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Divine Parenting: The Effect of Attachment Style on Religiosity

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Abstract
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DIVINE PARENTING
THE EFFECT OF ATTACHMENT STYLE ON RELIGIOSITY

A DISSERTATION
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY
OF
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R. TAYLOR STARK, JR.

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Abstract

This research project examined the extent to which an individual’s attachment style, measured via the Experiences in Close Relationships-Revised Questionnaire (Fraley, Waller, & Brennan, 2000), is related to early, formative experiences of religious involvement, as well as particular religious orientations. This study drew 132 mostly Caucasian participants, who were diverse in terms of age, gender, and education. Data were collected via online survey, which gathered responses to a demographic form, the Religious Practices Questionnaire, and the Experiences in Close Relationships-Revised Questionnaire. Researchers hypothesized that participants whose religious orientation and involvement mirrors that of their primary caretakers during the participant’s upbringing (“same” group) will display significantly less attachment-related avoidance and anxiety than those with differing religious views (“different” group). Results indicated that there were no significant differences between the “same” and “different” groups in terms of attachment-related avoidance or anxiety. Also, religious and non-religious groups were not different in this regard, either. Potential explanations of the results, discussion of limitations, as well as ideas for future research are discussed within the manuscript.
Religion is a powerful force that has the ability to dramatically shape the foundation of a society or individual. While religion often encourages love, acceptance, and humility, it has also been used as justification for oppression, discrimination, and murder. This duality demonstrates the enormous versatility with which the power of religion can be wielded. Given this power and versatility, one can reasonably ask several questions: What accounts for the variation of intensity and type of religious belief? How may someone’s formative relationships influence one’s religious preference or involvement? Given a belief in a higher power, what leads an individual to pursue his or her conviction to a greater or lesser extent, or in a different way, than others?

The purpose of this study is to examine religion and attachment style individually and comparatively. Ultimately it will be the interaction between the two that is highlighted, along with the implications this has in terms of relationship behavior.

*The Conception and Use of Religion*

Religion is a very complex concept – one that is not uniformly defined in available literature. White, Joseph, and Neil (1995) identified three basic types of religiosity: intrinsic, extrinsic-personal, and extrinsic-social. In individuals with an intrinsic orientation, religion manifested itself in every aspect of their lives. Individuals who endorsed extrinsic-personal religious orientations used religion as a means to an end, such as an ego defense. Individuals who endorsed an extrinsic-social orientation used religion for things such as participation in an “in” group, protection, or social status. In contrast, a study conducted by Joseph, Smith, and Diduca (2002) did not distinguish between extrinsic and intrinsic dimensions of religiosity, but rather, identified different forms of religiosity, such as a “quest approach” (p. 74). Those with a quest
approach turn to religion when confronted with existential questions that are raised by tragedies and contradictions in their lives.

Religious individuals may also vary in dimensions central to a religious or spiritual orientation. Richards and Bergin (1997) outline nine categories of elements that are often key to one’s religious or spiritual identity: metaphysical worldview, religious affiliation, religious orthodoxy, religious problem-solving, spiritual identity, God image, value-lifestyle congruence, doctrinal knowledge, and religious and spiritual mental health and maturity. While several of these categories are relatively self-explanatory (worldview, affiliation, orthodoxy), a few of these categories relate to the previously mentioned research by White et al. (1995). For example, religious problem solving involves how an individual may use faith in order to solve life problems, most commonly as a coping strategy. Also, value-lifestyle congruence assesses how congruent one’s behavior is with specific religious or spiritual values and worldview. In both cases, these categories target specific behaviors relating to religion and spirituality, particularly the functional use of one’s faith.

Different countries also use, or regard, religion in various ways. For example, the United States has demonstrated a historically strong religious presence. Miller and Thoreson (2004) found that about 95% of Americans profess a belief in a higher power, a figure that has remained at 90% or higher for the past 50 years. Sixty-nine percent of Americans are members of a religious institution, 40% of which attend services regularly.

Religious Assessment

When assessing for religious attitudes and participation, The Francis Scale of Attitude toward Christianity (Francis & Stubbs, 1989) is a common evaluative measure. (Francis & Bourke, 2003; Francis & Pearson, 1988; Lewis & Maltby, 1995). It is a 24-item Likert scale
comprised of questions regarding emotional responses to God, the Bible, church, Jesus, and prayer. Responses are indicated on a five-point scale: agree strongly, agree, not certain, disagree, and disagree strongly. Other researchers use a less empirical style of addressing religious beliefs and participation; that is, authors may ask participants questions such as “How frequently do you attend mass or otherwise participate in church-related functions or activities?” (Hjelle, 1975, p. 180). Barton and Vaughan (1976) divided participants into groups depending on whether a person had never belonged to a church, or had remained active in a church for the last five years. These inquiries are based on the premise that church involvement is indicative of “religiousness,” which may be overly generalized.

Another possible direction for studies of religiosity is to measure self-actualization. Measures of self-actualization have been varied, however. In short, self-actualization is an individual’s realization of inherent potential, and ranges between self-doubt and fulfillment. In order to measure spirituality as it compares to self-actualization, researchers have used the Spiritual Well-Being Scale (Ellison, 1983). The scale is a 20-item self-report measure, intended to measure a perceived spiritual quality of life, which is divided into religious well-being (relationship with God) and existential well-being (sense of life purpose and satisfaction). Researchers found that individuals who were more self-realized showed a significantly higher degree of spiritual well-being than those with low self-realization (Park, Meyers, & Czar, 1998). Therefore, it can be deduced that religiosity and spirituality can be an extremely fulfilling aspect in one’s life, negating self-doubt and producing a more psychologically healthy individual.

Hjelle (1975) also examined religiosity and its connection to self-realization; however, he chose to focus specifically on church attendance. In a sample of 63 male freshmen from St. John Fisher College, Hjelle hypothesized that a lack of religious involvement would be positively
correlated with self-actualization. He stated, “…young people who have disengaged themselves from active involvement in religious activities are autonomous and self-reliant, and are more prone to utilize their own internal norms as a basis for constructing a ‘meaningful life style’” (p. 180). From this, Hjelle concluded that institutional religion promotes social control, which subsequently decreases self-realization. His findings strongly supported his hypothesis. Hjelle found that there was significant negative correlation between frequency of religious participation and self-actualization scores, most strongly in the areas of inner direction \( r = -0.31 \), feeling reactivity \( r = -0.36 \), self-acceptance \( r = -0.31 \) and capacity for intimate contact \( r = -0.46 \).

