

ADULT ATTACHMENT INTERVIEW*



ACT Facilitator's Guide

The Art & Science of Attachment Resources

The AAI is a means of assessing whether or not Internal Working Models of attachment persist into adulthood. The developers of this tool, Dr. Mary Main and her colleagues, argue that it is possible to see parent-offspring patterns enduring from the previous generation into the present generation (e.g., that one can perceive the same pattern of attachment between a mother and her daughter as existed between the mother and her own mother).

Example questions:

What are five adjectives that describe your relationship to your mother and father?

What made you choose those descriptors?

What are some brief autobiographical episodes to support your answers? (Look for specificity, supportive, contradictory answers.)

What did you do in childhood when you felt/experienced:

- upset
- ill
- rejected
- hurt
- loss
- abuse
- separation

Why do you think your parent behaved in the way that you remember?

Has your relationship with your mother/father changed in a major way since childhood? (Describe your current relationships with your mother/father.)

What kind of influence has this childhood experience had on: your personality, current behavior, future parenting?

*Adapted from:

Main, M., Kaplan, N., & Cassidy, J. (1985). Security in infancy, childhood and adulthood: A move to the level of representation. In I. Bretherton & E. Waters (Eds.), *Growing Points of Attachment Theory and Research. Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development*, 50 (1-2, Serial No. 209) 66-104.



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To obtain the full protocol of the AAI, write to:

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Suggested Readings:

- Main, M. (1995). Attachment: Overview, with implications for clinical work. In S. Goldberg, R. Muir, & J. Kerr (Eds.), *Attachment theory: Social, developmental, and clinical perspectives* (pp. 407-474). Hillsdale, N.J.; Analytical Press.
- Donley, G.D. (1993). Attachment and the emotional unit. *Family Process*, 32, 3-20.
- Marvin, R.S. (1992). Attachment and family systems-based intervention in developmental psychopathology. *Development and Psychopathology*, 4, 697-711.
- Byng-Hall, J. (1997). Towards a coherent story in illness and loss. In R. Papodopoulos and J. Byng-Hall (Eds.), *Multiple voices: Narratives in systemic family psychotherapy* (pp.103-124). London: Duckworth.
- Lieberman, A.F. (1992). Infant-parent psychotherapy with toddlers. *Development and Psychopathology*, 4, 559-574.
- Farber, B.A. (1995). The therapist as attachment figure. *Psychotherapy*, 32, 304-212.
- Holmes, J. (1998). Defensive and creative use of narrative in psychotherapy; An attachment perspective. In G. Roberts and J. Holmes (Eds.), *Narrative in psychotherapy and psychiatry* (pp. 49-68).