

ABSTRACT

This dissertation explores the meaning of attachment to therapists who work with children and young people. It uses a qualitative approach and a grounded theory methodology.

Research shows the importance of the attachment relationship as a primary association, colouring all future relationships. If the attachment relationship is poor, brain development in the infant could be impaired. Psychopathological difficulties such as problems with emotional regulation, aggression, or an impaired sense of self could ensue if poor attachment occurs.

Research suggests, similar problems are encountered if there is experience of trauma, abuse, or neglect. Treatment options for children with a poor attachment history have also been explored. My co-researchers expressed varying degrees of understanding of attachment, sometimes recognising commonalities between attachment abuse and neglect.

There was discussion concerning close relationships with family from the co-researchers. The therapeutic relationship was also seen as important.

The grounded theory that evolved was yearning for closer relationships.