

August, 2008

Dear Colleagues:

Thank you for your interest in the Adult Attachment Scale. In this document you will find a copy of the original and revised Adult Attachment Scales, along with information on scoring. You'll also find some general information about self-report measures of adult attachment style, and a list of references from our lab.

Please feel free to use the Adult Attachment Scale in your research and, if needed, to translate the scale into a different language. If you do translate the scale, I would greatly appreciate it if you could send me a copy of your translation so that I can (with your permission) make the translation available to future researchers.

Before choosing the Adult Attachment Scale for your research, please be sure to investigate other self-report measures of adult attachment. There have been many developments in the field since my original scale was published, and you may find that newer scales – such as Brennan, Clark, & Shaver's (1988) Experiences in Close Relationships scale (ECR) – are better suited to your needs. I have included some references that will help you locate information on these newer measures.

Thank you for your interest in our work, and good luck with your research.

Sincerely,

*Nancy Collins*

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**Adult Attachment Scale (Collins & Read, 1990)**

Please read each of the following statements and rate the extent to which it describes your feelings about romantic relationships. Please think about all your relationships (past and present) and respond in terms of how you generally feel in these relationships. If you have never been involved in a romantic relationship, answer in terms of how you think you would feel.

Please use the scale below by placing a number between 1 and 5 in the space provided to the right of each statement.

1-----2-----3-----4-----5  
**Not at all** **Very**  
**characteristic** **characteristic**  
**of me** **of me**

- |      |  |       |
|------|--|-------|
| (1)  | I find it relatively easy to get close to others.                              | _____ |
| (2)  | I do <u>not</u> worry about being abandoned.                                   | _____ |
| (3)  | I find it difficult to allow myself to depend on others.                       | _____ |
| (4)  | In relationships, I often worry that my partner does not really love me.       | _____ |
| (5)  | I find that others are reluctant to get as close as I would like.              | _____ |
| (6)  | I am comfortable depending on others.  | _____ |
| (7)  | I do <u>not</u> worry about someone getting too close to me.                   | _____ |
| (8)  | I find that people are never there when you need them.                         | _____ |
| (9)  | I am somewhat uncomfortable being close to others.                             | _____ |
| (10) | In relationships, I often worry that my partner will not want to stay with me. | _____ |
| (11) | I want to merge completely with another person.                                | _____ |
| (12) | My desire to merge sometimes scares people away.                               | _____ |
| (13) | I am comfortable having others depend on me.                                   | _____ |
| (14) | I know that people will be there when I need them.                             | _____ |
| (15) | I am nervous when anyone gets too close.                                       | _____ |
| (16) | I find it difficult to trust others completely.                                | _____ |
| (17) | Often, partners want me to be closer than I feel comfortable being.            | _____ |
| (18) | I am not sure that I can always depend on others to be there when I need them. | _____ |

### **Scoring Instructions for the *Original Adult Attachment Scale***

The scale contains three subscales, each composed of six items. The three subscales are CLOSE, DEPEND, and ANXIETY. The CLOSE scale measures the extent to which a person is comfortable with closeness and intimacy. The DEPEND scale measures the extent to which a person feels he/she can depend on others to be available when needed. The ANXIETY subscale measures the extent to which a person is worried about being abandoned or unloved.

#### **Original Scoring:**

Average the ratings for the six items that compose each subscale as indicated below.

<b><u>Scale</u></b>	<b><u>Items</u></b>					
CLOSE	1	7	9*	13	15*	17*
DEPEND	3*	6	8*	14	16*	18*
ANXIETY	2*	4	5	10	11	12

\* Items with an asterisk should be reverse scored before computing the subscale mean.

#### **Alternative Scoring:**

If you would like to compute only *two* attachment dimensions – attachment *anxiety* (model of self) and attachment *avoidance* (model of other) – you can use the following scoring procedure:

<b><u>Scale</u></b>	<b><u>Items</u></b>											
ANXIETY	2*	4	5	10	11	12						
AVOID	1*	3	6*	7*	8	9	13*	14*	15	16	17	18

\* Items with an asterisk should be reverse scored before computing the subscale mean.

**Revised Adult Attachment Scale (Collins, 1996)**

Please read each of the following statements and rate the extent to which it describes your feelings about romantic relationships. Please think about all your relationships (past and present) and respond in terms of how you generally feel in these relationships. If you have never been involved in a romantic relationship, answer in terms of how you think you would feel.

Please use the scale below by placing a number between 1 and 5 in the space provided to the right of each statement.

