

Secure Attachment in Childhood
CORE MESSAGE



My love for you is warm, constant, accepting, protective. I'm here for you.

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Secure Attachment in Childhood
CORE MESSAGE



I come when you call

Knowing that my cries will be heard, my needs will be met, and I will be comforted, enables me to feel safe and secure.

"I can make things happen!"

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Caring Consistent Calm

I am seen.
I am gently and lovingly held, and peaceably comforted.

My emotions are named, understood and validated.

This brings relief.
This restores my soul.

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Strong Soft Sensitive

My carer is strong enough to bear my emotions and meet my needs without breaking.

I hear their soft words and feel their gentle touch.

They are sensitive to what matters to me; they help me thrive.

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Laughter Love Light

We laugh together.

We share and express our love for each other freely.

We bring light and lightness into each other's world.

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Protective Peaceful Patient

Feeling protected gives me a positive view of life.

My peaceful carer builds resilience in me, enabling me not to panic or be overwhelmed.

When patience is modelled it helps me learn to wait and tolerate uncertainty.

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Empathic Encouraging Empowering

I learn that my needs and emotions are normal and appropriate.

I receive praise, support and encouragement.

I develop confidence to try... to risk... to dare... to be me.

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Secure Safe Heard Held

Love is freely given to me

I am worthy of that love

My life is built on love and on trust.

It's a rock I can stand on.

I know who I am.

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Secure / AUTONOMOUS




I carry home in my heart

I carry a sense of belonging, deep inside me.

I belong to others. I belong to myself.

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Secure / AUTONOMOUS



I value and can name and express my emotions

I am taught to understand and value my emotions.


They are normal.

I receive empathy, and learn to be empathic.

I love because I know I am loved.

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Secure / AUTONOMOUS




Resting in Love

I don't have to work to be accepted. I don't have to 'perform', to 'get it right', in order to gain approval.

I know that I am loved, just as I am.

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Secure / AUTONOMOUS



I'm happy with others

I am content on my own...

I can securely attach to others in loving, trusting relationships.

I can lean on others. I can be leant on by others.

My affections are not enmeshed with others – I am my true, separate self

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Secure / AUTONOMOUS



Relationships make life rich

Why wouldn't they want me?

I have learnt to trust.

I can turn to people ... for support ... for encouragement ... for fun ... for intimacy ... for comfort ... for love

I am wired for connection

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Secure / AUTONOMOUS



I reach out to people when I need help and support.

Trust means that it is worth reaching out for help.

My natural response when I feel low, or something upsetting has happened, is to contact someone I am close to who I trust to be there for me.

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Secure / AUTONOMOUS

Not dominating Not disappearing



Standing my Ground

With thanks to Brené Brown

Standing my ground means:
... not being too big, forceful, oppressive
... not being too small, backing down too quickly
... being true to my values
... being assertive while respecting the values of others

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Secure / AUTONOMOUS



Love is a safe place of shelter

When a shame storm threatens, knowing I am unconditionally loved helps me withstand it.

Shame is a bad teacher.

I learn and grow from being loved.

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Secure / AUTONOMOUS



Ruptures get repaired

I am truly sorry

I hear true apology. I learn how to offer it.

"I was wrong. I am really sorry. How can I make it right? I'll try my best not to do it again. Can you forgive me?"

With thanks to Gary Chapman's 5 Languages of Apology

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Secure Attachment in Adulthood
CORE BELIEF




I know who I am; I give and receive love freely; I know my boundaries. I am AUTONOMOUS.

With a firm Secure Base I can trust myself and build committed, healthy relationships with others.

I am able to respect my own boundaries and those of others.

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Secure Attachment in Teen / Young Adulthood
CORE BELIEF



I know who I am; I give and receive love freely; I know my boundaries. I am AUTONOMOUS.

With a firm Secure Base I can trust myself and build committed, healthy relationship with others.

I am able to respect my own boundaries and those of others.

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Ambivalent Attachment
in Childhood
CORE MESSAGE



Sometimes I am there
for you, sometimes I am
not... it's up to you to
work it out

My carer's attitude
and behaviour is
unpredictable.
It leaves me with a
constant feeling of
anxiety.

Am I ok or not?
Am I safe or not?
Am I wanted and
welcome or not?

