

# Understanding How A Parents Personal History Affects The Relationship With Their Child

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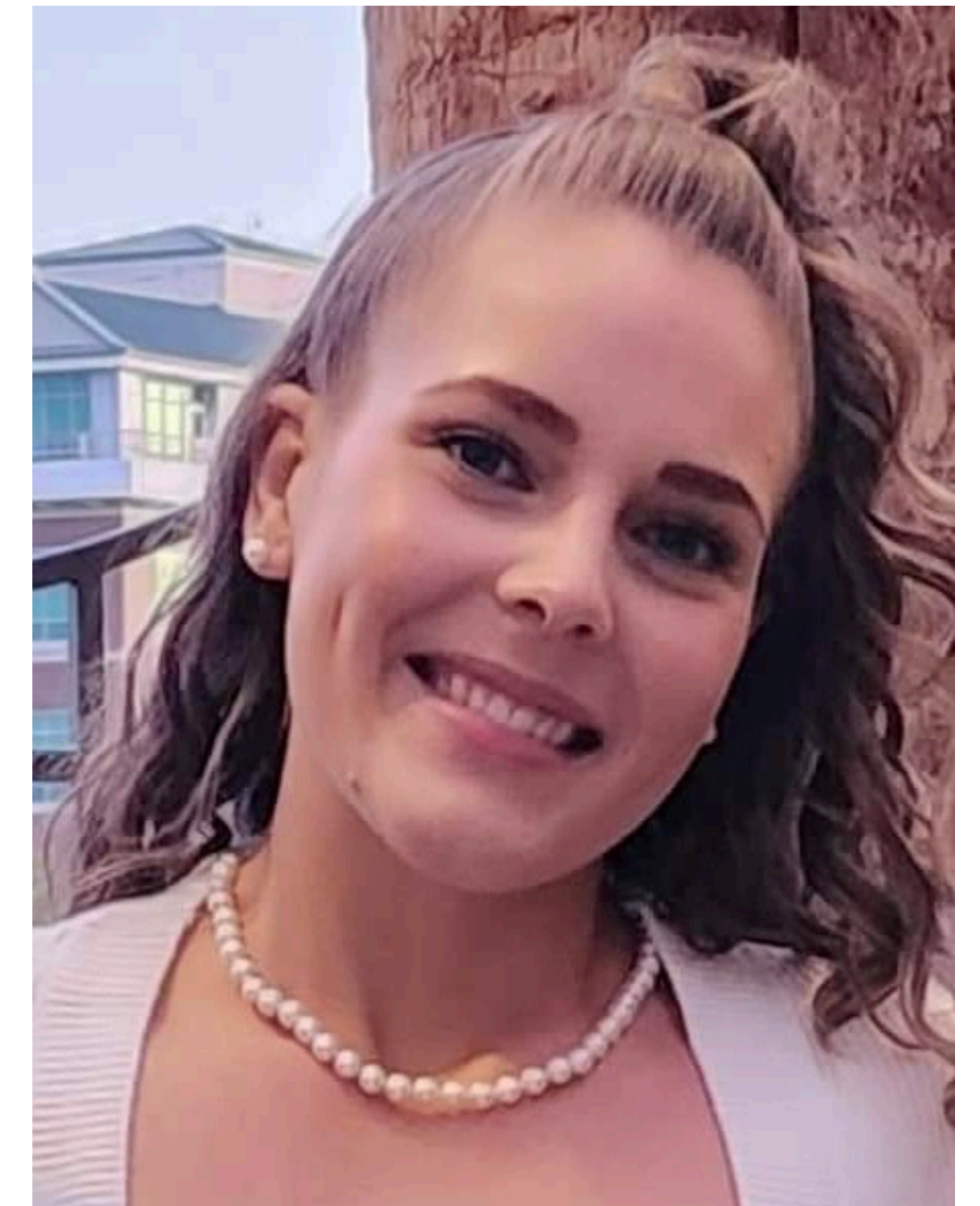
# Meet Our Staff



