



Attachment Style Predicts Self-Disclosure and Perceived Responsiveness In Dyadic Relationships

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Research Question

How do attachment styles moderate a person's propensity for self-disclosure and perceptions of partner responsiveness after an experimental generation of interpersonal closeness with a previously unacquainted individual?

Background

- **Attachment theory:** relationships with parents formed during infancy create “internal working models” that influence social interactions in adulthood
- Early relationships impact relationships well into adulthood
- Attachment styles can be measured in terms of three independent dimensions: **secure**, **anxious**, and **avoidant attachment**
- People scoring high on **avoidant** attachment rely on deactivating strategies (avoiding closeness in relationships)
- People scoring high on attachment **anxiety** rely on hyperactivating strategies (relationships marked by jealousy, obsessive preoccupation, and a lack of confidence that resources will be provided)
- People who score low on both dimensions are generally **secure** (relationships characterized by happiness, trust, and friendship)

Study Design

1. Recruit unacquainted female participants in dyads
2. Participants complete the ECR-RS to assess attachment styles
3. Fast Friends Procedure: 20-minute self-disclosure & relationship-building task
4. Participants complete post-study questionnaires

Fast Friends Procedure (Aron et al., 1997)

- 3 sets of questions: 36 total
 - Each set increases in required self-disclosure
 - Reciprocal asking and answering of questions
- Procedure shown to increase feelings of closeness, intimacy, and attraction to interaction partners



Sample Questions

Set I	What would constitute a perfect day for you?
Set II	What is your most terrible memory?
Set III	If you were to die this evening with no opportunity to communicate with anyone, what would you most regret not having told someone? Why haven't you told them yet?

Questionnaires

Name	Scale	Measure	Sample Item
ECR-RS	1-7	Attachment	I prefer not to show this person how I feel deep down
Relatedness	1-7	Closeness	I feel close to the other participant
Perceived Partner Responsiveness	1-5	Relationship satisfaction	My partner valued my abilities and opinions
Self-Disclosure	1-4	Self-Disclosure	I discussed my deepest feelings with my partner

Hypotheses

- **Avoidantly** attached participants will report disclosing less to their study partner during the Fast Friends task
- **Anxiously** attached participants will report feeling as though their study partner was less responsive to them
- **Avoidant** and **anxiously** attached individuals will report less closeness to their interaction partner as compared to **securely** attached participants

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