How do I tell?

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Ambivalent Attachment
in Childhood
CORE MESSAGE



I may come when
you call... I may not

I need you to come
when I cry...

Sometimes you come
and are loving and
kind, and I feel safe.

...but sometimes you
don't come.
I feel ashamed for
bothering you and
being needy.

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Ambivalent Attachment
In Childhood
CORE MESSAGE



I may come and be angry
or punish you

I need you to come...
but you might shame
or punish me if you
do...

...or I might have
made you cry, and
that would make me
bad for upsetting
you...

I'm trapped.

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Angry?
Unhappy?
Happy, warm,
loving?
Ice Cold?

Unpredictable

Sometimes I feel
loved, and
sometimes I feel
their anger and
rejection.

What mood will they
be in?

How can I be what
they want?

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Angry?
Unhappy?
Happy, warm,
loving?
Ice Cold?

Unpredictable

I know they can
meet my needs, but
I don't know when,
or how long it will
last.

That makes me
anxious
angry
unhappy
fearful.

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Reading the Room

I am hypervigilant

My mind is scanning
My body is scanning
Watching... listening
Stomach in a knot

Am I ok?
Are they ok?

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GO AWAY!

When they make a
mistake, or go away on
holiday, or cancel our
arrangements, it makes
me feel so angry with
them.

I'm low on their priority
list, my needs don't
matter, they don't really
care about me.

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Don't leave
me....

When they make a
mistake, or go away on
holiday, or cancel our
arrangements, it
makes me feel really
insecure.

I am terrified they
won't come back,
they'll die, I'll never
see them again...

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Projection

I am constantly fretting
over what people are
thinking about me.

I write stories in my
head; I imagine the
worst.

...I'm too much for you
...I'm not enough for you
...You've had enough of
me

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Anticipatory
Anxiety / Grief

I imagine all the bad
things that could
happen.

I need to be prepared,
to try and stop them
happening.

I need to work out if
it's my fault, to fix it.

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Consuming Anxiety

My fear of being
abandoned creates
difficulties in my
relationships. I need
constant reassurance
that I'm safe.

I'm ashamed I'm so
clingy... so needy...

...but I find it so hard
to trust.

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They love me
They love me not

Insecurity in
Relationships

My brain is wired for
insecurity and self-
doubt.

I know I need constant
reassurance, which is
wearing. I know I put
my relationships under
strain.

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Resistance in
relationships

I can be very jealous
and I'm constantly
seeking proof that I'm
loved.

I don't trust people
easily, and when things
go wrong I just want to
disappear. It'll only
happen again, and it
will all be my fault.

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Dependent
Attachment

I have such a deep
fear of being alone.

I feel I can't live
without them.
I think that's a
pressure for them,
but I don't know how
to be different.

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Self Doubt

I find it hard to fit into
groups – I have to
change myself to
belong.

I'm worried I'll say
the wrong thing and
upset them or make
them cross.

I work hard to please
them.

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Self-Sabotage

Other people seem to
just know how to do
life... like there's a
book you're meant to
get when you're born,
telling you how to do
relationships and feel
safe.

I didn't get the book.

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I don't want
to be seen

Sometimes I want to
disappear, to be
invisible.

Then I'm angry if they
don't come and find
me.

Or I'm afraid of their
reaction if they do
come.

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Adult Attachment
PREOCCUPIED

Please
love
me

If my parents would
only show me love
and accept me as I
am, I would be ok.

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Adult Attachment
FEARFUL

I am not safe in the
world; I am
unprotected

Deep down, I long
for comfort and
closeness, but I fear
rejection.

I try to be good, I try
to work out what
people want. But
I'm afraid I'll be
abandoned.