In comparing these two studies, it is important to note that Hjelle (1975) worked within a strictly Catholic perspective, while Park et al. (1998) measured general spiritual well-being. This lends credence to the idea that while certain trends may be applicable for a general population (religious), they may operate differently within subgroups of that general population (Catholicism). This idea will be explored later in the paper.

*Examining Intrinsic and Extrinsic Religiosity*

In exploring the effects that religion can have on people, it is beneficial to look at religion in its previously stated styles: intrinsic and extrinsic religiosity. In a study by Hettler and Cohen (1998), intrinsic religiousness was examined in terms of a stress-moderator for churchgoing Protestants. The authors began their study by offering distinctions between intrinsic, extrinsic-personal, and extrinsic-social styles of religion, following the example of Allport (1959). Recent research has indicated that an intrinsic orientation is related to activities such as church attendance and orthodoxy, but is unrelated to psychological variables. However, extrinsic religiousness is positively correlated with select negative variables, such as prejudice and trait anxiety (Kirkpatrick & Hood, 1990).
Hettler and Cohen’s (1998) main hypothesis was that “intrinsic religiousness would serve as a stress-buffer in the prediction of dysphoria” (p. 598). Due to intrinsic religiousness being a framework for one’s life, those adopting this view would most likely turn to religion in times of crisis. This orientation might provide individuals with a sense of meaning, mastery, and self-esteem. Specifically, faith may “reduce the perceived threat or loss associated with negative events, enhance an individual’s evaluation of coping options, and result in the use of effective religious coping strategies” (p. 598). Participants consisted of 124 white adult churchgoers between the ages of 22 and 82. Researchers categorized participants into various denominations, each being classified as either conservative (Presbyterian, Baptist, Evangelical) or liberal (Lutheran and Methodist) based on their theology and Biblical interpretation. Researchers found that those from liberal Protestant churches used intrinsic religiousness as a stress-buffer in times of dysphoria; however, those from more conservative orientations did not use religion in this way. Religion’s importance, prayer frequency, and frequency of church attendance acted as stress-buffers for liberal Protestants (Hettler & Cohen, 1998). This finding reinforces the idea that religion may be used in different ways for different purposes, even within specific religions.

Intrinsic and extrinsic religious orientations can have greater implications on mental health and personality beyond stress-buffering. Batson, Schoenrade & Ventis (1993) recently reported 197 findings from 61 different studies discriminating between intrinsic and extrinsic religious orientations. Forty-eight findings showed a negative relationship between an extrinsic religious orientation and positive attributes of mental health, including open-mindedness and flexibility, freedom from worry and guilt, appropriate social behavior, and personal control. The lone positive attribute associated with an extrinsic orientation was a lack of depression.
On the other hand, Batson et al. (1993) reported 49 studies that indicated a positive relationship between an intrinsic religious orientation and positive personality characteristics. Absence of mental illness and higher personal competence were the most prominent characteristics associated with an intrinsic orientation. Intrinsic orientation also had negative correlations with trait and death anxiety. The issue of prejudice was also addressed within Batson’s study, with the interesting conclusion that both intrinsic and extrinsic orientations led to increased prejudice. However, an intrinsic orientation led to prejudice only when it was not prohibited by the particular religious community, while there was no such stipulation for those with extrinsic orientations.

One possible influence on an individual’s religiosity is the family structure. It is unsurprising to see a religious family in which all family members share similar zeal and passion for their beliefs; however, alternate situations emerge in which a member of a religious family chooses to follow a different spiritual path. Family members are similar in terms of genetics and environment - what accounts for an individual’s potential for variation? In order to understand this variance, and the root of religion’s versatility, one must look at particular features of the attachment styles of those who comprise the “religious” population.

**Attachment Theory**

John Bowlby and Mary Ainsworth, founders of attachment theory, were able to recognize a biologically based evolutionary drive in young infants to be close to their caregivers. Bowlby postulated that infants were not drawn to their caregivers for solely emotional reasons, but also to ensure their physical survival. This drive is likely born out of a time in which threats from the natural environment, including predators, could threaten an infant’s life without the aid of an older caregiver (Main, Hesse, & Kaplan, 2005). Bowlby called this phenomenon the attachment
behavioral system, and stated that it was designed for the purposes of survival and reproductive success, on par with feeding and mating (Bowlby, 1969/1982).

This attachment system is evidenced by three distinct kinds of behavior. The first kind of behavior is described by Wallin (2007) as “seeking, monitoring, and attempting to maintain proximity to a protective attachment figure.” Wallin stated that the child usually has a hierarchy of attachment figures to fulfill this role, and that they are often relatives. The mother, however, seems to frequently be at the top of this hierarchy, according to Wallin, regardless of the extent of the child’s involvement with her. The child will frequently cry, call, cling, or crawl to the mother in order to establish this proximity.

The second behavior in the attachment system was researched by Ainsworth (1963), and involves the child using an attachment figure as a “secure base” from which to explore unfamiliar situations and settings. When this attachment figure is able to provide protection and support as a secure base, the child usually feels free to explore. When the caregiver is absent, however, the child displays less explorative behavior. This phenomenon was illustrated by Margaret Mahler’s observations of infants who would venture away from their mother, and return to “refuel” before further exploring (Mahler, Pine, & Bergman, 1975).

Lastly, an infant will also “[flee] to an attachment figure as a ‘safe haven’ in situations of danger and moments of alarm” (Wallin, p. 12). Wallin wrote that this is a similarity humans share with other ground-dwelling primates, particularly the tendency for humans to seek the company of stronger or wiser people instead of moving to a safer place when confronted with danger. This proximity is often cued by internal and external threats (e.g. loud sounds, darkness, and unfamiliar settings), as well as by actual or impending separation from the mother.
The “Strange Situation” Experiment and Associated Attachment Styles

In 1963, Ainsworth constructed the “Strange Situation” experiment, which led to the development of three distinct classifications of attachment style. Ainsworth enlisted 26 pregnant mothers to participate in this home-based study of early development. Once the babies were 12 months, Ainsworth placed the mothers and infants in a toy-filled room. They were then given “…three-minute episodes [including] opportunities for the infant to explore, in the mother’s presence, two separations from the mother, two reunions, and the infant’s exposure to a stranger (always a trained baby watcher)” (Wallin, p. 18). From Ainsworth’s observations during this study, she was able to discern three specific styles of attachment behavior.

Infants with a “secure” attachment style demonstrated an equal ability to explore when they felt safe and to seek comfort from the mother when they did not. Ainsworth found that secure infants were immediately reassured and comforted upon reconnecting with their mother, and readily resumed play behavior. Ainsworth observed that the mothers of these infants were quick to pick up and comfort them when they cried, but only for as long as the infant wished to be held. In this way, the infants’ mothers exhibited sensitivity, acceptance, cooperation, and emotional availability (Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, & Wall, 1978).

