

The History of Attachment Theory

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## Abstract

John Bowlby's work began the theory of attachment. Mary Ainsworth validated measures of attachment through her Strange Situation Laboratory and created the attachment styles. Mary Main's work helped to prove Bowlby's original idea that internal working models of attachment are shown in infancy, adolescence, and adulthood. Each researcher built off the other to show that early childhood relationships with a main caregiver impact future intimate relationships and the way the individual views himself in the world. This review ends with clinical implications for therapists.

Keywords: Attachment – Attachment theory – Attachment Behavioral System – Secure Base – Attachment Styles – Working Model of Attachment – Representational Processes

Dedication

This paper is dedicated to Dr. Justin Graham, Bridgette Nasi and Cecil White

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### History of Attachment Theory

Attachment theory is rooted in the belief that early in infancy, relationships with the infant and caregiver have an important influence on human development and how the person goes on to form intimate relationships later in life. John Bowlby is known as the father of attachment of theory; he created the attachment theory. Mary Ainsworth, a colleague of Bowlby, moved the theory of attachment to measurable science by her creation of the Strange Situation Laboratory. Her research also created the four attachment styles, which were not only important to attachment theory but also psychotherapy.

Mary Main, who was a student of Ainsworth, took the theory farther by proving that attachment styles of infancy have long-term effects that follow humans throughout their lives. She proved this with the creation of the Adult Attachment Interview. Main's research proved Bowlby's internal working model of attachment. This was important to psychotherapy because it showed that the internal working model of attachment was set in infancy and could be changed later only if the person became aware of it.

John Bowlby challenged the Freudian view. Bowlby believed that social environments play a large part in human development. Bowlby agreed with Adler's stance that to understand a human you have to look at their social environment. Adlerians have believed that each child, early on in their life, will develop a goal of belonging, significance or safety. In early childhood, the child will develop private logic or core beliefs about the world. Private logic will guide many decisions made in the child's life and later in adulthood. However, unless the adult becomes aware of the private logic he or she may continue to follow old habits that are not helping the person. Similar to

attachment, the adult may behave in certain ways when it comes to relationships not knowing why they are doing those things unless they become aware of it. Learning about attachment styles can help the person understand why they behave certain ways in their relationships with others. This is an important link for psychotherapist to help their clients understand their behaviors.

### **The Beginning of Attachment Theory: John Bowlby**

It is believed that the emotional quality of our earliest attachment experience is the single most influence on human development (Siegel, 2011). John Bowlby is known as the father of attachment theory. Bowlby's core contribution of attachment theory was to recognize that the attachment of the child to its caregiver is biologically based and needed for survival and evolution (Wallin, 2009).

John Bowlby challenged the long-standing Freudian view of human development. Bowlby claimed it focused too much on the inner world of the child without taking into account the actual relational environment (Siegel, 2011). This was a shift from seeing people as individuals, apart from their social environment, to seeing human nature as deeply relational. Alfred Adler also believed that human nature relies on its social environment. Adler believed that each human is striving for a unique individual goal, which is influenced by biology and its environment (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956).

John Bowlby was born in London in 1907. He taught at a progressive school for children, received his medical degree in psychiatry and completed psychoanalytic training. Early in Bowlby's career, he studied how mammals rear their young, which influenced his thinking. He noticed that when young animals were frightened they ran to a place of protection. When baby chimpanzees or gorillas were frightened they would

run to a protective adult, who would carry them off to safety. Bowlby concluded that humans are wired like their primate cousins, and human infants being the most dependent mammals cannot survive without forming attachments to a protective figure (Crain, 2005).

Bowlby believed that we could understand human behavior by considering the environment it came from; he called this environment of adaptedness (Crain, 2005). Throughout human history, infants needed to stay close to their adults for survival. Attachment theory defines attachment as a bond or tie between an individual and an attachment figure (Seigel, 2011). The tie is based on the need for safety, security, and protection; it is very important in infancy and childhood. Infants instinctively attach to their caregivers for protection and survival.

The term attachment applies to an infant or child's attachment to the parent, not the parent's attachment to the child. Attachment is an affectionate tie that one person or animal forms between himself and another person/animal- it is a tie that binds them together and endures over time (Ainsworth, 1970). Attachment is the need to bring the individual into closer proximity or to maintain proximity with the attachment figure because the parent or caregiver will remove stressors (Wylie, 2011). Bowlby made the leap away from the Freudian view that individuals stand apart from their social environment. Bowlby believed that because infants need to survive, attachment insured that infants rely on their relationships with an adult to seek closeness for survival.

The primal nature of attachment is a motivational system, which involves the infant needing to maintain close proximity to the caregiver in order to survive (Wallin, 2009). The infant is born with the instinctual knowledge that certain behaviors will bring

their caregiver closer to them. From this need to survive, children have developed or evolved the attachment behavioral system. The attachment behavioral system is engrained in infants.

The attachment behavioral system has three kinds of behaviors. The first is seeking, monitoring, and attempting to maintain proximity to a protective attachment figure (Wallin, 2009). The child will establish security of proximity by the following behaviors: crying, clinging, calling, and crawling to caregiver. These behaviors are a way of staying close to the parent or caregiver. The second is using the attachment figure as a secure base. If the child's attachment figure is available, as a secure base to provide protection and support, then the child will feel free to explore the environment. This is known as the Exploratory Behavioral System.

The third behavior of the attachment behavioral system is when a child flees to their caregiver in a situation of real or perceived danger in moments of alarm. When humans are threatened they seek safety with company of a person regarded as stronger and wiser (Wallin, 2009). Some examples of threats to infants are darkness, loud sounds, and unfamiliar settings.

The goal of attachment behavior is not only protection from the present danger but reassurance of the caregiver's availability. A caregiver can be physically present but emotionally absent. Bowlby defined the attachment figure's "availability" as being physically present and emotionally responsive as well (Wallin, 2009). There are two important internal elements of attachment: the child's perception to the caregivers availability and the child's experience of the caregivers availability in the past (Wallin, 2009).

The goal of attachment is not just a distance monitoring system but it is a felt security for children. Sroufe and Waters say that felt security is a subjective state that comes from the caregiver's behavior and the child's internal experience- mood, physical conditions, or thoughts (1977). There are two things that can greatly determine the felt security: the caregiver's history of availability and child's internal experience or perception.

### **Phases of Attachment**

Bowlby came up with the phases of attachment through which babies normally develop. Birth to three months is the first phase. Bowlby referred to this phase as "Indiscriminate Responsiveness to Humans" (Crain, 2005). Babies generally respond to all people in the same ways. They like to hear human voices and look at faces. Around six weeks babies will begin social smiling. Bowlby says that this promotes attachment because it can keep the caregiver close and often involves them in a caring or loving interaction. Babies' use crying to signal distress, which will result in proximity or signal to the parent the baby, needs the parent. They also use holding on, rooting, and sucking reflexes to bring interaction with the mother.

Phase two begins at age three months to six months it is called, "Focusing on Familiar People" (Crain, 2005). During phase two baby's coo, gurgle, and babble more in the presence of people they recognize. These behaviors help build a strong attachment because the sensitive responding parent will interact with the baby. Infants usually prefer two or three people and normally one in particular. The one person that they develop the strongest attachment with is often the one who has engaged and responded most positively to the baby.

