THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ATTACHMENT TO ADULTS,

ATTACHMENT TO GOD, AND SATISFACTION WITH LIFE

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A Dissertation

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at the University of Missouri

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of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

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by

MICHELLE HASTINGS

Dr. Norman Gysbers, Chair

May 2012

The undersigned, appointed by the Dean of the Graduate School, have examined the

dissertation entitled

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ATTACHMENT TO ADULTS,
ATTACHMENT TO GOD, AND SATISFACTION WITH LIFE

presented by Michelle Hastings,

a candidate for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Counseling Psychology,

and hereby certify that, in their opinion, it is worthy of their acceptance

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Joseph Johnston, Ph.D.

DEDICATION

First, I dedicate this work to all of my clients. It is such an honor to hear your stories and witness the power of change. Everyday I learn something more about human connection and about myself. I appreciate you sharing your vulnerability and your strength with me.

Second, I dedicate this work to my family and friends who have provided encouragement and support when I most needed it. I will take the time to thank each of your personally. Your belief in me was often what I needed in order to believe in myself.

Finally, and most importantly, I dedicate this work to my husband, Jay Hastings, and my daughter, Harlow Hastings. Jay, the kindness and unconditional love you have provided over the years have been invaluable to my growth as a partner and as a mother. Thank you for helping me discover how to have secure attachment in my current relationships. Harlow, the things you have taught me these past two years by far surpass any lesson I could have ever read in a textbook or learned in a lecture. I never truly knew the intensity of love and the importance of attachment until you. I love you both so much.

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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ATTACHMENT TO ADULTS,
ATTACHMENT TO GOD, AND SATISFACTION WITH LIFE

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ABSTRACT

The present study was created to contribute to the literature on religious and spiritual issues in the field of psychology by examining the relationship of attachment with individuals and attachment to God on life satisfaction. Multiple regressions were conducted using a sample of 197 undergraduate students who believe in the existence of God or higher power. This study concluded that a high secure attachment with individuals and a high secure attachment with God yielded one of the highest levels of life satisfaction. Thus, both secure relationships with individuals and secure relationships with God both appear to be important constructs when predicting overall life satisfaction. Clinical implications of this study's findings are discussed.

The Relationship between Attachment to Adults, Attachment to God,

and Life Satisfaction

INTRODUCTION

Richards, Rector and Tjelveit (1999) found that "95% of Americans say that they

believe in God…70% belong to a church or synagogue…72% say that religious faith is

the most important influence in their life…84% say they try hard to put their religious

beliefs into practice in their relationships with others" (p.155-6). More recently, a

Newsweek/Beliefnet poll (Adler, 2005) of Americans showed that over 80% of

respondents identified with some denomination of Christianity, while only 6% claimed to

be atheist, agnostic, or have no religious affiliation at all. In addition, 84% of Americans

rated spirituality as being somewhat or very important in their daily lives. Furthermore,

64% of respondents reported that they engage in prayer, and 29% engage in meditation

every day.

Despite these numbers, researchers maintain that religion and spirituality are often

neglected in psychological research (Jones, 1994; Plante, 1996). Since its inception, the

field of psychology took a negative view of these subjects. In his book, *Future of an*

Illusion, Freud criticized religion by stating that it was "A system of wishful illusions

together with a disavowal of reality, such as we find nowhere else…but in a state of

blissful hallucinatory confusion" (1927/1964, p.71). A national study of APA

psychologists found that 85% reported rarely, if ever, having discussed religion or

spiritual issues during their own training (Lukoff, Lu, & Turner, 1998). Other studies

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report that most psychotherapists either avoid the theme of religion, or handle it with insufficient professionalism (Miller, 2003). Along with avoidance of the topic, counselors may be influenced by their own religious or spiritual beliefs. Practitioners might not be aware of potential countertransference, may be biased in their interventions, or inadvertently impose their own values on clients.

Attachment Theory

Attachment theory suggests that, in order to survive, individuals develop an attachment to a primary caregiver who insures a sense of closeness, safety, and protection (e.g., Ainsworth, 1991; Hazan & Shaver, 1994; Hazan & Zeifman, 1994). In infancy and childhood, primary caregivers serve as attachment figures and in adolescence and adulthood other relationship partners can serve as attachment figures. Individuals learn to regulate their behavior so that they can be close to the primary caregiver or relationship partner (Bretherton, 1985). These behaviors then manifest into clear attachment styles based on the history of their emotional and physical needs being met by the primary caregiver or relationship partner (Fraley & Shaver, 2000).

Attachment styles have been categorized as secure, avoidant, anxious, and disorganized/fearful. Attachment styles guide the quality of our relationships, our view of the world, and the depth of our lives (Bowlby, 1958). Attachment theory is an important framework in research examining psychological and emotional well-being (Lopez & Brennan, 2000; Mallinckrodt, 2000). The theory has been used to explain critical phenomena related to relationships with caregivers (Bowlby, 1988), adult romantic relationships (Hazan & Shaver, 1987), coping after trauma (Mikulincer, Florian, & Weller, 1993), client-counselor working alliance (Mallinckrodt, 2000; Mallinckrodt, B.,

Coble, H.M., & Gantt, D.L., 1995; Mallinckrodt, B., Gantt, D. L., & Coble, H. M., 1995; Mallinckrodt, B., Porter, M. J., Kivlighan, D. M., Jr., 2005), client-supervisor working alliance (Riggs & Bretz, 2000), as well as religious and spiritual beliefs and behaviors (Kirkpatrick, 1997, 1998, 1999; Kirkpatrick & Shaver, 1990).

Religion and spirituality are considered key elements of psychological and emotional well-being (Compton, 2005). Attachment styles and religious and spiritual beliefs often manifests similar relationship qualities. Not only do individuals have an attachment style with other people but they can also have an attachment style to God. For example, those who have more insecure attachment styles in their adult relationships may compensate for this by trying to create a secure relationship with God (Granqvist & Hagekull, 1999; Kirkpatrick, 1998). In contrast, those with secure or insecure attachment styles in their adult relationships may have a similar or corresponding attachment style with God (Granqvist & Hagekull, 1999; Kirkpatrick, 1998).

Life Satisfaction

According to Pavot and Diener (1993), overall life satisfaction is a "distinct construct representing a cognitive and global evaluation of the quality of one's life as a whole" (p.137). Relationships are a determinant of life satisfaction (Kapteyn, Smith, & Van Soest, 2009) thus, the kind of attachment in these relationships is important to understand (Lopez, 2003; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000; Snyder & Lopez, 2002).

Purpose of Study and Potential Implications

As explained earlier, past research finds positive correlations in secure attachment style to adults and positive elements of life satisfaction. As expected, there is also a positive correlation between insecure attachment styles to adults and negative elements of

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life satisfaction. In addition, there is a positive correlation in secure attachment style to God and positive elements of life satisfaction and a positive correlation between insecure attachment styles to God and negative elements of life satisfaction. The strong associations with life satisfaction and healthy self-regulation in adulthood, attachment style with adults and with God could serve as key constructs in the continued development of positive psychology which aims to better understand "the factors that allow individuals, communities, and societies to flourish," (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000, p.5).

The relationship between the two constructs of attachment with adults and with God and their roles on life satisfaction have not been studied together. The purpose of this study is to extend the literature in the attachment to God research by addressing the void that exists concerning how both the role of attachment with adults and attachment with God have on overall life satisfaction. Essentially, is there a relationship between attachment to adults and attachment to God in overall life satisfaction? If this research question is answered and our hypotheses are supported by the data then it will suggest that having a religious or spiritual component in one's life contributes to life satisfaction. This will not only support research in the area of positive psychology which suggests that a relationship with a higher power leads to higher levels of life satisfaction, but it also will suggest that practitioners and researchers alike, must take a closer look at these constructs in the lives of individuals.

Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1. If a participant reports having a secure attachment with both individuals and with God (low levels of anxiety and low levels of avoidance), it is predicted that the level of satisfaction with life will be high.

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Hypothesis 2. If a participant reports having a secure attachment with individuals (low levels of anxiety and low levels of avoidance), but an insecure attachment with God (high levels of anxiety and/or high levels of avoidance), it is predicted that the level of satisfaction with life will be low.

Hypothesis 3. If a participant reports having an insecure attachment with individuals (high levels of anxiety and/or avoidance), but a secure attachment with God (low levels of anxiety and avoidance), it is predicted that the level of satisfaction with life will be high.

Hypothesis 4. If a participant reports having an insecure attachment with individuals (high levels of anxiety and/or avoidance) and an insecure attachment with God (high levels of anxiety and/or avoidance), it is predicted that the level of satisfaction with life will be low.

METHOD

Participants

The targeted group for this study was students at a small, coeducational, four-year, residential liberal arts college in the Midwest. Student enrollment for this college is just over 1,000. In the academic year for 2009-2010, the student body represented 27 states and 65 countries, making this college one of the most diverse small liberal arts colleges in the country. The college offers 36 majors, 34 minors, and 12 pre-professional programs. Participants were students enrolled in the college for the 2010-2011 year and represented a variety of geographical locations and several different academic majors, thus not

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restricting the generalizability of this study's results to one immediate area or one program of study.

A power analysis using the G*Power analysis software (Faul, Erdfelder, Lang, & Buchner, 2007) suggested a sample size of 106 participants in order to detect a medium effect size (w =.15). Based on past sample sizes in adult attachment and attachment to God studies (Beck & McDonald, 2004), a sample size of approximately 150+ appeared to be appropriate and was sought.

Instruments

Experiences in Close Relationships-Revised Scale (ECR-R). The Experiences in Close Relationships-Revised Scale (ECR-R) developed by Fraley, Waller, and Brennan (2000) (see Appendix C) is a revised version of Brennan, Clark, and Shaver's (1998) Experiences in Close Relationships Scale. The ECR-R is a 36 item self-report scale that asks participants to respond using a 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from "Strongly Disagree" (1) to "Strongly Agree" (7).

Fraley et al. (2000) define attachment style anxiety as the extent to which a person is insecure about his or her partner's availability and responsiveness. They define attachment style avoidance as the extent to which a person is uncomfortable being close to others. Lower attachment anxiety or attachment avoidance scores indicate a more secure attachment style. They suggest rewording items to read as "others" or "other people" rather than "romantic partners," if this will better suit the intended research. Since we were more concerned with general adult attachment rather than romantic adult attachment, we modified these items in the measure for this study.

Sibley and Liu (2004) assessed the ECR-R and concluded that the scale has acceptable classical psychometric properties. Factor structure, internal reliability, and short-term temporal stability were assessed. Separate exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses collected two separate times showed that the ECR-R displayed a two factor structure and provided reliable and replicable measures of the attachment anxiety and avoidance subscales. In addition, latent variable path analyses and test-retest over a 6-week period suggested that repeated measures of the subscales shared 86% of their variance. The estimate of internal consistency reliability is .90 or higher for the ECR-R (Fraley, Waller, & Brennan, 2000). A study by Strodl and Noller (2003) found validity of the ECR-R supported with good correlations with other measures of attachment style and predictable patterns of correlations with measures of family functioning and personality; the coefficient alpha for this study's sample on the ECR-R was .95.

Examples of the anxiety items are: "I often worry that my partner will not want to stay with me," and "I often wish that my partner's feelings for me were as strong as my feelings for him/her." Examples of the avoidance items are: "I feel comfortable sharing my private thoughts and feelings with my partner," and "I am nervous when partners get too close to me." These items are indicated on a 7-point Likert scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*).

To score the ECR-R, answers 1-18 comprised the attachment-related anxiety scale and items 19-36 comprised the attachment –related avoidance scale. An individual's attachment-related anxiety was scored by averaging their responses to items 1-18. Scores ranged from 1 through 7. The higher the number, the more probable it is that an individual is anxious in relationships. An individual's attachment-related avoidance was

scored by averaging their responses to items 19-36. Scores ranged from 1 through 7. The higher the number, the more probable it was that an individual avoids intimacy in relationships. Participants had a score for anxiety attachment to individuals and a score for avoidance attachment to individuals, resulting in two scores for these constructs. Items 9, 11, 20, 22, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 33, 34, 35, and 36 were reversed scored so that 1=7, 2=6, 3=5, 4=4, 5=3, 6=2, 7=1.

