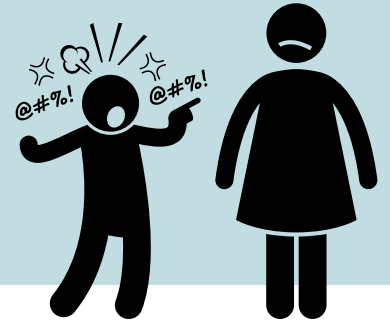


# BLOCKED TRUST

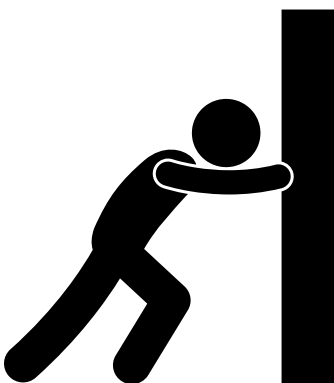
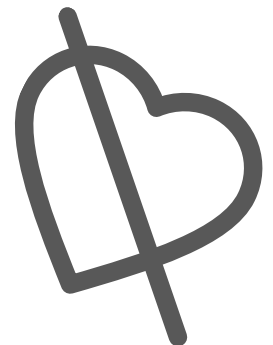


## WHAT IS BLOCKED TRUST?

Sometimes when a child has experienced difficult early experiences, they may find it difficult to trust the world and the adults around them. They suppress the need for comfort and companionship to survive the difficult experiences. They learn to not rely on, or to trust, adults.

1. Children learn not to expect comfort and companionship from adults in their life as in early childhood there were occasions where their needs were either ignored or met with fear or pain.

2. They learn to suppress emotions that are linked to care and companionship in relationships e.g. pain of separation and joy of connection.

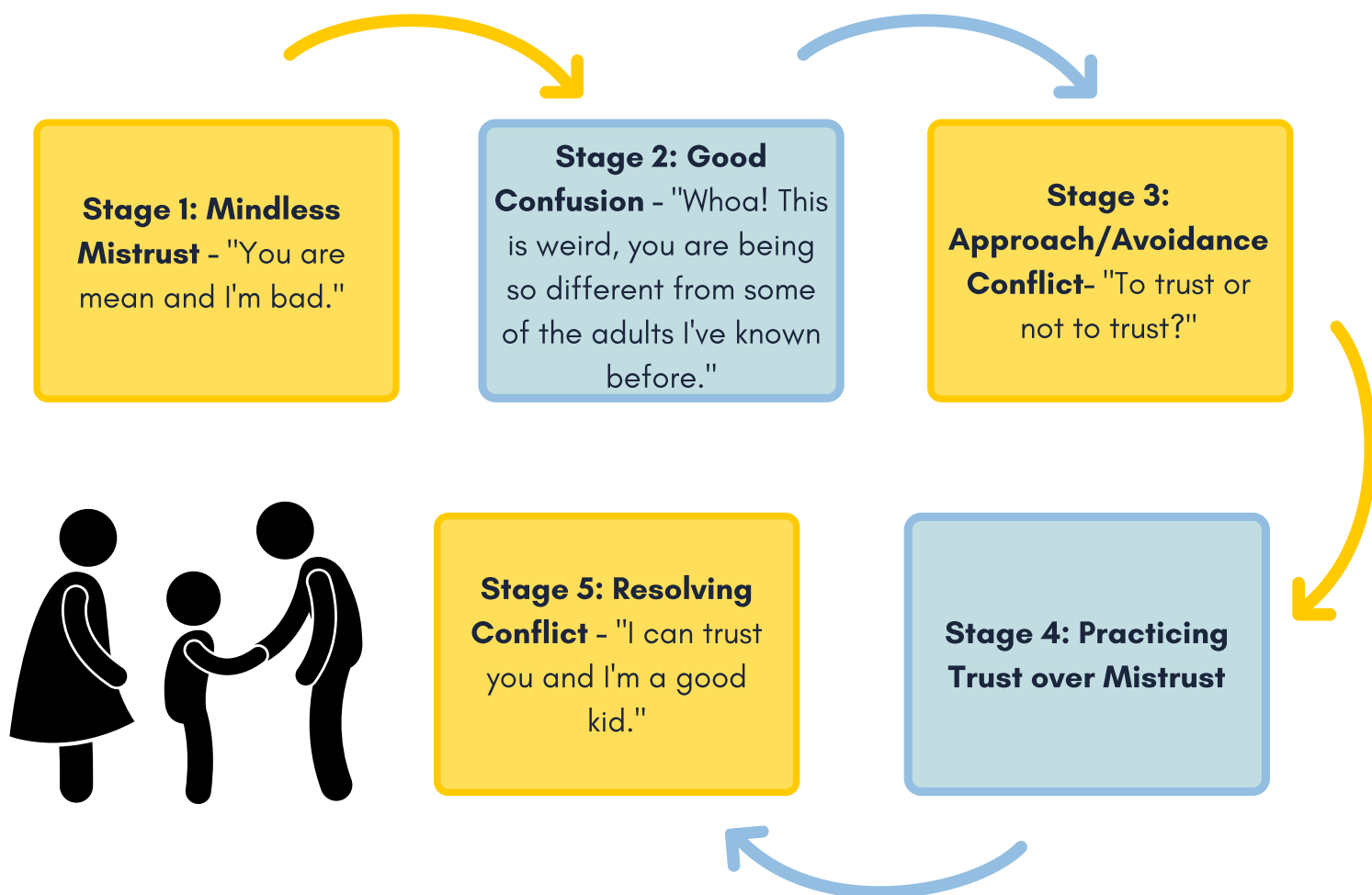


3. The child stays in a state of chronic defensiveness to protect themselves from potential pain that could occur from companionship with adults.

If your child is experiencing blocked trust you may notice they:

- Avoid you as a source of comfort.
- Resist your authority.
- Are constantly vigilant to danger and can't relax or enjoy playful moments.
- Struggle to remain curious and open to learning.
- Find it difficult to be open with others or share their thoughts and feelings with others.
- Trust themselves rather than others and distrust any unconditional love and support that you may offer them.
- Develop behaviour that is controlling to keep themselves safe and not rely on others. They feel safer being in charge than letting others have sway over them.

Blocked trust doesn't need to be permanent. There are 5 stages of trust that your child or young person will move through to shift from mistrust to trust:



The use of PACE can help a young person move through the stages to move into a state of trust.

You may hear the term  
**intersubjectivity** when people  
discuss blocked trust. So what is it?

An intersubjective relationship is two way and impacts both parent and child. It allows both you and your child to discover what is important to and about the other person (and share this understanding to each other).



There are 2 stages to intersubjectivity. Firstly there is Primary Intersubjectivity where you and your child discover yourselves in a reciprocal relationship and learn more about yourselves in the process, e.g. gazing at each other, smiling, showing concern when the other person is hurt or upset. Next is Secondary Intersubjectivity where your child learns about the world, events, objects and people. You and your child can explore the world together and learn about the impact the world can have on you both, e.g. playing with a toy together, talking about another object/TV show etc together.



A lack in intersubjective experience can lead to difficulties understanding each others emotional states, thoughts and opinions. It can also lead to feelings of shame ("there must be something wrong with me") and social difficulties relating to others. In the long run this can present as a need to control relationships in order to force social connections, or avoidance of social situations.