



Deep Release Online

Professional Training for Counsellors

ATTACHMENT BEHAVIOUR IN THE COUNSELLING ROOM

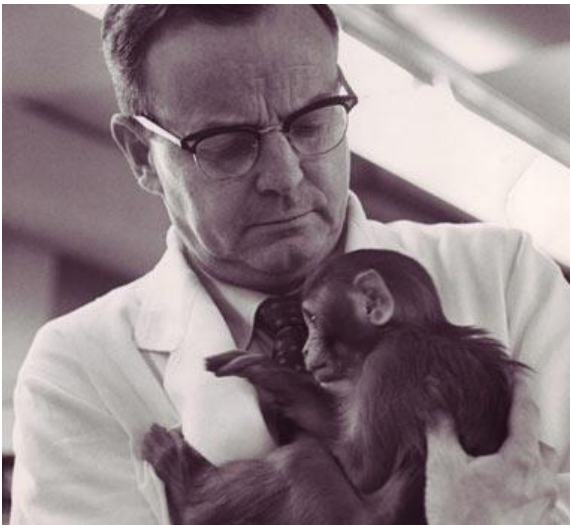


John Bowlby 1907-1990



John Bowlby
1907-1990
Psychologist
Psychiatrist
Psychoanalyst

Ethology

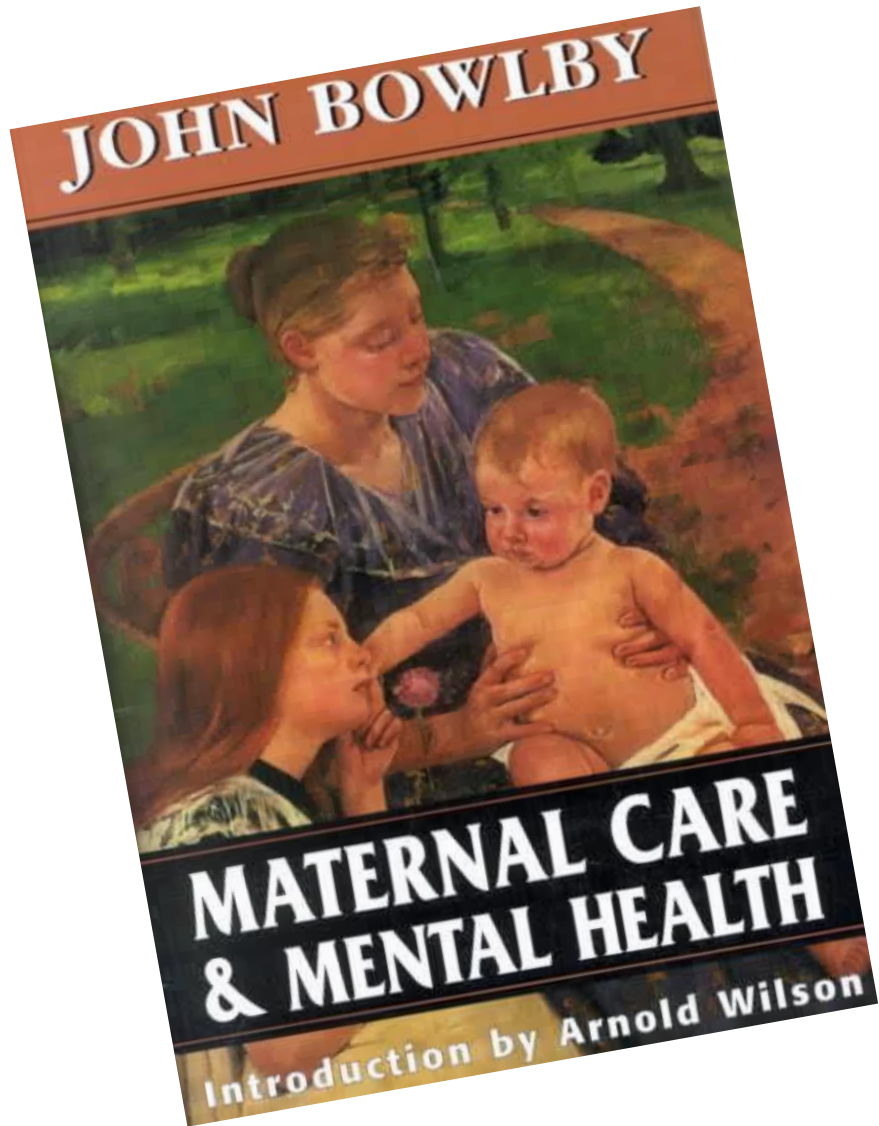


Harry Harlow's Monkeys



Carl Lorenz
Imprinting

ATTACHMENT THEORY



1951

Bowlby prepared a report on behalf of the World Health Organisation as a contribution to the United Nations programme for the welfare of homeless children.

Maternal care in infancy and early childhood is essential for mental health!

THE CHANGING ROLE OF THE MOTHER



Mechanics,
engineers,
munitions workers,
air raid wardens,
bus/fire engine
drivers,
land girls



ATTACHMENT THEORY

WHY?



HOW?



When you are confused
by a client's behaviour

**THINK
ATTACHMENT!**

WHERE?



WHO?



HOW THE ATTACHMENT SYSTEM IS FORMED

Secure Attachment



THE ATTACHMENT BEHAVIOUR SYSTEM

The relationship with the key Caregiver is designed to help the young child feel **SAFE AND SECURE**

The Attachment Behaviour System is **ACTIVATED** in times of danger, stress and novelty.

