



Treatment Together

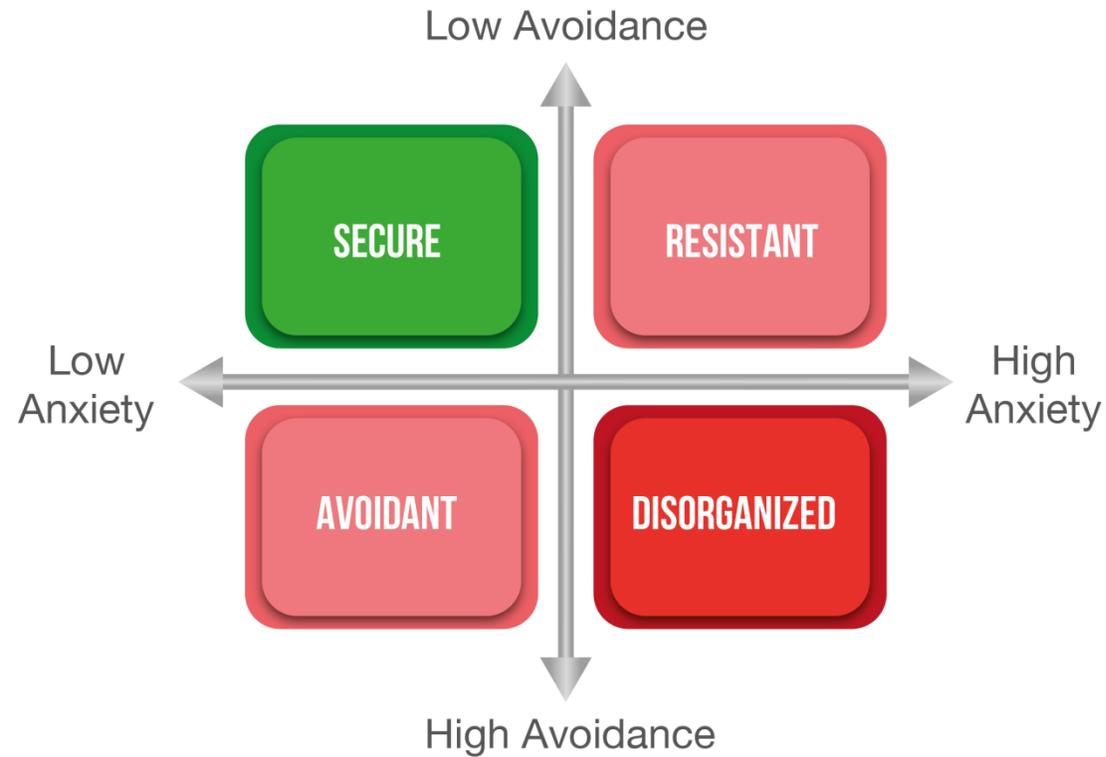
WAYS ATTACHMENT BASED PARENTING CAN IMPROVE MOTHER
AND CHILD OUTCOMES IN TREATMENT FOR SUBSTANCE USE
DISORDERS

ATTACHMENT THEORY



- Originated from John Bowlby who worked with maladjusted and/or delinquent children
- Mary Ainsworth, observed and made connections between maternal behaviors and child behaviors and responses
- *Strange Situation Procedure*, a technique that continues to be widely used to classify behavior patterns in young children
- *The behavior patterns were broadly classified into one of two attachment styles: Secure or Insecure*
- A secure attachment allows the child to feel comfortable exploring the environment, which is critical for cognitive, social, and emotional development
- Young children tend to have one primary attachment figure, and that the degree of attachment security with that figure is often reflected in later relationships
- One of the most important predictors of healthy development in children is a secure attachment relationship between the child and primary caregiver

