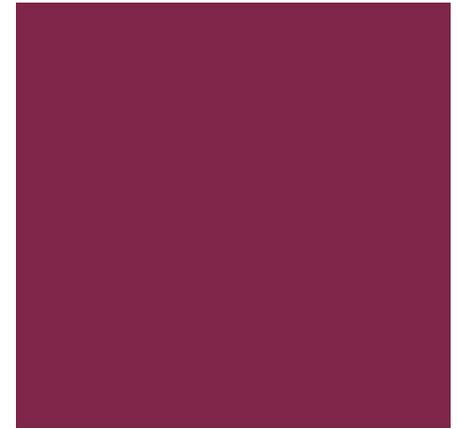




Adventist
Health Ministries



understanding

ATTACHMENT

Torben Bergland, MD | Health Ministries director

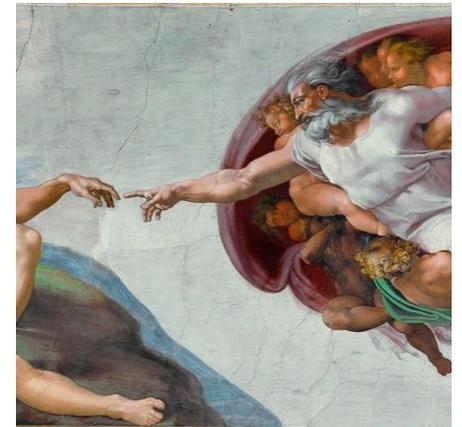
General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists | Trans-European Division



God

Genesis 2:18 (NIV UK)

18 The Lord God said, 'It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.'





eden ahbez

Nature Boy, 1947

“The greatest thing you'll ever learn,
Is just to love and be loved in return.”





The Perks of Being a Wallflower

We accept the love we think we deserve



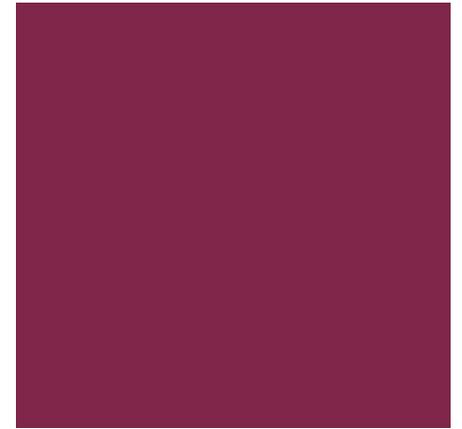


John Bowlby

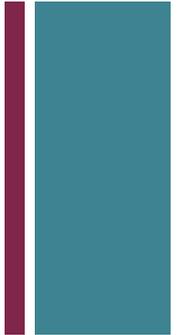
Attachment theory

Developed by the British psychiatrist and psychoanalyst John Bowlby (1907-1990).

A psychological model that attempts to describe the dynamics of long-term and short-term interpersonal relationships.

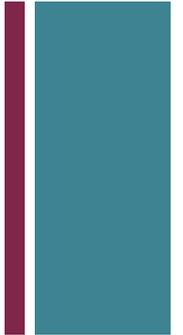


+ Attachment theory



- *Attachment theory regards the propensity to make intimate emotional bonds to particular individuals as a basic component of human nature, already present in germinal form in the neonate and continuing through adult life into old age." (Bowlby, J. (1988). A secure base, pp. 120–121)*
- People are biologically driven to form attachments with others.
- The quality of early attachments influence the child's emotional and social development, as well as future relationships and mental health.

