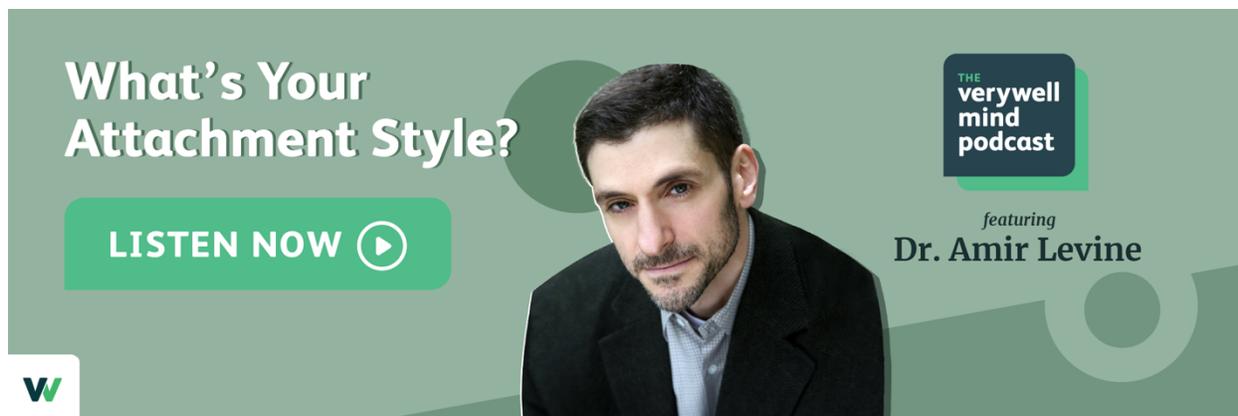




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234 — What's Your Attachment Style? with Dr. Amir Levine

Amy Morin:

Welcome to *The Verywell Mind Podcast*! I'm Amy Morin, the editor-in-chief of Verywell Mind. I'm also a psychotherapist and a best-selling author of four (soon to be five) books on mental strength. My newest book is the *13 Things Mentally Strong People Don't Do Workbook*, and it hits the shelves on February 28th. But you can pre-order it right now to make sure you're one of the first people to get your hands on a copy. It's filled with mental strength-building exercises straight from my therapy office that can help you become the strongest and best version of yourself.

Every Monday, I introduce you to a mentally strong person whose story and mental strength tips can inspire you to think, feel, and do your best in life. And the fun part is, we record the show from a sailboat in the Florida Keys!

Don't forget to subscribe to the show on your favorite platform so you can get mental strength tips delivered to you every single week. Now, let's dive into today's episode!

We used to talk about our attachment style in terms of our childhood. If you've taken a psychology course, you've probably learned a bit about childhood attachment. Over the years, however, we learned a bit more about those early attachments and how they affect the way that we attach to our partners later in life. There are three basic attachment styles. Number one: secure. People who are securely attached feel comfortable with intimacy, and they're usually warm and loving. Number two: anxious. People with anxious attachment are often preoccupied with their partner's ability to love

them back. And number three: avoidant. People with an avoidant attachment often focus on what they're losing in a relationship, like their independence, and they try to minimize closeness.

Learning to recognize your attachment style, as well as your partner's attachment style, could help you better understand yourself. And it might improve your relationship.

Here to talk about this today is Dr. Amir Levine. He's the Assistant Professor in the Department of Psychiatry in the Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry at Columbia University. He's also the co-author of a popular book called *Attached: The New Science of Adult Attachment and How It Can Help You Find — and Keep — Love*.

Some of the things he talks about today are how attachment styles form, how they play out in our adult relationships, and what we can do if we aren't feeling secure.

Make sure to stick around until the end of the episode for The Therapist's Take. It's the part of the show where I'll break down Dr. Levine's strategies and share how you can apply them to your own life. So here's Dr. Amir Levine on how to identify your attachment style!

