



Unbreakable Bonds

Understanding Your Attachment Style Practice

To support you to realize your higher potentials for health, happiness and longevity in love, I invite you to become aware of your primary “Attachment Style.”

To this end, I invite you to review the main traits of the three most common Attachment Styles (Secure, Anxious/Insecure and Avoidant) below.

As you do, notice which one(s)* best describes you in intimate relationships—particularly those connections where you feel emotionally vulnerable and/or dependent upon another for your safety and wellbeing.

** You may discover your Attachment Style varies from relationship to relationship, according to the Attachment Style of the person you’re in relationship with.*

Main Traits of a Secure Attachment Style

You assume that others will be for there you when you need them to be and you easily reach out for comfort and connection when you need it.

You are comfortable being emotionally intimate with a few select others who you connect with on a regular, and consistent basis.

You don't worry that you are going to be betrayed or abandoned by those you are close to. Nor do you tend to betray or abandon others.

You are reliable, consistent and fundamentally trustworthy.

You assume that those you are close to are fundamentally trustworthy as well.

You assume that the people you are close to will care about, and prioritize your feelings and needs if and when you express them.

You're able to address people head on if and when they fail to extend empathy to you when you need it, or who are emotionally mis-attuned to your needs in a moment of vulnerability, and you do so without breaking the bond you have with them.

You use your close relationships to help provide you with emotional balance.

You're available to understand your impact on those closest to you, and listen to their complaints about your behavior with interest, curiosity, humility and the willingness to make amends when needed.

While you may have moments of insecurity, you generally assume that others like you, care about you and want what you have to offer.

You're able to move fluidly between times of inter-dependence and times of autonomy, recognizing both states as fundamentally trustworthy and good.

In response to being disappointed or hurt, you tend to reach out to try to repair the rift in your relationship, rather than become defensive, put up walls and/or withdraw from the relationship.

You feel fundamentally worthy of love.

Main Traits of an Insecure/Anxious Attachment Style

You anticipate being disappointed and/or abandoned when you are in need, and so your needs for closeness and connection make you anxious, and cause you to turn away from or minimize your own dependency needs.

You often feel clingy and “needy” in intimate relationships and find yourself covertly pulling on others for reassurance and proof that you are loved and valued, in spite of being an intelligent and successful person in most areas of your life.

You may feel insecure about how others feel about you, assuming that others don't really like you, care about you, value you and/or value what you have to offer.

Your close connections tend to be emotionally explosive and reactive.

You have trouble setting appropriate boundaries.

You may be afraid to state your true feelings and needs and often engage in people-pleasing behaviors.

You may suffer with “rejection sensitivity,” and be easily angered when you perceive a rejection.

Your fear of being abandoned and/or rejected is a driving force in the dynamic of the relationship and often causes you to self abandon, particularly in relationships where you feel emotionally dependent upon another.

You create relationships characterized by drama and instability and which are fundamentally fraught with fear of too much closeness and too much distance, all that the same time, generating painful push-pull dynamics that keep the relationship unstable for long periods of time.

You suffer from fundamental doubts about your own inherent value and your worthiness to love and be loved.

Main Traits of an Avoidant Attachment Style

You spend a lot of time trying to protect yourself from being too vulnerable or from forming any feelings of dependence upon others.

You're good at shutting down your relationship longings entirely, almost taking pride in not needing anyone outside of yourself to be happy and fulfilled in life.

You tend to push others away if they begin expecting too much consistency and closeness from you.

Rather than seeing others as a source of safety and wellbeing in life, you may instead see others as a source of danger, and harbor covert assumptions that others want something from you that is somehow selfish and self-serving.

You give a lot of mixed messages to others, and instigate severe push-pull behaviors that serve to destabilize connection.

You attract impossible love scenarios that are doomed from the start. For example, you'll become involved with those who are committed elsewhere, or get involved in long distance relationships, or start relationships that you know deep down inside will never really go anywhere.

You'll have intense and passionate love affairs that are low on commitment.

You'll tend to lessen contact with someone when you feel threatened and/or afraid.

You tend to be profoundly self-reliant, and rather than move closer to try to resolve a conflict, you'll pull away instead.

When you need comfort and support the most, you are apt to withdraw into yourself and not reach out to others.

Reflection Questions

Understanding Your Attachment Style

Journal on the following:

1. Ask yourself: “Which Attachment Style above (Secure, Insecure/Anxious or Avoidant) best describes how I show up in my most intimate relationship(s) and in what ways do I do so?” (For example, “I notice I have a lot of insecure traits. Because I’m so scared that people will leave me, I stop telling the truth about what I really feel or need. Then I end up feeling like I have to break up with someone because I can’t get my needs met in the relationship and the only way to get what I need is to leave.”)
2. Ask yourself: “What intention can I set to evolve how I show up in my relationships to emulate a healthier and more secure style of relating?” (For example, “My intention is to cultivate my capacity to form healthier, more secure relationships that are a source of true happiness and wellbeing in my life.”)
3. Ask yourself: “What is one new way of relating that I can take on practicing that promises to grow me in the direction of having a more secure attachment style?” (For example, “I am going to begin taking the risk of telling the truth to others about what I really feel and what I really need. By doing so, I can discover which relationships are worth investing more of myself in, and which ones I should give less of myself to.”)