

Understanding **ATTACHMENT**

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WELCOME



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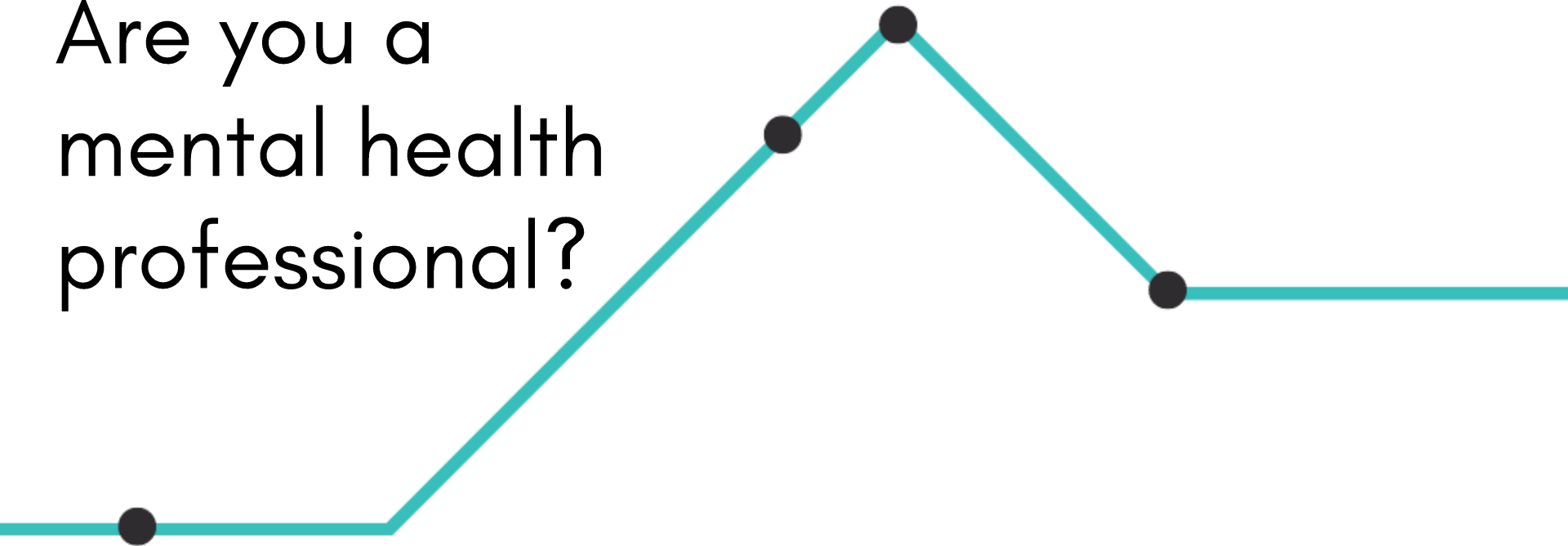
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POLL

Are you a
mental health
professional?

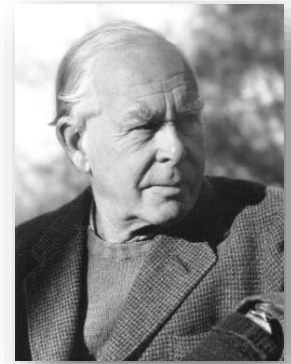


THIS WEBINAR WILL:

