

Adult Attachment Interview (AAI) Narratives

In this class we have discussed how important listening to the “story” is in our work with clients and caregivers. We also spent a good deal of time looking at how the AAI is used to interpret the attachment style and patterns of adults. In this exploration I read to you some excerpts from Daniel Siegel’s book to provide you with a base of hearing stories from different attachment perspectives. Here are the quotes I referenced today as well as a reference for Siegel’s book ...

Siegel, D. (1999). *The developing mind: how relationships and the brain interact to shape who we are*. New York: The Guilford Press. (pg. 89-112)

SECURE ATTACHMENT STYLE NARRATIVES:

“My mother was a very caring person, and I remember feeling very close. My mother used to ask me what happened during the day after I came home from school. I remember one day when I was very upset. She was a very busy person. I came in the room, and I remember her putting her books down, and she went with me to my room so that we could talk in private. I don’t remember exactly what she said, but I do remember how good she made me feel.” (p. 89)

“My father was very troubled by his being unemployed. For several years, I think that he was depressed. He wasn’t very fun to be around. He’d go out looking for work, and when he didn’t find any, he would yell at us. When I was young, I think that it was very upsetting to me. I didn’t feel close to him. As I got much older, my mother helped me understand how painful his situation was for him, and for me. I had to deal with my anger with him before we could have the relationship we developed after my teen years. I think that my drive today is in part due to how difficult that period was for all of us.” (p. 90)

DISMISSING ATTACHMENT STYLE NARRATIVE

“My parents were very helpful to me growing up. They gave me excellent experiences with classes in school and outside of the regular curriculum. I was able to learn a foreign language and to play two instruments proficiently. [In response to a query about her relationship with her parents from early on, she stated:] My parents were very generous people. My father was very, very funny, and he taught me the importance of a good sense of humor. My mother was very neat, and she taught me the benefits of organization. Overall, my family was very good. [When asked for specific memories of her childhood, she stated:] I have very fond memories of my childhood. I don’t remember specific experiences, but I do know that we had a very good family life. There were a lot of good times.” (p.94)

PREOCCUPIED ATTACHMENT STYLE NARRATIVE

“We were a close-knit family. We used to play all the time, have fun, walk around. There were never any times when things became too loud, or sometimes they would. But it was OK. One time we went to Disneyland with my uncle. It was a lot of fun. But last week my parents took my brother’s kids there and they didn’t even call us. Why they do this, I don’t know. It doesn’t bother me now, but it does. I mean it did. I think. I wish they would stop favoring him over me; but I’m through caring about it, I’m through with the whole thing. When will it stop?” (p.103)

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DISORGANIZED ATTACHMENT STYLE NARRATIVE

“I know I didn’t like my mother’s depression, but I don’t think I felt threatened by it. She would be OK sometimes, other times not. I think I was mostly disappointed and sad. About my father, well, that is a different sort of thing. I try not to think about it much. He is always unpredictable, though I think he can control himself, though sometimes he can’t, and I couldn’t figure out when he would, so I don’t, I mean I couldn’t, know how to deal with him...[twenty-second pause]. There were things that would happen... [seventeen-second pause]. And they weren’t very fun, I mean they were scary. Yes, I feel frightened. He is very big, and very threatening. Yes.” (p. 112)