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**Narrative Assessment of Adult
Attachment Representations
Scoring Secure Base Script Use**

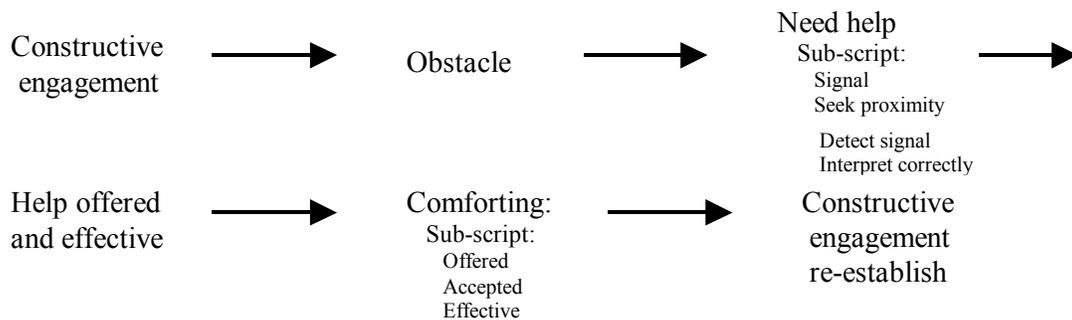
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I. Definition of a Secure Base Script

Bowlby and Ainsworth describe the infant (child)-mother relationship in terms of a balance between proximity seeking and exploration. This balance can be summarized in terms of a prototypic secure base script. This script describes a sequence of events in which the caregiver (1) supports the child's exploration, (2) remains available and responsive and serves as a resource as necessary; (3) the child encounters an obstacle or threat and becomes distressed; (4) either the child retreats to the caregiver or the caregiver goes to the child; (5) the difficulty is resolved or removed; (6) proximity and/or contact with the caregiver effectively comforts the child; (7) the child (possibly with the caregiver's assistance) returns to constructive play (or ends play comfortably and makes a transition to another activity). Bowlby hypothesized that familiarity with and access to this script plays an important organizing role in the attachment-exploration balance during infancy and early childhood and is the foundation for attachment "working models" that emerge later.

Content of A Generalized (Dyadic) Secure Base Script



II. Secure Base Script Content (Adult attachment narratives)

Four attachment prompt word outlines were developed to guide story production about attachment relevant scenarios (Baby's Morning, The Doctor's Office, Jane and Bob's Camping Trip, The Accident). Two are mother/child scenarios (Baby's Morning, The Doctor's Office) and two are adult/adult scenarios (Jane and Bob's Camping Trip, The Accident). We broadly define a prototypic secure script as one in which the secure base (mom/partner) helps the individual (character in story) deal with some distress and helps to get things back to normal. In more positive scenarios, the goal of the secure base is to facilitate exploration, promoting positive experiences. Stories organized around a secure base script will have:

- 1) the secure base helping to select and implement strategies for getting things back to normal and defusing the emotional distress, when that is possible, or avoiding distress altogether by facilitating transitions to other activities (for a baby or child) and providing explanatory frameworks to help understand the situation (for young child)
- 2) the secure base reconfiguring the person's representation to focus on more positive aspects, thereby diffusing the negative emotion. This often involves pointing out the "bright" side of a situation, e.g., we'll certainly talk about this trip for years to come.
- 3) an interpersonal focus, that is, a sensitivity to and awareness of the other person's psychological/emotional state. The content of secure base narratives focuses on the interaction between the two individuals rather than simply describing the sequence of events in the story. The secure base responds to requests, cues from child/partner, modifying their own behavior as a consequence. There is give-and-take, with each partner making their own unique contribution to the situation, activity, but working together "as a team." There is also emotional give-and-take with an expressed emotion in one leading to an emotional response in the other.

III. Scriptedness Scoring System

Highest ranked stories are those with extensive secure base content and a strong interpersonal framework. Stories lower in rankings would have less and less of the secure base content. At some point low ranked stories would begin to contain “odd” content, i.e., content inconsistent with a secure base script. There would also begin to be breaks in the coherence of story events, with emotional content just there, with no follow-up or reaction from the secure base character. The worst stories essentially eliminate the partner in the secure base pairing (child or adult partner) as an active participant in the story, even going so far as to redirect the focus of the story onto the self (e.g., *Baby’s Morning* focuses solely on mother’s experiences). In order to capture the full range of secure base scriptedness in the stories, a seven point scale was developed (described below).

Scriptedness Scale Scores

7. These are the very best examples of secure base content in the narrative. There is a rich interplay between the two principle characters. There is a great deal of attention to the psychological state of the other, and the “secure base” is very responsive to that psychological state. Important to the secure base script is the resolution of the problem/distress with a return to normalcy.
6. These narratives fall short of the richness of secure base content that is evidenced in stories ranked “7”. Nonetheless, these stories to contain a reasonable amount of secure base content.
5. These narratives have a medium amount of secure base content, but not as much elaboration as those that are ranked “7” or “6”.
4. These narratives have some secure base content, but not very much. Thus, they are weak on secure base content, but there is no odd content contained in the story either.
3. These narratives seem mostly event-related stories, in which what is happening is presented, with very little commentary on the give and take between with the characters, or on the psychological content of the story.
2. These are event-related as well, but so brief as to seem disjointed. Also included in this category are longer narratives that contain some odd content that is inconsistent with a secure base script. The intrusion of this content however is not as consistent or pervasive as the narratives that are scored “1.”
1. These narratives are theme-based variations that come across as quite peculiar interpretations of the implied story line. Not only is the secure base script not recognized, but a quite different script is in its place. The narratives can be quite detailed, with content generated consistent with the odd interpretation of the story line. These are not that common.

Note: Narratives with significant “odd” content, but fall short of a complete theme-based variation also receive a “1.”

The following pages contain descriptions of how the secure base script is instantiated for each attachment scenario along with sample narratives that span the range from good secure base content to the absence of such content to sample narratives that recast the story line (and avoid addressing the implied attachment scenario).

Prompt Word Outline 1: Baby's Morning

mother	hug	teddy bear
baby	smile	lost
play	story	found
blanket	pretend	nap

In this attachment story, secure base content first appears in the interaction between the mother and baby as the baby's cries awaken the mother. Good secure base content would include interactions in which the mother and baby respond to each other's cues, e.g., a smile in one leads to a smile in the other. Attentiveness to the baby's psychological state would also be part of the script content, e.g., noting how much the baby enjoyed playing a particular game, or hearing a particular story. As the story moves forward there is an opportunity for the mother character to handle a small crisis, i.e., where is the teddy bear? Stories are scored for secure base content that include awareness of the need to find the teddy bear, recognizing that the child's transition to nap time would be adversely affected, and an active effort to engage the baby in the search, making it a joint activity. Story variations in which the teddy bear is part of a pretend story are fine, and can be scored for secure base content in the same way as the earlier story interactions. Finally secure base content is also scored in the transition to sleep at the end of the story, noting to what degree the mother attends to smoothing the way to sleep, e.g., rocking the baby to sleep, or saying "Good night, I'll see you in a little while", etc.