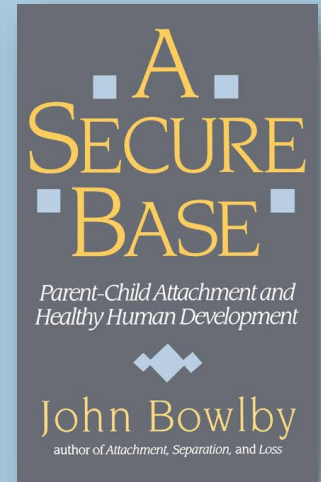
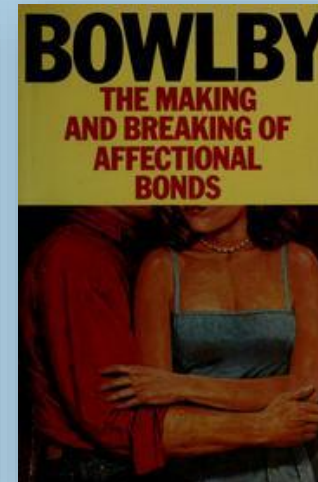
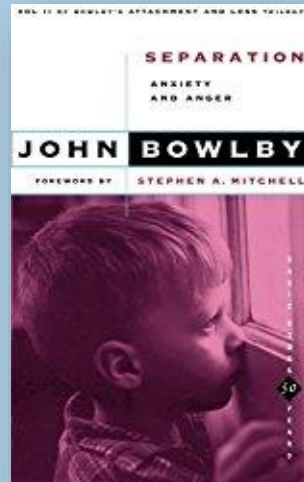
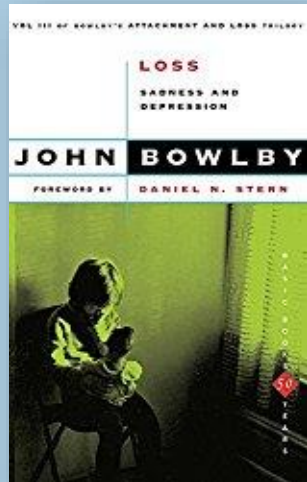
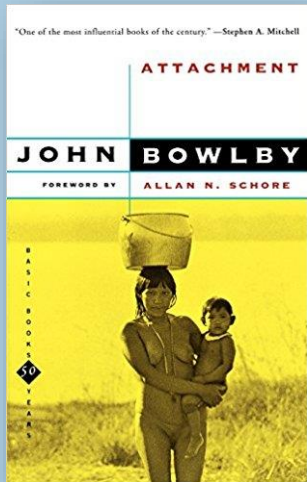
- ▶ Introduce participants to the fascinating science of attachment theory
- ▶ Explain the powerful role of attachment in shaping our lives
- ▶ Outline the four patterns of early attachment
- ▶ Define secure attachment
- ▶ Introduce the three patterns of adult insecure attachment



ATTACHMENT THEORY



Created by John Bowlby, a British psychoanalyst, based partly on primate ethology, to explain why “maternal deprivation” leads to anxiety, anger, delinquency, and depression.



From 1969–1988, he published five books about the theory, including one on psychotherapy.

WHAT IS ATTACHMENT THEORY?



How do I get these
people to take
care of me?

WHAT IS ATTACHMENT THEORY?



HUMAN BEINGS are born wired for connection. At the start of our lives, we form attachments to our primary caretakers as a survival mechanism.

ATTACHMENT PATTERNS form as a result of the adaptations made in infancy to get our needs met. Children make best adaptations they can to their family.

ATTACHMENT PATTERNS:

- ▷ Form in infancy (first two years of life)
- ▷ Affect us throughout our lives, particularly in how we relate in intimate relationships and with our children