Phase three, “Intense Attachment and Active Proximity-Seeking”, starts around age six months to three years (Crain, 2005). Infants become very particular and intense about their attachment to one person. They can begin showing signs of separation anxiety. Around seven or eight months the baby shows a fear of strangers. This will be particularly intense if a baby is ill or in an unfamiliar setting. Typically babies can crawl by eight months of age and will actively follow a parent. By one year of age a baby will be more courageous to explore their surroundings if they know that their mother (or father) will be there when they need her. However, if a child is ill or tired then they may not freely explore.

During phase three, babies begin to monitor parents’ whereabouts. This is a goal-corrected system, if the parent starts to leave the baby will follow, correcting or adjusting their movements to be close to the parent (Crain, 2005). The attachment figure becomes a secure base from which the child will explore their surroundings. If a child enters a new place the child will remain close then venture off to explore. The child will look back at the parent, exchanging glances or return to the parent from time to time. With the secure base in place, babies and toddlers play and explore happily. If the child glances back and does not see the parent or is frightened the baby will rush back to its secure base or in most cases, the parent. The close physical contact will comfort and then the baby will resume play.

Phase four, “Partnership Behavior”, begins at age 3 and last until the end of childhood (Crain, 2005). By three years of age a child can understand when a parent says they will be back. Children will be more apt to let parents go and will act more like partner in a relationship. Bowlby’s four phases outline what typically should happen in

child development. Through his work he noticed that not all children developed the four phases. It seemed that the four phases of development were not necessarily an inborn trait. He wanted to know why some children developed the four phases and others did not.

In 1936 he began work in child guidance. Bowlby became concerned about children with disturbances who were raised in nurseries and orphanages. These children frequently showed a variety of emotional problems, including an inability to form intimate and lasting relationships with others. It seemed to Bowlby that these children were unable to love due to a not having the opportunity to form a solid attachment with one caregiver early in life.

Bowlby also observed similar patterns with children who grew up in normal homes but suffered a prolonged separation from their caregiver. These children seemed to turn away from intimate human relationships. Bowlby believed that the mother/child bond held a key in children's development. Bowlby wanted to know how the bond formed and what happens to children when the bond is severed for a period of time.

Bowlby studied the effects of institutional care; he noted that there was an inability of many children raised in institutions to form deep attachments later in life. Bowlby named these children "affectionless characters," they were unable to form loving, lasting relationships with another person (Crain, 2005). Bowlby wondered if this was because babies lack the proper human interaction during the normal early periods in their life and then were never able to develop appropriate social behaviors.

Bowlby's attachment theory had two propositions. The first, history of children's early interactions with caregivers shapes the quality of their attachment relationship,

meaning if it is secure or not secure. The second proposition is that attachment relationships become the foundation for later personality development. Bowlby wanted to know what the process of “normal” and “abnormal” attachment looked like between mother and child so he could explore how it affected emotional development (Siegel, 2011).

Bowlby had created attachment theory but needed to move it into a science. Bowlby wanted a way to measure and to test his propositions so that he could prove his propositions. To move attachment theory into a science he needed to find a way to measure a relationship to see how it affects a child’s development. Bowlby’s close colleague would help move the theory to a science.

### **The Next Phase in Attachment Theory: Mary Ainsworth**

Mary Ainsworth was a colleague of Bowlby. Ainsworth’s contributions were absolutely critical to the evolution of attachment concept. By creating Strange Situation Laboratory Procedure, she was able to move attachment theory to a scientific theory through a means of measurement. For the first time, Strange Situation was able to provide empirical evidence of the importance of the emotional bond between child and caregiver.

Ainsworth discovered that the inborn biologically driven attachment system is easily formable. She led to the classifications of attachment styles in infancy and adulthood through her Strange Situation Laboratory. The attachment styles became a central part of what attachment theory brings to psychotherapy. Ainsworth also discovered what kinds of parent-child interactions were likely to produce secure

attachments or insecure attachments. The key to secure or insecure attachments was found in patterns of communications between the infant and caregiver.

Ainsworth began her work with Bowlby in London. Bowlby and Ainsworth worked together for three years. She and her husband moved to Uganda in the 1950's. Ainsworth decided to continue her work on attachment while in Uganda. It was in Uganda that Ainsworth created the "secure base" concept. This was the start of Ainsworth making Bowlby's theory into empirical science.

Ainsworth believed the basis of understanding for normal development of attachment was inadequate. After arriving in Uganda she launched the first naturalistic, longitudinal study of infants' interaction with their mothers. She began with the hypothesis that "attunement" or parents who responded sensitively to their infants cues and behaviors, was critical to determining the type or quality of attachment (Sroufe & Siegel, 2011). For nine months, Ainsworth observed twenty-six families. She visited each family for two hours every two weeks to collect data. It was her goal to answer the questions: what characterizes the "gestation" of attachment bond and what signals its "birth"? What promotes secure attachment and what impedes it? (Wallin, 2009).

After nine months of studying the families in Uganda, Ainsworth found that attachment develops through stages. Similar to Bowlby's phases of attachment, Ainsworth found that the infant starts off with a lack of preference of the mother or main caregiver. However, it is replaced by a clear preference for the mother (or main caregiver) and by six-nine months it forms into a powerful bond.

Ainsworth noted behaviors that showed a powerful bond of attachment between the mother and infant: an infant's flight to mother when distressed, use of mother as a

secure base for exploration, and actively going to mother when reunited (Ainsworth, 1967). There were a small number of infants that could not be soothed by their mothers and did not explore. There was even smaller minority of infants that showed no evidence of attachment.

After her Uganda study, Ainsworth wanted to know more about the minority of infants who were not soothed by mothers and showed no signs of attachment. Later, she would conduct studies to find out more about these patterns. She concluded that it was not the quantity of care that counted but the quality of the mother's sensitivity to the infant's signals that was of the greatest significance. Ainsworth also noted that both, mother and child, needed to show enjoyment in the attachment relationship. Ainsworth could not determine what kind of maternal behaviors could create a secure or insecure attachment, however she was able to recognize that there was link between attunement (sensitively responding parents) and attachment.

Eight years later, Ainsworth refined her study that she had conducted in Uganda. In Baltimore, Maryland, Ainsworth recruited twenty-six pregnant mothers to participate in a home base study of early development. Once the babies were born, interactions between babies and mothers were documented over the course of one year. Ainsworth and her team, visited each family eighteen times for four hours during that year, they noted a perfect overlap between attachment behaviors in Baltimore and Uganda (Wallin, 2009). This overlap was of great importance because it provided a cross-cultural correlation that attachment was a universal instinctive need, just as Bowlby had thought.

There was puzzling difference that Ainsworth noted between the Uganda and Baltimore groups: the Uganda infants displayed secure base behavior at home, while the

Baltimore group did not (Wallin, 2009). For Ainsworth, the secure base was central because it signified the security in a balance of being able to explore freely and attachment. In Uganda the infants explored freely in the presence of the mother, but stopped exploring when they were distressed or if the mother left the room. The Baltimore group explored at home whether mom was present or not (Wallin, 2009).

Bowlby had theorized that secure base behavior was a part of childhood development. Ainsworth wanted to determine if secure base was in fact a genetic working model in infants, she created Strange Situation to help get her answers. Ainsworth began with the hypothesis that attuned or sensitive responding parents to infants' cues was a critical factor in determining the type and quality of an infant's attachment. Ainsworth defined attunement as a parent or caregiver perceiving the infant needs something, makes sense of infant's cues and responds in a timely manner to the signals of a child (Siegel & Sroufe, 2011).

