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Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) Unit - Attachment and Relatedness

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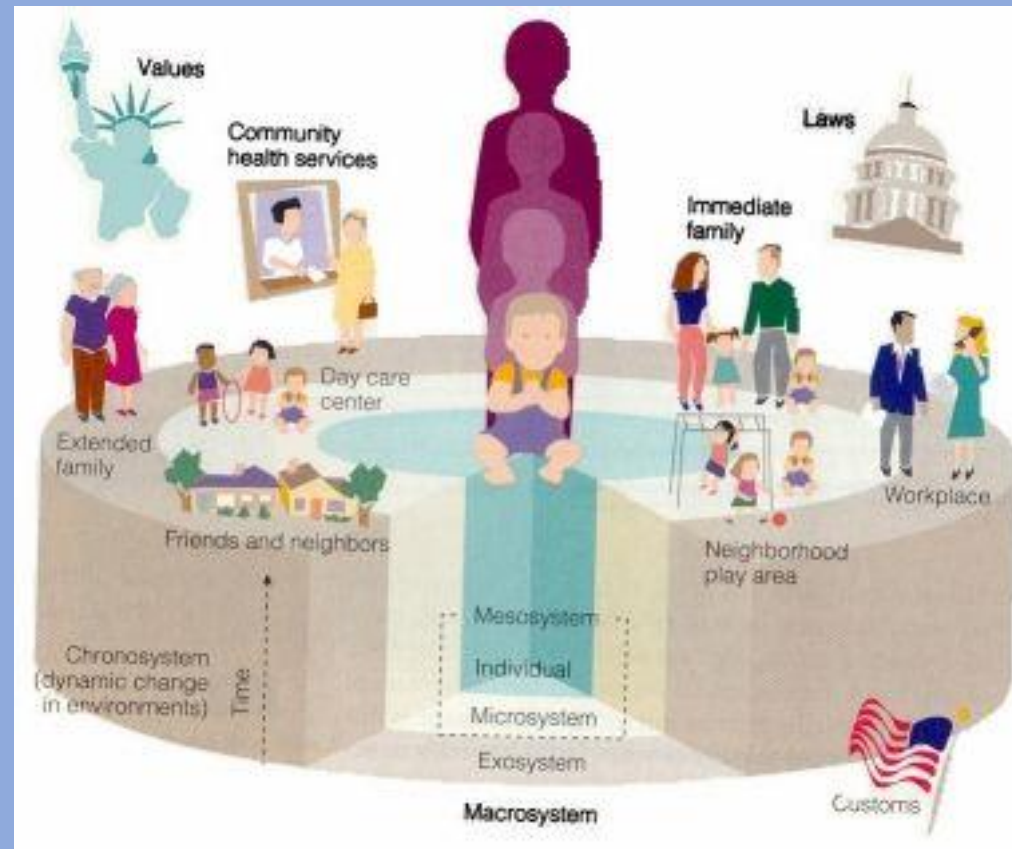


*Attachment and
Relatedness: How we
Bond with Self, Others,
and Society*

“Girl Before a Mirror”

Pablo Picasso, 1932

We do not exist in a vacuum!



Overview of Presentation

- Introduction
- How relationship with self is constructed
- How relationship with self informs relationships with others
- Changing relationship styles
- Recommendations for Clinical Pastoral Education

The “Art” of Relationship

- Example: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5dPbvrv3bY&sns=em>
- Consider these questions:
 - Based on this video, how would you describe this person’s relationship style?
 - How might this person’s relationship style have been formed?

I. How Relationship with Self is Constructed



Formation of Attachment Habits

- Survival of our ancestors' infants required the proximity to and protection of an adult from harsh elements in the environment.
 - Parents evolved an instinct to protect and nurture infants.
 - Infants evolved a fear of being separated from parents.
 - The resulting bond, “love,” was necessary to perpetuate the human race.