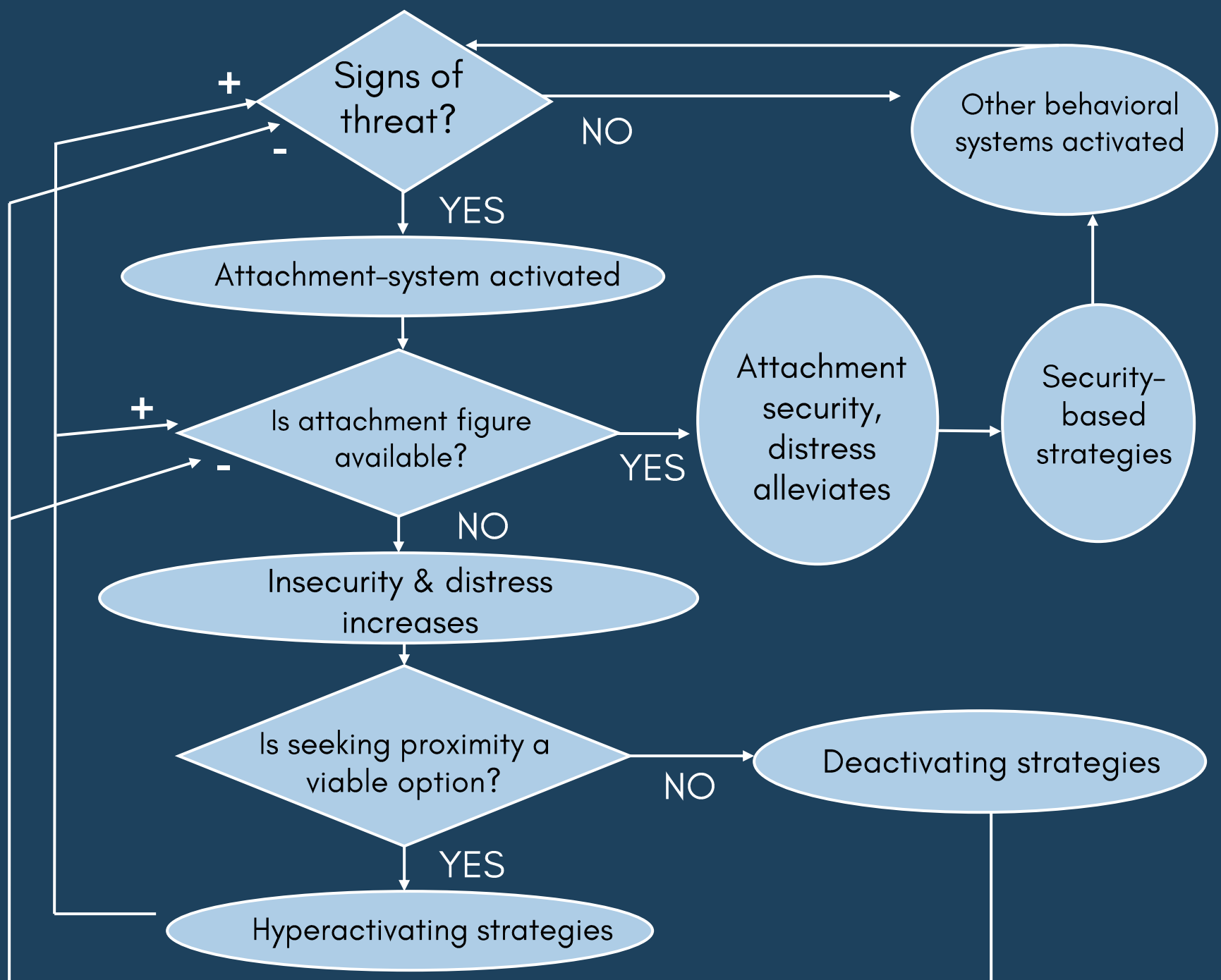


ATTACHMENT THEORY

- ▷ Our attachment system is activated when we are distressed.
- ▷ The way our parents interact with us (particularly during times of distress) forms the basis of our attachment style.



ATTACHMENT
SYSTEM
ACTIVATING!



DIFFERENT ATTACHMENTS

We have different attachments to different people.

FATHER



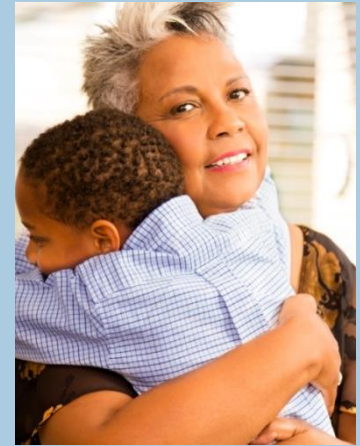
MOTHER



AUNT/UNCLE



GRANDPARENT



THE 3 S'S OF SECURE ATTACHMENT

HUMANS RELY ON ATTACHMENT FIGURES FOR:

01

PROTECTION (SAFE)



02

SUPPORT (SEEN)



03

EMOTION (SOOTHED)



ATTACHMENT THEORY & RESEARCH

Bowlby contended that internal working models of attachment help to explain:

01

EMOTIONAL DISTRESS



02

PERSONALITY DISTURBANCE



03

EMOTIONAL DETACHMENT



IMPORTANCE OF MAKING SENSE OF YOUR LIFE

- ▷ **EARLY EXPERIENCES** profoundly shape who we are.
- ▷ **BECOME A LENS** through which we see the world
- ▷ **WITHOUT THIS UNDERSTANDING** of how our past affects the present, we often unconsciously *recreate*, *repeat*, or *react to*



ATTACHMENT THEORY AND RESEARCH

Attachment underlies later capacity to make effectual bonds as well as a whole range of adult dysfunctions, particularly with marital bonds and trouble parenting.



ATTACHMENT STYLE & THERAPY

THE PSYCHOTHERAPY RELATIONSHIP EXHIBITS ALL THE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF ATTACHMENT BONDS:

- ▷ Regard the therapist as stronger and wiser
- ▷ Seek proximity through emotional connection and regular meetings
- ▷ Rely upon the therapist as a safe haven when they feel threatened
- ▷ Derive a sense of felt security from the therapist, who serves as a secure base for psychological exploration
- ▷ Experience separation anxiety when anticipating loss of the therapist



MEASURING ATTACHMENT

THE STRANGE SITUATION



ADULT ATTACHMENT INTERVIEW



PATTERNS OF ATTACHMENT IN CHILDREN

ATTACHMENT STYLE

- ▷ Secure
- ▷ Insecure – avoidant



SECURE PARENT-CHILD ATTACHMENT; DEFINITION

PARENTAL INTERACTIVE PATTERN

- ▷ Emotionally available, perceptive, responsive
- ▷ Emotionally unavailable, imperceptive, unresponsive, and rejecting