Attachment to God Inventory. The Attachment to God Inventory (AGI) was developed by Beck and McDonald (2004) and assesses the attachment dimensions of an individual's attachment to God in terms of avoidance of intimacy and anxiety about abandonment (see Appendix D). It is based on the Experiences in Close Relationships Scale (ECR), developed by Brennan, Clark, and Shaver (1998) that assesses these attachment dimensions in adult relationships. The AGI is a 28 item self-report scale that asks participants to respond using a 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). As in the ECR, the two dimensions of anxiety and avoidance are also dichotomized in the AGI.

The inventory contains 14 items on the anxiety subscale and 14 items on the avoidance subscale. A study with the AGI and a sample of 507 undergraduate and graduate students reported good internal consistency with an alpha coefficient of .84 for the anxiety subscale and .86 for the avoidance subscale (Beck & McDonald, 2004). In a replication sample, internal consistency for the anxiety and avoidance subscales reported an alpha of .80 and .84. After replicating the psychometrics of the AGI in a homogenous college population, Beck and McDonald (2004) administered the measure to a religiously diverse community sample of 109 participants. Again, good internal consistency

coefficients were found for both the anxiety subscale with an alpha of .86 and .87 for the avoidance subscale. Cooper, Bruce, Harman, and Boccaccini (2009), also reported Cronbach's alpha of .89 for the avoidance subscale and .82 for the anxiety subscale, using a sample with participants from various Protestant churches.

The anxiety subscale includes "fear of potential abandonment by God, angry protest… jealousy over God's seemingly differential intimacy with others, anxiety over one's lovability in God's eyes, and finally, preoccupation with or worry concerning one's relationship with God" (Beck & McDonald, 2004, p.94). Examples of the anxiety items are: "I often worry about whether God is pleased with me," and "I fear God does not accept me when I do wrong." The avoidance subscale includes "need for self-reliance, a difficulty with depending upon God, and unwillingness to be emotionally intimate with God" (Beck & McDonald, 2004, p.94). Examples of the avoidance items are: "I prefer not to depend too much on God," and "I just don't feel a deep need to be close to God."

The two AGI subscales, anxiety and avoidance, were scored according to the instructions provided by Beck and McDonald (2004). Items were answered on a 7-point Likert scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). To score the AGI, answers to 4, 8, 13, 18, 22, 26, and 28 were reversed scored so that 1=7, 2=6, 3=5, 4=4, 5=3, 6=2, 7=1. Items added together were 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, 17, 19, 21, 23, 25, and 27. These were the scores for attachment-related anxiety with God. The higher the sum the more probable an individual is anxious about their relationship with God. Items 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24, 26, and 28 were added together to create scores for attachment-related avoidance with God. The higher the sum, the more probable an individual avoids intimacy in their relationship with God. Participants had a score for anxiety attachment to

God and a score for avoidance attachment to God resulting in two scores for these constructs.

Satisfaction With Life Scale. The Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS) is a 5-item self report scale developed by Diener, Emmons, Larson, and Griffith (1985) (see Appendix E). It is widely used to measure the global cognitive judgments of satisfaction with one's life. The SWLS is used with multiple populations that vary in age and nationality. Items are rated on a 7-point scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*), with a sample item being "I am satisfied with my life." In support of its validity, Diener et al. (1985) found with the SWLS correlated positively with measures of self-esteem and happiness and negatively with measures of neuroticism and psychological symptoms. Internal consistency of the SWLS has been reported to be .87 and test-retest correlation was .82 (Diener et al., 1985). Scores on the SWLS correlate moderately to high with other measures of subjective well-being, and correlate predictably with specific personality characteristics.

The first three items of the Satisfaction With Life Scale focus primarily on a person's current life, whereas the last two items ask how one's life has been previously, up until the present. Some people score high on the first three items of the life satisfaction scale, but score lower on the last two items. This suggests that their lives are going well now, but that they are not entirely satisfied with their pasts. Other individuals might score low on the first three items, but higher on the last two items. This pattern suggests the respondent sees his or her past as more desirable than the present. Thus, a discrepancy in the scores between the first three items and the last two items can reveal whether people

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view their lives as improving or declining. The higher the overall score, the more satisfied an individual is with their life.

Demographic questionnaire. Participants were asked to complete a demographic questionnaire prepared by the researcher (see Appendix F). This questionnaire was prepared in accordance with U.S. Census bureau information and the Pew Research Center. Specifically, participants were asked their age, gender, race, citizenship status, current relationship status, highest level of education, and religious background. All demographic variables, with the exception of age, are categorical variables. A criterion for participants was that they acknowledged some kind of belief in God or a higher power, thus, those who identified as atheist were not included in the data set. In addition, those who identified as agnostics were also excluded because agnosticism lies on a continuum of theism and atheism. For example, there are those who believe it is impossible to know if God exists because it cannot be proven beyond one's own subjective experience. Agnostics may recognize that there might be a God, but there is no objective way to validate the existence of God, thus, they have no true relationship with God. Lastly, there are agnostics who are unsure either way and lie between belief and non-belief.

Procedure

After receiving permission from the Institutional Review Board from the University of Missouri and the Midwestern College from which participants were recruited, a flyer was placed in student mailboxes suggesting that students watch their e-mail for an upcoming survey. Three days later, the principal investigator sent out an e-mail to the entire student body asking for their participation in an online survey. Each e-mail had a unique link to an online survey that could not be used more than once. An e-

mail to remind students about the invitation to participate was sent out two weeks after the initial invitation.

Students wanting to participate in the survey clicked on the link and were directed to a survey posted on a research website, SurveyGizmo.com where they were presented the informed consent (see Appendix B) explaining the (a) nature of the study; (b) potential benefits and risks from participating in the study; (c) the fact that the study was voluntary; (d) participation in the study was completely confidential; (e) how much time would be required to complete the study; and (f) a request for students to participate in the study. The students completed a 75-item battery (Appendix C, D, E, and F). A recent analysis concluded that results from Internet data are consistent with those from paper and pencil measures (Gosling, Vazire, Srivastava, & John, 2004). Upon completion or exit of the survey, participants were given the opportunity to enter into a raffle for one of three $100 gift certificates to the campus bookstore.

RESULTS

Sample Characteristics

Data were collected on 274 students who responded to the survey out of approximately 1,200 students leading to a response rate of approximately 23%. Participants who were under the age of 18 ($n = 2$) or over 25 ($n = 3$) were excluded from further analysis due to age of consent (under the age of 18) or outliers (over the age of 23). Individuals who indicated that they were atheists ($n = 13$) or agnostics ($n = 28$) or who did not provide information for age or religion were excluded from further analyses. Some

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students met two exclusion criteria (e.g., two agnostics were over the age of 25). The sample that met inclusion criteria consisted of $N = 228$ participants with complete or near-complete data who met the inclusion criteria. After deleting participants who had missing data, the final sample consisted on $N = 197$ which represents participants with scores on every independent and dependent variable.

Table 1 presents frequencies and percentages for categorical variables. Of the 197 participants with data on every independent and dependent variable, one failed to provide student status, relationship status, and citizenship status. A second participant failed to provide relationship status. The majority of students in the sample were female (60.9%), White (81.7%), US citizens (80.1%), single (57.4%), and Christian (84.8%). The sample was fairly evenly split across freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors.

Table 1.

Frequencies and Percentages for Categorical Variables

	Frequency	Percent
Gender ($N = 197$)		
Male	77	39.1
Female	120	60.9
Race ($N = 197$)		
White	161	81.7
Black or African American	9	4.6
American Indian or Alaska Native	1	0.5
Asian (Indian, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese)	16	8.1
Hispanic or Latino (Mexican, Puerto Rican,Cuban)	3	1.5
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	1	0.5
Some other race	4	2.0
Two or more races	2	1.0
US native ($N = 196$)		
Native (this refers to anyone born in the U.S. or a U.S. Islander)	157	80.1

Foreign born (this refers to anyone who is not a U.S. citizen)	39	19.9
Student status (*N* = 196)		
Freshman	57	29.1
Sophomore	53	27.0
Junior	41	20.9
Senior	45	23.0
Highest level of education (*N* = 197)		
High school graduate or GED	57	28.9
Some college, no degree	126	64.0
Associate's Degree	5	2.5
Bachelor's Degree	9	4.6
Relationship status (*N* = 195)		
Single	112	57.4
Married	4	2.1
In a relationship	79	40.5
Religious background (*N* = 197)		
Buddhist	1	0.5
Christian	167	84.8
Hindu	5	2.5
Islam	9	4.6
Jewish	1	0.5
Other	14	7.1

Scale Scoring

Participants were administered the Experiences in Close Relationships-Revised Scale (ECR-R), the Attachment to God Inventory (AGI), and the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS).

Experiences in Close Relationships-Revised Scale and Subscales. The two ECR-R subscales, anxiety and avoidance to people, were scored according to the instructions provided by Fraley, Waller, and Brennan (2000). For the anxiety items, one participant skipped four items, six participants skipped two items, and 13 participants skipped one item. For the avoidance items, one participant skipped four items and 18 participants

skipped one item. In order to maximize the number of participants with scale scores, subscales were computed for all participants who met inclusion criteria and answered all items by averaging their scores across the items they answered. The subscales for the ECR-R are based on the average of the sum that made it possible to compute subscale scores for participants even if they had skipped an item or two. For example, if a participant answered nine of the ten items on the subscale the score is computed as an average across the nine items answered instead of across ten items. Thus, all 228 participants received scores on the ECR-R subscales but, because of listwise deletion, descriptive statistics are presented for the 197 participants who had scores on all scales.

Attachment to God Inventory and Subscales. The two AGI subscales, anxiety and avoidance to God, were scored according to instructions provided by Beck and McDonald (2004). Participants, who met inclusion criteria and answered all items, had a score for both subscales resulting in two scores for these constructs. Subscale scores were computed only for participants who answered all AGI items because the scores are based on sums. A valid sum score is obtained only if the participant answered all items. For example, if the participant answered nine of out the ten items on a subscale the overall sum score would be an underestimate of what would be the overall score. Thus, due to missing items, 210 participants received scores on the AGI and, because of listwise deletion, descriptive statistics are presented for the 197 participants who had scores on all scales.

Satisfaction With Life Scale. The Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS) is a 5-item self-report scale developed by Diener, Emmons, Larson, and Griffith (1985). Just like the AGI, an SWLS score was computed only for participants who answered all SWLS items

because the scores are based on sums. A valid sum score is obtained only if the

participant answered all items. For example, if the participant answered four out of the

five items the overall sum score would be a significant underestimate of what the overall

score would be. Thus, due to missing items, 222 participants received scores on the

SWLS and, because of listwise deletion, descriptive statistics are presented for the 197

participants who had scores on all scales.

 Descriptive Statistics

Table 2 presents descriptive statistics for each of the scales described above as

well as for age. To assess normality of each scale in Table 2, measures of skewness and

kurtosis were computed for each measurement. Skewness and kurtosis values of zero are

indicative of a normal distribution, and values between -2 and +2 signify no problematic

deviations from normality (Balanda & MacGillivray, 1988; De Carlo, 1997; Groeneveld

& Meeden, 1984; Hopkins & Weeks, 1990; Kendall, Stuart, Ord, & Arnold, 1999). All

measures of skewness and kurtosis were between the values of -1 and +1, indicating that

all variables were sufficiently normally distributed and that parametric statistics could be

appropriately applied in the analyses.

Table 2.

