

Attachment Styles

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Student Development and
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Attachment Styles

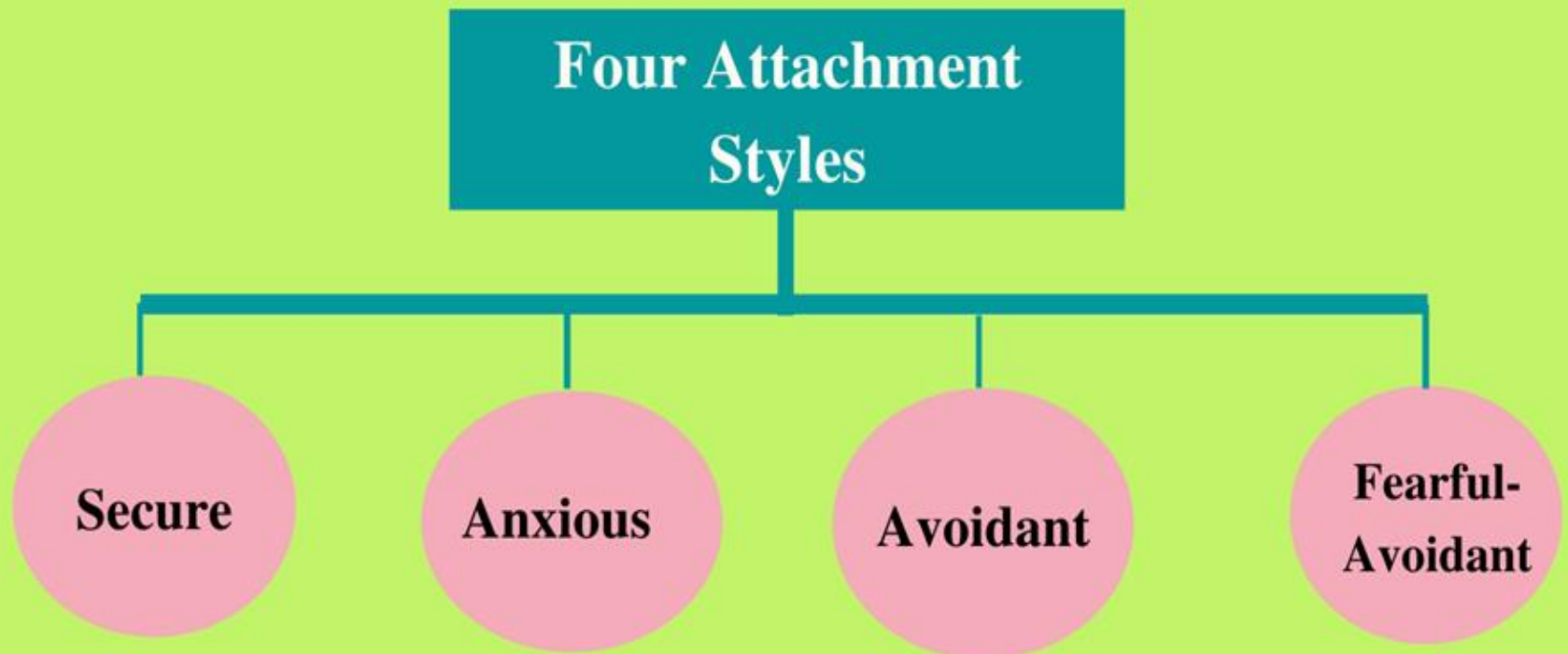
- Attachment styles are characterised by different ways of interacting and behaving in relationship.
- They develop during our childhood through non-verbal communication such as (eye contact, body language, tone of voice, facial expressions and touch) with our parents.



- The relationship between infants and their primary caregivers shape the success or failure of a future intimate relationship, the ability to maintain emotional balance and the ability to find satisfaction in being with others.
- The nature of the attachment will influence our attachment styles with our romantic partners later in our lives.

Attachment Styles

- In adulthood, attachment styles are used to describe attachment patterns in a romantic relationship which corresponds with the attachment styles during childhood.



SECURE

People with a secure attachment style are:

- Comfortable to show affection, being alone and independent.
- Able to prioritise relationship in their life and establish clear boundaries.
- Capable of accepting rejection and able to move on.

People with a secure attachment style tend to have caregivers who:

- Are attuned to their needs.
- Encourage autonomy.
- Are consistent with their emotional availability.

Example:

- *"If the relationship doesn't last, I will feel bad, but I will get over it."*
- *I trust my partner and do not need reassurance.*



ANXIOUS

People with an anxious attachment style tend to have caregivers who:

- Are not attuned to our needs.
- Discourage autonomy.
- Are unpredictable with their availability.



- Have trouble being alone or single.
- Need constant reassurance and affection.
- Have trust issues and tend to be stressed in their relationship.
- Have a strong fear of abandonment.
- Fear of being a burden or “too much”.
- Tend to be in an abusive relationship

Example:

- *“I am worried that you don't love me as much as I do.”*
- *“What happens if the relationship doesn't last?”*
- *I call my partner many times a day to get reassurance.*

AVOIDANT

- Extremely independent and self-directed.
- They feel "crowded" or "suffocated" when people try to get close to them.
- They construct their lifestyle by avoiding commitment or intimate contact.
- Feel unsafe with intimacy and closeness.
- Overwhelmed by other's emotional needs.
- Men are more likely to be avoidant than women.

Example:

- *Working for 80 hours a week and getting annoyed when their partner wants to meet more than once during the weekend.*
- *Having several romantic partners over the years but don't want to engage in a serious relationship.*

People with an avoidant attachment style tend to have caregivers who:

- Are emotionally neglected/unavailable.
- Are controlling, need excessive contact or are needy.
- Are traumatized or bereaved.

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FEARFUL-AVOIDANT

People with a fearful-avoidant attachment style tend to have caregivers who:

- Are emotionally neglected and experience chronic fear.
- Have experienced abuse, trauma and violence.



- Desire deep and emotional intimacy but experience trust issues.
- Sensitive to moments of perceived abandonment.
- Have difficulty in understanding their own needs.
- Fear of being too close or too distant from others.

Example:

- *"I don't feel comfortable opening up to romantic partners."*
- *"I am unworthy of the support that I get from my partner."*

How to heal your attachment style?

Anxious

- Be aware of your behaviours.
- Challenge problematic behaviours such as threatening to leave, make partner jealous and etc.
- Address the fear at the root of these actions.
- Don't expect your partner to fulfil all of your needs.
- Facilitate conversations with your partner.



Fearful- Avoidant

- Reflect on your feelings towards your relationship.
- Communicate openly with your partner.
- Do things that boost your self-esteem.



How to heal your attachment style?

Avoidant

- Reflect on the intent of your actions (Why do we distance ourselves?).
- Practise sharing small things about your feelings and thoughts with those that are close to you.
- Communicate your needs with your partner.

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Thank you!