The aim is to get close to and stay close to the key attachment figure.



SECURE ATTACHMENT

What the child does....



cries



calls



clings

What the mother does...

responds



protects

holds

available...intuitive...loving



I'm ok!
You're ok!
I'm wanted and welcomed
I belong in this family!
Sense of being
Sense of wellbeing

THE STRANGE SITUATION



MARY AINSWORTH
1-2 year-old children - 1970s

Stress activates child's Attachment System

The Secure child

- Cries if mum leaves - it's worth it! It gets results!
- Demands/receives care on her return
- Plays happily
- **Agency**

The baby expects his cry to be heard and that he will be comforted.

Donald Winnicott:
“His majesty the baby”



INTERNAL WORKING MODEL





Love is Available

Love is Given

**I am worthy to
receive that love**

**SECURE
ATTACHMENT**

***We turn to PEOPLE
in times of
distress or need.***

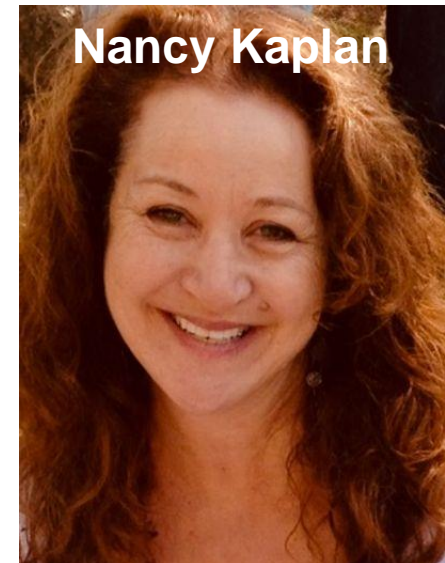
THE ADULT ATTACHMENT INTERVIEW



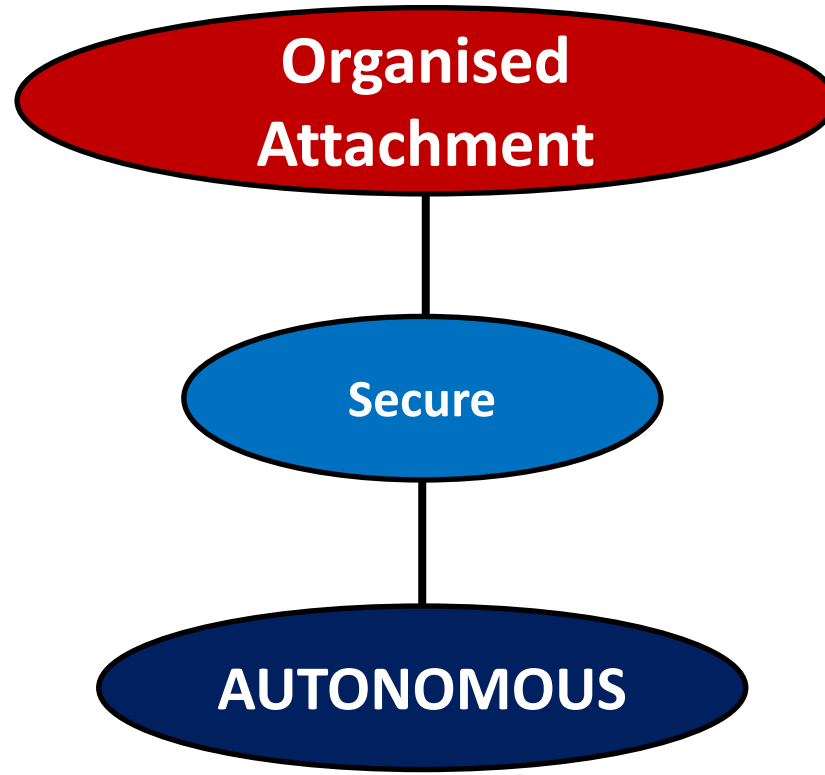
Mary Main (1943-)

- an American psychologist professor and a colleague of Mary Ainsworth
- came up with the additional category of 'disorganised' attachment for infants whose mothers are *frightening* or *frightened*, leaving the child no route to find safety

In 1984, along with Carol George and Nancy Kaplan, Main was also instrumental in developing the **Adult Attachment Interview**.