In Uganda, Ainsworth spent forty-seven hours of observation with each family. She created Strange Situation as a short-cut alternative to utilize a controlled unfamiliar and stressful situation for the child, with and without his mother (Ainsworth, 1970). Strange situation would provide an opportunity to observe how the infant's behavior is affected with the mother present and absent. It would also provide an environment to view attachment behaviors with regard to exploration with and without the mother.

### **Strange Situation**

Strange Situation was a laboratory assessment that lasted about twenty minutes. Mothers' and twelve-month-old infants were brought into a pleasant, toy-filled room. Next was a series of three-minute episodes: infant explores the room with the mother

present, mother leaves the room twice and returns twice, and last mother leaves and a stranger enters the room. The last episode of the mother not in the room and a stranger entering the room was meant to trigger the infant's attachment behavioral system. In summary, the eight episodes of the situation are as follows:

*Episode 1* (M, B, O). Mother (M), accompanied by an observer (O), carried the baby (B) into the room, and then O left.

*Episode 2* (M, B). M put B down in the specified place, then sat quietly in her chair, participating only if B sought her attention. Duration 3 minutes.

*Episode 3* (S, M, B). A stranger (S) entered, sat quietly for 1 minute, conversed with M for 1 minute, and then gradually approached B, showing him a toy. At the end of the third minute M left the room unobtrusively.

*Episode 4* (S, B). If B was happily engaged in play, S was nonparticipating. If he was inactive, she tried to interest him in the toys. If he was distressed, she tried to distract him or to comfort him. If he could not be comforted, the episode was curtailed—otherwise it lasted 3 minutes.

*Episode 5* (M, B). M entered, paused in the doorway to give B an opportunity to mobilize a spontaneous response to her. S then left unobtrusively. What M did next was not specified—except that she was told that after B was again settled in play with the toys she was to leave again, after pausing to say "bye-bye." (Duration of episode undetermined.)

*Episode 6* (B alone). The baby was left alone for 3 minutes, unless he was so distressed that the episode had to be curtailed.

*Episode 7* (S, B). S entered and behaved as in episode 4 for 3 minutes, unless distress prompted curtailment. (Ainsworth & Wittig 1969, planned a somewhat different procedure for episode 7, which was attempted for the first 14 Ss but, as it turned out, approximated the simpler procedure reported here, which was used for the remaining Ss.)

*Episode 8* (M, B). M returned, S left, and after the reunion had been observed, the situation was terminated. (Ainsworth, 1970, pp. 54)

Ainsworth believed that the infants judged secure in their home environment would use the mother as a secure base allowing them to play in a new environment, they would experience distress when she leaves the room, once she returns would be reassured and then continue to play (Ainsworth, 1970). Ainsworth also believed that infants labeled insecure in their home environment would be very upset during their mother's departure (Ainsworth, 1970). Some of the results of Strange Situation surprised Ainsworth and her team.

The majority of the Baltimore babies that were labeled "secure" after a year's worth of home visits, did show flexibility to explore freely and then be consoled by the return of their mother. There was a small number of infants who did not connect with their mothers, they only explored the room and avoided their mothers when she returned. Ainsworth described these babies as avoidant (Ainsworth, 1970).

Another small minority of the infants did not explore the room they only connected with their mothers. These infants were constantly preoccupied with their mother's whereabouts. They were either angrily or passively inconsolable upon reunion; they were called ambivalent (Ainsworth, 1970). Ainsworth greatest contribution to

attachment theory was through Strange Situation and the distinct attachment patterns: secure, avoidant, and ambivalent.

Secure attachment babies were able to explore, feel safe and to seek solace in connecting with their mother. Secure infants used their mothers as a secure base (McLeod, 2008). Babies with secure attachment when distressed by separation were reassured by connecting with their mother and then resumed play. Secure infants showed flexibility and resilience (Ainsworth, 1970). Mothers were sensitive to the needs of the child; they went with what the child needed. Securely attached infants had mothers that responded sensitively, were attuned, accepted the child, cooperated with the child rather than controlled, and they were emotionally available (Ainsworth, 1970).

Babies with avoidant attachment seemed to be unaffected by Strange Situation. The avoidant babies explored the room and didn't show any effect by their mothers leaving the room or her return. Their lack of distress made them appear to look calm. However, their heart rates during the separation were just as elevated as their peers who appeared distressed. The avoidant infants had a rise in the stress hormone, cortisol, compared to the secure group of infants (Wallin, 2009).

Ainsworth believed that avoidant babies showed "superficial indifference" and that their lack of attachment behavior was a defense accommodation (Wallin, 2009). It was similar to what Bowlby observed in two and three year olds who had suffered from a long separation from their parents. The babies learned that their tries for comfort and care were of no use. Ainsworth discovered that mothers of avoidant babies rejected their bids for connection, mothers often withdrew from babies when they were sad, mothers

lacked emotional expression, did not like physical contact, and were described as having a “shortness” in their caregiving (Ainsworth et al., 1978).

Ainsworth found that ambivalent attachment had two types, angry and passive. Both types were preoccupied with their mother’s whereabouts and did not explore freely. They both reacted to her departures with extreme distress. Upon reunion of baby and mother is where Ainsworth noticed the two types of ambivalent attachment.

Angry ambivalent infants first tried to connect with mom then they rejected mom they ranged from either leaning away from mother or having a full-blown tantrum. Passive ambivalent infants appeared to be so overcome by helplessness or misery from being apart from their mother they could not approach their mother directly. The reunion with their mother did not help their distress and they continued to be preoccupied with their mother’s whereabouts. In the Strange Situation laboratory, their mothers did not comfort the babies; even with her in the room it seemed that they were looking for a mother who was not there (Ainsworth et al., 1978). Common traits of mothers of ambivalent babies: they were unpredictable, occasionally available, were not physically or verbally rejecting, they were insensitive to baby’s signals, and they discouraged autonomy (McLeod, 2008).

Ainsworth had many discoveries after completing Strange Situation. The most important factor she noted was the main difference between secure and insecure was in the quality of their communication in their relationship with their attachment figure (Wallin, 2009). In secure babies, when the baby showed or expressed their need for comfort, they were soothed by their mother, and then returned to playing. There was an attuned communication- mothers were reading the cues of the babies and responded to

what the baby needed. Ainsworth, Blehar, and Waters described this as a collaborative and contingent relationship: the baby signals the mother, the mother senses the baby's feelings and then answers with what the baby needs (1978).

In insecure babies, the communication styles between mother and baby were different than secure. Avoidant babies failed to express their distress- it was revealed by elevated heart rates and cortisol levels that they babies where distressed. When avoidant babies were reunited with mothers they did not express their need to be soothed. Avoidant infants stopped all communication that invited connection; even though they were distressed they did not want closeness.

Ambivalent infants seemed to amplify the expression of their attachment, as compared to their peers. The infants were extremely preoccupied with their mother's availability. When they were distressed at separation they were hardly relieved upon reunion. The communication between the ambivalent infants seemed to say no matter what the mother did the child could not be soothed by her attempts.

The different patterns of communication shown in Strange Situation were the child's attempt at doing what they felt would work to help soothe them. The infants had adapted to the style of their parents attachment. Secure babies' mothers were sensitive and responsive to their baby's signals. The secure infant knew if they communicated their feelings and needs they would get an attuned response.

Mothers of the avoidant infants where rejecting of attachment behavior. They were not emotionally available and were uncomfortable with physical contact. Babies reacted to their mother's rejection with anger. Avoidant infants learned and adapted to

stop communication of their attachment needs to keep from being rejected and to stop the anger that pushed their mother away even more (Wallin, 2009).

