

# **Manual For**

# **The Current Relationship Interview**

# **And Scoring System**

Judith Crowell

Gretchen Owens

*State University of New York at Stony Brook*

1998

Version 4.0

APA citation format for material retrieved from the Internet:

Crowell, J. & Owens, G. (1998) *Manual For The Current Relationship Interview And Scoring System*. Version 4. Retrieved (*current date*) from [http://www.psychology.sunysb.edu/attachment/measures/content/cri\\_manual.pdf](http://www.psychology.sunysb.edu/attachment/measures/content/cri_manual.pdf).

## **Table of Contents**

Introduction .....	3
Rating Scales: Overview .....	4
Participant's History .....	4
Intensity of past relationships .....	4
Quality of parents' marriage: Warmth & Conflict .....	5
Stated satisfaction with relationship.....	8
Partner and Participant Variables .....	8
Secure Base: Loving behavior .....	9
Rejection of attachment .....	11
Involving behavior.....	13
Controlling behavior.....	14
Dependency .....	16
Communication .....	18
Safe Haven: Cares-seeking .....	20
Safe Haven: Caregiving .....	22
Current State of Mind/Discourse Style .....	24
Valuing of intimacy .....	24
Valuing of independence .....	26
Angry speech .....	28
Derogation of partner or attachment .....	29
Idealization or normalization of partner/relationship.....	31
Passivity of speech .....	33
Fear of loss of partner .....	36
Unresolved/disorganized .....	37
Coherence of transcript .....	39
Classification system	
Introduction .....	41
CRI Scoring .....	42
Table 1: Relations between scale scores and classifications.....	43
Secure .....	44
Sub-classifications .....	46
Dismissing .....	47
Sub-classifications .....	50
Preoccupied.....	51
Sub-classifications .....	53
CRI score sheet .....	56

## Introduction to the Rating System

The Current Relationship Interview is designed to investigate the nature of attachment relationships in adult partnerships. The purpose of the interview is to reveal how participants mentally represent attachments in romantic relationships, as reflected in their manner of speaking about their relationships. The interview contains questions about the participant's dating history; the nature of the present relationship and characteristics of the partner; and routine behaviors within the relationship, especially those related to providing and seeking support from the partner. In order to elicit an overview of the relationship, questions include topics such as what they have learned from each other and their hopes and concerns about the future of the relationship.

The instrument was developed to parallel the Adult Attachment Interview (Main & Goldwyn, 1994), but the questions reflect the reciprocal nature of adult relationships. The first part of the rating system consists of rating scales designed to assess (a) the participant's background, (b) the behavior of the participant and the partner including the ability to assume attachment and caregiving roles, (c) what the participant appears to value in the relationship, and (d) the participant's style of discourse.

Drawing upon the scores for the rating scales described above, an overall classification is assigned using descriptions of classifications. The major classifications illustrate three distinct ways of representing attachment with respect to a partner. Secure participants coherently describe a relationship with a partner, positive or negative, and value attachment as demonstrated by their statements and descriptions of their own behavior. The other two classifications both denote insecure representations. The Dismissing classification is given when the participant avoids attachment concerns. This can be seen in a variety of ways, including the participant minimizing or denying the limitations of a rather unloving partner, by focusing on other facets of life (buying a house, pursuing a career, hanging out with friends) rather than attachment elements of the relationship, or by dismissing or denying the importance of their own attachment behavior (or lack of it) in the relationship. Preoccupied participants appear confused or angry about the relationship or the partner's behavior, and may be anxious about the partner's ability to fulfill their needs for support and closeness. Within each of the three major classifications are sub classifications which capture more specific forms of the secure, dismissing, and preoccupied patterns. In addition, an Unresolved classification can be assigned when loss or trauma in a previous romantic relationship has impaired the person's ability to function effectively within the present relationship. Detailed descriptions of each of the rating scales and classifications are presented in the following sections.

This first and second revisions of the CRI came about after using the interview with engaged couples who were then reassessed after marriage. This revision continues to incorporate new information which has emerged in coding the interviews. The revision has several goals: 1) to render the manual applicable to all couples, as opposed to the engaged couples on which it was originally developed, 2) to clarify and emphasize that the CRI is intended to capture the individual's state of mind regarding attachment in adult relationships, a construct which is considered to be relatively independent of partner behavior, and 3) to make more explicit the relation between scale scores and classification by reorganizing the scales and their scoring.

**Important note:** We emphasize that descriptions of the participant's own parents (other than with respect to their marital behavior) should not be coded in this scoring system. Every effort has been made to maintain the focus of this interview on the current relationship and the state of mind with respect to discussions of this and other romantic/peer relationships. Only participant's reports of parents' marriage are scored; if the participant is idealizing or derogatory or angry in discussions of their parents, this discourse is not scored. This material has no place in the scoring of this measure, and is best captured using the Adult Attachment Interview.

We thank Everett Waters, Helen Pan, Maureen Olmsted, Celine Fyffe, Bushra Chaudhry, Tricia Lawrence, Alan Wilson, and Ana Zevallos, for their helpful comments on the development and clarification in the manual. Special thanks go to Dominique Treboux for her thoughtful suggestions, support, and assistance in updating and revising the manual.

## Overview

The scoring system consists of a number of scales which are rated and then considered in characterizing the participant's state of mind regarding attachment in an adult relationship. The first set of scales describe the past experiences of the participant (dating history and experience of the parents' marriage) and the participant's satisfaction in the relationship. The second set of scales describes the participant's and the partner's behavior in the relationship (loving, rejecting, etc.). The third set of scales are state of mind scales which characterize the participant's discourse style and the elements of the relationship that they appear to value most. The third set of scales, that is the state of mind scales, are the most important in assigning a classification. However, the description of the behavioral content of the interview provides us with the opportunity to understand and describe the participant's state of mind.

It is not uncommon in these interviews to observe characteristics of several classifications. This is because the state of mind with respect to attachment in the current relationship is influenced by 1) the participant's state of mind based on past and present attachment experiences in their families of origin, 2) previous romantic relationships, and 3) the behavior of the partner. For example, in close to half the couples, the participant and the partner's have differing state of mind with respect to attachment based on their families of origin (van IJzendoorn & Bakermans-Kranenburg, 1996). This requires the participant to integrate these differences into a coherent picture in order to be classified as secure. If they are unable to do this, the reader may be aware of both elements within the relationship. However, the classification of the CRI should be primarily based on state of mind with respect to attachment in the current relationship.

### **Participant's History: Intensity of Past Relationships and Quality of Parents' Marriage**

With these scales, we look at aspects of the participant's past experiences which may affect the relationship formed with a partner: previous relationships with other partners and the relationship between the parents.

With some interviews, it is impossible to determine the appropriate rating due to vagueness on the part of the participant or lack of probing questions from the interviewer. In such cases, **the score should be listed as CR ("can't rate"); if possible, a forced rating should be given in parentheses.**

#### Intensity of Past Relationships

This scale describes the dating history of the participant prior to becoming involved with the present partner. The more important aspect of the dating history is what the person says about the intensity of past relationships, in particular the manner in which those relationships ended. Everything the individual says about the relationship should be incorporated into the rating, not just the initial description of the dating relationship. On the high end are individuals who had deep involvement in a relationship. At the lowest end are those who were not involved with anyone until they met the present partner. (NOTE: The ability to score this scale will depend on the version of the CRI administered, as in some samples there may be only minimal or no information asked about past dating history.)

*1 - No previous dating relationships*

#### *3 - Casual dating*

This participant dated only in groups (rating = 2) or dated one or more individuals casually ("on and off"), but indicates no real emotional attachment to any. When asked if any partner was "special," the participant either says no or states that one or two stand out from the rest, but does not elaborate on this and does not state that he/she cared especially for them.

*5 - Mild intensity*

Participant was involved in one or more relationships, and mentions having cared for at least one past partner, but breaking up is not described as being painful. He or she was generally the one who ended relationships, or says they ended by mutual agreement, on a friendly basis.

#### *7 - Strong involvement*

This participant had at least one strong and reciprocated relationship. Breaking up was painful, but manageable; it did not lead to severe negative reactions.

#### *9 - Extremely intense*

The participant had at least one very closely involved relationship. The breakup was painful for the participant and resulted in long-term suffering or a severe emotional reaction (e.g., depression, suicide attempts), immediate entry into another intense relationship (rating = 8), or the relationship was prolonged even when it was obviously unhealthy because of fear of breaking up.

### Quality of Parents' Marriage

The marital relationship which a child observes may affect what he or she expects of a marriage, and these scales may be used to explore this question. In using this scale, the relationships between the parents should be scored, and if applicable, also parents and stepparents. If the participant spontaneously mentions another marriage (for example, that between his or her grandparents) *in response to the question on influences*, **do not score** that relationship. It is also not necessary to note generalized comments about other relatives' or friends' marriages which occur elsewhere in the transcript.

There are two dimensions of the parents' relationship which are rated **in the coder's opinion**: **warmth** and **conflict**. The first refers to how loving the parents were toward one another. The second is the amount of parental conflict to which the participant was exposed. The rater should remember that it is the overall relationship that is being scored. Even if one parent tried to build a good marriage, if the other was uninvolved, or actively engaged in hurtful or destructive behaviors, the marriage cannot be scored as loving.

Some participants idealize the parents' relationship and come up with vague statements that their parents' marriage was "great" or "they were just the perfect couple" without providing any convincing illustrations of this other than the duration of their marriage. In such cases, ratings are given in parentheses and usually should be only 4 to 6. Ratings of 7 to 9 should be reserved for those cases in which the participant provides some details and seems to be thoughtful in evaluating the parents' relationship.

**Please note that descriptions of the parents' relationships with the participants are not scored with this measure.** Only participants' reports of parents' marriage are scored; if the participant is idealizing or derogatory or angry in their discussions of the parents, this discourse is not scored, and has no place in the scoring of this measure.

### Warmth

Participants who score high on this scale describe their parents' relationship as "loving," and present a coherent picture by providing examples of loving acts or statements by the parents. These parents treated each other with respect and consideration of the other's wishes/needs. The reader has the impression of a couple who have been there for each other during difficult times as well as good ones. Believable details are often presented to illustrate this. The participant's tone sounds warm and/or humorous about the parents' relationship. In the middle range are relationships in which the parents show average love and support. This includes those who are simply described as "loving" without examples (but with no contradictory evidence either) or those who lack thoughtfulness in some areas but make up for it in other ways. At the low end, there is a lack of care and of affection. The parents may have been critical and demeaning toward each other, demanding and self-centered, or distant and unininvolved.

Note that the *relationship* between the parents is being scored, so if one parent was actively abusive, either emotionally or physically, the rating should be no higher than 1, no matter how well-meaning the other parent.

Many participants describe their parents' marriage in vague terms, saying it was "good" or even 'great' while providing no further evidence of than "they've stayed together through good times and bad" or "they are still together after 27 years". In such a case, the scorer should look carefully at the response to the questions about similarities/differences between the participant's relationship with the partner and the parents' marriage. If the person mentions no positive qualities that they find similar in the parents' relationship and their own, score (3); if general mention is made of some shared positive characteristics, but no elaboration is provided, a (5) may be more appropriate.

When asked about the parents' relationship with each other, some individuals bring up their own relationships with their parents. If there is no information about the parents' except in their parenting role, then the scale would be rated **CR**, with a forced rating of (3-5)

#### *1 - Very lacking in love*

These parents not only failed to support one another, they rejected or actively worked against each other. There is no sense that they were affectionate or thoughtful toward each other. This rating could be assigned to relationships that are filled with anger and antagonism, or ones in which the parents are cold and uninvolved. If either parent was physically or emotionally abusive toward the other, this score should be given.

Marriages which have ended in divorce receive ratings in the 1-3 range.

#### *3 - Lacking in warmth*

This relationship strikes the reader as mildly but inadequately supportive, or inconsistent in supportiveness, so that the needs of one or both parents are occasionally met but more often neglected.

This couple may seem mostly indifferent to one another, leading separate lives that rarely intersect. On the other hand, the rating may be given to couples who are involved with each other, but negatively, with some disrespect and a general lack of support.

#### *5 - Neither unloving nor actively loving*

The participant may say in general that his or her parents had a "good" or "loving" relationship, but details to confirm or challenge this perception are missing from the transcript.

If more detail is given, these parents come across as ones who usually provide adequate emotional support to each other. They are not particularly well attuned to each others' needs, but they have tried to be helpful on most issues. Some participants may focus on the parents' childrearing skills, and the reader has the impression that the parents' marital relationship was secondary in their eyes to raising children.

This rating should also be assigned as an average if in the past the parents have acted in clearly unloving ways, but have made up for these negative periods by believable affectionate acts or dedication to each other later in their relationship.

#### *7 - Loving*

Though there may have been some problems, the parents were loving and accepting toward each other. There is a definite sense that they found each other trustworthy and supportive. If the participant speaks consistently and warmly of the parents' relationship and reports that the

parents were loving toward one another, but provides few specific details to substantiate this, a rating of (7) is appropriate.

***9 - Very loving***

These parents were actively loving and affectionate toward each other, and clearly enjoyed each other's company. There is anecdotal evidence that they were available to and have supported one another as parents and as people. They have provided companionship and comfort for each other. The relationship does not have to be perfect in every way to get this rating, but there is strong evidence that the parents love, respect and support one another.

**Conflict**

The scale assesses the participant's description of the amount of conflict between the parents. Since this component is independent of the loving/warmth dimension, a high rating on warmth does not necessarily exclude a moderate rating on conflict. This aspect of the parents' relationship is often not mentioned by the participants, and should receive a CAN'T RATE if there is no information about conflict presented.

On one end of the scale are parents who were not observed to fight (either because of striking compatibility or glaring uninvolved), while at the other are those who never stopped fighting. Ratings of 1-3 are given to parents who presented little or no conflict. Mid-range ratings should be given if the parents fought fairly regularly, but in a reasonably civilized manner. This is also the appropriate best fitting rating for cases in which the interviewer failed to probe for details after the participant presented a sketchy picture of a less than admirable marriage, and the reader assumes closer questioning would have revealed moderate conflict ("I'm not saying they fought all the time, but they just didn't have much in common.") At the high end of the scale, the parents were unable to deal with disagreements and competing wishes in a constructive manner. At the least, they have been unwilling to compromise on both large and small issues. Their fighting has been bitter, prolonged, and unchecked.

***1 - No conflict***

Participant specifically reports the parents had no conflict.

***3 - Low levels of conflict***

Though these parents occasionally disagreed on one or more topics, their disputes were out of earshot of the children, or they were handled openly and respectfully, without put-downs or denigration.

***5 - Moderate levels of conflict***

The parents have had some significant problems and conflicts; these were either intense but relatively infrequent, or fairly common but at no more than moderate levels. The participant is aware of disagreements and anger, but did not witness strong or frequent insulting or demeaning behavior.

***7 - High conflict***

The parents were not notably abusive toward one another, but they did engage in large amounts of conflict; or intensely critical or insulting behaviors, shouting, or name-calling regardless of frequency.

***9 - Extremely high levels of conflict***

There was much open conflict, and at least one parent was abusive toward the other (either emotionally or physically).

**Stated Satisfaction with the Relationship**

The participant's satisfaction with his or her partner is rated here. The reader should look at the general description of the relationship and the adjectives chosen. A high score is given when the descriptions are positive and the rest of the interview does not contradict them or raise concerns. Hence an idealizing participant may receive a high score. The scorer should be careful about reading between the lines too much. Even though the partner may be described in a way that the

reader would believe **must** be disappointing, if there is no clear dissatisfaction expressed by the participant, his/her word is taken at face value.

*1 - Strong dissatisfaction with partner/relationship*

This participant expresses clear displeasure or disapproval of the partner, or disappointment in the relationship. Few if any positive remarks are made about the partner, and many negative ones. The reader has the feeling that the relationship might end at any moment.

*3 - Moderate dissatisfaction with partner*

The transcript is tipped toward negative and critical feelings about the partner. The participant may have a lot of difficulty telling why the partner is special, but answers readily when asked what he or she would like to change about the relationship or the partner.

*5 - Somewhat satisfied with partner*

There are some negative statements about the partner, or the participant expresses some disappointment in specific aspects of the relationship, but also makes some positive comments. The participant directly reports concerns about the relationship, but the overall appraisal of the relationship seems to be that there is hope that it will get better and it is worth the trouble of working at. This rating may also be given when there are neither significantly positive nor significantly negative statements made about the partner, and the participant seems not to have thought much about the relationship.

*7 - Mostly satisfied with partner*

The participant reports a high degree of satisfaction with the partner, though there may be one or two areas of minor discontent. This participant feels that the relationship is a beneficial one for him or her and that the partner is a good person. This score may be given even if the reader feels the problems are serious, as long as the participant does not clearly and directly express concern or views the problems as only minor.

*9 - Very satisfied with partner*

This person sounds delighted with the partner, who is seen as a very special person and the best possible partner he or she could have. The overall description of the relationship is a glowing one.

**Partner and Participant Variables:**

**Loving, Rejecting, Involving, Controlling, Dependency, Communication, Caregiving and Careseeking**

These behavior scales refer to the present relationship and should be rated for both the participant and the partner: secure base behavior, rejection, involvement, control, dependency, and communication, caregiving and careseeking. There may be considerable overlap between the scales, e.g., good caregiving is associated with loving behavior. Involving behavior and dependency or controlling behavior may show overlap. Careseeking and communication are often related.

The scorer's rating may differ from the participant's assessment. Sometimes, a score is impossible since the transcript is simply too vague or a topic was not touched upon during the interview. **In such cases, the score should be listed as CR ("can't rate"), with a best-fitting alternative score assigned in parentheses if possible.**

Loving: Secure Base Behavior

This scale assesses whether the partner/participant is supportive and available within the relationship, **in the coder's opinion and specifically with respect to attachment behavior**. That is, the person is a secure base: available, supportive, cooperative and sensitive in day-to-day life as well as in times of distress or need. Affection is a part of loving behavior, though it may take more or less demonstrative forms in different individuals. Acceptance is a key component; the

participant with a loving partner has a strong conviction that he/she is valued and understood by the partner. Though loving partners may disagree, their disputes are respectful, without put-downs or denigration. The loving partner/participant provides active encouragement of and support for the other's activities. He/she also allows and appreciates the partner's efforts to be loving. The behaviors scored in all the other behavioral scales are incorporated into this scale.

Note: Support for exploration should not be confused with indifference or rejection (pushing away toward greater independence). Note also: Traditional roles do not diminish the value of secure base behavior; in other words, a woman in a traditional home making role may feel fully supported within that role, exploration is not synonymous with having a career.