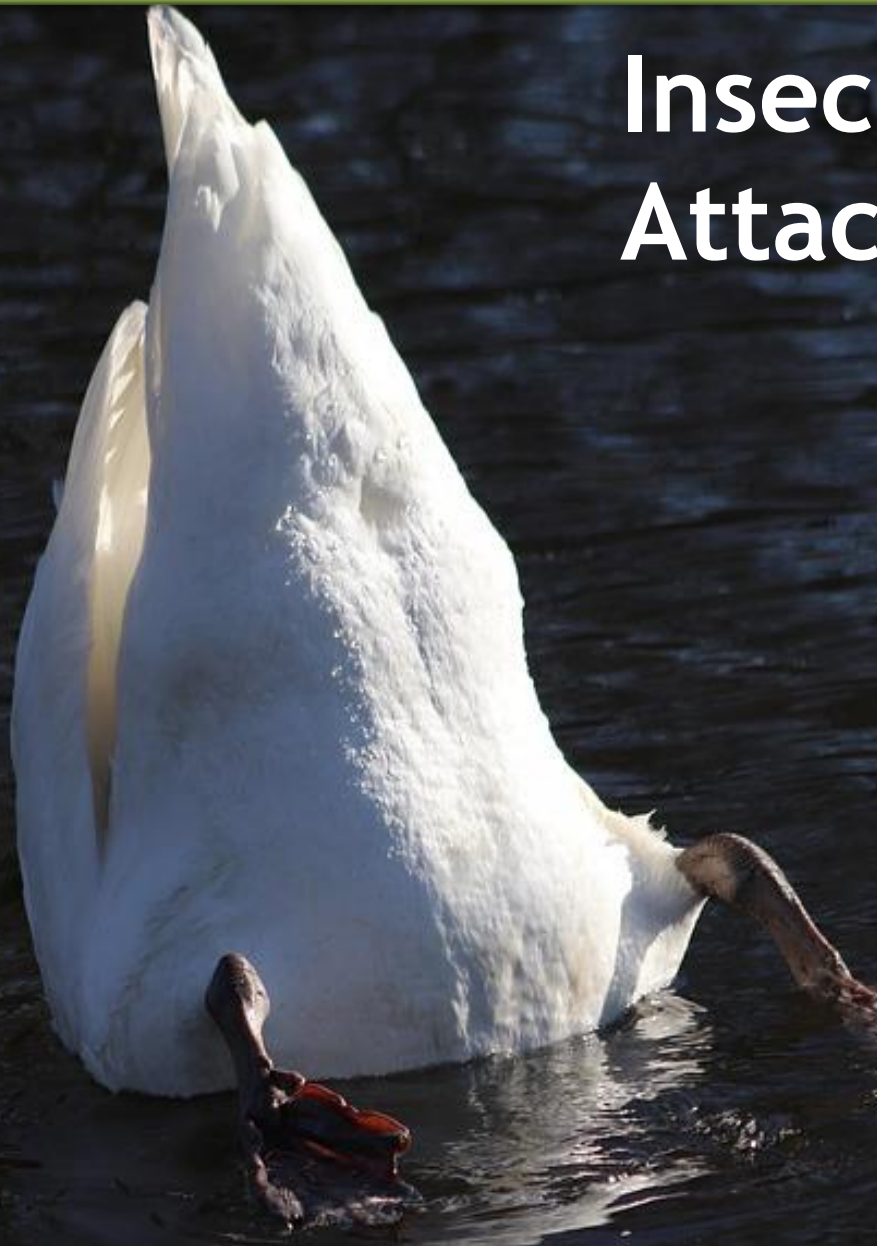


ADULT ATTACHMENT STYLES



HOW THE ATTACHMENT SYSTEM IS FORMED

Insecure Avoidant Attachment



INSECURE AVOIDANT ATTACHMENT



“If you are upset, deal with it yourself... get a grip.”

WHO MET MY NEEDS?



INSECURE AVOIDANT ATTACHMENT



“Life is D.I.Y.”

Mothers are

- Practical
- Functional
- Busy
- Not touchy-feely



Child becomes

- Self-sufficient
- Self-reliant
- Not touchy-feely

INSECURE
AVOIDANT

INSECURE AVOIDANT ATTACHMENT INTERNAL WORKING MODEL



- You're on your own
- **If you are stressed or upset, get a grip**
- Don't look to people to meet your needs
- **Don't get too close to people**
- Don't show your emotions

ADULT ATTACHMENT

The young child finds a way to reach their Attachment Figure, but it's a roundabout, painful way.

Don't be a nuisance, don't make a fuss, be grateful, there's nothing wrong with you, don't upset me...

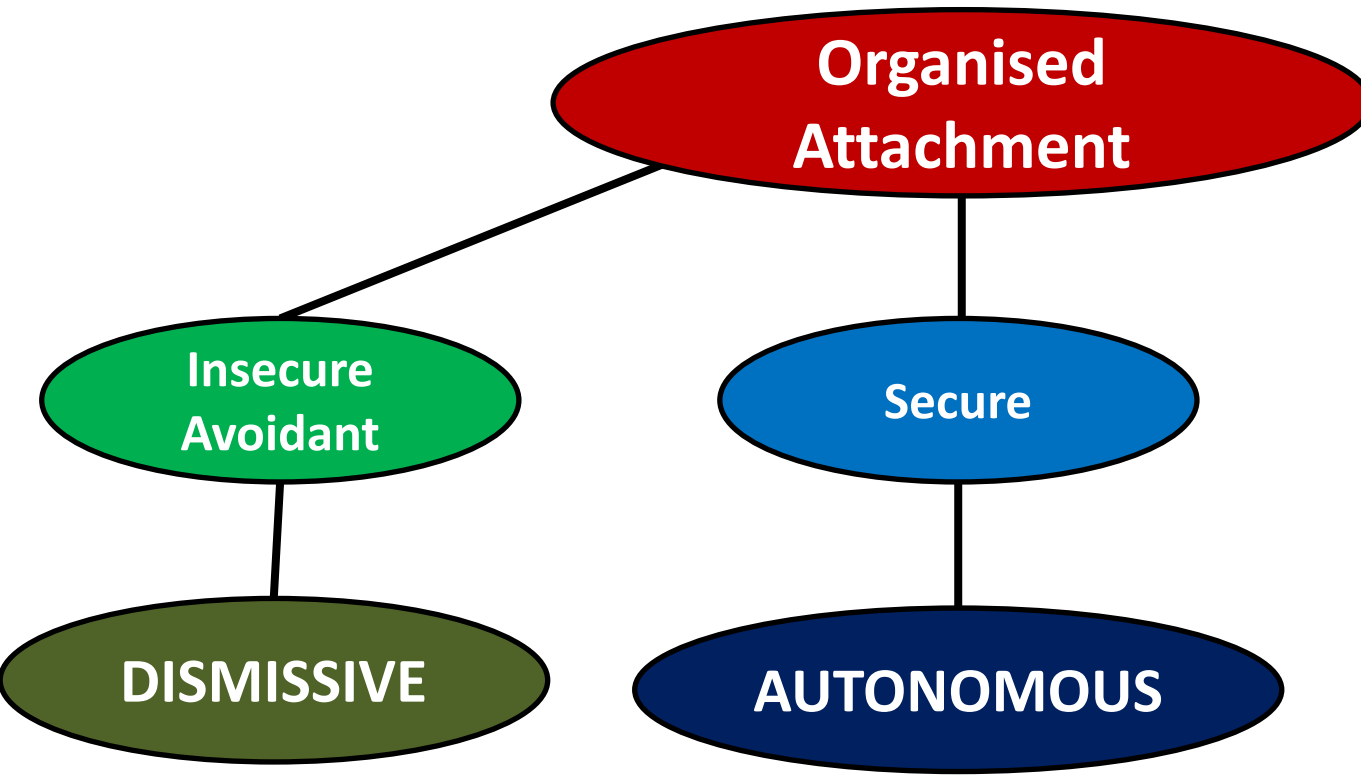
Attachment is organised and stable, but not happy.