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Teen / Young Adult
Attachment
PREOCCUPIED

Please
love
me

Teen / Young Adult
Attachment
FEARFUL

I am not safe in the
world; I am
unprotected

<div><div>Avoidant Attachment CORE MESSAGE</div><div></div><div>Don't expect much from me; you're basically on your own. Deal with it.</div><div>© PACT Ltd www.pact-resources.co.uk</div></div>	<div><div>By 1-year old, I have received the clear message that my emotions are not welcome.</div><div>My tears and rages don't bring me the comfort and cuddles I yearn for. I must squash down my feelings.</div><div>© PACT Ltd www.pact-resources.co.uk</div></div>	<div><div>Avoidant Attachment CORE MESSAGE</div><div></div><div>Sort yourself out</div><div>© PACT Ltd www.pact-resources.co.uk</div></div>	<div><div>Don't be a nuisance Get a grip! Grow up! Don't be so needy Stop crying!</div><div>I'm on my own</div><div>© PACT Ltd www.pact-resources.co.uk</div></div>	<div><div>From my earliest years I learnt that I must stop being difficult.</div><div>My needs and emotions overwhelm others. I must find other ways to get my needs met.</div><div>© PACT Ltd www.pact-resources.co.uk</div></div>	<div><div>My life ME My needs ME My problems ME My health ME</div><div>No room for me</div><div>© PACT Ltd www.pact-resources.co.uk</div></div>	<div><div>My carer is consumed with their own needs.</div><div>Their frustrations, problems and concerns – that's all they think about.</div><div>There's no space for me to share my worries and fears.</div><div>© PACT Ltd www.pact-resources.co.uk</div></div>	<div><div>Well done for not needing me!</div><div>Earned approval and self-worth</div><div>© PACT Ltd www.pact-resources.co.uk</div></div>	<div><div>They have enough to cope with - I don't want to make their life more stressful.</div><div>... and I get praised for not being difficult.</div><div>© PACT Ltd www.pact-resources.co.uk</div></div>
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<div><div>Avoidant / DISMISSIVE</div><div></div><div>I'm ok, thanks</div><div>© PACT Ltd www.pact-resources.co.uk</div></div>	<div><div>It's ok, I don't need help. I'm better sorting it out on my own.</div><div>You have enough to do already. You don't need my problems.</div><div>© PACT Ltd www.pact-resources.co.uk</div></div>	<div><div>Avoidant / DISMISSIVE</div><div></div><div>I'll work it out myself</div><div>© PACT Ltd www.pact-resources.co.uk</div></div>	<div><div>I like to sort things out on my own.</div><div>If I let you in, you may tell me I'm doing it wrong.</div><div>I hate conflict.</div><div>© PACT Ltd www.pact-resources.co.uk</div></div>	<div><div>Avoidant / DISMISSIVE</div><div></div><div>If I don't get close, I won't get hurt</div><div>© PACT Ltd www.pact-resources.co.uk</div></div>	<div><div>I'm the strong one.</div><div>I'm the one other people rely on.</div><div>© PACT Ltd www.pact-resources.co.uk</div></div>	<div><div>Avoidant / DISMISSIVE</div><div></div><div>Bottled up</div><div>© PACT Ltd www.pact-resources.co.uk</div></div>	<div><div>People don't want to hear my moaning - better to just shut my feelings away.</div><div>It causes problems when they get out.</div><div>© PACT Ltd www.pact-resources.co.uk</div></div>	<div><div>Avoidant / DISMISSIVE</div><div></div><div>Empty</div><div>© PACT Ltd www.pact-resources.co.uk</div></div>