Avoidant and ambivalent attachment are the two types of attachment that Ainsworth classified as “insecure.” Infants with avoidant attachment styles explored incessantly, without being affected by the departure or return of their mother. Ainsworth postulated that these children had likely learned that any efforts for comfort or care would be rebuked, and therefore neglected to put forth efforts to gain comfort from the mother. Ainsworth confirmed this theory by learning that mothers of avoidant infants had actively rebuked them in efforts for connection in the past. When connected with their mother, these infants would often go limp, rather than
cuddling or clinging. Ainsworth characterized mothers of these infants as emotionally inhibited, averse to physical contact, and unfriendly (Ainsworth et al., 1978).

Ainsworth characterized ambivalent infants as either angry or passive. Both sets of infants were unable to explore without the mother, and reacted to her departure with marked distress. When reconnected with the mother, angry ambivalent infants switched between efforts to connect to the mother and expressions of anger (e.g. leaning away from the mother or throwing temper tantrums). In identical situations, passive ambivalent infants seemed capable of only faint attempts to connect with the mother, as if they were overcome by their helplessness or misery. Ainsworth observed that ambivalent infants’ reconnection with the mother rarely resulted in the alleviation of distress or preoccupation with the mother’s whereabouts, almost as if the infant were seeking a mother that was not there. Ainsworth discovered that the mothers of ambivalent infants were unpredictable, occasionally available, unresponsive to their infants’ signals, and discouraging of their autonomy (Ainsworth et al., 1978).

In an extension of Ainsworth’s research, Mary Main and John Solomon (1990) revisited the Strange Situation videotapes 20 years following the original experiment and discovered another attachment style: disorganized. They noticed that, upon being reconnected with their mother, particular infants would back towards the mother, freeze in place, collapse to the floor, or fall into a daze or trance-like state. They hypothesized that this attachment style was likely learned by infants whose homes were a source of danger and discomfort. Main and Solomon also postulated that disorganized attachment is also produced out of interactions in which they perceive their mother as frightened. Therefore, the child likely experiences a contradiction in the desire to approach and avoid the mother.
Needless to say, the implications of a learned attachment style extend far past infancy, and even childhood, for that matter. Children that develop secure attachment patterns show higher self-esteem, emotional health and ego resilience, positive affect, initiative, social competence, and concentration than insecure children. Avoidant children have a tendency to victimize others, while ambivalent children are often victimized (Sroufe, 1983; Elicker, Englund, & Sroufe, 1992; Weinfeld, Sroufe, Egeland, & Carlson, 1999). Insecure attachment styles also often bring difficulties later in life. In post-childhood studies, avoidant attachments have been associated with obsessional, narcissistic, and schizoid problems; ambivalent attachment has been linked to hysteric and histrionic difficulties (Schore, 2002; Slade, 1999).

**Attachment Measures**

In light of Bowlby and Ainsworth’s research, several infant attachment measures have been developed. Ainsworth’s Strange Situation Procedure (SSP) has come to be known as the standard for assessing infant attachment security (Ainsworth et al., 1978). The SSP is essentially a reproduction of Ainsworth’s original Strange Situation laboratory experiment. It is a twenty minute laboratory procedure designed to ascertain whether or not infants use their caregiver as a secure base. Their behavior is assessed upon their reunion with their caregiver after a separation period, and classified into the aforementioned categories: secure, insecure-avoidant, insecure-resistant (ambivalent), and disorganized/disoriented. The SSP “emphasizes the dynamics of the attachment system in stressful situations and focuses on the child’s expectations of parental availability and responsiveness in times of stress and anxiety” (Smeekens, Riksen-Walraven, & Van Bakel, 2009). In follow-up studies, it has been shown that the SSP is a valid measure of infant attachment security (Solomon & George, 1999).
The Attachment Q-Set (AQS) is another well studied infant attachment measure (Waters, 1995; Waters & Deane, 1985). In the AQS, young children’s attachment behavior is assessed by rating the balance between exploration and seeking caregiver proximity in a home setting. The AQS contains 90 cards that describe specific attachment-related characteristics of children. An experimenter then observes the child during an extended period of time and places the cards in nine piles ranging from most to least descriptive of the child. A child is then given a “security score” based on the correlation between the child’s card sort and a baseline “secure” card sort. This measure has also been shown to be a valid measure of infant attachment security, and has a correlation of \( r = .31 \) to the Strange Situation Procedure (Van IJzendoorn, Vereijken, Bakermans-Kranenburg, & Riksen-Walraven, 2004).

Attachment in adults is typically measured via the Adult Attachment Interview or various self-report measures. The Adult Attachment Interview (AAI) is a semi-structured interview consisting of 20 questions designed to reveal an inner working model of attachment (George, Kaplan, & Main, 1996). The interview typically lasts between 45 and 90 minutes, and is given in a relaxed, conversational tone. The interview contains the following important components:

The most important questions ask the participant to freely describe childhood relationships with parents; to select adjectives to describe those relationships, subsequently to be supported by the recall of specific episodes; to describe what he or she did as a child when emotionally upset, ill, and in pain, as well as what parents did in those circumstances; to recall feelings associated with physical separation from parents; to elaborate on experiences of rejection and fear; and to speculate on the effect of childhood experiences with parents on current personality. (Cassibba, Granqvist, Costantini, & Gatto, 2008)
Following the interview, participants are categorized into one of four “states of mind.” A dismissing state of mind is typical of individuals who score highly on idealization, insistence on a lack of memory, and/or derogation of attachment. Individuals who score highly on anger or passivity of thought process in relation to attachment are classified as preoccupied. Those with an autonomous state of mind typically provide a collaborative, credible and free-flowing picture of their experiences. An unresolved/disorganized state of mind is typically superimposed on another state of mind, and entails disorganized speech and past loss and/or abuse experiences.

Brennan, Clark, and Shaver’s (1998) Experiences in Close Relationships (ECR) questionnaire is another common adult self-report measure, and will be explained in further detail later in this paper.

*Integrating Religion and Attachment*

Attachment theory provides a solid framework for integrating research and theory regarding the psychology of religion. Kirkpatrick (1992) notes that religion research is not well represented in psychology research, particularly from a theoretical perspective. Due to this lack of research, Kirkpatrick presented his conceptualization of religion as an attachment process. He notes that Christian religions provide a number of available attachment figures: God, Jesus Christ, the Virgin Mary, saints, and guardian angels. Kirkpatrick argues that the availability and responsiveness of these attachment figures is central to the theology of Judeo-Christian religions.

