

Attachment Theory Worksheet

Patient Information
Full Name:
Date of Birth:
Gender:
Patient ID:
Contact Number:
Email Address:

The series of questions is used to probe an adult's early attachment memories and their current strategies for processing information and feelings.

The following 10 questions are an excerpt from an AAI protocol (modified from George et al., 1985; Brisch, 2012):

Therapist to client

To help me get oriented, could you give me an idea of who was in your immediate family and where you lived?

Starting with your earliest memories, can you describe your relationship with your parents or caregivers?

What phrases or adjectives come to mind?

Which parent did you feel closest to? And why do you think that was?

When you were upset as a child, what would you do? Who would you go to?

Can you describe your first memory of separation from your parents?

Did you ever feel rejected as a child?

Did your parents ever threaten you?

How do you think your early experiences may have affected you in adulthood?

Why do you think your parents behaved as they did?

Avoidance Reflection

Avoidant strategies are most problematic when they stop you from being who you want to be or behaving in the way you wish to.

Utilize the following worksheet to become more aware of the situations that cause stress and lead to avoidant behavior.

What emotions are you experiencing when you are most stressed or likely to avoid a situation? For example, anger, fear, shame, guilt, hurt, or sadness, etc.

What are you looking for or need when you are most stressed or likely to avoid a situation? For example, affection, warmth, love, intimacy, etc.

What is happening when you are most stressed or likely to avoid a situation? For example, decision-making, losing autonomy, trying to be understood, etc.

Some of the answers to the above questions may overlap. Reviewing your answers should help you recognize feelings and behaviors you find difficult.

Safety and Security

Feeling safe and secure is crucial, especially in relationships.

Indeed, “security is about reassurance that connection and resources are and will remain available” and is crucial for relationship collaboration and intimacy (Chen, 2019, p. 43).

Use this worksheet to better understand what is needed to feel safe and secure.

What could you do to help prevent yourself from getting stressed?

What could your partner do to help prevent you from getting stressed?

What could you do to calm yourself down once you are stressed?

What could your partner do to calm you down once you are stressed?

What can you do to reassure yourself of the relationship connection you have?

What things could your partner do to reassure you of the relationship connection you have?

Chen, A. (2019). The attachment theory workbook: Powerful tools to promote understanding, increase stability & build lasting relationships. Emeryville, CA: Althea Press.