EMOTIONALLY UNAVAILABLE PARENTAL INTERACTIVE PATTERN; MEASUREMENT AND OUTCOME

PATTERNS OF ATTACHMENT IN CHILDREN

ATTACHMENT STYLE

- ▷ Insecure – anxious/ambivalent
- ▷ Insecure – disorganized



PARENTAL INTERACTIVE PATTERN

- ▷ Inconsistently available, perceptive and responsive, and intrusive
- ▷ Frightening, frightened, disorienting, alarming





VIDEO



ATTACHMENT FIGURES

Low Risk Non-Clinical Populations

- Secure 55–65%
- Ambivalent 5–15%
- Avoidant 20–30%
- Disorganized 20–40%

(Given a Best Fit Alternative)

High Risk, Parentally maltreated
Disorganized 80%

SECURE ATTACHMENT IN CHILDHOOD



SECURE ATTACHMENT PROMOTES:

- 01 Flexible self-regulation
- 02 Prosocial behavior
- 03 Empathy
- 04 Positive sense of emotional well-being and self-esteem
- 05 Coherent life-story



WHAT CAUSES INSECURE ATTACHMENT?

Unresolved trauma/loss in the life of the parents statistically predict attachment style far more than:

- ▷ Maternal Sensitivity
- ▷ Child Temperament
- ▷ Social Status
- ▷ Culture



IMPLICIT VERSUS EXPLICIT MEMORY

IMPLICIT MEMORY



EXPLICIT MEMORY



HOW DOES DISORGANIZED ATTACHMENT PASS FROM GENERATION TO GENERATION?

Implicit memory of terrifying experiences may create:

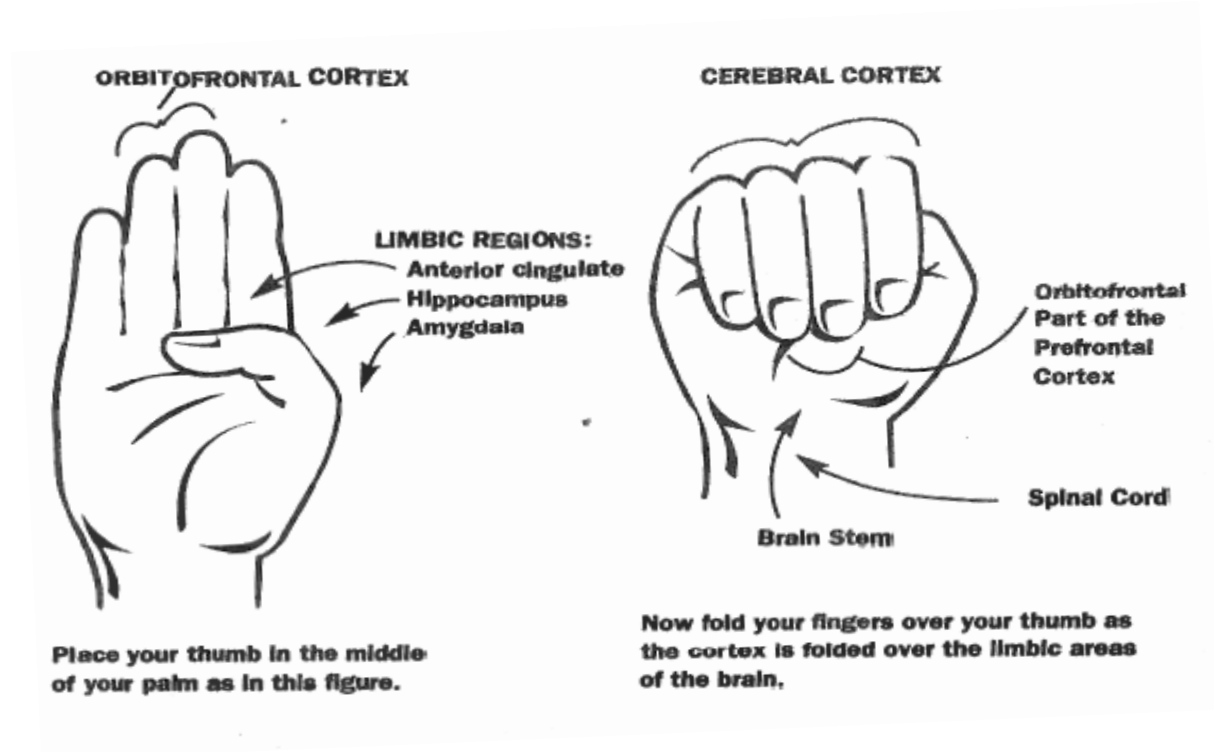
- ▷ Impulsive behaviors
- ▷ Distorted perceptions
- ▷ Rigid thoughts and impaired decision-making patterns
- ▷ Difficulty tolerating a rang