Mothers of ambivalent infants were observed to be inconsistently responsive to their signals. They were not always emotionally predictable. Due to the unpredictable responsiveness the ambivalent infants learned to communicate their attachment in a very persistent way- making every attempt to get a response from their mother.

A student of Ainsworth, named Mary Main noticed that some of the infants did not fit the three categories of attachment: secure, avoidant, and ambivalent. Main began her work by reviewing two hundred videotapes of Strange Situation. After reviewing all the tapes further she noticed that of the infants that did not fit into the three categories, ninety percent displayed a strange behavior around their parent (Wallin, 2009). Upon reunion, the infants backed away from mothers, froze in place, collapsed to the floor or seemed trance-like (Main & Solomon, 1990). These behaviors happened quickly, between ten to thirty seconds. She believed that another attachment pattern existed that had gone undetected; she named it, disorganized attachment.

Main believed that disorganized attachment results when a caregiver is both a source of danger and a safe haven to the infant. Most infants who were categorized as disorganized were from families that were burdened from stressors such as poverty, psychiatric illness, or substance abuse (Wallin, 2009). Main proposed that disorganized attachment came from: interactions with a parent that is experienced as frightening, interactions with a parent who is frightened, interactions with a parent whose anger is abusive, or interactions with a parent who is dissociating (Main & Solomon, 1990).

**Attachment Styles in Childhood, Adolescence, and Adulthood: Mary Main  
and Colleagues**

After Ainsworth's research many follow-up studies showed that attachment styles of infancy have long-term effects into childhood, adolescence, and adulthood. L. Alan Sroufe (2000) writes that early relationships are important because they are the "first models or prototypes for patterns of self-regulation" (p. 70). Patterns set between caregiver and infant early on set a pattern of how the child will continue to regulate his emotions throughout his life. The infant will signal the mother of an expressed need, if the mother meets the needs of infant the baby will understand it has achieved its purpose. Over time having experienced routine responsive care the child will gain self-confidence and a sense of self-worth (Sroufe, 2000).

Secure infants who have parents that respond sensitively to their needs learn a pattern of modulated, flexible emotional responding, at both the behavioral and physiological levels (Sroufe, 2000). When a distressing event occurs in the child's environment the child will be able to learn to remain flexibly responsive, which could include self-control, ability to handle frustration, ability to handle emotions. A secure infant needs to have a sensitively responding and attuned parent throughout childhood to continue to guide and teach the child to appropriately handle emotions. It is important that the parent continues to respond sensitively to the child throughout childhood.

When a parent continues to teach and guide a child throughout stressful times or during unbalanced emotions Sroufe call this "guided self-regulation" (1996). Parents teach children how to self-regulate emotions, establish guidelines for expected behavior, and monitor the child's regulation effort. This will continue to build a child's capacity

for self-regulation. Sroufe says, “the entire developmental process builds upon the foundation that was laid out in infancy” (p. 71, 2000).

A group of preschoolers, who were secure in infancy and continued to have responsive parents, were judged by teachers and a group of observers as children with higher self-esteem, more self-reliant, and more flexible in the management of their impulses and feelings (Sroufe, 2000). Children with secure attachment showed greater emotional health, positive affect, social competence, than do their insecure peers (Wallin, 2009). Secure infants grow up with more ability to flexibly express their emotions and to bounce back quicker from being upset or setbacks.

Children with insecure attachment were shown to have more emotional problems in childhood. Anxiety disorders are often associated with children who were found to have ambivalent attachment. Avoidant attachment children were found to be more aggressive and have conduct disturbances, and found to be constantly rejecting and emotionally unavailable (Sroufe, 2000).

Insecure attachments in infancy have been shown to be a significant risk factor for psychopathology from childhood and on. Borderline patients have histories of disorganized attachment. Avoidant attachment has been tied to obsessional, narcissistic, and schizoid disorders. Ambivalent has been linked to hysteric or histrionic difficulties (Wallin, 2009).

In schools, children with secure attachment in infancy are proven to be treated warmly and age appropriately by teachers. Avoidant children are viewed as sullen, arrogant, or oppositional in schools. Avoidant school age children often receive responses from adults that are angry and controlling. Avoidant children are shown to

bully other children; ambivalent are often bullied. School age ambivalent attachment styles are viewed as clingy and immature. They are often indulged and infantilized by adults (Sroufe, 1996).

Ainsworth's work was paramount to attachment theory. The impact of an infant's first relationships seems to set a pattern of how they formed intimate relationships throughout their lives. The attachment style of infants may have endured throughout their lives because early on the same parents maintain patterns of behavior, communication, and affect regulation for many years. It seemed probable that the attachment patterns are internalized as structured patterns in the mind. What begin as a biologically driven interaction may register psychologically throughout a lifetime and shape behaviors and experiences whether or not the original attachment figure is present or not (Wallin, 2009).

Mary Main was a gifted student of Mary Ainsworth she had already made a monumental discovery by adding disorganized attachment pattern. While Ainsworth studied attachment in infancy, Main moved attachment theory to show how early infancy attachment are encoded in the mind and influence future relationships throughout a lifetime. In the mid-1970s at the University of California at Berkeley, Mary Main began a longitudinal study of attachment following a group of middle-class families as their infants developed through childhood, adolescence and beyond.

Main began her study with conducting two Strange Situations once with mom and once with dad. Five years later she videotaped evaluations with forty families. Main's study of the one-year-old strange situation and then the six-year-old evaluations allowed her to shift the focus from the interpersonal interaction between infant and parent to the

six-year-old's internal world of mental representations (Wallin, 2009). Main's research was designed to look at individual's attachment history as a combination of memories, emotions, and beliefs that shaped their present and future attachment behavior. Main began using a theory from Bowlby.

From early in Bowlby's career, he was convinced that childhood attachment patterns could have a profound impact on a person's psychological development and capacity for intimate relationships throughout a person's life (Wylie & Turner, 2011). He theorized that from early infancy each person has an internal working model of attachment. This allows the baby to recognize patterns of interactions with caregivers, because the patterns are in place the baby knows what to expect from the caregiver. The internal working model of attachment influences expectations the baby has of the parent, behavior, and shapes interactions between the baby and parent.

Bowlby believed that the internal working models of attachment could be changed if the person became aware of their pattern. However it would be a challenge to change the internal working model because it functioned outside of conscious awareness and it is self-protected and often a self-defeating defense (Wallin, 2009).

### **Adult Attachment Interview**

Mary Main believed that an individual's internal working model of attachment could be revealed in characteristic patterns of narrative, discourse, and imagination as well as behavior (Wallin, 2009). Main created the Adult Attachment Interview (AAI), which asked parents to recall and reflect upon their history of their relationships with their parents including experiences of loss, rejection, and separation. Main believed that the AAI was a powerful tool to assess attachment in adulthood; just as Strange Situation

showed the attachment style of the relationship with the infant and parent. AAI could assess the person's current state of mind with respect to attachment.

The Adult Attachment Interview has a series of questions along with follow-up probes about memories related to attachment. It contains twenty open-ended questions about people's recollection on their childhood. People interviewed are also asked to choose five adjectives or phrases that best describe their early relationship with each parent and then are asked for recollections about each descriptor (Main, 2000).

Examples of questions asked in AAI: Describe your relationship with your parents. Think of five adjectives that reflect your relationship with you mother. What's the first time you remember being separated from your parents? Did you ever feel rejected? Did you experience the loss of someone close to you? How do you think your experiences affected your adult personality? (Hesse, 1999).