Many participants include "loving," "caring," or "close" in their overall description of the relationship or in their list of adjectives describing the partner. These descriptors are neither necessary or sufficient to receive a high score. High scores should be given when the participant presents a coherent picture of a caring, supportive partner/self throughout the interview by providing examples of loving acts or statements by the partner and/or the self.

Important note: Such things as romantic behaviors, gift giving, and sexual satisfaction are not elements of the relationship which are considered in this scale.

The partner/participant who scores high on this scale is one who has been available and supportive during difficult times as well as good ones, e.g., "Whenever I was having trouble deciding on my career, he was always there, by my side...he stuck by me whenever I didn't know what to do and he always helped me out." (Note the difference between this statement and a vague and possibly idealized "We're always there for each other" with no further details.) There may be indications of thoughtfulness suggesting that the partner/participant is aware of what makes the other person happy. This partner/participant promotes the other person's continuing development in personal or professional areas, sometimes even at considerable sacrifice, and the partner/participant feels valued by the other.

In the mid-range are partners/participants who show average love and support. This includes descriptions of being "loving" without clear examples (but with no contradictory evidence either) or being somewhat disappointing in some areas but make up for it in other ways. Individuals only characterized as loving in terms of their romantic behaviors, gift giving, or purely instrumental assistance should not be scored higher than the mid-range, and should be scored lower if there is evidence of unloving behavior. Generally nice behaviors such as one would routinely demonstrate to friends, or co-workers or filling commonly expected roles cannot be scored as strongly loving.

On the low end are those partners/participants who do not give a firm sense of care and availability in the domain of attachment. This behavior may be manifested by abusive, critical and demeaning behavior, demanding and self-centered behavior, unavailable, distant, and uninvolved behavior, or just apparent unawareness of this element of adult romantic relationships. Pushing the partner away when he/she is trying to help is also considered unloving behavior. The common denominator is that the partner/participant can have little confidence that the other is and will continue to be available and responsive to him or her in the coder's opinion. *For ratings of 1-3, actively unloving behaviors must be reported.*

For this scale, as for the others, the scorer should be careful to go only by the evidence the subject provides, not by the partner's own appraisal of the self or partner. For example, some subjects who report that the partner is "just great", their relationship is "wonderful" and "very loving" can provide no explicit examples of these qualities. In these cases, the reader should be skeptical, and alert to the possibility of idealization. If they cannot confirm their positive reports with examples, then assertions that the relationship is wonderful do not lead to high scores on this scale.

**Very important note:** The use of physical and verbal aggression by the partner/participant is always scored on the Loving scale. It should also be scored, if possible, in one of the negative behavior scales: Rejecting, Controlling, or Involving. The transcript should be examined to assess

the function of the aggressive behavior, and scored with the appropriate scale, if possible. For example, aggression almost always would be scored using the Controlling scale.

*1 - Very lacking in love*

The partner/participant is not emotionally supportive. There is no sense that the partner/participant is affectionate or interested in pleasing the other. The partner/participant does not turn to the other or feel comfortable offering help because of the high likelihood of being rebuffed or ignored if an attempt is made, or the partner/participant actually does rebuff or ignore the other in significant ways.

This rating may also be given to a partner/participant who is seemingly affectionate toward the other, but it is obvious such attention is a way to get his/her needs met without regard to the needs of the other. Such a partner/participant may be manipulative or demanding, and the other person is expected to adapt.

The partner/participant who is severely physically aggressive (e.g., kicking, punching, use of a weapon), or who is untrustworthy in other significant ways (stealing the couple's savings, unfaithfulness, significant substance abuse) should be scored here.

*3 - Lacking in love*

The partner/participant may be mildly but inadequately supportive, or inconsistent in his/her supportiveness, sometimes neglecting the needs of the other but at other times behaving in an affectionate manner. The arbitrary and unpredictable nature of these bouts of kindness can leave the other with little confidence in the partner/participant's support. Fearful or highly anxious responses to the partner's problems are scored here. (Note that participant may say partner/participant is loving, or they have a good relationship, but active indications of loving support are lacking from the transcript.)

This rating would be given to a partner/participant who is unwilling to compromise with the other person. The partner/participant may, on the other hand, come across as neglectful and/or oblivious to some of the other's important emotional needs, despite attempts by the other person to communicate these needs.

A partner/participant who has been unfaithful or has otherwise engaged in untrustworthy behavior (drinking, drug abuse, gambling, engaging in behavior which depleted the couples' assets) should not be scored above a (3), unless there is a clear and very coherently described change in the partner/participant's behavior which indicates they are trustworthy currently.

**NB:** The partner/participant who engages in mild physical aggression (e.g., shoving, slapping) should not score above a (4) on this scale.

*5 - Neither unloving nor actively loving*

The partner/participant appears capable of providing adequate emotional support. He or she is not attuned to every aspect of the other person's emotional life, but does try to be helpful on important issues. The person who is scored as loving at this level is more likely to be helpful in instrumental ways, going to the store, fixing the car, etc. Credible assertions that the partner/participant "will always be there for me" or "I will love her no matter what" are missing from the transcript, but this partner/participant does seem reasonably reliable.

The "over involved" or "controlling" partner/participant (scores above a 5 on the relevant scales) should not score above the midrange on the loving scale, and may score lower.

In some cases, this rating is also given as an average to a partner/participant who in the past has acted in unloving ways, but has made up for these negative periods by later dedication to the other person. The reader has the sense that this partner/participant is not likely to leave or reject the other person; this basic trustworthiness may make up for some negative behaviors which may annoy the partner/participant but do not cause serious damage to the relationship.

***7 - Loving***

Though there may have been some problems, there are specific examples of the partner/participant being loving and accepting toward the other person. The participant may describe disagreements or quarrels, but these have been resolved or are being worked on in a way which acknowledge the needs of the participant as well as his/her partner.

This rating may also be given when reports of specific loving behaviors are missing, but the reader gets a definite sense of the partner/participant's trustworthiness ("It keeps you going, knowing that you have somebody that cares for you and will be there for you, and it's a good feeling, it really is") and affection. This other person seems confident that the partner/participant will be available if needed, e.g., going to the partner/participant when upset or in need of help.

***9 - Very loving***

In the coder's opinion, this partner/participant is loving and accepting. He or she clearly values the other person and is willing to put the other's needs or wishes above his or her own at times. There are specific statements made about confidence in the partner/participant's availability. When one person is upset, he or she reports turning to the partner/participant, and is confident in his or her ability to provide comfort. The relationship does not have to be perfect in every way to get this rating. There may still be conflict over some issues, or past misjudgments by the partner/participant, but there is clear evidence that the other person is respected, loved, and supported by the partner/participant.

**IMPORTANT NOTE WITH RESPECT TO  
NEGATIVE BEHAVIOR SCALES:**

In some cases, the individual will report feeling rejected, controlled, etc. by the partner, or will report a behavior which is potentially rejecting, involving, controlling, etc., such as becoming enraged or threatening to leave the relationship. However, if there is no evidence provided regarding the motivation behind the behavior, the scale is rated **CR**. If there is only indirect evidence or it is possible to infer motivation, then the score should be given in parentheses. This problem occurs more frequently with respect to the partner's behavior, because usually the individual provides some information about their own motivation and hence can be scored, or their motivation can be more easily inferred, and the score can be given in parentheses.

**Rejection of Attachment: Pushing toward Independence**

Rejection refers to attempts to decrease attachment behaviors and feelings in the partner/participant **in the coder's opinion**. It is not simply the opposite of loving. The rejecting partner/participant specifically tries to shift the other person's attention away from him/herself as a secure base and toward more independence. Dependence or interdependence is rejected. The rejecting partner/participant is uncomfortable with and avoids the other's bids for help or closeness, regardless of whether he or she is direct in saying that is the intent. Note: Arguments are not equivalent to rejection unless the topic of the argument is specifically attachment related or the other person feels rejected in the argument because the partner/participant seems avoidant or unavailable. Independent activities are not a sign of rejection, unless there is no compromise or the partner/participant appears to want to exclude the other person.

At the high end of the scale, the partner/participant is clear that they do not want the partner to come to them for help, they do not wish the partner's help and do not seek it. They want the handle problems alone and have their partners do the same. At the mid range, the individual is somewhat responsive, but tends to minimize problems, e.g., "its no big deal; just forget about it"; "it doesn't matter", or gives advice, e.g., "you should just do ...." They are clearly more adequate in a crisis situation or when the person is ill or hurt where instrumental help may be useful, than they are in day to day situations or with emotional distress. At the low end of the scale the individual is warm and supportive, or may be dependent, involving or controlling, but they are not pushing the partner away or minimizing problems.

**IMPORTANT:** The reader should look closely at negative or critical statements made by the partner/participant to see whether these constitute true rejection or are instead reflections of ambivalence about the relationship on the part of the partner/participant or attempts to make the other person more pleasing to the partner/participant. For example, the partner/participant who tells the other person that "If you ever get fat, I'm leaving you" is not truly pushing the other person toward independence, but is instead trying to get her to conform to his ideal of what his partner should be like, and hence is being controlling. The partner/participant who seems to use critical or threatening remarks to activate the other person's attachment needs and pull him or her closer is practicing a manipulative form of engagement (involving and controlling), not rejection. Approaching the partner and then being highly critical of their apparently reasonable efforts to comfort, fall into the involving scale behaviors, rather than rejecting scale. Even if the push-and-pull tug of the partner/participant is a consistent pattern, the rating should still be no higher than mid-range.

*1 - Not at all rejecting of attachment*

The partner/participant does not turn away bids for closeness. It may be that such a partner/participant is extremely loving and accepting of attachment bids, or that he/she is dissatisfied with the amount of closeness with the other and therefore seeks more intimacy. There is no attempt to actively push the other away.

*3 - Mild rejection of attachment*

There is either a slight sense of rejection that characterizes the relationship in general, or there may have been a short period of rejection which has since been convincingly resolved. This rating is appropriate if the partner/participant occasionally fails to meet the other's attachment needs, but most of the time deals with them willingly, so that a reader has the sense that this partner/participant is probably acting out of an occasional lack of awareness or consideration than out of any desire to have the other person be more independent.

*5 - Moderate rejection of attachment*

The partner/participant is not particularly affectionate or supportive of the other when he or she seeks closeness or help. The partner/participant seems to want the other to be more independent, though this is not explicit. If attachment bids are initiated by the other they are met only minimally (see above).

This rating may also be assigned as an average if the partner/participant is rejecting in some areas or at some times, pushing the other toward greater independence, or being unavailable in certain situations, but not rejecting in other areas or at other times. It is possible for a partner/participant who is responsive in emergencies, or who gives instrumental help such as getting cold remedies when the other person is ill, to be scored as high as (5-6) on this scale.

NOTE: A person who scores at this level cannot score above the mid-range on the loving scale.

*7 - Rejection of attachment*

This rating is given to a partner/participant who rejects attachment behaviors in a manner which cannot be ignored, with no reports of counterbalancing attempts to bring the other person closer. Although not the only way a partner/participant may be scored as rejecting at this level, the partner/participant may manifest rejection by insisting upon being independent and may refuse requests by the other to spend more time together or that the partner/participant be more supportive. Or the partner/participant may have criticized the other for being too dependent, though the reader does not get the impression that the other person has asked for anything more than expectable levels of support or affection. (For example, one woman, engaged to a man whose social life revolved almost entirely around nights out with his friends, stated: "That's a big issue...he still wants me to keep my individuality, even though we're together...he tells me, 'Don't be dependent on me, don't rely on me.'")

This rating differs from a 9 in that this partner seems primarily intent on assuring his or her own independence rather than rejecting the participant.

***9 - Extreme rejection of attachment***

The partner/participant is so consistently rejecting of attachment that the reader feels that he or she is being cruel to the other person. There may have been derogation of the other's attachment-seeking behaviors, or reports of disapproving statements that the other person is too "clingy" or "babyish." The partner/participant appears to dislike the other, and it seems possible that he/she will leave the other. (Again, it is important to remember that not all cruel behavior has the goal of decreasing attachment behavior, and if the behavior does not appear to have that as its purpose, it should not be scored here.)

**Involving Behavior: Heightening of Attachment**

Involving behavior of the partner/participant are attempts to heighten attachment behavior within the relationship. Involving behavior is directly at odds with secure base behavior, as it does not foster exploration in the other person, or the feelings of confidence and support which are so key to the secure base phenomenon. There may be excessive attempts by the partner/participant to keep the other person close and attentive to the extent that independent action by the other is difficult. When the involving person tries to give care, their own anxiety may overwhelm the distress of the partner. A person who seeks comfort and then is unsatisfied with apparently reasonable efforts by the partner to comfort is involving. Involving behavior may include manipulation of the other to make them feel weak and vulnerable and needful of the partner/participant; in this case controlling behavior is also scored. The goal of the involving behavior by the partner/participant seems to be to ensure the other's involvement to increase the partner/participant's feeling of well-being and decrease anxiety.

At low levels, involving behavior consists of attempts to get the other person involved in the relationship without curtailing other activities or friendships. There may be mild anxiety if the other person is upset, ill or hurt, and they themselves are responsive to comforting although may be somewhat dramatic in their careseeking. At the mid-range of the scale, there may be some attempts to make the partner jealous, or there may be the need for lots of reassurance and comfort. Some behavior may appear to be "extra-helpful"; the partner/participant is involved in the others' activities of business to the point where they give a lot of advice, or do things or involve themselves to a degree greater than necessary. The partner/participant nevertheless seems genuinely concerned for the other. The individual may become quite upset when the partner has a problem, but still tries to help the partner. There may be strong expressions of needing love, affection, and closeness that seem out of context given the apparently adequate responsiveness of the other person.

The very involved partner/participant expects the other to be with him/her almost constantly, to the exclusion of other relationships and activities, finds separations highly stressful, and makes frantic attempts to maintain the other's involvement if there is any attempt to disengage. The partner cannot seek help from this person or discuss important issues because the individual becomes highly agitated and distressed. In some circumstances, threats to leave the relationship are attempts to increase involvement, as well as being controlling, and reports of such behavior must be closely looked at to determine their function in the relationship. A person who is highly involving is also likely to be scored as very controlling. However, a high score may be given for control, but not involvement, if the partner is demanding and wants things to go his or her way, but does not seem to be seeking greater closeness.

***1 -No involving behavior***

No involving behavior is described in the coder's opinion.

***3 - Mild involving behavior***

This individual has some concerns re: time spent with the other, but these appear to be realistic. The partner/participant emphasizes a need for closeness in the relationship, and some mild anxiety when the partner is upset. A person who desires more communication with the partner is scored here. Teasing efforts at making the other jealous are scored at (4).

***5 - Moderate involving behavior***

Low level fear or guilt induction is used in an attempt to influence the other person, including strong expressions of need, and some expression of helplessness, and desire for other relationships and activities to be curtailed. The partner/participant may push the other away at times, then use a "hook" to pull him/her in, or vice versa, seeks help strongly then is dissatisfied. The partner's distress or illness is a cause for moderate anxiety and overreaction, but overall the individual is concerned for the other person, as much as for him/herself. Threats to abandon the partner during arguments may be scored here if they appear to have the function of getting the partner to be more involved (see controlling scale). NOTE: A person who scores at this level cannot score above the mid-range on the loving scale.

#### *7 - Involving behavior*

This partner/participant is very involved in the other's relationships with friends or family, activities or business, as if the partner/participant feels he/she must have close contact for the well-being of the self and the relationship. The partner/participant tries to get the other to increase closeness. The partner/participant may be described as checking up on the other or repeatedly bringing up ways in which they feel the participant should have acted or using strong guilt induction. The individual is highly anxious about any distress or problems of the partner, and he/she can be of little help or support. This individual is difficult to soothe. The balance of the partner's concern has shifted to his/her own feelings and needs, with little concern for the participant's actual interests or well-being.

#### *9 - Very involving behavior*

This partner/participant is manipulative in attempts to ensure closeness and involvement. Even short separations are distressing for the partner/participant. The partner/participant is extremely demanding of the other's attention and assurance. The efforts of the other person to respond are rarely, if ever, satisfactory to the partner/participant. The individual is highly anxious about any distress or problems of the partner, and the other partner cannot seek help from them because of this. This individual is very difficult to soothe.

#### Controlling Behavior

An adult attachment relationship can be understood as a relationship between two equals who are mutually supportive and flexible in their ability to serve as and use a secure base. Like involving behavior, a person's controlling behavior in an adult relationship is at odds with secure base behavior, inhibiting exploratory behavior and undermining feelings of support and assurance. The principal difference between an involving and a controlling person is that the involving person uses the attachment system to keep the partner focused on him or herself, while the controlling person imposes his or her ideas on the partner with the goal of exercising power. (Although this may ultimately be seen as anxiety reducing, the need for control extends beyond the attachment system into other aspects of the partner's behavior). Rejection, dependency, and involvement are all controlling behaviors if carried to the extreme, and in these cases the coder needs to record the behavior in what ever scales are appropriate, for example, giving high scores on dependency and control.

Low to mid-range scores are given to partner/participant who appear to be "too helpful" in the coder's opinion. The partner/participant becomes involved in the other's activities or relationships with others; for example, calling friends to intervene in conflicts or insisting on how the other should behave, even in situations which are not directly the partner/participant's business. In response to the other's upset, the partner/participant is very directive about solving the problem or even takes charge of solving the problem. They nevertheless seem genuinely concerned for the other. A highly controlling subject wants his/her own way in most/all aspects of the relationship, including areas which should be relatively independent of the relationship. This partner strongly directs the participant's behavior, emphasizing that compliance is for the participant's own good or the good of the relationship. Efforts to control the participant are extreme, such as statements strong threats to leave, threats that he/she will kill himself if the partner leaves, or stalking behavior. This partner is over intrusive to the point of being suffocating.

The following behaviors may characterize a controlling person:

- (a) The partner/participant insists upon the subject doing things his/her way. Threats of leaving or "the silent treatment" may be used to elicit compliance.
- (b) The partner/participant tries to get the other to be pleasing, even to be willing to change aspects of his/her personality completely in order to be more "lovable" (or at least less aggravating) to the partner.
- (c) The partner/participant feels he/she knows what is best for the other.
- (d) The partner/participant seems uncompromising and rigid.
- (e) The partner/participant may be "overprotective", discouraging independent activities even when there is no obvious threat to the other's safety or to the relationship.
- (f) The partner/participant may infantilize the other, keeping him or her from handling ordinary adult tasks. (However, if the other has been incompetent about such tasks in the past, the score should not be high).
- (g) When the other person engages in routine tasks, the partner hovers and provides excessive instruction which strikes the reader as patronizing and unnecessary.
- (h) The partner/participant may forbid the other to engage in activities which he/she considers a waste of time, or to see people of whom she/he disapproves.
- (i) The partner/participant does not respect the other's privacy, insisting upon knowing about all aspects of the other's life. This might be seen in grilling the other when she/he gets off the phone, or goes out to an appointment. At higher levels it may include going into the other private things, or listening in on phone calls.
- (j) The partner/participant may be frightening or abusive to the other to gain compliance.
- (k) The partner/participant may be jealous and suspicious, checking up on the subject, or following him/her. This behavior may also be scored as involving.

