

THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO ATTACHMENT

ATTACHMENT DECODED: YOUR BLUEPRINT FOR CONNECTION

MANTALKS

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to what might be the longest free guide to attachment on the Internet. Don't quote me on that, but let's just say we here at ManTalks have been thorough.

Why? Well, I've been working with men for over a decade now, and I've watched the rise of attachment work for a long time. There's some wildly good info out there, but there's also a lot of half-baked, well-intentioned, or straight-up misinformed info as well.

I'd like to help change that, because I think the framework or lens of attachment is an incredibly powerful way of looking at—and enhancing—multiple parts of your life, from self-care priorities to intimate relationships to how you interact with work colleagues.

So without further ado, let's dig in. In this guide, you'll find the definition of attachment, how it forms, the four main “styles”, and some straightforward practices you can put in place to work on each of them.

ATTACHMENT: THE SIMPLE DEFINITION

Let's clear the fog right at the start by defining attachment strongly and simply.

Psychologically speaking, attachment is the connection to other people, especially people who are important to you.

HOW CHILDREN “ATTACH”

The attachment process for a child can be divided into three parts.

1. Having a need
2. Expressing that need
3. Having that need met by a parent or caregiver

For example...

- You're hungry.
- You cry because you're 8 months old and what are words
- Your mom feeds you.

Bam. That's a basic attachment process for an infant. As you grow up, more nuance and complex interaction get added in and layered on top (e.g. mom makes your favorite food after a rough day at school).

A mentor of mine, the legendary gestalt therapist Duey Freeman, makes it even simpler.

Go through a hard time with someone, and come out the other side okay.

The more this process happens—and the more often it's successful—the more you're able to connect, bond, and have a solid relationship with the person you went through a hard time with.

That's because on a deep, primal level, this process teaches you that the world around you AND you are okay.

All that said, you can probably guess that attachment in this sense is essential across your entire life, but it's crucial in childhood. Almost always, the hard time is going to be something you as a child can't express, and the person you're with is going to be a caregiver (i.e. parent, grandparent, babysitter, etc.)

But as you grow up, that caregiver role gets broadened into friends, partners, and even authority figures. Here are two examples.

You're four years old, and accidentally knock over grandma's priceless novelty plate collection (the hard time). It's emotionally overwhelming; you already have a good idea of how important those plates are, so you start crying (comfort is the need).

Your grandma is also upset, but she prioritizes ensuring you're ok, and that you know accidents happen. Just try to be more careful next time (the need is met).

OR

You're fifteen. Despite your best efforts, you got absolutely destroyed by the last math test. You're with your math teacher, and you admit you tried harder than ever this time, but it just wasn't good enough. You feel like shit.

Your teacher nods, and a gentle, knowing look crosses his face. He says he had serious issues with math too at your age, and he can understand how much it sucks to go through that. He also mentions that he's noticed how hard you've worked, and how that is the important part. When you're ready, he'll make some extra time for you so you can tackle some homework together.

From these two examples, you can get a pretty solid idea of the process—when it goes right. But what about when things get a little off the rails?

Read on, my friend, read on.

ATTACHMENT STYLES

Here's where things get interesting. Those early childhood years form your blueprint for connection to other people.

So even though you're constantly connecting to people throughout your life—from kids in school to your first crush to your college roommate—the steps you go through largely remain the same. This is what's called your attachment style. You could also call it an attachment pattern or template.

The examples on the previous page are solid examples of how ONE kind of attachment gets formed: secure.

But life isn't always so cut-and-dry, people definitely make mistakes, and sometimes shit just goes wrong.

Research from leading scientists, psychologists, and sociologists generally categorizes attachment into four styles or patterns. The specific names can change depending on who you talk to, but the underlying behaviors stay the same.

Below, you'll find a breakdown of each, their signs and signals, how they show up in your relationships, and more.

CAVEATS (OR MYTHS ABOUT ATTACHMENT)

There are a handful of points to consider and common ideas about attachment we need to debunk before digging in further. Try to keep these in mind.