+ Attachment theory



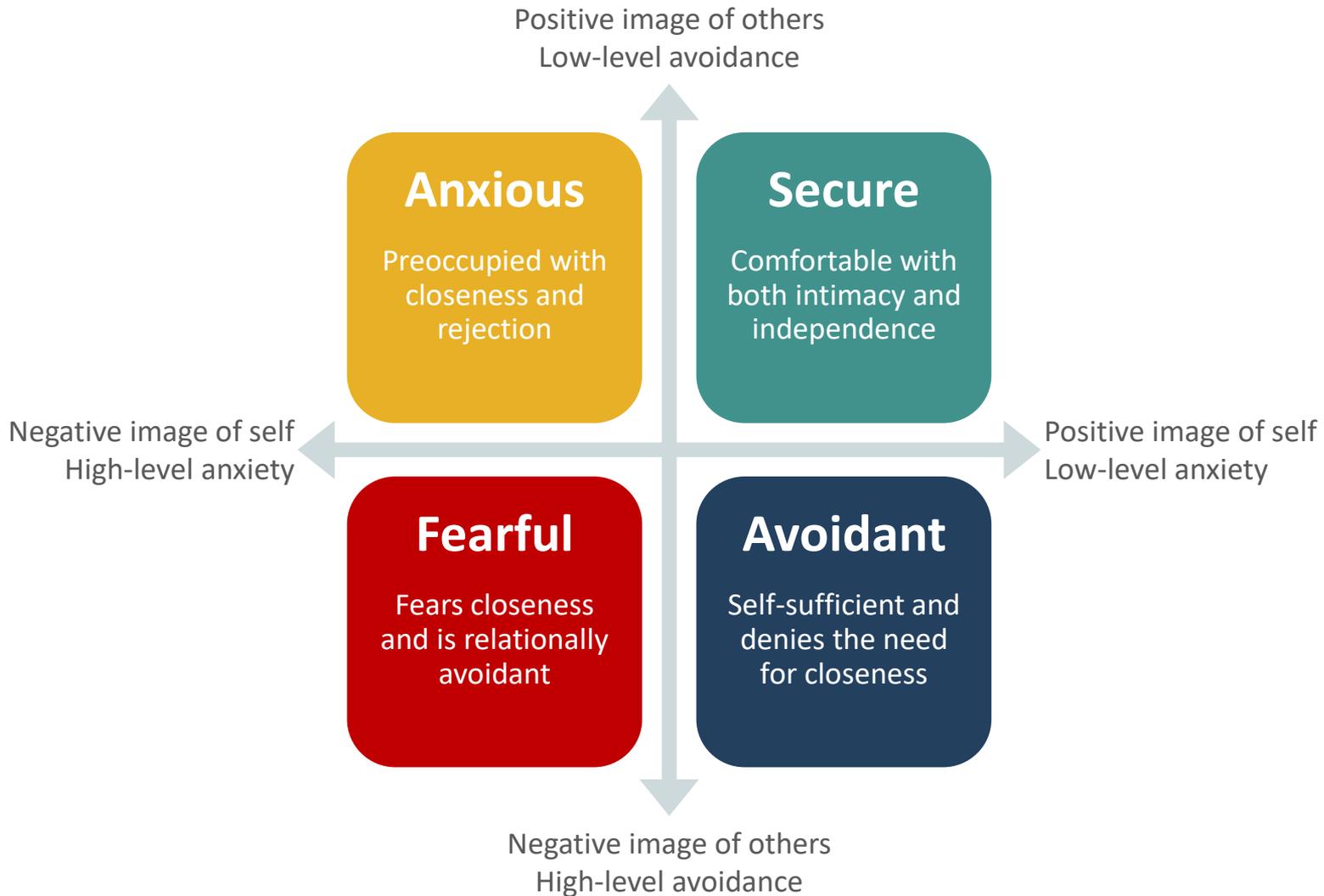
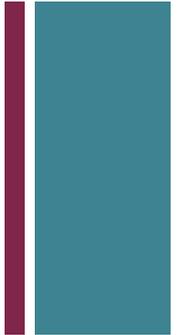
- Adult attachment behaviour is a reflection of the expectations and beliefs people have formed about themselves and others through previous attachment experiences.
- The "working models", or images of self and others in relationships, are relatively stable.
- These images of self and others in relationship are necessary to interpret the present reality, predict what might happen in the future, and choose an appropriate behaviour.

