



## Trauma Bonds-Understanding Exploitive Relationships

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A trauma bond is characterized by betrayal that is so purposeful and self-serving it moves to the realm of trauma. Trauma bonds create chains of trust that link a person to someone who is exploitive, dangerous, abusive and or toxic. A person in a trauma bond feels very confused about their relationship, yet they are unable to break free from it.

Here are some characteristics of a Trauma Bond Relationship:

- 1) Relationship is manipulative and exploitive
- 2) Agreements are ill-defined, unclear and tentative
- 3) Feelings are anxious and intense
- 4) Agreements are short term and difficult to navigate
- 5) Trust depends often on exaggerated or unreal promises
- 6) Rewards are in the future and often conditional
- 7) Risk is often one-sided
- 8) Feelings are absent and rewards are minimal

Some examples of trauma bond relationships are situations of sexual abuse or sexually exploited persons. Additionally, many relationships that start out as intimate and life-long can move into a trauma bond. Other instances where trauma bonds may occur are abortion or kidnapping.

There are multiple components to a trauma bond experience. If you think you might be in a relationship described above, it is very important that you start seeing the truth of your situation. Being in a trauma bond robs your identity and keeps you locked in a prison that is only survivable by shutting down your emotions and indeed your very internal soul.

### **See the Truth of Your Situation**

There is help and hope available. The first step is to begin to see the truth of your situation. The only antidote to the confusion you might feel is to begin to live in truth. It is hard and frightful at first; however continually asking yourself the “truth of your situation” is the initial question you must begin to explore. You were not created to be in the bondage described above.

Take the trauma bond test by going to [www.missingpieces.org](http://www.missingpieces.org) and finding self tests on the navigation drop down bar. Choose Trauma Bond Test.