NOTE: The reader should not be confused by the other person positively interpreting controlling behaviors as evidence of caring, love and involvement. The reader must try to maintain an objective view of what is appropriate behavior between two presumably competent partners.

#### *1- No controlling behavior*

In the coder's opinion, no controlling behavior is described. There is respect of autonomy and trust in the other's abilities.

#### *3- Mildly controlling behavior*

This partner/participant is described as exerting influence out of concern for safety and health, but the concern appears realistic. The partner/participant gives lots of advice, may be somewhat inflexible, and mildly questioning of decisions made by the other.

#### *5- Moderately controlling behavior*

This partner/participant shows at least one of the behaviors described above to a moderate degree. He/she may be excessively involved with or exerts efforts to control the other's activities or relationships with others. The behavior may be characterized as overly "helpful" or inflexible. The partner/participant still seems concerned for the other person as well as the self. The individual may have threatened to leave the relationship, but has employed this tactic rarely with no evidence that it has become a coercive technique.

NOTE: A person who scores at this level cannot score above a 5 on the loving scale.

***7- Controlling behavior***

At least one of the characteristics listed above appear strongly in the partner/participant's behavior. He/she is deeply involved in the other's relationships, activities or business, seems certain that he/she knows what is best for the other and the relationship. The partner/participant wants the other to behave as he/she sees fit, not necessarily as the other wants to behave. The partner/participant may check up on the other, or use tantrum-like or threatening behavior (including threats to leave the relationship) as a technique (that is, there is evidence of repeated instances) to assure the other's compliance. The balance of the partner/participant's concern has shifted to the self, with less concern for the other's feelings and needs, interest and well-being.

***9- Very controlling behavior***

This partner/participant is clearly manipulative, controlling, intrusive and suffocating, showing this in more than one aspect of behavior. He/she strongly directs the other's behavior in a malignant way, getting his or her own way at the expense of the other (even if the behavior is rationalized as being for the good of the other or the relationship). Efforts to control the other are striking, such as stalking behavior or statements that he/she will kill her/himself or the other if the subject does not comply.

**Dependency**

The individual who scores high on dependency appears childlike in their orientation to the partner and has few interests of his/her own. Dependency is differentiated from involving behavior in that it is not attachment specific. Rather the behavior appears to arise from immaturity, passivity, or some lack of competence in any domain of the relationship. In its extreme, however, it can be seen as either involving, controlling, or both. Although a relationship in which one or both partners are dependent implies that the couple spends a lot of time together and rarely engage in autonomous activities. Dependent behavior should not automatically be equated with a valuing of intimacy. Each scale must be rated on its own merits. There may be overlap between behaviors scored on this scale and the valuing of autonomy scale.

A person who scores at the low end of this scale is self-reliant and self-directed, with definite opinions and interests of his/her own; he or she may even express strong fears of or distaste toward being dependent upon another for support. If the person is able at times to provide support to others, but sometimes seeks assistance when it seems not really necessary, a midrange score should be given. At the high end are those who seem unable to function without the partner. A common form for this to take is extreme neediness or passivity in behavior. This may be gratifying to a domineering or controlling partner, or annoying to a partner who would prefer that the individual not depend on him or her so strongly. Note: The dependent person may be very happy in the relationship if the partner is cooperative with their desires.

The following may also characterize a highly dependent participant:

- (a) The reader gets the feeling that this person's whole life revolves around the partner. They are with each other almost constantly, or, if the partner is not as involved, the dependent participant remains available, hoping that the partner will decide to be around.
- (b) The partner/participant may seem immature or incompetent, requiring more help with ordinary activities than is usual for an adult. OR He or she appears to have a weakly developed personality. The reader gets little sense of the person having any particular convictions or opinions of his/her own.
- (c) The partner/participant is willing to give in to the partner disproportionately. Dependent individuals appear to want the other to determine the course of their lives.

- (d) Dependent individuals readily give up other relationships with friends and sometimes even family (as well as activities and interests which they had previously enjoyed) if the partner shows no interest in joining in.
- (f) The participant may try excessively to please his or her partner and be over-reliant on the partner's approval, to the point of completely changing aspects of the personality if he or she perceives that as what the partner wants. As one participant said, "I'm trying to be more of what he'd like me to be."

NOTE: There are individuals whom the reader will think must be very "dependent" to be in the relationship he/she is describing. That is, the relationship appears to be damaging to the person, or fulfilling a need peripheral to the relationship, such as a way to take revenge on parents or fitting an idealized image. Unless the person also shows some of the dependent behaviors described within the scale, the dependency score should be no higher than the mid-range, and should be in parentheses.

#### *1 - Not at all dependent*

This person is self-reliant and self-directed, whether within normal limits or extreme in these characteristics.

#### *3 - Mostly non dependent*

The person is generally self-reliant, with strong convictions and interests of his/her own, but occasionally expresses dependency or need for the partner, for example, there is some difficulty with separation or emphasis on the need for joint decision making.

#### *5 - Somewhat dependent*

This person has some independent identity and separate life in some areas. However, one or more of the characteristics listed on the previous page appear, but in a mild form, such as an emphasis on activities with the partner, or efforts to get more help or advice from the partner than really necessary. This level of dependence may be seen in a relatively new relationship which may be characterized as "romantic". The relationship with the partner is one of interdependence, rather than imbalance.

#### *7 - Dependent*

Here the balance has tipped to one in which the person is rarely independent. Several of the characteristics listed on the previous page are present. The person's life largely revolves around the other partner, who may be presented as the dominant force in the relationship. Being in the relationship is a major theme of the interview.

#### *9 - Extremely dependent*

Most of the characteristics listed on the previous page are present. Either the person sounds unable to function without direction from the partner, or he/she is strikingly needful of the partner's constant involvement and presence in areas which extend beyond the domain of attachment. He/she seems to have willingly handed over control of his or her own life in order to avoid the possibility of losing the caretaking individual.

### Communication

The scores for this scale reflect the amount of communication by individual and his/her attitudes about communication. Communication involves both talking and listening.

People who score at the low end of the scale have great difficulty being open with others, and the impression of the reader is that there are many areas in which they have failed to communicate important feelings and information. They also appear to have little interest in their partners' communications, or ability to listen and respond. Individuals who are in the mid to high range in openness talk freely about most topics, especially positive or intellectual ones, but there may be areas which are off-limits, either by agreement or because the individual has chosen not to reveal

information. These may include topics about which the person is embarrassed or those which he or she believes might cause unnecessary pain to the partner if they were discussed. People who score at the highest point of the scale are those who talk about virtually everything, including emotionally charged topics, and desire the same from their partners. To score at the high levels the individual must also be interested in the partner's communications.

The reader must attempt to determine how open the person actually is, rather than whether the partner is satisfied with the person's openness. Despite possible differences in men's and women's communication styles, the same standards in scoring should be used for men and women.

Scoring the participant: Participants are asked directly in the interview whether there are topics they do not usually talk about, but the response to that question cannot always be taken at face value. The reader should also look closely at how much the participant knows about the partner's family and history, what makes the participant special to the partner, and how the partner has reacted to separations. The response to the upset question can be especially telling, since partners who are communicative are able to identify the other person's emotions and describe their own.

The reader is required to rate each individual in the relationship. However, it is clearly true that one person's communication style may influence the other's behavior, and at times it may seem that the scores are being given to the couple as a unit. Also note that apparent shyness or discomfort in the interview setting is of little relevance for scoring purposes: Again, we are interested in how the partners behave with each other.

Very important note: At times, participants seem to equate communication with problem solving, arguments or conflicts. This is an important element of communication. However, if the person only seems to express him/herself in this arena, as opposed to discussing a broader array of topics, he/she should not score above a 5. If clear, direct and respectful handling of conflict is reported in conjunction with open communication on other topics then the score should be high (at least 7). If the transcript indicates that the person or partner is nasty, disrespectful, or aggressive in conflicts, then they should be rated down on the communication scale (no higher than 5, and possibly lower depending on severity of behavior), even if the handling of other topics of discussion or communication in other situations appears to be very open.

#### *1 - Little to no communication*

This partner/participant appears to be extremely uncommunicative, or to actively mislead the participant. The other person often complains about the difficulty he or she customarily has getting the partner/participant to communicate with him or her. The reader has the impression of a partner/participant who does not wish to be known very well by the other, or a partner who is unable to communicate his thoughts or feelings. The partner who has been caught in serious lies by the participant would ordinarily receive this rating.

#### *3 - Some limited communication*

This partner/participant is somewhat uncommunicative about topics which one would expect couples to discuss. If scoring the participant, he/she may sound tentative when talking about the other's occupation, family, or dating history ("We don't see much of his family. I think maybe he and his father had some big problem, I don't know what, and he doesn't like to visit them"). Others who receive this rating are difficult to talk to (as evidenced by sarcastic responses or lying), or as individuals who are likely to withdraw, or have trouble talking about sensitive topics.

If the reader has the sense that the person being scored is limited in their communication because of the other partner's behavior (pressure, withdrawal, avoidance, sarcasm, harshness, high anxiety or distress, anger), the score should reflect the amount of communication (scored in the 3-6 range). A person who responds to his partner's efforts to communicate with behaviors of this type should be scored in this range as well, the scorer trying to balance talking with listening skills.

People who talk readily about positive topics, but resist discussing negative ones, even when urged by the partner to talk, should receive a 4.

#### *5 - Moderate communication*

This partner/participant is somewhat reticent, but generally communicates about emotional topics as well as everyday ones. The reader has the feeling that the partner/participant does try to communicate information in a reasonably straight-forward manner. When upset the partner/participant does talk with the other, although it may be difficult at first. This person is a moderately good listener, showing some clear interest in what the other person has to say.

This rating should also be given if the participant asserts that they talk about "everything". However, the situations or conversations that are reported do not convincingly exemplify the participant's assertion that they are very open with one another, but neither do they contradict it.

#### *7 - High communication*

This partner/participant is able to communicate his or her feelings clearly. Communication is valued by this person. There may be explicit statements about the openness in response to the "upset" question. He/she is clearly interested in what the partner has to say. The partner/participant who has omitted details that might hurt the participant (e.g. about a past lover, or negative feelings about the participant's family) would receive this rating if the above criteria are met (This may be difficult to determine for the partner rating).

#### *9 - Extremely open in communication*

This partner/participant is unusual in the amount of openness he or she provides. It is important to such a person to be completely honest. All topics are considered open to discussion (even if the knowledge might be painful for the partner or the participant). Fleeting emotions are described to the participant, as well as details of past and present relationships. Such a partner is convinced that honesty is always the best policy, and that failing to divulge the whole truth is as bad as actively lying. They express willingness to hear all information from their partner as well, without any contradictory evidence.

### **The Safe Haven: Ability to Initiate and Respond to Attachment Behaviors in Times of Stress**

The attachment relationship in childhood is one in which the mother or father acts as an attentive, sensitive, responsive caregiver for the more dependent "attached" infant or child. The emphasis in most attachment work is upon the attached person's experience as he or she learns to use the caregiver as a secure base and safe haven; little attention has been paid to the attachment figure's experience in the caregiving role.

Attachments between adults differ in an important way from those of parents and young children. In the adult attachment relationship, each partner at times fills a caregiver role and at times a care-seeking one. Each adult partner should be capable at appropriate times of taking on either a nurturing ("parent") role or a care-seeking ("child") role. Ideally, both adults in a loving relationship will be comfortable turning to the partner with their concerns, or when distressed or hurt, confident that the partner will be able to reassure and comfort them. They also need to have learned to provide these sorts of caregiving behaviors and to feel comfortable doing so when their partner needs them. There are situations in which both roles are being played virtually simultaneously, e.g. in an argument: One partner may want something from the other (seeking role), yet optimally would be aware the impact of the argument on the partner and the effectiveness of one's own communication (giving role).

Not all adults are flexible in serving as a safe haven, and some of the specific ways they may have problems are described in the scales above (rejection, involving, etc.). Some people may be relatively at ease in the role of caregiver, but have more difficulty seeking help. Others have never learned to effectively support and nurture another, or are comfortable only in a more childlike, help-seeking role, and therefore act exclusively as the "child."

This scale and the following one indirectly assess the degree of reciprocity in the relationship on the ability to take on both roles: Caregiver and care-seeker in times of stress.

As with the other scales, if a rating is not possible, **CR** (and possibly a best-fitting alternative score) should be assigned.

#### Careseeking: Seeking and Accepting Care

Adults need reassurance about their concerns, encouragement for their efforts, and care when they get sick. If people have learned to expect that others will provide comfort and support when they become ill, sad, or frightened, we assume that they give clear signals of a need for help at such times. If the attachment figure ignores or misinterprets those signals, the person may exaggerate his or her distress or else give up and turn to other sources for comfort. Once this becomes habitual, the person may stop signaling a desire to be nurtured, may seek another source of comfort, and/or is left with unresolved negative feelings. This scale is designed primarily to indicate how effectively participants signal distress and accept comforting (i.e., use the partner as a "safe haven"), and secondarily to index the ability to use the partner as a "secure base" for exploring the world.

Low scores are given to those who seldom or never accept or seek comforting or care from their partners. This includes those who instead consistently fill the "adult" role in their relationship, those who actively seek but then reject care that is offered, as well as those who are described as the participant's "friend" (with no element of caretaking mentioned anywhere in the transcript). Mid-range scores are assigned to those who are less apt to actively seek nurturing, but who do accept it when it is offered. To receive a high score, there should be explicit statements referring to the individual seeking or accepting care and assistance from the partner.

This score refers specifically to the behavior of the participant or the partner. The reader should not be misled by a participant who presents himself or herself as emotionally needy, immature, or unstable. Unless there is evidence that the participant seeks and accepts care and assistance from the partner, a low score is given.

The scale also refers to behavior with the partner. If the partner is unresponsive to signals, the distressed person may have learned to turn to someone outside the relationship for comfort and reassurance. Even though an outside person may function effectively as a secure base for the person, and it is clear that the participant is perfectly capable of seeking and accepting nurturing, the individual should be scored only for what is happening in this relationship.

#### *1 - Does not seek or accept care*

This person does not seek and/or accept comforting or reassurance. There may be evidence of active rejection of those behaviors. He or she may be unwilling to acknowledge any need for help, or may be comfortable only in a caregiving role.

#### *3 - Unlikely to seek or accept care*

This person may seem ill at ease in seeking care or help, but does occasionally allow the partner to take care of him or her. He/she is more likely to accept this care in a situation of being physically ill, but very unlikely to accept care for emotional upset, except in serious or highly stressful situations only, such as death of a parent.

Individuals who report active approach to their partners, but dissatisfaction and rejection of their partner's apparently reasonable efforts at comfort (see caregiving section), are scored here, e.g., "he listens and tried to comfort me, but I shoot him down. He's like well, its not your fault. I'm like...of course its my fault."

Others who earn this rating may give no indication of adopting either role; the participant may describe the relationship as one of friends who enjoy good times together, but with no reports of caretaking.

*5 - Moderately able to accept care*

The person does not often seek care, and may find it difficult to ask for help except in seriously stressful situations. He or she is usually able to accept well when it is provided by the partner. One has the feeling that the person likes being cared for, but is, for whatever reason, not likely to ask directly for help or else gives off such confusing signals that a partner of average perceptiveness cannot always know when or how to respond.

The person may actively seek care, but is not easily comforted. The partner's efforts may be appreciated and the reader views them as reasonable (see caregiving section), but there is a sense that it is difficult for this individual to be comforted fully.

This rating may also be appropriate when the individual rarely seeks comfort or reassurance, but the reader feels this is probably due to the **other person's** disinclination to adopt the complementary caregiving role, rather than any inability of that person to accept help. ("When I cry, he gets frustrated, so I usually hold it in when I'm upset.") Someone who gives indications that he or she might well enjoy being taken care of, or who reports turning to someone other than the partner when distressed, may never take a careseeking role with a partner who doesn't like to nurture.

Give a rating no higher than (5) if the person makes general statements which imply that they take on a careseeking role ("We both take care of each other"), but provides no specific examples, even when prompted.

*7 - Seeks and accepts care*

This rating is given to the person who seeks and accepts comfort, reassurance, and assistance. He or she gives off clear signals of distress so that the partner will respond to them. They are comforted by the partner's efforts, and are appreciative of them. At least one specific example appears in the transcript describing the person looking to his/her partner for comfort when upset, or seeking help from the partner when ill, frightened or distressed. In contrast to the participant who is rated 5, the stressful situations for which help is sought are more ordinary or common events.

*9 - Very comfortable seeking and accepting care*

This person enjoys being taken care of and clearly expects his/her partner to provide care when he or she is distressed or ill. There are specific examples in the transcript of the individual appropriately seeking help in ordinary day-to-day situations as well as highly stressful ones, and with great appreciation of being cared for.

Caregiving

This scale is assesses an individual's ability to be a good (i.e., sensitive, responsive, and attentive) caregiver for his or her partner. When an adult is sick, frightened, upset, or sad, the partner should recognize this and respond to it in an effective manner. The behavior scored here is incorporated into the Loving scale, which also captures the everyday elements of secure base behavior, in particular emphasizing support of exploration in the individual as well as in the relationship.

Low scores are given to those who seldom or never act in a caring, supportive manner. This includes a diverse group: Those who are childlike and/or highly anxious in the relationship such that they are too distressed themselves to give care, those who are cold and non-nurturing, and those who are described as the participant's "friend" (with no element of caretaking mentioned in the transcript). Mid-range scores are awarded to those who are less apt to take on a caregiving role, or less effective when they try, but who do make some attempts. For example, they may instruct the individual how to behave. Individuals who score in the mid-range are often more responsive to the clearer demands of caring for a physical illness, than to emotional distress. To receive a high

score, there should be explicit statements in the interview referring to the individual in a caregiving role in this relationship. For example, the partner/participant provided effective, compassionate care to the other person when he/she was distressed.

