



6 Signs You May Be Caught in a Trauma Bond

A Self-Check Guide for Women Ready to Reclaim Their Peace, and
Who Are Healing. Even While Co-Parenting.

This checklist is designed to help you gently explore whether you
might be experiencing a trauma bond.

If you share children with the person, the bond can feel even more
confusing because contact may still be necessary for parenting.

Remember:

This is a tool for self-reflection, not a diagnosis.

Be kind to yourself as you go through it.

1. You feel emotionally pulled back, even when you know the relationship is unhealthy

- You keep going back even after promising yourself you won't
- You miss them intensely after conflict
- The relationship feels impossible to leave
- Even after arguments, separation, communication about the children pulls you back emotionally

2. The relationship swings between intense highs and painful lows

- After fights there are intense apologies or loving moments
- The good moments make you forget the painful ones
- You stay because you hope the "good version" of them will return
- When things are calm during co-parenting, you start questioning if it was really that bad

3. You constantly justify or minimize their behavior

- You tell yourself "they didn't mean it"
- You make excuses for them to friends or family
- You blame stress, childhood trauma or circumstances for their behavior
- You tell yourself you should tolerate more because you share children

4. You feel responsible for keeping the peace

- You believe if you communicate better things will change
- You work harder emotionally than they do
- You try to avoid conflict for the sake of the children
- You over-explain yourself during co-parenting conversations

5. You feel anxious, confused, or emotionally drained most of the time

- You constantly analyze their behavior
- Your mood depends on how they treat you
- Drop-offs, messages, or seeing them triggers anxiety in your body
- You feel like you are slowly losing yourself

6. Your body reacts before your mind does

- Your heart races when their name appears on your phone
- You feel anxious before drop-offs or pick-ups with the children
- You rehearse conversations in your head before seeing them
- You start cleaning or preparing the house when you know they are coming
- You keep checking the window, the door, or the time when they are on the way

If you checked three or more of these signs your nervous system may be responding to a trauma bond.

This does not mean you are weak. It means your mind and body adapted to survive a difficult emotional dynamic. Trauma bonds form when cycles of emotional pain and relief happen repeatedly. Over time, your nervous system becomes conditioned to that pattern.

This is why many women experience:

- A strong emotional pull toward the person even when the relationship has been painful
- Anxiety before/during conversations, conflict or communication. Whether you live together are separated or are co-parenting
- Difficulty emotionally detaching even when you recognize that the relationship has been unhealthy

If children are involved the process can feel even more complex because contact may still be necessary for parenting but healing does not require cutting off all contact.

Healing begins when you learn how to:

- Recognize and understand your nervous system responses so your reactions start to make sense
- Establish clear emotional boundaries that protect your wellbeing, whether you remain in the relationship, are separating, or are co-parenting
- Communicate in a grounded and emotionally regulated way without being pulled back into the trauma cycle
- Gradually rebuild a sense of internal safety, clarity, and self-trust within yourself

You don't have to figure everything out at once. The first step is awareness. Once you understand what your nervous system has been through, you can begin learning how to regulate, heal and slowly reclaim your emotional peace.

These are the foundations of the StillMind approach:

- 🌿 Regulate – Understanding and calming your nervous system
- 🌿 Heal – Processing trauma bond patterns
- 🌿 Reclaim – Rebuilding emotional safety and personal boundaries

