

ATTACHMENT STYLES

Understanding Patterns in Relationships

Attachment styles describe how we think, feel, and behave in close relationships. These patterns often develop early in life and can influence how we connect with others as adults .

While everyone has a primary attachment style, it's common to show traits from more than one.

Types of Attachment Styles

Secure Attachment

- Feels comfortable with closeness and independence
- Able to express needs openly
- Trusts others and maintains healthy boundaries
- Navigates conflict in a balanced way

Anxious Attachment

- Strong desire for closeness and reassurance
- Worries about abandonment or rejection
- May feel overly dependent on relationships
- Sensitive to changes in connection or communication

Avoidant Attachment

- Values independence and self-reliance
- May feel uncomfortable with emotional closeness
- Tends to withdraw or shut down during conflict
- Difficulty expressing needs or vulnerability

Anxious-Avoidant (Disorganized)

- Experiences both desire for closeness and fear of it
- May feel conflicted in relationships
- Patterns can feel inconsistent or unpredictable
- Often struggles with trust and emotional regulation

ATTACHMENT STYLES

Understanding Patterns in Relationships

Important to Remember

- Attachment styles are shaped by early experiences, but they are not fixed
- Awareness of your patterns can help you create change
- Relationships can influence and shift attachment over time

Moving Toward Secure Attachment

Building more secure relationships is possible with intentional effort and awareness.

1. Increase Self-Awareness

- Notice patterns in your relationships
- Identify common thoughts, fears, or behaviors

2. Explore Your Beliefs About Relationships

- Reflect on what you expect from others
- Challenge beliefs that may no longer serve you

3. Practice New Behaviors

- If you lean anxious: practice tolerating space and independence
- If you lean avoidant: practice openness and emotional sharing

4. Strengthen Emotional Awareness

- Identify and name your emotions
- Build tolerance for difficult feelings
- Practice empathy for both yourself and others

5. Communicate Openly

- Express needs clearly and respectfully
- Listen with the goal of understanding
- Work through conflict collaboratively

6. Support Your Environment

- Engage in relationships that feel safe and supportive
- Observe and learn from healthy relationship dynamics
- Manage stress, as it can intensify attachment patterns