Partner/participants who provide excellent caretaking during a crisis (e.g., after an automobile accident), but who is not particularly caring on a day-to-day basis should score no higher than midrange. If there is any indication of an actual rejection of caregiving, the score must be 3 or lower.

**NOTE:** A person who tries to give care, but has a partner who seems very difficult to comfort, should be scored based on the descriptions of the caregiving behavior, i.e., the quality of the effort made, not the effect.

#### *1 - Does not provide caregiving*

This person appears unable to adopt the role of caregiver. He or she may be unwilling to take care of another person, being unresponsive or rejecting, or is extremely anxious or childlike and therefore is unable to comfort or nurture the partner when it is called for. Others appear unaware of the caregiving role, and view staying away from the partner as desirable and kind.

#### *3 - Infrequent or inadequate caregiving*

This person rarely assumes the role of helper or comforter, (though he/she may occasionally do so when there is a crisis, such as a serious illness). This may be because the person misses signals from his or her partner that caregiving would be welcomed. In other cases, the needs of one person may be seen as undesirable; the partner responds with reluctance or resentment when it occurs, but does deal with it. Individuals who provide care when they view the stressor as important, but ignore or reject the partner when they feel the partner's distress is due to something trivial, receive this score. A person who becomes very distressed by the partner's problems and has trouble being responsive receives this score. If the partner is very difficult to soothe, the caregiver should be scored here if they express frustration, and that they have given up.

Others who earn this rating describe their relationship as one of friends who enjoy good times together, but with no element of caretaking on either side.

#### *5 - Moderately able to provide caregiving*

The person provides at least one specific description of an attempt to be nurturing, usually in response to a crisis. Though this may result in excellent caretaking during the crisis, the person is only moderately caring and reassuring on a day to day basis with fairly routine matters. ("He tries to make me feel better when I come home from work all upset, and I appreciate that, but he just doesn't understand what it's like" or "When I get upset, she'll be like 'just calm down, don't worry about it,'") This caregiving behavior may take the form of advice to the individual, e.g., "you should just do...." or "why don't you just...", which is action oriented and aims to "fix" the problem. The individual who responds with instrumental assistance only may be scored here (e.g., getting cold tablets at the pharmacy). A person who is very distressed by the partner's problems, but can provide some help and support should be scored here and no higher.

A rating of (5) should be given when the person uses general terms ("We both take care of each other"), which seem credible but are not substantiated by detail, even after prompting. ("When I'm sick, she's just great, she does everything for me, you know.")

A rating of (5) may also be appropriate when the person does not act as a caregiver, but the reader feels this is due mostly to the **other partner's** disinclination to adopt the complementary careseeking role, rather than any inability to be caring if called upon. The partner may also be very difficult to soothe, and the caregiver should be scored here if they express frustration, but keep trying in instrumental ways to help.

#### *7 - Skilled at serving in caregiver role*

This person is clearly comfortable taking care of another person. He or she appears sensitive and responsive to the other person's needs and emotional state. For this rating to be given, the participant must provide at least one clear example of the person appropriately taking on the role of caregiver with respect to a relatively routine source of distress. However, if contradictory episodes are also related, the rating must be lower. If the partner is very difficult to soothe, and the caregiver should be scored here if they express frustration, but appear aware of the partner's difficulty and are flexible in their responses.

*9 - Consistently serves as a secure base/safe haven*

This rating is given when the person provides more than one specific example of care and support, so that the reader is convinced that this person is adept at comforting, reassuring, and encouraging his or her partner in routine matters as well as during crises, regardless of the careseeking and care accepting characteristics of the partner.

**Current State of Mind:**

**Valuing of Intimacy, Valuing of Independence, Angry Speech, Derogation of Partner or Attachment, Idealization (Normalization) of Partner/Relationship, Passivity of Speech, Fear of Loss, and Overall Coherence of Transcript**

The rating scales in this section describe the participant's manner of presentation and, by inference, the current state of mind underlying that discourse. They are considered key to determining a final classification. **In other words, current state of mind (and the individuals own behavior and ideas) always override experience when determining the classification.**

#### Valuing of Intimacy

This scale assesses the participant's valuing of intimacy. High valuing of intimacy is typically seen in individuals who are classified as Secure, but it is not the only requirement for this classification. Intimacy is more than companionship or shared activities. It involves being close to a partner emotionally, trying to know the other person and to be known as honestly and clearly as possible. Activities such as talking to the partner about feelings, showing affection, or acknowledging insecurities are all intimacy-oriented.

It is important for the reader to ascertain what the participant means by "closeness" or "being there" for each other. Proximity, time together, desire to start a family, and dependency cannot be equated with intimacy. Idealizing participants may speak of "closeness" as desirable without demonstrating awareness of what this means. Distortions of intimacy should not be scored above the mid-range, such as the desire for fusion or to have a twin. Distorted expressions of closeness are best scored using the dependency, controlling, or involving scales.

Participants who score at the low end of this scale form a heterogeneous group. They may indicate that they find intimacy distasteful or frightening, and try to avoid it, or simply seem unaware of what intimacy entails. In many cases, low valuing of intimacy is inferred by the participant's negative remarks about the partner's desire for closeness, by an emphasis on materialism, and an apparent coldness or suspiciousness about relationships.

For those who score at the high end, intimacy is comfortable and gratifying. The partner may be described as "my best friend in the world," but other friends need not be excluded. They may indicate that they try to find a balance between the need to maintain a relationship and to develop one's personality in other areas, so friends and a job are also presented as meaningful and important. In such cases, a desire for independence or autonomy (see following scale) will also be acknowledged. **It is important to note that the participant does not need to have a "cooperative" partner to value intimacy highly.** If intimacy is not possible with the partner, the participant will specifically describe in general how intimacy within relationships is valuable or desirable.

*The reader should be cautious about confusing intimacy--which involves openness, sharing, and vulnerability--with dependency or a need for control.* A dependent participant may or may not be capable of intimacy. Sharing and balance in the relationship is included in the valuing of intimacy. Hence, the participant who is possessive about the partner, resenting time spent with other people or in other activities, is scored no higher than the mid-range on valuing of intimacy with the partner. A high score on communication (listening as well as talking) is often associated with valuing of intimacy if the partner is "cooperative".

An absence of statements in these transcripts (given the focus of the interview) about the need or desire for closeness, openness, and involvement is unusual, and therefore telling in itself. The person who makes no intimacy-related statements should receive a low score unless his/her behavior clearly demonstrates a strong desire for closeness.

Not all happy relationships are high in intimacy. The reader should look closely at the emphasis the participant places on emotional closeness and honesty, in contrast to sexuality, material goals, or affiliation (having fun, being pals).

*1 - Avoidance of or inattention to intimacy*

The person is uncomfortable getting close to other people, or says the partner makes him or her feel oppressed or confused with requests for more openness or affection. (This refers only to the partner who seems to be attempting to elicit normal degrees of closeness and intimacy; this rating should not be given if the partner is clearly extreme in his/her ideal of involvement, and participant is reacting against that.) The person may seem unaware of the concept of intimacy by their failure to mention the idea that closeness or openness might be an element of an adult relationship. (Such transcripts have a childish quality insofar as the participant seems to be describing a playmate rather than a partner.) A person whose desire to be "close" to the partner actually consists of a desire to control the partner is scored here.

*3 - Little valuing of intimacy*

This participant may express a desire for intimacy in vague terms ("We try to make time for each other; that's very important") that are belied by reports in other parts of the transcript of large amounts of discretionary time being spent other than with the partner.

This rating would also be given to the person who makes few if any statements about the importance of closeness or openness with the partner and reports few if any behaviors that are intimacy-oriented. It should also be given to the participant who, despite a stated desire to be "close" or "open," says nothing that implies understanding of what intimacy entails. Such an individual may focus their discussion of the relationship on shared activities, fun, and other affiliate aspects of the relationship. The emphasis is on being pals. OR the partner is controlling, and the desire to "know" the partner comes out of the person's own anxiety or need rather than true interest in the partner, "I just have to know what he's thinking, you know, cause I'm just the type of person that's gotta know, you know?".

*5 - Moderate valuing of intimacy*

At least once during the interview, the participant expresses a need to be close to his or her partner or others in a convincing way that is not contradicted by actual behavior. As an alternative to explicitly stating their valuing of intimacy, some participants will instead describe the partner's intimacy-seeking behaviors in a positive light which makes it clear that they enjoy the closeness. (The participant may make statements such as "He's always there by my side" or "I can confide in her about anything.") Still others show by their behavior that they enjoy closeness, since they spend considerable amounts of time with the partner. However, as compared to those with higher ratings, shared activities or "fun" are more of a focus than emotional closeness. Participants who are dependent/controlling/involving should not score above a 5 on this scale.

*7 - Strong valuing of intimacy*

During the interview this person comments on the desirability of being close to the partner, or the participant's behavior demonstrates that he or she obviously values the relationship with the partner more than other relationships. The importance of balanced emotional communication is stressed, although the partner need not reciprocate for the participant to value intimacy. The participant indicates he or she feels that an important element of an adult relationship is the ability of the partners to be available, trusting, and responsive to one another.

*9 - Extremely strong valuing of intimacy*

Valuing of well balanced involvement, closeness, and emotional sharing is the theme of this interview, and the participant comments strongly or frequently on the desirability of being close to the partner. The person strongly and clearly expresses the idea that the ability of the partners to be available, trusting, and responsive to one another is a critical element of an adult relationship. This may be a person who values the intimacy he or she enjoys with the present partner or one who is distressed by their lack of closeness and openness.

### Valuing of Independence

Within the partnership, each person is an individual with his or her own distinct goals and wishes. Some individuals strongly seek independence; others believe it to be selfish or dangerous. Ideas about independence may be explicitly stated or only alluded to. The reader should look carefully at the frequency and force with which the participant expresses his or her need to lead a life independent of the partner, as well as considering whether the participant engages in independence-related **behaviors**. High scores on this scale should lead the scorer to consider the Dismissing classification.

At the low end of the scale are those who express little or no need for activities, friendships, or interests separate from those of the partner. This may result from a strong determination to be closely united, or from passivity and dependence on the partner. At mid-range are those desire autonomy without sacrificing the relationship. They have tried to find a balance between partner-oriented activities and self-focused ones. They are unwilling to lose their own identities or give up old friendships in order to be with a partner, but make compromises that allow for shared activities and interdependent lives. These people can also be scored as valuing intimacy highly. In such cases, the difficulty of finding time for both, and the conflicts that can arise between the two needs, must be explicitly acknowledged to get a high score on intimacy (and on coherence). At the high end of the scale are those for whom the need or desire for independence is a dominant theme. In most high-scoring participants, the need for independence clearly outweighs the need for intimacy.

Valuing of independence may take several forms:

- (a) The participant places high value on self-sufficiency. Reliance on another--for practical matters or emotional ones--may be seen as being childishly dependent, and therefore to be avoided. ("I don't need to tell him about every little thing that upsets me; I can handle it myself.")
- (b) The participant is completely engrossed in a career or hobby, leaving little time for a relationship, with no regret expressed about this fact. The participant may justify the lack of involvement with the partner by suggesting that their minimal time together is fine, since it is "quality time."
- (c) The individual is concerned that a partner will infringe on his or her rights. For example, the participant might frequently mention that he or she is not going to be taken advantage of in the relationship, or is not about to become another person's "slave" or "attached at the hip".

The reader should look at the separation question to get an idea of whether the participant is "lost" when the partner is not present or whether he or she enjoys time away from the partner. The question on setbacks may lead to a discussion of the participant's feelings about the importance of other friends or a career. Other clues to a desire for independence which may appear in the transcript include the following:

- (a) The person may be more comfortable with casual friendships than with an intimate one, and may continue to spend large amounts of time "hanging out" with friends instead of with the partner.
- (b) There may be an unwillingness to compromise with the partner on independence issues.
- (c) The words "we" and "us" may be almost entirely absent, and "I" and "me" strikingly frequent.
- (d) The participant gives the impression of wariness about "too much" togetherness or closeness, even though the reader does not have the impression that the partner is asking overly much of him or her.

Intimacy and independence are not mutually exclusive. Attachment theory suggests that a loving partner supports and encourages one's development as a separate, distinct person. However, some people see the two needs as opposing positions. Therefore, a desire for independence may appear in the form of derogation of intimacy. The participant may mock the partner's intimacy bids or criticize exaggerated togetherness in others. Such a participant gives the impression of feeling restricted by relationships and cautious that the relationship will threaten his or her independence.

Occasionally, participants make contradictory statements about independence in different parts of the interview. This may be because they are trying to adopt the partner's contrasting attitude toward independence, or simply because of uncertainty about how they themselves feel. In such a case, even though strongly independence-seeking statements are present in the transcript, the contradictory comments should reduce the score to no higher than mid-range.

Some participants do not mention independence, but neither do they present an active statement that they prefer to be with the partner or that the relationship is important to them. In such a case, the reader should look carefully at the participant's *behavior*. In some cases, the participant's actions demonstrate that personal needs take priority over relationship needs, so the score should be above 5. In other cases, such as a dependent or involved individual neither independence or intimacy is valued, and low scores for both scales are given.

#### *1 - No need for independence expressed*

The participant does not state or imply a desire or need for independence. Other friendships and possibly favorite activities have been abandoned once the relationship began with this partner. The reader may feel that this person's life revolves around the partner, and there is no desire for an independent life. Independence may be seen as undesirable (i.e., selfish and unloving) or dangerous to a relationship. In some cases, the participant might be passive or dependent on others as a general style.

#### *3 - Little valuing of independence*

One or two mild expressions of a need or desire for a separate life appear in the transcript. This participant is somewhat dependent on the partner to make decisions and plan activities, or may value the development of a close relationship above other endeavors. Other friendships or independent activities are minimal, and are engaged in only when the partner is not available. Some couples maintain their favorite activities without sacrificing time together by joining in on each other's favorite activities; in such cases, the rating should be 4.

#### *5 - Moderate valuing of independence*

This participant enjoys being with the partner more than being alone or with others, and the priority is on their time together. However, other relationships and activities are also valued, and time is made for them. The participant feels comfortable pursuing separate interests in one or more areas (favorite pastimes, special friendships, or pursuit of his/her own educational/career goals). Though they enjoy being in a partnership, they may state a wish to be viewed as distinct from the partner.

The participant who asserts the importance of maintaining close ties with friends or family because it improves the partner relationship (rather than enhancing oneself) should receive this rating, not a higher one. ("We go out a lot, together, alone, and also with friends, and it keeps our relationship strong.")

Since a valuing of independence extends beyond oneself, the person who voices respect for the partner's differing approaches, interests, or opinions, and expresses no desire for either of them to change in order to be more alike, would also score at midrange or higher.

#### *7 - Strong valuing of independence.*

The difference between this rating and the previous one is in the strength or frequency of comments about the importance of maintaining individuality and independence of action, or in actual behaviors. The participant expresses determination not to lose his or her identity in a relationship ("We're very different people, and that's really good--I wouldn't like it if we were too much alike") or to give up favorite activities ("It's really important to maintain your own

interests. I just don't like doing some of the things she does, and she doesn't enjoy my stuff, so she does her thing, I do mine").

If the partners engage in activities together, this rating is given if the reader feels that the participant is unwilling to give up a favorite activity and the partner has to join in if he/she wanted to be with the participant, who has made no corresponding compromises.

A strong need for independence may appear in the form of a belief in handling their own problems and making their own decisions. It may also appear in allusions to the need to avoid being overpowered or taken advantage of by another in a relationship. Such a participant may be willing to go exactly halfway to meet the partner, but not more.

A high valuing of independence may be assumed when the participant places a priority on other activities rather than the relationship. For example, the participant who mentions his or her own educational or career goals repeatedly without reference to the relationship, will probably receive this score.

#### *9 - Very strong valuing of independence*

This person is fiercely independent in action and thought. He or she may feel restricted, even oppressed, by "too much" togetherness, and esteems independence far more than intimacy. The person wants his/her "own space" and resists attempts by the partner to enter it. Such a participant wishes to be sufficient unto himself or herself. A relationship clearly takes a back seat to other activities in this person's life. The transcript contains very frequent comments about the importance of maintaining one's independence or scornful remarks about those who do not.

#### Angry Speech

A score should be given which reflects 1) angry speech regarding the partner, and 2) angry speech expressed in the interview about any other person or experience excluding the participant's own parents. To receive a score on this scale, the participant's reports of being angry are irrelevant, the scale addresses whether the participant *becomes* angry or annoyed during the interview. This is confined to "hot," preoccupying anger, rather than a cold or dismissing derogation. High scores on angry speech should make the coder strongly consider a Preoccupied classification, as it is the hallmark of the Preoccupied/Angry classification.

Angry speech occurs when the participant engages in any of the following behaviors:

- (a) Gets caught up in run-on, entangled sentences describing the offenses of another
- (b) Reports surprisingly small affronts, or gets markedly upset over what seem to be minor provocations
- (c) Tends to blame the other person entirely for any conflicts or disagreements, instead of seeing his or her own role in the interaction or acknowledging the difficulty inherent in working out any relationship
- (d) Directly addresses the absent individual during the interview
- (e) Speaks as if he or she were other person during a report of a negative interaction, i.e., fails to mark quotations by stating, "He said..." or "She said..."
- (f) Attempts to elicit interviewer agreement, ("Can you believe anyone could be so thoughtless?!", or frequent use of "you know" in the passage when discussing a problem).

Reports of having been angry **should not** be scored on this scale unless the participant's speech meets one of the characteristics listed above.

NOTE: Angry speech may be directed at someone other than the partner, such as an in-law. If the partner is highly involved in some way with the problem situation or person whom the participant is angry with, such as the husband who won't stand up to his "incredibly annoying, you just wouldn't believe her" mother, this is scored under angry speech regarding the Partner. In other instances the anger is directed toward someone outside the current relationship, such as a former partner. In this case the angry speech should be scored with respect to Another Person.

*1 - No current anger expressed*

*3 - Mild anger*

This person expresses some annoyance by some exaggeration of speech, attempt to elicit interviewer agreement, failing to use a quotation (e), but the annoyance is over with quickly and does not recur with any real frequency.

*5 - Moderate anger*

Here, the participant expresses more than simple annoyance (there is a clear instance of one or more of the types of angry speech noted above), but the anger is under control (contained or else lightened with humor). The anger is not a recurring theme of the interview. A single clear outburst, or frequent lower level annoyance about the same person warrants this score.

*7 - Strong anger*

One or more clear markers of high current anger listed in (a) through (f) above appear two or more times in the transcript, but anger is not the sole emotion expressed about the individual.