Amy Morin:

Dr. Amir Levine, welcome to *The Verywell Mind Podcast*!

Amir Levine:

Oh, hi. I'm happy to be here.

Amy Morin:

So you wrote this book back 10 years ago called *Attached*.

Amir Levine:

Yeah, over 10 years ago I wrote it. I co-authored it together with my best friend from high school, Rachel Heller.

Amy Morin:

And then it was really TikTok that kind of get this pop culture resurgence. Am I right? Because I know that most books sell really well in the first few weeks they go on sale and then they kind of drop off. But I've heard your book has done the opposite, that over time it's grown in popularity, and social media has helped spread it because people are really interested in this topic of how do our attachment styles affect our relationships.

Amir Levine:

I think so. I think there was a steady growth over the last 10 years. And then I think around COVID times, things even sort of took on in an extra, the growth became even faster. I think part of it is because of TikTok and social media, and I think part of it is because of COVID and how it made people more interested in learning and improving relationships.

Amy Morin:

Absolutely, that makes sense. Before we dive in and talk about what the attachment styles are, one of the things that really stuck out to me from your book, as you explained, that attachment styles don't just come from childhood. I think that's a really big misconception that people say, "Well, it's all about how your parents raised you," but you say there's more to it than that.

Amir Levine:

I'm so glad that you are actually starting with that because I keep telling whenever anything comes out and they say, "Oh, attachment styles are determined in childhood. The way that your parents treat you is how you're going to be then. You're kind of fixated into that and how you're going to handle relationships throughout your life." And that's not what the research says. That's not what the data show us. The data show us that that's not true, that people can and do change their attachment styles and the attachment style you have in childhood is not necessarily the attachment style you're going to have as an adult.

Amy Morin:

So if it's not just the way we were raised, what else impacts what our attachment style is?

Amir Levine:

So the short answer is, people don't entirely know, but we do know some of it has to do with how we were raised. These are the first attachments that we have. But also, we're not only raised by our parents, we have other people that we're close to that can affect our attachment style even when we're children. The other things that are very important are friendships and other relationships later in life. Now researchers are honing in, especially on times during adolescence when there's a shift, we basically shift from the importance of our relationship with our parents becomes lessons to some degree, and there's a surge in how much attention and how much importance we give to our relationships with our peers. And that's another crucial time that researchers are trying to think, that this is a really crucial time for reshaping our attachment style.

Amy Morin:

Okay. So there are a lot of factors that affect what our attachment style is. It can change over time. Is it always consistent in every relationship? So if I have an anxious attachment, is it going to always be anxious with everybody I'm in a relationship with? Or does it also depend on the other person's attachment style?

Amir Levine:

Okay, these are really great questions. I'm happy you're asking this because I do think that it's almost like you have a tendency to react in a certain way. You can think, sometimes attachment styles are also called a working model, which is a predetermined conception or belief about the world and how it's supposed to be, which kind of also guides how you will see the world. What you believe is also what you tend to see, but then it's always open to new experiences and new interpretations. So you may have a tendency to experience things in a certain way, but when you meet something or someone that then gives you a completely different experience, this is a time where you can shift and change.

Amy Morin:

And you give us all hope that we all can make choices that help us to become more securely attached by changing our behavior, right?

Amir Levine:

I think so. I mean, another very important thing to say is that these attachment styles are not pathological, and there are times where it can be advantageous to have an insecure attachment style, be it anxious and avoidant, and we'll go into the definition in a moment. But here for example, around COVID, it could very much have been really advantageous to have an anxious working model, and I have many examples of that from my practice where people got very nervous, because having an anxious working model or an attachment style, it basically means that you have a more sensitive radar to potential danger in the relationship. And COVID was danger to your loved ones, and if you had a more keen sense of danger, I have several patients that very early on during the pandemic they were like, "Something is wrong. This doesn't feel right to me." They forced their significant others, their children to wear masks.