	1-----2-----3-----4-----5	
	Not at all characteristic of me	Very characteristic of me
1)	I find it relatively easy to get close to people.	_____
2)	I find it difficult to allow myself to depend on others.	_____
3)	I often worry that romantic partners don't really love me.	_____
4)	I find that others are reluctant to get as close as I would like.	_____
5)	I am comfortable depending on others.	_____
6)	I <u>don't</u> worry about people getting too close to me.	_____
7)	I find that people are never there when you need them.	_____
8)	I am somewhat <u>un</u> comfortable being close to others.	_____
9)	I often worry that romantic partners won't want to stay with me.	_____
10)	When I show my feelings for others, I'm afraid they will not feel the same about me.	_____
11)	I often wonder whether romantic partners really care about me.	_____
12)	I am comfortable developing close relationships with others.	_____
13)	I am <u>un</u> comfortable when anyone gets too emotionally close to me.	_____
14)	I know that people will be there when I need them.	_____
15)	I want to get close to people, but I worry about being hurt.	_____
16)	I find it difficult to trust others completely.	_____
17)	Romantic partners often want me to be emotionally closer than I feel comfortable being.	_____
18)	I am not sure that I can always depend on people to be there when I need them.	_____

### **Scoring Instructions for the Revised Adult Attachment Scale**

This scale contains three subscales, each composed of six items. The three subscales are CLOSE, DEPEND, and ANXIETY. The CLOSE scale measures the extent to which a person is comfortable with closeness and intimacy. The DEPEND scale measures the extent to which a person feels he/she can depend on others to be available when needed. The ANXIETY subscale measures the extent to which a person is worried about being rejected or unloved.

#### **Original Scoring Instructions:**

Average the ratings for the six items that compose each subscale as indicated below.

<u>Scale</u>	<u>Items</u>					
CLOSE	1	6	8*	12	13*	17*
DEPEND	2*	5	7*	14	16*	18*
ANXIETY	3	4	9	10	11	15

\* Items with an asterisk should be reverse scored before computing the subscale mean.

#### **Alternative Scoring:**

If you would like to compute only *two* attachment dimensions – attachment *anxiety* (model of self) and attachment *avoidance* (model of other) – you can use the following scoring procedure:

<u>Scale</u>	<u>Items</u>										
ANXIETY	3	4	9	10	11	15					
AVOID	1*	2	5*	6*	7	8	12*	13	14*	16	17 18

\* Items with an asterisk should be reverse scored before computing the subscale mean.

#### **Cronbach's alpha coefficient in 3 samples of undergraduates:**

<i>n</i>	<i>Close</i>	<i>Depend</i>	<i>Anxiety</i>
173	.81	.78	.85
130	.80	.78	.85
100	.82	.80	.83

**Revised Adult Attachment Scale (Collins, 1996 )- Close Relationships Version**

**The following version of the scale has revised instructions and slightly reworded items to refer to “close” relationships rather than “romantic” relationships.**

**The scoring for this scale is the same as the scoring on p.5**

The following questions concern how you *generally* feel in *important close relationships in your life*. Think about your past and present relationships with people who have been especially important to you, such as family members, romantic partners, and close friends. Respond to each statement in terms of how you *generally* feel in these relationships.

Please use the scale below by placing a number between 1 and 5 in the space provided to the right of each statement.

	1-----2-----3-----4-----5	
	Not at all characteristic of me	Very characteristic of me
1)	I find it relatively easy to get close to people.	_____
2)	I find it difficult to allow myself to depend on others.	_____
3)	I often worry that other people don't really love me.	_____
4)	I find that others are reluctant to get as close as I would like.	_____
5)	I am comfortable depending on others.	_____
6)	I <u>don't</u> worry about people getting too close to me.	_____
7)	I find that people are never there when you need them.	_____
8)	I am somewhat <u>un</u> comfortable being close to others.	_____
9)	I often worry that other people won't want to stay with me.	_____
10)	When I show my feelings for others, I'm afraid they will not feel the same about me.	_____
11)	I often wonder whether other people really care about me.	_____
12)	I am comfortable developing close relationships with others.	_____
13)	I am <u>un</u> comfortable when anyone gets too emotionally close to me.	_____
14)	I know that people will be there when I need them.	_____
15)	I want to get close to people, but I worry about being hurt.	_____
16)	I find it difficult to trust others completely.	_____
17)	People often want me to be emotionally closer than I feel comfortable being.	_____
18)	I am not sure that I can always depend on people to be there when I need them.	_____

## SPSS COMMANDS FOR CREATING FOUR ATTACHMENTS STYLES USING THE REVISED ADULT ATTACHMENT SCALE

The following SPSS commands will create Bartholomew's (1990) four attachment styles (secure, preoccupied, fearful, dismissing) based on scores on the three attachment dimensions (close, depend, anxiety). Please note that, at present, this method is quite exploratory and, in general, ***I do not recommend it*** (please see my note below). I have defined the styles in terms of theoretically expected profiles along the dimensions. For example, a secure person should score high on the close and depend dimensions, and low on the anxiety dimension. I define a "high" score as being above the midpoint on a 5-point scale, and a low score as below the midpoint. (Please note that this is NOT the same as performing a median split.) However, what this means is that individuals who score at the midpoint will be excluded from the sample. On the one hand, this method provides a more clear assessment of attachment style because we exclude individuals who appear to fall on the boundary of more than one style, or who don't clearly belong to any style. On the other hand, this is problematic because we lose important data points, and we have to worry whenever we remove any subjects from our sample. At present, we have used this procedure in only a handful of samples but we are finding that we lose about 7% of our sample. We are continuing to explore the validity of this method of scoring and we suggest that it be used with caution, and only in conjunction with the continuous measures that include the entire sample.