(Adah Sachs)

Deficits in the relationship with the key Attachment Figure in childhood lead to difficulties in forming future intimate relationships (eg with partner/children).



ADULT ATTACHMENT STYLES



Attachment
System is
DEACTIVATED

JANE: AVOIDANT ATTACHMENT



HOW THE ATTACHMENT SYSTEM IS FORMED

Insecure Ambivalent Attachment



It's all about me!

Please love me...

WHO MET MY NEEDS?



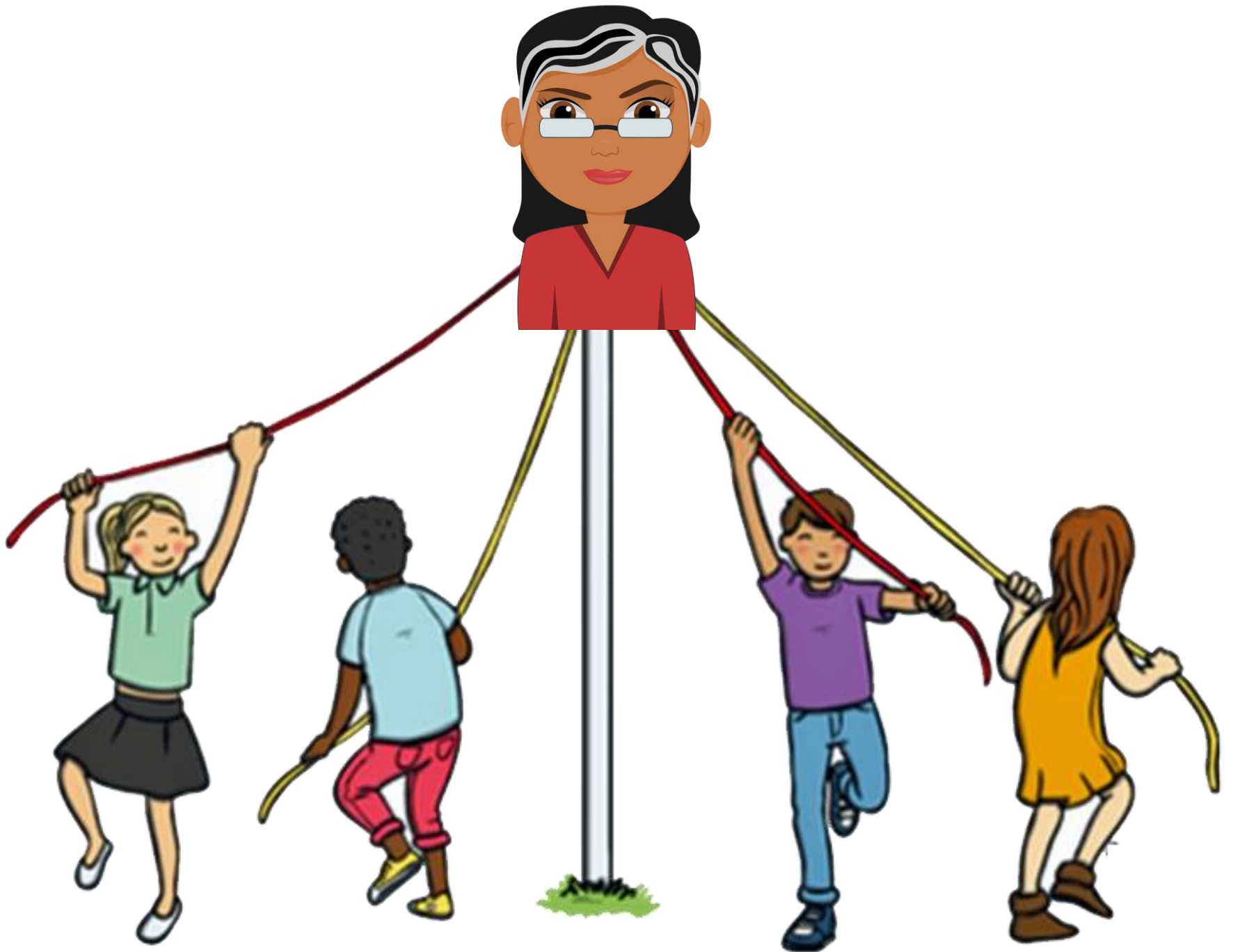
UNPREDICTABLE



- Hypervigilant
- Scanning
- Anxious

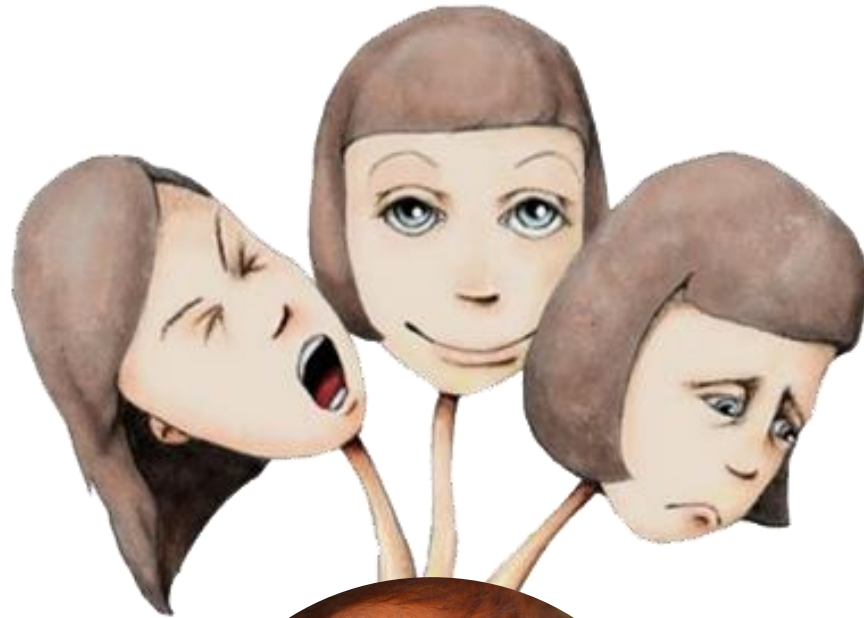
- High maintenance
- Fearful

Childhood
AMBIVALENT/RESISTANT



INTERNAL WORKING MODEL

I have to work out if I'm safe, if I'm ok...



Go
Away!

Don't
Leave
me!



Empathy

Parents’ failure to empathise with the child.

Empathy is a powerful therapeutic tool in building the therapeutic relationship



Pic by Gracia Lam

Idealising

Clients are seeking the calm, power, wisdom and goodness of an omnipotent idealised counsellor

