

Mental Health Monthly

February 2024

The monthly newsletter to help you fortify your mental wellness.



A note from the Editor

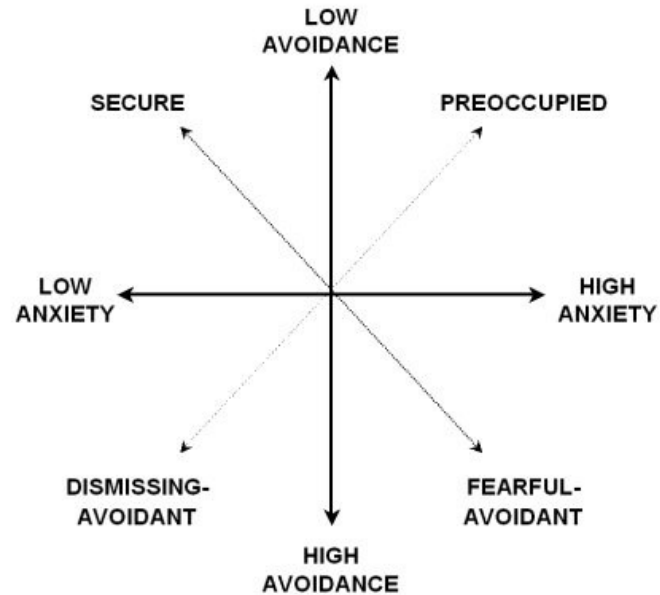
February; Black History Month, Groundhog Day, and (cringe) Valentine's Day. While this unofficial holiday can be difficult for some, it still remains a great opportunity to reflect on the "love" that is all around.

It has long been an accepted fact that humans are relational beings who's development and flourishing occurs only within social interaction. Think of how fulfilling and empowering it is to experience what Dr. Diane Poole Heller describes in her book **The Power of Attachment** as "Contingency- a felt sense that a person is attuned to you, that they get you in a spiritual and emotional way." Furthermore, there is abundant research showing that healthy relationships are the antitheses to mental illness and the number one protective factor for persons living with suicidal thoughts. "Connectedness counters the pull of addictive behaviors. It is key." affirms Dr. Bruce D. Perry, co-author of **What Happened To You; Conversations on Trauma, Resilience and Healing**.

Keep in mind that connectedness comes in all shapes and sizes. Dr. John Gottman, founder of the research institute on relationships in his name, says "in any interaction, there is a possibility of connecting..." Perhaps it is the colleague who brings to each meeting corny dad jokes that help you connect in humor. Or the best friend who gives you that intrinsic sense of being seen and understood. Or it might be the barista who shares the same knowing glance that we are all connected by simply enduring this journey called life.

Maybe that is why it is tradition for school children to bring in a valentine for each classmate with an individual positive affirmation on it. To honor each connection, because they all bring some value, no matter how great or small.

-Erin Barber, LMHC



Two - dimensional model of differences in adult attachment styles based on the work of psychologist John Bowlby.

"Invisible threads are the strongest ties." – Friedrich Nietzsche

Dear Erin,

Have an issue and want some feedback from the therapist? Look for a thoughtful response in an upcoming newsletter when you submit your question to: erinbarberlmhc@gmail.com

Upcoming Events

Gottman Institute's Couple's Workshop; *The Art and Science of Love*

March 30-31, 2024

660 W Hillsboro Blvd, Deerfield Beach, FL

NAMI Walks Greater Orlando

April 27, 2024,

Cranes Roost Park, Altamonte Springs, FL



What does that even mean?

In John Bowlby's attachment theory, our attachment style is like a relational template that is wired into our brain, body and nervous system in early childhood. It affects, even unconsciously, how we perceive, respond to and interact with others in all future relationships. The four main attachment styles are:

Secure attachment- often comfortable with intimacy and independence in relationships, have high self-worth and a positive view of others.

Anxious attachment- often pre-occupied with fears about relationships, have low self-worth but a positive view of others.

Dismissive attachment- often view intimacy and dependence in relationships as weakness, has high-self worth and a negative view of others.

Fearful-avoidant attachment- often don't trust others or themselves in relationships and have a negative view of both themselves and others.

Noteworthy Clinicians Spotlight

Diane Poole Heller, PhD, is an internationally-recognized speaker, author, and expert in the field of attachment theory and trauma resolution. She developed a signature series on adult attachment called DARE (Dynamic Attachment Re-patterning experience) and authored three books on healing attachment trauma and trauma resolution.

Resources

[Free Attachment Style self-assessment](#)

[Belonging: The Science of Creating Connection and Bridging Divides](#)
by [Geoffrey L. Cohen](#)

[The Power of Attachment: How to Create Deep and Lasting Intimate Relationships](#) by [Diane Poole Heller, PhD.](#)