



How we develop attachment?

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What was Your first attachment relationship?





The first special relationship we experience develops between parent and child

It is believed that this relationship will influence the development of our future relationships

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What is Attachment?

■ Attachment is a strong, long-lasting emotional connection

- A close emotional bond that is “person-specific” and is enduring across time.





How do you know an infant is attached to someone?



Infants show their attachment through proximity-seeking behaviors, meaning infants like to be near those we are attached. ⁵



How does love develop between mother and child?

Harry Harlow studied the impact of security and “contact comfort” on infant attachment.

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Harry Harlow (1959)
“The Monkey Love experiments”



- Harlow evaluated whether feeding or contact comfort was more important to infant attachment.
- The young animals were “raised” by two kinds of surrogate monkey mother machines.
- One mother was made of soft terry cloth, the other made of wire mesh

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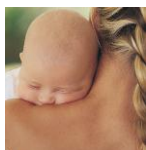
“Monkey Love Experiments”



- Harlow's research showed that the need for *affection* created a stronger bond between mother and infant than did physical needs (food).

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Harlow's work suggested that the development of a child's love for their caregiver was **emotional** rather than physiological



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What does this mean for humans?

- Harlow showed that the development of attachment was closely associated with critical periods in early life.
 - It is difficult or impossible to compensate for the loss of initial emotional security
- Further experiments on abusive conditions showed that no matter how abusive the “Iron Maidens” were, the baby monkeys always came back and displayed affection towards them.
 - Even in the face of abuse, the need for love was overwhelming

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What happened to these monkeys?

- Monkeys raised without their mothers were socially maladjusted the rest of their lives.
 - “When confronted with fear, they displayed autistic and institutionalized behaviors—throwing themselves on the floor, clutched themselves, rocked back and forth, and screamed in terror.”
- They were incapable of having sexual relations and they were also unable to parent their offspring, either abusing or neglecting them.

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“Not even in our most devious dreams could we have designed a surrogate as evil as these real monkey mothers were.”

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Are all Attachment Relationships the Same?



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The Quality of Attachment

Based on how the infant reacts to separation from the caregiver and the reunion by using a procedure known as the Strange Situation.

Ainsworth (1993) and others have identified 4 basic types of attachment relationships

1. Secure Attachment
2. Insecure/Resistant
3. Insecure/Avoidant
4. Insecure/Disorganized

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1 Observer shows the experimental room to mother and infant, then leaves the room.

2 Infant is allowed to explore the playroom for 3 minutes; mother watches but does not participate.

3 A stranger enters the room and remains silent for 1 minute, then talks to the baby for a minute, and then approaches the baby. Mother leaves unobtrusively.

4 The stranger does not play with the baby but attempts to comfort it if necessary.

5 After 3 minutes, the mother returns, greets, and consoles the baby.

6 When the baby has returned to play, the mother leaves again, this time saying "bye-bye" as she leaves.

7 Stranger attempts to calm and play with the baby.

8 After 3 minutes, the mother returns and the stranger leaves.

Types of Attachment

Secure attachment

- These infants use the caregiver, usually the mother, as a secure base from which to explore the environment.
- This group seems to say "I missed you terribly, but now that you're back, I'm okay."
- The securely attached infant moves freely away from the mother but also keeps tabs on her by periodically glancing at her.
- 60-65% of American children have secure attachment relationships (Kail, 2007).

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A secure attachment relationship is likely to develop when parents respond to their infant's needs reliably and sensitively

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Securely attached infants appear to grow up to be better adjusted and more socially skilled than insecurely attached children.

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Insecure Attachments

A relationship that is unstable or unpredictable, characterized by the infant's fear, anxiety, anger or indifference toward the caregiver

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Researchers have found links between attachment styles and relationship patterns in adolescence and adulthood

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Next Class

How does our thinking develop?

-Cognitive development

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