Examples of Secure Base Content from Baby's Morning

- 1) the secure base helping to select and implement strategies for getting things back to normal and defusing the emotional distress, when that is possible, or avoiding distress altogether by facilitating transitions to other activities (for a baby or child) and providing explanatory frameworks to help understand the situation (for young child ,

e.g., "Well, let's think really hard. If I were a teddy bear where would I be?" (memory retrieval strategy used by mom to help child find lost Teddy Bear)

e.g., "Mom gently laid the baby in the crib and told her that it was time for a nap, and that she would see her in just a little while when she woke up. And mom kissed the baby on the cheek and quietly walked out the room and said "Good night, baby." (transition to nap time)

- 2) the secure base reconfiguring the person's representation to focus on more positive aspects, thereby diffusing the negative emotion. This often involves pointing out the "bright" side of a situation, e.g., we'll certainly talk about this trip for years to come. (not really relevant to this story, baby is too small for directing comments to help shape how the baby thinks about a situation, plus there is no serious crisis/distress in this story)
- 3) an interpersonal focus, that is, a sensitivity to and awareness of the other person's psychological/emotional state. The content of secure base narratives focuses on the interaction between the two individuals rather than simply describing the sequence of events in the story. The secure base responds to requests, cues from child/partner, modifying their own behavior as a consequence. There is give-and-take, with each partner making their own unique contribution to the situation, activity, but working together "as a team." There is also emotional give-and-take with an expressed emotion in one leading to an emotional response in the other.

e.g., "Baby wanted to play hide and go seek so mother went and got a blanket from the baby's room." (responding to request)

e.g. "The little baby Sarah wanted to give her mom a hug also. So she reached up and gave her mom a really big hug. And this made her mom smile even more." (emotional give-and-take)

e.g., "And the mom would just smile at her and the baby would coo and laugh at the mom. She liked to laugh at the faces mom made." (emotional give-and-take)

e.g., "Mother knew that baby would not nap without her teddy bear." (aware of psychological state of other)

e.g., "And pretend that the teddy bear is hiding. The baby is looking for the teddy bear, and it pops out from behind mom. And the baby is very happy because he's found the teddy bear. The play for a little bit longer. The baby seems to be getting tired and mom puts the baby down for a nap." (awareness of baby's psychological state)

Sample Stories

Baby's Morning - Scale score 7

The brand new mother woke up to her little baby's cry. And she went running into the baby's room to see what was wrong. And actually, the baby was crying with happiness cause she was playing in her crib and she was playing with the brand new toy that her father had given her. The blanket that was generally around the baby was tied over the toy, and the baby was actually pretending that this doll was her little baby. So she was hugging it, and her mom just smiled, cause she thought this was so cute. The little baby, Sarah, wanted to give her mom a hug also. So she reached up and gave her mom a really big hug. And this made her mom smile even more. So then she wanted to hear a story. And the story was 'Goldilocks and the three bears.' And Sarah started laughing because her mom would pretend to be each of the bears. So she would say, "Oh, I'm Papa Bear," in this low and deep voice, "and whose been sleeping in my bed." And Sarah thought this was the funniest thing cause her mom had this really deep Papa Bear voice and then she'd have the little Baby Bear voice., "Oh, someone's been sleeping in my bed, and she's still there." So the little Sarah was very happy with her mom's story. And she played for most of the day while her mom watched her and played with her. And she had her favorite gift from her big brother was a teddy bear that was lost and she couldn't find it anywhere. She looked up and down the stairs and she looked in her room, and she looked in her brother's room, but she couldn't find it anywhere. But her mom said, "Well, let's think really hard. If I was a teddy bear where would I be?" And they thought, and they thought and they thought. "I know, I know, it would be in my bed." So Sarah went running up the steps, toddling up the steps, and there they found the teddy bear, laying in her bed where she had left him. So she was so tired that her mom said, "Why don't we both lay down for a little nap?" And Sarah and her mom took a nap for the rest of the afternoon.

In this story we see coordinated interactions with both mother and child responding to the signals of the other. Mom runs to the baby when she hears a cry. When mom enters and smiles the baby reaches to hug mom, and mom just smile even more. Mom then tells a favorite story that makes the baby laugh with glee, mom knows exactly what pleases the baby. When the teddy bear is lost, mom enlists the baby so they can both think very hard about where it could be. Mom provides a strategy for dealing with the distressful situation. The story ends with mom noticing that the baby is tired and they go off to bed.

Baby's Morning - Scale score 6

One morning mother and baby woke up and had breakfast together. Mother then needed to clean up some things in the kitchen, so baby went into the family room which was attached to the kitchen and mother had spread out a blanket and some toys on the floor for the baby to play on. As the baby was playing mother straightened up the kitchen. Since the baby was so good while mother cleaned up the kitchen she was feeling happy that she could get her work done and also that the baby could keep himself occupied. After mother's work was done she went over and hugged the baby. She picked him and smiled and said, "Let's read a story." Mother and baby went over to the couch and looked at a book together. Mother and baby then pretended as

they played with some cars. They played on the floor and pretended to make sounds of the cars as they drove up and down the highway, which was actually the floor. Baby then began to play with a teddy bear and as baby played with the teddy bear, mother had more chores to attend to. Baby was playing and playing and all of a sudden mother heard her baby crying. The teddy bear was lost. Baby was also getting tired and cranky and that's why he was crying also. So then mother put baby in for a nap. As the baby was napping, mother straightened up and found the teddy bear, so when baby woke up it was a happy afternoon for both of them.

In this story, mom shows sensitivity toward the child's needs, from setting up a play area for the baby while she does some chores, to coming over to read a story and play a pretend game about cars, to reacting quickly when the baby cries out because the teddy is lost. Mom realizes that the baby is tired and puts him down for a nap, but also finds the teddy so the baby will be happy when he awakens. This is a "6" because there is somewhat less detail about the exchanges between mom and child, less during the wake up time, for example.

Baby's Morning - Scale Score 5

One morning the mom and her baby were playing on the blanket in their den. Mom took out lots of toys for the baby to play with. She took out lots of rattles and crinkley toys and lots of things for her to stimulate her baby. They even did flash cards, little black and white flash cards, which the baby really likes. Then they took out a toy that plays music and the baby was clapping. Mom was trying to try to teach her baby how to sit up and how to roll over. They were having a great time. The mom kept hugging her baby and giving her baby kisses and she got really excited when her baby gave her a really big smile. She read the baby some books and then they would pretend to make soup with the little play plastic bowl and spoon set. The baby would pretend to blow on the spoon and feed it to her mommy. Then the baby liked to play with her teddy bears. She got really upset because she couldn't find her teddy bear. Mom looked all over for it and finally found it behind the couch. The baby was really happy. They kept playing. They played with blocks and stacking rings and finally then the baby was worn out and mom was ready for a nap too, so they both took a nap.

Throughout the story there are back-and-forth exchanges and mom is sensitive to what the baby enjoys. So mom starts out by bringing out all kinds of toys that the baby enjoys. The baby responds to mom with smiles and they jointly engage in a pretend game of eating soup. Mom looks for the teddy bear when the baby is upset that it is lost, and they both go to sleep when the baby is tired out. Once again, there is evidence of mother-child coordination and mother sensitivity throughout the story, but the story does not have the rich exchanges of a 7 or a 6.

Baby's Morning - Scale Score 4

Mother gets up in the morning and she's working around the house. She hears noises coming from the baby's room so she goes in because she thinks the baby has woken up. There he is in his crib playing with his little baby toy in the crib. When he sees her mom he gives her a big smile and she greets him warmly. She picks him up and gives him a big hug and then she takes him out of his room and puts him down. They are playing on the floor of the den. She's playing peek-a-boo with him. Then she goes and gets him some breakfast and he starts to get a little sleepy later after they are playing around together. He's almost ready for his nap already. So she reads him a story and gets ready to put him to bed. She finds his teddy bear for him and she tucks him in under his little blanket and he takes a nap.

As with other "4" stories, this story receives a "4" because there is very little personalized interaction. But there is some evidence that the mother is noting the child's state. She goes to the baby's room because the noises that she hears signals that the baby is awake. Later on the mother notes that the child is "almost" ready for his nap, so she reads a story first before she gets him ready for his nap.

Baby's Morning - Scale Score 3

Mother and the baby wake up and they decided they're gonna spend the morning playing. They have breakfast together, and then they play Peek-a-boo with a blanket and the baby laughs and smiles. And then the mom plays a game with the baby, and hugs her. And they read a story together. Then the mother pretends to be different animals and makes different animal sounds, which makes the baby smile. And when it's nap time, the baby's getting tired, the mother gets the baby's teddy bear, and looks for the pacifier which they can't find. And after they find the lost pacifier, the baby settles down and takes a nap.

This story presents a matter-of-fact presentation of the events of Baby's Morning. The rich give-and-take of a secure base script is absent. This story is event-focused, so receives a "3." Pretty much follows the word prompts and little more. There is no odd content or disjointed presentation to merit a lower score.