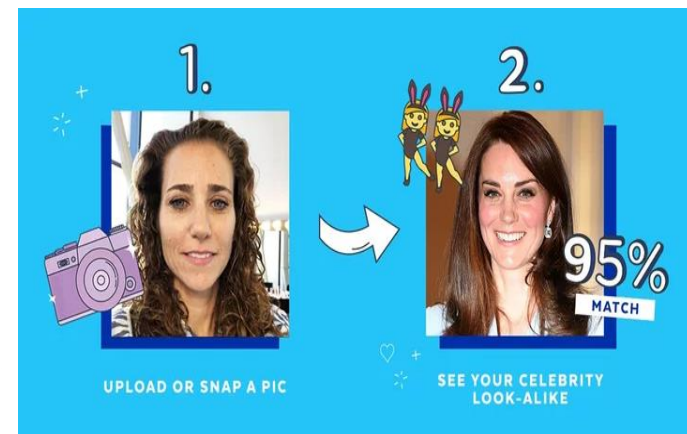


Pic by John Hain, Pixabay

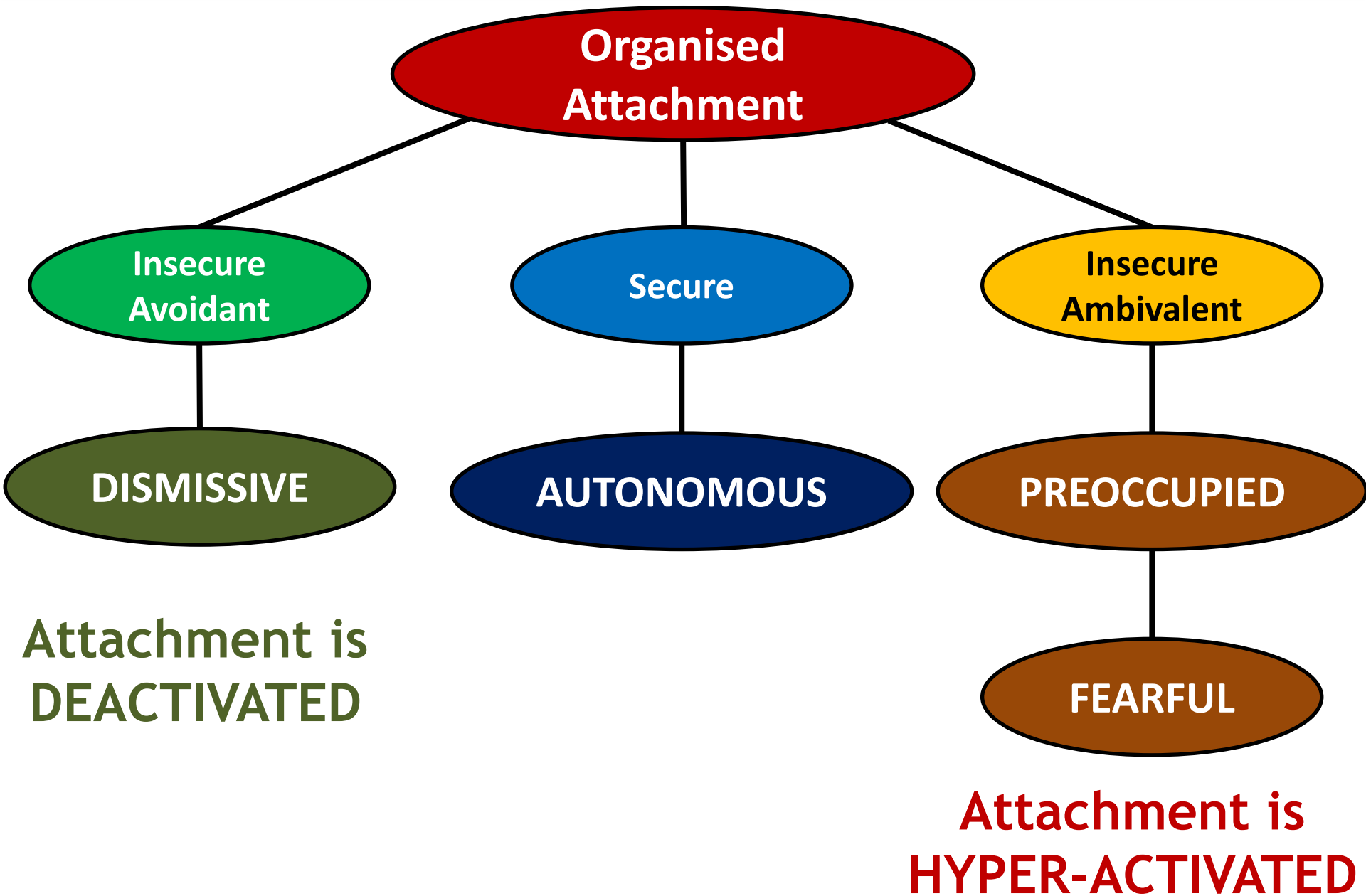
Twinning/ Mirroring

The affirming, positive responses of the counsellor enable the client to see positive traits within themselves

