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## Destabilizing Attachment: Mutual Disruption Amplification

by [Nick Clark](#) | Published March 27, 2026 | [PDF](#)

Destabilizing attachment occurs when two agents in a relational configuration have opposing coherence restoration requirements: what one agent needs to restore coherence actively damages the other's coherence, and vice versa. The relationship becomes a disruption amplifier where each agent's recovery attempts worsen the other's condition. This is the structural model of toxic relationships where well-intentioned behavior produces mutual harm.

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### What It Is

In destabilizing attachment, Agent A's coherence restoration requires a specific interaction pattern from Agent B, but that pattern is precisely what damages Agent B's coherence. Agent B's coherence restoration requires a different pattern from Agent A, but that pattern damages Agent A's coherence.

Neither agent intends harm; each is pursuing its own structural needs. The damage is a property of the relational configuration, not of either agent individually.

## Why It Matters

Destabilizing attachment is the most destructive relational pattern because both agents appear to be acting in good faith while producing escalating mutual harm. Standard conflict resolution fails because neither agent is doing anything wrong from its own perspective. The problem is in the relational configuration, not in either agent's behavior.

## How It Works

The amplification loop operates through coherence feedback. Agent A takes an action to restore its own coherence. This action degrades Agent B's coherence. Agent B responds with an action to restore its own coherence. This action degrades Agent A's coherence further. Each cycle amplifies both agents' disruption levels.

Detection involves monitoring mutual coherence trajectories: both agents showing synchronized but opposing coherence degradation in response to each other's actions signals destabilizing attachment.

## What It Enables

Understanding destabilizing attachment as a relational configuration problem, not an individual agent problem, enables the correct intervention: reconfiguring the relationship rather than treating either agent individually. This may involve mediated communication, interaction protocol changes, or in severe cases, managed separation with independent coherence restoration before re-engagement under new relational terms.

[Disruption Modeling All 21 steps →](#)

Recognize cognitive disruption before it stabilizes.

Primary Technical Disclosure

◦ [AQ-DSM: Diagnosing Cognitive Disruption as Loss of Coherence](#)

Secondary Technical

◦ [Cognitive Disruption as Architectural Phase-Shift](#)◦ [The Promotion-Containment Continuum](#)◦ [Attention Fragmentation: Reward-Biased Over-Promotion of Speculative Branches](#)◦ [Containment Collapse: Loss of the Speculation-Verification Boundary](#)◦ [Channel-Locked Promotion With Tolerance Escalation](#)◦ [Five-Axis Disruption Diagnostic Framework](#)◦ [Computable Therapeutic Dosing for Cognitive Disruption](#)◦ [Intergenerational Coherence Burden in Agent Lineages](#)◦ [Agent Self-Diagnosis and Autonomous Coherence Monitoring](#)◦ [Phase-Shift Early Warning System for Cognitive Disruption](#)◦ [Coherence Restoration Protocol Library](#)◦ [Positive and Negative Symptom Analogs in Containment Failure](#)◦ [Coherence Authorization Failure: Self-Disabling Execution](#)◦ [Pathological Verification Loop: Recursive Containment Audit Failure](#)◦ [Dissociation as Simulation Bypass: Acting on Unverified Planning](#)◦ [Affective Gradient Collapse: Self-Esteem Floor Lock](#)◦ [Resilience as Structural Capacity for Coherence Restoration](#)◦ [Personality Configuration Analogs From Stabilized Coping Regimes](#)◦ [Structural Dependency Patterns Between Agents](#)• [Destabilizing Attachment: Mutual Disruption Amplification](#)◦ [Resource-Depletion Pattern: Cognitive Operation Under Scarcity](#)◦ [Therapeutic Agent Interaction Through Behavioral State Recognition](#)◦ [Companion AI Relational Safety Constraints](#)◦ [Multi-Agent Group Coherence Dynamics](#)

Applications (General)

◦ [Coping Under Empathic Pressure: HSP, Narcissism, and Psychopathy as Control-Loop Intercepts](#)◦ [Two Faces of Codependency: Structural Entrapment vs. Emotional Entrapment Under Empathic Pressure](#)◦ [Starving for Each Other: Anxious-Avoidant Attachment as a Semantic Starvation Loop](#)◦ [Intimacy Collapse: A Structural Model of Trauma and Resilience](#)◦ [Structural Diagnosis: How Reward-Modulated Cognition Phase-Shifts Into ADHD and Schizophrenia](#)◦ [Clinical AI Therapeutic Monitoring Through Phase-Shift Detection](#)◦ [Autonomous Agent Fleet Health Through Coherence Diagnostics](#)◦ [Disruption Modeling for Workplace Burnout Detection](#)◦ [Disruption Modeling for Military Operator Resilience](#)◦ [Disruption Modeling for Financial Trader Monitoring](#)◦ [Disruption Modeling for Student Mental Health](#)◦ [Disruption Modeling for Caregiver Fatigue Detection](#)◦ [Disruption Modeling for First Responder Resilience](#)

Applications (Specific)

◦ [BetterHelp Cannot Detect When Therapy Is Making Things Worse](#)◦ [Talkspace Has No Model of Therapeutic Destabilization](#)◦ [Headspace Cannot Detect When Mindfulness Destabilizes](#)◦ [Noom Tracks Behavior Without Modeling Cognitive Disruption](#)◦ [Spring Health Matches Therapists, Not Disruption Patterns](#)◦ [Lyra Health Measures Outcomes, Not Coherence Trajectories](#)◦ [Ginger.io Detects Behavioral Signals Without a Disruption Model](#)◦ [Cerebral Prescribes Medication Without Modeling Disruption Dynamics](#)◦ [Modern Health Offers a Care Spectrum Without Disruption Diagnostics](#)◦ [Calm Business Offers Relaxation, Not Disruption Detection](#)

[Disruption Modeling overview →](#)

AQ

deterministic

autonomy

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