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Information & Support



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ATTACHMENT STYLES IN RELATIONSHIPS

Attachment is a strong need to seek closeness to a person, especially in moments of stress, tension and difficulty. It can also be defined as the degree of trust and security experienced in a relationship. It is a set of behaviours that we display in very close relationships with people.

Attachment style is of great importance in relationships. The attachment patterns that are formed in childhood influence our interpersonal skills and relationships with partners in adulthood.

There are four main attachment styles: secure, anxious-ambivalent, fearful-avoidant and disorganised. Each has distinct characteristics.

SECURE ATTACHMENT STYLE

The secure attachment style stems from childhood experiences, which were characterised by receiving adequate support and caregivers providing us with a sense of closeness. People with a secure attachment style have the ability to build lasting and satisfying relationships. They are characterised by trust in other people and feel positive emotions in their relationship with the opposite sex. They are able to share their feelings and needs honestly in close relationships and turn to their partner for help in stressful situations. People with a secure attachment style do not fear dependence on others and do not worry to excess about being abandoned or hurt. They have a sense of security and at the same time autonomy in the relationship, which allows them to fully engage and share their lives with the other person.

However, in order to maintain stability in a relationship, those with a secure attachment style need to maintain a balance between closeness and autonomy. It is important to respect and protect the bond, while maintaining distinctiveness and individuality.

ANXIOUS-AMBIVALENT ATTACHMENT STYLE

The anxious-ambivalent attachment style stems from childhood experiences that did not provide enough reassurance about the emotional constancy of caregivers – at one point a child experiences love and immediately afterwards rejection. As a result, they may feel lost, not knowing what to expect from the parent and what attitude they will face at any given time. People with this attachment style often feel a fear of rejection and struggle with relationship insecurity. They tend to constantly worry about whether they are loved and whether their relationship is sustainable. They are afraid of loneliness and, at the same time, struggle with the fear of intimacy and of becoming a burden to their partner.

People with an anxious-ambivalent attachment style display strong emotions such as jealousy and obsessive passion in a relationship. They usually feel unappreciated by their partner. They are also characterised by a tendency to be possessive and overly focused on others. This excessive need for closeness and attention can lead to tension and conflict in the relationship.



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We encourage you to read [Attached: The New Science of Adult Attachment and How It Can Help You Find - and Keep - Love](#) by Amir Levine and Rachel Heller

FEARFUL-AVOIDANT ATTACHMENT STYLE

The fearful-avoidant attachment style stems from childhood experiences characterised by rejection or uncertainty about the emotional availability of caregivers. People with this attachment style avoid closeness and intimacy. They tend to avoid emotional dependence on their partner and stay away from situations where they can be hurt. They are often independent and rely only on themselves. They can take good care of themselves and are focused on their own goals and career.

People with a fearful-avoidant attachment style have difficulty trusting someone. This aversion to intimacy can lead to difficulties in building and maintaining satisfying relationships.

DISORGANISED ATTACHMENT STYLE

The disorganised attachment style is more difficult to understand because it stems from traumatic childhood experiences. Individuals with this attachment style often experienced violence or neglect from caregivers. They were plagued by contradictory feelings – at the same time they craved the closeness of their carers and wanted to avoid them. They may be confused in relationships and often experience difficulties in forming and maintaining stable relationships.

IMPROVING FUNCTIONING WITH A PARTICULAR ATTACHMENT STYLE

Some attachment styles can lead to difficulties in close relationships, but there are ways to improve relationship functioning regardless of attachment style. Here are some tips:

1. **Communication:** it is important to be open and honest in your communication with your partner. Express your needs and expectations and listen carefully to your partner.
2. **Understanding yourself:** self-awareness and understanding of your attachment style can help you better understand your own reactions and behaviour. Work on recognising your emotions and needs.
3. **Trauma work:** if you have had traumatic experiences in the past, it is worth considering therapy to understand the trauma and cope with it. Working on trauma can help create healthy relationships.
4. **Building trust:** if you have difficulties with trust, it is important to work on it. Remember that trust takes time and effort, but can be rebuilt through consistent and honest action.
5. **Developing interpersonal skills:** it is worth investing time and effort in developing these skills. Read books, attend workshops or consult a therapist to better understand and improve your communication and social skills.

It is always worth remembering that we are not condemned to one attachment style for life. We can grow and change by working on reactions and behaviours in relationships. By working on understanding ourselves and our own needs, we can create healthy and fulfilling bonds.

Don't wait, call now! If you feel that you need to improve your functioning in relationships, contact a specialist. ***We are here to support you!***