THE BRAIN IN THE PALM OF YOUR HAND

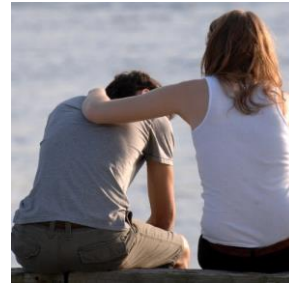


DANIEL SIEGEL, M.D. – INTERPERSONAL NEUROBIOLOGY



9 IMPORTANT FUNCTIONS OF THE PRE-FRONTAL CORTEX

1. Body Regulation
2. Attunement
3. Emotional Balance
4. Response Flexibility
5. Empathy
6. Self-Knowing Awareness (Insight)
7. Fear Modulation
8. Intuition
9. Morality



AVOIDANT ATTACHMENT IN CHILDHOOD



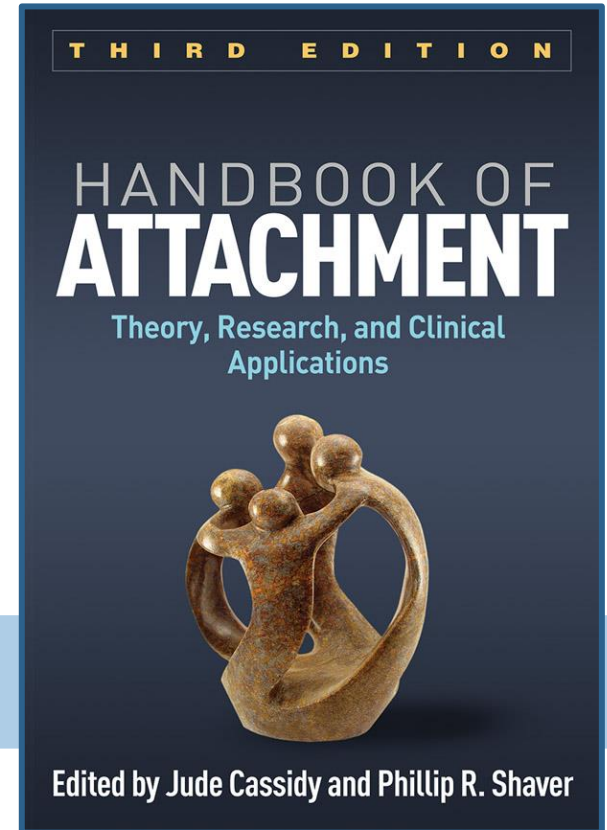
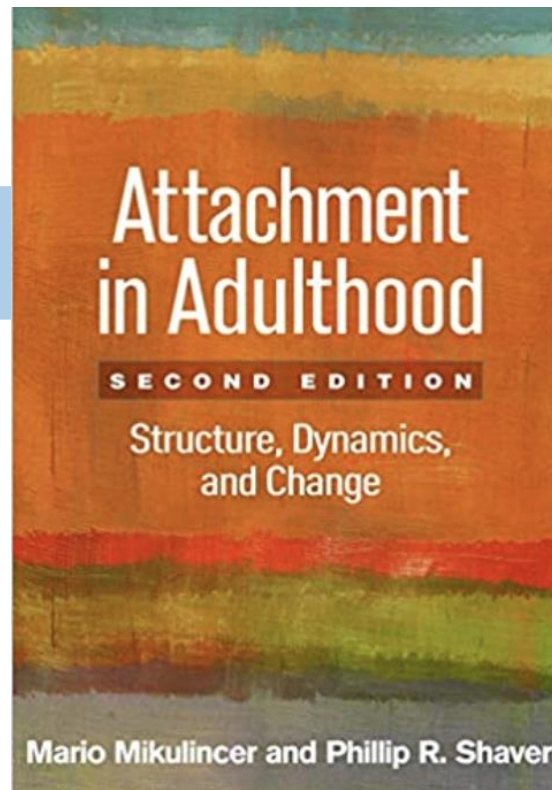
AMBIVALENT/ANXIOUS ATTACHMENT IN CHILDHOOD



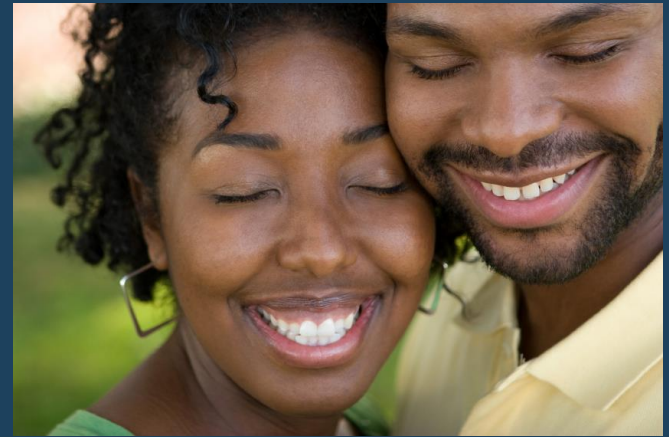
DISORGANIZED ATTACHMENT IN CHILDHOOD



A 1000-PAGE SUMMARY OF BASIC AND APPLIED ATTACHMENT THEORY AND RESEARCH



ADULT ATTACHMENT



Maternal caregiving at 18 months predicts self-reported anxiety and avoidance at age 22