When All Goes Well



- Caregiver is secure in her/his role: he/she remains attuned and the infant's needs are met
- Attunement – starts at the most subtle physical levels of interaction between babies and caregivers and gives babies the feeling of being met and understood
 - Importance of mirror neurons!
- When infants feel threatened, caregivers respond so that when the danger passes, the stress reaction system is aborted, and the infant is returned to calm. Later, when the cortex develops more, the growing child will be able to govern this process him/herself.
- Infants internalize two important things: self-importance and trust in others
- Development of a secure attachment in the child: what research says about this

The Securely Attached Child

- Ability to manage frustrating experiences, recognizing them as their “own.”
- Success in school
- More friends
- Likely to be neither teacher’s pet nor bully
- Better executive function and self-regulation
 - Delay of gratification - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=amsqeYOk--w&feature=related>
- More effective engagement with society



When All Does Not Go Well

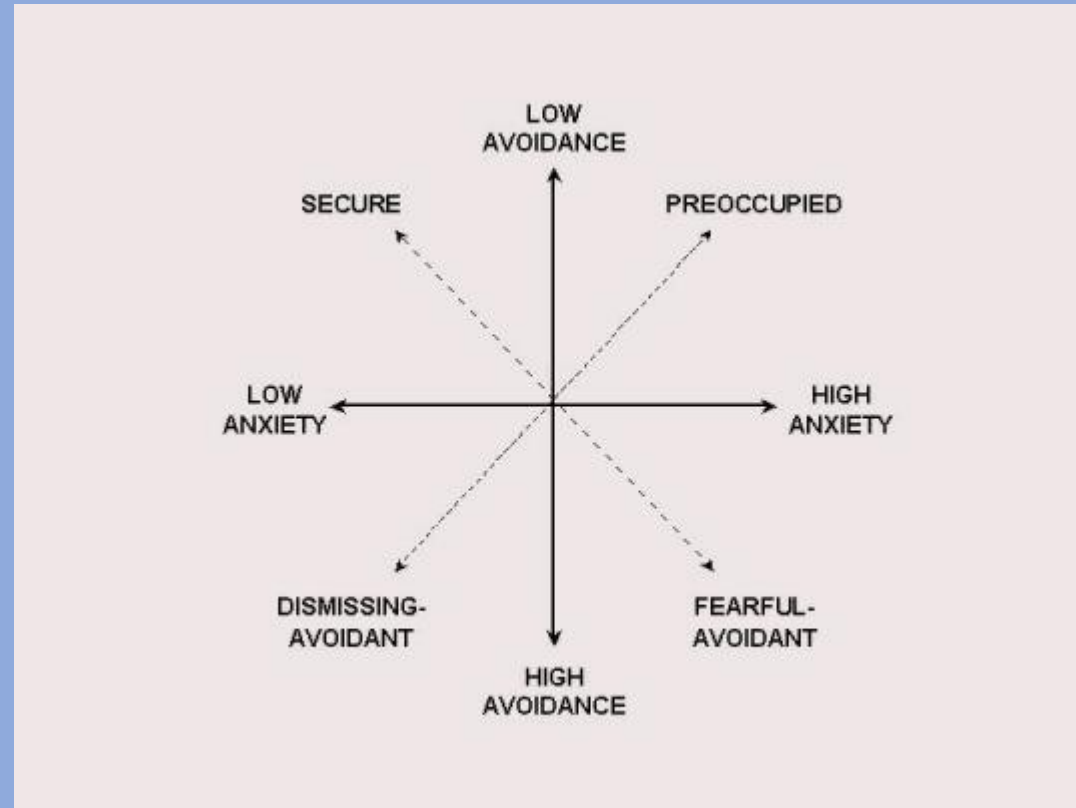
- Caregiver is insecure in her/his role: s/he may be overbearing or distant and unaffectionate, if too much anxiety
- Attunement is not demonstrated, perhaps due to caregiver's own trauma and under-developed mirror neurons.
- When infants feel threatened, caregiver is unable or unwilling to ease their fears, so they can remain in high alert, reactive state. Further, they do not learn how to sufficiently regulate threats themselves.
- Infants do not internalize self-importance and trust in others.
- Development of insecure attachment: what research says about this
 - More likely to bully or be bullied
 - More likely to develop oppositional defiant or conduct disorders
 - Fewer friends
 - Less success in school

II. How Relationships with Others are Constructed



Attachment Measured

- Mary Ainsworth: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QTsewNrHUUH&feature=related>



