



# Soul Cycles

Personal & Collective Evolvment  
Alternative Healing  
Social Artistry

## Attachment

I am a being with a mammal brain. I am born out of my mother's body and I am fed by my mother's body. Attachment is biologically given. It assures the survival of our species. Without attachment I would die. Attachment behaviour is based on biological predispositions, making loneliness and lack of support as agonizing as hunger. My attachment behaviour as a baby might manifest in kind of activities like crying, cooing, smiling, suckling, clinging, and trailing after my mother. Attachment can be good enough or insecure. Insecure attachments can be avoidant, ambivalent, disorganized, deregulating or disoriented. My attachment at 8 months old is highly predicted to be my attachment as an adult.

- Fairbairn says, attachment is the most powerful drive because abused children will go back to their abusive parents. *Life-force is made up of the inner impulse plus the object we are attached to.*

- In the 1950s John Bowlby theorized that human infants are born with a brain system that promotes safety by establishing an instinctive behavioural bond with their mothers. That bond produces distress when the mother is absent, as well as the drive for the two to seek each other out when the child is frightened or in pain. The same behavioural template is manifest in young mammals that also cry and cling and seek out the mothers when danger comes.

- Ainsworth observed that *secure attachment resulted when a child was hugged when he wanted to be hugged and put down when he wanted to be put down.*

- Daniel J. Siegel: "Attachment" is 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. The attachment system motivates an infant to seek proximity to parents (and other primary caregivers) and to establish communication with them. At the most basic evolutionary level, this behavioural system improves the chances of the infant's survival. At the level of the mind, attachment establishes an interpersonal relationship that helps the immature brain to use the mature functions of the parent's brain to organize its own process. The emotional transactions of secure attachment involve a parent's emotionally sensitive responses to a child's signals, which can serve to amplify the child's positive emotional states and to modulate negative states. In particular the aid parents can give in reducing uncomfortable emotions, such as fear, anxiety, or sadness, enables children to be soothed and gives them a haven of safety when they are upset. Repeated experiences become encoded in implicit memory as expectations and then as mental models or schemata of attachment, which serve to help the child feel an internal sense of what John Bowlby called a "secure base" in the world.

Studies of attachment have revealed that the patterning or organization of attachment relationships during infancy is associated with characteristic processes of emotional regulation, social relatedness, access to autobiographical memory and narrative.

Mary Main summarized the following principles:

- The earliest attachments are usually formed around the age of seven months.

*(To my opinion this is may be the first time that the child expresses or shows attachment behaviour, but it has been shaped already before.)*

- Nearly all infants become attached.

- Attachments are only formed to a few persons.

- These "selective attachments" appear to be derived from social interactions with the attachment figures.

- They lead to specific organizational changes in an infant's behaviour and brain function.

Qualitative terms describing the nature of the attachment are utilized: Attachments are seen as *secure* or *insecure*, with a variety of descriptions within these two broad categories.

The attachment system serves multiple functions. For an infant activation of the attachment system involves the seeking of proximity. Proximity seeking allows an infant to be protected from harm, starvation, unfavourable temperature changes, attacks from others, and separation from the group. For these reasons, the attachment system is highly responsive to indications of danger. The internal experience of an activated attachment system is thus often associated with the sensation of anxiety or fear and can be initiated by frightening experiences of various kinds, as well as by a threat of separation of the attachment figure.

Attachment relationships thus serve a vital function in providing the infant with protection from dangers of many kinds. These relationships are crucial in organizing not only ongoing experience, but the neuronal growth of the developing brain. In other words, these salient emotional relationships have a direct effect on the development of the domains of mental functioning that serve as our conceptual anchor points: memory, narrative, emotion, representations, and states of mind. In this way attachment relationships may serve to create the central foundation from which the mind develops. Insecure attachment may serve as a significant risk factor in the development of psychopathology. Secure attachment, in contrast, appears to confer a form of emotional resilience.

Although attachment behaviour is seen primarily in children, adults continue to manifest attachment throughout the lifespan. Especially under times of stress, an adult will monitor the whereabouts of a few selected "attachment figures" and seek them out as sources of comfort, advice, strength. For adults, such attachment figures may be mentors, close friends, or romantic partners."

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