

**Licensed Counselling Therapist** 

## 2 Questions

How do you think your early experiences with your parents or caregivers have influenced how you relate to others in your adult relationships?

How do you handle conflict or disagreements in your current relationships? Are there any patterns you have noticed?



#### What is Attachment?

Lasting psychological connectedness

What are Attachment Styles?

Different ways of interacting in relationships - based mainly on early childhood experiences with primary caregivers

#### **Attachment Styles** @ Work

Alongside each statement in the questionnaire, you will see a circle. Check that circle **if the statement is true for you**. If not true, move on to the next question.

#### Check the circle only if True

Check the chick	Α	В	С
I often worry that my colleagues will stop respecting me.	0		
2. I find it easy to feel connected with my colleagues.		0	
3. I fear that once someone gets to know the 'real' me, they won't like me.	0		
4. I find that I bounce back quickly after losing a work friend. I just seem to be able to put it out of my mind.			0
<ol> <li>If I don't have a colleague I feel close to, I feel somewhat anxious and incomplete.</li> </ol>	0		
6. I find it difficult to support a colleague if they are feeling down. I'm not sure what to say, or I don't really want to get into it with them.			0
7. When I show colleagues how I feel, I am afraid they will not feel the same about me after that.	0		
8. I prefer not to share my innermost feelings with colleagues.			0
I am generally satisfied with my work connections. I have always been good at maintaining relationships.		0	
<ol> <li>I am pretty much self-reliant at work. I don't ask for much support – from colleagues or from my supervisors.</li> </ol>			0
11. I don't focus too much on having close work relationships. I am here to get the work done.			0
12. I think and talk about my work relationships a lot.	0		
13. I find it difficult to depend on my colleagues for support when I need something. I prefer to handle things on my own.			0
14. I tend to get quickly attached to colleagues if I like them.	0		
15. I ask people for help when I need it, but feel confident that I can handle most things on my own.  16. I ask people for help when I need it, but feel confident that I can handle most things on my own.	0	0	
<ol> <li>I sometimes feel angry or annoyed with colleagues and don't always know why.</li> </ol>			0
17. I am sensitive to the moods of my colleagues. I tend to pick up on those things.	0		
18. I believe that most people are essentially trustworthy and dependable.		0	
19. I prefer casual work relationships with lots of colleagues rather than close work relationships with few.			0
20. I am comfortable sharing my personal thoughts and feelings with most colleagues. I don't 'overshare', but I naturally share some things.		0	
21. I worry that if I have a 'falling out' with a colleague it would bother me to the point I would ruminate over it.	0		

#### **Attachment Style at Work**

Check the circle only if True

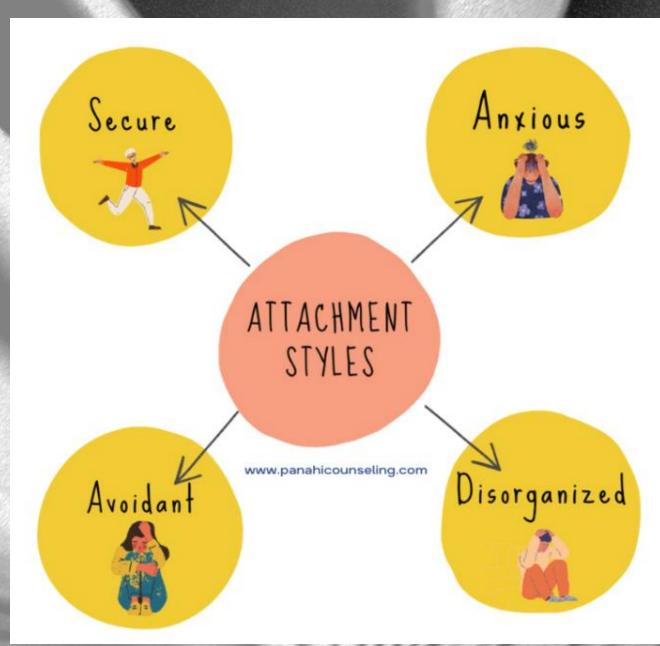
	Α	В	С
kes me nervous when colleagues try to get too close or personal			0
me.			
g a collegial conflict, I tend to impulsively do or say things I later	0		
t. Disagreements get me pretty upset.			
g a disagreement with a colleague doesn't usually cause me to		0	
ion our entire relationship.			
agues often want me to be closer than I am comfortable with.			0
ry that I am not good enough at work.	0		
't like engaging in conversations about other colleagues and their		0	
nal business. But it doesn't mean I don't care about them.			
work colleagues when we are apart, but when we're together I			0
he need to escape and distance myself.			
ı I disagree with someone, I feel comfortable expressing my		0	
ons without worry that it might harm our relationship.			
't like feeling that colleagues might depend on me.			0
tice that a colleague I feel close to is getting close to another		0	
igue, I might feel a small amount of jealousy – but it's very fleeting.			
tice that a colleague I feel close to is getting close to another			0
igue, I could care less.			
tice that a colleague I feel close to is getting close to another	0		
igue, that would really bother me.			
olleague I felt close to began acting cold or distant I would really be	0		
ered by it and would ruminate about what I may have done wrong.			
illeague I felt close to began acting cold or distant, I may wonder		0	
's happened, but I'll know that it's probably not about me.			
olleague I felt close to began acting cold or distant, it wouldn't			0
er me. In fact, I might not even notice all that much.			
ose colleague started distancing from me I would worry about it	0		
a bit, and would work hard to find out what's going on.			
ose colleague started distancing from me I would feel hurt at first,		0	
would get over it.			
oretty good at remaining in touch with some former colleagues –		0	
all, we have a lot in common.			
etimes feel I need to check with colleagues or supervisors to let me	0		
whether or not I am doing a good job.			