(Zayas, Mischel, Shoda, & Aber, SPPS, 2010)

- ▶ Attachment anxiety at age 22 correlated $-.75$ with maternal sensitivity measured 20 years earlier, and $.70$ with maternal controlling. Avoidance at age 22 correlated $-.73$ with maternal sensitivity and $.52$ with maternal controlling.
- ▶ These correlations were much higher than similar correlations with self-reported attachment to mother at age 22.



FROM: "SECURE AND INSECURE LOVE: AN ATTACHMENT PERSPECTIVE" PHILLIP R. SHAVER, PH.D.

ATTACHMENT & WELL-BEING IN ADULTHOOD

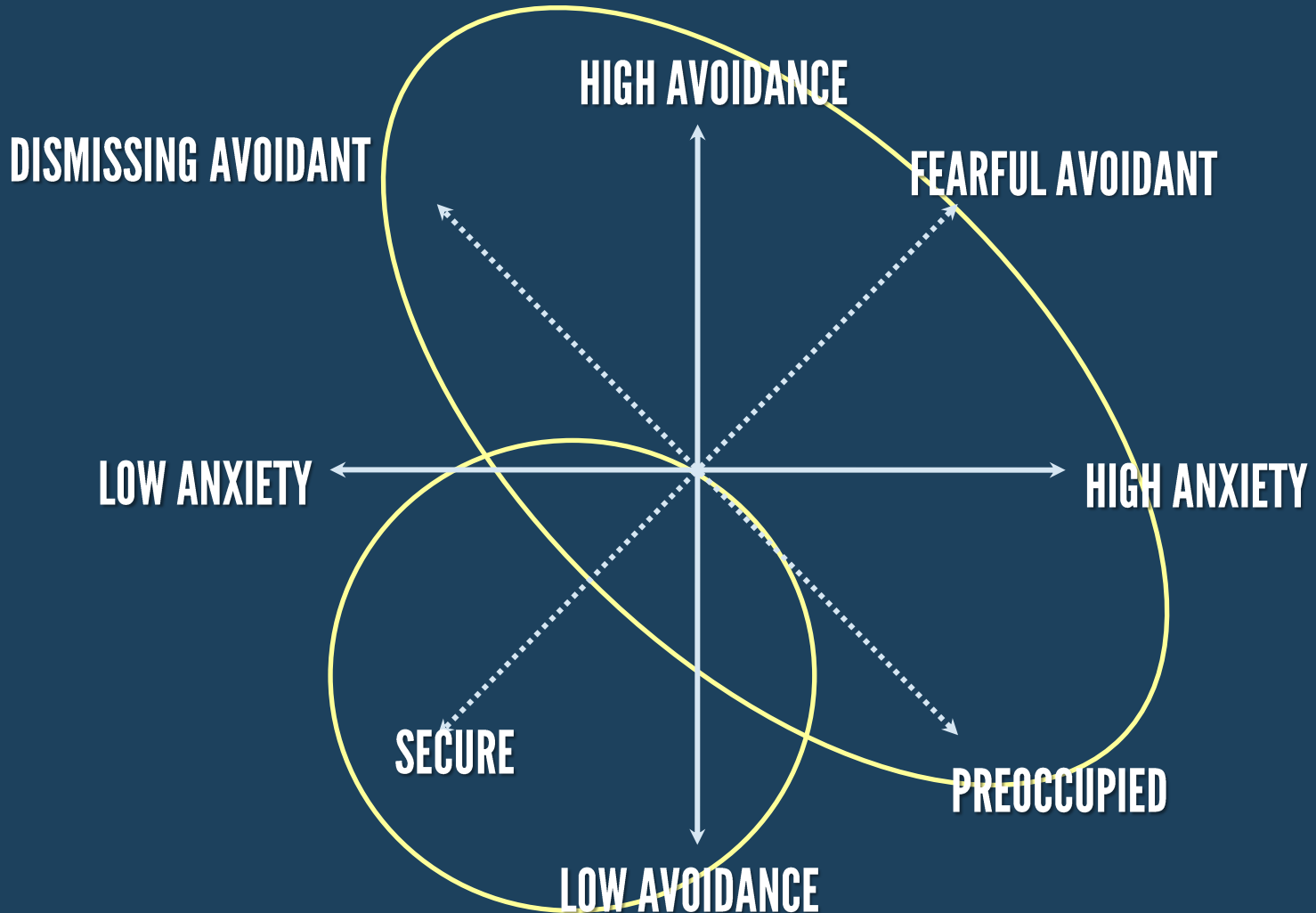
- Parental warmth during childhood predicts coping and well-being in adulthood.
- Early maternal sensitivity is negatively associated with cardiometabolic risk at midlife.
- Attachment anxiety and avoidance were inversely related to self-acceptance, personal growth, interpersonal relationship quality, purpose in life, and environmental mastery.