Children develop internal images of self and others in relationship which become models for interaction with others in adulthood

	Fundamental relational beliefs	Typical assumptions	Relational consequence
Positive image of self	Believes in one's self-worth and lovability	"I am worth being loved"	→ Low-level relational anxiety
Negative image of self	Distrusts one's self-worth and lovability	"I have to deserve the love of others" "I have to make myself lovable"	→ High-level relational anxiety
Positive image of others	Believes in other's ability and capacity to give the love one needs	"Other people are willing and able to love me and they are available when I need them"	→ Low-level avoidance
Negative image of others	Distrusts others' ability and capacity to give the love one needs	"I cannot trust others, but have to take care of myself and manage on my own" "The ones who should love me hurt and reject me"	→ High-level avoidance



Attachment in adults



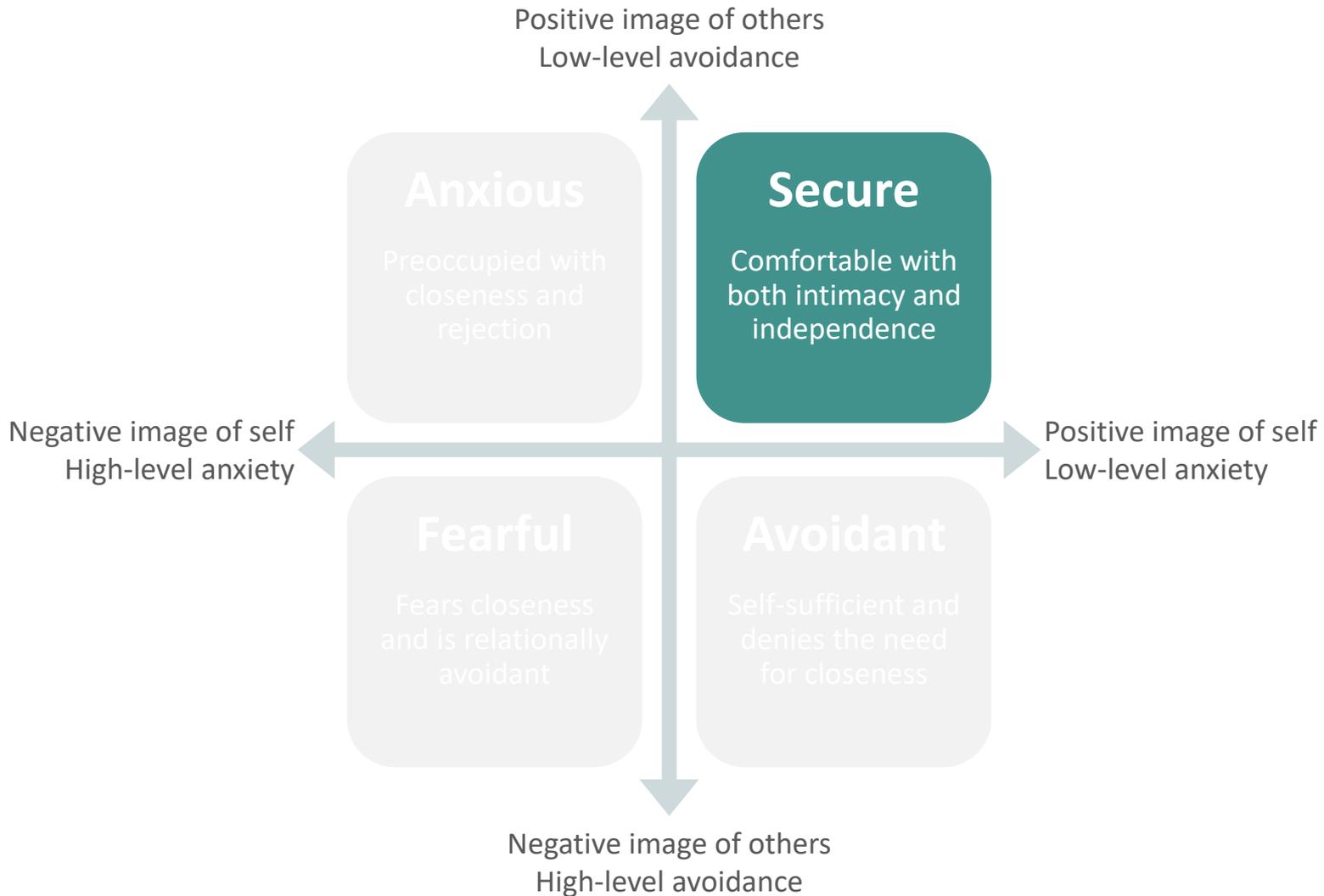
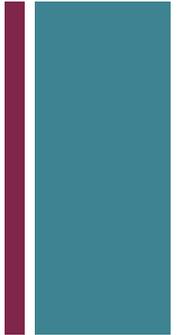
+ Attachment in adults

