

ATTACHMENT STYLE DISCOVERY



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INTRODUCTION

Whether you are aware of it or not, your childhood experiences have an enormous role in determining who you are today. The relationship you had as a child with your parents or your primary caregiver has a profound effect on the way you interact with people, find love or develop relationships.

As a child you are like a little sponge. You observe and take in what is happening around you and you respond instinctively to your parents or caregivers. The level of love and support you receive in the first few years of your life is critical for your development as it forms a particular bond with your parents or caregivers- called *attachment style*. Attachment theory was first formulated by a psychoanalyst and psychiatrist John Bowlby in 1958. Attachment theory focuses on safety and trust in intimate relationships. Based on the quality of the bond, you develop one of the following attachment styles: secure, anxious, avoidant or disorganized. Everyone has a certain way they behave in relationships with others, based on their experience as a young child.

Think back to the environment you grew up in. Was your relationship with your parents or caregivers healthy and secure or did you feel anxious and worried that they would not love you if you did something that would make them upset or did something wrong or were you perhaps told that you should just get on with it and questioned why you are so emotional? Whichever environment you grew up in, it has directly affected the way you are thinking and behaving today.

The following pages will help you to understand the specific ways in which your childhood experiences affect and shape your relationships today. You will also discover proven methods for eliminating your own unhelpful ways of thinking and behaving not just in your relationships.

By identifying your instinctive behavior, you will be able to recognize and anticipate your reaction to a specific situation and amend your response accordingly. Understanding your attachment style will help you form healthy and fulfilling romantic relationships.

Your attachment style comes into play in relationships of all kinds. Whether it is your spouse, family or friendship, your attachment style plays its role in how you form those relationships, who you feel drawn to and who does not resonate with you.

The methods in the following pages will help you to IDENTIFY, ADDRESS, REMOVE and REPLACE unhelpful and troublesome beliefs and behaviors you have likely repeated and carried with you since you were a little child. Replacing them with more positive and empowering ways of being, thinking and doing will increase the quality of relationships not just with others but also with yourself.

A FOUNDATION FOR LOVE

Your early connections with other create the basics of the two models:

MODEL OF YOURSELF & MODEL OF OTHERS

These models can be understood as the ways you relate to yourself and to others.

It is important to recognize that your attachment style can change with experience. Your romantic relationship often serves as a great opportunity for you to reflect on your own attachment style so as to be healthier.

Attachment Style Discovery is a simple test that will enable you to discover your own attachment style but not only that! Following section called Deep Dive will help you to understand your very own attachment style on a deeper level. In the Bonus section includes my top tips on navigating your attachment style in dating and tools specific to each individual attachment style to enable you to feel more secure and to thrive in your love life and life in general.

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The following questionnaire provides you with 20 statements describing behaviors in relationships. Using the scale from 0 - 5, select how much each of the following statements resembles you in relationships:

1. I feel comfortable being vulnerable and opening up to my partner.

0 - 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5

2. I find it difficult to manage my own emotions in a relationship

0 - 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5

3. I am uncomfortable depending on my partner. (AD)

0 - 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5

4. When my date/partner is away, it makes me question their love for me.

0 - 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5

5. I feel loved by my partner even when we pursue interests separately from each other.

0 - 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5

6. I believe that emotional or physical intimacy will lead me to getting hurt.

0 - 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5

7. I am uncomfortable with my partner depending on me.

0 - 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5

8. When I sense my partner being distant, I feel driven to reconnect e.g. by texting, calling or I feel angry and I withdraw.

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0 - 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5

9. When I was little, my parents/carers were abusive.

0 - 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5

10. I am comfortable depending on my partner and having my partner depend on me.

0 - 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5

11. When I am dating or in a relationship I tend to overthink and overanalyze situations.

0 - 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5

12. I often attract people who 'need saving' or partners who I believe can save me.

0 - 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5

13. I find it uncomfortable to talk about my feelings.

0 - 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5

14. I am scared to be intimate and/or scared of being in a relationship.

0 - 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5

15. When dating/ in a relationship, I need constant reassurance.

0 - 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5

16. I am comfortable with emotional and physical closeness.

0 - 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5

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17. I feel comfortable being vulnerable and opening up to my partner.

0 - 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5

18. When in conflict and I can see emotions coming up, I prefer to withdraw and cut myself off.

0 - 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5

19. I tend to pull away when my date/partner is seeking emotional or physical intimacy.

0 - 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5

20. I feel like I really want emotional intimacy, however at the same time, I feel as though it is safer for me to be on my own.

0 - 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5



The results:

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To determine your attachment style, count your overall score for each attachment styles as follows (numbers refer to the number of the question):

SECURE- 1,5,10,16,17

My score:

ANXIOUS- 4, 8,11,12,15

My score:

AVOIDANT- 3,7,13,18,19

My score:

FEARFUL AVOIDANT (DISMISSIVE)- 2,6,9,14,20

My score:

The higher the score, the more of the particular attachment style you exhibit.

What is your attachment style:

But what if you find yourself identifying with more than one attachment style?

You are certainly not alone. As human beings, we are complex and unique. Therefore, our behaviors can rarely be specifically categorized. Even if you have e.g. predominantly secure attachment style, you may find yourself fluctuating towards anxious or avoidant attachment tendencies at times. It can be helpful to take a close look at your own behavior and inclinations to determine which style is the most dominant for you.