

# ATTACHMENT STYLES

What are they? Names and definitions

## SECURE

- Secure attachment is defined by an ability to build healthy, long-lasting relationships.
- If a child can consistently rely on their primary caregiver to fulfill their needs growing up, they're likely to develop a secure attachment style.
- People with secure attachment tend to navigate relationships well.

## INSECURE

- Three types:
  - **Avoidant**
  - **Anxious**
  - **Disorganized**
- Insecure attachment styles develop if a child has had a strained bond with their primary caregiver.

## OTHER NOTES

- According to a [2018 study](#)<sup>Trusted Source</sup>, women score higher on anxiety and men score higher on avoidance when it comes to relationships.
- Regardless of your primary relationships, **you can change your attachment style.**

## AVOIDANT

- Also known as dismissive-avoidant, or anxious-avoidant
- Defined by failures to build long-term relationships with others due to an inability to engage in physical and emotional intimacy
- Your caregivers may have left you to fend for yourself, expected you to be independent, reprimanded you for depending on them, rejected you when expressing your needs or emotions, been slow to respond to your basic needs.
- People with avoidant attachment style tend to navigate relationships at an arm's length.

## ANXIOUS

- Also known as anxious-ambivalent or anxious-preoccupied.
- Characterized by fear of rejection, fear of abandonment, depending on a partner for validation and emotional regulation, codependent tendencies.
- Stems from inconsistent parenting that isn't attuned to a child's needs.
- Parents may have alternated between being overly coddling and detached or indifferent, been easily overwhelmed, been sometimes attentive and then push you away, made you responsible for how they felt.
- Parental relationships can therefore feel confusing and/or unstable.
- People with anxious attachment style may feel unworthy of love and need constant reassurance from their partner.

## DISORGANIZED

- Defined as having extremely inconsistent behavior and difficulty trusting others.
- Common causes of a disorganized attachment style include childhood trauma, neglect, abuse, or fear of parents.
- People with disorganized attachment style tend to have unpredictable and confusing behavior.
- This type is also associated with mental health conditions in adulthood, including: mood disorders, personality disorders, self-harm, substance use disorder.

# ATTACHMENT STYLES

Signs of each style

## SECURE

- ability to regulate your emotions
- easily trusting others
- effective communication skills
- ability to seek emotional support
- comfortable being alone
- comfortable in close relationships
- ability to self-reflect in partnerships
- being easy to connect with
- ability to manage conflict well
- high self-esteem

## AVOIDANT

- persistently avoid emotional or physical intimacy
- feel a strong sense of independence
- are uncomfortable expressing your feelings
- are dismissive of others
- have a hard time trusting people
- feel threatened by anyone who tries to get close to you
- spend more time alone than interacting with others
- believe you don't need others in your life

## ANXIOUS

- clingy tendencies
- highly sensitive to criticism (real or perceived)
- needing approval from others
- jealous tendencies
- difficulty being alone
- low self-esteem
- feeling unworthy of love
- intense fear of rejection
- significant fear of abandonment
- difficulty trusting others

## DISORGANIZED

- fear of rejection
- inability to regulate emotions
- contradictory behaviors
- high levels of anxiety
- difficulty trusting others
- signs of both avoidant and anxious attachment styles

# RESOURCES

1. [Attachment Style Quiz](#)
2. [National Library of Medicine](#)
3. [The Origins of Attachment Theory](#)
4. [Childhood Attachment & Adult Personality](#)
5. [Attachment Styles & their Role in Relationships](#)