



## How to Identify Your Attachment Style

Did you know that the way you relate to others began years ago? Your attachment style—whether secure or insecure—formed early in childhood, continues to shape how you connect with people throughout your life. Understanding your attachment style helps you recognize patterns in dating, friendships, family, marriage, and even at work. The following three steps can help you begin to identify your attachment style so you can build healthier, more secure relationships.

**Step 1: Develop insight.** The way our primary caregivers noticed and responded to our needs continues to influence how we respond to stress and relationships today. Take time to reflect on the following questions, and write your responses in a journal:

- Did my parents notice when I was distressed and offer comfort or a listening ear?
- How do I respond to stress now? In what ways do I express and receive love? What typically happens when I face conflict?

When parents consistently noticed and responded with comfort during times of distress, they modeled healthy attachment and helped their children develop a secure attachment style. However, many caregivers were unable to provide consistent nurture, comfort, or emotional connection. As a result, most of us developed some form of insecure attachment style. Seeing a [New Life Counselor](#) can help you.

**Step 2: Become aware of your patterns.** Begin by identifying your emotional triggers and unhealthy relational patterns. Emotional triggers are sudden, intense emotional reactions that are often rooted in past trauma, pain, or stress. Common examples include:

- Struggling to say “no”
- Withdrawing or shutting down during conflict
- Feeling responsible for someone else’s happiness or emotions
- Criticizing, sulking, pouting, stonewalling, or emotionally detaching

**Step 3: Compare your patterns with the different attachment styles.** Below are the six attachment styles and how to grow:

1. **Avoider** – Ignores emotional needs, remains distant, and minimizes feelings. Growth begins by allowing emotions to be felt rather than suppressed.
2. **Pleaser** – Focuses on keeping others happy and avoiding conflict, often struggling to say “no,” set boundaries, or express emotions. Growth requires shifting from appeasing others to setting healthy boundaries.
3. **Vacillator** – Desires close connection but fears abandonment, leading to emotional ups and downs. Growth comes from focusing on understanding personal reactions rather than others’ actions.
4. **Controller** – Uses control or anger to avoid vulnerability. Growth begins by recognizing the fears beneath the need for control.
5. **Victim** – Feels powerless or unworthy and struggles to assert needs. Growth occurs when unhealthy or abusive dynamics are recognized and no longer tolerated.
6. **Secure Connector** – Comfortable with intimacy and independence, communicates needs clearly, manages conflict well, and builds healthy relationships.

**If You’d Like to Learn More About Attachment Styles, Order a Copy of Marc Cameron’s Book, [Understanding Your Attachment Style](#), By Calling 800-NEW-LIFE.**