Freud (1927/1961) was one of the first to examine religion psychologically, advocating a position that religion is a response to feelings of helplessness in a hostile world. According to Freud, people seek the protection of an omnipotent parent figure in childhood and conceptualize their God in this image. Freud applied the concepts of regression, fixation, and dependency to religious behavior, all of which connotates negativity. Kirkpatrick notes that attachment theory is
as value-laden or evaluative of religious behavior, yet retains the core conceptualization that religious behavior reflects a want for security in times of danger, which is seen as normative.

Kirkpatrick (1992) argues that attachment principles can be seamlessly applied to religion, most notable the “haven of safety” and “secure base.” According to attachment theory, the intensity of attachment behavior in infants increases during: (a) alarming events, (b) threat of separation from the mother, and (c) actual separation from the mother (Bowlby 1973; Ainsworth et al., 1978). Kirkpatrick argues that people turn to religion, particularly God, under similar circumstances. Prayer, the most deliberate attempt at communication with God, is often shown to have a high value in times of crises. In fact, Argyle and Beit Hallahmi (1975) concluded that people often turn to prayer instead of the church in times of crises. This is an important parallel to attachment theory because it shows that people turn to specific figures, rather than institutions, for comfort in times of danger. Spilka, Hood, and Gorsuch (1985) similarly stated that “prayer is probably most significant for its role in crises” (p. 304). Religious faith has also been shown to be a positive predictor of successful coping in severe medical situations (O’Brien, 1992; Duke, 1977; Gibbs & Achterberg-Lawlis, 1978).

Regarding the link between perceived or actual separation from an attachment figure as a predictor of increased attachment behavior, the attachment model would postulate that religious behavior and belief should increase during bereavement. Research supports this assertion, with Loveland (1968) finding that, during bereavement, individuals feel more religious and engage in more prayer than they did prior to the death, though the specific content of their belief system remains unchanged. Research also shows that religious belief and commitment positively correlates with coping and adjusting to the loss of a spouse (Loveland, 1968; Haun, 1977; Parkes, 1972). This research shows that God, or religion, serves as a substitute attachment figure
after the loss of another attachment figure (spouse). Kirkpatrick (1992) also points out that “…in most theistic religions, separation from God is the most horrific threat imaginable. In many Christian belief systems, it is the very essence of hell” (p. 9). This research shows a response to God that is consistent with that of a response to a primary attachment caregiver across various situations. This in, turn, provides the comfort and security that only an attachment figure can.

In addition to a safe haven, religion also serves the function of a secure base. The idea of faith providing emotional security is described well by Voysey (1882; cited in James, 1902):

It is the myriads of trustful souls, that this sense of God's unfailing presence with them in their going out and in their coming in, and by night and day, is a source of absolute repose and confident calmness. It drives away all fear of what may befall them. That nearness of God is a constant security against terror and anxiety. (p. 275)

This quote reflects the calmness and confidence that comes from the mere knowledge of God’s existence, or presence. Kirkpatrick (1992) noted that research on religion’s role as a secure base has not been studied extensively, and may be complicated by the fact that people may turn to a myriad of things as a secure base. However, studies on intrinsic religious orientation supports the hypothesis of religion as a secure base. Intrinsic religiousness, as described earlier in this paper, has been shown to correlate inversely with trait anxiety (Baker & Gorsuch, 1982; Entner, 1977; McClain, 1978) and fear of death (Kahoe .& Dunn, 1975) and positively with internal locus of control (Kahoe, 1974; Strickland & Shaffer. 1971). Also, Galanter (1989) found that the statements “My religious beliefs give my comfort” and “I feel a close connection to God” were the best predictors of emotional well-being in a sample of Unification Church members.

Kirkpatrick postulates that these positive mental health characteristics are indicative of the presence of a secure base.
Bowlby (1969) identified several infant actions that are designed to increase proximity to the attachment figure. These actions include signaling behaviors (upraised arms, crying, babbling) and approach behaviors (clinging, cuddling, moving towards caregiver). Kirkpatrick (1992) notes that several religious behaviors are analogous to these infant behaviors, notably raising arms in worship and glossolalia (speaking in tongues). The combination of these behaviors strongly resembles an infant waiting to be picked up by an attachment figure. Kildahl (1972) stated that “more than 85 percent of tongue-speakers had experienced a clearly defined anxiety crisis preceding their speaking in tongues” (p. 57) He reported that these crises were typified by feelings of worthlessness and powerlessness. Therefore, the glossolalia could be seen as a direct attempt by the religious individual to seek comfort from an attachment figure (God).

Prayer can also be interpreted as analogous to infant attachment behavior. Kirkpatrick (1992) noted that “Young children exploring their environment check back with their mothers visually, verbally, and/or physically from time to time to reassure themselves that she is still available and attentive” (p. 15) He described prayer as analogous to this behavior, as a religious individual is constantly seeking reassurance that God is available and responsive to them, much like a secure base would be. Kirkpatrick also stated that church attendance also lends itself to an attachment perspective. Though many religious view God as omnipresent, Kirkpatrick pointed out that they still provide specific places that religious individuals can go to get closer to God. This is akin to a secure base, as a concrete reminder of God may provide additional comfort and security to an abstract image. This can be likened to how infants seek to be physically closer to a secure base during times of distress (Ainsworth, 1982).

An individual’s personal conceptualization of God, or God image, is also consistent with attachment behavior and literature. In the psychology of religion literature, the God image is
typically focused on the relationship between the God image and conceptualizations of either (a) one’s own parents or (b) one’s self-concept (Nicholson & Edwards, 1979; Spilka, 1978). Research has found that one’s God image is often positively correlated with one’s preferred parent (Nelson & Jones, 1957). This finding is consistent with attachment theory; God should resemble one’s preferred parent, as this parent is likely to be the child’s primary attachment figure. Studies relating one’s God image with one’s self-concept are also consistent with an attachment perspective. Research has found that children who believe that their attachment figures are loving, caring, and protective also perceive themselves as worthy of being loved, cared for, and protected (Bowlby 1973). Likewise, people who view God as being loving and beneficent have higher self-esteem and more positive self-concepts (Benson & Spilka, 1973; Flakoll, 1974; Jolley, 1983; Spilka, Addison, & Rosensohn, 1975). By observing the similarities between the predictive abilities of a parent or God image in regards to one’s self-concept, one can easily conceptualize God as akin to an attachment figure.