Fear of Abandonment

Fear of Close- ness	Fear of Abandonment	
	Low	High
	Low	High
Fear of Close-ness	Low	Secure
	High	Avoidant/ Dismissing
Fear of Close-ness	Low	Anxious- Ambivalent /Preoccupi ed
	High	Disoriented /Fearful

(Brennan, Clark, & Shaver, 1998)

Adult Attachment Styles <http://www.web-research-design.net/cgi-bin/crq/crq.pl>

- I am somewhat uncomfortable being close to others; I find it difficult to trust them completely, difficult to allow myself to depend on them. I am nervous when anyone gets too close, and often, lover partners want me to be more intimate than I feel comfortable being.
- I find it relatively easy to get close to others and am comfortable depending on them and having them depend on me. I don't often worry about being abandoned or about someone getting too close to me.
- I find that others are reluctant to get as close as I would like. I often worry that my partner doesn't really love me or won't want to stay with me. I want to merge completely with another person, and this desire sometimes scares people away.

(Hazen & Shaver, 1987; Mickelson, Kessler, & Shaver, 1997)

National Survey Results

- 59% secure; 25% avoidant; 11% anxious; 5% unclassifiable
- Developmental psychologists have found similar proportions among infants (Campos, Barrett, Lamb, Goldsmith, & Stenberg, 1983)
- Subsequent studies have found:
 - *Secure* adults are more likely to describe warm and trusting parents and family.
 - *Anxious-ambivalent* adults recall little parental support.
 - *Avoidant* people describe relationships with family members as distrustful and emotionally distant.

Secure Adults...

- Are more satisfied with their relationships than others.
- Are more likely to be happy with their relationship if they have a partner with a secure attachment style.
- Tend to have partners with similar attachment style.
- Are more likely to characterize their current relationship with love, strong commitment, and large amount of trust
- Are able to accept and support partner despite his/her faults
- Have more warm and intimate conversations
- Are more likely to share personal information when appropriate



(Brennan & Shaver, 1995; Collins & Read, 1990; Hazan et al., 1994; Keelan, Dion, & Dion, 1994; Kirkpatrick & Davis, 1994; Mikulincer & Nachshon, 1991; Pistole, 1989; Simpson, 1990; Tidwell, Reis, & Shaver, 1996; Tucker & Anders, 1999)

Those with high fear of closeness, or avoidant style...



- Fear intimacy
- Tend to have problems with jealousy
- Report believing that real romance rarely lasts forever, and “head-over-heels” love does not exist
- Are less likely to show affection or share intimacy with their partners
- 43% avoidant undergraduates said they had never been in love.

(Collins, Cooper, Albino, & Allard, 2002; Feeney, Noller, & Patty, 1993; Hazan & Shaver, 1987)

Those with high fear of abandonment, or anxious-ambivalent style...



- Fall in love many times but have difficulty finding the long-term happiness they are seeking
- Are afraid of losing partner and give in to his/her wishes to keep him/her happy
- Are more likely to fall in love with someone who does not love them in return
- Easily feel threatened

(Aron, Aron, & Allen, 1998; Hazan & Shaver, 1987; Pistole, 1989; Rholes, Simpson, Campbell, & Grich, 2001; Simpson, Ickes, & Grich, 1999)

What about Fear of Both, or Disoriented Style?

- Positions:
 - fear “losing” a relationship and become more submissive
 - fear of “being overtaken” by a relationship and become more dominant
- Fearful people
- See themselves as unworthy of love
- Doubt that romantic involvement will provide the much-needed intimacy
- Avoid getting close to others because they fear the pain of rejection (Brennan, Clark, & Shaver, 1998)
- Example: Good Will Hunting (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rq0apHW6Ezw&feature=related>)



Summary of How We Relate Intimately

- Avoidant and anxious attached adults, just like newborns in original research, feel heightened stress when separated from partners.
- Insecure partners see more conflict in their relationships and become more upset at perceived “rifts.”
- Secure partners seek more support from and offer more to partners; avoidant partners seek less.