Prevalence

Style	Prevalence
Secure	55-65 %
Anxious	10-15 %
Avoidant	20-30 %
Fearful	5-15 %



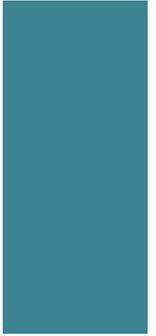
Attachment in adults



+ Secure attachment

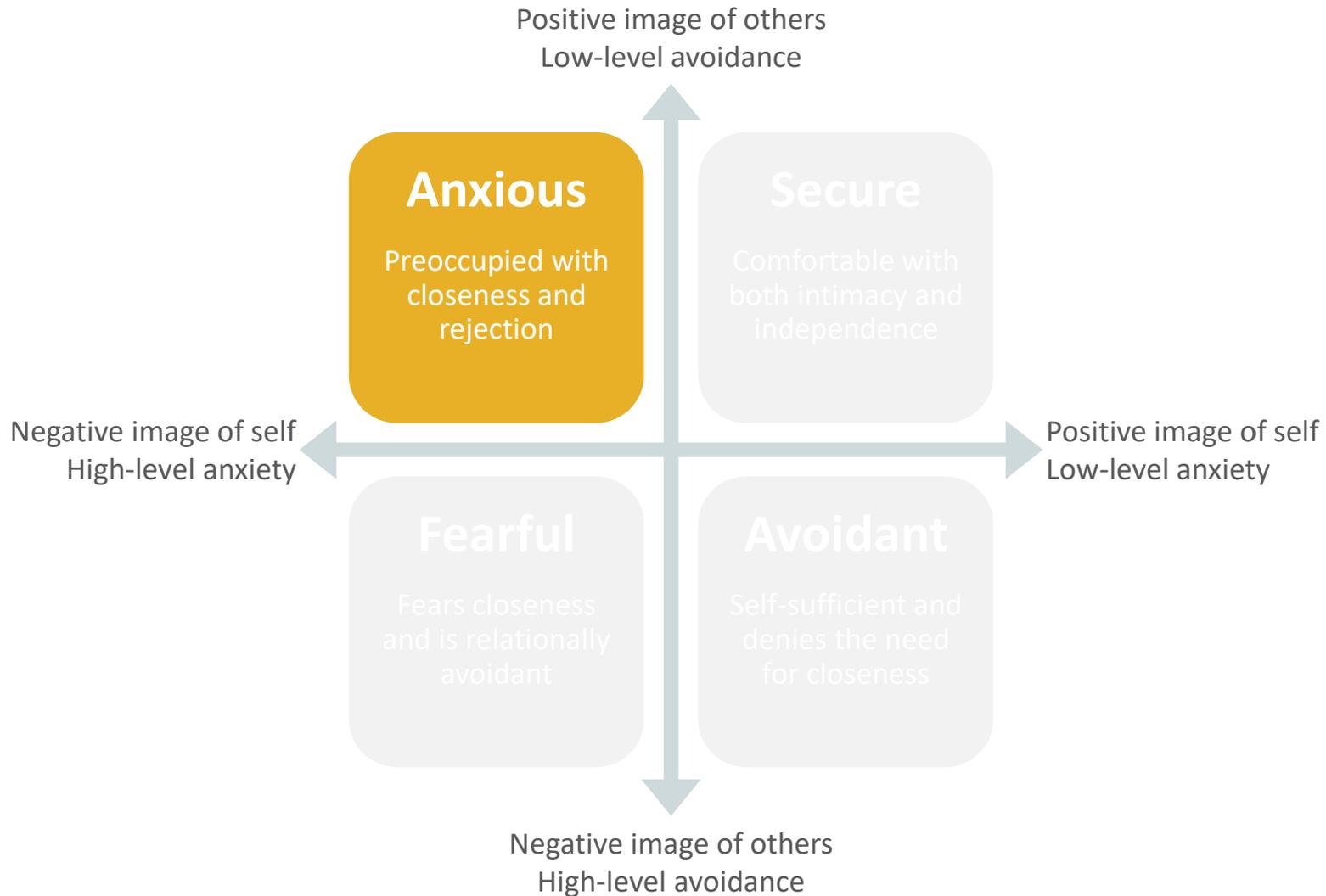
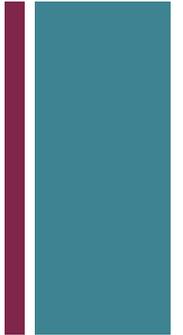
Typical self-statements

- "It is relatively easy for me to become emotionally close to others."
- "I do not fear the feelings of myself or others."
- "I am comfortable depending on others and having others depend on me."
- "I don't worry about being alone or others not accepting me."