Granqvist, Mikulincer, and Shaver (2010) also examined religion in the light of attachment theory. Researchers identified several ways in which religious behavior and concepts are akin to attachment-related behavior and theory, similar to Wallin (2007). They detailed concepts such as phenotypic resemblances between parental attachment and believers’ relationships with God, proximity maintenance and responses to separation and loss, God as a safe haven, and God as a stronger and wiser secure base. Additionally, the researchers posited two developmental pathways to religion: “compensation” and “correspondence” (p. 49). According to Granqvist et al., a compensation pathway involves “…distress regulation in the context of insecure attachment and past processes for individuals who are insecure with respect to attachment” (p. 49). Conversely, a correspondence pathway is based on secure attachment,
involving experiences with religious caregivers, and leading to “the development of a security-enhancing image of a loving God” (p. 56). However, the article does not discuss insecurely attached religious individuals, or the process of becoming more securely attached within a particular religion. Therefore, from this article, it cannot be concluded that religion is an attachment-security providing force, only that it serves as a reinforcing agent for the secure, and a coping option for the insecure.

In 2008, Cassibba, Granqvist, Constantini, and Gatto conducted a study designed to compare the attachment style of lay Catholics, priests, and religious populations to their God image, or representation. Researchers used the Adult Attachment Interview and compared attachment-related experiences and representations of 30 Catholic priests and religious against those of lay Catholics and the general population. They found that the Catholic priests and religious were more securely attached than other groups, which authors stated were groups that “were more likely to experience a principal attachment to God” (p. 1753). They also found a positive correlation between secure attachment and experiences with loving parents and loving God imagery. This supports previously cited literature, and supports the idea that attachment experiences with parents are reflected in perceptions of God.

This study will expand on these ideas by examining the relationship between an individual’s religiosity and his or her score on an attachment measure. This study will test the following hypotheses: Participants whose religious orientation and involvement mirrors that of their primary caretakers during the participant’s upbringing will display significantly less attachment-related avoidance and anxiety than those with differing religious views. Should this hypotheses be proven correct, then this issue must be contemplated: Does an individual’s
attachment style shape the religion to which he or she ascribes? Do people seek out God after childhood for supplemental divine parenting?

Method

Participants

This study drew responses from 132 participants. Participants were sampled from local and national religious samples, utilizing availability and snowball sampling methods. Religious organizations and church communities were amongst the religious samples selected, while the non-religious sample was primarily generated from academic list serves. All individuals were able to read and respond to the survey in English. Individuals who practiced religions other than those listed were excluded.

Of the 132 participants who responded to this study, 71% identified as female and 29% as male. Most participants were between the age of 18 and 29 (65%), with the remainder of the age groups represented fairly equally: 11% of participants aged 30-39, 9% of participants aged 40-49, 8% of participants aged 50-59, and 7% aged 60 or older. The vast majority of the participants were Caucasian (81%), with each of the remaining ethnicities having 9 or less representatives. Many participants’ educational experiences peaked at a bachelor’s degree (38%), with most other participants earning a master’s degree (25%) or high school diploma (22%). Income level was surprising, as the most represented economic bracket was individuals making $100,000 or more (24%). All other income levels were represented equally. Many participants identified as Protestant (28%). Non-religious and Catholic participants were represented most similarly among the remaining participants (24% and 20%, respectively), while the study only involved 10 Jewish participants.
Measures

Experiences in Close Relationships-Revised (ECR-R) Questionnaire

The Experiences in Close Relationships-Revised (ECR-R) Questionnaire was used to assess adult attachment orientation in the participants (Fraley, Waller, & Brennan, 2000). This 36-item Likert Scale uses two 18-item subscales to measure attachment-related anxiety and avoidance. The avoidance subscale targets avoidance of intimacy, discomfort with closeness, and self-reliance, while the anxiety subscale targets preoccupation, jealousy, fear of abandonment, and fear of rejection. Participants used a 7-item scale to indicate the extent to which each statement applies to how they generally experience relationships. Sibley and Liu (2004) found the ECR-R to have high internal consistency reliability (over .90 for each subscale) and high test-retest reliability (low .90s). Further investigation by Sibley, Fischer, and Liu (2005) showed the ECR-R’s ability to discriminate between attachment-related emotions between romantic and non-romantic partners, as well as decent convergent validity between the ECR-R and other measures of anxiety and avoidance within romantic relationships (rs = .50). Sibley et al. (2005) conclude that “similarly comprehensive measures assessing different aspects of people’s attachment representations (e.g., their models of family and friends)…have yet to be developed,” and the ECR-R “accurately discriminates between attachment-related emotions [anxiety and avoidance] experienced in interactions with romantic and nonromantic partners” (p. 1534). Therefore, the ECR-R appears to be a suitable measure for assessing general attachment emotions, and will remain as such until a more targeted comprehensive measure is available.

Religious Practices Questionnaire

In order to measure religiosity, a questionnaire entitled the “Religious Practices Questionnaire” (Appendix B), was developed by the principal investigator and faculty advisor.
The questions are measured on a five-item Likert scale, with higher scores being more indicative of greater religious activity. The aim of the test is to measure the frequency of public and personal religious activity, along with the centrality of religion to one’s life. This test was modified from its previous form (Stark & Christiansen, 2009) to include questions that ascertained parental levels of religious activity and religious orientation. Prior to modification for the current study, this test showed good internal consistency reliability (\(\alpha = .89\)) and an acceptable mean inter-item correlation of 0.74.

**Procedure**

Participants were first sent an e-mail in which they were informed of the purpose of the study, along with an invitation to participate. They were then provided a link to surveymonkey.com, where they indicated acceptance of informed consent, provided limited demographic data (e.g. age, gender, ethnicity), and completed the Experiences in Close Relationships- Revised Questionnaire and Religious Practices Questionnaire. Total test time was not intended to take more than 20 minutes, and after the participant was finished with the exam, he or she was given the option to provide an e-mail address, through which the participant was entered into a raffle for a gift card.

This study’s hypothesis was tested by utilizing a one-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA). For this test, participants were split into two groups: participants whose religious orientation and involvement mirrors that of their primary caretakers during the participant’s upbringing (the “same” group), and those with differing religious orientation and involvement from that of their primary caretakers during the participant’s upbringing (the “different” group). For the purposes of statistical analysis, “mirroring religious involvement” was operationally defined as a participant’s total involvement score being within one value of
their caretakers’ total involvement score. The MANOVA was conducted to evaluate the effect that this shared religious orientation and involvement has on a participant’s score on the Experiences in Close Relationships-Revised (ECR-R) (Fraley, Waller, & Brennan, 2000). If this hypothesis were to be correct, then the MANOVA results would indicate that shared religious affiliation and orientation significantly affected the dependent variables of attachment-related anxiety and avoidance.