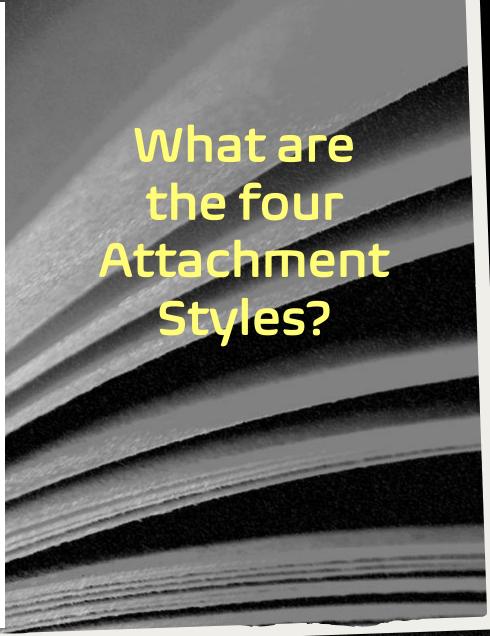
Category Totals: \_\_\_ A B C

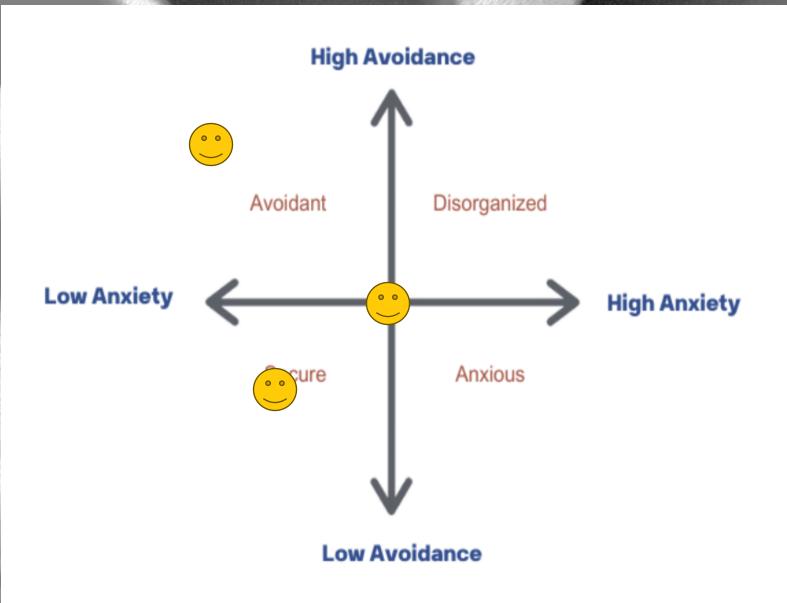


### Why Should You Care About This?

- <u>Secure attachment</u> amongst colleagues is one of the highest predictors of contentment at work (Leiter & Maslach, 1999)
- It can be a <u>guide</u> to help you make positive changes in your work relationships
- It may help explain why some people treat you the way they do
- It may help explain why you treat colleagues the way you do