I have one particular father that really insisted that his child would wear a mask in school, and he was wearing a mask when he went to school. I think that was in January, February. And the teachers were upset because of it, and people told him that he couldn't wear a mask when he comes to school, he's scaring the other kids. But he really insisted, at some point he kept his child home from school. And soon thereafter, there was an outbreak of COVID in the classroom and several parents actually were hospitalized for a period of time and became quite ill. But he had a sixth sense for that particular danger. So you can see, in times when things are not safe, when there's danger, it could be advantageous to have an insecure attachment style.

Amy Morin:

Oh, that's an interesting point because I think we look so much at thinking that secure is the best way to go and anything else is a disadvantage. So I'm glad that you brought that up.

Amir Levine:

Yeah. And it's not about health or sickness or health, that that's healthy and that's not healthy, these are just variations in the population. About 25% of adults have an avoidant attachment style, and around 20 some percent have an anxious attachment style. So these are not anything that's abnormal. This is just a variation of a norm. And then we have to learn what we are and then we have to learn how to live with our biology and how to make the best of it in some ways.

Amy Morin:

So then let's dive in and talk about what those are. Let's start with an anxious attachment. What does that look like?

Amir Levine:

So it all has to do with how sensitive we are to potential danger in the relationship. So that's one dimension. And then the other dimension is how comfortable we deal with intimacy and closeness. So the way it looks is that if we have a very sensitive radar for danger, meaning we... And danger, from an attachment perspective, is anything that can make the people that you're attached to not available to you, that something may happen that will sort of break the bond that exists between us.

In some ways, in the back of our mind, we all have this system, and it's constantly checking and running in the back of our minds that kind of knows where our loved ones are and also knows that if anything happened, like for example, if I were to tell you that where your loved ones are, there had been a terrible earthquake or a terrorist attack, it'll be hard for you to continue with this interview. You'll have to jump off for a minute and just make sure that they're okay. It'll be really, really hard to continue to concentrate. The sirens would go off. So we all have that. But people who have an anxious working model or an anxious attachment style have a more sensitive radar. It's easier for them, their sirens would go up much more quickly than someone who's secure or avoidant. So that's the anxious working model.

But on the other hand, people with anxious attachment style have no difficulty being close. They love closeness, they love intimacy. They just are very scared of that being

taken away from them because they're very sensitive to seeing signs of potentially signs of that. That's the anxious working model.

Amy Morin:

So what are some of the problematic behaviors that we see in a relationship when somebody has an anxious attachment style?

Amir Levine:

And I love, attachment has a very specific lingo. And in our book, in *Attached*, we really try to teach the people the terms and the lingo because I find it very helpful. What usually happens, when anyone feels that their significant other is not available to them, and it's really much easier to see in children but also actually in animals, adults disguise it but not always, then what will happen is that we'll engage in protest behavior. Protest behavior meaning any behavior that will correct that potential danger and make our partner or significant other or attachment figure available to us. So protest behavior can mean yelling at them or calling them 20 times until the call or texting them, "Are you there? Are you there? Are you there?" That's what we mean by protest behavior. It's like protesting, "Hey, you're not available to me, where are you?"

We have to understand that as humans, we feel safe... People think that we feel safe if we have a lot of money in the bank or if we have a lot of things. But that's not how humans feel safe, because our emotional brain, when it basically was morphed into our emotional brain, that happened way before all of these things were even in our world. Basically all we had is the people around us. So we feel safe for other people. And if we feel that someone is not available to us, it makes us feel very unsafe and we want to correct that by making sure that they'll be available. Someone who's has an anxious working model will have a tendency to have... It's easier for them to basically start to... It's more easy for them to see the danger and then they resort to protest behavior.

Amy Morin:

Yeah. As a therapist, what I'll see is, people come into my office and one partner who's more anxious will say, well, the other person said, "Hey, I need a break. I just have to go

for a walk for a few minutes to calm down." And while that person, their partner's out for a walk, they're just thinking, "Did we just break up? What happened?" So they're texting incessantly, and the person that just went for a walk is like, "I'm going for a walk so I can get away from you and now you keep texting me every two seconds. This isn't working." And it can certainly create a lot of confusion and wreak havoc on the relationship when they don't understand each other.

