

Understanding Avoidant Attachment

A Gentle Psychoeducation Guide



What Avoidant Attachment Looks Like

Avoidant attachment often develops when earlier emotional needs were not consistently met. You became good at relying on yourself. As an adult, these strategies can make closeness feel overwhelming or threatening. Avoidant attachment is **not a flaw**; it is a learned form of protection.

Common Experiences

- Uncomfortable with emotional closeness
- Pulling away during conflict
- Minimizing needs ("I'm fine")
- Valuing independence but feeling disconnected



Therapy Goals

- Increase emotional awareness
- Tolerate closeness in small steps
- Practice expressing needs
- Build trust with yourself & others



Therapy Homework: Gently Working with Avoidant Attachment



Daily Emotional Check-In

Pause & Notice:
"Right now, I feel
___ in my body."



Practicing 10% More Openness

Try being 10% more open in
one small moment.



Needs Without Losing Independence

Ask: "Can you listen for a few minutes?"

Gently reflect:
"What was happening just before?"



Noticing Shutdown

Gently reflect:
"What was happening
just before?"



Updating Old Beliefs

Repeat: "I'm allowed to
need people sometimes."



Important Reminder

These patterns helped you feel safe.
There is nothing wrong with you.
This is about adding choice, not forcing change.

References

- Bowlby (1988), Ainsworth et al. (1978),
- Mikulincer & Shaver (2016),
- Siegel (2020).