Descriptive Statistics for Continuous Variables (N =197)

	M	*SD*	Range	Skewness	Kurtosis
ECR-R anxiety (people)	3.68	1.15	1.06 – 6.50	0.02	-0.58
ECR-R avoidance (people)	3.65	1.00	1.39 – 6.72	0.31	-0.05
AGI anxiety (God)	45.06	14.60	14.00 – 91.00	0.15	-0.18
AGI avoidance (God)	54.66	15.56	14.00 – 98.00	0.09	-0.30
Satisfaction with life	24.88	6.36	6.00 – 35.00	-0.62	-0.16
Age	19.84	1.39	18.00 – 25.00	0.78	0.76

Table 3 presents the Cronbach's alpha reliabilities (Cronbach, 1951) that were computed to assess the internal consistencies of the items on each of the ECR-R and AGI subscales and the SWLS. These reliabilities were computed across the items that comprised each subscale; thus, a participant could be included in the reliability assessment of a scale only if they had scores for every item that comprised that scale. For example, for the ECR-R anxiety scale, only scores for participants who answered all 18 items on that scale could be included in the reliability assessment. Thus, sample sizes in Table 3 differ from sample sizes in Table 2 for the ECR-R subscales because those subscale scores ignored missing items. Cronbach's alpha reliabilities should be greater than .70 in order to be considered acceptable (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). All Cronbach's reliabilities were well above .70, indicating very good internal consistencies for all scales.

Table 3.

Cronbach's Alpha Reliabilities for Scales

	N	Number of items	Reliability (α)
ECR-R anxiety (people)	183	18	.93
ECR-R avoidance (people)	184	18	.92
AGI anxiety (God)	197	14	.89
AGI avoidance (God)	197	14	.89
Satisfaction with life	197	5	.88

Regression Assumptions

Each regression model was first assessed to determine whether it met the necessary assumptions of multiple regression. The variables were assessed and found sufficiently normally distributed as discussed earlier in the chapter in the section on skewness and kurtosis. In addition, a linear relationship was determined between the independent and dependent variables by plotting the studentized residuals against the

standardized predicted values of the dependent variable. Figure 1 displays a scatterplot

showing this relationship for the regression. As can be seen in the scatterplot in Figure 1,

there were no obvious curvilinear patterns in the data; thus, a linear relationship could be

assumed. To be thorough, Mahalanobis distance was calculated to check for multivariate

outliers.

Figure 1.

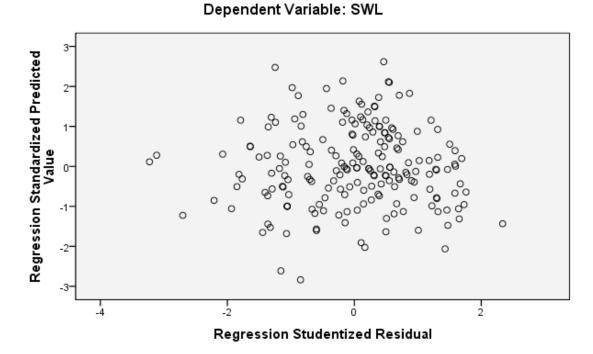*Scatterplot of studentized residuals and standardized predicted values for the regression.*

Figure 1 can also be used to assess the data for homoscedasticity, which is a

measure of whether the error variances are equal across all levels of the independent

variables. When error variances are not equal, obvious patterns (e.g., bowtie pattern, fan

pattern) will appear in the scatterplot, indicating heteroscedasticity. Figure 1 is free of

patterns, thus indicating that the assumption of homoscedasticity has been met. Finally,

the independent variables were assessed for multicollinearity. Typical measures of

multicollinearity include the Tolerance and the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF).

Typically, tolerance measures should be > .20 and the VIF should be < 4.0. All

independent variables in the tested models met these assumptions.

Main Analyses

Analysis was conducted using the enter method and listwise deletion so that

participants who had data on every variable ($N=197$) were used in the correlation and

regression analyses.

Pearson Correlations

Pearson correlations were computed as preliminary analyses to consider the

relation between each attachment dimension and satisfaction with life when considering

only two variables at a time. The first analysis was computed using the zero-order

correlation between the SWLS score and the ECR-R anxiety subscale score. The

correlation was $r = -.34$, $p < .001$, indicating that life satisfaction was negatively related to

anxiety toward people. A second analysis was conducted by computing the zero-order

correlation between the SWLS score and the ECR-R avoidance subscale score. The

correlation was $r = -.29$, $p < .001$, indicating that satisfaction with life was negatively

related to avoidance toward people. A third preliminary analysis was conducted by

computing the zero-order correlation between the SWLS score and the AGI anxiety

subscale score. The correlation was $r = -.33$, $p < .001$, indicating that satisfaction with life

was negatively related to anxiety toward God. A fourth analysis was conducted by

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computing the zero-order correlation between the SWLS score and the AGI avoidance

subscale score. The correlation was $r = .12, p > .05$, indicating that satisfaction with life

was not significantly related to avoidance toward God.

Table 4.

Pearson Correlations between Scales and Age

	SWLS	ECR-R Anxiety	ECR-R Avoidance	AGI Anxiety	AGI Avoidance	Age
SWLS	--					
ECR-R anxiety	-.34***	--				
ECR-R avoidance	-.29***	.29***	--			
AGI anxiety	-.33***	.46***	.18**	--		
AGI avoidance	.12	.01	.06	-.14	--	
Age	.06	-.13	.04	-.01	-.13	--

Note. SWL = Satisfaction with life. ECR-R = Experiences in Close Relationships-
Revised. AGI = Attachment to God Inventory. Listwise deletion was applied so $N = 197$
for all correlations.
**$p < .01$. ***$p < .001$.

Tests of Hypotheses

Independent t tests

Before computing the regression analyses, independent *t* tests were computed to

compare participants by race (white vs. non-white), relationship status (in a relationship

vs. not in a relationship), citizenship status (domestic vs. international), and gender (male

vs. female) on each independent and dependent variable. The results for SWLS were as

follows: race: whites compared to nonwhites, $t(195) = 1.80, p > .05$; relationship status:

married or in a relationship compared to individuals who were single, separated, divorced,

or widowed, $t(193) = -0.42, p > .05$; citizenship status: domestic students compared to

international students, $t(194) = 0.90$, $p > .05$; and gender: males compared to females, $t(195) = -0.64$, $p > .05$). There were no significant differences between any groups on satisfaction with life. The full results for all t tests can be found in the Tables section. There were significant, but small, differences between whites and nonwhites on AGI avoidance, $t(195) = 2.10$, $p < .05$, and between those in a relationship and not in a relationship on ECR-R avoidance, $t(193) = 2.25$, $p < .05$. However, when the Bonferroni correction was applied by dividing the significance level by the number of t tests, these t tests were not significant. Additionally, when those variables were entered as controls in the regression equation, the results changed very little and the conclusions were unchanged. Thus, in order to create a regression model that was not restricted by demographics such as race or gender, the only covariate used in the final regression model was age.

Simultaneous multiple linear regressions for predicting Satisfaction with Life

Multiple linear regression was used to address the hypotheses in this study. The standardized regression equation from Table 9 can be written as follows (note that the βs are not rounded in the equation): Predicted score on Satisfaction with Life = .049*(Age) - .183*(Anxiety with People) - .209*(Avoidance with People) - .193*(Anxiety with God) + .119*(Avoidance with God). Anxiety with individuals has a mean score of 3.68 and avoidance with individuals has a mean score of 3.65. Anxiety with God has a mean score of 45.06 and avoidance with God has a mean score of 54.67.

Multiple regression was conducted by regressing the SWLS score on the ECR-R anxiety subscale, the ECR-R avoidance subscale, the AGI anxiety subscale, and the AGI avoidance subscale while controlling for age. The regression results can be found in

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Table 9. The overall model was significant, $F(5, 191) = 9.82$, $p = .001$, explaining 20.4%

of the variance in satisfaction with life.

Table 9.

Simultaneous Multiple Regressions for Predicting Satisfaction with Life from ECR-R

Anxiety, ECR-R Avoidance, AGI Anxiety, and AGI Avoidance controlling for Age (N =

197)

Predictors	B	$SE\ B$	β	p	R^2
Age	0.25	0.30	0.05	.415	.204
ECR-R anxiety	-1.02	0.42	-0.18	.016	
ECR-R avoidance	-1.32	0.43	-0.21	.002	
AGI anxiety	-0.08	0.03	-0.19	.009	
AGI avoidance	0.05	0.03	0.12	.073	

Note. The overall model was significant, $F(5, 191) = 9.82$, $p = .001$. The constant for the
model = 29.70.

Hypothesis 1.

If a participant reports having a secure attachment with both individuals and with

God (low levels of anxiety and low levels of avoidance), it is predicted that the level of

satisfaction with life will be high.

Hypothesis 2.

If a participant reports having a secure attachment with individuals (low levels of

anxiety and low levels of avoidance), but an insecure attachment with God (high levels of

anxiety and/or high levels of avoidance), it is predicted that the level of satisfaction with

life will be low.

Hypothesis 3.

If a participant reports having an insecure attachment with individuals (high levels of anxiety and/or avoidance), but a secure attachment with God (low levels of anxiety and avoidance), it is predicted that the level of satisfaction with life will be high.

Hypothesis 4.

If a participant reports having an insecure attachment with individuals (high levels of anxiety and/or avoidance) and an insecure attachment with God (high levels of anxiety and/or avoidance), it is predicted that the level of satisfaction with life will be low.

A regression for the SWLS score and the ECR-R anxiety subscale while controlling for the ECR-R avoidance subscale, the AGI anxiety subscale, and the AGI avoidance subscale found the ECR-R anxiety score was a significant negative predictor (β = -.18, p = .016). It could be concluded that life satisfaction was negatively predicted by attachment-related anxiety toward people while controlling for attachment-related avoidance toward people and attachment-related anxiety and avoidance toward God. This indicates that lower anxiety with people predicted higher life satisfaction and that higher anxiety with people predicted lower life satisfaction.

A regression for the SWLS score and the ECR-R avoidance subscale, while controlling for the other variables, found the ECR-R avoidance score as a significant negative predictor (β = -.21, p = .002). It could be concluded that life satisfaction was negatively predicted by attachment-related avoidance toward people while controlling for attachment-related anxiety toward people and attachment-related anxiety and avoidance toward God. This indicates that lower avoidance with people predicted higher life satisfaction and that higher avoidance with people predicted lower life satisfaction.

A regression for the SWLS score and the AGI anxiety subscale, while controlling for the other variables, found the AGI anxiety score as a significant negative predictor (β = -.19, p = .009). Thus, it could be concluded that life satisfaction was negatively predicted by attachment-related anxiety toward God while controlling for attachment-related anxiety and avoidance toward people and attachment-related avoidance toward God. This indicates that lower anxiety with God predicted higher life satisfaction and higher anxiety with God predicted lower life satisfaction.

A regression for the SWLS score and the AGI avoidance subscale, while controlling for the other variables, found the AGI avoidance score to be a nonsignificant positive predictor (β = .12, p = .073). Thus, it could *not* be concluded that life satisfaction was negatively predicted by attachment-related avoidance toward God while controlling for attachment-related anxiety and avoidance toward people and attachment-related anxiety toward God. This indicates that the level of avoidance with God did *not* significantly predict life satisfaction.

The regression results indicated that the AGI anxiety score was a significant negative predictor of SWLS (β = -.19, p = .009) that may be slightly stronger than the ECR-R anxiety score (β = -.18, p = .016). It could be concluded that attachment-related anxiety toward God was a stronger predictor than attachment-related anxiety toward people in predicting life satisfaction while controlling for attachment-related avoidance toward God and people, although the advantage was *very* small. This indicates that anxiety with God was the strongest predictor of life satisfaction when the other variables were in the model.

The regression results also indicated that the AGI avoidance score was not a significant negative predictor of SWLS ($\beta = .12$, $p = .073$), but the ECR-R avoidance score was a significant negative predictor ($\beta = -.21$, $p = .002$). Thus, it could not be concluded that attachment-related avoidance toward God was a stronger predictor than attachment-related avoidance toward people in predicting life satisfaction while controlling for attachment-related avoidance toward God and people. This indicates that avoidance with people was a significantly and unique predictor of life satisfaction when the other variables were in the model.

Supplementary Analysis: Predicting Satisfaction with Life

In the standardized equation, a person's age and their four attachment scores in z-score form can be inserted into the equation to get a *predicted* satisfaction score in raw score form. To provide a *general picture* of the different levels of satisfaction that would be provided by different patterns of high and low anxiety and avoidance scores with people and God, values of -1 and +1 were inserted into the standardized regression equation to represent low and high attachment scores on each variable. The value of -1 was chosen to represent a low score because a z-score of -1 represents a score that is 1 standard deviation below the mean of that variable. The value of +1 was chosen to represent a high score because a z-score of +1 represents a score that is 1 standard deviation above the mean of that variable. Age was held constant at the mean, so it was always entered as 0, thus eliminating the age variable from the standardized equation. The mean of age for the $N = 197$ participants who were used to create the regression model was 19.84 years, so the following scores apply to a person who is approximately 20 years of age.