SOURCES: [HTTPS://WWW.TANDFONLINE.COM/DOI/ABS/10.1080/14616734.2018.1541517](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/14616734.2018.1541517)
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ADULT ATTACHMENT STYLES:

REGIONS IN A 2-DIMENSIONAL SPACE





IS YOUR ATTACHMENT STYLE AFFECTING YOUR RELATIONSHIP?

SECURE ATTACHMENT:

Tend to feel secure in their relationships. They have a strong sense of themselves, and they desire close associations with others. They tend to have a positive view of themselves, their partners and their relationships. Their lives are balanced, as they are both secure in their independence and in their close relationships.



DISMISSIVE-AVOIDANT ATTACHMENT:

Have learned to keep their own needs below their level of awareness and to take care of themselves. In relationships, they maintain emotional distance and tend to experience their partner's bids for connection as needy or childish. They feel like they are self-sufficient and pseudo-independent.



IS YOUR ATTACHMENT STYLE AFFECTING YOUR RELATIONSHIP?

ANXIOUS-PREOCCUPIED ATTACHMENT:

Tend to struggle with insecurity in dating and relationships, because they have learned that you can't rely on others to consistently meet their needs. They may find themselves feeling unconfident, fearful, clingy, unsure, or wanting reassurance from their partner. While they believe they want closeness, they often engage in actions that push their partner away..



FEARFUL-AVOIDANT ATTACHMENT:

Often lives in an ambivalent state of fear around being both too close to or too distant from significant others. They have not developed an organized strategy for getting their needs met by others, because their early caretakers were disorienting and alarming. They alternate between moving toward their partner and needing emotional distance. They tend to be mixed up or unpredictable in their patterns. As adults, these individuals tend to find themselves in rocky or dramatic relationships with many highs and lows and fears of both being abandoned and being intimate.

OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

01

Attachment theory has proven to be a very fruitful framework for studying social and psychological processes.

02

Similar mental and social processes occur in different contexts: romantic relationships, teacher-student relationships, leader-follower relationships, etc.; and many attachment-related mental processes occur in religious/spiritual contexts (prayer, meditation).

03

Humans' social-relational nature shows up everywhere and perhaps can eventually be conceptualized in a general theory.

DEVELOPING A SECURE ATTACHMENT

- ▷ It is never too late to develop an Earned Secure Attachment.
- ▷ Models of attachment are changeable, but only if we come to understand them.
- ▷ Grow toward security by developing integration from non-integrated brain functioning.



**FEEL THE FULL PAIN OF YOUR
CHILDHOOD AND MAKE SENSE OF IT.**



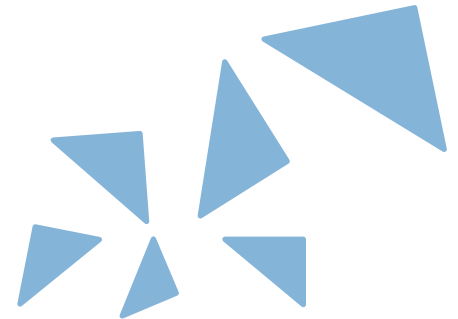
DEVELOPING A SECURE ATTACHMENT

- ▶ Because our attachment ability is broken in a relationship, it can be fixed in a relationship. This can be with a romantic partner, a close friend or a good therapist. It takes time to develop an Earned Secure Attachment in a relationship. Stick with it!



IMPLICATION OF ATTACHMENT THEORY FOR TREATMENT

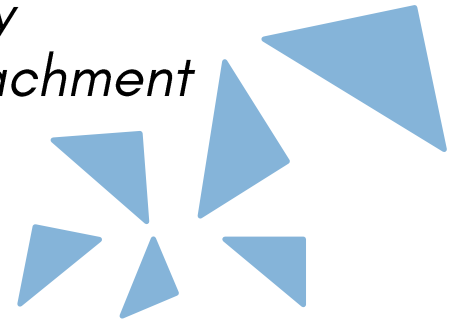
Psychotherapy promotes self-understanding by illuminating how clients' internal working models as opposed to external forces are what shape the present quality of their interpersonal relationships.



