



## Attachment in Adulthood, First Edition: Structure, Dynamics, and Change

*By Mario Mikulincer PhD, Phillip R. Shaver PhD*

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This authoritative work provides a systematic, comprehensive overview of theory and research on adult attachment. The authors—who have been at the forefront of this rapidly growing field since the concepts of "adult attachment" and "attachment style" were first developed—trace how Bowlby and Ainsworth's original constructs have evolved through the study of adolescents and adults. They review extant measures and analyze how attachment theory has been used to advance scientific understanding of emotions, social cognition, close relationships, psychopathology, and psychotherapy.

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## **Editorial Review**

### Review

"The students in my close relationships seminar find this book extremely stimulating. They are astonished by the way attachment theory can provide a unifying, empirically supported perspective to account for widely disparate psychological phenomena."--Kelly Brennan-Jones, PhD, Department of Psychology, State University of New York at Brockport

"The scholarship exhibited in this volume is superb....Now no one will need to search for primary references because they are all contained in this extraordinary volume. This is indeed a labor of love by the two authors, who rightly deserve the encomium of their colleagues and certainly mine....There is no existing theory or model that I know of that comes close to the proliferation of significant research contained in this volume emanating from this topic. It could be said without fear of exaggerating that this volume is the end-all as well as the very beginning on the topic of attachment. I doubt seriously whether any researcher, scholar, student, or professional helper will be able to study, evaluate, or apply attachment without referring to *Attachment in Adulthood*....Scholars, researchers, and students in the fields of personality and social psychology will have no choice but to refer to it, whether it is in their possession or in their institutions' libraries....This book is a bargain in comparison with more expensive books of less importance because it is and will certainly be the substantive basis for any clinical and nonclinical psychologist interested in personality and human relationships."--*APA PsycCRITIQUES*

"Mikulincer and Shaver offer a superb synthesis of attachment theory, adult-attachment research, and attachment-style research, and they provide a comprehensive conceptual model of how attachment orientations affect adult romantic relationships....This book should further efforts to enhance the discourse among developmental, social, and clinical psychologists....Highly recommended. Lower-division undergraduates through faculty and professionals."--*Choice*

"The adult attachment literature has grown tremendously during the past decade, making it difficult to comprehend and integrate this vast and important body of work. This outstanding book is a shining example of how a grand theory can be applied to explain findings that were at one time isolated and largely disconnected, in search of broader organizing principles. Mikulincer and Shaver do a superb job of showcasing just how much the field of interpersonal relationships has progressed since Hazan and Shaver decided to run a little ad for a simple self-report study in a local newspaper nearly 20 years ago. This book is a 'must read' for anyone who is interested in the science of relationships."--Jeffrey A. Simpson, PhD, Department of Psychology, University of Minnesota

"Over the last two decades, studies based on adult attachment theory have offered a wealth of important insights into the nature of adults' relational and emotional lives. This comprehensive volume provides a clear and accessible account of attachment processes. It outlines the foundational principles and studies of adult attachment, and organizes the large body of subsequent research that has refined our understanding of the key concepts and their applications. The book should prove a welcome resource for students, researchers, and clinicians."--Judy Feeney, PhD, School of Psychology, The University of Queensland, Australia

"A tour de force. In Mikulincer and Shaver's capable hands, the attachment viewpoint becomes a rich framework for understanding and improving core aspects of the human experience: our thoughts, emotions,

close relationships, and even the need to face our own mortality. If one thinks of knowledge as a web, this is one of the most complex, well-developed webs in the social sciences today. The book lucidly explains attachment theory, impressively reviews the thousands of studies testing attachment ideas, offers instruments for measuring key constructs, and insightfully explains how the attachment approach relates to other developments in psychology. This is the perfect volume for anyone who wants to learn about attachment, conduct research in the attachment tradition, or apply the theory in clinical, educational, or organizational settings."--Daniel Perlman, PhD, School of Social Work and Family Studies, University of British Columbia, Canada

"An exhilarating and comprehensive overview of Mikulincer and Shaver's important life's work. The authors' contagious passion for understanding the psychology of attachment in adults is beautifully illustrated in this synthesis of their own fascinating research with hundreds of other studies in the field. This rewarding journey into the vast scientific literature is appropriately cautious, avoiding excessive assumptions and conceptual leaps, yet it has breathtaking implications for helping us construct a fuller picture of the social nature of the mind and how we develop well-being in our lives."--Daniel J. Siegel, MD, Department of Psychiatry and Center for Culture, Brain, and Development, UCLA School of Medicine