When assessing AAI, Main focused on the ways parents used words rather than the particular words they used. Focus was more on the process and form than the content (Wallin, 2009). The attention was on how the adults communicated not what they communicated.

AAI was meant to invoke the attachment system in adults as just Strange Situation did in infants. Priming up the attachment system can be a stressful event for the person taking the AAI. Main felt the respondent had the opportunity to demonstrate or fail to demonstrate their ability for coherent discourse. Main identified coherent discourse as a major factor of secure state of mind with regards to attachment. Coherent discourse was considered to be responses that were consistent, plausible, and collaborative (Main, 1995).

Main's longitudinal investigations revealed two critical discoveries that moved attachment research from level of behavior to representation. Main's discoveries helped to progress attachment theory. This was important for clinicians because it validated centering concerns on emotions and belief that underlie patient behavior (Wallin, 2009). Therapists now could build a connection to adult's attachment style as a child and how it affects their adult relationships.

Main found a correlation between the child's Strange Situation behavior with the primary parent at twelve months and the child's beliefs of that child five years later. The second, Main found an intergenerational correlation between the child's Strange Situation behavior and the parent's state of mind with respect to attachment (Wallin, 2009).

Main's two correlations were very important because it elaborated on Bowlby's internal working model. The two correlations showed that infant nonverbal communication and patterns of attachment in Strange Situation could predict representational processes later in six-year-olds and then adults (Wallin, 2009).

The representational process is how the subject describes her attachment relationships. This is important because using AAI the mental representation will allow the researcher to understand the individual's internal working model of attachment. Main describes the internal model of attachment as a set of conscious or unconscious rules for the organization of information relevant to attachment (Main et al., 1985). Basically Main's research showed the attachment pattern shown during Strange Situation is proven to carry on in the thinking of a six-year-old and later still with adults. Researchers can confirm the adult's attachment style by using mental representations to discover their internal working model of attachment.

The first critical discovery Main found in her study was of the similarities between infant behavior in Strange Situation and the six-year-old's "representational artifacts" (Main & Hesse, 2005). During the six-year-old's evaluations, the children were shown an image portraying and the possibility of a two-week separation. The researcher (words in italics below) asked the child, "What would the child do?"

Child 1 (Secure in infancy): Cry. [Giggles.] *Cry?* [nods yes.] *Why's she gonna cry?* Cause she really loves her mom and dad. *Cause she really loves her mom and dad?* Mm. *What else is she gonna do?* Play a little bit.

Child 2 (Avoidant in infancy): I don't know. *What could he do?* I don't know! *Any ideas?* Ow. Ow. [High voice through toy horse.] No, I don't. *No?* Wheww. Sit up lion.

Child 3 (Ambivalent in infancy): Chase them. *Chase Who?* Their dad and mom in his new toy car- he's pssshh- run right off. *Then what's gonna happen?* And then he's gonna, then he is gonna...toss a bow and arrow and shoot them. *Shoot his mom and dad?* Yeah. If he want to, maybe.

Child 4 (Disorganized in infancy): Probably gonna hid away. *Gonna hide away?* Yeah. *Then what's gonna happen?* He'll probably get locked up in his closet. [Forced giggle.] *Locked up in his closet?* Yeah, I was locked up in a closet. (Main et al., 1985, pp. 103-104)

The above example of a mini-dialogue from six-year-old evaluations shows a direct correlation from the twelve-month-old strange situation attachment style to six-year-old's narrative responses. The findings of the two studies show that the original

internal working model of attachment are linked to the earliest relationships and are our representational processes later in life.

Main's second critical discovery suggests that the parents' internal working model of attachment strongly influences the working model of attachment of the infant. There was a correlation between the security of attachment of the children, assessed in Strange Situation, and the security of parents as assessed through the AAI (Main et al., 1985). Main believed that the Strange Situation classifications predict the AAI results (Main et al., 1985).

Later through Main and other researchers it was discovered that AAI classifications of parents could predict the Strange Situation classifications of their child. If an adult is given the AAI it was later proven to accurately predict the child's Strange Situation classification when given to parents before their child was born (van IJzendoorn, 1995).

In Main's study, the AAI transcripts showed many differences of the parents who raised secure children versus those who raised insecure children. Parents of secure children engaged cooperatively, recalled easily, added thoughtfulness, and objectivity while exploring their attachment histories (Main et al., 1985). Main felt that parents of secure children maintained a secure state of mind regarding attachment throughout the AAI.

Transcripts of AAI, showed parents of insecure children had difficulty maintaining coherent, collaborative discourse (Main et al., 1985). The parents of avoidant children were referred to as dismissing and minimized the value of attachment. Parents of ambivalent children were termed preoccupied and seemed to be experiencing

the past attachments during the interview. Parents of disorganized children were called unresolved and spent a lot of time talking about past traumas.

Main's study showed a big correspondence in the way that parents talked about their own attachment experience and their infant's attachment behavior in Strange Situation. It was shown that a parent's ability reflect coherently on their own past has a large effect of the security of attachment in their own children.

Just as Strange Situation had four categories of attachment styles, the AAI also had four categories of styles. AAI had four categories regarding the state of mind of the respondent with respect to attachment: autonomous, dismissing, preoccupied, unresolved (Wallin, 2009). Each of the four categories corresponds with the infant attachment patterns: autonomous and secure, dismissing and avoidant, preoccupied and ambivalent, and unresolved/disorganized and disorganized.

Adults who scored secure autonomous on AAI showed discourse that was coherent, consistent, and non-defensive. They valued attachment relationships and could describe them in a balanced way. Descriptions of attachment relationships were described consistently even if they were negative or positive experiences.

Dismissing adults were shown to have things in their past experiences that they could not remember. They were quick to minimize any negative aspects and were in denial that they had any impact on relationships. They seemed to over-generalize and normalize their descriptions, saying that their mother was "excellent" or "very normal mother" (Wallin, 2009). Their discourse was considered defensive.

Preoccupied adults were not coherent in their discourse. They seemed too preoccupied with the past experiences. Their descriptions were often extremely long and

did not make much sense. They often had angry or ambivalent representations of their past.

Unresolved/Disorganized adults showed trauma resulting from loss or abuse. Their discourse was hard to follow and lacked reason. Many unresolved/disorganized adults showed prolonged periods of silence.

Main's study found impressive parallels among: infant's patterns of behavior, the six-year-old's representation of attachment, and the parent's dialogue during AAI (Main et al., 1985). This led Main to propose: that internal working models of attachment are not templates, but rather a set of rules that organize how we take in or perceive information on attachment relationships (Main et al., 1985). Main believed that we internalize our first relationship with our caregivers, and what we experience in infancy becomes our set of "rules" for attachment and later it is how we relate to others in adulthood. Researchers throughout the years went on to prove the validity of Main's AAI. Later, several other interviews were patterned after AAI.

### **Studies that Prove Our Original Working Model of Attachment are Linked to Our Earliest Relationships: After Bowlby, Ainsworth, and Main**

The Child Attachment Interview (CAI) is an assessment that is created and patterned after AAI. It is designed for ages seven to twelve. This is a semi-structured interview, which asks children to describe their relationships with their parents or primary caregivers.

The CAI has age appropriate measures for assessing how attachment patterns manifest into childhood (Target et al., 2003). Based on validated and well-established Adult Attachment Interview. CAI activates the attachment system to elicit attachment

related information (Target et al., 2003). The Child Attachment Interview focuses on recent attachment related events and current relationships with each parent.