Baby's Morning - Scale Score 2

The mother and the baby spent the morning together on the blanket playing and telling stories. They smile and hug and the mother tells the baby about a story where the child in the story's teddy bear is lost. And the child cannot find the teddy bear and she is upset and she takes a nap and when she wakes up she finds the teddy bear next to her.

This story is very brief and thus appears somewhat disjointed. There is also some odd content. The child is upset, but there is no effort to deal with the upset, the baby just takes a nap.

Baby's Morning - Scale Score 2

The mother woke up and she said, "Good morning baby. I want to play with you today. I'll wrap you in the blanket, and give you a hug. Oh you make you smile, I'm so happy. Let me tell you a story. It's a story about a mommy pretending to be a teddy bear." The mommy's pretending to be the teddy bear. She lost her baby teddy bear, but then she found out that the baby teddy bear was only taking a nap. So she found the baby and they were very happy.

This story receives a "2" in part because it is brief but also because this is a one-way dialogue. The baby is not a participant at all. The baby doesn't even wake up to start the interaction, it's the mom who awakes. And then the mom starts with what she wants to do today. Stories that focus on the mother's needs are scored as inconsistent with the secure base script.

Baby's Morning - Scale Score 1

I'd like to explain what my morning is like. Since I'm a working mother, it's kind of difficult for me to get the baby ready in the morning. A lot of times he wants to play, so it really takes up a lot of time in doing my routine. But what I usually do is I try to wrap him up in the blanket, and give him a big hug and then off we go to the babysitters. I try to smile a lot as I'm dropping him off, and as he's getting older now, we're trying to make up stories about where I'm going, and I try to explain to him where I go to work, and what I do. And a lot of times I have to pretend that I'm not leaving. And we have to distract him a little bit, so that I can get out of the house. And the other day, it was so traumatic because I had dropped off his teddy bear with him, and then when she, the babysitter, gave him back to me, we couldn't find the teddy bear. So we thought it was lost but maybe some of the other kids had taken him home. Luckily we were able to find him. So once the teddy bear was found, everything was good, and I was told that now that he's able to take his nap better, because without the teddy bear, during the day he wouldn't sleep, so his nap time was kind of messed up. So this is how baby's morning goes with me.

In this story the subject focuses on herself and tells the story in the 1st person. The theme throughout this story is how the baby's morning affects the mother. There is no attention to the needs of the baby. Both the initial sentence and the final sentence of the story is about what the mother's morning is like, how the baby's morning "goes with me." Not only is there no evidence of a secure base script, there is a self-oriented perspective that seems to preclude the script. This story is definitely a "1."

Prompt Word Outline 2: The Doctor's Office

Tommy	hurry	mother
bike	doctor	toy
hurt	cry	stop
mother	shot	hold

In this attachment story, the crisis situation begins with the child falling off his bike and being hurt. This is the first opportunity for mom to take action as a secure base, and/or for the child to effectively seek out his secure base. Secure base content focuses on mom's recognition, not only of the need to get Tommy to the doctor, but of the need to calm Tommy down and reassure him that everything will be all right, and that if he needs a shot it will only hurt for a moment. The story then moves to the actual doctor's office, and the need to calm Tommy down as he faces the shot and/or stitches. Secure base content is scored for mother's efforts at providing an explanation of what is happening, how much it will hurt, etc. Recognizing that some comforting is needed as the doctor proceeds, e.g., holding Tommy's hand, or even stopping the doctor a moment to give Tommy a hug is also scored as secure base content. Once the trauma of the doctor's office is over, the mother's continued efforts at getting things back to normal involve praising the child for his good behavior at the doctor's office and offering to reward that behavior by buying Tommy a toy. When the toy is used for this purpose, and/or to provide Tommy with something to do while his knee heals, and Tommy gets to choose something he likes (i.e., his needs, preferences count for something) the story is scored for secure base content. Using the toy to stop Tommy from crying, or as something which is given at the doctor's office as a matter of form does not count as secure base content.

Examples of Secure Base Content from The Doctor's Office

- 1) the secure base helping to select and implement strategies for getting things back to normal and defusing the emotional distress, when that is possible, or avoiding distress altogether by facilitating transitions to other activities (for a baby or child) and providing explanatory frameworks to help understand the situation (for young child)

e.g., "Tommy started to cry again, but the mother was able to hold him and he stopped crying. The doctor needed also to stitch up his chin so Tommy started to cry again. And his mother said, "Doctor can you just stop for one minute? Let me hold him and I'll be able to calm him down." (strategy for defusing emotional distress)

e.g., (Doctor says) "We'll have to give you a stitch. But only a few stitches. But everything will be okay. And his mother reassured him, "It might hurt for a minute Tommy, but its going to be okay." Tommy was still very upset, held his mother's hand real tight with his mom standing right next to him." (mother provides comfort, both in the way of explanation and physical closeness)

e.g., (in this story, Tommy had been hurt because when he went into the street a biker ran into him) "You know Tommy, you have to understand, when you're playing in the front yard, you have to stop at the curb. And if you wanted to cross the street you have to hold somebody's hand, and the person should be an adult." (mother provides explanation and strategy for avoiding another fall)

- 2) the secure base reconfiguring the person's representation to focus on more positive aspects, thereby diffusing the negative emotion. This often involves pointing out the "bright" side of a situation.

e.g., "And his mom says to him that because he was such a good boy that she will take him to the store and buy him something. But it's not gonna be another bicycle because we had enough

trauma on that today. And Tommy was very happy because now he feels that now he was a big boy cause he went to the doctor, and he got his bandage all taken care of and now he's going to be rewarded for being so good while he was there." (mother focuses on the fact that Tommy was so good at the doctor's office)

e.g., "Tommy was proud of himself and his mother said "Tommy, you did a wonderful job. You did real good, mom was very proud. You didn't cry too much, and see, now your leg is gonna heal up real nice and be all better." (mother focuses on positive outcome, leg looks better, as well as how good Tommy was)

- 3) an interpersonal focus, that is, a sensitivity to and awareness of the other person's psychological/emotional state. The content of secure base narratives focuses on the interaction between the two individuals rather than simply describing the sequence of events in the story. The secure base responds to requests, cues from child/partner, modifying their own behavior as a consequence. There is give-and-take, with each partner making their own unique contribution to the situation, activity, but working together "as a team." There is also emotional give-and-take with an expressed emotion in one leading to an emotional response in the other.

e.g., "So, Tommy was such a big boy, though, that he made his mother proud, and said, "Okay, I'll be really good mom I promise." And his mother was so happy with him that she said, "Okay, we'll go to the toy shop and we'll be able to pick up a toy that you might like as a reward for being so good." (emotional give-and-take)

The Doctor's Office - Scale score 7

Tommy was about 5-years-old and learned to ride his bike about two months before. His mother finally decided to let him ride around the block by himself. Tommy was really excited for this big day and his mom was waiting on the front stoop for him to come home. When Tommy came home he was crying and was obviously hurt. She rushed down to go see him and he said that a dog had bit him on the leg. He was crying and crying and she didn't even know how he got the bite home because he was crying so much. The bite didn't look bad, but his mother still felt that he should go to the doctor. When they got to the doctor, the doctor was probably worse than the bite itself and Tommy wouldn't stop crying and she couldn't get him to calm down. The doctor then told the worst part, that he had to get a tetanus shot. Tommy kept crying and crying and his mother kept trying to reason with him that everything was going to be okay and that this was going to be over, although inside she was worried that he might be afraid of dogs for a long time to come. She tried to explain to him that the dog was afraid of him and that's why the dog bit him. Tommy seemed to come around once the shot stopped hurting and the bite stopped hurting so much. His mother told him that they could go to Toys R' Us and buy whatever they wanted to in the store. What was really funny was what Tommy decided to buy was a toy dog. He said he was going to teach the dog not to be afraid of him. At the end of the night after they got home and Tommy was all calmed down he was watching t.v. and holding his dog. His mom stopped to look at him. She thought he was so beautiful and so grown up and that it was amazing that he could drive around the block by himself. Then she down next to him while he was watching t.v. and gave him a nice hug.