*9 - Extremely strong, current anger*

The participant is clearly preoccupied by his/her anger toward the partner or another. This anger pervades the interview, appearing sometimes at unexpected junctures; negative affect is nearly always present when the partner or another is discussed. Several of the markers of current anger listed in (a) through (f) above appear during the interview.

Derogation of Partner/Attachment

Unlike the hot, involving anger captured by the previous scale, this scale measures a cold, uninvolved derogation of the partner or of attachment relationships (not parent-child). The participant may also evidence derogation by dismissing attachment concerns (e.g., distress over separation from or potential loss of a partner) as ridiculous. While it is true that the highly derogatory participant may be defending against underlying concerns, the manner in which he or she does so is to dismiss their import in a cold, sarcastic, or demeaning manner which is striking when it appears. A high score on this scale leads the coder to strongly consider a Dismissing classification.

This scale refers to more than a simple dismissal of feelings. It is not just that *feelings* related to attachment are nothing worth paying attention to, but that the *person* is in fact a "nothing" who is beneath notice. The statements show that the participant considers the attachment figure or attachment itself stupid or ridiculous. At one or more points during the interview, the highly derogatory participant adopts a derisive or disparaging tone toward the partner ("He was acting like a real jerk, and I just didn't care to be around him") or toward attachment ("Then my roommate's fiancé broke up with her, and she was such a baby--I couldn't believe she'd bother crying about a loser like him").

In general, the participant with a high score on derogation suggests directly or indirectly that paying attention to attachment figures or experiences is foolish or not worth the energy. The reader's impression is that anger at the perceived failings of the partner or disappointment about the relationship is beneath this participant, and he or she chooses instead to dismiss the person and the feelings by putting them down.

Distinguishing derogation from angry speech: Although sharply critical, cruelly sarcastic remarks may be made, if derogatory, they are presented in an almost offhand, casual manner. The highly

derogatory speaker may give an impression of nastiness that makes the reader recoil, although may be surprising insightful or even caring in other places. *If the speaker follows critical or derogatory remarks with angry speech, the remarks should be scored for anger and do not receive above a 4 on this scale. The truly derogating individual does not persist in a discussion of a topic which is beneath attention.*

At low levels, derogation is usually expressed as sarcastic humor. In moderate forms, the participant may ridicule the partner indirectly by making censorious generalizations about a larger group to which the partner belongs (e.g., his or her family, occupation, or gender) without explicitly excluding the partner from the negative assessment. (For example, "Her whole family's nuts" or "Men! You just have to treat them all like children") Though the derogation may take the form of purportedly humorous sarcasm, there is an underlying unpleasantness to the words that may verge on cruelty. High level derogation is clearly, and apparently gratuitously, nasty.

Instead of demeaning the partner, the participant may derogate attachment by ridiculing romance or marriage ("At the beginning, I told him I didn't want to waste five months in this little la la land, let's get right down to the good stuff [negotiating who does what chores]"). Such a statement would earn a low to mid-range score for derogation of attachment.

Some participants have good things to say about their own partner or relationship (and may even score moderately high on the Idealization scale), but derogation of attachment appears when they talk about their dating history ("I would never go out steadily with anyone; I just couldn't be bothered"- very mild), past partners ("I always dated slutty type girls"-moderate), or other people's relationships ("My friends come home from work, then she goes shopping, fixes dinner...now that they're married the husband has a slave"-moderate).

Since some participants are derogatory about attachment relationships in general but not about their partners, the two are scored separately, with a rating of 1 to 9 given for derogation of partner and a separate 1 to 9 rating for derogation of attachment. NOTE: The score given to the partner on derogation is automatically given for overall derogation of attachment, unless derogation of attachment or others is higher than that of partner.

**VERY IMPORTANT:** Do not score derogatory comments about the participant's parents!

*1 - No derogation of partner or of attachment*

This participant at no time puts down the partner or attachment.

*3 - Mild derogation of partner/attachment*

At least once, the participant may be mildly sarcastic about the partner or attachment behavior. However, there is an underlying valuing of the relationship which also comes through and makes the statements sound somewhat more good-humored than negative.

This score may also be given if the participant mildly disparages past partners or relationships, but makes no such remarks about the present partner (derogation of partner = 1, derogation of attachment = 3).

*5 - Moderate derogation*

One or two sarcastic or disparaging comments are made about the partner or groups to which he/she belongs without excluding the partner (e.g., "Her whole family is nuts!"); these are presented in a coldly dismissing rather than angry way. The person uses words like "silly," "foolish," "ridiculous," "stupid," or "disgusting." This rating is also given if instead of derogating the partner, the participant "puts down" important aspects of relationships, including with friends, previous partners, and family, as being unworthy of serious attention. ("It's not my habit to waste time on going to visit his mom.")

This rating rather than a higher one is given if there are also some positive statements about attachment to counter the derogatory ones.

***7 - Definite derogation***

The partner or attachment relationships are described in a demeaning manner, with little positive affect to balance out the portrayal.

The rating of 7 is also appropriate for the participant who explicitly states that it is ridiculous or foolish to become emotionally caught up in a relationship, whether happily or in distress. ("She's just so ridiculous now that she's engaged, you'd think he was the greatest guy on earth, and he's really nobody special.")

***9 - Strong derogation***

The disparaging depiction of the partner or of attachment relationships is virtually a theme of the interview. The scorer feels distinctly uncomfortable with the speaker's tone. The participant suggests that the partner or attachment relationships in general are beneath contempt and not worth notice. For this rating, no positive feelings toward the attachment relationship with the partner are mentioned, and it seems a mystery why the two are together.

**Idealization or Normalization of Partner/Relationship**

What is being assessed in this scale is the distance between 1) the image the participant holds of the partner, 2) the self in the relationship, or 3) of the relationship between them, as normal, good, or even perfect (i.e., the **idea** he or she has, hence "idealization") and actual accounts of the partner, the relationship, or the participant's own behavior in the relationship as reported during the interview. A high score on this scale (5 or greater) should lead the coder to consider a Dismissing classification. However, some individuals who are best classified as Preoccupied may get scores in the mid-range on this scale (4-5).

The distortion in the representation of the partner/relationship is in a normalizing direction. That is, the partner is described as "very loving" or "always there for me," (that is, as good partners are supposed to be), and yet the examples given are of a partner who has regularly failed to support the participant. Or the partner is labeled as "pretty good" or someone who "really loves me," and the reader has the impression of an emotionally cold, cruel, or rejecting partner. The participant may also frame his or her own behavior in a very positive light, not supported by the examples given.

Varying descriptions of the partner, self or relationship in different sections of the interview do not automatically lead to a high idealization score. The partner may be described as loving in some ways, but thoughtless in others; so long as these do not contradict each other, a low score should be given. Idealization is also distinct from evaluatory oscillation, in which the speaker checks himself/herself and quickly changes the appraisal of the partner, often in the same sentence ("He's really loving, well, not always loving, he really hurts me with things he says, but he's really good to me.")

The reader should look at the overall description of the relationship/partner at the beginning of the interview; the adjectives which are chosen to describe the relationship; the response to the rejection question; and behaviors reported in response to the upset question. The adjectives chosen to describe the relationship can be particularly revealing. Highly positive adjectives must be consistently supported by the evidence. Idealizing participants often choose very positive adjectives, but the examples they provide don't fit. In mild cases, they offer weak examples, in more marked cases no evidence at all, and at high levels of idealization participants provide contradictory information. Use of words like "normal", "standard", "typical", or "everybody..." suggests idealization. ("Everybody has big fights about money, that's just part of the wedding thing").

Some low-scoring participants present a somewhat sentimental description of a wonderful relationship, but provide little evidence. If the depiction of the relationship is consistently positive, little detail is given, yet the reader has no reason to doubt the participant's word based on the rest of the transcript, the score should be no higher than a 3.

Mid-range scores are given when the participant (a) provides no evidence whatsoever for positive adjectives, instead substituting vague generalities (it's "loving" because "we really love each other"), (b) presents glowing adjectives followed by examples that show the partner to be only average in supportiveness (the relationship is "very loving" because "when I was in an automobile accident, she visited me at the hospital"), or (c) provides adjectives and examples that are impersonal and superficial, all having to do with the image the couple presents to the outside world rather than how they experience the relationship (it's "impressive" because "other people look at us and they're always impressed by things we do...like when we went out and got the furniture [in another state]").

High scores are given to participants present a wonderful relationship when the reader has the distinct impression that it is not. They may list positive adjectives, but then contradict themselves or can give no evidence in the example. In other cases, the examples given in the adjective section are vaguely supportive of the words selected, but they are strongly contradicted by other statements elsewhere in the interview. For example, the participant who rationalizes the partner's or their own thoughtless or rejecting behavior in order not to face its implications is idealizing ("He spends a lot of time drinking with his friends on the weekends, so sometimes we don't see each other for a few days, but it's good because it helps me be more independent.").

**It is important to note that a participant may present a state of mind which is idealizing or normalizing of the relationship, even in the face of describing a good to excellent partner.** Such an individual may be idealizing of his or her own role, describing a markedly devoted relationship without communicating any sense that he or she contributes anything to it. In such cases a moderate idealization score would be given. A higher score would be given to a participant who in addition to minimizing or idealizing his or her own behavior in such a way, normalizes or minimizes his partner's behavior as "standard or normal" when in fact the partner's behavior is quite loving. **The interview appears to convey the idea that attachment behavior is "no big deal", its presence or absence is trivial to the relationship.**

#### *1 - No idealization*

The description of the partner, self or relationship supported by convincing and consistent evidence. The participant who receives this score may describe a satisfying relationship, but can support it or is open about the quirks or ups and downs of the relationship, and presents these matter-of-factly without needing to deny them as slight problems.

Other participants may describe a flawed partner, or serious problems in the relationship. Such a participant receives this score if they were direct about the problems, or if they oscillated in their descriptions in a confused/confusing way.

#### *3 - Slight idealization*

There is a minor discrepancy between the positive image of the partner, self, or relationship and specific examples or anecdotes, but it is within the normal range for couples who are 'in love', and seems to be more romanticizing than true idealizing. Some participants begin the interview with a favorable generalized picture of the partner, and later, as they begin to be more comfortable with the interviewer, admit to some small problems. There is a sentimental or normalized appraisal with no clear confirming anecdotes but no contradictory evidence either.

#### *5 - Moderate idealization*

The participant supplies vague generalities; a superficial, image-oriented depiction; or clear discrepancies between the adjectives that are chosen and the examples intended to illustrate them. The reader notes a difference between the generalized image of the partner, the self, or the relationship as normal and memories, descriptions, or anecdotes that show it is as less than optimal; or between the ideal of an excellent relationship (**including his or her own role in it**) and examples that show the partner or the participant to be only average in supportiveness. However, the idealization is incomplete and the participant is aware of some difficulties.

#### *7 - Considerable idealization*

The reader's impression of the participant's relationship with his or her partner is strikingly different from the description provided. Though the partner/self/relationship is presented as good/normal, the transcript fails to confirm this. This participant provides extremely positive descriptions of the partner ("She's great--she's just always there for me"), self, or of the relationship ("It's terrific--we're very open with each other"), but the lack of memories or examples to support this image, even when prompted by the interviewer, makes the reader suspect that the speaker is not giving the full picture. Or the participant says her partner is "just like all men," where the behavioral descriptions of the partner not only fail to support this normalizing description, but instead he sounds quite rejecting or notably insensitive. Or the participant may say his partner is "just like all women", and convincing accounts of loving behavior are normalized or viewed as standard or typical behavior.

This participant differs from one rating a 9 in that he or she has not completely split the generalized from the episodic representations of the partner, so does have some access to apparently "real" memories or impressions of the partner and him/herself.

#### *9 - Extreme idealization*

There is a sharp and unsettling disunity between the reader's assessment of the partner, self or relationship, and the participant's description on the generalized level. The participant depicts a relationship which he or she describes as wonderful, but seems to the reader to be very unsatisfactory.

This participant presents the partner in a consistently positive light, with no access to negative feelings. If negative information or conflicts are presented, they are passed off as being the fault of the participant ("Sometimes I used to wish we could see each other more than twice a week, but as usual he's right, I've got to learn to be less clingy") or of other people or situations.

In the reader's estimation, this partner scores as not loving or even abusive, yet the participant consistently presents the relationship as wonderful or even perfect. Throughout the interview, the reader has the impression that this participant is hiding something, not from the interviewer, but from himself or herself.

Or the participant gives convincing accounts of truly loving behavior by the partner which considered normalized or standard or not meaningful, and the participant's own clearly rejecting behavior in the relationship is minimized or idealized.

#### Passive Speech

Passive Speech involves a lack of focus, clarity, or specificity in responses to the interview questions. At mid- to high levels, it is believed to serve as an index of confused preoccupation with attachment issues. Passive participants seem overwhelmed when they attempt to discuss relationships. They become confused or lost, and end up wandering off the topic, substituting vague phrases that fail to communicate what actually occurred, or trailing away into meaninglessness. The concept of a passive speaker can be illustrated by a contrast with an active speaker: The active speaker is trying to communicate something directly to the listener or trying to prevent the interviewer from knowing about something, or doesn't wish to discuss something. In these instances the speaker is in control of his/her own discourse. The passive speaker appears to lose control. This manner of incoherence of discourse is characteristic of the Preoccupied/Passive category, and the participant will generally be assigned this classification if this characteristic is observed in the transcript.

Passivity differs from dismissal of attachment topics, in that there is nothing deliberate or conscious about it. Rather than providing determined closure to thoughts, as the dismissing participant does, *the passive participant seems unable to complete his or her thoughts at all, and ultimately gives up the attempt.*

Passive speech is not just inarticulate or oversimplified language. Dysfluency, hesitations, and restarting of sentences do not in themselves constitute passive speech. Participants may take their

time getting to the point, but **as long as they eventually get there**, a circuitous route does not signify passive speech.

Participants who score high on passive speech become lost along the way, leaving the reader as confused and unclear about their experiences related to a particular topic or to attachment in general as they apparently are. At other times, passive participants will speak as though everything has been made clear when in fact the reader does not know what the thrust of the sentence is, especially when the reader suspects that the lack of specificity may be covering something difficult to discuss ("When he gets upset, he yells at me and stuff, you know.") **NOTE:** The reader should not confuse passive or dependent *behavior* with passive *speech*. Individuals who act in a dependent, unassertive manner may nevertheless be active in speaking about the relationship.

As noted by Main and Goldwyn (1991), participants who speak passively do any or all of the following:

- (a) Insert meaningless words or phrases into sentences or use extremely general sentence frames ("that kind of stuff," "and this and that," "or something"), especially when it seems that the participant might be trying to avoid potentially negative things.
- (b) Fail to complete sentences which they have started but in which they have not yet made the idea clear (however, the scorer should be cautious about judging speech to be passive if there is any possibility that the speech or thought may have been interrupted by the interviewer)
- (c) Complete sentences with very general terms or nonsense language ("dadadadadada"), without having made the ideas clear first
- (d) Become digressive while speaking and wander off to other topics as though they have completely lost the point of the interview (but if the participant realizes he/she has gotten off track, and asks for a repetition of the question, it is not passive speech);
- (e) Add words or brief phrases ("Yes." "Huh!" "I know.") to sentences which have already been completed
- (f) Take on a childlike tone or affect during the interview (use a child's grammar or vocabulary or use words, sentences, or phrases which are unusual for an adult but which they may have heard as a child)
- (g) Confuse themselves and others in speech, most often by using pronouns which refer to the wrong person and lead to confused, entangled sentences

The following do **not** imply the mental confusion and entanglement believed to underlie passive speech, **so should not be scored as passive speech**:

- (a) Meaningless phrases at the end of a thought when the sense is clear ("She's always affectionate, saying 'I love you', hugs me, *and that kind of stuff*" or "We do a lot together, movies, going out to dinner, *that sort of a thing*")
- (b) Trailing off at the end of a sentence if they have already made the idea clear and have simply run out of things to say ("So we talk about pretty much everything, work, our families, our future, and um...")
- (c) Incomplete thoughts or changes of direction in the middle of a thought, if the participant then goes on to answer the question being asked (some will veer off quickly if they realize that they might be headed in a direction that is uncomfortable for them; this is an active management of the interview, more typical of dismissing participants, and not passive)

- (d) The use of "you know" or "I don't know", which often serve an active function of avoiding a more complete answer or reassuring the speaker and listener that the event or feeling is normal and the listener would naturally know what the speaker is talking about ("If I get angry, you know, then I just leave" or "So, I don't know, it's usually that sort of thing, I guess, that leads to our fights, you know").
- (e) Incomplete sentences which result when the interview interrupts or jumps in too quickly with a comment or question (usually, but not always, marked by a slash on the transcript)
- (f) Long hesitations while the participant decides how to complete a sentence or thought, unless they are extremely long and repeated
- (g) The use of "So." at the end of a sentence as a marker that the speaker is finished and the interviewer should move on
- (h) Angrily preoccupied responses which go on too long in order to demonstrate how terribly the other person was behaving or to enlist the interviewer's agreement

**Vagueness and lack of specificity are characteristic of many dismissing participants as well as those preoccupied participants who engage in passive speech. In order to differentiate between the two, the reader should look for how much control the participant has over the direction of the interview.** Dismissing participants are vague, but not confused. They are usually clearly in charge, determinedly stopping answers or changing direction to avoid statements which might weaken the image (usually of a very good relationship) which they are attempting to project. Although they may be inarticulate or incoherent, and run-on, entangled sentences may occur, their discussion is related to the topic at hand. Poor or incoherent examples are not passive speech so long as they are still related to the topic. If incomplete thoughts appear mid-sentence, it is often because such participants were starting to digress, caught themselves, and returned to the original topic. Passive participants, on the other hand, are lost and confused. They seem to have no control over where the interview goes. They become unproductively caught up in an unrelated topic, completely losing sight of the question asked without any realization that this has happened.

It is essential that high ratings for passive speech (6 or higher) be given solely to those participants for whom the passivity of thought processing has become habitual and consequently pervades the transcript.

#### *1 - No evidence for passivity of thinking/discourse*

This rating is given when there are no indications of being lost in an attempt to think, even though there may be some use of meaningless phrases such as "or something" or a few trailing sentences when the person runs out of things to say. However, these are not considered true passive speech if the participant has first made the thought clear.

#### *3 - Slight passivity of thinking/discourse*

One or two examples of clearly passive thought, or somewhat more frequent slight passivity may be present (but this is never fully passive).