- There's always some overlap: People are complex. You may find your own personal patterns overlap with more than one attachment style. That's fine; you'll always have one that's more dominant, like being right-handed vs. left-handed.
- No caregiver can be 100% consistent: A kid isn't automatically, permanently damaged from mistakes. In fact, studies have shown that kids develop secure attachment when needs are met around 60-70% of the time.

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- Healing isn't linear: If you're reading this to help you move to a more secure attachment style, be prepared for it to take a while, with the odd backslide. That's just the inconvenient facts.
 - You're not broken: Lots of rhetoric out there says any attachment style other than secure is something to kill off or destroy. That doesn't work. An attachment style is an adaptive strategy you had to use to survive. That's all.
 - Most parents aren't pure evil: Something I hear often is a demonizing of parents who were trying to do their best with limited time, knowledge, understanding, and their own attachment/other issues. Just because you wound up not having a secure attachment style doesn't mean your mom is DSM-V narcissist. Your work will be a hell of a lot easier if you allow for a balance of grace and accountability.

Let's dig into each of the four major attachment styles.

SECURE ATTACHMENT

Secure attachment arises from a robust, safe bond between you as a child and your caregivers. There's lots of safety, trust, and comfort overall, and your parent/grandparent/caregiver consistently responds to your needs in a sensitive and attuned way.

What this ultimately helps you develop is a sense of trust in the world around you and an urge to explore. It also gives a boost to social, emotional, and cognitive development because you know you have someone to lean on.

Over time, this tends to result in healthier relationships, better emotional regulation skills, and more resiliency.

Where It Comes From

Below is the short list of what develops secure attachment during childhood. Secure attachment grows when:

- Needs are consistently met: Like I said above. You're hungry, you're fed. Bam. This doesn't have to happen 100% of the time.
- Repair is attempted: When needs don't get met, there's generally work from the caregiver to repair the connection.
- Boundaries are healthy: And set consistently! Variable or porous boundaries lead to uncertainty.

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- There's positive reinforcement: Meaning encouragement of healthy risk and praise of effort more than praise of result.
 - Consistent, effective communication: There's regular response when you reach out, whether that's verbal or otherwise.

Signs And Signals

All of the above will manifest what's below. There are five major signs of a secure attachment style.

- Engaging in healthy conflict and finding resolutions. You can navigate conflict and resolve it within 24 to 72 hours.
- Trusting yourself and others. There's trust in other people to not to react impulsively or damage any relationship. You can freely express desires and concerns without fear of judgment or rejection.
- Regulating yourself and allowing co-regulation. In a relationship setting, there's set tactics for how to calm down in stressful situations. You can trust your partner to help them regulate their emotions when needed, creating a balance of self-regulation and co-regulation.
- Balancing independence and togetherness. There's a healthy balance between spending time alone and with others. You've got your own life, but also actively invest time and energy into your partner, friendships, and work relationships.
- Creating, maintaining, and repairing connection. Secure individuals consistently create moments of connection with people, work to maintain that connection, and repair it when needed.

Again, it's important to note that no one is going to get 100% on this behavior, and children can form secure attachment when needs are met even 60% of the time.

There are always going to be moments of disconnect, misunderstanding, and more. What's important is that there are checks and balances in place—like nervous system regulation skills—to help repair anything that comes up.

ANXIOUS ATTACHMENT

There are a number of different factors that play into anxious attachment, but the very core is almost always a single belief: I'm not okay if you're not okay. Something (or some things) happened in childhood that caused you to learn that your needs, your wants, even your sense of safety should always be in last place.

But of course, you still have needs, so stress levels are typically high. You're always lying in wait to take care of everything except you so that maybe, just maybe, there's some time left for your own needs.

