

Improved Parenting, Relationships, and Work  
through



Healing Attachment Wounds

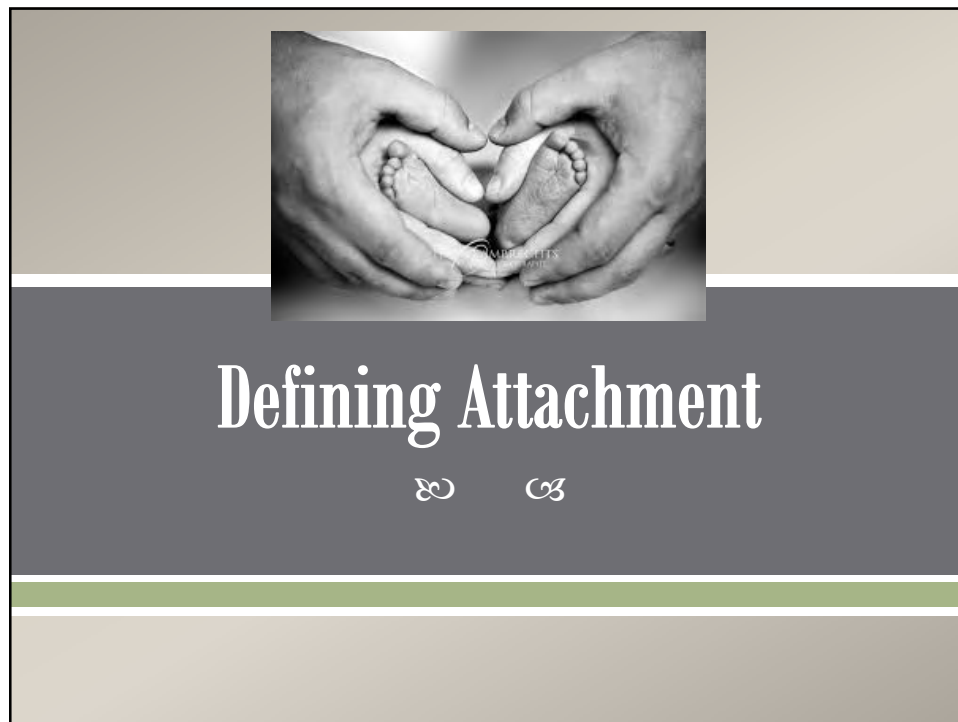
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## Attachment

Overview:

- ☞ About Me
- ☞ About You
- ☞ About This Training
- ☞ Handouts: [www.pruettcounseling.com/blog](http://www.pruettcounseling.com/blog)
- ☞ Topics We'll Cover
  - Defining Attachment
  - Attachment Styles
  - Impact of Attachment
  - Healing






## Defining Attachment

∞ Attachment:

- ∞ is a deep and enduring emotional bond that connects one person to another across time and space (Ainsworth, 1973; Bowlby, 1969)
- ∞ begins when we are infants
- ∞ is shaped by our interactions with caregivers
- ∞ describes how people manage close relationships in order to feel secure



## Defining Attachment

### ☞ Attachment Style Determines:

- ☞ How secure we feel taking risks and growing and developing as a person.
- ☞ The degree to which we trust others and are vulnerable to others.
- ☞ What causes us stress and how we react to stress.