#### *5 - Moderate passivity of thinking/discourse*

Marked passivity of thought regarding attachment to the partner may be present, but only in regard to a particular topic; or some passivity is evident throughout the interview.

#### *7 - Marked passivity of thinking/discourse*

Several of the indices of passivity listed above are present throughout the interview, or extreme passivity is seen for a lengthy passage and there is lower level passivity elsewhere. However, compared to the transcript rated 9, this participant is not very difficult to follow.

#### *9 - Fully passive thinking/discourse*

Indices of passivity are marked and frequent, and parts of the interview consequently are difficult to follow. The reader will be unable to clearly ascertain the participant's meaning in several passages.

#### Fear of Loss of Partner

This rating signifies the extent to which the participant fears for the health and safety of the partner, and acts upon them. In most transcripts, there is no mention, either direct or implied, of fears that the partner will die. However, some participants are openly anxious, a few excessively so, about the partner's health or personal safety with no apparent reason for feeling that way. Some are aware of the irrational nature of their fears, and determined not to act upon them; others allow them to affect behavior on a regular basis. A high score for this state of mind in the participant should lead one to classify the participant as Insecure, but other features of the transcript may determine which is the most appropriate Insecure classification. The D4 sub classification should be assigned as well. A rating of 5 is undecided, and the rater may decide whether to assign a D4.

This state of mind seems rare in a normative sample, and its significance is not yet understood with respect to adult attachment.

In most cases, the participant will not state explicitly that it is death which he/she fears. Euphemisms such as "something happening to him" or "losing her" are more likely. Some participants find the topic so uncomfortable that they are unable even to complete their thoughts. For example, one man, discussing a past separation from his partner, reported, "I worried about her. I would call her every night, you know, just to make sure she was all right, because I don't know, I just get wor-...you know, I think she is...I don't know, I think some...I just worry about her, she is not...you know, I always want to make sure she is okay."

The following considerations apply:

- (a) The fear refers to the partner's personal health or safety rather than to the continuation of the relationship.
- (b) Fears of losing a seriously ill partner are not to be considered for mid- high scores as there is a connection between the fear and the illness.
- (c) High scores are ruled out if the participant is conscious of the source of the fear. For example, other attachment figures (perhaps a parent) may be seriously ill or have died unexpectedly, a close friend's partner may have died, or this partner or a previous one may have had a life-threatening illness or injury in the past. In such a case, where the participant explicitly identifies the source of the anxiety, the fear is considered to be rational, even if it is excessive, so should not be considered for a score above 3. The source need not be direct personal experience; knowing that a situation is potentially dangerous may lead to legitimate fear. For example, after a well-publicized airplane crash or a rash of neighborhood crimes, fears for the partner's safety are more likely to appear, but should be explicitly and convincingly linked to such phenomena.
- (e) A high score (above 5) should not be given if the participant does not act upon his/her fears, even if they are strong. ("Sometimes I get almost panicky when he has to fly on a business trip, and I have these mental pictures of something happening to him, but I know planes are actually safer than driving a car, so I just try to control it and I don't usually even say anything to him about it, because I wouldn't want him to be nervous like me.")

#### *1 - No fear of loss reported*

#### *3 - Fear of loss connected to source*

The participant explicitly and convincingly connects anxiety about the health of the partner, or loss of partner to its source.

**5 - Somewhat fearful of loss**

This participant expresses some anxiety about the partner's health or losing the partner, and the reader cannot be certain that the speaker is aware of how his/her past experiences have led to these fears. (For example, the fears are mentioned in one part of the transcript, and plausible reasons for such fears appear in a different place. The speaker does not explicitly make the connection, though the reader can imagine that it exists.)

Alternatively, this rating is given if it is clear that the participant does not connect the strong fears to their source, but he or she realizes that they should not be acted upon and is definitely not allowing them to affect behavior.

**7 - Mild effects on behavior**

The participant expresses strong fears or worries about the partner's health and safety ("I'm just constantly worried about her, I always just wanna make sure she's okay"), does not identify the source of the fears, and has acted upon them at times. For example, one participant reported having called every one of his fiancee's friends and her parents when she was one hour late returning from shopping, getting all of them worried. However, in contrast to the participant rated 9, the fears influence this participant's behavior only mildly or infrequently.

**9 - Strong effects on behavior**

The source of this person's fear of losing the partner through death is unidentified, and he or she has acted upon that fear frequently.

**Unresolved/Disorganized  
Due to Loss or Trauma in Previous Relationship**

The scale which follows assesses continuing effects of loss or trauma on the present relationship. This is limited to loss of a peer relationship (most often a **previous or potential partner**, though occasionally a close friend), whether through distance, dissension, break-up, or death. A high score on this scale may also reflect emotional trauma related to a previous romantic involvement (e.g., physical abuse). High scores on this scale result in automatic assignment to the Unresolved/Disorganized classification (see below).

The reader should look for **indications of disbelief** that the person is gone from the participant's life, **unusually detailed and strongly affect-laden descriptions** of the person, **sudden changes of topic** when the person is mentioned, or unexpected segues into **discussion of the person at inappropriate points** in the interview. Disorganization may appear as severe **disruption of speech patterns** which appear when the person is discussed, or **confused recounting** of experiences with the person; these are also scored as indicating lack of resolution of the loss. **IMPORTANT:** Some participants show a particular type of incoherence only in discussion of a past partner or other individual (not the partner). Noticeable deviations in discourse style confined to discussions of a former partner or friend, such as anger, derogation, or passivity are strongly suggestive of an Unresolved previous relationship, and should be scored at least as a 4-5.

In addition, a high score on this scale should be given if the participant expresses **excessive guilt** over having caused a break-up with a previous partner. Reports of **extreme responses** at the time of loss/trauma (e.g., suicide attempts, heavy use of drugs, lasting and extreme withdrawal) warrant a high score if there also appear to be lingering aftereffects. Continuing extreme responses automatically receive a high score.

If the participant scores 5 or above on this scale, a primary classification of Unresolved is assigned, with an alternative Dismissing, Secure, or Preoccupied classification and sub classification which best matches the remainder of the transcript (for example, U/P3). Ratings of 4 or lower do not receive a U classification.

It should be clearly noted on this scale whether the participant is being scored for: 1) the **break-up** of a previous peer or romantic relationship with or without trauma within that relationship, or 2)

**death of a previous partner.** No other death, including miscarriages, should be scored using this scale.

*1 - No losses experienced*

Either the participant has had no previous relationship, or he or she is convincing about any relationship(s) having been so casual that there was no sense of loss when they ended.

*3 - No disorganizing effects of loss*

The person may express mild sorrow or regret about the previous relationship, but nothing further. The participant may see good effects of the loss on the present relationship (e.g., knowing better now what is important in a partner, or realizing that one must work at maintaining a good relationship).

*5 - Unsettled, but not cognitively disorganized*

There is some lack of acceptance of the loss, and there may be some disorganized/disoriented language. The participant may bring up the topic of a past partner or friend several times during the interview, but not at particularly jarring points. There are mild effects upon the present relationship (e.g., hiding phone calls to the friend), but these appear manageable and not overly detrimental to the relationship.

Other participants receive this rating not because they have lost a loved partner, but because they never gained that person in the first place. They fantasize about a relationship they might have had with a person with whom they wish they could have become romantically involved, or express regret about the relationship they missed out on.

This participant differs from the one rated 6 or higher in that the participant seems aware that the behaviors or feelings are somewhat problematic. This rating is also appropriate when the participant is aware of the source of his or her anxieties--even if not of the excessive nature of the concerns--and they seem not to be having serious negative effects on the present relationship.

*7 - Some negative effects of loss upon the relationship*

The previous loss is clearly affecting the present relationship, though not to the extent of seriously jeopardizing its continuation. The participant reports continued anger, mourning, fear or guilt that may have led to conflict with the partner, who either does not know about the ways in which the earlier loss has affected the participant, or is impatient with the participant for not resolving his or her issues.

In other cases, the earlier loss has led the participant to fear that relationships are fragile, and has resulted in either wariness about entering into the relationship wholeheartedly, or clingy attempts to hold on to the present partner. ("I probably call her up at work 4 or 5 times a day just to check in. I want her to always know I love her so she won't leave like my old girlfriend did.")

Emotionally traumatic experiences (e.g., physical or emotional abuse by a previous partner) associated with an earlier relationship could also lead to this rating if they are affecting the participant's ability to relate to the present partner. If the participant makes the connection between the earlier experience and the present insecurities, but still suffers from effects, the rating should be a 7.

*9 - Severe effects of loss on present relationship*

The participant's confidence in the partner's availability has been significantly damaged due to previous losses. He or she engages in angry, jealous, anxious, suspicious, or clingy behaviors which may have little connection to the behavior of the partner.

The participant's ability to choose an appropriate partner has been impaired because of the earlier loss and he or she enters and remains in clearly unhealthy relationships simply in order to avoid being alone. Since such a fear could arise from other sources, the rating should not be

this high unless there is a clear link in the transcript between the earlier loss and later self-destructive relationships.

Finally, a rating this high could be given when an earlier, emotionally traumatic experience within a romantic relationship has impaired the participant's ability to behave normally with the partner, and the participant reports serious difficulties between them without making any connection to what seems to the reader to be a fairly obvious source.

### Coherence of Transcript

There are two facets of coherence which are considered: How clear a picture the participant seems to have of his or her own experiences with the partner, and how clearly the participant is able to convey those ideas to another person (in this case the interviewer). The coherent participant sounds "truthful, non-contradictory, fairly concise and yet sufficient and complete, easily addressing the interview topic and seldom speaking in confusing ways" (Main & Goldwyn, 1991). Coherence is the hallmark of security in this coding system.

A high score for coherence indicates that the transcript is intelligible, consistent, and logically integrated. The reader should be able to easily discern what the participant's experiences have been, both in this relationship and in other aspects of the participant's life which are reported. The information provided is relevant to the question which was asked, and is presented in a logical order. A clear-minded, non-contradictory participant will provide a comprehensible, unambiguous narrative; one who does not understand his or her own experiences with attachment will provide an incomplete, confusing, or even garbled, account.

Coherence is examined in terms of Grice's (1975) maxims, described by Main & Goldwyn (1994) and used for scoring coherence in the AAI. In order to make a conversation coherent, the participants must cooperate in achieving the purpose of the conversation (in this case to explore how the participant has experienced the relationship with the partner). To that end, the participant is expected to follow four maxims: **quality**, **quantity**, **relation**, and **manner**. Each of these is described briefly in the following paragraphs.

**Quality**, the most important of the maxims, refers to the truthfulness of respondents and their ability to provide evidence for what they say, i.e., believability. A truthful participant will be consistent and avoid contradictions in different parts of the interview. Violations refer only to inconsistencies which are not recognized and corrected, or otherwise explained, by the participant. Quality is diminished by logical contradictions, factual contradictions, contradictions between the abstract level and the episodic level (a high score on Idealization should alert the reader to the likelihood of a low score on Coherence), and rapid oscillations of view.

The maxim of **quantity** requires that the participant be succinct, yet complete, in fulfilling the purpose of the interview. If the person gets caught up in run-on, entangled sentences and provides far more detail than could possibly be required to answer the question, he or she violates the maxim of quantity. Correspondingly, if the participant is strikingly terse and provides little or no detail, the reader will be hampered in any attempt to determine what the participant's experiences have been.

The responses of the participant should be relevant to the interview topic and the specific questions that are asked. The speaker who departs from the interview topic and substitutes unconnected topics violates the maxim of **relation**. The participant may start answering appropriately, but then digress to other topics and fail to answer the question which was asked. He or she may lose track of the topic entirely. Participants who catch themselves doing this, who comment on their violation of the maxim ("Sorry, I've sort of gotten off the topic, haven't I?"), and who then go on to answer the question appropriately should be marked down only slightly. However, the person who avoids the topic by answering different questions than those which are asked is in violation of the maxim of relation.

The final maxim, **manner**, requires that the participant be clear and orderly in conversation. Examples of violations of this maxim include shifts into the voice of another without any verbal

cue that such a switch was about to take place; lapses into jargon, including psychological jargon, which imply a shared understanding of unspecified events or feelings; substitution of nonsense words for parts of sentences; entangled, hard-to-follow run-on sentences; sentences which make no sense to the reader and cannot be readily understood; and uncompleted sentences which trail off when the meaning has not yet been made at all clear.

Violations of each of these maxims may be licensed by the participant in such a way that it is apparent he or she was still trying to cooperate in the purpose of the interview. (For example, a violation of the maxim of quantity would be diminished if the participant says, "That's kind of a complicated issue. It would take to long to really explain it to you.")

In general, the coherent transcript seems to ring true, and provides enough information for scoring individual items. (Any transcript which results in a number of "Can't Rate" subscale ratings automatically gets a low score on coherence.) The speaker seems intent on trying to truthfully communicate his or her experiences to the interviewer. The transcript has a quality of freshness; the reader has the impression that the participant was considering the evidence even as he or she spoke, possibly experiencing new insights along the way.

Important Note: Each of the specific discourse styles rated with the scales of angry speech, derogation, passivity, idealization, lack of resolution of a previous relationship, and fear of loss are forms of insecurity and must be incorporated into the overall coherence score. In addition, all other forms of incoherence as characterized by Grice's maxims are incorporated into the final score.

#### *1 - Highly incoherent*

The participant fails to make clear what his or her experiences and feelings are. The reader must struggle to follow the transcript, and the participant at times appears irrational. The transcript may be extremely vague, excessively detailed (but tangential, so nothing of substance is said), or there may be major contradictions in different sections. If the relationship of the participant with the partner can be determined, the reader is likely to disagree strongly with the participant's appraisal of the relationship.

#### *3 - Incoherent*

The participant does not seem to have a clear picture of his or her attachment experiences, but does seem reasonably rational. The transcript is vague, tangential, or contradictory throughout, but with effort, the reader can interpret it. Even when the reader has struggled toward a clearer picture of the relationship, however, he or she may not agree with the participant about the relationship and its effects.

#### *5 - Neither coherent nor incoherent*

This is a rating denoting acceptable coherence. The participant is not particularly articulate, but on the whole the transcript is understandable. In most cases, the participant is moderately coherent throughout; however, sometimes this rating is given when a participant is coherent for most of the interview yet rather incoherent in some portion of the transcript or when dealing with some particular issue. In general, the reader has a fairly good idea of what the participant's experiences have been with his or her partner, and of their effects.

#### *7 - Coherent*

"The speaker seems truthful, non-contradictory, fairly concise and yet sufficient and complete, easily addressing the interview topic and seldom speaking in confusing ways. The speaker does not appear to contradict herself, and for the most part, the reader finds herself in agreement with the speaker's description and evaluation of her experiences and its effects" (Main and Goldwyn, 1994, p. 49). However, the transcript is off somewhat on one of the elements of coherency (quality, quantity, relevance, or manner): "perhaps it is not flowing, perhaps there are occasional incoherence or contradictions, or perhaps some effort of interpretation is required now and then. This rating may be given despite the presence of hesitations, occasional dysfluencies and distancing."

#### *9 - Highly coherent*

"The participant has a steady and developing flow of ideas regarding the attachment-related questions addressed to her throughout this interview. She may be either reflective and slow to speak, with some pauses and hesitations, or chatty with a rapid flow of ideas (some fairly free in their associative nature), but her underlying intents, thoughts and feelings are clear and have a quality of freshness. Not only is the speaker at ease with the topic, but she seems to think afresh while she speaks, perhaps (though not necessarily) adapting to new ideas and experiencing new insights even while the interview is in progress (Main and Goldwyn, 1994, p. 49)."

## **Classification of State of Mind regarding Attachment in the Current Relationship**

Drawing upon the scores for the subscales described above, combined with an appraisal of the participant's primary focus during the interview with respect to the current relationship, an overall classification should be assigned. As noted above, the state of mind and participant behavior scores play the greatest role in assigning classification. In contrast, the behavior of the partner provides a forum about which the participant may express his or her own ideas, opinions, and state of mind, but the partner's behavior in and of itself does not determine classification.

The major categories denote three distinct ways of representing attachment. The **Secure** classification is given to open, objective participants who value attachment to a partner; they often depict a convincingly loving relationship with a partner who provides security and comfort, and in whose availability they are confident, but this is not necessary to the classification. Secure participants may have difficult relationships with their partners, but the transcripts are marked by high coherence and moderate to high valuing of intimacy. The other two classifications both designate insecure representations of the adult attachment relationship. The **Dismissing** classification is given when the participant avoids attachment concerns either by minimizing or denying the limitations of him or herself as a rather unloving partner, of having a rather unloving partner, by placing the primary focus of the interview on other facets of life (e.g., buying a house, pursuing a career, hanging out with friends) instead of the relationship, or by derogating the partner or attachment relationships. **Preoccupied** participants appear confused or angry about the relationship or the partner's behavior, and may be anxious about the partner's ability to fulfill their needs for support and closeness. They are poor caregivers because of their anxiety.

Once again, in arriving at the classifications, the ratings for current state of mind (including discourse style) are key, as they are presumed to reflect the participant's underlying way of looking at attachment to a partner. For example, individuals from each of the three major classifications might discuss a moderately rejecting partner in a distinctive manner. The dismissing participant is likely to try to overlook the rejection, either denying it as rejection or discounting its impact on himself or herself. A preoccupied participant might go on angrily and at excessive length about the outrageous behavior of his/her partner, often attempting to enlist the interviewer's agreement. The secure participant would report the actual behavior of the partner and acknowledge that it was rejecting, but then should be able to convincingly explain why the partner would behave in such a way ("In his family, nobody was supposed to show any emotion, so at first he just couldn't handle it when I'd get upset, and he'd get all stiff and tell me not to cry") or place it in context ("I think she was terribly hurt when I said I wasn't sure I wanted to get married, so later she needed to hold back a bit, and when I wanted to get back together, she said 'No'"). A secure person would also chose to focus on other aspects of the individual they value, such as their intelligent, good-humored, or responsible nature, and would not over-state their partner's ability to be warm, responsive, or supportive..

Individuals from each of the three major classifications might also discuss a loving partner in a distinctive manner. A secure person would describe the partner and the self as loving and supportive and give clear and consistent evidence for those adjectives. They would report valuing those characteristics of the relationship and the partner. A dismissing person would be likely to clearly describe the partner's behavior, but would devalue or dismiss its significance. Even if

he/she appreciated the partner's actions, the dismissing person would indicate without apology that he or she was not as nice as the partner, and/or would idealize their own behavior, "I think it's important for her to figure things out for herself...". The preoccupied person would vary in his/her description of a good partner. For example, he/she might be very pleased with the partner, but indicate that he/she is very anxious about the partner and any problems the partner might have. The preoccupied person might show marked anger at a past partner, but be currently pleased with the present partner because he/she is conforming to the preoccupied person's wishes. However, the reader may get the sense that the partner could easily fail to satisfy in this participant's view.