Table 10.

Predicted Satisfaction Scores for Different Patterns of Attachment from Regression

Equation

Profile	Anxiety w/people	Avoidance w/people	Anxiety w/God	Avoidance w/God	Predicted Satisfaction w/Life score
1	High (1)	High (1)	High (1)	Low (-1)	20.41
2	High (1)	High (1)	High (1)	High (1)	21.92
3	Low (-1)	High (1)	High (1)	Low (-1)	22.74
4	High (1)	High (1)	Low (-1)	Low (-1)	22.86
5	High (1)	Low (-1)	High (1)	Low (-1)	23.07
6	Low (-1)	High (1)	High (1)	High (1)	24.25
7	High (1)	High (1)	Low (-1)	High (1)	24.37
8	High (1)	Low (-1)	High (1)	High (1)	24.58
9	Low (-1)	High (1)	Low (-1)	Low (-1)	25.19
10	Low (-1)	Low (-1)	High (1)	Low (-1)	25.39
11	High (1)	Low (-1)	Low (-1)	Low (-1)	25.52
12	Low (-1)	High (1)	Low (-1)	High (1)	26.70
13	Low (-1)	Low (-1)	High (1)	High (1)	26.90
Profile	Anxiety w/People	Avoidance w/People	Anxiety w/God	Avoidance w/God	Predicted Satisfaction w/Life Score
14	High (1)	Low (-1)	Low (-1)	High (1)	27.03
15	Low (-1)	Low (-1)	Low (-1)	Low (-1)	27.84
16	Low (-1)	Low (-1)	Low (-1)	High (1)	29.36

Note. Values of -1 and +1 were used to represent low and high z-scores on attachment, respectively. The standardized regression equation was used to compute z-scores on Satisfaction. The z-scores were then transformed into raw SWLS scores by multiplying by the standard deviation of 6.36 and adding to the mean of 24.88.

Patterns Interpreted As Profiles

This study had four different predictor variables since both measures had two subscales each measuring anxiety and avoidance. Adults with low levels of both attachment anxiety and avoidance are said to possess more attachment security, whereas higher scores in either dimensions (or both) are indicative of insecure attachment.

The four predicted variables in this study yielded 16 different outcome patterns based on the different possible scores for each variable. Table 10 displays the predicted

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satisfaction scores for the 16 patterns of high and low anxiety and avoidance with people and God developed from the regression equation. The range for satisfaction of life scores is from 5 (lowest score possible) to 35 (highest score possible).

Patterns are presented in the order of lowest to highest satisfaction with life and range from 20.41 (lowest score) to 29.36 (highest score). For example, the pattern in which a person has high anxiety with people, high avoidance with people, high anxiety with God, and low avoidance with God produced the lowest predicted satisfaction score. (20.41) The pattern in which a person has low anxiety with people, low avoidance with people, low anxiety with God, and high avoidance with God produced the highest predicted satisfaction score (29.36). Based on Bartholomew's model (1990) found in Figure 2, it is possible to elaborate on each profile.

Figure 2. *Bartholomew's Four-Point Model of Individual Differences in Adult Attachment*

Profile 1.

High anxiety with people and high avoidance with people on Bartholomew's model would be categorized as fearful-avoidant attachment. One has a negative perception of self, a negative perception of people, a desire for intimacy but distrust of others, and avoids close relationships. High anxiety with God and low avoidance with God on Bartholomew's model would be categorized as anxious-preoccupied attachment. One has a negative perception of self in relation to God, a positive perception of God, and overdependence on God. This profile predicted the lowest level of life satisfaction (20.41) in this sample.

Profile 2.

High anxiety with people and high avoidance with people on Bartholomew's model is categorized as fearful-avoidant attachment. One has a negative perception of self, a negative perception of people, a desire for intimacy but distrust of others, and avoids close relationships. High anxiety with God and high avoidance with God on Bartholomew's model is categorized as fearful-avoidant attachment. One has a negative perception of self in relation to God, a negative perception of God, desires intimacy with God but distrusts God, and avoids a close relationship with God. This profile predicted a very low level of life satisfaction (21.92) in this sample.

Profile 3.

Low anxiety with people and high avoidance with people on Bartholomew's model is categorized as dismissive-avoidant attachment. One has a positive perception of self, a negative perception of others, a denial of attachment or intimacy with others, and relies more on self and personal achievement. High anxiety with God with low avoidance

with God is categorized as anxious-preoccupied on Bartholomew's model. One has a negative perception of self in relation to God, a positive perception of God, and is overly dependent on God. This profile predicted a low level of life satisfaction (22.74) in this sample.

Profile 4.

High anxiety with people and high avoidance with people is categorized on Bartholomew's model as fearful-avoidant attachment. One has a negative perception of self, a negative perception of people, a desire for intimacy but a distrust of others, and avoids close relationships. Low anxiety with God and low avoidance with God is categorized as secure attachment. One has a positive perception of self in relation to God, a positive perception of God, is comfortable with intimacy and autonomy with God. This profile predicted a low level of life satisfaction (22.86) in this sample.

Profile 5.

High anxiety with people and low avoidance with people is categorized as anxious-preoccupied attachment. One has a negative perception of self, a positive perception of others, and is overly dependent on others. High anxiety with God and low avoidance with God is categorized as anxious-preoccupied attachment. One has a negative perception of self in relation to God, a positive perception of God, and is overly dependent on God. This profile predicted a low level of life satisfaction (23.07) in this sample.

Profile 6.

Low anxiety with people and high avoidance with people is categorized as dismissive-avoidant attachment. One has a positive perception of self, a negative

perception of others, denies attachment or intimacy with others, and relies on self and individual achievement. High anxiety with God and high avoidance with God is categorized as fearful-avoidant attachment. One has a negative perception of self in relation to God, a negative perception of God, desires intimacy but distrusts God, and avoids close relationships with God. This profile predicted a low level of life satisfaction (24.25) in this sample.

Profile 7.

High anxiety with people and high avoidance with people is categorized in Bartholomew's model as fearful-avoidant attachment. One has a negative perception of self, a negative perception of others, desires intimacy but distrusts others, and avoids close relationships. Low anxiety with God and high avoidance with God is categorized as dismissive-avoidant attachment. One has a positive perception of self in relation to God, a negative perception of God, denies attachment or intimacy with God, and relies more on self and individual goals. This profile predicted a low to average level of life satisfaction (24.37) in this sample.

Profile 8.

High anxiety with people and low avoidance with people is categorized as anxious-preoccupied attachment. One has a negative perception of self, a positive perception of others, and is overly dependent on others. High anxiety with God and high avoidance with God is categorized on Bartholomew's model as fearful-avoidant attachment. One has a negative perception of self in relation to God, a negative perception of God, desires intimacy with God but cannot trust God, and avoids a close

relationship with God. This profile predicted an average level of life satisfaction (24.58) in this sample.

Profile 9.

Low anxiety with people and high avoidance with people is categorized as dismissive-avoidant attachment. One has a positive perception of self, a negative view of others, denies attachment or intimacy with others, and relies more on self and individual achievement. Low anxiety with God and low avoidance with God leads to a secure attachment. One has a positive view of self, in relation to God, a positive view of God, and is comfortable with intimacy and autonomy with God. This profile predicted an average level of life satisfaction (25.19) in this sample.

Profile 10.

Low anxiety with people and low avoidance with people is categorized as a secure attachment. One has a positive view of self, a positive view of others, and is comfortable with intimacy and autonomy with others. High anxiety and low avoidance with God is an anxious-preoccupied attachment. One has a negative perception of self in relation to God, a positive perception of God, and is overly dependent on God. This profile predicted an average to high level of life satisfaction (25.39) in this sample.

Profile 11.

High anxiety with people and low avoidance with people is categorized as anxious-preoccupied attachment. One has a negative perception of self, a positive perception of others, and is overly dependent on others. Low anxiety with God and low avoidance with God is a secure attachment. One has a positive perception of self in relation to God, a positive perception of God, and is comfortable with intimacy and

autonomy with God. This profile predicted a high level of life satisfaction (25.52) in this sample.

Profile 12.

Low anxiety with people and high avoidance with people is categorized as dismissive-avoidant attachment. One has a positive view of self, a negative view of others, denies attachment or intimacy with others, and relies more on self and individual achievement. Low anxiety with God and high avoidance with God is categorized as dismissive-avoidant attachment. One has a positive perception of self in relation to God, a negative view of God, denies attachment or intimacy with God, and relies more on self and individual achievement. This profile predicted a high level of life satisfaction (26.70) in this sample.

Profile 13.

Low anxiety with people and low avoidance with people leads to a secure attachment. One has a positive view of self, a positive view of others, and is comfortable with intimacy and autonomy with others. High anxiety with God and high avoidance with God leads to a fearful-avoidant attachment to God. One has a negative perception of self in relation to God, a negative view of God, desires intimacy but distrusts God, and avoids a close relationship with God. This profile predicted a high level of life satisfaction (26.90) in this sample.

Profile 14.

High anxiety with people and low avoidance with people is categorized as anxious-preoccupied attachment. One has a negative view of self, a positive view of others, and is overly dependent on others. Low anxiety with God and high avoidance with

God is a dismissive-avoidant attachment style. One has a positive perception of self in relation to God, a negative view of God, denies attachment or intimacy with God, and relies more on self and individual achievement. This profile predicted a high level of life satisfaction (27.03) in this sample.

Profile 15.

Low anxiety with people and low avoidance with people is categorized as secure attachment. One has a positive view of self, a positive view of others, and is comfortable with intimacy and autonomy with others. Low anxiety with God and low avoidance with God also leads to secure attachment. One has a positive perception of self in relation to God, a positive perception of God, and is comfortable with intimacy and autonomy with God. This profile predicted a very high level of life satisfaction (27.84) in this sample.

Profile 16.

Low anxiety with people and low avoidance with people is categorized as secure attachment. One has a positive view of self, a positive view of others, and is comfortable with intimacy and autonomy with others. Low anxiety with God and high avoidance with God leads to a dismissive-avoidant attachment. One has a positive perception of self in relation to God, a negative perception of God, denies attachment or intimacy with God, and relies more on self and individual achievement. This profile predicted the highest level of life satisfaction (29.36) in this sample.

Generalized interpretation of four profiles in relation to hypotheses

Profile 15 in Table 10 shows that participants who scored low levels of anxiety and avoidance with adults on the ECR-R (secure attachment) and low levels of anxiety

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and avoidance with God on the AGI (secure attachment) predicts the second highest score on the Satisfaction with Life Scale (27.84). This supports our first hypothesis.

Profile 13 in Table 10 shows that participants who scored low levels on anxiety and low levels of avoidance with adults on the ECR-R (secure attachment) and high levels of anxiety and high levels of avoidance with God on the AGI (insecure attachment) have the fourth highest score on the Satisfaction with Life Scale (26.90). This profile does not support our second hypothesis.

Profile 4 in Table 10 shows that participants who scored high levels on anxiety and high levels of avoidance with adults on the ECR-R (insecure attachment) and low levels of anxiety and low levels of avoidance with God on the AGI (secure attachment) is the fourth from the lowest score on the Satisfaction with Life Scale (22.86). This profile does not support hypothesis three.

Profile 2 in Table 10 where participants who scored high levels on anxiety and high levels of avoidance with adults on the ECR-R (insecure attachment) and low levels of anxiety and low levels of avoidance with God (secure attachment) on the AGI is the second lowest score on the Satisfaction with Life Scale (21.92). This profile does not support hypothesis four.

