



# Attachment and Trauma

How attachment patterns impact the healing of trauma &  
how to work with them

an open workshop with Merete Holm Brantbjerg

March 31 - April 1, 2012

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**From John Bowlby's Attachment Theory** we know our patterns of attachment are established early in life and carried with us into adulthood. Of interest is what happens to our relationship to attachment during and after experiencing trauma.

Attachment may be impacted during the traumatic event itself and/or in the way we are met by others afterwards. Patterns of attachment are played out in both *care seeking* and *caregiving* roles with the risk of ending up in personal exchanges impacted by *dominance* and *submission*.

## **Some questions we may be curious about**

Both in a care seeking and a caregiving role, skills are needed to optimize safety and regulate emotions - crucial elements in the regulation of the arousal system after it has been strongly activated.

- How do we offer a "holding environment" without becoming "rescuers"?
- How do we seek help without going one-down or without trying to control the interaction?

The arousal-states released in trauma challenge our capacity for containment.

- How are we met by the outer context and how do we ourselves step into a meeting with others after a traumatic event?
- Which attachment patterns come to the foreground in the meeting?

## **In powerful trauma states we may experience "falling out of attachment"**

We enter inner spaces such as collapse, hopelessness and chaotic acting out, where our attachment to other people, ourselves and the world is changed or lost. How do we "come back again"?

**In this workshop**, which is experiential and related to theory,

- We will focus on the fact that patterns of both attachment and trauma become woven together, and then explore the possibility of reaching into them to start a process of healing through training psychomotor skills.
- These two professional fields – attachment theory and trauma theory – are not commonly directly related to each other. Strategies will be offered to build a bridge between the two, both theoretically and practically.
- Theory of organized and disorganized attachment styles and affect regulation as an important aspect of attachment will be presented.
- Two different healing strategies, involving two different sets of roles, will also be presented
  - ✚ leaving the high arousal state and finding a way/being helped back into an attachment relationship
  - ✚ normalizing and accepting the experiences from the high arousal states

By sharing them with others these experiences become included as part of the condition of being human. This is a different way of 'being helped'; not to get away from them but to embrace them through mutual exploration and affect regulation.

Both of these healing strategies are, in Merete's experience, an essential part of trauma work and can potentially open new attachment experiences. The skill training in the workshop will be related to both strategies.

## **What does the body offer us in these processes?**

The body oriented skill training in the workshop will focus on

- optimizing safety both in the body and in relationship
- regulating contact – balancing between being held, holding another and holding one's self
- mutual affect regulation

**Dates:** March 31 – April 1, 2012

**Time:** 9:30am – 5:30pm daily

**Cost:** \$325 if cheque dated on or before February 18, 2012 - \$350 following

**Location:** Vancouver School of Theology, 6000 Iona Drive, UBC campus. Room 309.

*Parking available at VST, Carey Hall and North Parkade. Further details will be sent with your receipt. Please visit VST and UBC web pages for maps.*

Light refreshments will be provided for themed morning and afternoon breaks and we would appreciate it if you'd bring your own mug. A 'fridge is available for storing lunches if you wish.

Please take care of yourself if you have sensitivities/allergies or require filtered water.

**Registration: Please read carefully** - your place is reserved with:

- Full pre-payment and a completed registration form. *The registration form has been attached to this e-mail as a separate document or please request one.*
- Your cheque made payable to Merete Holm Brantbjerg and mailed to Barbara Picton c/o 671F Market Hill, Vancouver, BC, V5Z 4B5
- Receiving your receipt via e-mail as confirmation of your registration.

PLEASE NOTE: If you have not received your receipt within two weeks of mailing your cheque, please follow-up with Barbara.

#### **Cancellation and Refund Policy:**

A cancellation received in writing (letter or e-mail) postmarked by March 3, 2012 will qualify for a refund minus \$25 administration fee. No refunds for cancellations from March 4, 2012.

**For further information:** [barbara@barbarapicton.com](mailto:barbara@barbarapicton.com) 604.838.6048

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**Merete Holm Brantbjerg** co-created **Bodydynamic Analysis** (1985), a body- psychotherapeutic system developed in Denmark. She now specializes in **Resource Oriented Skill Training (ROST)** as a psychotherapeutic method, applying it to both developmental and shock trauma. In her workshops Merete integrates body oriented skill training with systemic methods of addressing group dynamics.

Merete currently leads body psychotherapy trainings and workshops in Scandinavia, London and North America and maintains a private practice for therapy and supervision in Copenhagen.

The name "**Moaiku**" - derived from "Motoric Haiku" - captures the poetic quality in a method of psychotherapeutic skill training that is focused on simplicity, repetition, precise individual dosing, and 'here and now' presence.

**[www.moaiku.com](http://www.moaiku.com)**