

Trauma Bonding



Signs of being in a trauma bond with someone;

- You feel protective about the person because of their 'difficult past' or 'childhood' and find yourself caring for them despite their abusive behaviour.
- You know you are being manipulated but you're often in denial and block out or quickly forget the bad things.
- The relationship is intense and inconsistent. You do everything to please them and are unconditionally loyal while getting nothing but heart ache in return.
- They say things you want to hear to resolve issues temporarily - "I have learnt my lesson". "I will prove my love for you every day", "life is impossible without you".
- You are driven to the point of self-destruction and often harbour thoughts of self-harm.
- A pattern of non performance: The person constantly promises you things and constantly lets you down.
- You feel that you don't even like trust the person anymore but you cannot leave.
- Your friends and family have advised you against the relationship but you stay.
- Others seem disturbed by things that happen to you but you brush it off.
- You have tried to leave but it made you feel physically ill, like you will die or your life will be destroyed if you do.
- You know the person is 'sometimes' abusive and destructive but you focus in the 'good' in them.



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The Seven Stages of Trauma Bonding

1 Love Bombing
They shower you with excess love, flattery and appreciation in order to get your affection.

2 Trust and Dependency
They do everything to win your trust and make you depend on them heavily for love and validation

3 Criticism
They gradually start criticizing. They blame you for things and become more demanding.

4 Gas Lighting
When things go wrong they tell you that it is your fault. They make you doubt your own perceptions and manipulate you into believing their own narrative.

5 Resigning to Control
You no longer know what to believe but your only way of experiencing the good feelings of Stage 1 is by giving in and doing things their way.

6 Loss of Self
When you fight back things get worse. You settle for anything to have some peace and make the fights stop. You lose all your confidence.

7 Addiction
You get addicted to the highs and lows. Your body is on a constant cortisol high (stress) and craves dopamine (pleasure). This creates a cycle of dependency that feels a lot like a drug addiction