Finally, a classification as **Unresolved/Disorganized** may be assigned based on a lack of resolution of loss or trauma which occurred in a previous relationship. More detailed descriptions of each of these four classifications, and the alternative forms they may take, are presented separately in the following sections.

### CRI Scoring

The audiotaped CRI should be transcribed, omitting identifying proper names of people and places. **The transcription should indicate line numbers on the margin, as well as page numbers.**

To score the CRI, read through the transcript underlining sections which appear relevant, and indicate relevant sections on the scoring sheet by line number. For example, if there is an example of apparent rejecting behavior by the partner, or angry speech by the participant, the line number(s) should be indicated on the scoring sheet. The interview may require several readings in order to obtain information for the scoring of each scale, especially as the coder is becoming familiar with the many scales. It is also helpful to make notes in the margins of the interview, and use symbols to indicate particular forms of incoherence, such as, X for general incoherence, ... for passivity, and an upturned arrow for idealization.

To score each scale, review the recorded information to first confirm that the line(s) indeed are relevant to that scale, and then to assign a score based on the number and intensity of experiences or discourse style.

After assigning all the scale scores, review the pattern of scale scores and the overall descriptions of the classifications before assigning a classification. There should always be consistency between scale scores and classification as indicated by Table 1 on the next page. It is particularly important to note that a coherency score above 5 is indicative of security. A score of 5 is almost always indicative of security except in the rare D2 participant who is moderately coherent. Note: Although the partner's behavior is not consistently related to classifications, coding the partner's behavior is a means through which the reader can check the participant's state of mind, as well as being useful in studies which may utilize partner behavior in conjunction with participant state or mind regarding attachment in adult relationships.

**Table 1: Relations between Scale Scores and Classifications**

Category	Satisfaction	Communication	Intimacy	Independence	Dependency	
S2	3-9	5-8	5-9	3-6		1-4
S1	5-9	4-7	5-7	4-6		X
S3	3-9	5-8	6-9	2-5		1-5
D1	5-9	1-5	1-3	6-9		X
D2	1-9	1-9	1-6	5-9		1-3
D3	3-9	2-7	1-5	4-9		1-6
D4	3-9	?	?	?		?

P1	1-9	1-7	1-5	1-5	3-9			
P2	1-7	5-9	3-7	1-5	5-9			
P3	1-7	3-9	3-7	1-5	1-9			
P4	1-9	5-9	3-5	1-3	1-9			
<b>Category</b>	<u>Self-Care</u>	<u>Self-Care</u>	<u>seek</u>	<u>Anger</u>	<u>Derog.</u>			
			<u>Coherence</u>	<u>Ideal.</u>	<u>Passive</u>	<u>Fear</u>		
S2	5-9	5-9	X	X	1-3	X	X	7-9
S1	4-7	5-7	X	1-3	1-4	X	X	5-7
S3	5-7	5-9	1-4	X	1-3	1-4	X	5-7
D1	1-3	1-4	1-2	1-4	6-9	X	X	1-3
D2	1-5	1-6	1-3	5-9	1-6	X	X	1-5
D3	1-5	1-4	1-3	1-4	3-7	X	X	3-4
D4	?	?	X	?	?	X	5-9	1-4
P1	1-5	1-5	X	X	1-4	5-9	X	1-3
P2	1-6	1-9	5-9	1-3	X	1-5	X	3-4
P3	1-9	1-9	1-5	X	1-4	X	?	3-4
P4	1-5	?	1-5	1-3	X	X	?	1-4

X= generally not present , ?= uncertain, possibly low level

## Secure Classification

This classification is given to an individual who clearly understands and values the secure base phenomenon. The adult relationship is viewed as a potential source of emotional support and closeness, and at the same time a foundation for personal growth.

Secure participants value the attachment system in their adult relationships. At the same time, they can step back and view it with some objectivity. During the interview, they freely explore their thoughts and feelings about the partner and the relationship. Discussion of the relationship is usually relatively relaxed since the topic is one which is open to examination and evaluation, although distress about a partner's limitations may be openly expressed. Secure participants give clear, accessible accounts of experiences with the partner which help the coder have a good understanding of their relationships. Furthermore, they are aware of the effects these experiences have had on their personality or on their present way of viewing relationships.

Secure participants meet most or all of the following descriptions:

Personal history. The secure participant integrates past experiences into the present situation, valuing what they have learned, and viewing the experiences as important within their development. They present their histories coherently, without anger, passivity, idealization, or derogation.

Description of partner/relationship. Many secure participants provide clear examples of loving behavior by the partner (low scores on rejection and involving scales), and their overall satisfaction with their relationships is quite high. However, many secure participants describe specific problem

areas on which they are presently working with the partner, but overall they view the relationship as clearly worth the effort. Secure participants typically express hope and anticipation that the relationship will continue to grow and provide support for the individual and joint development of the partners.

The secure group does contain participants who are highly coherent and value attachment strongly, but are presently concerned about their relationships with the partners. The partners may be somewhat rejecting, involving, controlling, or generally unloving. Secure participants can be differentiated from insecure participants by their coherence; valuing of attachment; and freedom from idealization, guilt, blame, or preoccupying anger.

**Self-description.** Secure individuals describe situations in which they communicate with the partner at a moderately high level. He/she depicts the partner's feelings and actions believably and with understanding. This person seems genuinely aware of the partner's needs and wishes, and seeks a balance between his or her own needs and those of the partner.

These participants value their time with the partner. If they are apart for extended periods of time, they mention missing the partner. They enjoy the activities they share, and are often willing to join with the partner in a favorite activity. More than engaging in joint projects, however, they want to be emotionally close to a partner, and appreciate the opportunity. Therefore, they score midrange or higher on the intimacy scale.

Although they may have willingly made compromises and changes in order to spend more time with the partner, they usually acknowledge their own and their partner's need for some independent activities, friends, and interests. These are viewed as enriching the relationship rather than detracting from it. After entering a relationship, they may have cut back on some activities, but have continued with the activities they enjoy most and include the partner when possible. They may also describe less contact with particular people than before the relationship began, but they have maintained some important outside friendships. The partner may be described as "my best friend," but he or she is not usually the only friend. For these reasons, they usually score in the low to mid-range on the independence scale, and at the low end of the dependency scale.

Secure participants convincingly report using the other as a secure base, or trying to serve as one. They seek comfort from the partner when they need it, or express the desire to have such comfort. They accept comfort that is offered. They also provide it when the partner needs it, or clearly desire to do so. A secure participant involved with a partner who has difficulty with caregiving or seeking may have difficulty undertaking the complementary careseeking or care providing role. The attachment role scales account for this problem, allowing a midrange score. The secure participant should score at midrange or higher on ability to assume both the caregiving role and the careseeking role, or be coherent about why this is not possible despite the desire to do so.

**Discourse style.** Secure participants show most or all of the following characteristics:

- (a) During the interview, they generally speak of the partner with respect and/or affection rather than with anger or derogation.
- (b) There is little or no idealization of the partner, the relationship, or the self within the relationship, so when positive things are said they are substantiated with specific examples which make the assertions credible.
- (c) The transcripts of secure participants score at least a 5 (and usually higher) on the coherence scale; they present a clear picture of the partner, the relationship, and their own role in it. They are comfortable with the topic of attachment. They bring thoughtfulness and insight to the interview topic.
- (d) They often enjoy their own and their partners' individuality, and may agree to disagree on some issues. There is a tolerance and often humor about the differences between themselves and their partners.

- (e) Secure participants often describe the relationship with confidence and optimism. Many make statements that explicitly express their security in the relationship, saying that they feel the partner will always be there for them, or that they can count on the partner to come through when they need him or her, even in small ways.
- (f) Secure participants are alert to their partners' loving behaviors, value them and wish to maintain them. In this way they contrast with some insecure participants who may coherently describe a loving partner, but demonstrate by their descriptions that they do not understand or value this behavior.
- (g) Even if the desired qualities are not present in the current relationship, there is a clarity about what they value and desire within an adult relationship.

In addition, some of the characteristics of the secure participant which are listed in the AAI scoring system (Main & Goldwyn, 1994, p 132-134) are pertinent here:

- (h) There is "A balance with respect to the view taken of relationships, accepting their own parts in relationship difficulties when appropriate, setting [the partner] in relevant contexts when criticizing [him or her], or showing a sense of proportion and balance".
- (i) "Relative ease with imperfection in the self, the [partner], and in others. All are at least implicitly able to perceive both their own and the [partner's] imperfections, and all are implicitly compassionate toward others."
- (j) "The reader has the impression of the development of a strong personal identity. This is shown partly in the freshness of speech. Few or no phrases, sentences, or paragraphs seem to be rote replies; there is little jargon... and the individual seems to be able to examine the evidence afresh even while the interview is in progress."

## Secure Sub-classifications

In addition to the primary classification as Secure, each secure individual also receives one of three sub classifications:

### S1. Somewhat dismissing or restricting of attachment

These individuals are somewhat less coherent and thoughtful than the most secure (S2) participants. There is some vagueness in the description of the relationship but a valuing of attachment and intimacy is consistently present.

Participants receive this classification because they exhibit *in mild form* any of the behaviors which in a more marked form are characteristic of dismissing participants. That is, there may be some emphasis on friendship, "fun," or material goals; or they may be somewhat idealizing of the partner (ratings of 3-5 on Idealization). They may also be somewhat reserved and non-emotive, as if they are trying to be rational about love; may be somewhat limited in their ability to assume one or both attachment roles; or may employ humor to keep attachment concerns at bay or to avoid sounding too sentimental. Compared with participants classified as dismissing, they are more coherent, they do not contradict their statements about valuing attachment and their own and their partners' attachment behaviors, even if their statements are rather general.

### S2. Secure with respective to attachment

Individuals falling into this category share the characteristics of being highly coherent throughout the interview and of valuing attachment strongly. They are able to discuss their experiences with partners and the effects of those experiences without defensiveness, seeing their own role in relationships and viewing others and themselves with compassion, affection, and humor. There is a lack of idealization, and the reader's appraisal of the partner and the relationship is very close to that of the participant.

In many cases, the depiction of the partner is believably positive, as is the description of the relationship. The partner is generally described as emotionally supportive and able to effectively comfort the participant when he or she is distressed. Both intimacy and autonomy are important to such people. Most important, they express a hopeful confidence in the relationship.

However, it is not necessary for the relationship to be positive in order to assign this classification. To quote from the analogous AAI classification (Main & Goldwyn, 1994, p. 136), "These adults may volunteer awareness of personal insecurities, fears, or anxieties, in the present or in [the past]. They do not necessarily find all present relationships satisfying, and indeed may be presently contemplating [leaving the partner, or have other serious concerns]. With respect to the inner representation of attachment, however, they have developed either a natural or an earned autonomy. They are characterized by ease and/or by thoughtfulness, and meet the descriptors for the [secure] group in general." In general, individuals in this group know what secure attachments are about and value them, desire to be and have a secure base relationship with another adult, and are working actively to obtain or maintain a fulfilling attachment to a partner.

### **S3. Somewhat preoccupied with respect to attachment**

Members of this subgroup share a strong valuing of attachment and a mild preoccupation with attachment experiences and issues. This may take the form of an overly sentimental, romanticized depiction of the partner or of the relationship. Sometimes these individuals provide rich detail when talking about their experiences with the partner, and obviously enjoy regaling the interviewer with their stories.

Others in the S3 group give little detail, but they speak of the partner and the relationship in glowing terms which are not contradicted in the record, and their behavior demonstrates the strong priority they place on the partner relationship (often cutting back greatly on other activities or relationships with no regrets). Ties to their own families of origin may also be unusually strong. There is an emphasis on pleasing the partner and making him or her happy which may appear in their responses to the questions about their hopes for the relationship. The transcript may contain a few of the characteristics described under the Passive Speech scale.

Others share with preoccupied participants a tendency to analyze events and individuals, so that they spend considerable time conjecturing about the reasons for their own or their partner's behavior. At times, they may sound somewhat confused or anxious, but they are ultimately rational enough that the Secure classification is more appropriate than a Preoccupied one.

Other S3 participants are mildly angry at the partner or another individual, but are fairly coherent about their attachment-related experiences. The anger takes a preoccupied form, so that they discuss the failings of the partner or disappointment with the relationship. However, this is not as strong as in P2 participants, who may get caught up in their anger and lose sight of the interview questions. These secure participants are ultimately rational, though upset, and may use humor to moderate their anger, or may comment about the intensity of their emotions, catching themselves and getting back to the interview topic.

## **The Dismissing Classification**

The **Dismissing** classification is given when the participant attempts to limit the influence of partner relationships and experiences with attachment either by minimizing or denying the limitations of a rather unloving partner, of the relationship, of the self in the relationship, or by placing the primary focus on other facets of life (e.g., buying a house, pursuing a career, hanging out with friends) instead of the relationship. Most give the impression that they do not think much about attachment and have little desire to do so. **These participants are characterized by a dismissing state of mind. Most are not dismissing or rejecting of the partner, but of the attachment elements of the relationship.**

Individuals classified as dismissing tend to be focused on presenting a positive image. Statements about their own independence and strength are common. Even in the absence of such claims, there is an implicit claim to invulnerability which comes through in their denial of any negative effects

of attachment experiences on them or of their own rejection of their partners. They regularly announce that there is no real impact, that an experience was "no problem" or "no great loss." Avoiding problems seems to be thematic for some ("Breaking up was never a big deal, no big hassles").

They often ignore negative aspects of their relationship by idealizing the partner (but providing no evidence to confirm the positive picture which they paint). Generalized insistence upon the sterling qualities of the partner or of the relationship may be unconvincingly emphatic. ("Our relationship is great. It's very, very good"). Others avoid acknowledging negative aspects of the partner or the relationship by giving very little detail, instead substituting vague generalities which make scoring of the partner scales extremely difficult. They may actively avoid acknowledging anything negative about the relationship or the partner. In order to maintain this positive focus, they often must reject their own feelings of missing, needing, or depending (such interviews have a sad or lonely quality, despite the effort to be positive).

Those who do acknowledge negative aspects of the partner or of the relationship usually minimize the effects, especially of hurt- although annoyance may be expressed ("We don't spend much time together, but that's fine--it gives me a lot more time for my work"). Others present the information in a derogatory fashion which suggests that it is simply not worth thinking about or becoming upset over ("He was acting like a real jerk, but that's his problem, not mine--I'm not about to lose sleep over it"). Some soften the impact by comparing their relationship favorably to other couples, or identifying their relationship as typical or normal.

Responses to the interview questions may focus on activities and on things rather than the partner or the relationship. An overall description of the relationship poses few problems, though it tends to be brief and generalized. They may have considerably more difficulty coming up with adjectives to describe the relationship; when they do, the words tend to be conventionally positive (loving, caring, fun, trusting, understanding, communicating). The examples which follow fail to substantiate the idealized evaluation.

Often, dismissing participants are unable to tell why the partner is special to them or why they are special to the partner, since they haven't thought about it before. They may answer by excluding negatives ("He doesn't drink, he doesn't smoke, he doesn't take drugs, which considering all the negative things that are out there, I think that's positive", or "I'm not a slut").

In some cases, the reader has the impression that the participant has a pragmatic goal in mind which requires the participation of another person (getting married, having children, buying a house, acquiring a better lifestyle), and the partner seems to fit the practical requirements. The dismissing person may be overlooking marked limitations in the partner or incompatibilities between them in order to hold onto this whole picture. Some may even take a consumerist approach, in effect stating that the partner looked like a good bargain in the mating marketplace: "After we broke up, I looked around at what was out there, and I didn't see anything better, so we got back together."

Personal history. The dismissing participants fail to integrate or value past experiences with respect to the present. Their discussions tend to be brief, unsupported and even contradictory, idealizing, or derogating.

Description of partner/relationship. **The partner may score anywhere on the loving scale**, as having a dismissing state of mind does not preclude having an excellent partner. A background of rejection by the partner is common, but this score also varies greatly, since some dismissing participants have partners who encourage their independence and lack of connection, while others have partners who would welcome more involvement if the participant were open to it. The partners of dismissing participants may be involving, in which case the participant generally expresses dislike of this behavior. It is also possible that loving behavior by the partner may be viewed as involving; this would not receive a high score on the involving scale, but would be consistent with a dismissing state of mind. Since dismissing participants often push aside negative feelings about the partner or in fact have a good partner, their reported satisfaction is usually above the mid-range.

NOTE: A dismissing person with a loving partner may be quite believable about the partner, simply describing loving behavior that happened yesterday or a year ago. The scorer must look closely at the coherence of the description of the participant's feelings about the partner's behavior, and the participant's own attachment related behavior toward the partner in determining classification.

Self-description. Despite the participant's assertion in many of these interviews that they talk about "everything" with the partner, there is little evidence of this in the transcript, and communication seldom goes higher than midpoint. In other cases, the dismissing participant sees little benefit to communication, so the score is low.

Most dismissing participants score higher on valuing independence than intimacy. In the relationship, they tend to keep their distance emotionally. These individuals usually want their "own space," and resist the partner's attempts to increase involvement. Others may describe a desire for a "close family life" or claim that openness is very important to them, but their descriptions reveal that they have little understanding of what intimacy entails. Most (but not all) value their independence, and maintain separate activities, friends, and interests. Dismissing participants often score low on the dependency scale, but those who idealize a rejecting partner may score in the mid-range or even higher.

Many dismissing individuals score low on both caregiving and careseeking. In response to the upset question, they often take care of it themselves through withdrawal or by distraction; they unlikely to turn to their partner except in serious circumstances. They may report the partner helping them when they are sick, and the partner's behavior may be scored quite high for caregiving and midrange for careseeking. However the partner's behavior may be described in vague and idealizing terms, even when prompted ("If I'm sick, he's very supportive, he's very, very supportive. Very supportive. (Q)... [He does] everything, every single thing, I mean I don't have to do anything. Every single thing.") The reader remains unclear about what the partner actually does.

The relationship may be presented as one between friends, with little element of caretaking on either side. They believe that each person is responsible for meeting his or her own needs. Consequently, their own needs are paramount to them, and there is little mention of what the partner wants, though they may talk at length about their own goals. This is not necessarily done in a mean-spirited manner; it is just that they believe the partner should be responsible for taking care of himself or herself.