Amir Levine:

I love this example because this example shows you how people don't fully understand the attachment and how it can come in the way of the relationship, because one person thinks, "Okay, this is what I need right now and you have to take care of your own feelings while I'm gone." But that's not how relationships work. That's not how our attachment works. If we understand the biology, we see it from a very different perspective. We understand that once you get attached to someone, you become like a one physiological unit. There is no longer "You have your emotions. I have my emotions." Things that we don't even have control over, get controlled by the presence or absence of our partner.

There are studies that show that our sleep is affected whether our partner is there or not. Or our breathing rate, our heart rate, our pulse, all these things that we have no control over are now affected by the presence or absence of our partner or also by the quality of our relationship. There's stumps to studies that show that if we're in a secure relationship and we have a cut, it'll heal faster. So we're talking about a very fundamental physiological level. And in the example that you gave me, someone feels, "Okay, I'm overwhelmed. I need to cool down for a minute," not thinking about the other person, whereas you really have to think about yourself as a unit. And if you think about it from that perspective, then you understand, "Okay, I have an important role, and my role is that I have to make sure that my partner calms down. And then once their calm, I can then go and do what I needed to do and take care of myself." But there needs to be a give and take here.

Amy Morin:

I like that part of the book, that you challenged the idea that we're all responsible for our own emotions all the time. You make it clear that, no, we have some role in how other people feel as well.

Amir Levine:

Completely. It just such a fundamental understanding of the biology and the physiology that leads to that conclusion. And it completely changes all of the dynamics in relationships, like the example that you gave me, which oftentimes happens when people are more avoidant, so now we didn't get to that, the avoided attachment style. So really, the hallmark of that is that they don't really feel comfortable with too much closeness and intimacy. And what they do is they use what we call deactivating strategies, little different things that they instill into their relationship to create a little bit more distance. If you think about it, who is the most sensitive to that? That would be the anxious because that's danger, right? You're instilling distance unavailability. So that's scary for them. So saying, "Okay, I'm going to go for a walk," during a fight, that's really scary for someone who's anxious because immediately, they think, "Oh my God, that's the end of the relationship. They want to break up with me." And then they just become frantic.

So people who are avoidant have this tendency to really highlight the importance of self-reliance above anything else and that everyone should be self-reliant almost in defensive way. But people who are secure oftentimes have this innate understanding because they love to be close, but they also don't have a sensitive radar, so they don't feel the danger too much. So in that example that you gave me, if someone would be texting and texting, they'll answer the phone or they'll answer the text. Maybe instead of texting back, they'll call their partner and say, "Hey, listen, I know that we just had a fight. Don't worry, I'll be back. I love you. We're not breaking up. I just need a minute or two, but if you want me, I'll come back right away. So that's fine. I wanted to just go out and really blow some steam and come back, but if you want me, I can come back right away." So that's the secure person, because they don't feel, "Oh my God, what do you want from me? I need my space."

Because if you think about it, a fight is oftentimes an opportunity, or during a fight we have this option of becoming closer, and it's hard for avoidance. So what happens in a fight for someone who's avoidant, they check out. Immediately, they just want to check out. Some of it, it's not so much because of the fight, but it's because of the fear of what will happen if you actually get over the fight and that closeness that it may bring. That sometimes is much scarier for them than the fight itself.

Amy Morin:

And I think that's difficult for people who are anxious to comprehend because we think, why would you be scared to be close with somebody you're in a relationship with? But let's say you have an anxious person and an avoidant person in a relationship and they're talking about moving in together, the anxious person's already planning their furniture, where they're going to put it, and the avoidant person is already thinking about the freedom that they're going to lose. They're more focused on, "Ooh, I don't want to be smothered by this person."