The making and breaking of affectional bonds. II. Some principals of psychotherapy.

The Fiftieth Maudsley Lecture

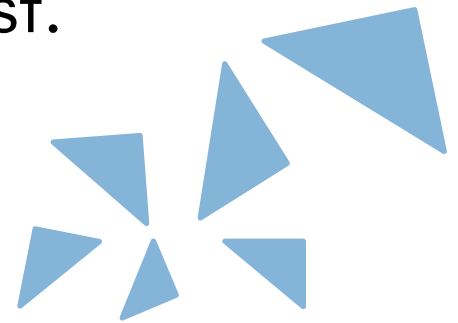
"...a psychotherapist is seen to have a number of inter-related tasks: (a) to provide the patient with a secure base from which he, the patient, can explore himself and his relationships; (b) and (c) to examine with the patient the ways in which he tends to construe current interpersonal relationships, including that with the therapist, and the resulting predictions he makes and actions he takes, and the extent to which some may be inappropriate; (d) to help him consider whether his tendencies to misconstrue, and as a results to act misguidedly, can be understood by reference to the experiences he had with the attachment figured during his childhood..."



~ John Bowlby, BJPsych, 1977

REASONS WHY IT'S IMPORTANT TO KNOW ABOUT ATTACHMENT PATTERNS

- You assess the patient's attachment style, because it influences the process of psychotherapy, the quality of the alliance and the ultimate outcome of treatment.
- Provides clues as to how the patient is likely to respond in treatment and to the therapist.



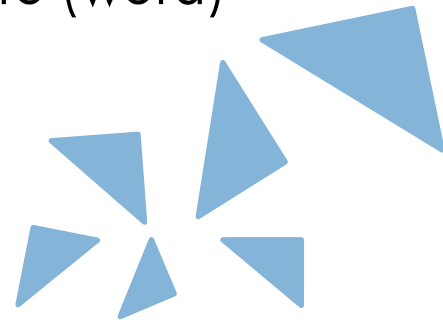
From "Attachment Style"

Adult Attachment Interview

Mary B. Main

"Now I'd like to ask you to choose five adjectives or words that reflect your relationship with your mother starting from as far back as you can remember in early childhood--as early as you can go, but say, age 5 to 12 is fine. I know this may take a bit of time, so go ahead and think for a minute...then I'd like to ask you why you chose them. I'll write each one down as you give them to me."

"Okay, now let me go through some more questions about your description of your childhood relationship with your mother. You say your relationships with her was (you used the phrase) Are there any memories or incidents that come to mind with respect to (word)"



WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO MAKE SENSE OF YOUR LIFE?



Research reveals that the more coherent a narrative we have of our own attachment issues in childhood, the more we've made sense of how our early life experiences have shaped us, the more likely our children will have a secure attachment to us and the more rewarding in general our interpersonal relationships will be.

- DANIEL SIEGEL, M.D.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO MAKE SENSE OF YOUR LIFE?



When we create a narrative of who we are, we link past and present so we can become the active author of a possible future, too.

- DANIEL SIEGEL, M.D.

UPCOMING CE WEBINARS

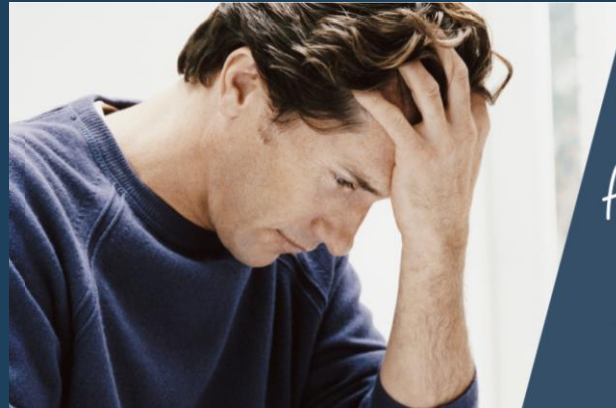
JAN. 12



Understanding *Dismissive-Avoidant* **Attachment**

CE WEBINAR WITH DR. LISA FIRESTONE

JAN. 26



Understanding *Anxious-Preoccupied* **Attachment**

CE WEBINAR WITH DR. LISA FIRESTONE

FEB. 9



Understanding *Fearful-Avoidant* **Attachment**

CE WEBINAR WITH DR. LISA FIRESTONE

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**THANK YOU
SO MUCH!**



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For those purchasing or watching this webinar as an archived recording, a link to purchase home study ce's was provided with your purchase confirmation. Registrants can earn 2 home study ce's by watching the webinar and completing a reading assignment.