

TRBI and Parental Attachment Styles

Why attachment is important, identifying your own style, and how to become “Earned Secure”

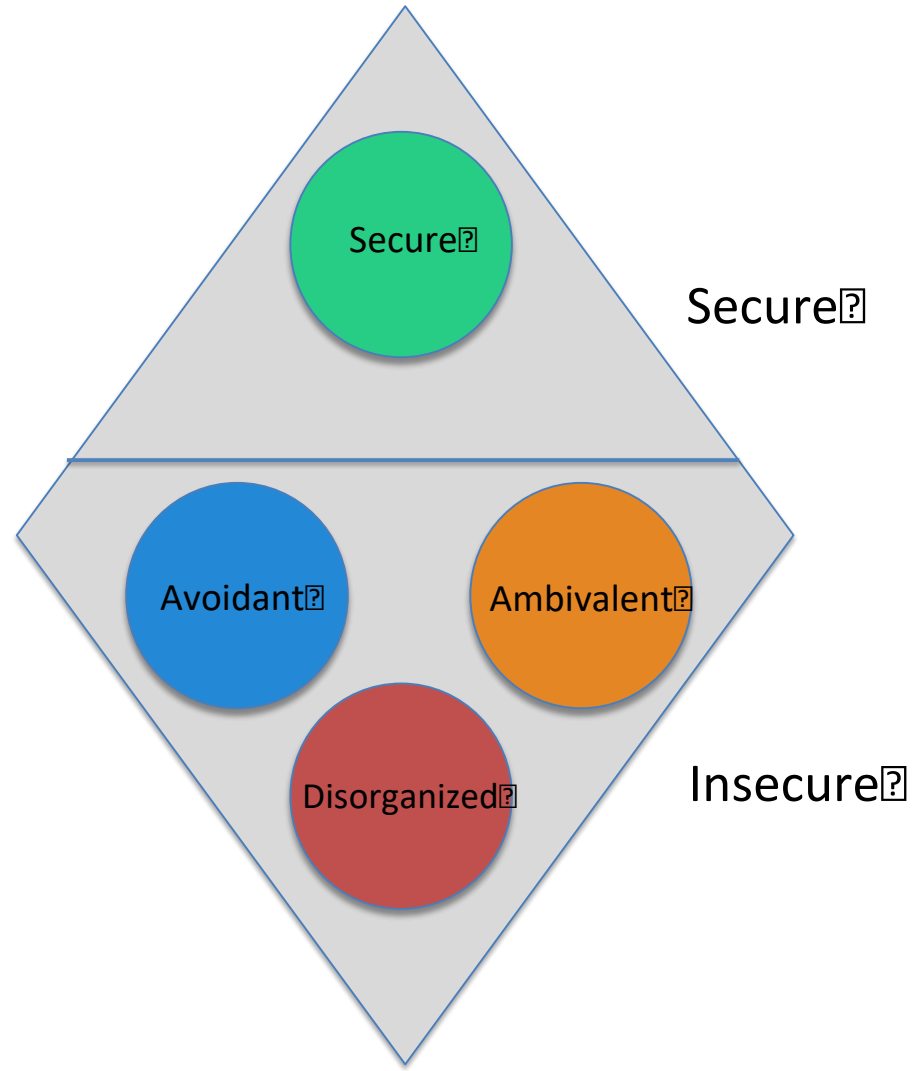


What is Attachment?

Infant Attachment

- Histories with caregivers influence attachment patterns
- Infants use attachment as model for relationships

Attachment style	History with caregiver	Infant's strategy when upset
Secure	Caregiver consistently, warmly responds when infant is upset	Cries; infant knows that caregiver will soothe
Anxious-Avoidant	Caregiver does not respond in emotionally warm way when infant is upset	Infant has learned not to try to get needs met
Anxious-Ambivalent	Caregiver inconsistently responds when infant is upset	Infant cries (and is difficult to soothe) in an effort to stay in caregiver's direct attention
Disorganized	Caregiving is frightening/traumatic	Infant has no clear strategy when upset



Secure Attachment

- Greater than 50% in typical population
- Learn to trust that safe people meet needs
- Healthy cognitive, social, behavioral outcomes



Avoidant Attachment

- Caregiver does not meet *emotional* needs of child
- Child turns attention toward toys/objects
- Infants often seem 'desirable' or independent

Ambivalent Attachment

- Caregiver meets emotional needs of child *inconsistently*
- This is confusing; child occupied with whether caregiver is emotionally available
- Can lead to anxiety/uncertainty in social situations



Disorganized Attachment

- Caregiver is frightening to infant *or* caregiver is frightened
- Infant does not have strategy for approaching caregiver
- Can lead to clinical behaviors in childhood/adolescence

Remember, there is hope and healing for EVERY child.