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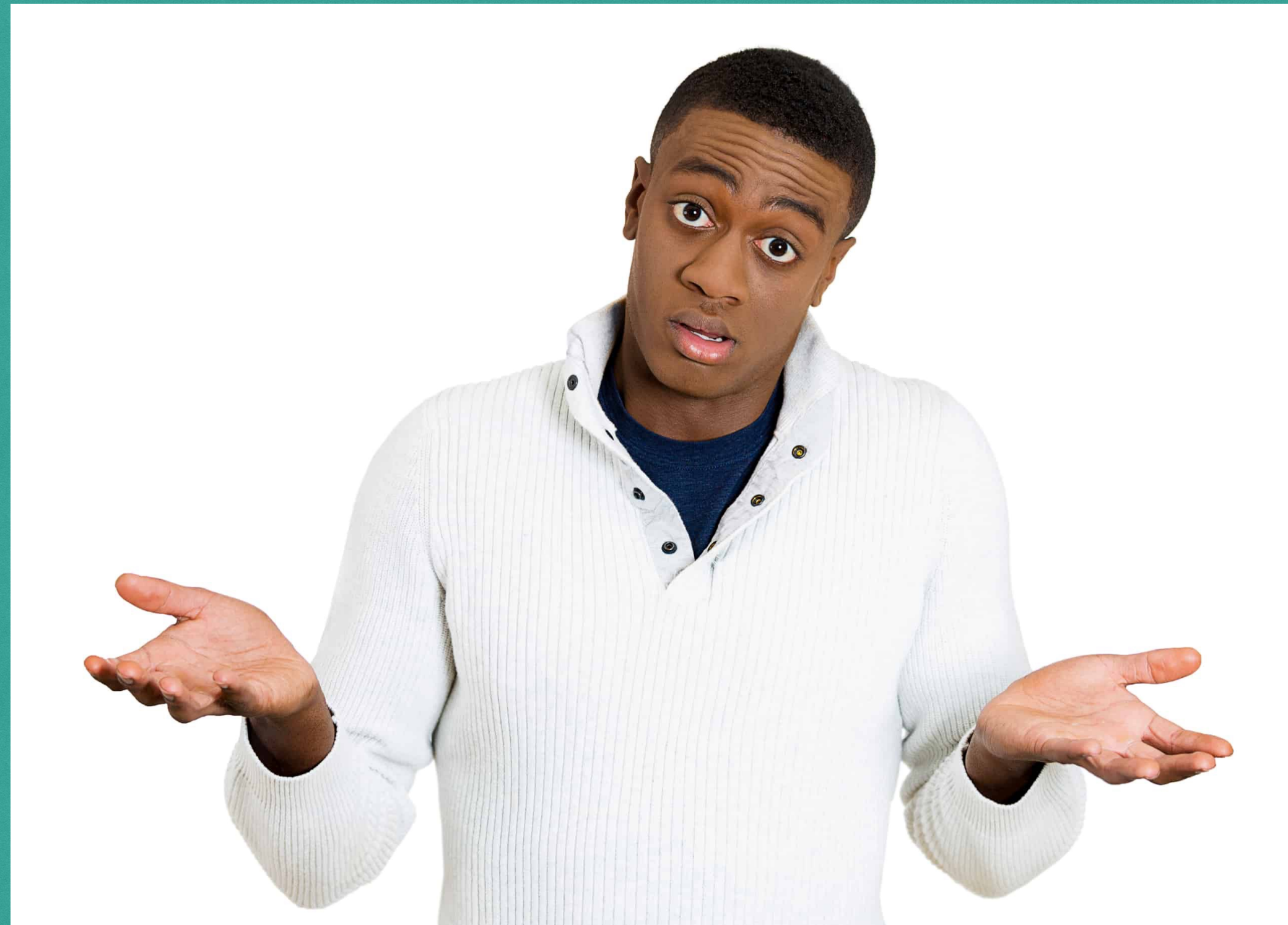
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**Therapist**



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# What is trauma?



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# Trauma



- Emotional state of turmoil following a significantly distressing event
- Event can be isolated, or chronic
- Causes long lasting physical and psychological effects
- Sources of trauma can be physical, psychological, or emotional



# What types of trauma are there?



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# Types of Trauma

## Acute Trauma

- Experiencing or witnessing an isolated traumatic event
- Event threatens severe injury and/or life of self or loved one
- Examples of Events
  - Car Crash
  - Act of sexual violence
  - Shooting
  - Death of loved one

## Complex Trauma

- Series of distressing events or circumstances
- Events happen over the course of months or years
- Long term physical, emotional, or psychological neglect
- Abandonment
- Repeated abuse

## Chronic Trauma

- Long-term, repeated, distressing, or extreme events
- Repeated acute trauma that is left unaddressed
- Example of Events
  - Prolonged child abuse
  - Prolonged exposure to war
  - Repeated sexual abuse
  - Experience repeated natural disasters