ATTACHMENT STYLES

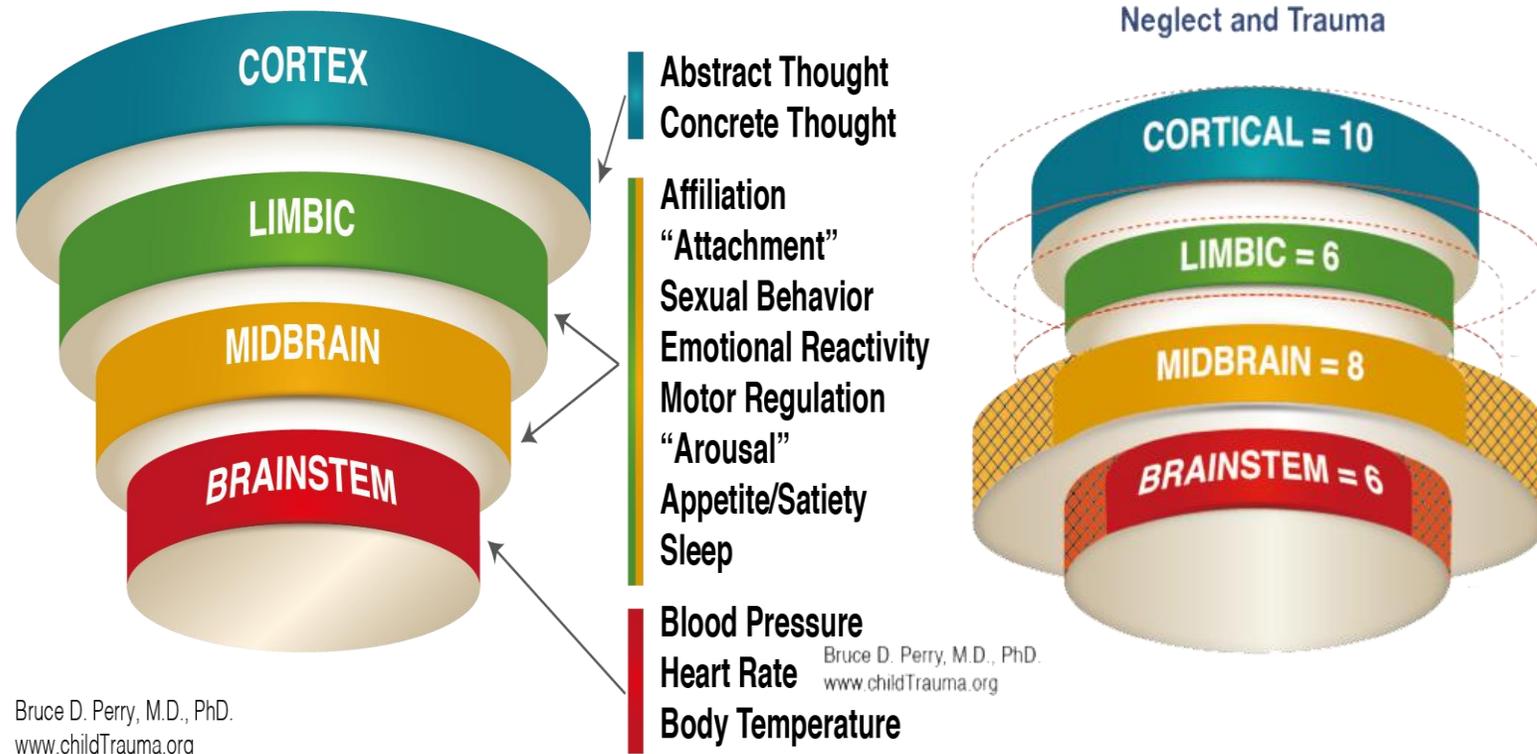


RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN NON-SECURE ATTACHMENT AND SUBSTANCE USE

- Having been abused as a child is an important risk factor for abuse of one's own children
- There is a high incidence of abuse during childhood among women in treatment for substance use disorders
- maternal substance abuse in particular is one of the most common factors associated with CM
- Mothers who have substance use disorders have higher incidences of hostile attributions and inappropriate expectations of child behavior as well as repeated disruptions in their parenting behaviors
- These disruptions can create a negative effect on the parent–child relationship, as evidenced in the increased rates of insecure attachment in children who have parents with substance use disorders

TRAUMA AND THE BRAIN

- The brain has a “bottom-up” organization
- Neurons and connections change in an activity-dependent fashion
- This "use-dependent" development
- The brain is most plastic (receptive to environmental input) in early childhood
- With trauma and neglect, the midbrain is overactive and grows in size while the limbic and cortical structures are stunted in growth



PARENTING INTERVENTIONS

Parenting Interventions: Common Characteristics of Effective Parenting Programs

Formal parenting interventions that are supported by research tend to have common characteristics, including:

- Behavioral parent training

- Skills training

- Family therapy

- In-home family support

OUTCOMES FROM UNC HORIZONS

Mean Total Score on Parenting Stress Scale
N=57



Child Protective Service Involvement:

- Outpatient women and children who complete the program: 75% of families had positive changes (e.g., closed cases, children reunited)

- Residential women and children who complete the program: 95% of families with cases had positive changes (regained custody, cases closed)

IMPROVING ATTACHMENT TO BREAK THE CYCLE

Parenting Interventions

1) Triple P (Positive Parenting Program)

- Shown to work across cultures, socio-economic groups, and in all kinds of family structures

Triple P: Positive Parenting Program 5 Steps to Positive Parenting

- 1. Create a safe, interesting environment (keep children busy so that they do not misbehave; give them access to interesting, safe activities)**
- 2. Have a positive learning environment (praise children when they do things you like; be affectionate; speak nicely; share your experiences with them)**
- 3. Use assertive discipline (set clear rules, be consistent, and use age-appropriate consequences; praise good behavior).**
- 4. Have realistic expectations (don't expect more or less than your kids are capable of doing, and remember that everyone makes mistakes- no one is perfect).**
- 5. Take care of yourself as a parent (talk to other parents, exercise, take breaks, etc.)**

FINAL THOUGHTS

- Without treatment, children who are maltreated are at an increased risk to become adult with numerous mental health issues, and at increased risk to perpetuate abuse on their own children.
- To address this paramount, intergenerational, public health issue, researchers and practitioners must continue to test parenting programs that address the parenting factors associated with abuse.
- Although the attachment field has made substantial progress over the past 20 years in developing and evaluating evidence-based attachment programs the availability of effective, group-based attachment programs has lagged.
- Given the well-documented importance of attachment security for healthy, long-term developmental outcomes for children, having attachment-based parenting programs that are manualized with easy-to-use formats is critical for broad dissemination.



UNC Horizons

Contact:

Hendrée E Jones, PhD

Executive Director, UNC Horizons

Professor,

Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology

School of Medicine

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Hendree_Jones@med.unc.edu

Direct Line: 1-919-445-0501

Main Office: 1-919-966-9803

Fax: 1-919-966-9169