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Adult Attachment

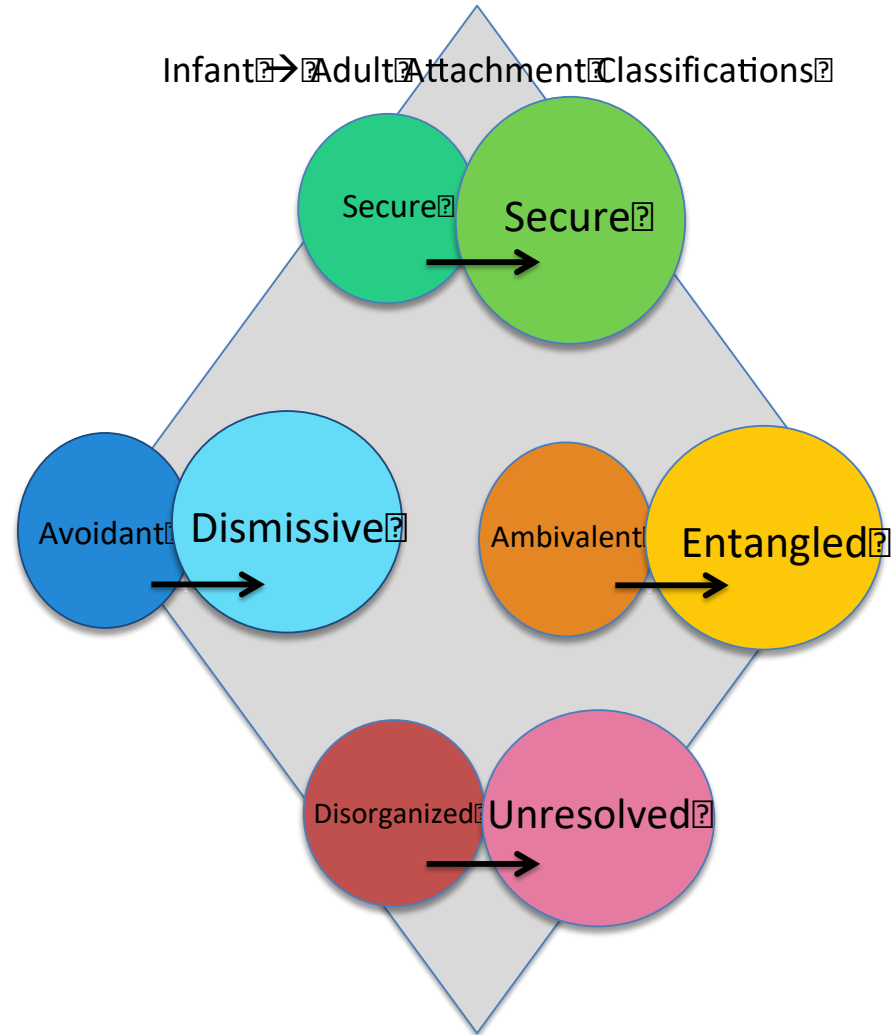
- Caregiver's own history heavily influences type of care given to child
- Without awareness, attachment style at 12m carries throughout life

Infant's behavioral strategy



Adult's relational strategy

Infant → Adult Attachment Classifications





The Secure Adult

The Secure Infant/The Secure Adult

Ability to:

- Give care
- Receive care
- Negotiate needs
- Be autonomous



The Dismissing Adult

The Avoidant Infant/The Dismissing Adult

- Emotionally closed off
- May not remember details of childhood/relationships
 - May idealize childhood/relationships
 - Not inclined toward physical affection
- ‘Things’ more reliable than people



The Entangled Adult



The Ambivalent Infant/The Entangled Adult

- May have anger/resentment toward parents
AND/OR
- Identity closely tied to parents
- May be intrusive
 - With caregiving
 - In relationships



Unresolved Trauma



Disorganization/Unresolved Loss or Trauma

- Mental 'checking out'/dissociation
 - Unable to be present in moment with child
 - Not limited to trauma in *childhood*
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Becoming Earned Secure

- Be fiercely honest about the past
 - Let go with compassion
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Becoming Earned Secure

- Journey, not a quick fix
 - The road to earned secure is possible and worth it
 - Benefits: deeper connection, trust with
 - Children
 - Spouse
 - All relationships
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Being Mindful

- Noticing child's cues allows you to be *proactive*
 - This is called being attuned
- Noticing your own triggers allows you to act rather than react
 - Ask yourself: Is this about my child, me, or my own history?



Mindfulness