



Attachment Classification 101

Example of Attachment Measure	Focus of Attachment Measure	Attachment Orientation				
Strange Situation Procedure (SSP)	Observation of infants' behaviour towards their caregiver and a stranger in a laboratory setting	Secure	Insecure-avoidant	Insecure-anxious/-ambivalent/-resistant	Disorganised	
Adult Attachment Interview (AAI)	State of mind with regards to attachment derived from the coherence of verbal recollections as part of an interview in adults	Autonomous	Insecure-dismissive	Insecure-preoccupied		
Experiences in Close Relationships (ECR) Questionnaire	Self-report questionnaire concerning thoughts and feelings regarding adult romantic relationships	Secure	Insecure-avoidant	Insecure-anxious		Fearful / Fearful-avoidant

Please note that the **unresolved attachment category** – derived from the AAI (row 2 of the table above) – refers to a specific difficult event of loss or trauma, rather than being a person's overall attachment orientation. Thus, for instance, a person can be overall securely attached, yet also have an unresolved attachment narrative when it comes to a specific person and/or event in their life. Therefore, the unresolved attachment category is not included in the table as a separate category.

And to be even clearer:

- **Disorganised attachment** is an attachment orientation attributed to **infants derived from the SSP** (see first row in the table). It is assigned if there is conflicted, confused, and/or apprehensive child behaviour towards their caregiver, or a complete lack of an organised child behavioural attachment strategy.
- There is **NO** such thing as an “**insecure-disorganised adult attachment style**”.
- **Fearful-avoidant** attachment is **NOT** another name for **disorganised attachment**.
- Insecure-avoidant and -dismissive attachment are different terms that designate essentially the same attachment orientation. The same logic goes for insecure-ambivalent/resistant/preoccupied/anxious attachment. And for autonomous and secure attachment.

For more information please visit the [Society for Emotion and Attachment Studies \(SEAS\) website](#).