Where It Comes From

- Inconsistent parental responses: Your caregivers were very inconsistent in meeting your needs as a child. You learned that attention and care are unpredictable. This leads to uncertainty and anxiety about whether or not you'll be okay, and that later manifests as insecurity in relationships.
- Overly intrusive or overbearing caregivers: You were a victim of helicopter parenting or overly controlling caregivers, which means you never really learned what independence was. You may have grown up feeling that the world is dangerous and that you can't trust yourself to make good decisions.
- Emotional dependence encouraged by caregivers: One or both of your parents may have made you emotionally dependent on them to make up for their own insecurities. This is typically unconscious and unintentional, but it can occasionally be purposeful. You grew up feeling you won't be able to function independently without someone else's constant support.
- Parental unavailability, absence, rejection, or neglect: You lacked secure emotional connection because of the above, which caused a deep anxiety about being rejected or abandoned.
- Trauma, abuse, or PTSD: Whether it was physical, emotional, or verbal abuse, these traumatic experiences ramped up the uncertainty and anxiety in your childhood life. You often feel heightened anxiety in any relationship, especially during moments of conflict or intensity, because it triggers memories of past trauma.

Signs And Signals

Generally speaking, folks with anxious attachment won't have a lot of self-worth to draw from, and several codependent behaviors come out of this. Here are the five big ones.

- Hypervigilance and external focus: You're often preoccupied with other people's emotions and actions, and don't pay attention to your own needs. There's a sense of "if they're not ok, I'm not ok." Your sense of security depends on how your partner is feeling or behaving.

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- Constant need for validation: Instead of seeking support, you seek validation. You need reassurance—especially from partners—that everything is okay. This often manifests in behaviors like over-texting, constantly checking in, and frequently asking if something's wrong.
 - Feeling secondary to others' needs: You often feel that your own needs, desires, and emotions are way less important than other people's. You tend to over-index everyone else's wellbeing (aka people pleasing) in order to feel safe.
 - Fear of abandonment and rejection: You have a strong fear of being left behind or rejected. Another reason to become clingy and overly dependent on a partner.
 - Over-sensitivity to relationship dynamics: Any change in a relationship dynamic feels mildly (or wildly) terrifying, and you tend to compensate with self-abandonment or emotional volatility.

AVOIDANT ATTACHMENT

I have a soft spot in my heart for avoidant attached people, because I was one myself.

This attachment style often has a desire to be overly independent and self-sufficient, typically to the point of pushing others away, and having a lack of trust in relationships in general. This can also mean that increasing closeness will generate a ton of anxiety for you. For example, if your partner wants to talk about moving in together, it'll probably set off alarm bells.

Secondly, in order to reinforce the independence and self-sufficiency, avoidants can sometimes have a habit of viewing others more negatively and themselves more positively. In an intimate relationship, they may feel that the other person is causing all the issues and they're the low-maintenance one.

Not necessarily true.

Where It Comes From

One of the first things you'll notice is that some origin points for avoidant attachment overlap or are similar to anxious attachment. This is because your response as a child can vary, obviously. Two people can experience the same thing and learn two very different lessons!

The five most common origins for avoidant attachment are:

- Emotional distance from caregivers: A caregiver of yours was emotionally distant, unresponsive, or consistently failed to meet your needs, so you learned that vulnerability and/or seeking comfort doesn't get you anywhere. This ultimately leads to the belief that, at best, your emotions don't matter. At worst, they cause more problems than they solve and should actively be suppressed.
- Premature independence: Due to circumstance or tragedy, you were pushed to become independent/mature too early. For example, you had to take care of your siblings because your parents were never around, or your parent was sick and couldn't respond to your needs consistently. As an adult, you may not feel like you had the chance to be "be a kid", so you hyper-prioritize your desires as an adult.
- Rejection of attachment needs: Your attempts to seek comfort or support were met with rejection, punishment, or emotional volatility. You learned that it's basically never safe to express your needs.
- Inconsistent or unpredictable intimacy: If caregivers were sometimes nurturing but right after times cold, neglectful, or even abusive, you learn to distrust closeness and intimacy. It's unpredictable and unsafe, and that leads to emotional withdrawal.
- Manipulation and control by caregivers: When parents are overly controlling or manipulative, you might feel that you can't express true emotions or needs. This can create deep mistrust of relationships and lead to the avoidance of closeness.