Results

Prior to reporting statistical analytic treatments used in this study, it is important to note select pre-analysis screening measures. This study included various missing data, though there was no discernable pattern. As there was not enough missing data to justify compensatory procedures (e.g. using mean scores for missing data), participants with missing data were excluded from final results analysis. In this way, the results represent a complete data set for each participant. As a note, the above discussion pertains to scores on the Experiences in Close Relationships-Revised Questionnaire (Fraley, Waller, & Brennan, 2000) and certain questions on the Religious Practices Questionnaire. For missing data on the Religious Practices Questionnaire, participant exclusion was conducted on a case-by-case basis. Missing information deemed non-essential to grouping participants, for each hypothesis, did not lead to the exclusion of participant data for statistical purposes.

Also worthy of note is that a few weeks after opening the study for data collection, it came to the primary researcher’s attention that the online survey lacked explicit informed consent information, and an indication of consent. This was a mistake on the part of the primary researcher, who then quickly closed the study, added informed consent, and reopened the survey.
All data collected during the time when the study lacked informed consent was discarded. This will be addressed further in the discussion section, specifically the limitations portion.

Before reporting group comparisons, descriptive data will be presented for how participants as a whole performed on this test’s measures. One interesting discrepancy in the data was between the frequency of participants’ religious involvement and their parents’ religious involvement. Most participants reported little (every few months) to no religious attendance (68), while most participants (73) reported that their parents attended religious services once or more per week. Another interesting note is that while there were 30 participants that reported a non-religious orientation, only 11 participants reported that their parents were non-religious growing up. These differences likely contributed to the number of participants in the “different” group (67) being greater than the number of participants in the “same” group (46).

Data gathered with the Experiences in Close Relationships-Revised Questionnaire provided interesting descriptive information as well. Participants generally scored higher on the anxiety subscale (M = 46.9, SD = 21.2) than the avoidance subscale (M = 42.7, SD = 18.4). This is a relatively minor difference; however, it does reflect a slight tendency toward anxiety. Also interesting is that there was a greater range of scores (min. 18, max. 105) for the avoidance subscale than for the anxiety subscale (min. 18, max. 97). Based on normative data collected online from over 22,000 people by Fraley (2005), the mean score for an avoidance subscale response was 2.93 (SD = 1.18), while the mean score for an anxiety subscale response was 3.64 (SD = 1.33). Normative data was not provided for total subscale scores, so the best estimate (though by no means exact) of this would be simply be to multiply the mean response scores by 18 (number of questions for each subscale). If one were to do this, then an “average” anxiety subscale score would total to roughly 65.52, and an “average” avoidance subscale score would
total to roughly 52.74. In this way, participants for the current study can be seen as scoring lower than the normative population for both avoidance and anxiety.

The data supplied by each group provided interesting trends. The “same” group scored higher on attachment-related avoidance (M = 42.96, SD = 18.31), anxiety (M = 46.98, SD = 22.19), and combined avoidance and anxiety (M = 89.93, SD = 36.71) than the “different” group, but only by a mean average of 0.45, 0.01, and 0.45, respectively. Though these are minimal and statistically insignificant differences, they reflect a trend opposite of what was hypothesized. These data show that participants in the “different” group exhibited scores indicating a marginally less anxious, avoidant, and overall insecure attachment than those in the “same” group. Means and standard deviations for each sample are presented in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Avoidance Mean</th>
<th>Avoidance SD</th>
<th>Anxiety Mean</th>
<th>Anxiety SD</th>
<th>Combined Mean</th>
<th>Combined SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Same</td>
<td>42.96</td>
<td>18.31</td>
<td>46.98</td>
<td>22.19</td>
<td>89.93</td>
<td>36.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Different</td>
<td>42.51</td>
<td>18.62</td>
<td>46.97</td>
<td>20.60</td>
<td>89.48</td>
<td>35.99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There were also interesting differences between religious (Protestantism, Judaism, Catholicism, or other) and non-religious groups’ scores on the Experiences in Close Relationships-Revised (ECR-R) Questionnaire (Fraley, Waller, & Brennan, 2000). As can be seen by the data provided in Table 2, the religious group scored higher on attachment-related avoidance (M = 43.40, SD = 18.17) than the non-religious group (M = 40.62, SD = 19.26). However, this did not translate into a higher attachment-related anxiety score as the non-religious group showed a higher score on this variable (M = 50.10, 24.21) than the religious group (M =
45.89, SD = 20.06). Overall, the non-religious group scored higher on combined avoidance and anxiety (M = 90.72, SD = 39.78) than the religious group (M = 89.30, SD = 35.02).

Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Avoidance Mean</th>
<th>Avoidance SD</th>
<th>Anxiety Mean</th>
<th>Anxiety SD</th>
<th>Combined Mean</th>
<th>Combined SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Religious</td>
<td>43.40</td>
<td>18.17</td>
<td>45.89</td>
<td>20.06</td>
<td>89.30</td>
<td>35.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-religious</td>
<td>40.62</td>
<td>19.26</td>
<td>50.10</td>
<td>24.21</td>
<td>90.72</td>
<td>39.78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A one-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted to evaluate the effect that shared, or differing, religious orientation and involvement with one’s caretaker during upbringing has on a participant’s score on the Experiences in Close Relationships-Revised (ECR-R) (Fraley, Waller, & Brennan, 2000). The MANOVA results indicate that religious orientation and involvement did not significantly affect the combined dependent variable of attachment-related avoidance and anxiety scores (Wilks’ Λ = 1.00, F(2, 110) = .01, p = .99, η² = .00). The effect size was very small, and indicated that approximately 0% of the variance in avoidance and anxiety scores may be explained by group status. Analyses of variances (ANOVAs) were conducted on the dependent variables of attachment-related avoidance and anxiety as a follow-up test. This test yielded similarly insignificant results for avoidance, F(1, 111) = .02, p = .90, η² = .00, as well as anxiety F(1, 111) = .00, p = .99, η² = .00.

In addition to hypothesis testing, a one-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted to evaluate the effect of religiosity (religious or non-religious) on a participant’s score on the Experiences in Close Relationships-Revised (ECR-R) (Fraley, Waller, & Brennan, 2000). The MANOVA results indicate that religious affiliation did not significantly
affect the combined dependent variable of attachment-related anxiety and avoidance scores
(Wilks’ $\Lambda = .97$, $F(2, 110) = .139$, $p = .14$, $\eta^2 = .035$). The effect size indicated that
approximately 3.5% of the variance in avoidance and anxiety scores may be explained by
religiosity. Analyses of variances (ANOVAs) were again conducted on the dependent variables
of attachment-related avoidance and anxiety. This test also yielded insignificant results for
avoidance, $F(1, 111) = .49$, $p = .49$, $\eta^2 = .004$, as well as anxiety $F(1, 111) = .85$, $p = .36$, $\eta^2 =
.008$.