Discourse style. Anger toward the partner is seldom acknowledged, even when the partner has behaved in a way which would certainly seem to warrant an angry response. Mild annoyance may appear, but not the "hot" anger which comes out as angry, preoccupied speech. Hurt, distress, and feelings of needing or depending are not expressed. Negative feelings toward the partner may take the form of derogation of partner. Derogation of love, marriage, or the attachment relationships of other people may also be seen.

Except for those participants whose dismissal of attachment takes the form of derogation, idealization is strongly characteristic of the dismissing pattern (usually midrange or higher). In fact, an idealization score of 6 or higher automatically leads to a dismissing classification. Passivity of speech is rare.

Coherence varies within this group. The D2 type (see below) may be quite coherent, with midrange scores (3-5). Those fitting the D1 sub classification provide very little detail, and the scorer is unable to get any clear idea of what the relationship is like, so scores are low. Coherence does not exceed a score of 5.

Other characteristics include the following:

- (a) There is often a notably materialistic approach, with considerable emphasis on economic goals.

- (b) They may describe themselves as difficult to get along with, said without apology or guilt.
- (c) They may talk about "getting their own way," rather than seeing themselves as members of a team with a shared goal.
- (d) There is often an emphasis on having the relationship look good from the outside, with the goal being to maintain a positive image in other people's eyes. Appearances seem to be more important than reality to the dismissing participant.
- (e) In general, such participants appear to not think in much depth about the partner or the relationship, so usually (though not always) the interviews tend to be shorter than those of secure or preoccupied participants.
- (f) Because they don't wish to think much about the relationship, they may offer meaningless phrases instead of direct responses to questions ("You know, I don't know, I guess he does").
- (g) Dismissing participants may describe a loving partner in a believable way because in fact they may have such a partner. However, that partner's attachment behavior is not appreciated or valued as is the case for a secure participant. The loving behavior may be viewed as standard or normal, or may be an opportunity to be derogating to the partner.

**IMPORTANT:** At times, it can be hard to distinguish a dismissing participant from a preoccupied one (especially D1 from P1), since, as Main (1988) has pointed out, dismissing participants are on some level preoccupied with attachment, and preoccupied participants dismiss aspects of their experience. In order to differentiate between the two, it is essential to look mostly at how the participant presents the topic of attachment and what he or she does when concerns surface. The reader should remember that dismissing participants most often **actively** avoid considering negative things about their relationship or the partner. They may say many of the "right" things, asserting that the relationship is important to them and that they are close to the partner. They try to present an image of the partner and the relationship as wonderful. If they then begin to describe other behaviors which cast the relationship in a less than positive light, they rush to convince *the listener* that this is normal, that they are better off than most couples, or that it has had no real impact. Others work so hard at avoiding letting negative things out about the relationship that if they start to slip, they quickly change the direction of the discussion or actively close it off. Preoccupied participants are less concerned with the image they present, and are more likely to describe concerns or dissatisfaction; their struggle is then to convince *themselves* that it is really okay, which frequently results in notable oscillation.

In addition, dismissing participants are generally very much in control of the direction of the interview. Although sometimes guarded in their responses, they usually stay on topic and answer the questions. In their attempts to wrap things up quickly and avoid letting out negative information, they may lose the reader, but they don't get lost themselves (i.e., become passive).

## **Dismissing Sub-classifications**

There are four sub classifications to the dismissing category:

### **D1. Inattentive to attachment**

These participants are notable for the lack of information they provide. Idealization or normalization is high, and they cannot substantiate their general descriptions with examples of specific behaviors. In fact, the examples and anecdotes they do provide may contradict the generalized picture. They seem to have given little or no consideration to relationship issues, either in the past or during the interview, except insofar as a relationship means that two people can accomplish a task easier than one. The transcript is startling for its lack of detail and/or the inability of the participant to understand a number of the more thought-provoking questions and/or to be very uncomfortable with them.

**D2. Devaluing of partner/attachment**

This participant puts down the partner, relationships, or attachment itself in a cool, derogatory fashion. This person is not one who would be labeled as "in love," since such sentimentality would probably be looked down upon. The participant is likely to highly value his or her own personal strength or independence. Relationships may be manipulative, or viewed in an opportunistic way. There may also be evidence of materialism, and an emphasis on physical attractiveness. Anyone who scores above a 5 on the Derogation scales (either the partner scale or the attachment scale) should automatically receive this sub classification.

**D3. Restricted in feeling regarding partner/relationship**

These participants are not cut off from their experiences with the partner to the degree the D1 participant are, so they are usually fairly well-focused and moderately coherent (3-5). They may describe relationships which seem largely affiliative, or which focus on common external goals such as buying a house. They relate some negative experiences with the partner (or with previous partners), but their reactions are minimized. Even while describing strongly emotion-laden events, there is no apparent emotional response beyond mild annoyance in some cases. The participant denies that past experiences with a partner or the present behavior of the partner have had a negative emotional effect on him or her. There may be claims to personal strength. In addition, there may be a moderately high level of idealization as the participant tries to normalize his or her experiences with the partner.

**D4. Fearful of losing partner**

This classification is assigned to participants who express strong and unfounded fears of injury or death befalling the partner. The participant must also have acted upon those fears in some way. The sub classification is not assigned if the participant is conscious of the source of fear.

Anyone who scores above a 5 on the Fear of Loss scale should automatically receive this sub classification. In addition, the scorer should assign a secondary classification which best fits the transcript over and above the fear of loss.

## **The Preoccupied Classification**

The Preoccupied with Partner/Attachment classification is given when the participant appears confused, angry or controlling about the relationship or the partner's behavior. The participant may express strong needs for openness and intimacy with the partner, but equally strong anxiety about the likelihood of having those needs met (either because of his/her own or the partner's limitations). Other preoccupied participants speak angrily about the partner. Some participants idealize love relationships in general, but seem concerned that **this** relationship does not or will not meet such high hopes or expectations. The person may express ambivalence about the relationship, the partner, and/or the self.

Some preoccupied participants come across as emotionally immature. This could take the form of passivity, dependency, demanding behavior, or petulance. The reader may get the impression that they do not see the partner as a separate person whose efforts at individual growth deserve their support, but as someone whose purpose should be to meet the participant's own emotional needs. In contrast, other preoccupied participants have **partners** who fit the description above (demanding, dependent, emotionally needful or troubled), and they appear dedicated to trying to make the other person happy even while they are failing to get their own needs met in the relationship. The anxiety about this situation renders them preoccupied.

Some preoccupied participants describe a conflict-filled relationship, and may supply near-verbatim descriptions of arguments or insulting comments. In other cases, the participant is conflicted about the relationship itself. Though they have grave doubts about the durability of the relationship and the partner's ability to meet their needs, they find themselves unable to leave the relationship. In such cases, they may blame themselves for problems in the relationship or for not being more accepting. The reader gets the sense that they are trying to convince themselves that the relationship is going to work. In either case, the oscillation between concern over and denial of

problems is striking. This differs from the dismissing, idealizing participant who tries to present a consistently positive image *to the outside world*; this preoccupied participant instead seems to be trying to convince *himself or herself* that their relationship is fine.

Preoccupied individuals may demonstrate any of the following behaviors:

- (a) Dependency may be marked, with a reliance on the partner to determine the form and substance of the participant's life. The person may seem passive, with little identity of his or her own separate from the relationship.
- (b) The preoccupied person may have such high expectations of a relationship that he or she seems perpetually disappointed and angry, even with a partner who does not strike the reader as deficient. The anger at the perceived failings of the partner is generally related to the partner's lack of involvement or thoughtfulness. This anger may color the participant's perceptions so that he/she fails to note positive qualities of the partner or ways in which the relationship is beneficial to the self.
- (c) Other participants expect the partner to meet all of their needs, despite the fact that they may never have spelled them out. This can lead to angry resentment of a partner who was expected to know what those needs were without having been told.
- (d) The participant may sound quite manipulative and controlling of the partner, even if they are happy with the partner's behavior. Statements which at first sound like rejection turn out on closer inspection to be attempts to keep the partner close and pleasing to the participant. Jealousy or overprotection may also be used in an effort to keep the partner available.
- (e) The preoccupied person often has difficulty seeing the partner objectively, so may project his or her own thoughts and preferences onto the partner, and describe the two of them as almost exactly the same. If differences **are** discerned, the participant usually wants to eliminate them, and may be angered over simple differences of opinion or behavior.
- (f) The entanglement between self and other may be seen as desirable, and especially in the last section the participant may describe a strong wish to merge into one ("That's what I hope, that the two of us will come together, one mind, not two"), or be twins.
- (g) They may be determined to maintain the relationship despite distinct dissatisfaction and regardless of the partner's preference. (As one woman said, "He wanted to end it with me, and I wouldn't give up and I said, 'I'm gonna stand by your side, no matter whether...you like it or not.'") This determination to maintain an unsatisfactory relationship results in intense ambivalence about the partner or the relationship. Often, they demonstrate such confusion and contradictory feelings by oscillating between extremes even in the same sentence or paragraph. ("The relationship is great, well, it's terrible lots of times, but it's the best thing in the world.")
- (h) They appear anxious about whether the relationship will last. Some participants directly express fears that the partner may abandon them and that they would be unable to function without him or her.
- (i) They may express anxiety about their own ability to maintain a healthy relationship. ("It's basically my fault that there's bad stuff going on, 'cause I can twist things around in my own head.")

Personal history. The preoccupied participant fails to integrate past experiences into the current situation, or to derive meaning from it. Their histories may be presented with considerable detail, but there is little sense of how these experiences affect them. Past experiences may viewed with

great intensity, preoccupation, and/or anger. NOTE: The participants' experiences with their own parents are not relevant to the preoccupied classification of the CRI.

Description of partner/relationship. The partner's behavior in the coder's opinion, may have little to do with the participant's feelings about the partner's behavior, and hence the partner may receive any score on the behavior scales.

Self-description. Communication tends to be important to many preoccupied participants, so they are likely to report high levels of communication for themselves and their partner. However, since they are often too confused, angry, or anxious to communicate clearly with the partner, and since their own neediness may make them less receptive to the partner's communications, their scores may be in the 3-5 range.

In most cases, independence is not valued, but neither is true intimacy. Participants may report spending large amounts of time with the partner. Scores on the dependency scales are variable. Some participants are immature, emotionally needful, and/or dependent, so the partner is regularly thrust into a "parent" role to their "child." They are often not very accepting of comfort that is offered, and appear anxious and unsettled. Their caregiving behavior is often weak and self-focused. Others are involved in an unsatisfying relationship with a troubled, unhappy partner, so they generally fill the parent role and cannot seek care from the partner (To be classified preoccupied vs. secure with this behavior, the individual must express confusion, anger, or demonstrate marked, but unintegrated, ambivalence about the relationship).

Discourse style. In sub-type P2, anger is high, but in the others it is not. Derogation is generally low (1 to 3). Some idealization is possible, especially in the passive, confused P1 group, but it will not exceed a 5. Passive speech, if extreme, qualifies the participant for a P1 rating.

Although some S3 (secure) participants are mildly angry or anxious, a preoccupied participant can be differentiated because of the low coherence which typifies his or her interview. The transcript tends to be rambling, disjointed, with too much detail in places. Preoccupied participants may become caught up in anger and go on at length with scorable angry speech, or may be extremely confused and passive in discussing attachment. The transcripts are often hard to follow, and contradictions and/or evaluatory oscillation are likely. Scores for coherence are always below 5.

## Preoccupied Sub-classifications

There are four sub classifications to the preoccupied category,

### P1. Passive

These participants are characterized by passivity of speech. The interviews are disjointed, rambling, and confusing. It is difficult to determine what has gone on in the past or is going on currently in their relationships. Any sense the reader gets of the participant's past experience is often later lost in contradictions or incoherence. Unlike D1 participants who resemble them in some ways, these individuals are willing to consider attachment issues; however, they cannot do so with any clarity or real insight. No matter how hard they try to understand the relationship with the partner, they just don't "get" it. Consequently, they have low coherency scores.

P1 participants are not angry toward their partners; in fact, they often idealize the partner or the relationship at a mild or moderate level. If they do mention negative aspects of the relationship, they usually ascribe the problems to themselves or to the present circumstances (e.g., getting ready for the wedding, being separated from each other because of school or a job). Since they are unable to productively seize upon any issue, the reader gets an impression of underlying anxiety about the relationship (though this anxiety may not be explicitly stated). Though these participants may seem vaguely dissatisfied, they are confused and passive about identifying the source of their distress or doing anything about it.

Additionally, they may be very dependent on the partner or on others. They give the impression of having a relatively undeveloped sense of self. Such people seem to avoid independent action, ideas,

or interests, and live for the partner, sometimes expecting the same in return. They report spending large amounts of time with the partner, but they are too confused and vague to qualify as valuing intimacy (emotional closeness) with a partner.

### **P2. Angry**

The hallmark of this group is strong, active anger toward a partner who is not meeting their needs or expectations. Problems in the relationship are blamed entirely on the partner, with no acknowledgment of their own role in the difficulties; the speaker may make subtle or blatant attempts to elicit interviewer agreement that the partner's behavior is deplorable. The interview is often lengthy, as the participant provides detailed accounts of difficulties with the partner and the participant's own feelings of distress or anger. Though the person may speak with authority and assurance about his/her experiences with relationships, psychological jargon often appears as a substitute for incisive meaning.

The Angry Speech score is 5 or above for this classification. There may nevertheless be positive statements made about some aspects of the relationship. Rapid evaluatory oscillation may occur even within the same sentence ("Our relationship is bad, well sometimes it's terrible, but it's really good"). Individuals who are high on anger for another person should receive this classification, but if possible, another classification should be assigned which best characterizes the relationship with the partner.

### **P3. Enmeshed**

This category is designed for those participants who have become caught up in an unhealthy relationship with someone who is unable to meet the participant's emotional needs. P3 participants are troubled and preoccupied by the problems endemic to the present relationship, but are still trying to convince themselves that it will get better and work out, despite evidence to the contrary. They may rationalize their continuation in the relationship by trying to convince the interviewer and themselves that everyone has problems and doubts, and theirs are no worse than anyone else's. Unlike the previous classification, anger, if present, is not the predominant emotion; rather, sadness, ambivalence, confusion, or even fear underlie the transcript of P3 participants.

As with the P2, conflicting feelings and evaluations are typical, often resulting in contradictions and oscillation. Though this is often a reasonable response to a partner whose behavior is itself inconsistent (the partner may behave in a rejecting or cruel manner at times, but at other times be extremely romantic or flattering, keeping the participant involved and hopeful), the problem is that the P3 participant does not clearly see the partner's role in making the relationship so erratic. They often try to be optimistic about the future of the relationship, despite all evidence to the contrary. If they simply try harder, they will be able to make everything better. They differ from the D3 individual in that they are not idealizing; that is they are more direct in their distress, but then oscillate to a positive view.

They may be somewhat more coherent than others in the preoccupied classification, but not clear minded enough to see the limitations of the relationship as it now stands (if relatively clear about the situation they are likely to receive the S3 classification). Though they recognize that there are serious problems, they are not willing to leave the relationship. This may be because of what appears to be an overdeveloped sense of responsibility or guilt, a feeling that their only value lies in a caretaker role, anxiety about being alone, or fear about the partner's reaction. It may also be that they are too confused about the partner's behavior to currently take a strong stance about leaving.

### **P4. Controlling**

These participants are controlling in the relationship. They dwell upon the activities of the partner, and try to control what the partner is doing even when he or she is elsewhere. This can take different forms. Some participants are jealous or suspicious. They check up on the partner regularly, and may follow them or set verbal traps to find out whether they have in fact been where they were supposed to be. They may become agitated when the partner talks with another person, viewing others as potential threats. They may forbid the partner to go certain places or be with certain people, and become angry if their restrictions are ignored.

Another form this sort of preoccupation may take is overprotectiveness. Here, the participant hovers over the partner, trying to keep him or her from engaging in activities that the participant interprets as dangerous. They tend to infantilize the partner, giving unnecessary instructions and warnings. Still other controlling participants manipulate the attachment system to keep the partner near. Participants who threaten to leave their partner or to withdraw their affection may be reinforced for such behaviors, since the partner may pull closer and try to be more pleasing in order to avoid abandonment. For such participants, this then becomes a successful and frequently used means for controlling the partner.

In any of these cases, the underlying motivation seems to be fear. Controlling participants are anxious about the partner's continuing involvement and availability, and become over involved in the partner's life. However, the P4 participant whose partner is cooperative with this level of control may not express any overt distress, and may be quite happy.

It is important to note that the individual classified as P4 may express very little about attachment. Although they are very concerned about the self, the relationship and the behavior of the partner, the preoccupation need not be with attachment per se. These individuals may have a sociopathic or narcissistic quality, and in data analyses possibly should be kept separate from the preoccupied group as a whole.

## CRI SCORING SHEET

Participant #: \_\_\_\_\_ Classification: \_\_\_\_\_

Date scored: \_\_\_\_\_ Adjectives

Coder \_\_\_\_\_

Grade in which dating began: \_\_\_\_\_

Length of relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

\* \* \* \* \*

### **PARTICIPANT--HISTORY:**

Intensity of past relationships \_\_\_\_\_

Parents' marriage Warmth: \_\_\_\_\_ Conflict: \_\_\_\_\_

**SATISFACTION** with partner/relationship \_\_\_\_\_

### **RELATIONSHIP BEHAVIOR:**

#### **PARTNER**

#### **PARTICIPANT**

Loving \_\_\_\_\_

Rejecting \_\_\_\_\_

Involving \_\_\_\_\_

PARTNER	PARTICIPANT
---------	-------------

Controlling \_\_\_\_\_

Dependency \_\_\_\_\_

Communication \_\_\_\_\_

Careseeking \_\_\_\_\_

Caregiving \_\_\_\_\_

**STATE OF MIND/DISCOURSE STYLE:**

Valuing of intimacy \_\_\_\_\_

Valuing of independence \_\_\_\_\_

Angry speech: Partner:\_\_\_\_\_ Other (not parent):\_\_\_\_\_

Derogation of partner/attachment

Partner: \_\_\_\_\_ Attachment:\_\_\_\_\_

Idealization of partner/relationship \_\_\_\_\_

Passive speech \_\_\_\_\_

Fear of loss \_\_\_\_\_

UNRESOLVED LOSS/TRAUMA: Score: \_\_\_\_\_

BREAKUP: yes \_\_\_\_ no \_\_\_\_ DEATH of previous partner: yes \_\_\_\_ no \_\_\_\_

**Coherence of transcript** \_\_\_\_\_

\* \* \* \* \*

Notes: