

Attachment Theory



what is

Attachment?



Attachment is a deep emotional connection, typically formed between a child and their caregiver in early life. It creates a foundation of emotional security, trust, and relationship-building skills, helping individuals navigate challenges and form connections throughout their lives.

The Theory of Attachment



John Bowlby, the founder of attachment theory, viewed attachment as a survival mechanism. It helps keep a child close to their caregiver for safety and care. He introduced the "internal working model," which shapes how individuals perceive relationships and themselves, based on early caregiver interactions.

Types of Attachment

Mary Ainsworth identified four attachment styles through her "Strange Situation" experiment. These styles reveal how children respond to caregiving:

1.



Secure Attachment

2.



Avoidant Attachment



3.



Ambivalent Attachment

4.



Disorganized Attachment

Swipe left to view the detailed explanation!

Secure Attachment

Securely attached children feel safe, trust their caregiver, and seek comfort when distressed. They explore their surroundings confidently, knowing support is available. This bond develops when caregivers are consistent, nurturing, and emotionally available. In adulthood, secure attachment leads to emotional resilience, self-esteem, and healthy relationships.



Avoidant Attachment

Avoidant attachment forms when caregivers are emotionally distant or dismissive. Children suppress their emotions, avoid closeness, and do not seek comfort from caregivers. As adults, they may avoid intimacy, prioritize independence, and struggle with emotional expression in relationships.



Ambivalent Attachment

Ambivalent attachment occurs when caregivers are inconsistent in their responses. Children become anxious, clingy, and uncertain about whether their caregiver will respond to their needs, leading to fears of abandonment. In adulthood, they often feel insecure, and emotionally dependent, and struggle with relationship anxieties.



Disorganized Attachment

Disorganized attachment is linked to trauma or neglect. Children display conflicting behaviors, such as seeking and avoiding caregivers. Caregivers may be abusive or frightening. In adulthood, individuals with disorganized attachment struggle with trust, emotional regulation, and maintaining healthy relationships, often facing mental health challenges.



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