"An amazing book. Mikulincer and Shaver, the two giants of adult attachment, summarize the vast and complex wealth of knowledge on adult attachment that has accumulated over the last two decades in this compelling, eminently readable, and fascinating volume. All students of attachment across all mental health fields will benefit from this complete and coherent account. John Bowlby's heritage is in flower here. This book will have an impact on clinicians, students, and researchers for years to come."--Susan M. Johnson, EdD, School of Psychology, University of Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

"Reading *Attachment in Adulthood* by Mikulincer and Shaver is like stepping into a classroom with two master teachers and researchers....The book begins by outlining the basic concepts of attachment theory. It includes an engaging account of the origins of the theory and the relationship between attachment theory and psychoanalytic theory. This chapter could stand alone as a useful introduction for students, clinicians, and researchers new to attachment theory or for those who have learned it piecemeal and need a more coherent understanding....The number and scope of the studies represented in this book is staggering....For students and teachers, *Attachment in Adulthood* clearly introduces the history and basic concepts of attachment theory as well as a summary and analysis of a large body of adult attachment research. For scholars and researchers, the presentation of all of this information together in one text is invaluable. For clinicians, this compendium of accessible clinically relevant research benefits clinical assessments, decisions about clinical interventions, and contributes to personal awareness and growth."

*(Clinical Social Work Journal 2010-01-06)*

"The proliferation of attachment-defined theoretical constructs and adult attachment research measurements presents a daunting challenge with a vast and often confusing or disconnected body of knowledge for both the novice and advanced clinician or research scientist. Mikulincer and Shaver have risen to this challenge, offering conceptual clarity through their exhaustive and comprehensive review of the theoretical and empirical literature with findings synthetically organized and critically appraised within a coherent theoretical framework....Mikulincer and Shaver are to be praised for their review and condensation of a vast existing evidence-based literature applied to adult attachment processes, the therapeutic process, and the wider social and organizational context."

*(Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease 2010-01-06)*

"An excellent resource for students and researchers. As many of the findings discussed have clinical

implications, clinicians may find it useful as well....This book is a tribute to the generativity of [Phillip] Shaver, his colleagues, and students."

(*Bulletin of the Menninger Clinic* 2010-01-06)

"The scholarship exhibited in this volume is superb....Now no one will need to search for primary references because they are all contained in this extraordinary volume. This is indeed a labor of love by the two authors, who rightly deserve the encomium of their colleagues and certainly mine....There is no existing theory or model that I know of that comes close to the proliferation of significant research contained in this volume emanating from this topic. It could be said without fear of exaggerating that this volume is the end-all as well as the very beginning on the topic of attachment. I doubt seriously whether any researcher, scholar, student, or professional helper will be able to study, evaluate, or apply attachment without referring to *Attachment in Adulthood*....Scholars, researchers, and students in the fields of personality and social psychology will have no choice but to refer to it, whether it is in their possession or in their institutions' libraries....This book is a bargain in comparison with more expensive books of less importance because it is and will certainly be the substantive basis for any clinical and nonclinical psychologist interested in personality and human relationships."

(*PsycCRITIQUES* 2010-01-06)

#### About the Author

**Mario Mikulincer, PhD**, received his doctorate in psychology from Bar-Ilan University, Ramat Gan, Israel, in 1985, and was Professor of Psychology there until 1992. In 2007, he established the Interdisciplinary Center (IDC) in Herzliya, Israel, and now serves as Dean of the New School of Psychology. He has published more than 220 articles and book chapters and two books, *Human Learned Helplessness: A Coping Perspective* (1994) and *Prosocial Motives, Emotions, and Behavior: The Better Angels of Our Nature* (2009), coauthored with Phillip R. Shaver. Dr. Mikulincer's research interests include attachment styles in adulthood, terror management theory, personality processes in interpersonal relationships, evolutionary psychology, and trauma and posttraumatic processes. He currently serves on the editorial boards of several academic journals and as associate editor of *Personal Relationships* and the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. In 2004 he received the EMET Prize in Social Science, sponsored by the A. M. N. Foundation for the Advancement of Science, Art, and Culture in Israel, awarded by Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, for Dr. Mikulincer's contribution to psychology.

**Phillip R. Shaver, PhD**, is Distinguished Professor of Psychology at the University of California, Davis. He is associate editor of *Attachment and Human Development* and a member of the editorial boards of several other journals. His books include *Measures of Personality and Social Psychological Attitudes* (1991) and *Handbook of Attachment: Theory, Research, and Clinical Applications* (1999), and he has also published more than 175 articles and book chapters. Dr. Shaver's research focuses on emotions, close relationships, and personality development, viewed from the perspective of attachment theory. He has made notable contributions to the literatures on human emotions, close relationships, and psychology of religion. In 2002 he received a Distinguished Career Award from the International Association for Relationship Research, and in 2006 he was elected President of that organization.

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