## Defining Attachment

### ☞ Ideal Attachment:

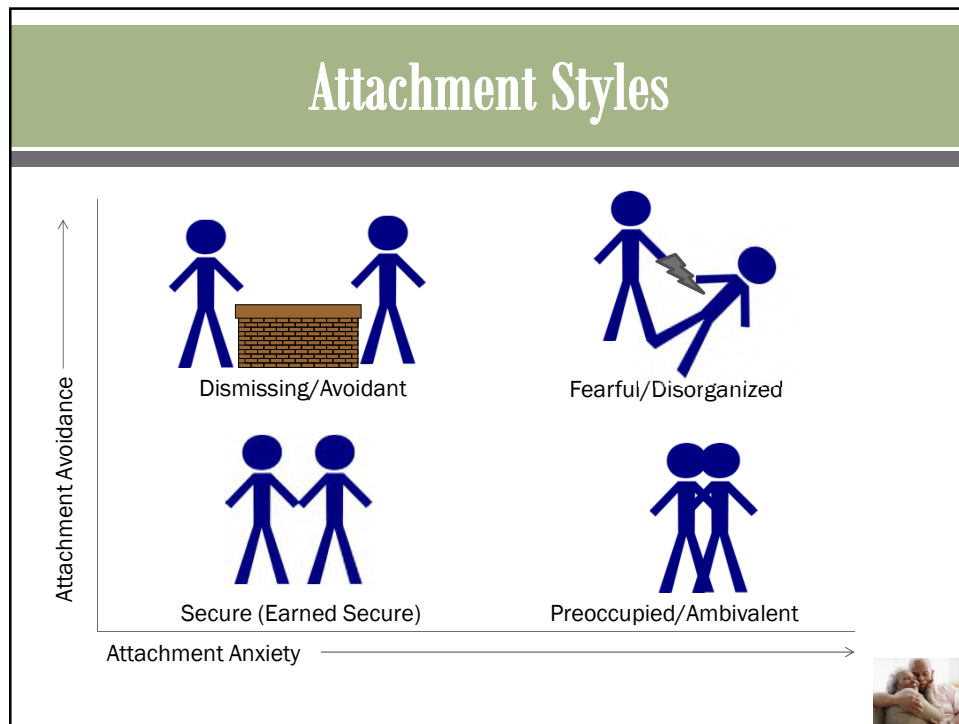
- ☞ Gives children a secure “home base” from which they venture to explore the world and return when needed.
- ☞ Allows adults to balance intimacy with independence.





## Attachment Styles





### Attachment Styles

↻ Attachment Over Time

- ↻ **Style:** Secure → Secure
- ↻ **Parental Style:** Attuned to child's emotions; aligned with child
- ↻ **Adult Characteristics:** Can create meaningful relationships; empathic; sets appropriate boundaries
- ↻ **EARNED Secure Attachment:** Adults who become securely attached as adults despite not having secure attachment as children.


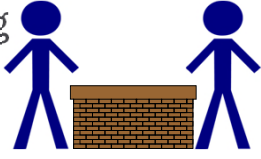
## Attachment Styles

☞ Attachment Over Time

☞ **Style:** Avoidant → Dismissing

☞ **Parental Style:** Unavailable or Rejecting

☞ **Adult Characteristics:** Avoids closeness or emotional connection; distant; critical; rigid; intolerant





## Attachment Styles

☞ Attachment Over Time

☞ **Style:** Ambivalent → Preoccupied

☞ **Parental Style:** Inconsistent and Sometimes Intrusive

☞ **Adult Characteristics:** Anxious and insecure; controlling; blaming; erratic; unpredictable; sometimes charming





## Attachment Styles

☞ Attachment Over Time

☞ **Style:** Fearful → Disorganized

☞ **Parental Style:** Ignored or didn't see child's needs; Frightening/traumatizing

☞ **Adult Characteristics:** Chaotic; insensitive; explosive; abusive; untrusting even while craving security



## Attachment Styles


☞ Assessing Attachment:

☞ **Formal:** Adult Attachment Interview

☞ **Informal:** Describe your mother/father; Talk about stories from your past

- ☞ Can they recall stories?
- ☞ Are they idealized?
- ☞ How much detail?
- ☞ Are they taking the audience/question into account?
- ☞ Can they relay pertinent information without becoming lost?

☞ **Informal:** How much information have I gathered at the halfway mark of an intake session?





# Impact of Attachment



## Impact of Attachment: Work

### Work

- Attachment style linked to leadership, trust, satisfaction, and performance in the workplace (Harms, 2011).
- Secure attachment orientation at work positively related to self-esteem, emotional intelligence, extraversion, agreeableness, and conscientiousness and statistically predictive of positive job performance (Neustadt, Chamorro-Premuzic, and Furnham, 2011)
- Avoidant attachment negatively correlated with civility, psychological safety, and trust. Attachment anxiety correlated with workplace incivility, exhaustion, and cynicism. (Leiter, Day, and Price, 2015)





## Impact of Attachment: Relationships

### ∞ Relationships

- Who We Choose
- How Relationships Progress
- How We Respond When Relationships End
- How We Manage Closeness; Independence; Proximity