DISCUSSION

The main goal of this study was to investigate the relationship between attachment with people and attachment with God and their relationship to on life satisfaction. It was hypothesized that individuals with higher levels of secure attachment with people and

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with God would exhibit a higher level of life satisfaction and those with higher levels of insecure attachment with people and with God would have a lower level of life satisfaction. It was also hypothesized that, even if an individual has a higher level of secure attachment with people, an insecure attachment with God would result in lower levels of satisfaction and those with lower levels of secure attachment with people and higher levels of secure attachment with God would exhibit higher levels of life satisfaction.

The results show, as hypothesized, that higher levels of secure attachment with people and higher levels of secure attachment with God resulted in a higher level of life satisfaction. The study also found and supported the hypothesis that individuals who exhibited higher levels of insecure attachment with people and higher levels of insecure attachment with God resulted in a lower level of life satisfaction. These results contribute to the research on attachment and are supported by the literature.

Previous studies find that those who report higher life satisfaction exhibit more trust in others (Brehm & Rahn, 1997) and are more prone to self-disclosure (Diener & Seligman, 2004), which are characteristics of securely attached relationships. In addition, individuals who exhibit strong and secure attachment styles in their relationships with others evidence less loneliness, hostility, and/or psychosomatic illness when compared to individuals with insecure attachment styles (Hazan & Shaver, 1990). Past studies on attachment support the idea that insecure attachment style is consistently associated with low levels of emotional well-being and higher levels of depression and anxiety (Carnelley, Pietromonaco, & Jaffe, 1994; Kobak, Sudler, & Gamble, 1991).

Individuals who report having a secure attachment to God report a higher level of well-being and lower levels of anxiety, loneliness, depression, and physical illness than those with an insecure attachment to God (Kirkpatrick & Shaver, 1992; Kirkpatrick, Shillito, & Kellas, 1999). Individuals who report having an insecure attachment to God exhibit a lower level of well-being and higher levels of anxiety, loneliness, depression, and physical illness than those with a secure attachment to God (Kirkpatrick & Shaver, 1992; Kirkpatrick, Shillito, & Kellas, 1999).   In addition, a study by Rowatt and Kirkpatrick (2002) demonstrated how an anxious (or insecure) attachment to God was a significant predictor of negative affect, which could also contribute to low satisfaction of life.

Thus, possessing secure relationships on both constructs is predictive of a higher level of satisfaction and possessing insecure relationships on both constructs is predictive of a lower level of life satisfaction. These findings contribute and support previous research as well as the correspondence hypothesis that suggests that the same attachment one has with individuals is the same kind of attachment they seek from God. It is a familiar relationship style that, once developed, is static throughout one's lifetime (Kirkpatrick, 1992; Kirkpatrick & Shaver, 1990). This suggests that an individual's attachment style to their caregiver will influence and quite possibly predict their attachment styles in romantic relationships, relationships with other adults, and to God. If one develops an insecure attachment to a caregiver early in life, this might lead to the same insecure relationship with God (Kirkpatrick, 1992). For example, avoidant attachment to God is positively correlated with the avoidant dimension of adult and supports the theoretical correspondence between attachments in these two domains

attachment (Granqvist & Hagekull, 1999; Kirkpatrick & Shaver, 1992; Kirkpatrick, 1998).

On the other hand, a secure attachment to caregivers in early life is found to lead an

individual to adopt the same, if any, religious and spiritual values and beliefs similar to

those of their parents (Reinert & Edwards, 2009).

Interestingly, the current study also discovered that individuals who scored lower

on secure attachment with people and higher on secure attachment to God resulted in

lower levels of life satisfaction. In contrast, individuals who scored higher on secure

attachment with people and lower on insecure attachment to God resulted in a higher level

of life satisfaction. These results did not support the other two hypotheses in this study,

which suggested that, despite the secure or insecure relationship one has with individuals,

the secure or insecure relationship with God would be the determining factor in high life

satisfaction. Instead, they support the compensation hypothesis (Granqvist, 1998;

Kirkpatrick, 1997, 1998). The compensation hypothesis suggests that if an attachment

system is activated when one perceives a situation to be threatening or distressful and the

attachment figure is not accessible or responsive to attachment behaviors, a secondary or

surrogate attachment figure may be sought (Ainsworth, 1985). This secondary attachment

figure could be an older sibling, athletic coach, teacher, and pastors among other

possibilities. The secondary attachment figure could also be God (Granqvist, 1998;

Kirkpatrick, 1992; Kirkpatrick & Shaver, 1990). Essentially, individuals who lack

sufficient attachment bonds seek out that attachment with God and those with strong

attachment bonds do not feel the need to compensate with a relationship with God.

Individuals who grow up with insecure attachments to nonreligious parents have more of a

tendency to turn to God and religion, as they get older (Granqvist, 1998; Kirkpatrick,

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1997).

Table 4 presents us with the data that may explain why these hypotheses are not supported. Anxiety (β = -.18, p = .016) and avoidance with people (β = -.21, p = .002) have significant negative regression weights. Anxiety with God has a significant negative regression weight (β = -.19, p = .009), but avoidance with God has a nonsignificant, but positive regression weight (β = .12, p = .073). Anxiety with God carries more of the weight because it is a significant predictor and is larger in magnitude. Avoidance with God does not carry as much weight in predicting SWLS because it is not a significant predictor and is smaller in magnitude. It could be possible to interpret this result as anxiety and avoidance with God cancelling each other out when a person is higher in both anxiety and/or avoidance or lower on both anxiety and/or avoidance with God. Essentially, satisfaction with life goes up about equally when anxiety with people, avoidance with people, and anxiety with God goes down, but satisfaction goes down just slightly when avoidance with God goes down because avoidance with God is not a significant predictor of satisfaction. Thus, it can be concluded that attachment with people ends up carrying more weight in predicting life satisfaction than attachment with God. There might be a few possibilities for these findings.

First, those who have a secure attachment with people, an insecure attachment to God, and a higher satisfaction with life may invest more in the "here and now," rather than the Hereafter. Indeed, numerous studies conclude that social relationships are essential to well-being and life satisfaction (Lansford, 2000; Park, Peterson, and Seligman, 2004). Diener and Seligman (2002) found in their study that those who reported being

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very happy, which is a component of life satisfaction and subjective well-being, had excellent social relationships.

In fact, in this study, the general profile for an individual with the highest level of life satisfaction also had slight high avoidance with God that may indicate that, even though they believe in God, they may not be distressed by their ambivalent relationship with God. Perhaps Kierkegaard (1847) said it best when stressing the importance of social relationships while also living "before God":

> It is in fact Christian love which discovers and knows that one's neighbor exists and that—it is one and the same thing—everyone is one's neighbor. If it were not a duty to love, then there would be no concept of neighbor at all. But only when one loves his neighbor, only then is the selfishness or preferential love rooted out and the equality of the eternal preserved…If you want to love me, then love the men you see; what you do for them, you do for me…if you want to show that your life is intended to serve God, *then let it serve people*, yet continually with the thought of God. (p. 58)

People are primarily relational and this is emphasized in the Judeo-Christian philosophy as well as the dogma of other religions. For example, for Jews, religion involves relationships with the community. Much of Jewish law focuses on how Jews relate to each other within and outside of the Jewish community and the steadfast love (*hesed*) to be bestowed on others (Worthington and Berry, 2005). In Christianity, two of the primary commands of Jesus are to love God (Matthew 22:37, New International Version) and to love thy neighbor as thy self (Matthew 19:19 and Matthew 22:39, New International Version). St. Paul stressed love (*agape*) to be one of the greatest of all spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 13, New International Version). In Islamic tradition, compassion is compared to selfless love for others. The Sufi mystic Muhaiyaddeen (1981) stated that, "Once you have God's love, God's qualities, and God's actions, everyone is connected to you…" (p.24). The Buddha taught compassion and loving-

kindness through *metta*, preaching, "…whatever kinds of worldly merit there are, all are not worth one sixteenth part of the heart-deliverance of loving kindness," (Itivuttaka sutta 27).

There is a second possibility for the findings in this study. Individuals who have an insecure attachment with people, a secure relationship with God, and exhibit a lower satisfaction with life may be less invested in the "here and now," seeing it as temporary. Instead, these individuals focus more on the life to come after death. Satisfaction with "life" is, instead, an ethereal concept and unattainable here on earth. Satisfaction will come in the afterlife through faith and grace of God. Hence, these individuals do not invest as much into their personal relationships with others because people are mere "houses" for their souls for the duration of time on this earth. This perspective is most likely limited to monotheistic religions since many polytheistic religions, such as Hinduism and Buddhism, believe in reincarnation and karma. Reincarnation refers to the individual's soul taking on the embodiment of a new form on earth after each death. The rebirth will occur on earth and be one of five classes of living beings (including animals and humans) and is governed by karma, the concept that one's actions in this life will determine the consequences or benefits of their next life on earth (Jones and Hostler, 2005). Thus, relationships and actions taken in this life are deemed as important because it will influence the one's next life and, most likely, how satisfied one is with it.

Another possibility is the life stage of college students. This stage is full of change and exploration. A transition to this stage can be influenced by attachment and that can then effect life satisfaction and social competence (Wei, Russell, & Azkalik, 2005; Wright & Perrone, 2010). Students who have a history of secure relationships have the ability to

access social support, resources, and have the confidence to create interpersonal relationships to meet their needs (Weinfield, Sroufe, Egeland, & Carlson, 2008). Students who have a history of insecure relationships are more likely to have significantly high interpersonal distress, lack social confidence, and might gravitate more towards a relationship with God in order to compensate for these social deficits (Wei & Mallinckrodt, 2002). However, even though they might be able to develop a secure relationship with God, their lack of self-efficacy in social situations might still lead them to have a lower satisfaction of life.

Limitations of Study

There are a few important methodological limitations of this study. First, there is the possibility of response bias and social desirability that can occur with self-reports, though this is unlikely due to the measures taken to assure anonymity. In addition, the AGI, one of the measures used for this study, does not have test-retest reliability, despite its history of use in replicated studies that show good internal consistency.

Second, the sample for this study was primarily homogenous, with Christian, college aged, White women as the dominant part of the sample. Further research is needed to replicate this study with different populations, specifically homogenous monotheistic religious groups, such as Muslims or Southern Baptists and polytheistic groups, such as Hindis.

Third, although age was controlled for in this study, older populations might have different results since they tend to engage more in religious or spiritual practices than those of younger populations (Miller, 2005). In addition, research on attachment and the transition from high school to college indicates that attachment styles strongly contribute

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to adjustment (Cutrona, Cole, & Colangelo, 1994; Holmbeck & Wandrei, 1993; Kenny & Donaldson, 1991; Kenny & Rice, 1995; Rice, 1992). Adolescents and young adults, which would be the developmental stage for the sample of this study, often report that friends are their most important influence, outside of family, and friendship is related to social competence and well-being (Brown, 2004; Hartup & Abecassis, 2002). Social relationships are important and this could be why, for this particular sample, attachment to people is more significant in life satisfaction rather than attachment to God. Future studies should include a different or a more broad age range.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this study is that a secure relationship with God and a secure relationship with people are significant predictors for higher life satisfaction. This supports our first hypothesis as well as the previous literature. This study also found that relationships with people might be slightly more significant in determining life satisfaction than a relationship with God. This may suggest that a secure attachment and relationship with individuals are *more* significant to higher life satisfaction than a secure attachment and a relationship with God. This does not minimize the importance of a relationship with God or the benefits of a religious or spiritual component in one's life. There are still strong associations between religious and spiritual commitment and healthy physiological and psychological processes. However, a secure relationship with God *and* a secure relationship with people might be considered the ideal for higher life satisfaction.

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Implications for Practice

In closing, if practitioners, public policies, employers, and others can cultivate an environment that encourages and values quality relationships with families, co-workers, and communities it could very well have a positive effect on one's overall satisfaction with life. Satisfaction with life can then create a spillover effect. For example, higher satisfaction with life for individuals might increase one's engagement in work and lead to higher production and lower turnover. Satisfaction with life and positive secure relationships, which correlate with better physical and mental health, might create healthier individuals and decrease the dependence on medical assistance from the government. Schools that stress social skills within their curriculum may contribute to the creation of rewarding friendships and monogamous relationships.

