

Book Excerpt

Topic: Do Avoidants Desire Connection and Intimacy?

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Title: Attachment Theory: A Guide to Strengthening the Relationships in Your Life

Referenced Page(s): 99

... Fearful-Avoidants had incongruency in their childhood, which was often paired with some form of abuse—whether it be physical, emotional, or sexual. Typically, they had some sort of emotional connection with one or both caregivers, who were also a victim to, or the perpetrator of, pain. They began to associate emotional connection with a lack of safety, and thus developed a strong aversion to vulnerability. However, humans are biologically hardwired to seek connection. For the Fearful-Avoidant, this creates a strong need for emotional connection in conjunction with a sense of safety.

Notes on the Quote:

People whose dominant attachment style is Avoidant have the same desire for connection that people with other styles feel. This issue for Avoidants is the association of connection and intimacy with harm. The parent who had the strongest emotional connection with the child may have acted in ways that harmed or frightened the child or that parent may have been the victim of abuse or harm from the other parent or someone else. Either way, the child grows to associate closeness with a feeling of fear, of being in danger.

This attachment style is activated by intimacy or attempts at intimacy. The resulting behavior is fight, flight, freeze or fawn. No matter which behavior is triggered, the desired intimacy is pushed away. Only then, does the Avoidant feel safe... safe, but lonely.