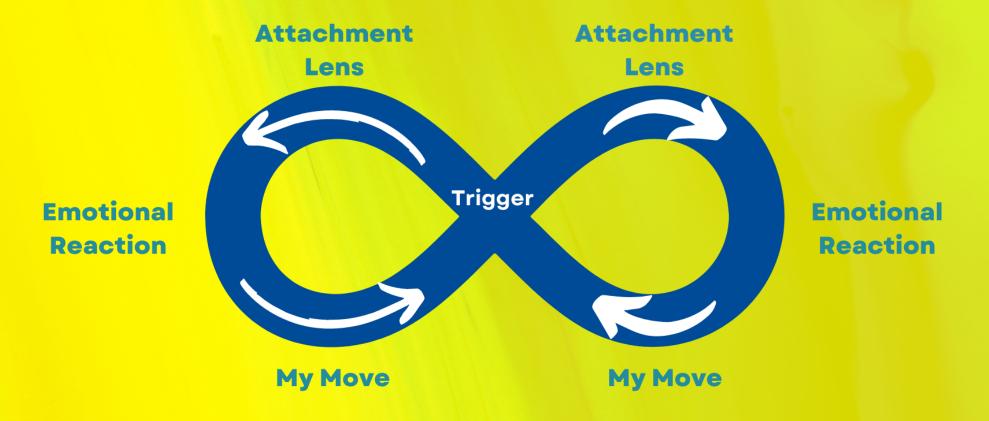


What are the four Attachment

### Other tidbits about attachment styles

- Your attachment style at work is likely your attachment style with your romantic partner
- You can have a mixture of anxious/avoidant, but we generally have a dominant style
- You can have different styles with different people
- You can learn to make different moves in relationships and alter your style

### The Cycle of Interaction



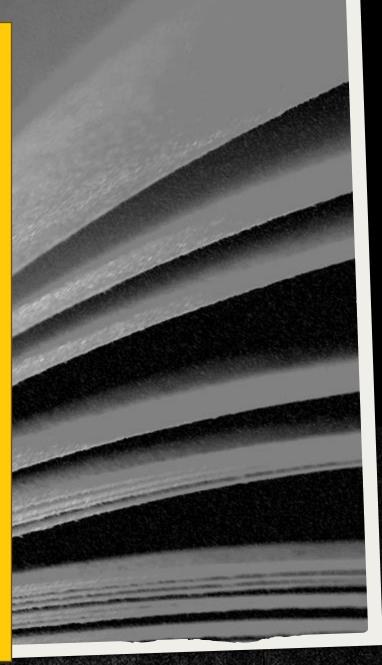
### When do attachment styles show up?



- During Connection
   Situations
- Emotional Pain
- Physical Pain
- Sense of Abandonment

#### Secure Attachment

- You feel at ease relying on others
- You feel confident that others will offer to help you when you need it
- You rarely worry that your work colleagues are upset with you
- You rarely worry about someone feeling emotionally connected to you
- You are comfortable with others relying on you
- You are, for the most part, consistent with how you relate to others
- You are engaged in the lives of at least some of your colleagues



# Anxious (Pre-occupied) Attachment (a.k.a. Connection-Seeker)

- Seeking approval & concerned about being accepted
- Overwhelming desire for interpersonal closeness
- Investing in social relationships in the workplace
- Conforming to group wishes
- · Intense fear of rejection and negative evaluation
- Hypersensitivity to feedback
- Feeling underappreciated
- Occasionally over-rely on others especially supervisors (a lot of checking)
- Really notice the gaps or disconnection times

# Better yourself 365

### Attachment in the Workplace

What Are the Superpowers of Employees With Preoccupied (Anxious) Attachment?

- They are highly alert to their own potential deficiencies.
- → They are always seeking ways to improve themselves.
- → They are better at detecting and responding to risks.
- → They are more accurate in detecting deceit.
- ightarrow They are high performers.
- → They create less friction in the workplace.



# Avoidant (Dismissive) Attachment (Safety-Seeker)

- Avoiding interpersonal closeness and group tasks
   & preference for working alone
- Keeping distance & using 'work commitments' to avoid socializing with colleagues
- Being resistant to leadership and new information learning/projects
- Rarely seek support from colleagues and even less from supervisors
- Don't feel obligated to conform to the group's wishes
- Viewed as 'less optimism' with more negative emotions in the workplace
- Makes jokes/humour to exit from 'heavy' conv's



## Attachment in the Workplace

What Are the Superpowers of Employees With Dismissive (Avoidant) Attachment?

- They have great capacity to sustain their focus on the tasks at hand and get the job done.
- They work well independently.
- In times of danger, they are usually the quickest to act - effectively and without hesitation.
- They stimulate the team to focus on the tasks at hand.
- ightarrow They are results-oriented.

Attachment Project



# What Anxiously Attached staff can do to move toward *Secure* attachment

- Sit a bit longer with the urge to seek support and see if you can work it out yourself.
- Notice how often you ask others for their opinions out of worry about making the wrong choice.
- Notice when you worry about the meaning of another staff members' behaviour. Ask, "Is that really what they meant?"
- Let certain people know that you need to feel appreciated and let them know how you prefer it.
- Re-interpret feedback as a way to grow rather than an indication that you are not enough.

# What Avoidantly Attached staff can do to move toward *Secure* attachment

- Become aware of your possible negativity and how it might affect your colleagues.
- Take risks to emotionally connect with one or two staff.
- Take the risk to reach out for support more often.
- Join group projects to allow you to warm up to your hard-working colleagues.
- Initiate difficult but respectful conversations with colleagues who upset you instead of holding it in.

How Will You Increase Secure Attachment at work?



### The Cycle of Interaction