Counseling psychologists should acknowledge the amount of influence attachment has on client's current relationships, relationship with God, social self-efficacy, and life satisfaction. A client's current struggles in their intimate relationships might reflect the kind of relationship they have with God and might help explain the level of satisfaction they have with their life. Understanding these relationships is helpful to gain perspective on a client's worldview and how they see themselves, their expectations from others, self-regulation, coping behaviors, paths toward forgiveness or empathy, ways to find peace, and, hopefully, enhance therapeutic change. The findings of this study can also help support the motivation to explore spiritual or religious issues with clients in therapy. These issues may be vital elements of a client's life but have often had a history of being ignored in a therapeutic setting.

Ultimately, the inclusion of religious and spiritual issues, such as these, in psychological practice, emphasizes the importance of multicultural competence. Thus, in order to promote the ideals of multicultural competence and these specific client issues, there is a need for practitioners and researchers to have better self-awareness of their own religious and spiritual values and attachment styles, knowledge of conceptual models and intervention techniques, and an ability to implement training opportunities.

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Figure 1.

Scatterplot of studentized residuals and standardized predicted values for the regression.

Figure 2.

Bartholomew's Four-Point Model of Individual Differences in Adult Attachment (1990)

Table 1.

Frequencies and Percentages for Categorical Variables

	Frequency	Percent
Gender (*N* = 197)		
Male	77	39.1
Female	120	60.9
Race (*N* = 197)		
White	161	81.7
Black or African American	9	4.6
American Indian or Alaska Native	1	0.5
Asian (Indian, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese)	16	8.1
Hispanic or Latino (Mexican, Puerto Rican,Cuban)	3	1.5
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	1	0.5
Some other race	4	2.0
Two or more races	2	1.0
US native (*N* = 196)		
Native (this refers to anyone born in the U.S. or a U.S. Islander)	157	80.1
Foreign born (this refers to anyone who is not a U.S. citizen)	39	19.9
Student status (*N* = 196)		
Freshman	57	29.1
Sophomore	53	27.0
Junior	41	20.9
Senior	45	23.0
Highest level of education (*N* = 197)		
High school graduate or GED	57	28.9
Some college, no degree	126	64.0
Associate's Degree	5	2.5
Bachelor's Degree	9	4.6
Relationship status (*N* = 195)		
Single	112	57.4
Married	4	2.1
In a relationship	79	40.5

Religious background ($N = 197$)		
Buddhist	1	0.5
Christian	167	84.8
Hindu	5	2.5
Islam	9	4.6
Jewish	1	0.5
Other	14	7.1

Table 2.

Descriptive Statistics for Continuous Variables (N = 197)

	M	*SD*	Range	Skewness	Kurtosis
ECR-R anxiety (people)	3.68	1.15	1.06 – 6.50	0.02	-0.58
ECR-R avoidance (people)	3.65	1.00	1.39 – 6.72	0.31	-0.05
AGI anxiety (God)	45.06	14.60	14.00 – 91.00	0.15	-0.18
AGI avoidance (God)	54.66	15.56	14.00 – 98.00	0.09	-0.30
Satisfaction with life	24.88	6.36	6.00 – 35.00	-0.62	-0.16
Age	19.84	1.39	18.00 – 25.00	0.78	0.76

Table 3.

Cronbach's Alpha Reliabilities for Scales

	N	Number of items	Reliability (α)
ECR-R anxiety (people)	183	18	.93
ECR-R avoidance (people)	184	18	.92
AGI anxiety (God)	197	14	.89
AGI avoidance (God)	197	14	.89
Satisfaction with life	197	5	.88

Table 4.

Pearson Correlations between Scales and Age

	SWLS	ECR-R Anxiety	ECR-R Avoidance	AGI Anxiety	AGI Avoidance	Age
SWLS	--					
ECR-R anxiety	-.34***	--				
ECR-R avoidance	-.29***	.29***	--			
AGI anxiety	-.33***	.46***	.18**	--		
AGI avoidance	.12	.01	.06	-.14	--	
Age	.06	-.13	.04	-.01	-.13	--

Note. SWL = Satisfaction with life. ECR-R = Experiences in Close Relationships-Revised. AGI = Attachment to God Inventory. Listwise deletion was applied so *N* = 197 for all correlations.
**p ≤ .01. ***p ≤ .001.

Table 5.

Independent t tests Comparing White and Nonwhite Participants on all Scales

	White (n = 161) M (SD)	Nonwhite (n = 36) M (SD)	t(df)
Satisfaction with life	25.27 (6.25)	23.17 (6.62)	1.80(195)
ECR-R anxiety (people)	3.74 (1.16)	3.40 (1.07)	1.62(195)
ECR-R avoidance (people)	3.62 (1.01)	3.79 (0.99)	-0.93(195)
AGI anxiety (God)	44.57 (14.56)	47.25 (14.75)	-1.00(195)
AGI avoidance (God)	55.76 (15.39)	49.78 (15.60)	2.10(195)*

*p < .05.

Table 6.

Independent t tests Comparing Participants who were not in a Relationship and

Participants who were in a Relationship on all Scales

	Not in a relationship (*n* = 112) M (SD)	In a relationship (*n* = 83) M (SD)	t(df)
Satisfaction with life	24.67 (6.21)	25.06 (6.60)	-0.42(193)
ECR-R anxiety (people)	3.79 (1.05)	3.50 (1.24)	1.74(158.91)
ECR-R avoidance (people)	3.78 (1.03)	3.45 (0.93)	2.25(193)*
AGI anxiety (God)	44.09 (13.93)	46.34 (15.53)	-1.06(193)
AGI avoidance (God)	54.49 (16.44)	54.89 (14.59)	-0.18(193)

Note. If Levene's test for unequal variances was significant, the *t* test for unequal variances was applied and the degrees of freedom differ from $n_1 + n_2 - 2$.
*$p < .05$.

Table 7.

Independent t tests Comparing Native and International Participants on all Scales

	Native (n = 157) M (SD)	International (n = 39) M (SD)	t(df)
Satisfaction with life	25.05 (6.22)	24.03 (6.87)	0.90(194)
ECR-R anxiety (people)	3.75 (1.15)	3.40 (1.14)	1.72(194)
ECR-R avoidance (people)	3.59 (1.04)	3.88 (0.86)	-1.82(68.37)
AGI anxiety (God)	45.03 (14.94)	45.41 (13.42)	-0.15(194)
AGI avoidance (God)	55.65 (15.80)	50.72 (14.27)	1.78(194)

Note. If Levene's test for unequal variances was significant, the *t* test for unequal variances was applied and the degrees of freedom differ from $n_1 + n_2 - 2$. There were no significant *t* tests.

Table 8.

Independent t tests Comparing Male and Female Participants on all Scales

	Male (n = 77) M (SD)	Female (n = 120) M (SD)	t(df)
Satisfaction with life	24.52 (5.70)	25.12 (6.76)	-0.64(195)
ECR-R anxiety (people)	3.49 (1.16)	3.81 (1.13)	-1.91(195)
ECR-R avoidance (people)	3.65 (1.89)	3.65 (1.08)	0.04(195)
AGI anxiety (God)	43.64 (13.65)	45.97 (15.16)	-1.09(195)
AGI avoidance (God)	55.13 (14.08)	54.37 (16.49)	0.34(195)

Note. There were no significant *t* tests.

Table 9.

Simultaneous Multiple Regressions for Predicting Satisfaction with Life from ECR-R Anxiety, ECR-R Avoidance, AGI Anxiety, and AGI Avoidance controlling for Age (N = 197)

Predictors	B	$SE\ B$	β	p	R^2
Age	0.25	0.30	0.05	.415	.204
ECR-R anxiety	-1.02	0.42	-0.18	.016	
ECR-R avoidance	-1.32	0.43	-0.21	.002	
AGI anxiety	-0.08	0.03	-0.19	.009	
AGI avoidance	0.05	0.03	0.12	.073	

Note. The overall model was significant, $F(5, 191) = 9.82$, $p = .000$. The constant for the model = 29.70.

Table 10.

Predicted Satisfaction Scores for Different Patterns of Attachment from Regression

Equation

Profile	Anxiety w/people	Avoidance w/people	Anxiety w/God	Avoidance w/God	Predicted Satisfaction w/life score
1	High (1)	High (1)	High (1)	Low (-1)	20.41
2	High (1)	High (1)	High (1)	High (1)	21.92
3	Low (-1)	High (1)	High (1)	Low (-1)	22.74
4	High (1)	High (1)	Low (-1)	Low (-1)	22.86
5	High (1)	Low (-1)	High (1)	Low (-1)	23.07
6	Low (-1)	High (1)	High (1)	High (1)	24.25
7	High (1)	High (1)	Low (-1)	High (1)	24.37
8	High (1)	Low (-1)	High (1)	High (1)	24.58
9	Low (-1)	High (1)	Low (-1)	Low (-1)	25.19
10	Low (-1)	Low (-1)	High (1)	Low (-1)	25.39
11	High (1)	Low (-1)	Low (-1)	Low (-1)	25.52
12	Low (-1)	High (1)	Low (-1)	High (1)	26.70
13	Low (-1)	Low (-1)	High (1)	High (1)	26.90
14	High (1)	Low (-1)	Low (-1)	High (1)	27.03
15	Low (-1)	Low (-1)	Low (-1)	Low (-1)	27.84
16	Low (-1)	Low (-1)	Low (-1)	High (1)	29.36

Note. Values of -1 and +1 were used to represent low and high z-scores on attachment, respectively. The standardized regression equation was used to compute z-scores on Satisfaction. The z-scores were then transformed into raw SWLS scores by multiplying by the standard deviation of 6.36 and adding to the mean of 24.88.

APPENDIX A

Extended Literature Review

Introduction

This chapter includes four sections. The first section helps define some of the terms used in this study. The second section discusses the role of religion and spirituality in psychology. The third section gives an overview of attachment theory. The fourth section discusses attachment theory as conceptualized in a relationship with God.

Definition of Terms

Religion and Spirituality

Religious factors are concerned with "prescribed beliefs, rituals, and practices, as well as social institutional features" (Miller & Thoreson 1999, p.6), which demonstrate how one relates to the divine or sacred. According to Wong (1998) religion is "one manifestation of spirituality and, as a cultural phenomenon, tends to involve societal institutions, shared beliefs, symbols, and rituals" (p.367). Melton's (1996) *Encyclopedia of American Religions* identifies over 2,135 religious groups in the U.S., including nearly 1,200 Christian denominations (p.29). Koenig, McCullough, and Larson (2001) describe religion as an organized system of beliefs, rituals, practices, and symbols that create a kind of closeness to the sacred and transcendent (God, higher power, The Divine, ultimate truth). Religion also embodies a commitment to foster one's understanding and one's responsibility to others within a community.

On the other hand, spirituality focuses on an individual's subjective experience; it can be conceptualized but not captured in dichotomous categories. Schneiders (1989)

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says spirituality is the "experience of consciously striving to integrate one's life in terms not of isolation and self-absorption but of self-transcendence toward the ultimate value one perceives" (p.684). Spirituality is also described as having observable behaviors, such as meditation, fasting, prayer, and study that bring about a "reality of a spiritual dimension beyond sensory and intellectual knowledge" (Miller & Thoreson, 1999, p.8). In *The Handbook of Religion and Health* (2001), Koenig, et al. define spirituality as a personal journey toward discovering answers to life's ultimate questions about life, meaning, and relationships with the sacred or transcendent, which may or may not lead to the development of religious rituals and creation of a community.

For the purposes of this study, religion and spirituality will be used interchangeably, due to the main objective being to better understand an individual's relationship with God, higher power, the Divine, the sacred, or the transcendent, in terms of attachment.

Attachment System

Bowlby (1969) first introduced attachment theory as a behavioral system. Mikulincer and Shaver (2007) described this system as, "a species-universal, biologically evolved neural program that organizes behavior in ways that increase the chances of an individual's survival and reproduction, despite inevitable environmental dangers and demands" (p.10). Essentially, the attachment system creates and regulates behaviors that obtain and maintain proximity with a specific person or persons identified as an infant or child's primary caregiver (Bretherton, 1985). The proximity with the caregiver ideally provides a sense of safety and protection, which insures survival.

