

Understanding Your Attachment Style

A Practical Guide to Understanding Relationships

FREE Educational Guide

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Educational Disclaimer

This educational guide is intended for self-reflection and informational purposes only. It is not a diagnostic tool and should not be used to diagnose any mental health condition. Completing this guide does not establish a therapist-client relationship. If relationship patterns are significantly affecting your emotional well-being or daily functioning, consider seeking support from a qualified mental health professional.

What Is Attachment?

Attachment refers to the emotional bond we develop with others and the way we connect within relationships. Our earliest experiences with parents, caregivers, and important relationships often influence how we view ourselves, trust others, communicate, and respond to closeness throughout life.

Attachment is not about assigning blame to parents or caregivers. Rather, it is about understanding how early experiences may have shaped our expectations, emotional responses, and relationship patterns. While these patterns often begin in childhood, they can continue into adulthood unless we become aware of them.

The encouraging news is that attachment styles are not permanent. Through greater self-awareness, healthier relationships, and continued personal growth, many people develop more secure ways of connecting with others.

This guide is designed to introduce the concept of attachment and help you better understand your own relationship patterns. It is intended for educational and self-reflection purposes only and should not be considered a psychological evaluation or substitute for professional mental health care.

The Four Attachment Styles

Although every person is unique, attachment patterns generally fall into four common styles.

Secure Attachment

Individuals with a secure attachment style generally feel comfortable with both closeness and independence. They communicate openly, trust others appropriately, establish healthy boundaries, and work through conflict without becoming overwhelmed.

Common strengths include:

- Comfortable with intimacy
- Healthy communication
- Trusting relationships
- Respect for boundaries
- Emotional stability

Anxious Attachment

Individuals with an anxious attachment style often worry about rejection, abandonment, or whether others truly care about them. They may seek frequent reassurance, become highly sensitive to relationship changes, or fear losing important relationships.

Common characteristics include:

- Fear of abandonment
- Difficulty tolerating uncertainty
- Frequently seeking reassurance
- Overthinking relationships
- Strong emotional reactions to perceived distance

Avoidant Attachment

Individuals with an avoidant attachment style often value independence and self-reliance. They may feel uncomfortable depending on others or allowing others to depend on them. Emotional closeness can sometimes feel overwhelming or uncomfortable.

Common characteristics include:

- Difficulty trusting others
- Preference for independence
- Discomfort with emotional vulnerability
- Pulling away during conflict
- Difficulty expressing emotions

Fearful-Avoidant (Disorganized) Attachment

Individuals with a fearful-avoidant attachment style often experience both a desire for closeness and a fear of being hurt. They may want connection while simultaneously pulling away when relationships become emotionally intense.

Common characteristics include:

- Mixed feelings about closeness
- Difficulty trusting others
- Fear of rejection and vulnerability
- Inconsistent relationship patterns
- Emotional uncertainty during conflict

Understanding Attachment

Attachment styles are not personality traits or lifelong labels. They are learned relationship patterns that develop through experiences and can change over time.

Our attachment style may influence how we:

- Build relationships
- Communicate our needs
- Respond to conflict
- Handle trust
- Express emotions
- Set boundaries
- Give and receive support

Greater awareness allows us to recognize these patterns and make healthier choices within our relationships.

Attachment Style Self-Assessment

Instructions

Rate each statement based on how accurately it describes you.

0 = Never

1 = Rarely

2 = Sometimes

3 = Often

4 = Always

1. I worry that people I care about may leave me.
2. I find it difficult to trust others completely.
3. I feel comfortable asking for help when I need it.
4. I become anxious when someone seems emotionally distant.
5. I prefer handling problems on my own rather than depending on others.
6. I sometimes push people away even though I want closeness.
7. I openly communicate my needs in relationships.
8. I often overthink interactions with people I care about.
9. I find emotional vulnerability uncomfortable.
10. My childhood experiences continue influencing my relationships today.
11. I would like to better understand my relationship patterns.
12. I believe healthier relationships begin with greater self-awareness.

Understanding Your Score

Total Score: _____ /48

0–12

Your responses suggest that your attachment patterns are generally secure and balanced. Continue strengthening healthy communication, trust, and emotional awareness.

13–24

Your responses suggest that you may occasionally experience attachment-related concerns in certain relationships. Greater self-awareness may help you better understand these patterns.

25–36

Your responses suggest that attachment patterns may be influencing your communication, trust, or emotional responses within relationships. Learning more about attachment may help you better understand yourself and others.

37–48

Your responses suggest that attachment-related concerns may be significantly affecting your relationships or emotional well-being. If these patterns continue creating distress, consider speaking with a qualified mental health professional.

Reflection

Take a few moments to reflect on your responses.

How do I typically respond when I feel emotionally vulnerable?

What relationship patterns do I notice repeating throughout my life?

How have my early relationships influenced the way I connect with others today?

What is one healthy relationship skill I would like to strengthen moving forward?

Final Thoughts

Understanding your attachment style is not about placing yourself into a category or blaming your past. It is about recognizing the relationship patterns that have shaped the way you connect, communicate, and respond to others.

Greater awareness creates opportunities for growth. As you better understand your attachment style, you can begin strengthening communication, building healthier boundaries, increasing emotional awareness, and developing more secure relationships.

Remember that attachment patterns are not permanent. Healthy relationships, continued learning, and intentional practice can help create new experiences that support lasting change.

If you found this guide helpful, continue your learning with the complete workbook, *Understanding Your Attachment Style: Educational Workbook & Self-Assessment*. The full workbook explores attachment in greater depth through comprehensive educational chapters, an expanded self-assessment, score interpretations, reflection exercises, and practical insights designed to help you better understand your relationship patterns and build healthier, more secure connections.

Thank you for downloading this educational guide. I hope it has provided greater insight into your attachment style and encouraged you to continue learning about the patterns that shape healthy relationships.

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