

STRUCTURAL DISSOCIATION MODEL

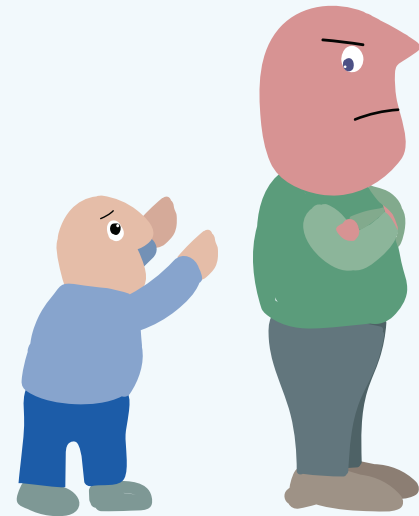
Defense System

When a child is abused, their defense system will naturally work to shield them from harm, BUT . . .



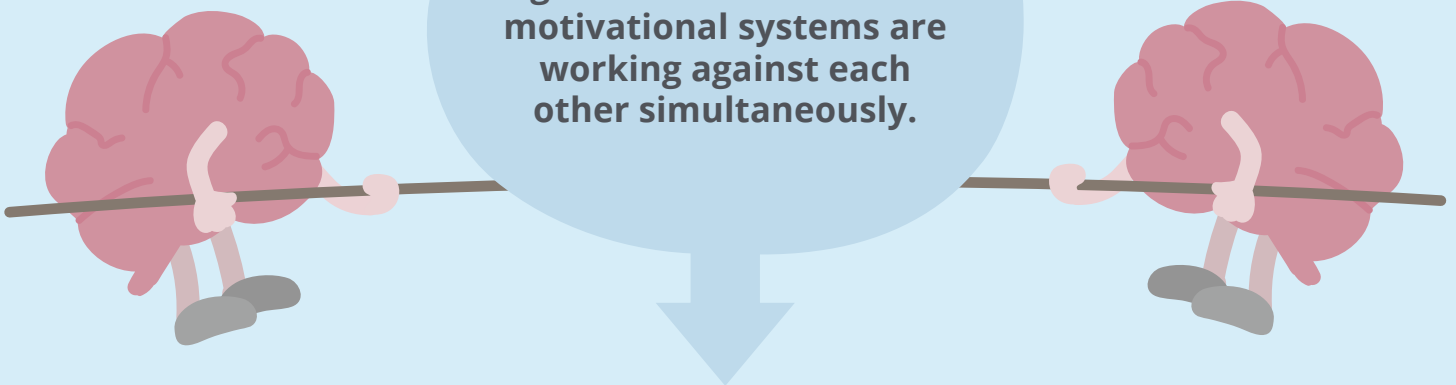
Attachment System

. . . their attachment system will still want to be loved and cared for by the parent.



vs.

This creates an internal tug-of-war where different motivational systems are working against each other simultaneously.

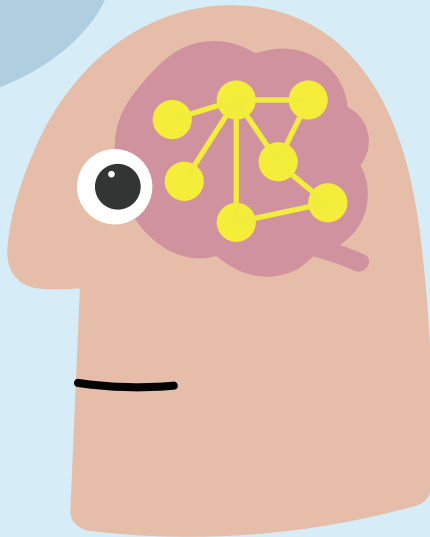


This can cause a patient's conflicting parts to separate. That can lead to a split in their sense of self and a dysregulated nervous system.

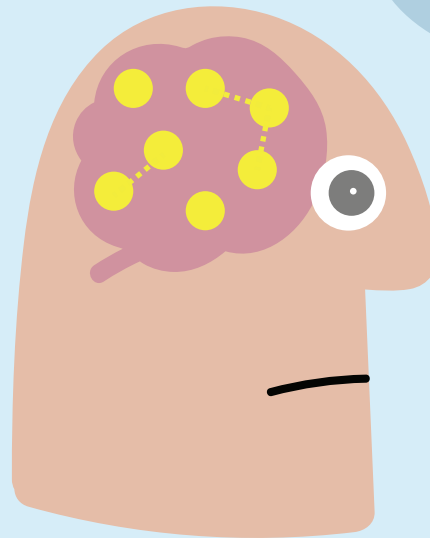
LEFT BRAIN:
The “Going on with
Normal Life” Part of
the Self

RIGHT BRAIN:
The “Traumatized
Child” Part of
the Self

This is the rational,
present-oriented,
and grounded self.



This part
contains the
trauma.



This self handles daily life —
social interaction, attachment,
work, play, exploration, learning,
and taking care of physical needs.

This part is often drawn out by
reminders of the trauma, and it
may not experience much of
everyday life.

The survival responses of this self
may include Attach/Cry for Help,
Collapse/Submit, Please/Appease,
Freeze, along with Fight and Flight.

**The key to recovery is helping a patient have full awareness of
all their parts without feeling overwhelmed.**