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<div><div>Avoidant / DISMISSIVE</div><div></div><div>It's hard asking for help</div><div>© PACT Ltd www.pact-resources.co.uk</div></div>	<div><div>People see me as having it all together. They don't see how much it takes for me to ask for help.</div><div>If you knock me back, I'll retreat; I won't try again.</div><div>© PACT Ltd www.pact-resources.co.uk</div></div>	<div><div>Avoidant / DISMISSIVE</div><div></div><div>Minimising</div><div>© PACT Ltd www.pact-resources.co.uk</div></div>	<div><div>There are so many people with real problems in the world – mine are of no importance.</div><div>Other people get what they want by making a fuss.</div><div>I'm not doing that.</div><div>© PACT Ltd www.pact-resources.co.uk</div></div>	<div><div>Avoidant / DISMISSIVE</div><div></div><div>Relationships can be stressful</div><div>© PACT Ltd www.pact-resources.co.uk</div></div>	<div><div>Everyone is so busy, they don't want me around.</div><div>I'm used to my own company.</div><div>Close relationships aren't my thing. Who would want me anyway?</div><div>© PACT Ltd www.pact-resources.co.uk</div></div>	<div><div>Adult Attachment DISMISSIVE</div><div></div><div>Needy People are Weak</div><div>© PACT Ltd www.pact-resources.co.uk</div></div>	<div><div>I know how to make life work – it's other people who don't.</div><div>I've got my life together. Why can't they?</div><div>© PACT Ltd www.pact-resources.co.uk</div></div>	<div><div>Avoidant / DISMISSIVE</div><div></div><div>Pretend</div><div>© PACT Ltd www.pact-resources.co.uk</div></div>
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<div><div>Avoidant / DISMISSIVE</div><div></div><div>Don't come too close</div><div>© PACT Ltd www.pact-resources.co.uk</div></div>	<div><div>I like to protect my personal space.</div><div>I don't like close contact unless I know someone very well, and even then I don't find hugs easy.</div><div>© PACT Ltd www.pact-resources.co.uk</div></div>	<div><div>Avoidant / DISMISSIVE</div><div></div><div>© PACT Ltd www.pact-resources.co.uk</div></div>	<div><div>Animals are easier than people.</div><div>They don't hurt me or let me down.</div><div>© PACT Ltd www.pact-resources.co.uk</div></div>	<div><div>Avoidant / DISMISSIVE</div><div></div><div>© PACT Ltd www.pact-resources.co.uk</div></div>	<div><div>Possessions are easier and safer than relationships.</div><div>Having enough money helps me feel independent.</div><div>© PACT Ltd www.pact-resources.co.uk</div></div>	<div><div>Avoidant / DISMISSIVE</div><div></div><div>I hurt inside</div><div>© PACT Ltd www.pact-resources.co.uk</div></div>	<div><div>It's like I'm broken inside.</div><div>I hurt a lot. I smile but I'm not happy.</div><div>Sometimes I feel angry with everything and everyone.</div><div>Especially me.</div><div>© PACT Ltd www.pact-resources.co.uk</div></div>	<div><div>Avoidant / DISMISSIVE</div><div></div><div>I'm scared</div><div>© PACT Ltd www.pact-resources.co.uk</div></div>
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AVOIDANT / DISMISSIVE