“I want to be like you...”



ADULT ATTACHMENT STYLES



PREOCCUPIED ATTACHMENT STYLE

If she'd only hug me...

Should I suggest she gets therapy?

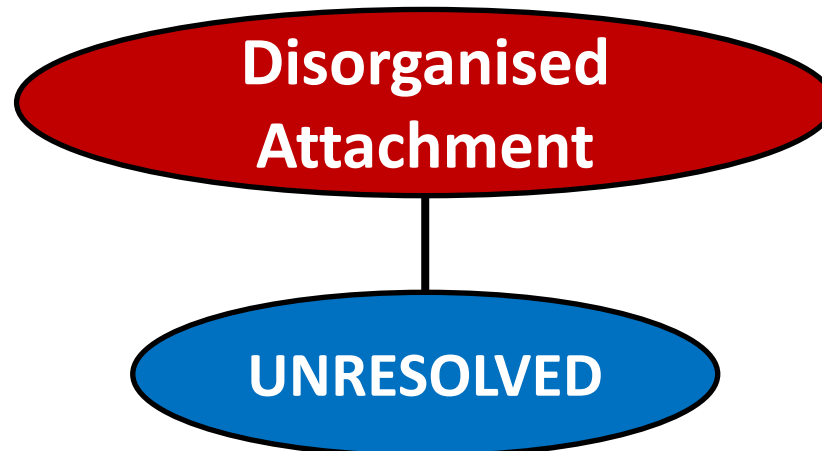
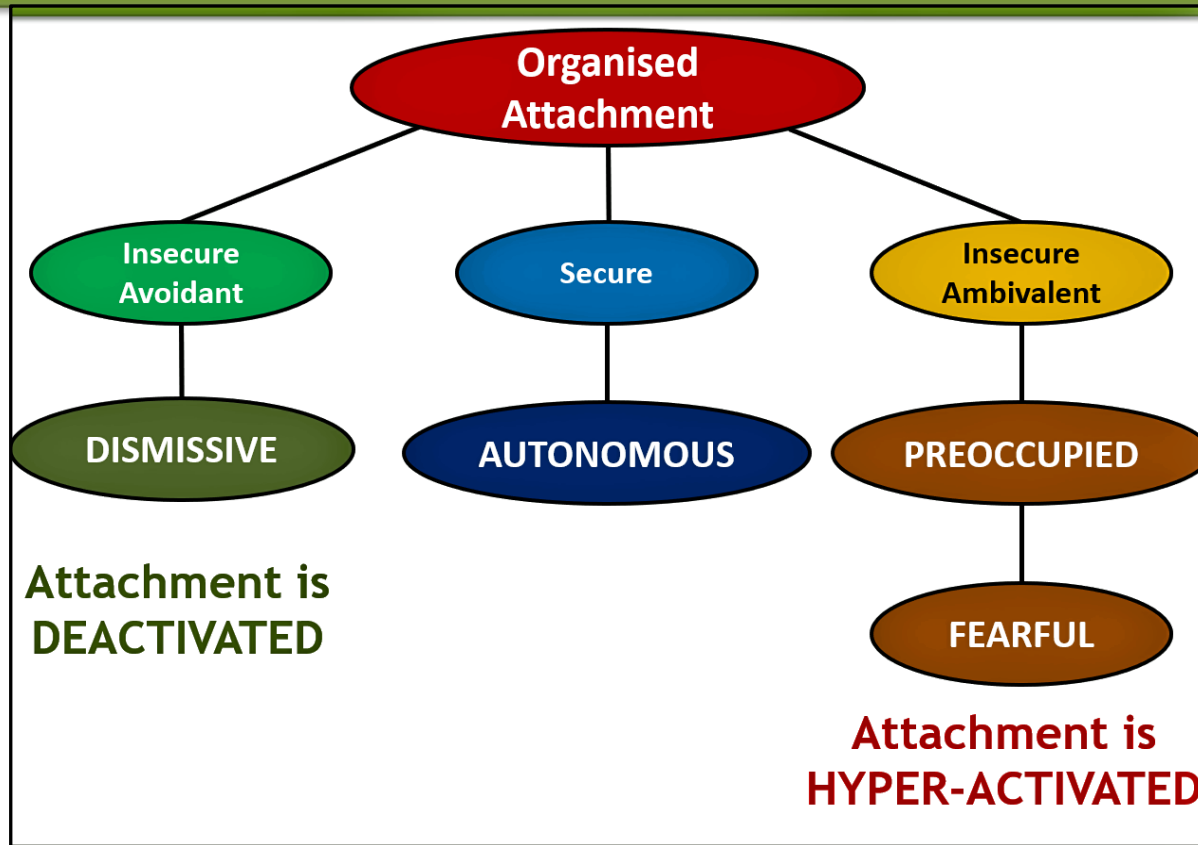
I want to hear her say she loves me...