The mother throughout the story is sensitive to Tommy's state, providing support & explanation to help him deal with the situation. He is on his first run around the block on his own, so Mom waits on the stoop to monitor the situation. When she sees that he is hurt, she runs down to check and decides that he needs to be seen by a doctor. At the doctor Tommy is crying so Mom explains how everything will be ok. Afterwards she offers to go to Toys R' Us as he calms down, where Tommy picks what he wants. Mom continues to monitor Tommy as he plays with his toy dog and sits down to give him a hug as he gets back on track, all calm, dealing with his encounter with a "real" dog by playing with a toy one.

The Doctor's Office - Scale score 6

Tommy wanted to get home from school. He hurried out the school after going to his locker and returning his books. He wanted to get home as quickly as possible because he knew his mother had a special surprise wait-

ing for him. He hurried out the door and went to his bike, took the bike lock off, got upon his bike, and started hurrying home. He rode as fast as he could, anticipating what the surprise would be. As he was riding he realized that there was a stop sign and it was too close for him to stop. As he tried to stop, he fell off his bike over his handle bars. He hurt himself very badly and he began to cry. His leg was bleeding. All he wanted was his mother. He got up and held on to his bike and decided to walk the rest of the way. At the door he saw his mother waiting for him. When he saw his mother he began to cry again. His mother came and held him and asked what happened. He told her how he hurried home because he couldn't wait to see the surprise. She said, "Okay, well I think we have to go to the doctor. Your knee does not look very good". So, she put him in the car and they went to they doctor. When they got there, the doctor stitched up his knee and gave him a shot so there'd be no further infection. On the way home, he sat closely to his mother and cried a little more. When they reached home his mother said, "Don't forget, I have a special surprise for you". They went into the living room and there was a wrapped up package. As he opened it he totally forgot about his hurt knee. He opened it and it was a very special toy. He was so happy and all he could think of was, I have the toy and he never thought of his knee again.

In this story Tommy seeks out his Mom, his secure base, when he is hurt. Mom was waiting for Tommy to come home and went to him immediately when she saw he was hurt, comforting him and asking what happened. Mom explains that the knee doesn't look that good so they go off to the Doctor's. Tommy sits close to Mom as they go home because he is still upset from the Doctor's office. But when they arrive home and he gets the surprise that he had rushed home for, he was once again happy and back on track. This story has a good secure base script, receives a "6" because there is less exchange between Mom and child at the actual Doc's office.

The Doctor's Office - Scale score 5

It was bright and sunny day. Tommy decided to go outside to ride his bicycle. He put on his helmet, he got on his bike and started to ride up and down the block. His mother told him to be careful not to ride too fast so he doesn't get hurt. Tommy was riding up and down the block for a while without any problem and then he decided to be a little more adventurous and wound up hitting a curb and falling over. Tommy realized he was very hurt and started to cry. When his mother heard him crying she hurried out the door and picked him up. She realized that he had been hurt pretty bad and she should take him to the doctor. In the car on the way to the doctor Tommy asked his mother if he needed to get a shot. And Tommy's mother said, "Well, it would depend on how hurt you are." So on the way to the doctor they stopped at a store and bought Tommy a toy, just in case he needed a shot so he wouldn't cry. When they got to the doctor's office, the doctor decided that Tommy would need a shot, so his mother held him very close and told Tommy not to worry, that the shot would only hurt for a minute and as soon as it was over they would stop for ice cream on the way home.

This story has a solid secure base script. Mom begins with a warning that Tommy not ride too fast, and then hurries out when she hears him crying. When Tommy asks about whether he needed a shot, Mom explains that it depends. At the Doctor's office Mom does hold Tommy close and explain that the shot will only hurt for a moment. Mom also plans to stop by for ice cream afterwards to help Tommy get back on track. This story receives a "5" because there is less back-and-forth, less elaboration about the exchanges between Tommy and Mom. Although there is a sense that Tommy is going to be back on track, that is not laid out in detail.

The Doctor's Office - Scale score 4

One day little Tommy was out playing on his bicycle. He hit a rock and he fell and he got hurt. His mom was really upset because Tommy was crying and he scraped up his knees pretty badly and he banged his elbow, so his mom wanted to take him to the doctor to make sure that he was okay. She called up the doctor and luckily the doctor was able to see him in a hurry and she brought him right over. Tommy was crying, but by the time he got to the doctor he had calm down just a little bit. The doctor's office was really pleasant and they took Tommy in right away. The doctor looked over his wounds and cleaned everything up and he had to give Tommy a tetanus shot because he did fall where there was some metal and he wanted to make sure that Tommy wouldn't have a problem with that. So, he did give him a shot, which hurt and he was crying. His mom was holding him tight and hugging him and trying to distract him with a toy. The doctor told him that he had been a really good boy and gave him some stickers before he left. His mom gave him a big hug and took

him home.

This story presents the events as they occur with little direct interaction between Mom and Tommy. But there is some evidence of Mom's sensitivity to Tommy's state so the story receives a "4." The story at least reports on how Tommy begins to calm down a bit by the time they arrive at the Doctor's office. Mom does hold onto and hug Tommy during the Doctor's visit. Finally, after the Doctor phrases Tommy for being a really good boy, Mom adds another big hug.

The Doctor's Office - Scale score 3

One day Tommy and his mother were playing and he asked his mother if they could ride bikes. She said - "yeah sure, we'll go together and ride bikes." As they were riding, Tommy proceeded to go faster and he fell from his bike and got hurt. He was crying and he got cut. His mother said "let's go back, we'll go to the doctor." They rushed him to the doctor. He was crying and his leg had been badly hurt and when the doctor saw it they told him that he needed a shot. They told her that she had to hold him down. He was still crying. They gave him a shot so that he wouldn't get an infection and he stopped crying and he felt a little better. They gave him a toy to play with at the doctor's office. His mother told him that when he got better they could ride bikes again and that going to the doctor wasn't so bad. That the shot would help him and that he wouldn't get sick. Tommy was okay.

This story is event-focused. There is no consideration of Tommy's psychological state. Tommy is crying, but Mom doesn't do anything to calm him down. He stops crying when he starts to feel better. This is a "3."

The Doctor's Office - Scale score 2

One day after school Tommy was riding his bike. The bike slid in the sand and he got hurt. His mother hurried him to the doctor. He was crying a lot. The doctor gave him a shot that made him feel better. His mom then on the way home stopped quickly at a toy store and she bought him a toy.

This story is abbreviated with no elaboration. No secure base script.

The Doctor's Office - Scale score 2

One sunny afternoon after school there was a little boy named Tommy who was riding on his bike. He was racing up and down the block and as he was racing up and down the block he head into one of the other little boy's toys with his bike and the bicycle went flying in the air and he fell on the ground. It turns out that Tommy had gotten hurt and he started bleeding profusely from his mouth and it looks like he cut himself on the handle bars of his bike. He started to cry like anything. His mother had hurried on over to him to see what was wrong. She saw all the blood. She got so nervous, she picked him up and threw him in the car and they ran to the doctor's office. It turns out that he had knocked his tooth into his mouth when he went over on the handle bars. But there seemed to be a little rust that was on his handle bars so the doctor had wanted to give him a shot just in case, so he didn't get any kind of infections or anything like that. After the shot and after they saw that they had to do a couple of stitches to Tommy's lip. They put him back in the car and brought him on home. Tommy felt much better after that, within the next couple of days.

This story is event-focused, with an emphasis on describing Tommy's injuries. It receives a "2" because there is also some odd content. The reaction of mom to Tommy's injury is unusual. It focuses on the fact that Mom is nervous about the injury so she rushes Tommy to the doctor. She is described as picking him up and "throwing" him into the car. At no point does she try to address any upset that Tommy might be experiencing.