Attachment in adults



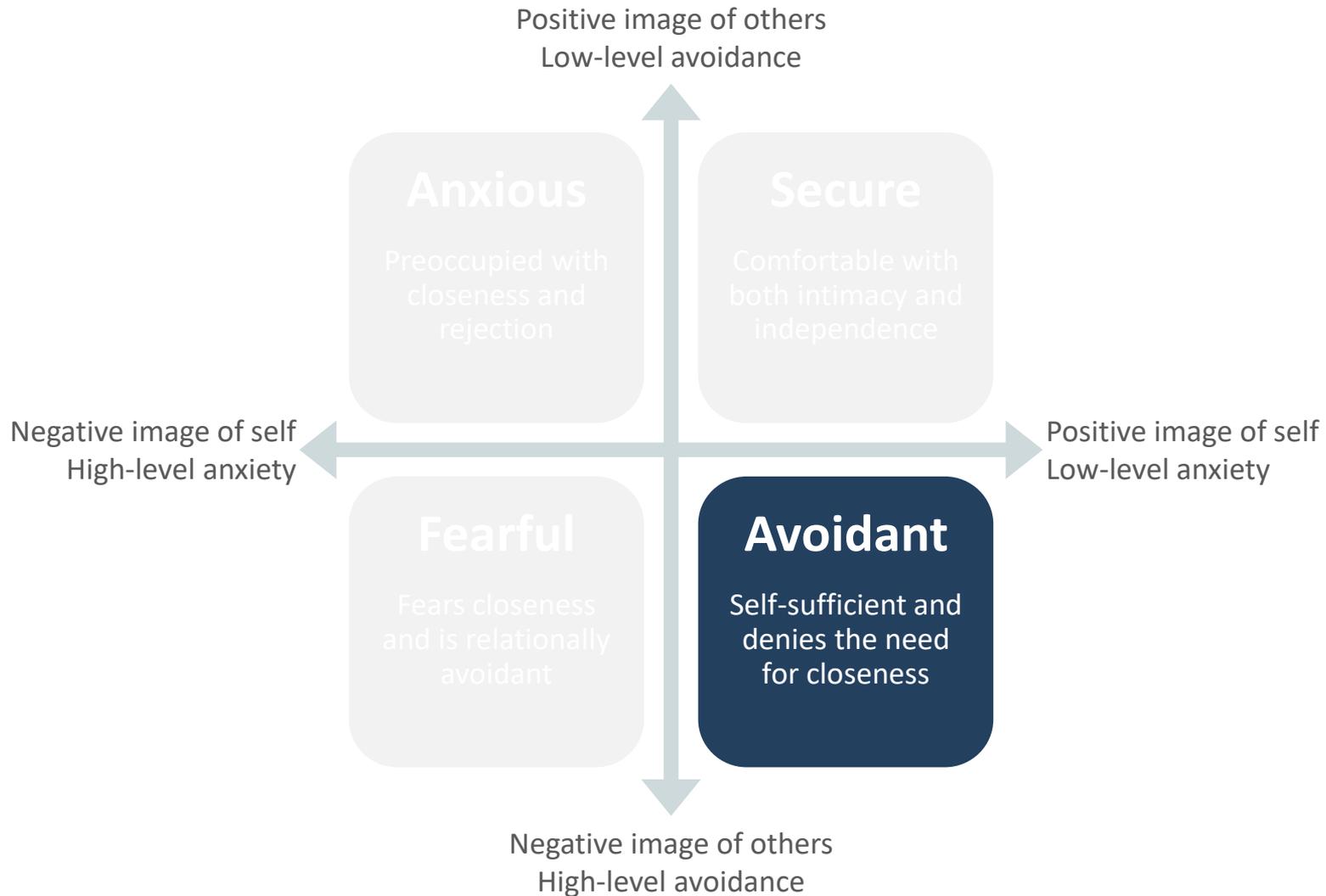
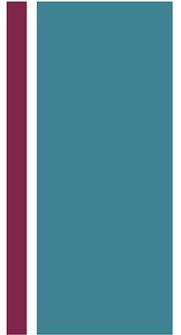
+ Insecure attachment