ROSE: AMBIVALENT ATTACHMENT



ADULT ATTACHMENT STYLES



DISORGANISED ATTACHMENT

Trauma



Abuse



Neglect



Carers are frightening or frightened
The only hand to offer rescue is the abuser's
Easier to believe I am unlovable/bad (Trauma Bond)
Who can I trust? Where am I safe?

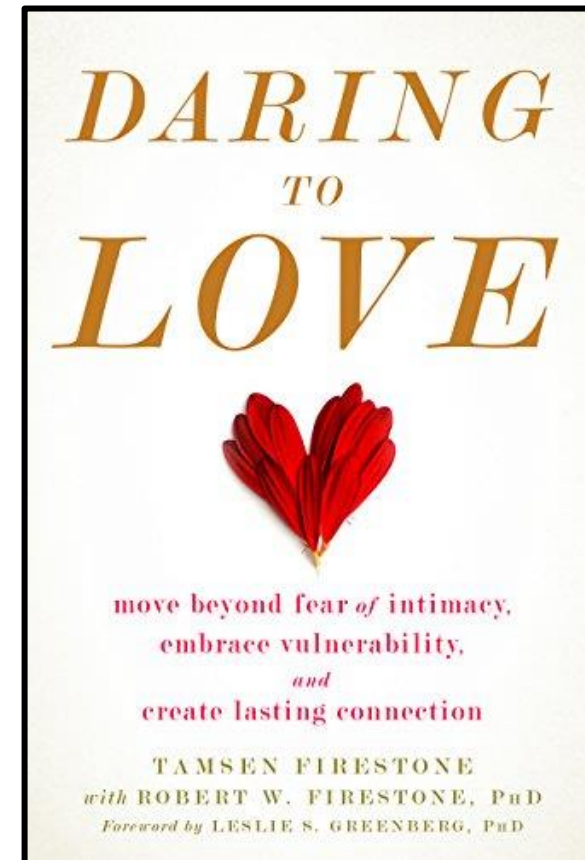
HORROR VACUI - FEAR OF THE EMPTY SPACE



RESTRUCTURING THE ATTACHMENT SYSTEM

- Conflict when someone tells us they love us/see us positively
- Suspicion!
 - *You're idealising me*
 - *You don't really know me*
 - *What do you want from me?*
- We want to hang on to our negative self-image because it's connected to our past
- It's how we've always known ourselves.

Tamsen Firestone



RISKED ATTACHMENT

It shakes us up to learn that something we thought was fundamentally true might not be. We have to dare to challenge ourselves and our defences - what's getting in my way?

**Trusting is scary
and risky!**



DON'T GET PULLED OUT OF SHAPE!

- Know our own Attachment style
- Keep working on our own issues
- Stay with core conditions & key skills
- Keep boundaries clear
- Show your workings
- Have good Supervision