# GENERATIONAL TRAUMA

- The Transference of traumatic experiences or stressors from one generation to the next.
- This information comes from the study of epigenetics
- Changes to individuals DNA in-utero caused by maternal stress.
- Nuances of life unknowingly taught throughout someone life
- Vulnerable history correlate to vulnerability of family



# Symptoms and how to spot them





# Symptoms

<b>Intrusion Symptoms</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Flashbacks</li><li>• Nightmares</li><li>• Intrusive Thoughts</li></ul>	<b>Arousal/Reactivity Symptoms</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Irritability</li><li>• Difficulty Concentrating</li><li>• Hypervigilance</li><li>• Difficulty Sleeping</li><li>• Exaggerated Startle Response</li></ul>
<b>Avoidance Symptoms</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Avoid reminders of event<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Thoughts, feelings, places</li></ul></li><li>• Change routine<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Even if it makes daily life more complicated</li></ul></li></ul>	<b>Cognitive/Mood Symptoms</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Difficulty enjoying activities</li><li>• Trouble remembering details of event</li><li>• Isolating from others</li><li>• Persistent negative feelings and/or beliefs</li><li>• Difficulty managing emotions</li><li>• Relationship issues</li></ul>

# Attachment Styles



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Attachment Type	As A Child	As An Adult
Secure	Able to separate from parent	Have trusting, lasting relationship
	Seek comfort from parents when frightened	Tend to have good self-esteem
	Return of parents is met with positive emotions	Comfortable sharing feeling with friends and partners
Avoidant	Prefers parents to strangers	Seek out social support
	May avoid parents	May have problems with intimacy
	Does not seek much comfort or contact from parents	Invest little emotion in social and romantic relationships
	Shows little or no preference between parent and stranger	Unable or unwilling to share thoughts and feels with others

Attachment Type	As A Child	As An Adult
Ambivalent	May be wary of strangers	Reluctant to become close to others
	Become greatly distressed when the parent leaves	Worry that their partner does not love them
	Do not appear to be comforted by the return of the parent	Become very distraught when a relationship ends
Disorganized	Seek comfort from the parent, when approaching parent fear occurs and causes distress	Extreme need for closeness, coupled with tendency to avoid closeness
	Express odd or ambivalent behavior toward the parent	Negative self-image and low self-esteem
	Meet needs through disorganized means which seem odd	Chaotic, unpredictable or intense relationship patterns and behaviors



# Parenting Styles



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## **Permissive**

- Child Driven
- Rarely gives or enforces rules
- Overindulges child to avoid conflict

## **Authoritative**

- Solves problems together with child
- Sets clear rules and expectations
- Open communication and natural consequences

## **Neglectful**

- Uninvolved or absent
- Provides little nurturance or guidance
- Indifferent to child's social-emotional and behavioral needs

## **Authoritarian**

- Parent-driven
- Sets strict rules and punishment
- One-way communication, with little consideration of child's social emotional and behavioral needs



# Effects of Trauma on Parenting



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# Avoidance

- Most prominent symptom
- Avoids feelings and memories
- Easily triggered from past trauma
- Heavily involved in work
- Uninvolved in child's life
- Limit child's involvement in outside activities
- Substance use occurs frequently



# Sheltering The Child

- Trying to protect the child
- Desire to ensure the child's survival
- Not allow child to experience risk
- Constantly creating fear in child
- Child unable to explore “taboo” topics





# Controlling

- Due to loss of control as a child, parenting become extremely controlling
- Parent feels need to ensure every aspect of child's life is known and planned
- Rebellious behavior is common
- Emotions are difficult to manage, results in eating disorder or substance use





# Neglecting Emotional Needs



- Lack of control of own emotions leads to avoidance of child's emotions
- Sadness, guilts, love are vulnerable emotions. Parent struggles to be present with emotion
- Creates difficulty for child to regulate own emotions
- Child may become needy, needing attention, or emotionally withdrawn

# How to Change





# Steps to Change

## Stages

- Stage 1: Make sense of the past
  - Past feelings lead to current behaviors
  - Trauma is alive = processing trauma
- Stage 2: Relate to your child
  - Understanding trauma provides ability to relate to the child
  - Your responses are your child's responses
- Stage 3: Give it time
  - Its not about blame. Its about understanding
  - Change the future through interacting with the child
  - More emulation of positive traits leads to positive interactions





# Questions?



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# References

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