Signs And Signals

- Emotional distancing: You tend to pull away emotionally when intimacy increases. More often than not, you avoid sharing personal desires or getting into deep conversations. Most (if not all) of your relationships are surface-level. If you search for #aloof on Instagram, your pic is in the top 10.
- Allergic to intimacy: You want intimacy but shut down when your partner tries to initiate. This can be a conscious or unconscious reaction, and you end up making excuses or justifications for avoiding closeness. You'll also have a hard time returning affection.

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- Over-prioritizing independence: Respecting autonomy is great, but you place almost all your value on it. Anything that infringes on that feels threatening. This also means you tend to deflect or avoid conversations that would progress a relationship (e.g. moving in together), and have a hard time working in a team or delegating authority.
 - Inconsistent communication: This is usually subconscious. You'll forget to text back, avoid making plans, or find ways of avoiding alone time with people you're "close" to.
 - Rigid boundaries: Unlike anxious attachment people, avoidants will have boundaries that feel like a wall covered in spikes.
 - Blame-shifting: This goes hand in hand with prioritizing independence. You may place the blame for issues on a partner or colleague, because you don't want to get trapped. You find it hard to take responsibility.

FEARFUL-AVOIDANT ATTACHMENT

This style is more rare and has a lot of names, with the most common being "disorganized" or "anxious-avoidant" attachment. That name doesn't get to the heart of what it feels like to have this attachment style, in my opinion, so I choose to go with fearful-avoidant.

You'll notice that it's almost like a merged version of anxious and avoidant styles, especially in how it originates. The end result, however, is somewhat different.

Where It Comes From

- Volatile caregiving: You had one or more caregivers who were distant and stonewalling you one moment, available the next, and then abusive or smothering after. This wild inconsistency causes fear and anxiety around whether others will meet their emotional needs.
- Trauma and abuse: Experiences of physical, emotional, or sexual abuse, particularly from caregivers, are a big contributor. These traumas cause the hypervigilance of anxious attachment, plus the heightened fear of closeness that avoidants carry. You learn to interpret intimacy as something with extreme risk of harm.
- Caregiver neglect: You were neglected—whether emotionally or physically. This overlaps heavily with avoidant attachment.

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- Caregivers with mental health or substance abuse issues: For example, one of your parents struggled with mental illness (e.g., bipolar disorder) or alcoholism. This created a very unpredictable environment. You didn't know what version of dad you would get when he got home.
 - Exposure to domestic abuse and high conflict: You grew up witnessing domestic abuse or growing up in an environment with heavy levels of conflict. You inadvertently learned relationships are inherently unsafe.
 - Parentification: Often, thanks to one of the above, you were forced into the caregiver role for your parent or siblings. AKA, you took on responsibilities that are inappropriate for your age. You're a kid though, so the demands and standards of the job are impossibly high for you. You become very self-reliant but avoid or get anxious when anyone expresses dependency on you.

Signs And Signals

- Desire (and fear) of intimacy: You deeply crave closeness, but get wildly fearful of it. This leads to a constant push-pull dynamic where you'll initiate intimacy but pull away when it gets too real, so to speak. You may even sabotage genuine closeness.
- Emotional volatility: You likely didn't get a lot of emotional regulation or self-soothing skills taught to you, so you don't have a good handle on your anger, sadness, or joy.
- Fear of abandonment: Even small signs of potential rejection or abandonment can trigger intense anxiety or emotional withdrawal. This builds into hypervigilance in relationships and a strong reaction to feelings of distance from a partner.
- Difficulty trusting others: You have a hard time trusting just about anyone, but this amps up in romantic relationships. You often question whether your partner is being genuine or reliable because you're constantly expecting to be hurt, deceived, or betrayed.
- High sensitivity to perceived rejection: Synced up with emotional volatility, even the smallest perceived slight or rejection can feel extremely painful.
- Negative view of others: You tend to judge other people's actions harshly, and have an overall negative view of people in general.
- Internal conflict and self-doubt: You often feel torn between a desire for connection and a fear of vulnerability. You end up questioning not just others but your own decisions and motivations. You ultimately tend to push hard to be in relationships, but when things get serious, you freak out.

