/defend

Resentful Compliance

Anxiously attached partners have pressing and urgent fears of whether they matter to their loved ones; they are preoccupied with the with the fear of abandonment and being unloved.

When we get overwhelmed with emotions by feeling criticized, accused or not heard we default to our programmed rigid responses of fight, fix or flight. We are stuck in habitual ways of reacting. The anger arises as a result of not being able to seek comfort or by feeling not heard and not having their normal needs for contact and intimacy met by their partners

When we feel emotional starvation and hunger, we get angry and critical, yet underneath we feel sad and it is painful.

When we feel rejected, we feel shame

Our anger is a desperate attempt to connect with our partner and prevent more rejection, but it actually does the opposite

Partners criticize each other to evoke responses from each other but end up pushing each other away; or they shut down and withdraw to avoid rejection and end up shutting each other out which elicit fears of abandonment.

Softer relational exchanges appear to disconfirm their belief that their partners will abandon them. In a softening event, a previously withdrawn partner's new accessibility and responsiveness actively challenges the more anxiously attached partner's cognitive belief that he or she will be abandoned and is essentially defective and unlovable.

Try deeper, softer emotions, and send new signals to each other that evoke new and more positive responses from each other.

If the more hostile partner softens and asks for needs to be met in a vulnerable fashion, the partners can be becoming mutually accessible and responsive to each other's attachment needs and fears.

We need to find more positive, less angry and less controlling ways of expressing our

emotions and needs and of inviting our partners to engage with us.

We need to be brave and ask for comfort in regard to our attachment fears.

Clearly state their needs in a manner that invites responsiveness.

This corrective experience demonstrates the powerful impact of sharing fears and vulnerabilities elicits attuned caregiving rather than avoidance or rejection.

You want to know that your pain impacts your partner.

Are you there for me; am I important to you; and will you come when I call?

Wolves need to express emotions to their partners

His or her lack of emotional presence is a trigger for the partner to experience panic and rejection

Secure Functioning:

Understand how you are wired for love and attachment, know your survival skills

Self-center= Retain emotional balance and flexibility in the face of confrontation, rather than becoming flooded with anxiety or anger

Self-reference Tune into your primary emotions and so you can identify needs

Offer coherent messages to others about fears and needs that evoke responsiveness

Receive what is being heard

Tolerate ambiguous or negative responses from another with less defensiveness and reactivity

Don't lose yourself to the pressure and demands of others

Respond to another with empathy and sensitive care in a way that constantly renews bonds

Validate anger and place it in the attachment frame of desperation triggered by perceived abandonment.

Become an expert in your partner's strengths not weaknesses