The Doctor's Office - Scale score 1

Tommy had run into the house because apparently he was riding his bicycle with his friend Billy and he fell down and got hurt. He ran in and said "Mother, Mother, Mother, I fell down and got hurt." She said "Let me see!" He lifts up his pants leg, only to discover that he is bleeding profusely and needs to go to the doctor. She's sure he needs stitches but she doesn't want to get him excited because she knows that he can't stand

needles so they says “oh, it should be nothing, but we’ll take you to the doctors just to get you cleaned up.”. He says, “Alright, alright, you know I don’t like to go to the doctors. She says, “Oh, it’ll be alright.”. They get there and the doctor says “Oh, it looks like you’re going to need shot, when was the last time you had your tetanus?” The Mother said, “Oh no, it’s been quite some time.”. He said “Alright, let me get the nurse and we’ll give you a tetanus shot.”. So he starts to cry. Mom’s upset because he’s all bloody and a mess. She says, “Alright, if you handle it like a big boy, I promise I’ll take you to the toy store.”. He says, “Well, would you buy me the toy that I’ve been wanting?”. She said, “Well, depending on how you are at the doctor’s office, sure.”. He says, “Well, would you do me one other favor?”. She said, “Yeah.”. He said, “Would you hold my hand.”. She said, “Sure, I’ll hold your hand.”. He said, “Will you hold my hand until the pain stops.”. So she says, “I promise.”. That’s what she did. She held his hand until the pain stopped. He stopped crying and they went to the toy store when it was all over and he got the toy that he wanted and everybody was happy in the end.

This is a very unusual story in that Mom seems to be focused on how keep things from getting too unpleasant for her. She begins by lying to Tommy about the Doctor’s office because he doesn’t like needles and if he thought that he needed a shot he would become excited. However, when the doctor tells Tommy that he needs a shot, Mom does not focus her attention on Tommy who may be upset about this. She is too upset that he is all bloody and a mess. So she tries to offer him try to handle the shot like a big boy. That prompts a very unusual exchange in which Tommy negotiates for his preferred toy, and furthermore negotiates for getting Mom to hold his hand.

Prompt Word Outline 3: Jane and Bob’s Camping Trip

Jane	tent	campfire
Bob	wind	shadow
bags	collapse	sounds
hurry	upset	hug

In this attachment story, there are several opportunities for secure base content to appear as Jane and Bob encounter various difficulties and have to jointly negotiate their way through them. Many of the stories begin with differing degrees of enthusiasm for this camping trip, usually with Jane deciding she will go along because of Bob’s interest in the trip. This is scored as secure base content because of the sensitivity to the other’s psychological state/needs and because it involves a give-an-take between the two partners. As the story continues there are additional difficulties in which one partner becomes upset, i.e., the tent collapses, the weather turns bad, and there are strange sounds at night. Each of these difficulties is an opportunity to score secure base content, i.e., sensitivity to the other’s psychological state, and recognizing the need to negotiate a solution that addresses the other’s needs, as well as one’s own. An important component of the secure base content in these exchanges is an effort by one partner to look on the bright side of the situation, recasting the experience in a positive light and diffusing the negative affect. Bringing the story to a positive conclusion in spite of all the difficulties, with Bob and Jane reaffirming their affection for one another is also a hallmark of the secure base script in this story.

Examples of Secure Base Content from Jane and Bob’s Camping Trip

1) the secure base helping to select and implement strategies for getting things back to normal and defusing the emotional distress, when that is possible, or avoiding distress altogether by facilitating transitions to other activities (for a baby or child) and providing explanatory frameworks to help understand the situation (for young child)

e.g., “And now Jane is like, “Bob, come on. It’s time for the hotel, we gotta get out of here.” And he

explains to her, “You know, we can reset this up. If you really want to go to a hotel we can, but we really wanted to get away from just all the people and the commotion, and the confusion.” And she says, “Well, all right. If you really feel we can recover this and make it okay.” (secure base offers strategy to make everything work out)

- 2) the secure base reconfiguring the person’s representation to focus on more positive aspects, thereby diffusing the negative emotion. This often involves pointing out the “bright” side of a situation.

e.g., “After they got the tent set up (after it had collapsed), they worked together to get it set up, and Jane was really enjoying herself. She told Bob that it was more that they were together than where they actually took their vacation” (Jane focuses on positive aspect of experience, in part because she knows that Bob is concerned about how things went badly early on)

e.g., “And the wind started to howl like those coyotes and those wolves, and the tent started flapping around. It flapped so hard that it collapsed right on top of Jane and Bob. And Jane was so upset that their anniversary trip was ruined. But Bob looked at her, gave her a big hug and said, “Don’t worry honey, this will be an anniversary to remember.” (Bob recasts experience into positive terms)

e.g., “Actually they were telling ghost stories and Jane happened to see a shadow and hear sounds which Bob didn’t hear. But she started to panic. But Bob hugged her and said, “It’s okay. There’s nothing, it’s your imagination. Don’t let it run away with you. And she said, “You know, you’re right.” (Bob provides interpretation that diffuses negative affect)

- 3) an interpersonal focus, that is, a sensitivity to and awareness of the other person’s psychological/emotional state. The content of secure base narratives focuses on the interaction between the two individuals rather than simply describing the sequence of events in the story. The secure base responds to requests, cues from child/partner, modifying their own behavior as a consequence. There is give-and-take, with each partner making their own unique contribution to the situation, activity, but working together “as a team.” There is also emotional give-and-take with an expressed emotion in one leading to an emotional response in the other.

e.g., “And of course now (after telling scary campfire stories), every little twig that is out there starts to drive her crazy, cause of course now, it’s this monster or that monster coming through. He reassures her that it’s a fox or whatever, although in his mind, he’s thinking, well it could be a bear, but you don’t tell her that.” (sensitivity to other’s psychological state)

e.g., “The sounds of the cricket and the wind in the leaves were all very romantic, and Jane agreed that this was the perfect vacation. Bob thanked Jane for agreeing to come, and Jane thanked Bob for showing her that camping could be a good vacation as long as they were together. The night ended with a big hug and they went into their tent. (emotional give-and-take, a team)

Jane and Bob’s Camping Trip - Scale score 7

Jane and Bob couldn’t decide where to take their yearly vacation. Jane wanted to go to a beach resort, but Bob had his heart set on camping. He couldn’t convince Jane to change her mind. He brought home brochures and used his best tactics to convince her. Jane just couldn’t get used to the idea of not having all the amenities she was used to. Finally she gave in, because she knew it was Bob’s true desire. He packed their bags in a hurry before she could change her mind. When they got to the campsite Bob set up the tent. They went for a long stroll in the woods and when it was time for dinner they set back for their tent. The weather began to change very quickly. The wind kicked up and the sky grew dark. Jane was very frightened. They went into the tent to take shelter because the rain was coming down hard. Bob did his best to comfort Jane. With one very strong wind, the tent collapsed right on top of them. Bob was more upset because the camping trip was not what he had promised Jane that it would be. They ran to the nearest shelter and soon the weather became nicer. Bob was apologizing to Jane that he would make everything right, and he promised himself that he would make it right for her, because she had agreed to come. After they got the tent set up ... they worked together to set it up, and Jane was really enjoying herself. She told Bob that it was more that they were together than where they actually took their vacation. As the night went on, they had a roaring campfire, and they toasted marshmallows, and just sat beside each other. The shadow of the fire cast a warm glow on the camp-

site. The sounds of the crickets and the wind in the leaves were all very romantic, and Jane agreed that this was the perfect vacation. Bob thanked Jane for agreeing to come, and Jane thanked Bob for showing her that camping could be a good vacation as long as they were together. The night ended with a big hug and they went into their tent.

This receives a "7" because of the joint support that they give each other and the sensitivity each has for the concerns and perspective of the other. Bob thanks Jane for being willing to come on this trip, and appreciates the value of being together regardless of where they go for a vacation.