HEALING ATTACHMENT ISSUES

INTRO

The great thing about a pattern? It can be changed.

Maybe you've felt trapped in endless cycles of text-bombing partners or losing your shit the second a colleague critiques your work. Maybe you're tired of thinking everyone is going to screw you at some point, so you keep friends and family and partners at arms length.

That can—and does—change. Let's get right to what you need to practice in order to move away from a maladaptive attachment style to something more secure, grounded, and healthy. Something that's going to bring you what you ultimately want.

The next three steps are a useful starting point for every attachment style. Keep reading for more specific tactics.

ONE: FIGURE OUT THE WHEN

The first step is probably the biggest. Once you've identified what attachment pattern you typically enact, figure out when the pattern started. This gives you a much clearer picture of where to begin the real work of de-patterning yourself.

The reason for this is, attachment issues can manifest differently depending on when they formed in your childhood. Each stage of your life maps roughly to a particular existential question that needs answering. You don't know you're doing this; it's an unconscious process.

How this question gets answered—whether it's by you or by a caregiver—has a deep impact on your attachment style, your core worldview (the default way you see people and life in general), and what you're attracted to.

Development Stage	Question
0 - 18 months	“Is the world okay?”
18 months - 3 years	“Am I okay?”
3 years - 6 years	“How much can I do?”
6 years - 11 years	“How well can I do?”
11 years - 23 years	“Who am I?”

Here are some real-life examples so you can get a feel for how this works.

Gabor Maté, the famed psychologist, was handed off by his mother to a total stranger at 11 months old. It was 1944, and the Nazis were deporting Hungary’s Jews to Auschwitz. His mother got him out of there to keep him safe, but from the perspective of 11-month-old Gabor, he was abandoned in a very traumatic way. He learned that no, the world was NOT okay. To this day, he admits being triggered by any perceived abandonment in a way that lines up with fearful-avoidant attachment.

My own childhood had a fair amount of inconsistency, enough that it was about the only thing I could expect. When I brought a problem forward, sometimes they’d help, but other times they’d lose their shit. A lot of this came up when I was around age 7-8, so I learned that my feelings, wants, and core desires just weren’t worthy. They were a sign that I wasn’t good enough to be valued. So, I began prioritizing taking care of myself, being alone, and never expressing what I actually felt, needed, or had a problem with. Classic avoidant attachment.

The Work

Grab your journal! For the next few days, make dedicated time to reflect on when/where your attachment style came from, ideally at least 15 minutes a day.

- Which signs and signals from the styles resonate with you?
- What memories come up?

Write down events that you remember or specific words and behavior patterns that your internal dialogue seems to repeat. Be as detailed as you can handle, and include your age if you can.

Take a look at the above “Development Stage” table and reflect on how you learned to answer the appropriate question (e.g. “my parent’s divorce when I was 12 led to me doubt who I was; I couldn’t trust my own internal compass”)

Chronic Versus Acute

It’s important to note that there may not always be a single start point for your attachment style (e.g. parental divorce). It may be that you were faced repeatedly with a negative experience (e.g. repeatedly shamed for your appearance) over the years.

So if you have trouble pinpointing a specific origin point, don’t stress. Just write down what you can remember.

TWO: CONNECT TO YOUR EXPERIENCE

And here’s the part most men hate! Trust me, though, it’s worth the discomfort.

To put it simply, you’re going to have to connect and re-connect to what came up in step one, but you’re going to try and experience them as the child version of you experienced them.

The reason this step is so damn nasty is that we’re generally taught to compartmentalize or rationalize the negative things that happen to us. Thoughts like:

- I was just a stupid kid
- They were doing their best
- That’s just how life is

The DFE

Another way of looking at this is what I call connecting to the DFE: Direct Felt Experience. This means not just what it “feels like” emotionally, but what sensations you’re having in your body in the moment.

