

THE CYCLE OF ATTACHMENT DISORDER

	SECURE	AVOIDANT	ANXIOUS	DISORGANIZED
CHILDREN	Secure attachment describes an attachment where a child feels comforted by the presence of their caregiver. Securely attached children feel protected and that they have someone to rely on.	Avoidant attachment is characterized by a child who avoids their caregiver and does not seek comfort from them. These children will show little to no preference for their caregiver over a stranger. They will not seek out their parents when in times of distress.	Children that receive an anxious attachment are clingy to their caregiver, yet when their caregiver attempts to comfort them, the child remains distressed. Children are often confused and strive for love and connection.	Children will show an inconsistent connection with their caregiver and often hold fear towards them. The child must rely on the caregiver for survival, but the caregiver is also a source of fear.
ADULTS	Adults that had a secure attachment are empathetic and able to set appropriate boundaries, that tend to make them feel safe, stable, and more satisfied in their close relationships. While they don't fear being on their own, they usually thrive in close, meaningful relationships.	Adults that had an avoidant attachment are often independent, self-directed, and uncomfortable with intimacy. They regularly complain about feeling "crowded" or "suffocated" when people try to get close to them.	As adults they are often nervous and stressed about their relationships. They need constant reassurance and affection from their partner. They have trouble being alone or single. They'll often succumb to unhealthy or abusive relationships.	Adults are not only afraid of intimacy and commitment, but they distrust and lash out emotionally at anyone who tries to get close to them. They may spend much of their time alone and miserable, or in abusive or dysfunctional relationships.
PARENTS	Parents that show a secure attachment to their child acknowledge and meet their needs, and act as a safe home base. They are responsive, warm, and emotionally available.	Parents of children with an avoidant attachment tend to be emotionally unavailable or unresponsive to them most of the time. They disregard or ignore their children's needs, and can be especially rejecting when their child is hurt or sick.	Parents show inconsistent parenting. A caregiver can be supportive on some days and unsupportive just as frequently. They may be neglectful, abusive, or emotionally unavailable.	Parent's consistently fail to respond appropriately to their child's distress, inconsistent respond to their child's feelings of fear or distress. Parents are not responding to their child's emotional or physical needs.

ATTACHMENT STYLES IN RELATIONSHIPS

Our relationship with our parents or caregiver creates an "attachment style"—a blueprint for how we handle close relationships later. An attachment style develops early in life and is a specific pattern of behavior in and around relationships. Founded by psychoanalyst John Bowlby in the 1950s and expanded by Mary Ainsworth, attachment theory outlines how your bond with your primary caregivers sets the foundation for navigating relationships throughout life. The theory states that the primary goal of a human infant is to maintain proximity to its caregiver, [which] was necessary for survival during our evolution. There are four adult attachment styles: secure attachment, anxious attachment, avoidant attachment, and fearful-avoidant (aka disorganized) attachment.

	SECURE	AVOIDANT	ANXIOUS	DISORGANIZED
MODELS	- Has a positive model of themselves. - Has a positive model of others.	- Has a positive model of themselves. - Has a negative model of others.	- Has a negative model of themselves. - Has a positive model of others.	- Has a negative model of themselves. - Has a negative model of others.
ANXIETY/ AVOIDANCE	- Low anxiety - Low avoidance	- Low anxiety - High avoidance	- High anxiety - Low avoidance	- High anxiety - High avoidance
CHARACTERISTICS	- Empathetic - Sets healthy boundaries - Satisfied in close relationships - Feels safe and secure - Confident - Comfortable with intimacy	- Avoids emotional connection - Doesn't rely on others - Independent - Uncomfortable with their own feelings	- Overly needy - Lacks self esteem - Anxious - Craves emotional intimacy - Worries about their relationship	- Finds intimate relationships confusing - Swings between emotional extremes of love and hate for their partner. - Insensitive towards their partner, selfish, controlling, and untrusting.

TOOLS FOR YOUR ATTACHMENT STYLE

SECURE

Ways to rewire your attachment style to be more secure: Knowing yourself, building self-esteem, and finding self-compassion are typically a few steps forward. Here are some steps that can assist you further.

1. Keep developing the things you are already good at and the things you love, so you spend more time in flow, or immersion in your loved pursuits, living passionately.
2. Take some measured risks (nothing dangerous), but try things that push you out of your comfort zone.
3. Get physically strong because the process of it strengthens your head as well.

AVOIDANT

1. Educate yourself about this attachment style
2. Acknowledge your childhood
3. Speak to your parents
4. Accept your childhood pain
5. Set firm boundaries so that you don't over give to people and them become resentful towards them
6. Acknowledge that your anxiety increases when you start to depend on others
7. Allow yourself to depend on others
8. Discuss your concerns around intimacy with your partner
9. Learn to distinguish between those that genuinely want to give to you and those that want to use you
10. Don't push people away when they try to get close to you

ANXIOUS

1. Acknowledge your painful childhood
2. Accept your need for security
3. Communicate what you need to others
4. Talk to others when you feel anxious
5. Choose a partner that is empathetic and emotionally available
6. Avoid avoidantly attached people
7. Take accountability when you act out from your triggers
8. Question the validity of your triggers and fears
9. Be compassionate with yourself
10. Get professional help to address your childhood, concerns and worries

DISORGANIZED

1. Acknowledge your painful childhood
2. Recognize your triggers for feelings of abandonment
3. Learn how to self soothe
4. Learn how to communicate your needs appropriately
5. Practice managing your anger
6. Take personal space when you need it
7. For example, "Look, things are getting a little heated at the moment. Can we take a break for a couple of minutes and talk about things after that?"
8. Challenge your inner critic
9. Be patient and consistent in personal growth
10. Develop consistent and trusting relationships