Anxious

- Typical self-statements
 - "I long for closeness, but struggle a lot with the fear of being rejected."
 - "I want to be completely emotionally intimate with others, but I often find that others are reluctant to get as close as I would like."
 - "I am uncomfortable being without close relationships, but I sometimes worry that others don't value me as much as I value them."
 - "I may become too dependant on others."
 - "I often doubt whether others like me, I worry a lot and blame myself if something goes wrong in a relationship."
 - "I am sensitive to criticism and often perceive it as rejection."
 - "In close relationships my emotions run high and I have difficulty controlling them."



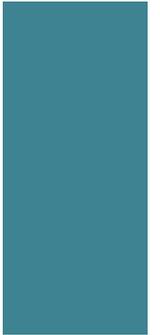
Attachment in adults



+ Insecure attachment

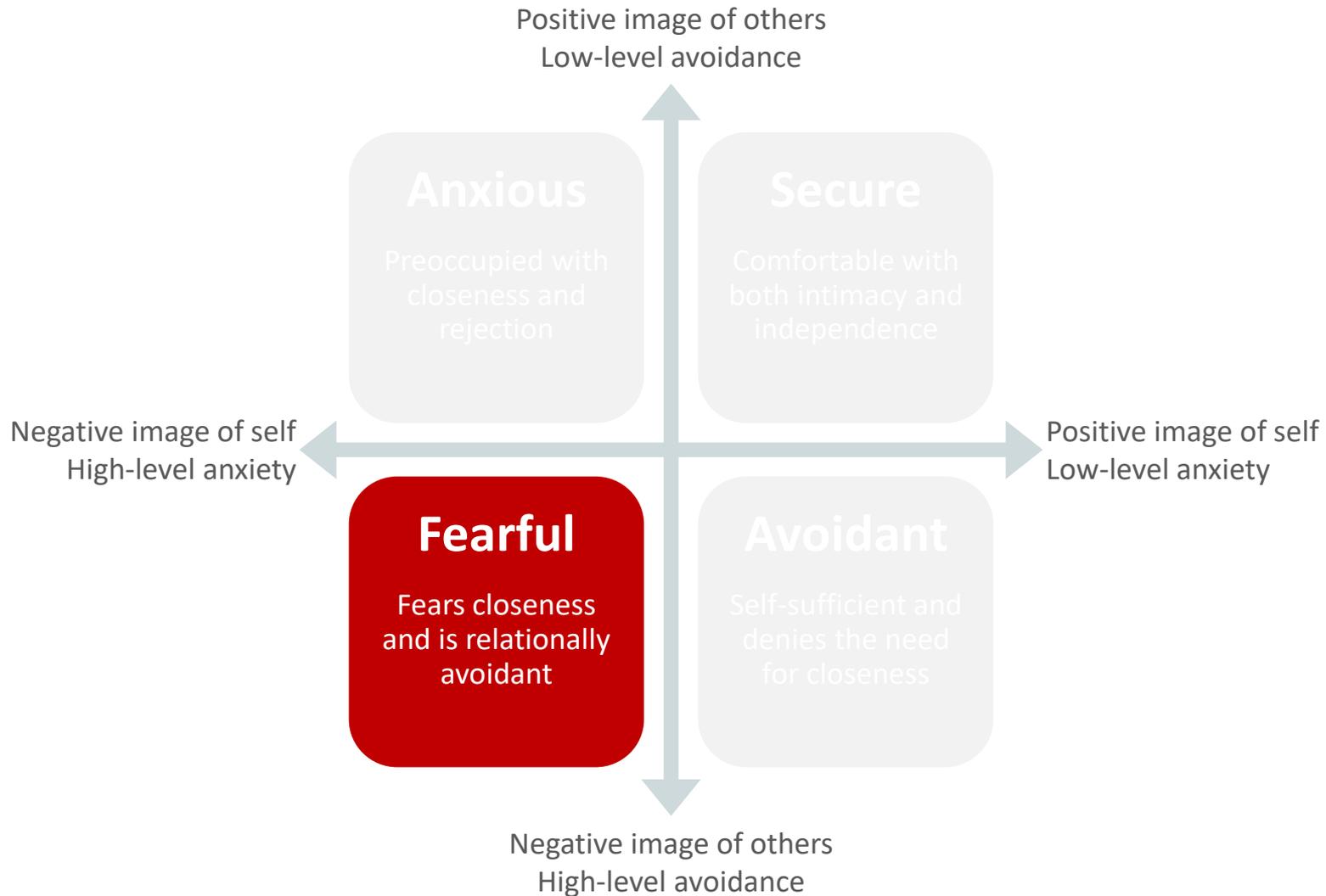
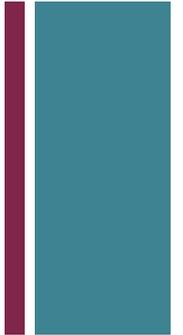
Avoidant