Jane and Bob's Camping Trip - Scale score 6

Jane and Bob decided to go on a camping trip. The thing was that this was the first camping trip they had every gone on. Bob's been on one or two camping trips but he's not very good at putting up the tent or setting up a campfire or anything like that. Jane really wanted to go and Bob wanted to make Jane happy. They're off to Pennsylvania and when they went it ended up being a very windy day so they were trying to put up their tent and they trying to hurry about it because it seemed like it was going to rain. The clouds started coming in. They put up the tent. It took them about a half hour to forty five minutes. Then this gush of wind came and the whole tent collapsed. They obviously didn't have it set up properly. Jane was getting pretty upset and Bob was getting a little annoyed because he just couldn't do it and he wasn't really good at this and he really wanted to go for a weekend at a hotel and go watch the leaves turn since it was the fall time. So Jane said to Bob, let's just regroup, let me give you a hug and let's see if we can try to do this together. Off they went, over to the tent to try to put it up. They got it up, it looked all solid and everything. All the wind was coming and the sound of the wind and rain started coming so they ran inside their tent and it seemed like it was holding up pretty well. They ended up staying there most of the night because it was raining outside and couldn't really set up a campfire because it kept getting wet every time they tried it. So, in the morning, after the rain had passed and it seemed like it was a gorgeous day, they set up a beautiful campfire and they ended up going fishing. They made a nice breakfast and enjoyed the rest of their weekend.

This receives a "6" because there is the type of give-and-take and concern for the other's point of view/psychological state that we expect in the secure base script for this story. Bob goes along because Jane really wants to go camping. When Bob gets upset that things aren't going well, Jane comforts Bob, and suggests they regroup and try (together) to make it work. In the end they enjoy the weekend. It's a good script story but there is less elaboration than a "7."

Jane and Bob's Camping Trip - Scale score 5

Jane and Bob wanted to spend another anniversary going someplace special. They decided the usual trips to Hawaii, the Caribbean and Colorado skiing were getting a little bit boring, so they decided to go camping. They planned this wonderful trip to go camping at the eastern end of Long Island. They did a lot of shopping before they went away. They shopped at the Price Club and Sam's Club and bought bags and bags of all the food and accessories that they would need. When they got there it was getting dark and windy and they needed to set up the tent. Because they never camped before, they really didn't know how to do this, but did the best they could. Soon, it was the middle of the night, the wind was picking up, and then all of a sudden, the tent collapsed. Refusing to get upset because this was a nice vacation, they just sat there and laughed over the situation and were able to get the tent back up. Most of the camping trip involved eating and sitting around the camp fire. They enjoyed sitting by the camp fire and found it very relaxing. They liked to watch the shadow of the flame and enjoyed listening to the sounds of the fire crackling and wood burning. It was a very relaxing place for them to be. Every night before they went to bed they would put out the camp fire (for safety reasons). On the way back home, they embraced in a big hug and agreed that this was one of the more memorable experiences that they had for an anniversary vacation.

This story receives a "5." There is less give-and-take between the two but both Bob and Jane take on the disruptions of the trip with a positive slant and a commitment to make sure this trip is enjoyable. They don't let the negative events take over. So they refuse to get upset and laugh about the situation. At the end they hug and agree this was a memorable experience, casting the trip in positive terms for the both of them.

Jane and Bob's Camping Trip - Scale score 4

Jane and Bob had planned a big camping trip for the end of August and they planned it since the springtime. They had planned to go, Bob got the bags out of the attic and they both packed their things. It took them a lot longer than they thought and they were in a hurry to get going and have a good time. Bob put the tent on top of the car on the way to the camping site. He didn't tie it on too good and the wind took it away. That also happened when Jane put the tent up at the camping site. There was gusty winds and when Jane was trying to get it all together it collapsed. This made her very upset, but Bob consoled her. Once that was done they had a big laugh about it. They set up the campfire to cook some dinner. After dinner the campfire was roaring. Bob and Jane sat around talking and cuddling. Jane saw a shadow and heard some sounds. They went to investigate and it happen to be a raccoon rummaging through the garbage. They were so relieved that it was just a raccoon that they gave each other a hug.

This receives a "4" because there is some evidence of a secure base script. When Jane became upset, Bob does console her and they have a laugh about it. They do investigate the sounds in the woods, but its described in a very matter of fact kind of way. Nonetheless they give each other a hug when they are so relieved that its just a raccoon.

Jane and Bob's Camping Trip - Scale score 3

Jane and Bob Smith decided on a windy afternoon in October to go camping for the weekend. Jane and Bob didn't have any children and were free to go away for the entire weekend all by themselves. Jane and Bob hardly packed all their bags, through in their sleeping bags, took the propane stove and quickly stopped at the super market for some stuff to throw on the barbecue. They loaded up the explorer with the tent and propane tank and the lantern and away they went into the woods. Once they got there it was starting to get dark. It was starting to rain and starting to get very windy. Jane and Bob tried and tried to get the tent up, but every time it kept collapsing. Bob thought this was incredibly funny, and Jane was very very upset. Eventually, they got the tent standing, they laid out their sleeping bags and started their camp fire. The rain had stopped and they made a beautiful fire. They took out their hot dogs and marshmallows and roasted away. While they were roasting they could see the shadows of the fire dancing on the ground next to where the camp fire was out and it just looked like two people dancing and dancing and dancing. As they got intrigued by that, they could hear the sounds of the firing crackling while there marshmallows and hot dogs cooked. They were so happy with their pretty camping trip that they gave each other a big big hug and then had a feast of hot dogs and marshmallows.

This story is event-focused,giving an event by event account of the camping trip. When things go bad, Bob thinks its funny, and Jane is very upset. This doesn't prompt any awareness on Bob's part of Jane's state. They just move on to the next step, setting things up for the camp fire. The hug at the end seems there mainly because of the word prompts, not the usual reaction to the scary sounds, etc. Consequently the story receives a "3" reflecting its event-focused framework.

Jane and Bob's Camping Trip - Scale score 2

Jane and Bob went camping. They were in a hurry to get up their tent because the wind started blowing quick. All of a sudden the tent collapsed and they got very upset, so Bob hugged Jane and then they built a campfire. Jane got scared because then she heard some sounds and she saw a shadow.

This story receives a "2" because of its brevity. As a consequence it's also a bit disjointed.

Jane and Bob's Camping Trip - Scale score 2

Jane and Bob went camping. But they were a little late because they had to work late, so they were in a hurry. So when they got to the campsite, they put up their tent really fast, which when the wind came, it collapsed. Jane got upset, and Bob fixed the tent. And pretty soon they were having a nice camp fire, telling stories. And then they went in their sleeping bags to sleep, but they heard some sounds, and they saw shadows and they got scared. Turns out it was just the wind again, and this time the tent stayed up. And they had a good time and they fell asleep.

This story receives a “2” because not only is it a relatively short story, but also it contains some odd content. The distress noted in the story line is never addressed. Jane becomes upset, and Bob fixes the tent, but there is no connection between the events. Bob doesn’t seem aware of Jane’s state. When they get scared, neither one tries to comfort the other.

Jane and Bob’s Camping Trip - Scale score 1

Jane and Bob were getting ready to go on their camping trip. Jane had all the bags packed and Bob was still not home. By the time he got home, he was late and Jane was hurrying him to put the bags into the truck and off they went. When they got to the camp site they were already late and the sun was going down. They put the tent up in a hurry. Since they didn’t secure all of the poles, when the wind came the whole tent collapsed and Jane was very upset because there was no reason that Bob should have been late to begin with. After they finished putting the tent back up they built a camp fire. The camp fire made funny shadows around the ground and the sounds of the wild animals made Jane afraid. She gave Bob a big hug to try calm herself down.

This story receives a “1” because of the theme-based focus on Bob’s lateness and the odd ending in which Jane gives Bob a hug to try to calm herself down. Jane starts out angry that Bob is late coming home. This point is reiterated when they arrive at the camp site and the sun is already going down. We hear again about Bob’s lateness when the tent collapses. Then, once again we have a very peculiar ending in which Bob does not comfort Jane when she becomes frightened, but Jane gives Bob a hug in an effort to calm herself down.

