Attachment Trauma Description (from emotional abuse)

Many have disrupted adult relationships from trauma in childhood in the form of physical or sexual abuse. This is real and concerning and is discussed in the next blog post on the page.

I’m going to discuss attachment trauma from emotional abuse. Sometimes this was very overt and it’s clear you were being maltreated. There is a more insidious form as well where they parents looked good to others on the outside and really loved you and tried to be good parents. But their own personalities, wounds and lack of personal work ended up hurting you.

With parents that were a bit self-absorbed, pre-occupied or not in tune with their own emotionality, we can come out of that feeling traumatized in our attachment to one or both. We can know they love us on one level, but feel pretty uncomfortable in their presence.

One way this more subtle emotional attachment trauma could have played out is…

You longed for something from your parents that you really didn’t get. You needed comfort, care and understanding when you were hurting or scared. Or them to understand and care that they had just emotionally hurt you. When you tried to protest this, you were shamed, dismissed or blamed. So you started to learn that when you got the feeling of an emotional need or hurt that you wiped it out or didn’t listen to it. Or you’d go into self-doubt. Or you’d go into rumination about how you could get through to this person. Or self-blame. Over-time disconnecting from the need, and emotion and ultimately yourself. You then got into this habit of not listening to your emotional needs. You often felt alone in this pain. Dealing with it all by yourself. You felt invisible. The pain of aloneness. You learned not talk about your needs. No one truly comforted your emotional hurts when you needed them too. It was so hard.

Now you can see that your emotional needs were perfectly normal. That you should have been soothed, understood, known and held in your pain. That your intuitions are to be trusted. That you are entitled to love, comfort and care. That you can trust your longings, yearnings, intuitions and emotions. That you are allowed to act on these and make mistakes and you are still loveable, worthy and OK. That it is OK to be you however you are. That you can trust yourself and express what you truly think and feel. That you no longer will stand for being dismissed. That you can value your need and opinions and put them out there. That even if you are wrong you can put your opinion out there and listen to it. To listen to yourself, take yourself seriously.