Discussion

This study tested the hypothesis that participants whose religious orientation and
involvement mirrors that of their primary caretakers during the participant’s upbringing (“same”
group) will display significantly less attachment-related avoidance and anxiety than those with
differing religious views (“different” group”).

Hypothesis Testing

The results offered no support for this test’s hypothesis; in fact, insignificant differences
trend opposite of the proposed hypothesis. As can be seen in Table 1, average differences
between the “same” and “different” groups never reached a value of more than 0.5. The
differences that were present indicated a higher level of avoidance, anxiety, and combined
anxiety/avoidance for the “same” group than the “different” group.

There are a few factors that could explain a lack of significant difference, as well as the
insignificant trend. One theory that may explain the data centers on the idea of individuation; that
is, that the establishment of a religious identity that is discordant with one’s parents’ may in fact
produce a more secure attachment style. This theory may explain the insignificant differences;
however, greater support would be garnered for this theory if there were significant differences
that represent this trend. As it stands, there was essentially no difference between “same” and “different” groups in terms of attachment style, which could be for several reasons.

The attachment measure itself may be responsible for the lack of significant differences. Throughout the data collection process, the primary investigator received feedback from a few participants regarding the Experiences in Close Relationships-Revised (ECR-R) Questionnaire (Fraley et al., 2000) that indicates potential confounding variables. The feedback that was received indicated that some participants were confused about how to fill out the questionnaire, as it is worded as if it is asking solely about romantic relationships, with a slight skew toward long-term relationships. A few participants noted their lack of past long-term relationships, or long-term relationships that they did not believe reflect their general relationship behavior. Therefore, they answered based on how they believe they would behave in a more “true” representation of relationship behavior, rather than on actual past relationships. This wording is a recognized bias of the test; however, as stated previously, the test could be applied to any “emotionally intimate” relationship, not just romantic relationships. In hindsight, it likely would have been helpful to indicate this more clearly to participants, rather than assuming it would be interpreted correctly.

A final explanation for the insignificant results may be that differences or similarities in attachment style are simply not dependent on shared or differing religious orientation from one’s parents. This does not necessarily mean that attachment and religion are not related, as previous literature would strongly suggest that they are; however, it appears that the specific constructs measured by the Experiences in Close Relationships-Revised (ECR-R) Questionnaire (Fraley et al., 2000) are not dependent on shared or differing religious orientation from one’s parents.
Trends outside of hypothesis testing

There are several trends outside of hypothesis testing that are interesting as well. First, it is interesting to note that religious and non-religious groups were essentially equal in combined avoidance and anxiety scores (mean difference = 1.42), with the non-religious group having the higher average score. However, it is interesting to note that the non-religious group had a higher mean score on attachment-related anxiety, while the religious group had a higher score on attachment-related avoidance. These differences were not significant, however, but may be interesting to follow up on in future research.

Another trend that warrants attention is the decline in participant religious participation relative to the parental generation. As was reported before, 23% of participants in this study reported being non-religious, while only 8% of participants reported that their parents were non-religious. This shows that several participants rejected the religion that was prominent in their household, and are expressly non-religious. This mirrors current trends in the United States, as the number of people who ascribe to Christianity and Judaism decreased by 10.2% and 0.6%, respectively, from 1990 to 2008. Within that same time frame, the nonreligious population has increased by 6.8% (Kosmin & Keysar, 2008). Research regarding the link between this trend and attachment security is unclear; however, it could be the case that more people are individuating and finding attachment security outside of religious sources.

A potential explanation for religious groups having lower overall attachment-related anxiety is the notion of a “safe haven” or “secure base” that is present in both attachment literature and various religious orientations. As was discussed previously, Kirkpatrick (1992) argued that people turn to religion, particularly God, when faced with attachment-related anxiety. Therefore, a religious individual may be more adept at coping with attachment-related anxiety
based on these principles than a non-religious person would be. This would likely lead to a
decline in the experienced intensity or duration of any attachment-related anxiety that a
religious person may experience.

A potential explanation for the lack of difference between religious and non-religious
groups in attachment-related anxiety and avoidance, beyond the fact that it is the null hypothesis,
may lie in the role of religion, and its relationship to one’s attachment figure or upbringing.
More specifically, it is not religion that is the determining factor for one’s attachment style;
rather, it is the primary caretaker. As discussed in the previous literature, one’s conception of
God often shares characteristics with a primary caregiver. Therefore, God is more accurately an
extension of one’s caretaker, and not the causal force behind someone’s attachment style. For
example, if one grew up with a caregiver with whom they had an insecure attachment, based on
previous literature, a relationship with God would not produce a secure attachment style. More
likely than not, that person would have a similar sort of attachment, or at least imbue their God
with the negative characteristics that they attribute to their caregiver.

Further follow-up testing indicated no significant differences in attachment-related
avoidance, anxiety, or a combination of the two based upon one’s religious affiliation. However,
there were several interesting trends that emerged from this testing. The first trend showed that
participants with a Jewish religious orientation had the lowest mean avoidance, anxiety, and
combined scores when compared with the other groups. Conversely, those participants in the
“other” religious group had consistently higher avoidance, anxiety, and combined mean scores
when compared with other groups. Participants in the non-religious group had higher anxiety and
combined scores than other groups (besides the “other” group). These trends would be
interesting to follow-up on in a more concentrated quantitative study, or perhaps a more in-depth qualitative study.

Limitations

Limitations were a problem for this study, and must be taken into account when interpreting the results. The first limitation, or potential confounding variable, occurred midway through the first bout of data collection, during which time it was discovered that the study lacked informed consent. Procedures detailing the handling of this situation were addressed in the method section. This was a problem for the study, as the survey had close to 200 responses when the error was discovered. The study still garnered 132 participants, which provided enough data for interpretation; however, the discarded data may have provided further insight, uncovered new trends, or contributed to the statistical significance of hypothesis testing.

Another limitation of the current study is the sampling procedures. This study utilized availability and snowball sampling, which may have lead to the overrepresentation of particular demographic groups, particularly ethnicity. This study was comprised of predominantly female (71.2%), Caucasian (81%) participants from ages 18-29 (65.1%). These demographics are highly indicative of a graduate school population, which largely comprised the sampling pool of this study. A more diverse and representative study may have contributed to higher external validity for this study.

A final limitation of the study was the attachment measure that was used. As was alluded to previously in this paper, the Experiences in Close Relationships-Revised (ECR-R) Questionnaire (Fraley et al., 2000) is one of few adult quantitative attachment instruments available. Ideally, this test would be conducted with a test that was more comprehensive in assessing attachment representations of romantic partners, family, and friends. The ECR-R came
across to several participants as solely targeting romantic relationships, which likely provided an inaccurate portrayal of participants whom were not currently in romantic relationships, or had a brief or nonexistent romantic relationship history.