The CAI is comprised of scales that are aimed to assess the child's overall current state of mind in regards to attachment. The scales are: emotional openness, preoccupied anger, idealization, dismissal, self-organization, balance of positive/negative references to attachment figures, and resolution of conflict (Target et al., 2003). The current version includes fifteen questions the interview can use additional probes to elicit important details. The interviewer can also provide scaffolding questions to help the child with storytelling. The CAI produces four attachment categories along with a measure of attachment security (or insecurity).

Mary Main created the Berkeley Longitudinal Study of Attachment. In this study she had forty-two participants that she tested at age one with Strange Situation, the same children at age six were tested with the CAI, and then tested again at age 19 with the AAI. Main was able to show an attachment-related trajectory with her participants. Once again she confirmed at nineteen years old the behavior, representational, and linguistic processes from infancy to six years and then to nineteen years were all correlating and the same (Main, Hesse & Kaplan, 2005). This proved that the early attachment relationships continue into adulthood.

### **Romanian Orphan Studies**

In his 2014 book, *Brain Rules for Baby* by John Medina, he discusses an interesting study done about orphans from Romania that also confirms that what happens in infancy will affect the person as an adult. Medina says, "there are several years during which babies strive to create bonds and establish perceptions of safety. If it

doesn't happen, they can suffer long-term emotional damage. In extreme cases they can be scarred for life" (p. 64).

Medina goes on to talk about orphans from Romania. In the 1960's the Romanian dictator, Nicolae Ceausescu banned contraception and abortion, and he also taxed people who were childless after age 25. This meant that many people had babies they could not take care of and the babies ended up in orphanages. The Romanian government could not support so many orphans and the orphans suffered. These babies had no attachment with an adult or caregiver. Babies were left in their beds alone for hours, and they were seldom held or given any stimulation. Many babies died from the horrible conditions.

A great number of Canadian families adopted the Romanian orphan babies. Studies were done on how the infants matured and the long-term effects the orphanages had on the babies. Studies showed that the children could be divided into two groups: stable and unstable. The stable group of adopted orphans fared well when tested for social behaviors, stress responses, grades and medical issues. The stable group of orphans tested similarly to the control group. The unstable or "troubled" orphans showed aggressive anti-social behaviors, got sick more often, and had more eating problems. The one factor that was variable between the stable and unstable orphans was their age of adoption.

Medina says studies showed that if the babies were adopted before their fourth month of life, there were not any real notable behavior differences. If the babies were adopted after eight months they had many behavior problems. Medina says, "the babies adopted after 8 months acted like gang members" (2014, p. 65). The fact that these babies

could not form an attachment with a caregiver before eight months caused lifelong, irreversible behaviors that continued after they were adopted and throughout their lives.

Many other studies were done on the Romanian orphans. It was an unfortunate event that allowed scientists to study the effects of infants having no real primary caregiver prior to adoption, which is a very rare occurrence.

Kim Chisholm studied the orphans their first year after being adopted and then again three years later. In her study, she had three groups of children: Romanian orphans adopted at 8 months or older, Canadian born, non-adopted, never institutionalized children, and Romanian orphans that were adopted before the age of 4 months. Chisholm had two measures that she used: the Attachment Security Questionnaire based on parental reporting and the separation reunion procedure (for preschool age children).

Chisholm's study found that four years after adoption the Romanian orphans adopted after 8 months of age did not score differently from the Canadian non-adoptive group, and the early-adopted group on the Attachment Security Questionnaire filled out by the parents. It was found that the insecure Romanian orphans and the insecure Canadian children and the secure Romanian orphans and the secure Canadians all scored similarly to their first questionnaire taken three years ago (Chisholm, 1998). The insecure Romanian Orphans group of children had more behavior problems and significantly higher amounts of parental stress than the secure group of Romanian orphans. The children were all given the Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale, the Romanian Orphan group (adopted after 8 months of age) scored lower than the Canadian group and the early adoption group.

In the Separation Reunion Procedure there were the most insecure attachments in the Romanian orphans group (Chisholm, 1998). The most significant difference was in the display of indiscriminate friendliness. Chisholm defines indiscriminate friendliness as “behavior that was affectionate and friendly toward all adults (including strangers) without fear or caution of normal children” (1998). In her first study in 1995 and second study in 1998 the Romanian orphan group showed the largest amount indiscriminate friendliness than the insecure control children.

Chisholm made the connection that insecure attachment in infancy has quite consistently predicted behavior problems in preschool and school age children (1998). Her study found that insecure children, especially the Romanian orphan group, displayed behavior problems three years later. She theorized that the orphans that did not form attachments before 8 months of age would continue to show behavior problems.

### **Infancy Attachment Affects Later Relationships**

There have been many studies done about how relationships during infancy and childhood can affect relationships later in life. In 2001, researchers at the University of Minnesota published a journal article titled, “The Coherency of dyadic behavior across parent-child and romantic relationships as mediated by the internalized representation of experience.” The researchers building on years of attachment theory research proposed that working models of attachment and representations of relationships come from the first caregiver/infant experience (dyadic experience) and will guide expectations about behavior in future intimate relationships (Roisman et al., 2001). The researchers set out to prove that the parent-child experiences are internalized and carried forward into adult

relationships. In other words, an individual's attachment style from infancy will set the stage for how they behave and perceive their adult relationships.

The researchers of this study began by using observations of adolescents at thirteen-years-old interacting with their parents. Then the same group of subjects would be give the AAI at nineteen-years-old to see how their representations correlated with what was observed at thirteen. Lastly, between twenty and twenty-one-years old the same subjects were observed with their romantic partners and given the Current Relationship Interview to see how their relationships correlated with original working model of attachment.

The one hundred and seventy participants came from the Parent-Child Longitudinal Project. They had been followed from birth to age twenty-five. The mothers of subjects were recruited between the years of 1975-1977 from Minneapolis public health clinics where the mothers were receiving prenatal care (Roisman et al., 2001). Mother ranged in ages twelve to thirty-four-years old. The mothers and children participated in the parent-child observation, which took place when the adolescent was thirteen years old. At nineteen the participants were given the AAI. Then between the ages of twenty to twenty-one, seventy-three participants were in relationships. They were observed with their partners in the romantic relationships observation.

The results of this study proved that the representations of past experiences corresponded with actual experiences in the parent-child dyads (Roisman et al., 2001). In other words, at thirteen the parent-child interactions corresponded with the representations of the AAI given at nineteen years old. The study also confirmed that the

working models of attachment at thirteen were similar to their behavior with their romantic partners later in life.

Attachment patterns are shown to persist across generations. After Main's original investigation several other researchers continued to prove this. In 1995, van IJzendoorn conducted a meta-analysis, which included eighteen different samples from six different countries. He concluded that parents' AAI classifications generally predict infant's strange situation classifications. Research showed that a majority of the time a secure infant became a secure adult who raised a secure child.

A few years later, a study done by Hesse in 1999, showed that attachment classifications of grandmothers corresponded with daughters, and their grandchildren. This was important because it showed that attachment is not only passed down from parent to child, but it is transgenerational. Attachment styles can persist throughout multiple generations, not just parent to child.

### **An Adlerian View on the Importance of Attachment Theory for Therapists**

Several Adlerian theories compliment the Attachment Theory. Like Attachment Theory, Adlerians believe that events in early childhood often guide our actions in adulthood. Adlerians believe that if you uncover the mistaken belief you can change your behaviors. Understanding a client's attachment style from childhood may be very beneficial when working with a client.

