

# Attachment-Informed Psychodynamic Psychotherapy

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June 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2020

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# Overview

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1. What's *psychodynamic* in therapy?
2. Attachment framework for psychodynamic therapy
3. Mechanisms of change
4. An intervention tool

# What is Dynamic is *Psychodynamic* Therapy?

**Dynamic** = Characterized by continuous activity and/or change

## 1. Intrapersonal dynamics

E.g., Id, Ego, and Super-ego

## 2. Interpersonal dynamics

E.g., relational patterns

# Attachment as a Framework for Psychodynamic Therapy



Unlike Freud, Bowlby stated that early interpersonal experiences that shape “who we are” are REAL (and not imagined or fantasized)

# Attachment as a Framework for Psychodynamic Therapy

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**Attachment** = Emotional bond

**Psychopathology** =

1. Real/Perceived *loss* of emotional bond(s)
2. Attempts to adapt to them

**Interpersonal environment plays a crucial  
role in emotional conditions**

# Mechanisms of Change

Guiding principle: To expand realm of possibilities or plausible interpretations to increase a sense of control over one's life (thoughts, actions)

## 1. Experiential

- "Corrective emotional experience"
- How does it feel to seek support? To received support? To be "seen" and understood? To be loved?

## 2. Cognitive

- "Insight"
- That emotional difficulties may be rooted in early and repeated experiences with primary caregivers

# Example: An Intervention Technique



Aim: Getting in touch with the thoughts and feelings underlying our relational pattern(s)

# Example:

## An Intervention Technique

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1. Recall a childhood scene when you were *in need/distressed* and how parents responded (or didn't respond...)
2. Construct the memory with as much vivid details as possible
3. Invite present self to join the early scene
4. Ask: What would the present you *do* or *say* with the XX-year-old you?