Adult Attachment
DISMISSIVE



Build Your Own Life Kit

Life is D.I.Y.

I'm independent.

I'm capable.

I'm in control.

Don't tell me what to do.

I don't need your help.

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AVOIDANT / DISMISSIVE

Teen / Young Adult
Attachment
DISMISSIVE



Build Your Own Life Kit

Life is D.I.Y.

I'm independent.

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Don't tell me what to do.

I don't need help.

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AVOIDANT / DISMISSIVE

Teen / Young Adult
Attachment
DISMISSIVE



I can't cope!

Can I come round?!

What should I do?

Needy People are Weak

I know how to make life work – it's other people who don't.

I've got my life together. Why can't they?

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<div>DISORGANISED / UNRESOLVED</div> <div><p>Disorganised Attachment Core Message</p><p>I am not safe</p></div>	<div><p><i>My world is painful, frightening and confusing. I cannot find a way to feel safe and secure.</i></p><p><i>I don't know what to do.</i></p></div> <div><p>© PACT Ltd www.pact-resources.co.uk</p></div>	<div>DISORGANISED / UNRESOLVED</div> <div><p>Disorganised Attachment</p><p>Rage</p></div>	<div><p><i>When people are out-of-control, raging and violent, the noise, the gestures, the facial expressions terrify me.</i></p><p><i>And when they are icy cold, I am filled with dread.</i></p></div> <div><p>© PACT Ltd www.pact-resources.co.uk</p></div>	<div>DISORGANISED / UNRESOLVED</div> <div><p>Disorganised Attachment</p><p>Cruelty</p></div>	<div><p><i>My ears hurt My eyes hurt My head hurts My body hurts My heart hurts</i></p><p><i>Everything hurts</i></p></div> <div><p>© PACT Ltd www.pact-resources.co.uk</p></div>	<div>DISORGANISED / UNRESOLVED</div> <div><p>Disorganised Attachment</p><p>My carer is frightened</p></div>	<div><p>It can be very destabilising for a young child to see fear in a carer's eyes.</p><p>Something very bad must be happening.</p><p>The child feels fear without really knowing what it is, or what to do.</p></div> <div><p>© PACT Ltd www.pact-resources.co.uk</p></div>	<div>DISORGANISED / UNRESOLVED</div> <div><p>Abuse</p></div>	<div><p>Physical, sexual, emotional, psychological and spiritual abuse leave a long legacy of trauma, affecting body, mind, soul and spirit.</p></div> <div><p>© PACT Ltd www.pact-resources.co.uk</p></div>
<div>DISORGANISED / UNRESOLVED</div> <div><p>Trauma Bond</p></div>	<div><p>A young child has to attach to survive. When the only person they can attach to is causing them harm, this is called a Trauma Bond.</p><p>It causes mental anguish and confusion.</p></div> <div><p>© PACT Ltd www.pact-resources.co.uk</p></div>	<div>DISORGANISED / UNRESOLVED</div> <div><p>Neglect</p></div>	<div><p>When a child's basic physical, emotional and psychological needs are persistently neglected, this can profoundly affect their health and mental wellbeing.</p></div> <div><p>© PACT Ltd www.pact-resources.co.uk</p></div>	<div>DISORGANISED / UNRESOLVED</div> <div><p>Poor Focus</p></div>	<div><p>Chronic trauma affects a child's ability to concentrate, and they may have been punished at school for not paying attention in class.</p><p>Low grades reinforce low self-worth.</p></div> <div><p>© PACT Ltd www.pact-resources.co.uk</p></div>	<div>DISORGANISED / UNRESOLVED</div> <div><p>Adult Disorganised Attachment UNRESOLVED</p><p>Fearful-Avoidant</p></div>	<div><p>On high alert, the fight, flight, freeze responses are ever-present, headaches are common, and life is exhausting.</p><p>There is a deep longing inside to be helped, rescued and loved.</p></div> <div><p>© PACT Ltd www.pact-resources.co.uk</p></div>	<div>DISORGANISED / UNRESOLVED</div> <div><p>Shame</p></div>	<div><p>Without a Secure Base, shame can dominate our sense of self.</p><p><i>I am bad. I am not loveable. I don't deserve love. I brought this on myself. I need to hide. I need to be invisible. Sometimes I want to die.</i></p></div> <div><p>© PACT Ltd www.pact-resources.co.uk</p></div>
<div>DISORGANISED / UNRESOLVED</div> <div><p>Alone</p></div>	<div><p>Trauma, abuse and neglect can leave a legacy of a profound loneliness and aloneness.</p><p>Reaching out for help is painfully difficult. Trusting can feel impossibly hard.</p></div> <div><p>© PACT Ltd www.pact-resources.co.uk</p></div>	<div>DISORGANISED / UNRESOLVED</div> <div><p>Trusting can be terrifying</p></div>	<div><p>Where there has been grooming, deception, seduction and betrayal, trust can feel impossible.</p><p><i>How do I know you are safe? What does that even mean?</i></p></div> <div><p>© PACT Ltd www.pact-resources.co.uk</p></div>	<div>DISORGANISED / UNRESOLVED</div> <div><p>Gaslighted</p></div>	<div><p>Gaslighting is a kind of mind control where we are told that we are mad, ill, a fantasist.</p><p>The truth is concealed and we experience profound mental confusion and harm.</p></div> <div><p>© PACT Ltd www.pact-resources.co.uk</p></div>	<div>DISORGANISED / UNRESOLVED</div> <div><p>Chaotic Attachment</p></div>	<div><p><i>"It's exhausting, clinging on by my fingernails, not trusting myself, pushing people away. I don't understand how to connect to myself or others, while needing and wanting that connection desperately. Attachment is so scary, overwhelming and unknowable..."</i></p></div> <div><p>© PACT Ltd www.pact-resources.co.uk</p></div>	<div>DISORGANISED / UNRESOLVED</div> <div><p>Teen / Young Adult Disorganised Attachment UNRESOLVED</p><p>Teen / Young Adult Disorganised Attachment UNRESOLVED</p></div>	<div><p>On high alert, the fight, flight, freeze responses are ever-present, headaches are common, and life is exhausting.</p><p>There is a deep longing inside to be helped, rescued and loved.</p></div> <div><p>© PACT Ltd www.pact-resources.co.uk</p></div>