Adlerians believe that each person is striving for a goal, known as teleology. People move towards their goals in different ways. Adler believed that three very common goals were belonging, safety/security, and significance/worth.

Adlerians believe that a part of each person's life style or personality is based on goals. Goals are different for everyone, and their desire to reach the goal is what guides their behaviors. As infants and young children they are generally passive and as they get older they become more interactive with the world around them. They learn and begin to anticipate actions from their caregivers. They also begin to "train" their caregivers to respond in certain ways, for example if baby cries the caregiver will go to baby.

Each child has four basic needs that later become goals. The four needs are:

1. Nourishment and contact becomes the goal of attachment.
2. Protection and Safety become of the goal of security.
3. Mastery becomes the goal of competence.
4. Sensory variation becomes the goal of cognition. (Carlson, Watts, & Maniaci, 2006, p. 49)

Each child arranges the needs in a different way according to personal preference due to their personality. As an adult the goals will be hierarchically arranged according to their personality or lifestyle.

Attachment starts as dependency as an infant. The infant is dependent on the parent or caregiver for survival, which includes food and physical contact. As the infant gets older the dependency will change to affection. At first affection will be directed towards parents, caregivers, or close relatives. As the child gets older and forms more relationships the affection will branch out to peers, teachers, or even pets. It is affection that will help develop friendships in childhood (Carlson, Watts, & Maniaci, 2006). In adolescence affection often develop into love relationships.

An adolescent in a love relationship knows how to be affectionate from infancy. The attachment learned in early infancy and childhood plays out in their relationships later in life. Attachment will be different for each person due to his or her history, early training, response, and environmental opportunity (Carlson, Watts, & Maniaci, 2006).

For adults, goals generally fall under two dimensions: concrete versus fictional, and long-term goals versus short-term goals. Fictional goals are subjective and state what must be achieved in order to have a place in life (Mosak & Maniaci, 1999). Examples of achievements might be: fame, power, perfection, money, sexual attractiveness, performance, conquest, and so forth. A person can achieve significance or place in life in many other ways so that is why the goals are considered fictional.

Bowlby believed that a newborn infant's behaviors are to attain safety or survival. If the parent responds to the infant sensitively the infant will know the caregiver will keep the infant safe. The infant builds a level of trust with that person. The secure infant will believe that he or she belongs, is safe, and has significance because of the way their caregiver responded to them at a very young age.

Insecure attachment styles are due to a parent not responding sensitively to infant's needs. Ainsworth proved that mothers of avoidant infants were often rejecting of attachment behavior. Maybe infants believed that they were not lovable, did not belong, were not significant, or were not safe in their environment. Avoidant infants in strange situation stopped communication of their attachment needs to keep from being rejected.

Ambivalent infant's mothers were often observed as responding inconsistently and were not emotionally predictable. Ambivalent infants learned to communicate their attachment in a very persistent way. These infants learned in order to feel safe they

needed to be very loud to get their mothers attention. It is easy to make the leap that if the infants felt they were often not heard maybe they believed they were insignificant or did not belong.

Disorganized infants experienced their mothers as a source of danger and a safe haven. It would be hard for a child to feel safe if they experience their mother as source of danger. For an infant to grow up having a caregiver that scares them and comforts them then the world could seem very confusing. It is possible that disorganized infants may have felt that they did not belong or were not significant.

Adler's theory of phenomenology was based on the fact that people do not see the world they apprehend it (Mosak & Maniaci, 1999). Adler believed that when people tell their experience they are not telling facts, they are telling their perception of what they believed happened. If perception of the event is dependent on how the person decides to re-act or act in the situation.

Mary Main and several other researchers proved that infant's attachment styles predicted how they would act later as an adult in relationships. Siegel believed that in infancy the caregiver's patterns established the infant's brain to become wired to expect the same outcome. Adler's theory of phenomenology parallels the thought that an infant's caregiver's patterns establish the brain to become wired a certain way. If an infant's parent does not responds sensitively to his or her needs, that child could grow up thinking that they do not matter and have lower self-esteem. If a child has low self-esteem they may go through life thinking others do not like them. This may not be true but because they are wired to view the world this way they may have troubles creating healthy relationships.

The Adlerian concept of private logic is made up of ideas, experiences, or perceptions from early childhood. Established personal beliefs, constructs, or cognitive beliefs are referred to as private logic (Mosak & Maniacci, 1999). From infancy through early childhood ideas about the self and the world around child are built from the child's perceptions of experiences. Perceptions of a small child are often wrong; misperceiving a situation can lead to faulty private logic or mistaken beliefs. For example, a child who does not get attention may believe the only way to get attention is to have a temper tantrum.

John Bowlby was convinced that childhood attachment patterns had an impact on a person's psychological development and their capacity to develop intimate relationships. John Bowlby's internal model of attachment is based the fact that babies recognize patterns of interactions with caregivers, then the baby will know what to expect from their caregiver. The working model of attachment shaped the interactions between the baby and caregiver. Similar to private logic, beliefs established in early childhood predict how we perceive and act upon later situations.

Mary Main created AAI as a narrative assessment of the adult's state of mind with respect to attachment. She used AAI to invoke the attachment system in adults. AAI reflects a particular organization pattern or engrained state of mind of that individual at the time of interview (Siegel, 1999). The AAI is a semi-structured autobiographical narrative where an adult is asked a series of questions about their childhood.

AAI is a narrative or subjective account of recollections of the individual (Siegel, 1999). It is not an exact account of what really occurred, it is what is recalled. AAI is similar to the Adlerian technique of collecting early recollections to understand private

logic. When people recollect early memories it reflects their current view of the world, and themselves at that time. People project their beliefs on these memories, which makes early recollections a projective assessment (Mosak, & Di Pietro, 2006).

A technique used by Adlerians to understand the Life Style of an individual is Early Recollections. Adlerians believe that from early on children perceive the world, the way they make sense of the world and patterns that keep happening is the way that a child begins to see himself in the world. Individuals view the world through their own lenses; they go out look for experiences that validate their views of the world (Kern, et al., 2004).

Adlerians use early recollections to assess an individual's unique worldview (Kern et al., 2004). Early recollections are stories of events that happened before the age of ten. Every person has the ability to recall events that happened in childhood, whether it is to reminisce, express an emotion, explain their behavior, or to explain a specific point. Early recollections give us an idea about individual's current perception.

Early recollections are mental representations of unedited memories that a person has stored in their brain that help to confirm perceptions of how he or she handles problems or challenges (Kern et al., 2004). Early recollections help give clinicians clues of a client's lifestyle, cognitive belief system, and private logic. Early recollections give the therapist and the client insight on how the client solves major problems related to work, intimate relationships, or social relationships.

If a client keeps having problems of being too distance in relationships or being too clingy, early recollections could help. The therapist could use early recollections to show the pattern of how the client has been fixing the problem. By shining light on what

the pattern is the client can decide to keep doing the same thing or make a change. As said earlier in this paper, Bowlby believed that people could change their working model of attachment if they became aware of the problem.

Working models of attachment seem to be very similar to private logic or cognitive beliefs. Each individual builds a working model of attachment, which includes the world and him in it. He goes through life with working models of world and attachment and using them to perceive events, predicts what is going to happen in the future, and constructs plans. Attachment theory has taught us that people develop their mental representations or internal working models that consist of expectations about them, significant others, and the relationship between the two (Pietromanaco, 2000).