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Attachment Styles

The attachment system manifests as patterns that create attachment styles. These styles are a result of the history of an individual's attachment experiences (Ainsworth, 1967). These attachment styles are differentiated by distinct patterns of expectations, needs, and emotions (Fraley & Shaver, 2000). Attachment styles are described generally as secure, avoidant, anxious, and disorganized, depending on the kind of patterns exhibited toward the primary caregiver or relationship partner.

Attachment Figures

Attachment figures are individuals a person turns to when protection and support are needed. According to attachment theory (e.g., Ainsworth, 1991; Hazan & Shaver, 1994; Hazan & Zeifman, 1994), an attachment figure has three purposes. First, the attachment figure is the focus of "proximity seeking." Closeness to the attachment figure is desired in times of need. Second, the attachment figure serves as a "safe haven," providing protection, comfort, and support. Third, the attachment figure provides a "secure base" which creates a safe environment in order to pursue goals that are not related to attachment. Lastly, when the attachment figure is separated from the infant or child, there is often "separation protest," meaning the infant or child becomes distressed when separated from the figure because they perceive the separation as a threat to accessibility to the caregiver (Kobak & Madsen, 2008). An individual only becomes an attachment figure when he or she provides a safe haven and secure base in times of threat or danger (Mikulciner & Shaver, 2007). Primary caregivers serve as attachment figures during infancy, but in later childhood, adolescence, and adulthood other relationship partners can serve as attachment figures.

Life Satisfaction

Life satisfaction is an evaluative judgment (Pavot & Diener, 2008) and a "cognitive evaluation of one's life" (Diener, 1984, p.550). There are six main variables that best predict an individual's happiness and satisfaction with life (Argyle, 1987; Diener, Suh, Lucas, & Smith, 1999; Myers, 1992). These variables are a sense of perceived control, positive self-esteem, extroversion, optimism, a sense of meaning and purpose in life, and positive social relationships (Compton, 2005). More specifically, according to a 2009 study by Kapteyn, Smith, and Van Soest, determinates of global life satisfaction include four domains: daily activities (including one's job), social contact and family, health, and income, the latter being the lowest determinate. The positive psychology movement places an emphasis on understanding the importance of life satisfaction and how to enhance these variables and determinates.

Social bonds and attachment to other individuals can result in health benefits or decrements from the absence or loss of such bonds. Disruptions in relationships can make an individual more vulnerable to mental illness, disease, an impaired immune system, substance abuse, and suicide, all elements that contribute to life satisfaction (Bloom, Asher, & White, 1978; Goodwin, Hurt, Key, & Sarret, 1987; Lynch, 1977; Uchino, Cacioppo, & Kiecolt-Glaser, 1996). Thus, the importance of understanding these relationships in the context of an individual's life can be essential in treatment.

The Importance of Religion and Spirituality in Psychology

Multicultural training and competency are now promoted heavily in the areas of counseling and psychology. This competency is tested when students and practitioners are required to have: "(a) an awareness of one's own cultural heritage, (b) respect and

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comfort with other cultures and values that differ from one's own, and (c) an awareness of one's helping style and how this style could affect clients from other cultural backgrounds" (Walker, Gorsuch, & Tan, 2004, p.49). However, in an attempt to distance itself from the subjective, unscientific nature of religion and spirituality in psychology, psychological research and training overlooks a major area of diversity and an integral part of human lives.

The psychology of religion and spirituality is often ignored by mainstream psychology (Baumeister, 2002; Hill, Sarazin, Atkinson, Cousineau, & Hsu, 2003; Kirkpatrick, 1992). There are reasons why this may occur. First, some researchers may view the study of religion and spirituality as unscientific (Simpson, 2002). Second, some of the variables involved in religion (e.g., social support) can be studied outside the realm of religion (Funder, 2002). Third, religiosity and spirituality may be too complex, multifaceted, and therefore, too difficult to study (Hill et al., 2003; Simpson, 2002). Fourth, psychologists as researchers and clinicians tend to be less religious or spiritual than the general public and surround themselves with like-minded colleagues, hence psychologists tend to believe religion and spirituality are relatively unimportant in research or practice (Baumeister, 2002; Joules, 2001). Finally, there are few major, mainstream psychological theories directly applied to the psychology of religion research (Kirkpatrick, 1992; Simpson, 2002).

In addition to lack of a research emphasis, educational programs and professional organizations also fail to incorporate religion and spirituality in their training. Burke, Chauvin, & Miranti (2005) propose several different reasons for why spirituality and religion have been omitted from educational training in the past:

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Our nation's founding principle of separation of church and state, the sacred from the secular, has contributed to the segregation of religious beliefs and practices from the professional mental health field. Like the larger society, secular mental health professionals adopted a hands-off attitude, wanting to be 'value free' so as not to intrude into client's spirituality or to impose personal values on the client. Rigid boundaries were drawn and issues of religion and spirituality have been viewed as the province of ministers, priests, and rabbis. Spiritual issues were seen as existing in a separate realm from psychological and physical distress and therefore were to be ignored. Professionals were taught to adopt a stance of neutrality and remain objective and unbiased. (p. 6-7)

Religion was finally included as an element of human diversity in the American Counseling Association and the American Psychological Association codes of ethics (Miller, 2003). Additionally, in 2001, the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Education Programs (CACREP) included religious and spiritual values in the standards under the common core area of Social and Cultural Foundations (Miller, 2003, p.3-4). These guidelines include explaining the difference between spirituality and religion, exploring one's own religious and spiritual beliefs, showing sensitivity to a variety of religious clients, and identifying competency and professional limits (Burke, et al., 2005).

The latest revision of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-IV TR)* also recognizes the role of spirituality and religion in mental health. A patient can be diagnosed with a DSM-IV code, listed as V Code 62.89, which is "a religious or spiritual problem…that involve(s) loss or questioning of faith, problems associated with conversion to a new faith, or questioning of spiritual values that may or

may not necessarily be related to an organized church or religious institution" and demonstrates a need for clinical attention (American Psychiatric Association [DSM-IV-TR], 2000, p.741). Richards and Bergin (1997) discuss five reasons helping professionals should assess for religion and spirituality when diagnosing and doing treatment planning. These reasons include obtaining a more thorough understanding of the client's worldviews, exploring whether or not religious orientation is healthy or maladaptive, and becoming aware of religious interventions that might be helpful in treatment.

Researchers are also starting to recognize the influences of religion on psychological functioning (Jones, 1994). More specifically, recent research is examining the relationship between religious faith and positive mental health benefits. This research reveals that positive contributions to overall mental and physical health are attributed to religious and spiritual faith (Donahue & Benson, 1995; Ellison, 1991; Larson et al., 1992). Richards and Bergin (2000), recognize that religion and spirituality provide coping behaviors for stress, grief, and illnesses. Religious individuals report fewer illnesses, better recovery from illnesses, a greater tolerance for pain, and live longer lives (George, Larson, Koenig, & McCullough, 2000). Religious individuals are also less likely to suffer from depression, anxiety, suicidal ideation, and partake in alcohol or drug abuse (Donahue & Benson, 1995).

In order to encourage religious and spiritual identity and assessment in education, training, and practice, clear standards, such as course objectives and textbook recommendations can be set by professional organizations. Although it is noted in professional ethical codes, there is very little done to actually promote this diversity issue in the profession. Faculty and staff must have an openness to offer this area of diversity

training and create an environment where students feel safe and respected rather than stereotyped and ostracized. Clinical and training settings can also encourage religious and spiritual assessment by providing intake forms tailored to include these aspects of a client's history. Formal quantitative assessment tools, as well as qualitative assessments, can be used to gauge spiritual and religious histories. For example, the genogram and narrative life-line activities allow therapists to map out the generations of a client's family and give a visual representation of the "ways in which clients' religious/spiritual heritage continues to affect their current beliefs" (Frame, 2003, p.104). The spiritual genogram and narrative life-line take note of conversions, baptisms, significant rituals and events that were religious or spiritual in nature. In addition, the absence of such rituals and events can also have significance.

Theory, research, and training in psychology are beginning to address religious and spiritual issues, but there is still much work to be done. Although there are faith identity models, assessment tools, and ethical codes promoting multicultural competency in this area, there is a need for more research and information for practical application. Therapy content, such as grief, illness, world events, marriage, gender roles, and sexuality, often influence a client's thoughts on religion. How can practitioners be best prepared for these discussions? When is it time for them to refer their client due to conflicting values? What leads people to experience a complete religious overhaul or give up on God?

Overview of Attachment Theory

Childhood Attachment

Attachment theory was first introduced by John Bowlby to help explain the emotional bond and the behaviors that were used to maintain an infant's proximity to a

caregiver and to protect the infant from danger (Bowlby, 1969/1982). Bowlby found that when infants were separated from their caregiver they would go to great lengths to prevent the separation or to immediately reestablish proximity to their caregiver. Bowlby suggested that these kinds of behaviors (clinging, crying, raising of the hands) might serve an evolutionary function. Since infants are unable to feed and care for themselves, they are dependent upon the parent or caregiver. Throughout history, infants who were able to maintain proximity to their caregiver, through the use of attachment behaviors, were more likely to survive and reproduce.

In order to survive during times of alarm or distress the attachment system becomes activated and the child engages in activities that allow the child to grow closer in proximity to the attachment figure. Bowlby (1969/1982) notes that there are three situations that can trigger the activation of attachment behaviors: (a) frightening or alarming events; (b) illness, injury, or fatigue; and (c) separation or threat of separation from attachment figures. The activation of the attachment system results in attachment behaviors that are thought to have the biological function to protect oneself from psychological or physical harm (Bretherton, 1985). Bowlby (1969/1982) suggested that attachment behaviors, such as these, are just as important as mating and feeding because the attachment system has its own distinct internal motivation: safety. When put in these situations a child that exhibits attachment behaviors is then soothed most effectively and quickly by the attachment figure (Bretherton, 1985). The knowledge that the attachment figure will be available and responsive creates a feeling of security and a strong bond between the attached person and attachment figure.

The attachment system is cyclical (Mikulciner & Shaver, 2007). The individual experiences distress, seeks protection and safety from an attachment figure, experiences a reduction in distress, feels safe once again, and the individual is then able to return to other activities and interests (Mikulciner & Shaver, 2007). Thus, the availability or lack of protection and security has many implications for regulating emotions, coping with distress, feeling valued, and modeling in relationships (Mikulciner & Shaver, 2007).

Early attachment experiences with caregivers create expectations of these caregivers, which are then incorporated into an internal working model (IWM) (Bowlby, 1969). These internal working models provide a schema that guides perceptions and behaviors in later relationships (Main, Kaplan, & Cassidy, 1985). More specifically, an internal working model (IWM) can set the stage for how an individual feels worthy of love and their level of trust with others in relationships (Neswald-NcCalip, 2001). Attachment style and internal working models (IWM) are participant to change due to history and contextual factors (Bowlby, 1988). However, most attachment styles remain static and resistant to change. Attachment styles will more than likely end up manifesting in other relationships often during times of distress or emergency (Bretherton, 1985; Shaver & Hazan, 1988).

Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, and Wall (1978) added upon Bowlby's theory by suggesting that there are different styles of attachment observed in children as early as six months old. The Strange Situation, developed by Ainsworth and her colleagues, presented 12-month old infants with a play environment where they were in the presence of their mothers, exposed to strangers and separated from their mothers, and then reunited with their mothers. Three attachment styles were coded: secure, anxious-ambivalent, and

anxious-avoidant. A fourth attachment style, disorganized-disoriented, was later identified by Main et al. (1985).

Infants that explored the environment in their mother's presence, showed some anxiety upon her separation, and were easily comforted when reunited with their parent, were categorized as having a secure attachment style. A secure style suggests high functioning of attachment between the child and caregiver. The attachment figure gives help and comfort when needed, provides a safe haven, and a secure base for exploration. In response to this cycle, the attached child develops an internal working model (IWM) that suggests they are worthy of love and support.

