



## Attachment

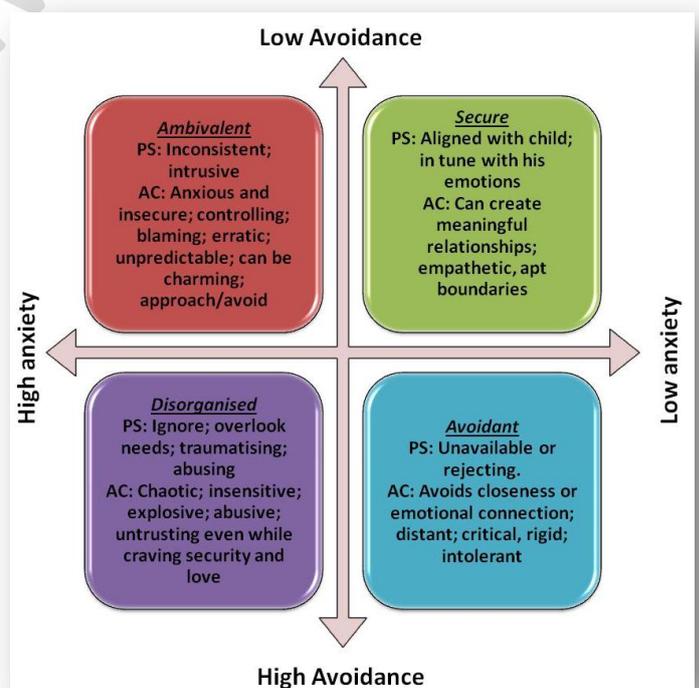
Attachment theory attempts to explain the levels of emotional closeness that we feel for the important people in our lives. Such emotional connections affect our behaviour throughout our lifespan and influence the dynamics of interpersonal relationships. Starting with our primary caregivers, the bonds we form and the styles of behaviour we experience help our social and emotional development, and in particular, how to regulate our feelings. Whilst these bonds and experiences don't ultimately determine how we will be in relationships, they do have a huge influence on our ongoing relationships and can manifest in various sets of styles. Furthermore, the type of attachment has huge bearings on our personal development as it has far reaching impacts on our navigation of life, e.g., sense of security, stability, curiosity, trust, open-ness, self-esteem, self-worth, self-efficacy, independence, personality, identity.

**Ambivalent Attachment:** Caregivers were "on-again, off-again," inconsistently tending and attuning to the child. The child then doubts that their needs will be met, vigilant for cues/clues to how their behaviour influences caregivers' responses. Eventually, moods become erratic, up and down, as needs and wants are inconsistently met, and invariably dissatisfied. As children and adults, they can be unaccustomed to receiving love, yearn for it when not there, and "turn off/away" when it is there. There could be a "self fulfilling prophecy" set of behaviours when relationships end.

**Secure Attachment:** This is the ideal. It facilitates healthy boundaries, intimacy, flexibility, interdependence, sociability, and individuation. Developed by having caregivers who "prize" the child, are positively attuned to them, give safety, security, consistency, and "good enough" care, attention and affection. Children then feel safe in their home which helps to explore the world, interact with others with trust, acceptance, and authenticity and to have emotional resilience and regulation. As adults, they have more confidence, balance, and empowerment in relationships, and can give and receive love. Adults can feeling loving, loveable, and loved.

**Avoidant Attachment:** Caregivers were emotionally unavailable, insensitive, and/or hostile in responses towards the child and their need for connection. This results in disconnecting, perhaps even a lack of emotion, which suggests an emotional "middle brain"/logical "outer brain" disconnection of sorts. As adults, they may result in isolating themselves; have a lack of social connections, participation, and bonds, not live existentially, may be hindered in compassion too.

**Disorganized Attachment:** Caregivers give an "approach/avoid" style of messaging to child. Child is put into unsolvable, unwinnable, unattainable situations. For example, ordered to do a task, criticised, mocked, punished for doing it "poorly". Eventually, the child decides not to solve problems, and is left feeling scared, overwhelmed, disoriented, disorganised. Even worse when violence from "caregivers" is involved; yearn to be close and afraid too.



PS means Parental Style and AC means Attachment in Child.



### Attachment Questionnaire

This questionnaire aims to gather information to help you to understand your attachment style with other people. Answer all questions quickly and as honest as possible. Mainly, focus on one significant adult relationship, ideally a current one (referred to below as X); not necessarily a romantic partner but one with whom you have a connection. Other items are in general across relationships. Add scores up at the end; the highest scores could point towards your style of attachment. Consider certain items below that would be worth exploring further.

Guide to Understanding my Attachment Style						
Item	Score	True=5	Part True=4	Neither=3	Part False=2	False=1
<b>Secure</b>			<b>Anxious/Ambivalent</b>			
1. I feel relaxed with X most of the time						
2. I find it easy to go from being close and connected with X to being alone						
3. If X and I argue, I can somewhat easily apologise and work together to find harmony again						
4. People are essentially good at heart						
5. It is essential to keep agreements with X						
6. I try to uncover and meet the needs of X whenever I can and I am comfortable stating my needs						
7. I keenly protect X from others and from harm and try to preserve safety in our relationship						
8. I see X with compassion and care and look forward to shared time together						
9. I am comfortable being affectionate with X						
10. I can keep confidences, protect X's privacy, and respect boundaries						
<b>Total Score</b>						
<b>Avoidant/Dismissive</b>			<b>Disorganised/Disoriented</b>			
1. When X comes home or approaches me, I feel strangely stressed – especially when X tries to connect						
2. I find myself reducing the importance of close relationships in my life						
3. I insist on self-reliance; I have difficulty reaching out when I need help, I prefer to work/play solo						
4. I sometimes feel superior in my autonomy and wish others were more independent						
5. I feel like X is always there and I often prefer to have my own space unless I initiate connection						
6. I prefer casual sex to a committed relationship						
7. I prefer relationships with things or animals instead of people						
8. I find eye contact uncomfortable and particularly difficult to maintain						
9. It is easier for me to think things through than to express myself emotionally						
10. I initially experience elation then depression when I lose a relationship						
<b>Total Score</b>						
<b><u>Focussing on items that you answered False or Part False, which areas of your life need particular attention?</u></b>						