In my work with thousands of men from all different walks of life, this has been an effective way of creating connection with what’s really going on. It’s not always the most enjoyable experience, but it works. Here’s how.

The Work

Do this for a few days, ideally once a day for about 15-20 minutes.

1. Sit or lie down in a comfortable position.
2. Close your eyes and take a few deep breaths to settle your mind.
3. When you feel you’re settled, take one of the events or patterns that came up when you were reflecting in step one.
4. As you breathe in, feel what comes up in your body. Is there tension or tightness anywhere? A feeling of energy? Where is it located?
5. As you breathe out, let your exhale be nice and long. Visualize some of the tension or energy dissolving or flaking off and carried away from you by that exhale.
6. Continue with this imagery for at least 10 minutes, allowing your breath to flow naturally and deeply.
7. When you’re done, come back to your journal. Reflect on how any sensations might be connected to what you experienced as a child. For example, a fearful experience might cause tension in your legs from wanting to run or your breathing might suddenly get shallow.

When You're Done: First off, celebrate this small victory. A lot of people just avoid this.

Incorporate these techniques into a daily routine. When I began including even just five minutes of this into my morning, it was a game changer.

The key to success in breathwork, like any practice, is consistency. When you DO slip up, use it as an opportunity for discovery.

What initiated the slip-up? Was the day just too busy? Was there emotional resistance?

TACTICS YOU CAN USE WHEN ATTACHMENT ISSUES SPIKE

Below are some starting points you can use literally today. I've given these same ones to many, many clients, and they'll serve you well.

ANXIOUS ATTACHMENT

The biggest focus for anxious folks is getting your internal state more regulated. You've probably spent a lot of your life people-pleasing, neglecting self-care, and deprecating everything from your health to your accomplishments. Hard truth: that's going to have to stop, and it's not going to feel nice. Here's where to begin.

- Self-regulation techniques: This is the biggest and best first step by far. Learn how to regulate your nervous system using techniques like breathwork, meditation, and exercise. A good start point is the box breath: Inhale for a count of 4, hold for 4, exhale for 4, hold for 4. Repeat that for 5 minutes.
- Exposure therapy: As the old saying goes, the dose makes the poison. Try to face situations that trigger anxious feelings gradually. For example, if you're an over-texter when someone hasn't replied quickly enough, set a timer for 10 minutes, then text back—once. Slowly exposing yourself to these stressors helps build resilience and reduces dependence on external validation.
- Build self-esteem and self-worth: Anxious attachers often rely on others for validation (remember the phrase "I'm not ok if you're not ok). This means it's essential to cultivate an internal sense of worth.
- Detach worth and safety from external sources: Instead of relying on others 100% for validation, practice healthy detachment. This can take a lot of different forms, but a great place to start is embracing and developing something you're passionate about. Personal example: I love photography, and get a lot of self-validation from honing my skills and taking my camera with me on trips. Note: this doesn't mean avoiding relationships, it means creating space to feel secure without constant reassurance.

AVOIDANT ATTACHMENT

Most ways of combating avoidant attachment are going to be “uncomfortably close”. You’ll have to brush up against the urge to shut down, back away, or get the hell out of dodge pretty often.

And it’s going to suck at first. There’s just no way around that. But it WILL get easier.

What can help with each of the following tactics is a simple question to reframe the situation. When closeness begins to feel threatening, or when you feel the urge to pull away, ask yourself, “If it were putting this relationship first, what choice would I make?”.

This changes the focus from pure self-protection to relational growth.