- Typical statements
 - "I am comfortable being without close emotional relationships and I do not need them."
 - "It is important to me to be independent and self-sufficient."
 - "I prefer not to depend on others or have others depend on me."
 - "There are more important things in life than close relationships."
 - "I keep my emotions in check and hide them if I am under pressure."
 - "If I am rejected I have no desire to re-establish or continue the relationship."





Attachment in adults



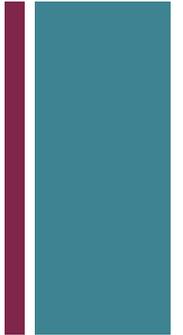
+ Insecure attachment

Fearful

- Typical statements
 - "I do not feel loved or wanted."
 - "I am somewhat uncomfortable getting close to others and do not trust their intentions."
 - "I want emotionally close relationships, but I find it difficult to trust others completely, or to depend on them."
 - "I sometimes worry that I will be hurt if I allow myself to become too close to others. "
 - "I suppress my feelings and find it difficult to express affection."



What might be done about an insecure attachment patterns?



- Attachment patterns are rather stable over a lifetime
 - 70-80 % keep their primary attachment style through life
 - 20-30 % change their primary attachment style
- Insecure attachment patterns may change in more secure direction through experiencing others as a secure base in life one may turn to in times of distress, someone who supports, comforts and calms.
- Insight into the attachment patterns of ourselves and others may help us understand what happens when things get relationally stressful, to limit inappropriate and damaging behaviour, and when something has gone wrong.



+ Fear and defences

What creates distance in relationships

+

The dangers of being too defensive

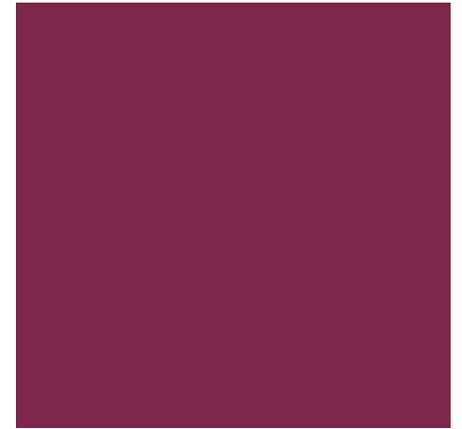
The School of Life



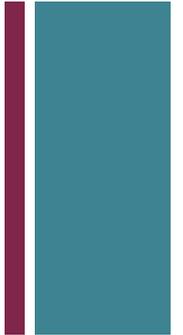


The dilemma

We want to maximize closeness and minimize vulnerability, but closeness is only gained when one dares to be vulnerable



+ Recommended reading



- Wikipedia: Attachment theory
 - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attachment_theory
- Wikipedia: Attachment in adults
 - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attachment_in_adults
- Rachel Heller & Amir Levine: Attached: The New Science of Adult Attachment and How it Can Help You Find - and Keep – Love
- Stan Tatkin: Wired for Love | Wired for Dating
- The Book of Life & The School of Life
 - <http://www.thebookoflife.org>
 - <https://www.youtube.com/user/schooloflifechannel>
- Psychalive
 - <http://www.psychalive.org>
- Self-assessment: Experiences in close relationships, ECR-R or ECR-RS
 - <http://www.yourpersonality.net/relstructures/>

www.facebook.com/TEDHealth

ted.adventist.org/health-ministries



Thank you

Your comments, input and feedback is appreciated:
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