\*\*\*\*\* *Reverse code the appropriate items* \*\*\*\*\*.

```
RECODE      AT8 AT13 AT17 AT2 AT7 AT16 AT18
            (1=5) (2=4) (3=3) (4=2) (5=1)
            INTO AT8R AT13R AT17R AT2R AT7R AT16R AT18R.
```

\*\*\*\* *Compute the three attachment dimensions* \*\*\*\*.

```
COMPUTE      CLOSE = MEAN (AT1, AT6, AT8R, AT12, AT13R, AT17R).
COMPUTE      DEPEND = MEAN (AT2R, AT5, AT7R, AT14, AT16R, AT18R).
COMPUTE      ANXIETY = MEAN (AT3, AT4, AT9, AT10, AT11, AT15).
```

\*\*\*\* *Combine the CLOSE and DEPEND dimensions into a single composite* \*\*\*\*.

```
COMPUTE      CLOSDEP = MEAN(CLOSE,DEPEND).
```

\*\*\* *Compute an attachment style variable by using cutoff scores above/below the midpoint* \*\*\*.

```
IF      (CLOSDEP GT 3)   AND  (ANXIETY LT 3)   STYLE = 1.
IF      (CLOSDEP GT 3)   AND  (ANXIETY GT 3)   STYLE = 2.
IF      (CLOSDEP LT 3)   AND  (ANXIETY LT 3)   STYLE = 3.
IF      (CLOSDEP LT 3)   AND  (ANXIETY GT 3)   STYLE = 4.
```

```
VALUE LABELS      STYLE 1 'SECURE' 2 'PREOCC' 3 'DISMISS' 4 'FEARFUL'
```

***An important note on data analysis:*** Although researchers often want to assign respondents to attachment style categories, a more appropriate statistical procedure is to conduct regression analyses using the *continuous* attachment dimensions and then, if desired, plot the predicted values corresponding to each of the four attachment prototypes. In this type of analysis, the Close and Depend dimensions of the AAS can be averaged (and then reverse scored) to form an overall index of attachment-related *avoidance*, and the Anxiety dimension of the AAS can be used as an index of attachment-related *anxiety*. The predicted means corresponding to each of the four attachment prototypes can then be easily plotted. For example, the mean for "secure" individuals can be obtained by computing the predicted value (of your dependent variable) at 1 standard deviation (SD) below the mean on Anxiety and 1 SD below the mean on Avoidance. Likewise, the predicted mean for "preoccupied" is obtained by computing the predicted value at 1 SD above the mean on anxiety and 1 SD below the mean on avoidance. Please see Collins & Feeney (2004) for an example of this procedure.

## READING LIST: MEASURING INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES IN ADULT ATTACHMENT

As you may know, there are a number of unresolved measurement issues in the adult attachment field, and there are a variety of ways to conceptualize and measure individual differences in adult attachment patterns. As such, before you select an attachment style measure for your own research program, you may want to read the following articles and chapters. These papers describe a variety of self-report and interview measures of adult attachment style, and they also discuss a number of important measurement issues that are currently being debated in the field. Although I highly recommend *all* of these papers, the following two chapters may be especially useful. (1) Crowell, Fraley, & Shaver (1999) – This chapter provides an in-depth and up-to-date review of the current state of the field. It offers a broad overview of measurement issues and measurement tools, including *self-report* and *interview* measures of adult attachment. (2) Brennan, Clark, & Shaver (1998) – This chapter presents a *new self-report measure of attachment style* that is likely to become widely used in the field. If you know in advance that you will be using a *self-report* measure of attachment style, then you will want to be sure to read this chapter.

In addition, **please be sure to visit Dr. R. Chris Fraley's website** at the University of Illinois, Urban-Champaign. This website provides a very useful overview of self-report measures of adult attachment. [www.psych.uiuc.edu/~rcfraley/measures/measures.html](http://www.psych.uiuc.edu/~rcfraley/measures/measures.html).

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Collins, N. L., & Read, S. J. (1994). Cognitive representations of adult attachment: The structure and function of working models. In K. Bartholomew & D. Perlman (Eds.) *Advances in personal relationships, Vol. 5: Attachment processes in adulthood* (pp. 53-90). London: Jessica Kingsley, Inc.

Crowell, J. A., Fraley, R. C., & Shaver, P. R. (1999). Measurement of individual differences in adolescent and adult attachment. In J. Cassidy & P. R. Shaver, (Eds.), *Handbook of attachment: Theory, research, and clinical applications* (p. 434-465). New York, NY: Guilford.

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## REFERENCES DESCRIBING ADULT ATTACHMENT RESEARCH IN OUR LAB

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**Please note:** Information regarding the Adult Attachment Scale can be found in Collins & Read (1990) and Collins (1996). Please feel free to contact me if you would like copies of any unpublished manuscripts. [ncollins@psych.ucsb.edu](mailto:ncollins@psych.ucsb.edu).