(Campbell, Simpson, Boldry, & Kashy, 2005; Collins, Ford, Guichard, & Allard, 2006; Collins & Feeney, 2000; Feeney & Collins, 2001; Feeney & Kirkpatrick, 1996; Powers, Pietromonaco, Gunlicks, & Sayer, 2006; Simpson, Rholes, Orina, & Grich, 2002)

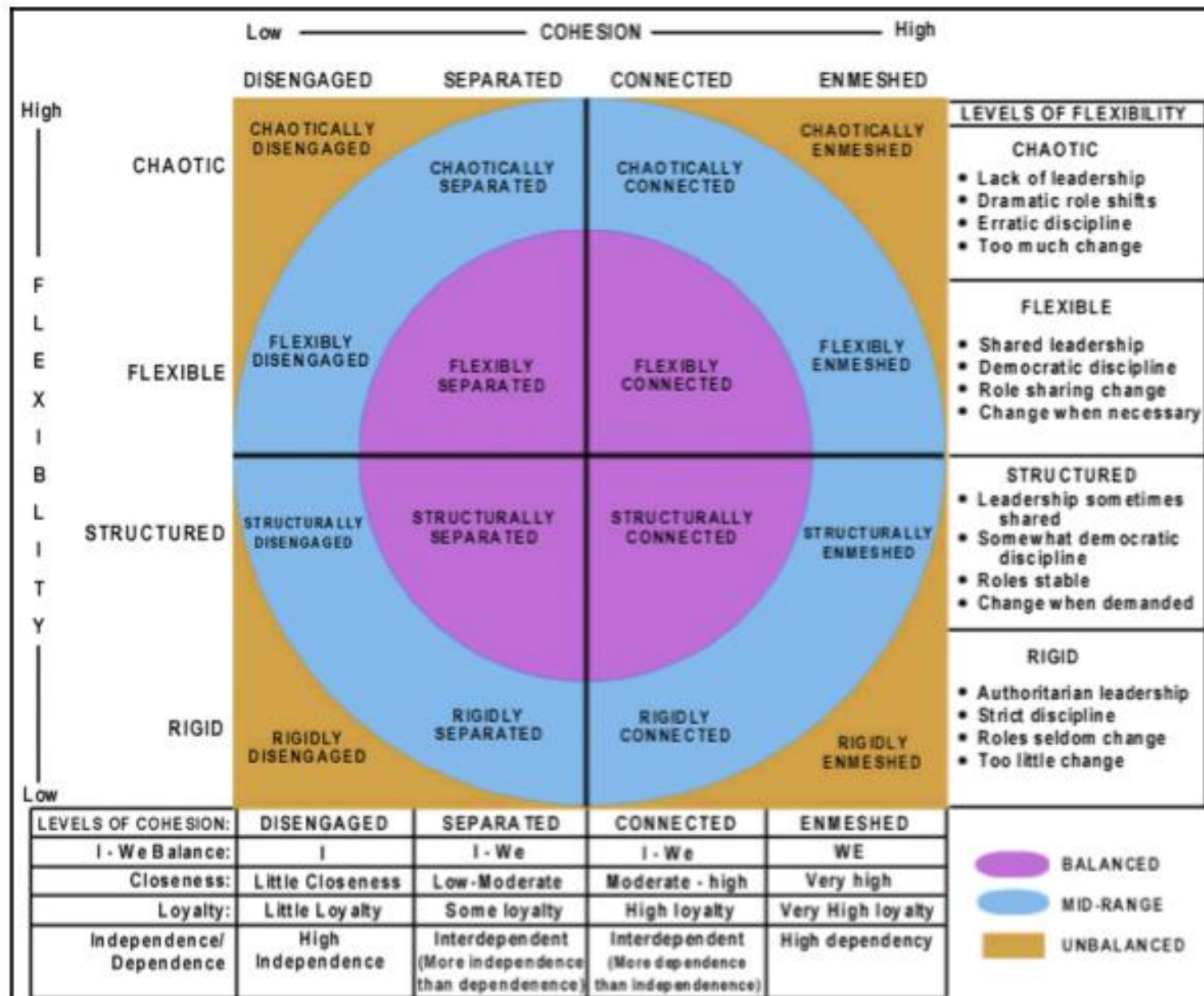


Figure 1: Circumplex Model: Couple & Family Map

How might all of this impact how we relate within society?