Prompt Word Outline 4 The Accident

Sue	wait	home
road	Mike	dinner
accident	tears	bed
hospital	doctor	hug

In this attachment story, the crisis situation involves an accident and a trip to the hospital. Secure base content is scored when there is some substance to the reunion, with the partner expressing concern about the well-being of the injured party, and trying to make them feel better about what has happened. As Mike and Sue go home there is an additional opportunity to score secure base content vis-a-vis the partner’s efforts at getting things back to normal. Thinking of ways to make the injured person comfortable, helping them settle into bed, etc. would all be scored positively. Stories that follow a secure base script provide many more details about the partner’s efforts, in effect emphasizing the importance of helping to get things back to normal.

The key feature of “Accident” stories that follow a secure base script however is an emphasis on how this experience reflects upon the personal relationship between the two characters. It is less a story about an accident, and more a story about an experience that brings the two closer together, remind-ing them about how important they are to one another.

Examples of Secure Base Content from The Accident

- 1) the secure base helping to select and implement strategies for getting things back to normal and defusing the emotional distress, when that is possible, or avoiding distress altogether by facilitating transitions to other activities (for a baby or child) and providing explanatory frameworks to help understand the situation (for young child)

e.g., She was relaxing and resting, still in quite a bit of pain. But around dinner time, Mike gave her her medication. She ate dinner, was feeling a little better after that. But Mike carried her up the

stairs to bed, laid her down, propped her up with some pillows, made her nice and comfortable, and gave her a big hug (secure base implements series of steps to make Sue feel better, helping to get things back to normal)

e.g., "When Mike arrived, Sue had tears in her eyes because she was very shaken by the accident. The doctor said "There's nothing to be worried about. Everything will be okay. Sue will just need to have some rest and relaxation for the next few days." So Mike went over to his wife, gave her a really big hug, and said, "Why don't we go home honey?" (secure base comforts Sue, recognizing she needs the comforting, and then initiates the next step to getting things back to normal, going home)

- 2) the secure base reconfiguring the person's representation to focus on more positive aspects, thereby diffusing the negative emotion. This often involves pointing out the "bright" side of a situation.

e.g., "Sue and Mike looked at the unprepared dinner on the counter and it reminded them how precious life is, and that things can take a turn immediately, without warning. With this on their mind they went to bed early and thought of how fortunate they were that everything turned out okay. They fell asleep and because they realized their lives were so full they never even thought about dinner. (accident experience is recast in relationship terms)

e.g., And on the way home, Sue remembered that all the food for dinner was in her car that was towed away to the repair shop. Seeing as they had nothing in the house to eat, they both made a big bag of popcorn, and they had a can of KoolAid that was left over in the refrigerator. Afterwards they went to bed and Sue said, "I'm so sorry. I planned this really big dinner for you." And Mike just gave her a really big hug, and said, "The best kind of gift I have is you, home safe with me." (dinner disaster is recast in positive relationship terms)

- 3) an interpersonal focus, that is, a sensitivity to and awareness of the other person's psychological/emotional state. The content of secure base narratives focuses on the interaction between the two individuals rather than simply describing the sequence of events in the story. The secure base responds to requests, cues from child/partner, modifying their own behavior as a consequence. There is give-and-take, with each partner making their own unique contribution to the situation, activity, but working together "as a team." There is also emotional give-and-take with an expressed emotion in one leading to an emotional response in the other.

e.g., "Sue was a little groggy right now, and still very upset and shaken from the accident. As soon as she saw Mike she went into tears. "Oh, I can't believe I did this. This is so bad. I feel terrible. I didn't realize how tired I was (in this story, Sue nodded at the wheel)." Mike said, "We're just lucky that you're okay, and that the gentleman in the truck is fine." (emotional give-and-take, Sue breaks down, now that her secure base is here, and Mike reassures her that everyone is fine)

The Accident - Scale score 7

Sue was driving home early one morning, after getting off at her rounds at the hospital. She was a little tired when she got in the car, but figured she was okay to drive, once she hit the nice cool air. So, she got in her car and proceeded on her way home. She was driving down the road, and believes to have nodded off a little bit behind the wheel and causing an accident at an intersection. She had hit a truck, a morning delivery man making his rounds. And she was hurt, and the gentleman in the truck that she had hit on his side was okay. He called an ambulance, and an ambulance came from the hospital where Sue had just got off at her rounds. And the ambulance picked her up and took her to the hospital. She had a one broken rib, and a little bruised up, but she was going to be okay. She was put in a room to wait for a doctor to see her. And while she was waiting a nurse came in and took all of her information and told her she would call her husband Mike. So she called and within a half an hour Mike was at the hospital. Sue was a little groggy right now, and still very upset and shaken from the accident. As soon as she saw Mike she went into tears. "Oh, I can't believe I did this. This is so bad. I feel terrible. I didn't realize how tired I was." Mike said, "We're just lucky that you're okay, and the gentleman in the truck is fine. He's been looked at already and he's fine." So Sue was being pretty

hard on herself. She thought ‘I can’t believe that this happened to me. That I did this, I caused this accident.’ But the doctor came in and prescribed some medication for Sue. It actually had been a colleague of hers who had come in to see her and was glad she was okay. And said “Sue, go home. Take a couple of days, rest up. You’ll be back to work in no time, but you need to rest. It’s going to take a while for that broken rib to heal”. So after a few hours, Mike was able to take her home and on the way home, they stopped to pick up her medication. By the time they had gotten home, it was getting close to dinner. It was late afternoon and Mike was fixing dinner and Sue was laying on the couch. She was relaxing and resting, still in quite a bit of pain. But around dinner time, Mike gave her her medication. She ate dinner, was feeling a little better after that. But Mike carried her up the stairs to bed, laid her down, propped her up with some pillows, made her nice and comfortable, and gave her a big hug and was just so glad that she was okay. And she was just glad to be home.

In this story there is a detailed reunion at the hospital that reflects good secure base content. Sue expresses her distress to Mike and he talks to her providing some perspective and comfort. When he brings her home he makes sure that she is well taken care of, giving her her medicine, cooking dinner, and making sure she is comfortable in bed afterwards. The story ends with Mike expressing how happy that Sue is ok and she’s just happy to be home. All the components of the secure base script for the Accident story are evident in this story. It’s a “7.”

The Accident - Scale score 6

It was a cold and rainy night and Sue was driving on the road in her old Volvo. It was hard to see because the rain was coming down so fast and she drove on a slick road. All of a sudden, she saw a stop sign that was blocked by a tree that was waving in the wind. She slammed on the breaks, but it was too late, “Crash”. She skidded along and crashed into a fire hydrant. She had a big bump on her head and her car was a wreck. All of a sudden she heard sirens coming. “Oh good”, she said, “Someone must have seen it and called it in on their car phone.” The ambulance came up, checked her out, and decided to take her to the hospital, just to make sure she was okay. When she got there, she was waiting in the emergency room for her husband to come. She had the ambulance drivers call him to let him know what happened. Her husband, Mike, showed up. He was in tears. “Are you okay, are you okay?”, he said. Sue smiled through her bruised face. “I’m okay, I’m really glad we bought a Volvo. It really is true what they say about the cripple zone.” Doctor came over to her and checked her out. He checked her eyes to make sure she didn’t have a concussion. He said, “Well you’re not gonna look too pretty for awhile, but we’re sending you home. You’ll be okay. I just want you to stay in bed for a few days and rest up. Then you’ll be as good as new”. Mike took his wife home, put her in bed and made her some chicken soup for dinner. He gave her a big hug and said, “I’m so glad you’re alright. I don’t know what I would have done without you.” Sue said, “I’m glad I’m okay too. I’m going to be much more careful in the future”. The two of them just spent the rest of the evening watching videos and being thankful that they were together.

This story receives a “6” because it has a good secure base script. It has a reunion at the hospital in which Mike expresses his concern, and Sue says she’s ok. At home, Mike puts Sue in bed and cooks dinner. They end the story by expressing how grateful they both are that everything is ok and that they are together. All of the components of the script are in this story as well, but there is a bit less elaboration. The reunion at the hospital is a bit more focused on how lucky Sue is for driving a Volvo, than on how she/Mike feel about the accident.