Amir Levine:

Right, exactly. I think that's a great example. There's always this, and we write about that in *Attached*, we write about how there's a conflict. There's constant conflict about... There's a whole chapter there about conflict and conflict resolution, and we really divided the types of conflict into two. The day-to-day kind of conflict, "No, I don't want to do the laundry. No, you do the laundry," or, "I don't want to walk the dog. You walk the dog." And then in people that have insecure attachment, especially anxious and avoidant, there's oftentimes a conflict that surrounds around how much closeness we want. And it gets negotiated all the time. And it brings a lot of dissatisfaction and pain in to these people's relationship, especially because oftentimes it's personalized.

So the avoidant will tell the other person, "Oh, you're too needy, you're too..." And then the anxious oftentimes will say, "Yes, well, I've had this trauma from past life." And it's really blowing it out of proportion when it's just a simple need for a little bit more distance and it's not personal. For the person who's anxious, they would personalize it and they would feel, "Oh my God, that's terrible. The fact that they don't want to move in

together right away, or they're having second thoughts about it or it's hard for them, that means that they don't love me enough. If they love me enough, then they would jump right in." And that's another myth that exists in our society, is that everyone is capable of the same amount of love. And then it only a matter of falling in love with someone enough that that love would be able to show.

We see it in all the romantic comedies oftentimes like, "Oh, these people that were very hard to get, that never really dated anyone. And then all of a sudden this person comes into their life and they change completely and become the most loving and the most dotting partners." But that's not what the research shows. The research shows oftentimes that if you have an avoidant attachment style, it's not all of a sudden you become this lovey-dovey person. It's going to be hard for you to be really close to someone and you'll need your distance. And the secret is, to give you your distance, and I always say, almost for someone avoidant, it's like a street cap, it's like laying out the milk and let them come on their own terms and close like that. And then over time you start to feel more and more comfortable feeling close and it's not as threatening.

Amy Morin:

So that makes sense then for what an avoidant person looks like. What about if somebody's securely attached, what does a secure attachment look like?

Amir Levine:

So secure attachment, I really have come to see it over the years as people have this amazing talent for being in relationships. They really know almost seamlessly how to solve different potential conflicts in relationship. So much so that relationships with them oftentimes are seamless. And really, even though I know that people often say relationships are a lot of work, relationships are a lot of work, but with secure people, they're really not that much hard work because they're so good at being in a relationship. And part of the problem is, not part of the problem actually, part of the reason is, is that they don't have such a sensitive radar and they're not afraid of closeness. So if there's a lot of closeness, but you don't really think, "Oh my God, my partner is upset with me," that means that the relationship's going to end. You don't take

it... "Well, they're upset now. They'll go over it. They've been upset before and that's fine." Or they need to go out on a walk, I mean, it doesn't seem as threatening. You don't personalize it.

I think that if you don't have a sensitive radar, then life is much easier. You just don't see a lot of the potential threat in the relationship. But things that can happen to secure people won't usually happen to anxious people. Anxious people will usually know if someone is cheating on them. They feel the pulse of their relationship all the time. But someone secure, many, many sort of potentially bad things can happen to them in their relationship and they just won't know it because their radar is not that sensitive.

Amy Morin:

Interesting. So another plus side potentially of being more anxious is you would figure that out sooner.

Amir Levine:

Yeah.

Amy Morin:

So how easy is it for people to figure out which one they are?

Amir Levine:

I think for most of us, many people, just from the description, they can say, "Oh my God, I'm definitely this," or, "I'm definitely that."

Amy Morin:

Yeah.