Future directions

Directions for future research tie in directly with the previously mentioned limitations. If a similar quantitative study were to be conducted, then it would be beneficial for researchers to have an established informed consent from the beginning of the study to avoid having to throw out data. Related, but also a separate issue unto itself, is ethnic and cultural diversity. Future research may be helped by focusing on gathering a more representative sample, through the utilization of more varied sampling procedures. The utilization of an alternate quantitative test may also yield different results, and therefore would be an interesting avenue to explore. However, as was previously mentioned, there is a relative dearth of quantitative, adult attachment-orientated questionnaires that target the constructs explored in this study. Therefore, this future direction would largely depend on the development of a new quantitative test. In the meantime, or perhaps as a new avenue entirely, it may be interesting to explore these constructs from a qualitative perspective. Both religion and relationship behavior are phenomena that are highly subjective, and have the potential to carry a great deal of meaning for a particular individual. Therefore, a more in-depth focus on the subjective experience of each participant may yield richer, more detailed results.

This study attempted to shine light on the differences in how people express their attachment security based on their religious, or non-religious, upbringing. Early attachment relationships have incredible influence on later relationship behavior, and, given past literature, may also be expressed in future religion-oriented behavior. Given the power of religion on a
personal and societal level, it is important to strive for understanding into the potential root causes or early influences of future religious behavior. This study examined the expression of attachment styles, as they relate to early attachment relationships and religious or non-religious upbringing, yet a more comprehensive, qualitative study may do well to highlight the slight nuances between these different groups.
Appendix A

Experiences in Close Relationships-Revised Questionnaire

The statements below concern how you feel in emotionally intimate relationships. We are interested in how you generally experience relationships, not just in what is happening in a current relationship. Respond to each statement by [web: clicking a circle] [paper: circling a number] to indicate how much you agree or disagree with the statement.

1. I'm afraid that I will lose my partner's love.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Slightly Disagree</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Slightly Agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
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2. I often worry that my partner will not want to stay with me.

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<td>Agree</td>
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3. I often worry that my partner doesn't really love me.

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<td>Neutral</td>
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<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
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4. I worry that romantic partners won’t care about me as much as I care about them.

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<td>Slightly Agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
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</table>

5. I often wish that my partner's feelings for me were as strong as my feelings for him or her.

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<td>Neutral</td>
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<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
6. I worry a lot about my relationships.

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</table>

7. When my partner is out of sight, I worry that he or she might become interested in someone else.

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<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8. When I show my feelings for romantic partners, I'm afraid they will not feel the same about me.

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<td>Strongly Agree</td>
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</table>

9. I rarely worry about my partner leaving me.

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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10. My romantic partner makes me doubt myself.

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<td>Neutral</td>
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<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11. I do not often worry about being abandoned.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
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</table>

12. I find that my partner(s) don't want to get as close as I would like.
13. Sometimes romantic partners change their feelings about me for no apparent reason.

14. My desire to be very close sometimes scares people away.

15. I’m afraid that once a romantic partner gets to know me, he or she won’t like who I really am.

16. It makes me mad that I don't get the affection and support I need from my partner.

17. I worry that I won't measure up to other people.

18. My partner only seems to notice me when I’m angry.
19. I prefer not to show a partner how I feel deep down.

   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Slightly Disagree | Neutral | Slightly Agree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
Disagree | Disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Slightly Agree | Agree | Agree |

20. I feel comfortable sharing my private thoughts and feelings with my partner.

   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Slightly Disagree | Neutral | Slightly Agree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
Disagree | Disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Slightly Agree | Agree | Agree |

21. I find it difficult to allow myself to depend on romantic partners.

   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Slightly Disagree | Neutral | Slightly Agree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
Disagree | Disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Slightly Agree | Agree | Agree |

22. I am very comfortable being close to romantic partners.

   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Slightly Disagree | Neutral | Slightly Agree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
Disagree | Disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Slightly Agree | Agree | Agree |

23. I don't feel comfortable opening up to romantic partners.

   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Slightly Disagree | Neutral | Slightly Agree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
Disagree | Disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Slightly Agree | Agree | Agree |

24. I prefer not to be too close to romantic partners.

   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Slightly Disagree | Neutral | Slightly Agree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
Disagree | Disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Slightly Agree | Agree | Agree |

25. I get uncomfortable when a romantic partner wants to be very close.
26. I find it relatively easy to get close to my partner.

27. It’s not difficult for me to get close to my partner.

28. I usually discuss my problems and concerns with my partner.

29. It helps to turn to my romantic partner in times of need.

30. I tell my partner just about everything.

31. I talk things over with my partner.
32. I am nervous when partners get too close to me.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Strongly Disagree Slightly Neutral Slightly Agree Strongly Agree
Disagree Disagree

33. I feel comfortable depending on romantic partners.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Strongly Disagree Slightly Neutral Slightly Agree Strongly Agree
Disagree Disagree

34. I find it easy to depend on romantic partners.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Strongly Disagree Slightly Neutral Slightly Agree Strongly Agree
Disagree Disagree

35. It’s easy for me to be affectionate with my partner.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Strongly Disagree Slightly Neutral Slightly Agree Strongly Agree
Disagree Disagree

36. My partner really understands me and my needs.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Strongly Disagree Slightly Neutral Slightly Agree Strongly Agree
Disagree Disagree
Appendix B

Religious Practices Questionnaire

Please review each of the following questions carefully and indicate the most appropriate response:

1. What is your current religious affiliation?
   Catholicism  ___  Other  ___  Judaism  ___  Protestantism  ___  Non-religious  ___

2. What religion did your primary caretaker identify as?
   Catholicism  ___  Other  ___  Judaism  ___  Protestantism  ___  Non-religious  ___

3. Are you actively involved in a religious community?
   Yes ___  No ___

4. How often do you attend religious services or activities?
   Never ___  Every few months ___  Every few weeks ___  Weekly ___  More than once per week ___

5. How often did your family/primary caretaker attend religious services or activities while you were growing up?
   Never ___  Every few months ___  Every few weeks ___  Weekly ___  More than once per week ___

6. How often do you engage in self-directed religious activity (prayer, reading scripture, etc.)?
   Never ___  Every few weeks ___  Weekly ___  More than once per week ___  Daily ___

7. How often did your family/primary caretaker engage in self-directed religious activity while you were growing up (prayer, reading scripture, etc.)?
   Never ___  Every few weeks ___  Weekly ___  More than once per week ___  Daily ___
8. On the following 5-point scale, please indicate how central religion is to your life:

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Not at all                  Extremely
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