The Accident - Scale score 5

Sue went out for a ride on the motorcycle one day. She took motorcycle safety courses and she knew all the rules of the roads and how to watch out for the other cars that didn’t pay attention to motorcycles, people on bicycles and people walking. She made sure she was seen. As she was driving down the road she sees an accident. What happened was that two cars pulled out at the same time and hit each other. Sue got scared. She tried to stop her motorcycle but she didn’t quite stop and she went off the road and had an accident into the grass. The accident of the two cars happened right in front of her. An ambulance came and took the people from the cars to the hospital and Sue wound up going to the hospital too. The ambulance crew wasn’t sure if she was okay or not. Sue went to the hospital and they had to wait for a while in the emergency room. They

asked her who to call. She said - Call Mike, he'll know what to do. So the hospital people called Mike and Mike came to get her and see if she was okay. But Sue wasn't okay. She cried a lot and had tears in her eyes when Mike showed up. The doctor talked to her and said - It's okay Sue, you just have a broken arm and it's just fine. The doctor fixed Sue's broken arm and then Mike drove her home and they had a nice dinner of chicken soup, to make Sue feel better. Mike tucked Sue into bed and gave her a big hug and Sue said she would be very careful next time she went out riding.

In this story Sue asks for Mike because he'll know what to do. She seeks out her "secure base." Mike does his part. He takes her home, and they have chicken soup to make Sue feel better. Mike goes on to tuck her in and give her a big hug. She says that she'll be more careful next time. Things are back on track. The story has a secure base script but less elaboration than a "7" or "6."

The Accident - Scale score 4

Early one spring morning, Sue decided to go out for a bike ride. She always rode in the woods, close to the house. So she had her helmet on and she was riding for about an hour when her bike hit a huge rock and threw her from the bicycle and she smashed her head on a tree stump. Along came another biker that immediately decided to get her some doctor's attention, so he called 911, and an ambulance came and took her to the hospital. She went in to see the doctor. She was very upset and a little bit disoriented because she had smashed her head. Her husband Mike had been notified and went to the Emergency room also. He was waiting in the waiting room while the doctor's checked Sue out. He finally got to go in and see how she was, and the doctor said that there was no concussion, just a bad bump on the head and that he could take her home. So they left the hospital shortly after that, went home, had some soup, something mild to eat, and Sue was still pretty shaken up so he was comforting her, giving her some hugs and kisses, and making her comfortable in bed, and then they went to sleep.

This story has less elaboration and detail about the interaction between Mike and Sue. There is little in the way of a reunion at the hospital. However once they are home Mike does take steps to comfort Sue, not only giving her something to eat but giving her hugs and kisses. His concern about Sue's welfare, expressed at the end of the story gives this story a "4." There is some secure base content.

The Accident - Scale score 3

One day Susie was out driving on her way to Home Depot and she came upon an accident. She was looking at it as she passed by and couldn't believe what had happened. While being distracted as she passed by the accident she didn't realize that there was a car stopped in front of her and she got into an accident. The ambulance was called and Susie was taken to the hospital. Waiting in the waiting room was Mike, her boyfriend. He was not sure what was wrong with Sue, so he was crying in the waiting room. The doctor came up to him and told him what was wrong with Susie. She was fine, she just needed a couple of stitches and shots. After she was all done, Mike took her home, made her a special dinner, gave her a hug, and put her to bed.

This is an event-focused story with little psychological content, and nothing much in the way of interaction between Mike and Sue. The story is a "3."

The Accident - Scale score 2

One day Mike was driving home from work. Sue was waiting for him at home. Sue was making dinner as usual and was wondering what was taking Mike so long to get home. Mike was in an accident. He drove off the road. Mike was rushed to the hospital and tears came to Sue's eyes when she got the phone call. She went to the hospital and the doctor said he would be fine and that he could go home and rest in bed. She was so happy she hugged the doctor and they went home.

This story receives a "2" because of the combination of the relative brief presentation and some odd content. It is event-focused so its going to be a "3" or less. But it's also a bit brief and has an odd ending in which Sue directs her attention to the doctor, not Mike. It's the doctor she hugs. So it's a "2."

The Accident - Scale score 2

Sue had an accident on the road. She went into the hospital. Mike was waiting there for her. He was crying. The doctor said that she would be okay and Mike took her home. He made her dinner and put her to bed and gave her a hug.

This story receives a "2" because of its brevity.

The Accident - Scale score 1

This is the accident that I wanted to tell you about, that involved Sue and Mike, well actually, it just involved Sue. Sue should not have been on the road that night. I mean, after 'Happy Hour' she was totally smashed. She should not have been driving. But she insisted on getting on the road. So, let her go. Of course, she got in an accident. We all knew that this would happen, it wasn't even a surprise. I got the call from the hospital, and she wanted me to just wait where I was, and not go to the hospital, so I can let Mike know when he got home. So I was waiting, and Mike finally came home. I told him. He ran up to the hospital. I mean I know her and she was just, when I spoke to her on the phone, she was just tearing, tears, I mean I could just hear the tears in her voice. Then I heard that Mike was able to go up and speak to the doctor, and really everything was fine. She just really got shaken up during the accident. So they came home to my house that night. I made dinner, everything was good, she was relaxed. They went to bed. I mean that's when Mike came down and just gave me a big hug to say thanks for everything I did for them.

This storyline has some unusual twists and turns. The story teller intrudes into the story, but the point at which this story receives a "1" for significant "odd" content is when it turns out that it's the third person in the story who provides comfort for Sue and for Mike. She's the one who makes the dinner for Sue, so she can relax. And she is the person whom Mike thanks. Mike and Sue never interact, but Mike has the time to give this third person a big hug.

IV. Neutral Stories – Prototypic Script Rankings

Two neutral prompt word outlines were also developed to guide story productions about non-attachment scenarios, one involved a child and her friend (Trip to Park), the other an adult and her friend (An Afternoon Shopping). For each story there was an implied script that guided the rankings of story versions produced from these outlines. For "Trip to the Park" it was a standard, two little girls go the park and play script. The temporal/behavioral sequencing of the script, as implied by the prompt word outline is as follows: two little girls ride to the park, play on the swings, in the sandbox, run around, become tired, sit down, read comics and have a coke, and then go home. For "An Afternoon Shopping" it was the standard "mall" script. The temporal/behavioral sequencing of the script is as follows: two friends drive to the mall, browse among the stores, buy a small gift, decide they are hungry, sit down to eat and talk, and then go home.

High scoring stories were those that followed each script without deviations or unusual content, focusing only on filling in the details as appropriate to the particular script. Somewhat lower scored stories followed the implied script, but with increasingly less detail, i.e., a more or less abbreviated version of the script, a "bare bones" rendition. Stories scored even lower were those that deviated from the script. In some cases it was just some unusual/less typical content, in other cases there was a redirection of the script (e.g., two little girls go to the park and pretend they are mommies, or two friends go to the mall to try on new clothes in celebration of a successful diet).

The following two pages present each prompt word outline of the two neutral stories. Sample stories that span the range from highly scripted to abbreviated scripts to those with unusual content and redirection of the script are available upon request. The neutral stories are part of the narrative battery in order to provide breadth in the story lines and prevent subjects from zeroing in on the intent of the assessment. Scores on the "Park" or "Mall" scripts are not highly correlated with the secure base script scores and we do not recommend that these stories be scored.

E. Trip to Park

Susie	swings	tired
bike	sandbox	bench
park	game	comics
friend	run	coke

As indicated above the Trip to Park story line follows a standard script in which two girls ride their bikes to the park and play for a while until they become tired and sit down with some cokes and comics.

F. An Afternoon Shopping

Emily	browse	hungry
car	buy	food
mall	money	talk
friend	gift	home

As indicated above the Afternoon Shopping story line follows a standard script in which two friends drive to the mall, browse through the stores for a while, then buy a small gift, and sit down to eat and talk when they become tired, and then go home.