Working models of self are thought come up when individuals work closely with others. The working models come from beliefs about how acceptable the self is in the eyes of early attachment figures, which comes from the responsiveness of those figures. Children who had sensitively responding parents are assumed to develop a representational of self as acceptable and worthwhile. Those whose parents are unresponsive or inconsistent are assumed to develop a view of self as unworthy or unacceptable.

Individual's experiences throughout life shape the way their minds function. Longitudinal research on attachment suggests that early relationship experiences promote emotional wellbeing, social competence, cognitive functioning and resilience in the face of adversity (Siegel, 1999). What occurs in the early years of a child may set the stage for how the child relates in the world and with others as an adult. Which will reinforce

those mental functions from early childhood. For example, if a child believes that he is not worthy of a person's time, he may perceive that no one wants to give him attention.

Ainsworth found that the most important thing a parent could do to help create a secure attachment style was to respond sensitively and be attuned to the infant. Adlerian believe that individuals are the creators of their lives. No one is ever destined to be sad and depressed for life, people can make changes. Bowlby believed the same, that just because a child grows up with insecure parents and then has an insecure attachment style, anyone can change.

Therapists can provide safe, dependable, empathetic and attuned presence that could allow the person to learn how to get rid of some old patterns that are not serving them well. Many believe that even with horrible, abusive, neglectful, or inadequate childhood events people can learn through therapy to create a reflective, coherent, and emotionally rich story about their childhoods, giving them emotional security so they can create secure relationships with their children (Wylie & Turner, 2011). Daniel Siegel is quoted, "If you can make sense of your life story, you can change it" (Wylie & Turner, p. 24, 2011).

### **Summary and Implications for Therapy**

Starting with the work of Bowlby, then Ainsworth, and Main attachment theory was created and proven as a scientific theory. The work of attachment theory can be useful to clinicians working with children, teens, parents, and adults. It can help them to make sense of their childhood and shed light on their relationships. It can also be a very helpful tool to help parents determine how respond to their infant and child.

John Bowlby's core contribution of attachment theory was to recognize that the attachment of the child to its caregiver is biologically based and needed for survival and evolution (Wallin, 2009). Bowlby challenged the common Freudian belief and looked at individuals in their social and relational environments.

John Bowlby's studies led him to create attachment theory. Attachment theory defines attachment as a bond or tie between an individual and an attachment figure. The tie is based on the need for safety, security, and protection; it is very important in infancy and childhood. Infants instinctively attach to their caregivers for protection and survival. The primal nature of attachment is a motivational system, which involves the infant needing to maintain close proximity to the caregiver in order to survive (Wallin, 2009). The goal of attachment behavior is not only protection from the present danger but reassurance of the caregiver's availability. A caregiver can be physically present but emotionally absent.

Bowlby came up with the phases of attachment through which babies normally develop. Birth to three months is the first phase. Phase two begins at age three months to six months it is called, "Focusing on Familiar People" (Crain, 2005). Phase three, "Intense Attachment and Active Proximity-Seeking", starts around age six months to three years (Crain, 2005). Phase four, "Partnership Behavior", begins at age 3 and last until the end of childhood (Crain, 2005).

Bowlby studied the effects of institutional care; he noted that there was an inability of many children raised in institutions to form deep attachments later in life. Bowlby wondered if this was because babies lack the proper human interaction during

the normal early periods in their life and then were never able to develop appropriate social behaviors.

Bowlby had created attachment theory but needed to move it into a science. Bowlby wanted a way to measure and to test his propositions so that he could prove his propositions. To move attachment theory into a science he needed to find a way to measure a relationship to see how it affects a child's development. Bowlby's close colleague would help move the theory to a science.

Ainsworth's contributions were absolutely critical to the evolution of attachment concept. By creating Strange Situation Laboratory Procedure, she was able to move attachment theory to a scientific theory through a means of measurement. For the first time, Strange Situation was able to provide empirical evidence of the importance of the emotional bond between child and caregiver.

Ainsworth continued her studies in Uganda in the 1950's. After arriving in Uganda she launched the first naturalistic, longitudinal study of infants' interaction with their mothers. She began with the hypothesis that "attunement" or parents who responded sensitively to their infants cues and behaviors, was critical to determining the type or quality of attachment (Sroufe & Siegel, 2011). After nine months of studying the families in Uganda, Ainsworth found that attachment develops through stages. Similar to Bowlby's phases of attachment, Ainsworth found that the infant starts off with a lack of preference of the mother or main caregiver. However, it is replaced by a clear preference for the mother (or main caregiver) and by six-nine months it forms into a powerful bond.

Bowlby had theorized that secure base behavior was apart of childhood development. Ainsworth wanted to determine if secure base was in fact a genetic

working model in infants, she created Strange Situation to help get her answers.

Ainsworth began with the hypothesis that attuned or sensitive responding parents to infants' cues was a critical factor in determining the type and quality of an infant's attachment. Ainsworth's greatest contribution to attachment theory was through Strange Situation and the distinct attachment patterns: secure, avoidant, and ambivalent.

Ainsworth had many discoveries after completing Strange Situation. The most important factor she noted was the main difference between secure and insecure was in the quality of their communication in their relationship with their attachment figure (Wallin, 2009).

After Ainsworth's research many follow-up studies showed that attachment styles of infancy have long-term effects into childhood, adolescence, and adulthood. Patterns set between caregiver and infant early on set a pattern of how the child will continue to regulate his emotions throughout his life. A secure infant needs to have a sensitively responding and attuned parent throughout childhood to continue to guide and teach the child to appropriately handle emotions. It is important that the parent continues to respond sensitively to the child throughout childhood.

Mary Main made a monumental discovery by adding disorganized attachment pattern. While Ainsworth studied attachment in infancy, Main moved attachment theory to show how early infancy attachment are encoded in the mind and influence future relationships throughout a lifetime.

Main created the Adult Attachment Interview (AAI), which asked parents to recall and reflect upon their history of their relationships with their parents including experiences of loss, rejection, and separation. Main believed that the AAI was a

powerful tool to assess attachment in adulthood; just as Strange Situation showed the attachment style of the relationship with the infant and parent. AAI could assess the person's current state of mind with respect to attachment.

Main found a correlation between the child's Strange Situation behavior with the primary parent at twelve months and the child's beliefs of that child five years later. The second, Main found an intergenerational correlation between the child's Strange Situation behavior and the parent's state of mind with respect to attachment. Main's two correlations were very important because it elaborated on Bowlby's internal working model. The two correlations showed that infant nonverbal communication and patterns of attachment in Strange Situation could predict representational processes later in six-year-olds and then adults (Wallin, 2009).

Mary Main created the Berkeley Longitudinal Study of Attachment. In this study she had forty-two participants that she tested at age one with Strange Situation, the same children at age six were tested with the CAI, and then tested again at age 19 with the AAI. Main was able to show an attachment-related trajectory with her participants. This proved that the early attachment relationships continue into adulthood.

Several Adlerian theories compliment the Attachment Theory. Like Attachment Theory, Adlerians believe that events in early childhood often guide our actions in adulthood. Teleology, phenomenology, private logic, and early recollections can all be useful when working with a client to help discover how a person's childhood attachment is affecting their relationships as an adult.

Adlerian believe that attachment starts as dependency as an infant. The infant is dependent on the parent or caregiver for survival, which includes food and physical

contact. As the infant gets older the dependency will change to affection (Carlson, Watts, & Maniaci, 2006). Affection will create childhood friendships and later in adolescence it will create love relationships. Depending on how the attachment relationship was formed as an infant and child will determine how the person makes love relationships.

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