- It starts with secure attachment style!
 - Then, the following happens:
 - Regulation
 - Affiliation
 - Awareness
 - Tolerance
 - Diversity
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=skaYWKC6iD4>
- From the intimate give and take of the attachment bond, children learn that other people have feelings and thoughts that are both similar to and different from theirs; they get “in sync” with their environment and with the people around them and develop self-awareness, empathy, impulse control, and self motivation

Ex: President Trump



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W6ZHY0E4_Wg

Neil Cavuto

<http://www.businessinsider.com/fox-news-criticizes-trump-twitter-rants-against-news-media-2017-6>

How might this happen in the absence of maltreatment?

- In short, experience...or lack of experience.
- Every experience interpreted through subjective experience, whether satisfying (good) or frustrating (bad).
 - Example: infant playing with an object
- Infants may take different “positions” to relate to good or bad objects.
 - Depressive position: fear of losing object; submissive
 - Paranoid-schizoid position: fear of being overtaken by an object; dominant
- Example of an adolescent “crush”



Can relationship style change?

- Developing a loving and trusting adult relationship, which was denied as a child.
 - 30% young women in recent study changed attachment style over 2-year span.
 - Attachment style may not be established as early as previously thought. (Carnelley, Pietromonaco, & Jaffe, 1994; Davila, Burge, & Hammen, 1997; Davila, Karney, & Bradbury, 1999)

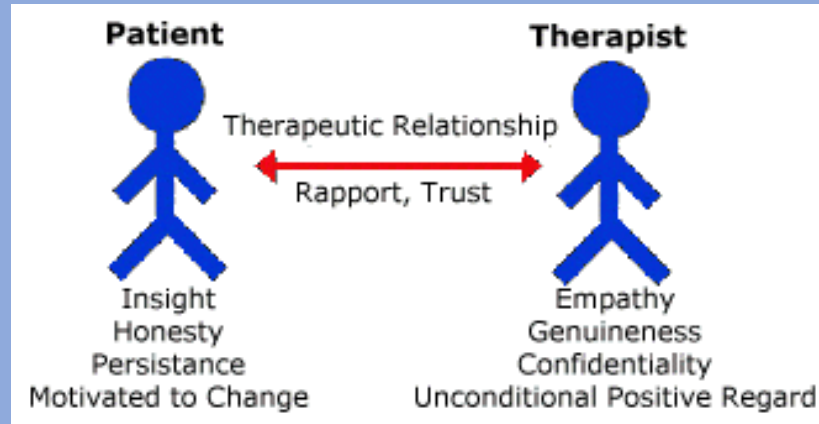


How Relationship Styles Change

- Be intentional about changing coping style.
 - Compulsive behavior may be about relationship trauma.
 - Addictive behaviors may be healed through relationship
 - http://www.ted.com/talks/johann_hari_everything_you_think_you_know_about_addiction_is_wrong



How Relationship Styles Change



- Therapy:
 - EMDR
 - Emotion-focused therapy
 - Mindfulness therapy
 - Internal Family Systems Therapy
- Therapeutic relationship facilitates a greater amount of positive change than any other measured factor.

Why does this matter to chaplains?

- You are meeting with people experiencing immense stress.
- How clients approach stress probably will, at least initially, reflect their past beliefs about self and others.
- Clients experiencing great stress about the future also tend to be more open to new truths.
- Clients may, therefore, be open to new perspectives of themselves and others.
- ***You may, therefore, have the privilege of being with clients who are at the precipice of contemplating change.***

The Example of Grief Loss

- The grief loss is experienced through the lens of personal attachment style.
- The loss, if close, sets into motion processes of identity reconstruction, which leads to meaning making of the loss.
- Religious and spiritual issues are often central to meaning making.
- Ex. Spousal bereavement



Conclusions for Clinical Pastoral Education

- Accept a client where s/he is, regardless of relationship style. (Remember that the unconditional positive regard of a caregiver is what initially helps establish a sense of self-worth.)
- Know that sense of self-worth (relationship with self) will impact relationships with others, including a Higher Power.
- Relationship healing can, in this way, contribute to spiritual healing.
- If you can be a secure relationship in the midst of a person's great unknowns, you may have contributed to the person's healing in multiple dimensions.
- Change and healing is possible!

...One Relationship at a Time