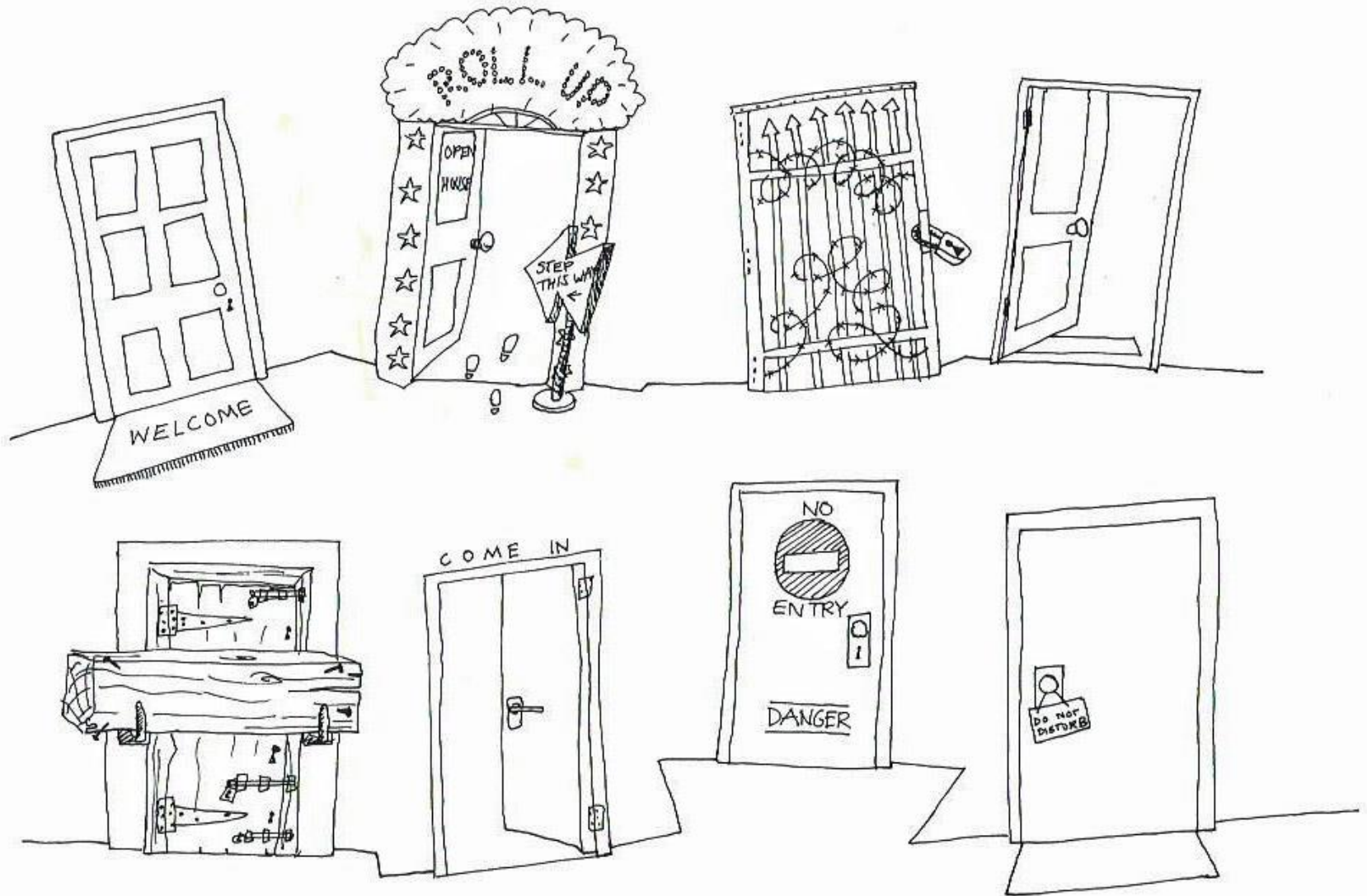




**CREATIVE
WAYS OF
WORKING
WITH
ATTACHMENT**



CREATIVE WAYS OF WORKING WITH ATTACHMENT



CREATIVE WAYS OF WORKING WITH ATTACHMENT

Choose animals to represent family members:

- How close are they to each other?
- Which ones relate to each other?
- How similar are they?
- Experiment with moving them around.
- Explore the feelings, eg if an animal is removed from the scene.



CREATIVE WAYS OF WORKING WITH ATTACHMENT

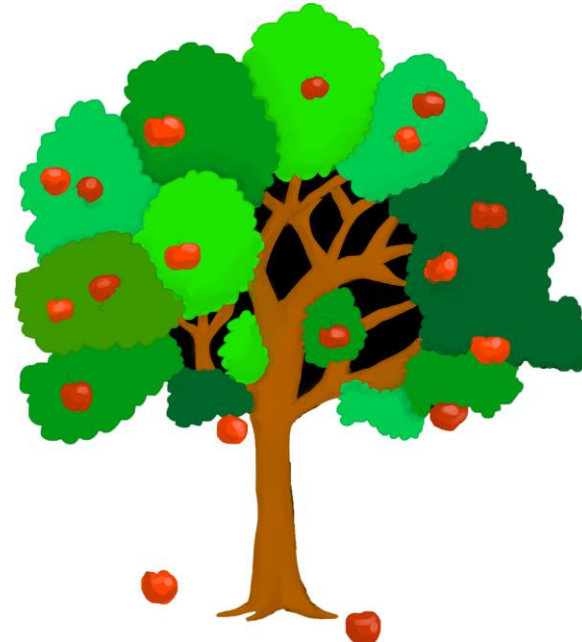


What is the client's core fairy tale? Can give clues as to their Attachment style.

- Sleeping Beauty (*don't wake me up!*)
- Little Red Riding Hood (*is it Grandma or the wolf?*)

Draw yourself as a tree:

- Alone or with other trees?
- What season?
- What kind of tree?
- What kind of fruit?



Kindness when ill

Care & comfort offered in sickness

Creativity

Creativity praised & encouraged

Feelings are OK

Emotions understood & validated - allowed to express them

Physically comforted

Safe & tender touch, cuddles & soothing

Moral compass

Right

Physically protected

Kept safe from harm & danger

Can make mistakes

Not shamed or punished for failure

Celebrated

Feel

Defended

Trusted & believed

Joy & Laughter

Playing together & finding things funny

Privacy

Physical & emotional space respected - boundaries kept

Quality Time

Unrushed time spent together

Positive cultural identity

Valuing where I come from

Education

Education is important

Self-Worth

Knowing I am loved just as I am

Food

Enough food on the table

Financial help

They would give me their last penny

Purpose

Knowing my life has meaning

Faith

Healthy spirituality taught & modelled

Physical Care

Appropriate medical and dental care

A love of nature

Discovering & enjoying the beauty of the natural world

Determination

The value of perseverance & not giving up

Clothing

Smart, clean clothes