Amir Levine:

Sometimes I've noticed some people who are avoidant will decide that they're secure. It's like, "Oh yeah, no, I like closeness. It's just that I haven't met the right person and I don't really need anyone." They don't really realize that when they say that, that usually means that they're not secure. Because when you say, "I don't really need anyone," by

definition, that kind of drives you more towards avoidance. We don't look at it as categorical so much anymore. We think about it more on the spectrum. So people can have some secure traits but still be avoidant. So there are different flavors of that. Right? And then depending on who we are with, that can really either bring out all of the avoidance in us or all the anxiety in us. Or if we're with someone who's secure, which is almost like blood type O+, O-, that you can actually give anyone, so if you're secure, you can really many times fit in with anyone, because let's say...

I love the example of someone that I know, she's sort of a very successful career woman. After reading the book, she said, "Oh, for sure, my husband is completely avoidant, but that actually really works for me because I'm gone a lot for work." She travels, she's a consultant. "I'm traveling at least half of the month, but it's fine for him. He totally deals with it. I don't feel that I have to call him a lot or really babysit him in any particular way." She's like, "Then he comes back, he's very happy, but it's good for him also that I'm gone for a while." So that's an example of how it can work for someone who's avoidant and someone's secure. Or sometimes avoidants, when secures are gone a lot, they don't really see the threat in it so much. They think, "Well, yeah, they have to go. They have to go work. They can't be here for too long." Or sometimes even for secures, it's easier to deal with polyamorous relationships and open relationships. It just doesn't seem as threatening.

Amy Morin:

Interesting. So the matchup certainly matters, right? If you have an anxious person who's with a secure person, over time, their anxiety might go down. But if you have an anxious person with an avoidant person, it might double down. They might end up becoming more clingy and doing these protest behaviors more often. Right?

Amir Levine:

Yeah. Because if you think about it, someone who's anxious, very sensitive radar, with someone's secure, there's no danger, so the alarm doesn't go off. So they may seem entirely secure from pretty early on. They just have to get... Sometimes what happens in my practice at least is that I see patients who they haven't really

experienced a secure relationship at all in their lives. And then when they experience it the first time, they just don't know what to do with it. It feels so strange to them and so unfamiliar. It's almost like being in a different planet. And part of the work is to really talk them down. It's like, "No, you don't have to be so scared. Yes, it's unknown. The terrain is not known, but stick around. Because if you just are able to give this a chance instead of running away, because that in of itself feels dangerous, it's just unknown, but if you stick around enough, there's a great promise ahead, a promise of a really good life."

And then they kind of calm down and see, "Wow, yeah. Actually, I feel good here. I don't feel threatened. I don't feel judged. I feel understood." And then they can become more secure. Same thing with the avoidants, they are giving the space that they need and then they feel, "Wow, I'm really..." Oftentimes they say, "No, I don't need anyone." All those jokes. "He or she manipulated me into marrying them, so now I'm with them." All these jokes that men oftentimes say, but not only, sometimes women. These are kind of the avoidants, sort of like saying stuff even though they themselves don't even realize how attached they are and how devoted they can be over time.

Amy Morin:

So do you think when people are looking for a partner, should they seek out somebody who is secure?

Amir Levine:

I think so. I think if you're avoidant... I mean, by the way, research shows that if you are secure and you've been traumatized enough by bad relationships, maybe cheated on in a terrible way, you can also become insecure. But I think in general for secures, they have much more room to choose because it's not that crucial. They can oftentimes help the other person become more secure. I definitely think if you're anxious or avoidant, that you don't want to go with someone else who's anxious or avoidant because it can really make life much, much harder. But again, different people also vary in their ability to change.

I've had couples come in, the one person is more avoidant. And I would explain to them some of what we've talked about here, how the physiology dictates that we're one unit

and know they are responsible for their partner's well-being, and how it actually can be really simple to meet those needs in a way that will actually give them more time on their own. And they really understand that one or two sessions, and they can change their behavior completely. They can sort of really push the whole diet towards more security.