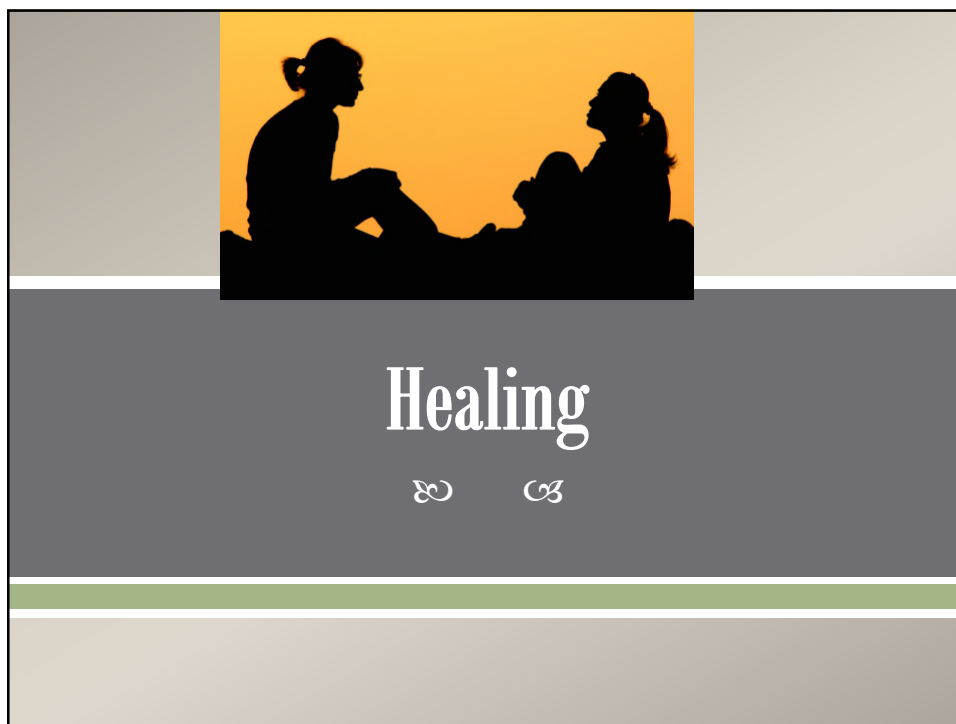


## Impact of Attachment: Parenting

### ∞ Parenting

- Affection and Comfort
- Discipline
- Repeating Patterns






## Healing

☞ Skills of Earned Security:

- ☞ Mentalizing (The ability to think reflectively)
- ☞ Narrative Coherence (The ability to tell a personal story well)
- ☞ Interpersonal Effectiveness



## Healing

### ☞ Skills of Earned Security:

- ☞ Mentalizing (The ability to think reflectively)
  - Reflect on own thoughts and feelings without just reacting to them
  - Curiosity about inner life
  - Similar curiosity and openness about what other people are thinking



## Healing

### ☞ Skills of Earned Security:

- ☞ Narrative Coherence (The ability to tell a personal story well)
  - Give listener context and details they need to understand the story
  - Keep the thread of the story so that someone else can follow
  - Express emotions effectively without being undone by them
  - Use appropriate illustrations



# Healing

## ☞ Skills of Earned Security:

- ☞ Interpersonal Effectiveness
  - Take action – Knowing what to do and doing it



# Healing

## ☞ Ways to Earn Security:

- ☞ Relationships with Others
  - Safe
  - Reciprocal
  - Consistent
  - Boundaries
  - Healthy Balance of Closeness and Independence



## Healing

### ∞ Ways to Earn Security:

#### ∞ Therapy

- Safety
- Learn/Practice Mentalizing and Cohesive Narrative
- Modelling Good Boundaries



## Healing

### ∞ Ways to Earn Security:

#### ∞ Independent Work

- Journaling/Reflecting on Personal Narrative
- Understanding of Early Attachment Figures
- Raising Self-Awareness
- Selecting Healthy Relationships



## Healing

### ☞ Working With Clients to Improve Attachment

- ☞ Motivation: If attachment style doesn't disrupt their life, there's no need to "fix" them
  
- ☞ For all styles:
  - Look at the range of relationships, including work, romantic, friendships, family of origin, and parenting
  - Examine the lens through which they see relationships



## Defining Attachment

### ☞ Attachment:

- ☞ A word about "Attachment Therapy"
  
- ☞ Techniques versus Philosophy
  - Attunement
  - Balance
  - Context



# Healing

## Working With Clients to Improve Attachment

- ✎ Dismissing/Avoidant
  - Establish Safety First
  - Help Them Accept Care
  - Encourage Insight
  - Pacing is Important



# Healing

## Working With Clients to Improve Attachment

- ✎ Preoccupied/Ambivalent
  - Caring but Firm Boundaries (“Boundaries are not Rejection”)
  - Ability to Be in the Moment (Grounding)



# Healing

## Working With Clients to Improve Attachment

### Fearful/Disorganized

- High Consistency
- Firm Boundaries
- Accept the Feelings; Label the Behaviors
- Expect Push-Pull



# Healing Attachment Wounds

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