



INTEGRATE TO LIVE

Restore Resilience. Cultivate Community. Impact your World

Week 22 Transcript: Patterns of Relating

This week, we are exploring our patterns of relating. These deeply ingrained responses to the people around us begin to develop early in life.

We have a biological need to bond with others, starting with our primary relationships. Something called the “attachment system” in our nervous system is what helps regulate our sense of safety in relation to our loved ones.

Early on, our relational encounters are mostly nonverbal and stored in our implicit memory. Remember? Implicit memory is outside our awareness and involves the parts of the brain that don’t require conscious processing for us to begin to make up stories about our experience.

Our patterns of relating are developed through hundreds of daily experiences. Our mirror neurons soak in the intent, lack of intent, desire, care, lack of care or neglect from a parent or guardian.

We take in signals from those in charge of our care. Is Mom anxious? Is Dad present? Does anyone respond when I express my need for food, comfort or warmth? Are the big people supervising my well-being stressed out? Angry? Distant?

We perceive and process information about whether our needs will be met, and if the world feels safe, overwhelming, chaotic, or frightening. From this place, we begin to develop how we are going to behave relationally to ensure we get what we need.

The responsiveness or lack of response from our parents, or primary caregivers, is the story board on which we create our relational narrative.

We bring these impressions with us into our adult relationships, and repeat our relational story over and over again, whether we are conscious of it or not.

Culturally speaking, we believe that people should be emotionally self-sufficient. We downplay the need for love and social connection to the detriment of our health and well-being.



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What's true is we are hard-wired to connect and need input from others to keep us alive. We are designed for interdependency with others. Depending on others in a healthy and effective way allows us to be more independent, courageous and take risks.

Truly being seen and known is essential to our well-being and survival. Truly being seen and known is one of the most terrifying encounters we may ever experience.

So, no wonder this space can get a little awkward as we move toward it in insecure and underdeveloped ways. Our fear of disconnection, most often expressed through rejection and abandonment, is what holds us back from the connection we crave.

Have you ever noticed that there are patterns in your relationships that seem to repeat themselves? Taking a focused look at our patterns of relating will help us create something new and different. Be sure to download the action guide to support this process and share what you are learning on our group page.