But then some people will never even come to see me because they're so afraid of the closeness. They just don't want or don't have the capacity to sort of work in that way, in psychotherapy or in couples therapy or on their own towards more security. So it really depends. But in general, that's part of what the Attached is about, is about learning how to identify your own attachment styles, but at the same time also learning to identify other people's attachment styles and really change the way that you see them and see yourself based on those attachment styles, like not personalized things. Or if you're dating also, choose to go secure because that's the easiest way and that's the way that will promise you the most chances of long-term relationship satisfaction. At least that's what the research shows.

Amy Morin:

And you make it clear in the book that, yes, if you are matched with somebody who maybe doesn't have the same attachment style, you're already married, you're not necessarily doomed, but we can all learn how to act more secure. Perhaps over time when our behaviors change, it also changes our partner's behaviors and then we feel more secure.

Amir Levine:

Definitely. Even just trying to do the secure thing in a relationship and then seeing how your partner reacts to it, that in of itself can help you get the answers that you need, whether this relationship can work or not. I call it keeping your side of the street clean. When you keep your side of the street secure, then you see the reactions from the other person and you can really understand it better, and you can see whether you can live with it or not.

Amy Morin:

I love it. Well, Dr. Levine, thank you so much for being on The Verywell Mind Podcast. I hope all of our listeners go out and buy a copy of Attached, so they can learn more about their attachment styles, their partners, and I suspect it will help them understand themselves and their relationships a lot more.

Amir Levine:

Thank you very much. Great questions. I really enjoyed this conversation.

Amy Morin:

Welcome to The Therapist's Take! It's the part of the show where I'll break down Dr. Levine's strategies and share how you can apply them to your own life. Here are three strategies you can try to address your attachment style.

Number one: work on identifying your attachment style. Invest some time into thinking about which attachment style best describes you (secure, anxious, or avoidant), and consider how your attachment style plays out in your relationship. Are you too clingy sometimes? Do you push your partner away? Or are you able to tolerate some anxiety and some distance?

This episode might have given you some clarity on your attachment style, or maybe you already knew. But if you aren't sure, or you think you can identify yourself in a few different ones, do a little research. When you have a better understanding of your attachment, some of your behavior will make more sense. I've worked with a lot of therapy clients over the years who say things like, "I start to act like a completely different person when my partner and I argue. I don't know what comes over me." But they're usually referring to their attachment style. They might have an anxious attachment, and they are requesting constant reassurance. Or maybe they're avoidant, and they struggle to stay close to somebody. So spend a little time learning about which one best describes you and how it plays out in your relationship.

Number two: identify your partner's attachment style. Take some time to step back and consider your partner's attachment style too. Understanding their style can give you

some great insight into their behavior. You might be less likely to take things personally once you understand them better. And you might be better equipped to support them. If your partner's avoidant, give them space (which is hard to do though if you're anxious). And if they're anxious, they might need some support sometimes, of course. But you can also set limits. You might tell them that you're taking a break to calm yourself down so that they don't think you're stepping away from the conversation because you're breaking up with them (which is something that anxious people do sometimes). When you understand their attachment style, you can get a better understanding of how you can respond and how you can support one another.

And number three: if you're not secure, work on changing your attachment style if you want. Dr. Levine says we're all capable of changing our attachment style, and we can learn how to do that. Of course, being in a relationship with a securely attached person might help, but it's not necessarily a requirement. You can also work on building your self-worth, and you can learn skills to manage uncomfortable feelings in a healthy way that won't damage the relationship. Tolerating the anxiety or the closeness, for example, might help you grow more comfortable with it. But you might need to heal some old wounds too, which could require some professional help. Just know it's possible to become more securely attached. And by doing so, you'll likely be able to enjoy your relationships and your life more.

So those are three of Dr. Levine's tips that I highly recommend. Learn about your attachment style, identify your partner's attachment style, and (if you're not secure) work on finding ways to improve your attachment. To learn more about adult attachment, check out Dr. Levine's book, *Attached: The New Science of Adult Attachment and How It Can Help You Find — and Keep — Love*.

If you know someone who could benefit from hearing this message, share this show with them! Simply sharing a link to this episode could help someone feel better and grow stronger.

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