- Prioritize your experience: Avoidants tend to suppress their needs and desires, believing they don’t matter. So the first move against that is acknowledging and communicating your wants and needs in all forms of relationships.
- Shift from blame to ownership: A classic avoidant tactic is putting fault onto other people. Instead of blaming a partner for issues, give extra focus to personal responsibility. Take ownership of the ways you might be contributing to distance between a friend, a partner, or colleagues. Yes, this can also mean talking about it.
- Use shutdown as a bridge: If the avoidant impulse to shut down or pull away arises, call it out. Admit it. It can actually be used as an opportunity to bridge the gap, open up, and reconnect.
- Build trust through routine and repetition: In healing all attachment patterns, consistency is key. Try creating regular opportunities for connection (such as weekly dates or a standing gym session with a friend). This helps you slowly but methodically build trust in others.
- Seek Professional Support: Therapy or coaching with someone experienced in attachment theory can provide tailored guidance, helping navigate the more challenging aspects of shifting attachment styles.

FEARFUL AVOIDANT ATTACHMENT

Being a mix of the previous two, you’ll see some overlap here. But unlike the others, I recommend fearful-avoidants do the following practices more or less in order.

You're going to need consistency more than anything, and if you discover that your fearful-avoidant patterns are the result of some serious trauma in your childhood, I encourage you to seek the guidance of a professional coach or therapist. That will accelerate your progress and help you lay a solid foundation.

- Get clear on origins: This is true for all attachment styles, but it's doubly so for fearful-avoidants. Refer back to the major practice at the top of this section.
- Self-soothing and self-regulation: Fearful avoidants have a hard time feeling safe internally, so building an infrastructure of self-soothing habits is essential. Dig into things like breathwork, cold plunges, or skill-testing challenges; things that prove to your nervous system—on a primal level—that you can go through hard times and come out okay.
- Consistent trust-building: Slowly and consistently building trust with partners or friends is key. This involves engaging in behaviors that create connection, such as asking for needs, maintaining physical closeness, or sharing vulnerabilities. This is another way of training your nervous system that you can go through hard times.
- Track and replace disconnection patterns: Go full Batman on detecting them and full Superman on combating them. Identify the behaviors you use to disconnect, like picking fights or shutting down, and THEN work to replace them with actions that prioritize connection.
- Challenge fear-based mindsets: Fearful avoidants are often driven by fear-based thinking. Learning to set boundaries with these thoughts by challenging them, questioning them, and acting against them.

FINAL THOUGHTS

I know this is a big-ass guide. I also know there's more complexity than can be covered even in this pile of pages!

If you're curious and want to know more, you're fired up and want some deeper work, or you're simply down for a new challenge, I've got more to offer you.

The Attachment Playlist

On both my YouTube channel and podcast, you'll find a whole playlist dedicated to attachment. I go into deep dives on each of these attachment styles and more, including codependency and general mental health. Listen in for insights, tactics, and personal examples.

[Click here to watch](#)

Relationship Mastery For Men

This is a course I designed specifically for men, and you guessed it, focuses entirely on all things relationships. You'll find training on boundaries, conflict resolution, sex, relational leadership, and accountability. A great accompaniment to this guide.

[Click here to learn more](#)

The Shadow Course

If you're really wanting to go deep, ManTalks' flagship course is for you. Together, we'll dive into Jungian psychology around the Shadow, aka the part of your ego that denies and disowns everything it doesn't like about you—even the potentially positive stuff.

[Click here to learn more](#)

Wherever you go and whatever you choose, I hope you continue to develop yourself as needed. It's my sincere belief that the world is going to need people who know how to connect in spite of their challenges. To work hard at relating in the face of discomfort and conflict.

Reconciliation can't happen without the delicate dance of accountability, assistance, and understanding. And that process starts inside your own mind, heart, and body.

During my childhood in Alberta, Canada, there used to be a comedy show on the CBC called The Red Green Show. It was probably the most Canadian thing to have ever existed. A gravel-voiced guy in plaid flannel and a toque (aka beanie) gave advice on all kinds of silly shit, from starting a poutine business to the best way to duct tape your truck back together.

But he also had really sincere, poignant moments. There was one thing he said—in every single episode—that resonates with me every day, and here's where I'll leave you.

Remember, I'm pulling for you. We're all in this together.

To Your Success,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Connor Beaton'.

Connor Beaton