

Slide 1

**The Attachment Dance**

*By Karyn Purvis, PhD  
Institute of Child Development*

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 2

**ATTACHMENT:  
a definition**

- *An inborn system in the brain that evolves in ways that influence and organize motivational, emotional, and memory processes with respect to significant care-giving figures*

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 3

**Developing States of Attachment**

- Requires:
  - “affective attunement”
  - “aligning states of mind”
    - (Seigel) “A state of mind can be defined as the total pattern of activation in the brain at a particular moment in time.”
    - A state of mind does two fundamental things:
      - Coordinates activity in the moment
      - Creates a pattern of brain activation that can become more likely in the future.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 4

**Development of Infant Attachment**

- Indiscriminate social responsiveness (0-2 mos.)
  - Infant prefers to look at a human face, but “any” face will do... they are indiscriminate
- Discriminate social responsiveness (2-7 mos.)
  - Babies begin to discriminate to familiar faces
- Specific attachment relationships (7-30 mos.)
  - Babies begin to develop attachment behavior (seeking proximity, maintaining contact). Emerges with growing mobility.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 5

**INFANT ATTACHMENT**

- Most desirable for interactions to yield healthy attachment relationships
- Called by Bowlby, “a secure base”
  - Without the secure base, development of “normal behaviors” will be impaired such as social interactions with peers and adults
  - Interaction with peers can be aggressive and tend to avoid interaction with adults

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 6

**Antecedents of Secure Attachment**

- Parental responsiveness
- Acknowledgment
  - Moms acknowledge their babies actions and words
- Affectionate pickups
  - Moms pick babies up frequently and affectionately
- Competent holdings
- Sensitivity to signals
  - Moms respond to signals of their babies behaviors

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 7

### Consequences of Secure Attachment

- Sociability with adults
  - Securely attached children are more likely to enjoy interaction with adults
- Prosocial with peers
  - Securely attached children exhibit play which is more social and less aggressive
- Interactive with peers
- Persistence/Enthusiasm on tasks
  - Securely attached children have good learning skills and are able to ask for help from adults

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 8

### Bowlby's Behavioral Systems: Rooted in the "Secure Base"

- Attachment
- Affiliative
- Fear-Wariness
- Exploratory



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 9

### INFANT ASSESSMENT

- The Strange Situation
- Developed by Mary Ainsworth
- 8, 3-minute segments
- Scoring occurs during the two reunions
- Scores yield an attachment classification of Secure ("B" baby) or Insecure ("A" & "C" babies)

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 10

**Infant Classifications**

- Secure (B)
  - Infant seeks proximity, comfort, is easily consoled by return of caregiver, quickly returns to play after her return
- Avoidant (A)
  - Infant shows little or no desire to be held or to receive comfort from the mother, ignores her presence during the reunion
- Resistant or Ambivalent (C)
  - Fussy infants, cant decide if they want the caregiver to comfort them or not
- Disorganized/Disoriented (D)
  - Infant displays very unusual behaviors, trances, repetitive behaviors like rocking or "pawing" the air

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 11

**Sub-Classifications of Infant Attachment:**

- A1: Extremely Avoidant
- A2: Moderately Avoidant
- B1: Distance Interaction
- B2: Avoids x1, Seeks x2
- B3: Very Secure
- B4: Very Concerned with Proximity/Contact
- C1: Obvious Anger
- C2: Passive Anger

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 12

**THE STRANGE SITUATION**

|                                   |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| • Strange Situation Episode Order | • Strange Situation Scoring Constructs |
| • Episode 2 (B & M)               | • Proximity Seeking                    |
| • Episode 3 (B, M&S)              | • Contact Maintaining                  |
| • Episode 4 (B & S)               | • Avoidance                            |
| • Episode 5 (B&M)                 | • Resistance                           |
| • Episode 6 (B)                   |  |
| • Episode 7 (B&S)                 |  |
| • Episode 8 (B&M)                 |  |

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 13

**Sample Anchors for  
SS Scoring**

- PROXIMITY- and CONTACT-MAINTAINING Behavior
  - 1. No effort to achieve physical contact or proximity
  - 2. Minimal effort to achieve proximity
  - 3. Weak effort to achieve proximity or contact
  - 4. Obvious desire, but ineffective effort
  - 5. Some active effort to achieve contact
  - 6. Active effort and initiative in achieving contact
  - 7. Very active effort and initiative in achieving....

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Slide 14

**Childhood Attachment Styles**

|              | Seeking Proximity | Contact Maintaining | Avoidance | Resistance |
|--------------|-------------------|---------------------|-----------|------------|
| A Avoidant   |                   |                     | ★         |            |
| B Secure     | ★                 | ★                   |           |            |
| C Ambivalent | ★                 | ★                   |           | ★          |

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---