Another category of infants in the Strange Situation showed anxiety in exploration of the novel environment, even with the mother present. These infants became extremely distressed when the mother left them in the room with the stranger. Upon the mother's return, the infants sought to remain close to the mother, but also became resentful and resistant when the mother initiated attention. Infants displaying these attachment behaviors were categorized as having an anxious-ambivalent attachment style because they reflected a child's uncertainty about a caregiver's responsiveness and availability. An anxious-ambivalent style suggests that caregivers are inconsistent and unpredictable in how they respond to an infant's needs. The child is constantly unsure how the caregiver will meet their needs or requests. The attached child may develop an internal working model (IWM) that leads them to question their worthiness and their trust in others.

Lastly, Ainsworth and her colleagues categorized infants into an anxious-avoidant attachment style. These infants avoided or ignored their mother in the novel environment, showed little to no emotion when the mother left, exhibited low levels of exploration, and

had little to no emotion when the mother returned. The anxious-avoidant attachment style results when a caregiver lacks responsiveness and availability; they also avoid physical contact. In avoidant relationships, the child expects all efforts to gain attention from the caregiver to be dismissed. In response to this, the attached child may develop an internal working model (IWM) that leads them to believe they are unworthy of help, comfort, or love.

Main and her colleagues (1985) extended the attachment research by identifying the attachment style of infants who did not fit into these three attachment styles by Ainsworth. She labeled infants with a disorganized-disoriented style. These infants exhibited behaviors that were "inexplicable, odd, disorganized, disoriented or overtly conflicted… in the parent's presence" (Main & Hesse, 2000, p. 1099). When in distress or in need of comfort, these infants seemed confused about what to do and exhibited misdirected movements and incomplete expressions. They engaged in contradictory behaviors such as reaching their arms out to the parent while backing away. Infants also displayed apprehension when their mother approached or they would freeze or slow their movements in response to their mother's attempts to approach them. The disorganized-disoriented attachment style often results from parents who frighten their children when they are seeking comfort and security. Parents also may unconsciously respond to their children in threatening or inappropriate ways that confuse and disorient their children in their attempt to seek proximity and comfort.

Adult Attachment

Differences in attachment in childhood will, more often than not, influence relationship styles and patterns in adulthood. The internal working models (IWM) that

individuals create regarding adult relationships are often a reflection of their childhood experiences. For example, a child that grows up with a secure style of attachment has experiences that validate they can depend on others and that others will keep them safe. Having these experiences encourages the child to seek out relationships that correspond to these relationship expectations.

The requirements of the attachment figure in adult relationships are similar to those in infancy and childhood. The adult attachment figure is the focus of "proximity seeking," behaviors; however, unlike attachment in children, proximity can be in the form of mental representations of the relationship partner (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007). Mental representations can create a feeling of safety and can be symbolic of protection. The adult attachment figure, or partner, serves as a "safe haven," by providing reassurance, comfort, and support in times of need, just as the attachment figure in infancy or childhood. The adult attachment figure provides a "secure base" which creates a sense of security and safety in the relationship so that the individual can pursue goals outside of the attachment relationship and grow as a person (Feeney & Monin, 2007). Lastly, "separation protest" and distress occurs as a result of losing the adult attachment figure through death, divorce, or some other sort of separation, either temporary or permanent.

Hazan and Shaver (Hazan & Shaver, 1987; Shaver & Hazan, 1998; Shaver, Hazan, & Bradshaw, 1988) agree that adult attachment is the emotional bond created between adult romantic partners and has similar characteristics and motivations found in the emotional bond between infants and their caregivers. They found that individuals, when asked to self-report about their romantic attachment patterns, variables, such as working models about relationships and love, reflections of childhood experiences with parents,

and work experiences were theoretically relevant to adult attachment (1987, 1990). Hazan and Shaver developed a prototype for adult attachment that follows in the footsteps of Ainsworth's attachment styles: a secure style, an avoidant style, and an anxious-ambivalent style.

Investigators became somewhat critical of Hazan and Shaver's model of adult attachment (Collins & Read, 1990; Levy & Davis, 1988) because they felt that it was limited by placing individuals into categories of attachment rather than dimensions of attachment. Researchers then attempted to design measures that would use continuous rating scales (Collins & Read, 1990; Feeney & Noller, 1990; Levy & Davis, 1988) and broadened their focus on close relationships rather than just romantic relationships.

The attempts to create multi-item scales found that there were two distinct dimensions that continued to manifest in self-report measures about attachment style. These distinct dimensions were anxiety and avoidance. Attachment anxiety is defined as "involving a fear of interpersonal rejection or abandonment, an excessive need for approval from others, and distress when one's partner is unavailable or unresponsive" (Wei, Russell, Mallinckrodt, & Vogel, 2007, p.188). Attachment avoidance is defined as "involving fear of dependence and interpersonal intimacy, an excessive need for self-reliance, and reluctance to self-disclose" (Wei et al., 2007, p. 188). High scores on one or both of these dimensions suggest that individuals have an insecure attachment style (Wei et al., 2007). Low scores on attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance dimensions suggest that individuals have a secure attachment style (Brennan, Clark, & Shaver, 1998; Lopez & Brennan, 2000; Mallinckrodt, 2000).

Using dimensions rather than categories, Bartholomew (1990) proposed a different model of adult attachment. She suggested that our attachment style was a reflection of both our models of self and our models of others. These perceptions of the self and others are either positive or negative. The self is seen as worthy or unworthy of love and others are seen as available, unreliable, or dismissive. By looking at both the self and others, Bartholomew proposed a model of four attachment styles in adulthood. These styles include a secure style and the insecure styles labeled in dimensions as anxious-preoccupied, dismissive-avoidant, and fearful-avoidant. Researchers are increasingly adopting Bartholomew's four-point model of adult attachment.

In Bartholomew's model, a secure adult attachment style involves a positive perception of the self and a positive perception of others. This is exhibited as low avoidance and low anxiety on the model. A secure style leads to an individual being comfortable with intimacy and autonomy. An anxious-preoccupied attachment style involves a negative perception of the self and a positive perception of others. This is exhibited as low avoidance and high anxiety on the model. An individual with an anxious-preoccupied attachment style may find their self as overly dependent in their adult relationships. Dismissive-avoidant style individuals have a positive perception of self and a negative perception of others. This is exhibited as low anxiety and high avoidance on the model. Often individuals with a dismissive avoidant attachment style deny attachment or intimacy with others and rely heavily on individual achievement and self-reliance. Fearful-avoidant (which has also been described as disorganized) individuals have a negative perception of self and a negative perception of others. This is exhibited as high anxiety and high avoidance on the model. Individuals who have a

fearful-avoidant attachment style desire intimacy but their distrust in others leads them to

avoid close relationships that could lead to rejection or loss. Bartholomew's model can be

seen in Appendix I.

Attachment Conceptualized in a Relationship With God

It is suggested that one's relationship with God is not only an attachment

relationship, but also a reflection of one's internalized relational schemas (Brokaw &

Edwards, 1994; Heinrich, 1982; Jensma, 1993; Rizzuto, 1974). One's perceived idea of

God will also be a reflection of one's early attachments as well as other significant

attachment relationships throughout one's lifespan. Kirkpatrick (1992, Kirkpatrick &

Shaver, 1990) suggests that monotheistic religions believing in a personal God might also

fit into the attachment theory framework because God is often conceptualized as a parent

or attachment figure (Granqvist & Kirkpatrick, 2008). Kaufman (1981, p. 67) states that,

"The idea of God is the idea of an absolutely adequate attachment-figure…God is thought

of as a protective and caring parent who is always reliable and always available to its

children when they are in need." In contrast, a 2006 study by Baylor Institute for Studies

of Religion reported that 31% of Americans view God as "judgmental," 25% see God as

"benevolent," 23% describe God as "distant," and 16% view God as "critical."

Attachment to God, at least in monotheistic traditions, fulfills the same criteria that

are required in an attachment relationship with another individual: the importance of

proximity to the attachment figure, the attachment figure is seen as a "safe haven," the

attachment figure provides a secure base, and separation protest can occur. However, a

study by Kumari and Pirta (2009) using the Attachment to God Inventory (Beck &

McDonald, 2004) with a sample of individuals who identified as Hindu, a polytheistic

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religion, found that individuals held a strong belief in God, a strong belief in the power of

God, and various ways and uses for prayer. Additionally, Granqvist, Mikulincer, and

Shaver (2010), suggest that attachment theory proves useful in conceptualizing other

aspects of religion where there is no anthropomorphic God figure, such as Buddhism.

Buddhism "involves vividly what it feels like to have an attachment figure (often one's

mother) provide one with unconditional love, and this love is then turned outward toward

other people" (p.56). A Buddhist nun, Pima Chödrön, (2003) emphasizes the importance

of security (a safe haven), love, and "mindfulness":

> Our mind is always seeking zones of safety…We fear losing our illusion of
> security—that's what makes us so anxious…That's the essences of samsara—that
> cycle of suffering that comes from continuing to seek happiness in all the wrong
> places. (pp.23-24)

Religion offers a variety of ways to seek proximity to God. Although God is

frequently described as being omnipresent, the most important form of proximity-

maintaining attachment behavior is prayer (Reed, 1978). Prayer is described as "the most

often practiced form of religiosity," (Trier & Shupe, 1991) and individuals who pray,

"believe(s) that he speaks with God, immediately present and personal" (Heiler, 1932, p.

356). Attachment patterns with God in a secure relationship include a desire to maintain a

close proximity to God. This proximity is satisfied through prayer and religious services

that instill a sense of security and comfort from God. Individuals can be "touched" by

God, be "close" and intimate with God, or be cold and distant from God. An avoidant

attachment to God results in less effort toward proximity, while an anxious-ambivalent

attachment to God may lead to maladaptive efforts toward proximity.

God also serves as a "safe haven," which is another criterion of attachment. Hood,

Spilka, Hunsberger, and Gorsuch (2003, p. 386-387) suggest three triggers that may have

people turning to God in times of trouble: (a) illness, disability, and other negative life events that cause both mental and physical distress; (b) the anticipated or actual death of friends and relatives; and (c) dealing with an adverse life situation. These triggers are similar to the attachment triggers that Bowlby (1969/1982) suggests as being necessary to activate the attachment system in children.

Attachment also provides a "secure base" to allow for exploration. Secure-base themes are found in much of the Judeo-Christian Bible. In the book of Psalms, God is often described as "a shield for me" (Psalms 3:3 New International Version), "my rock, and my fortress" (Psalms 18:2, New International Version), and "the strength of my life" (Psalms 27:2, New International Version). The 23rd Psalm (New International Version) which states, "Yea, though I walk through the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me" is probably one of the most well known examples describing God as providing this secure base. A relationship with God is often seen to provide strength, peace, and resiliency and the concept of God as providing a secure base is not limited to Christian religious tradition (Kirkpatrick, 2005).

Finally, the threat of separation from God also fits into the requirements for an attachment figure. God does not die or move away as might happen in child or adult attachment relationships, but separation can happen in other ways. Potential separation might occur depending on what one believes happens after death (Kirkpatrick, 2005). Another way to "lose" God might be to simply cease believing in God. There are also situations where individuals believe they have been abandoned by God and "lose" God. Pargament (1990) quotes a Holocaust survivor:

> I used to have a very personal intimate relationship with God. I thought
> everything I did and every move I made God knew and was right there...He'd be

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there just above me, watching and admonishing and saying 'tut-tut-tut' about those inner thoughts I might have…Then the Nazis came and where did He go? God was no longer near me. Disappeared. And I am no longer the person I was. (p. 134)

It appears that even Mother Theresa, a mentor for spiritual and religious individuals alike, suffered from a similar separation from God. Her posthumously published private papers (2007) portray a painful experience:

Since [age] 49 or 50 this terrible sense of loss-this untold darkness—this loneliness, this untold darkness—this loneliness, this continual longing for God—which gives me that pain deep down in my heart—Darkness is such that I really do not see…—the place if God in my soul is blank—There is no God in me—when the pain of longing is so great—I just long & long for God—and then it is that I feel—He does not want me—He is not there—…God does not want me—sometimes I just hear my own heart cry out—"My God" and nothing else comes. (pp. 1-2)

If God can be conceptualized as an attachment figure, then it suggests that attachment styles to God also manifest, just as they do in child and adult relationships. Kirkpatrick and Shaver (1992) constructed a measure of attachment to God using similar attachment categories as outlined earlier by Ainsworth and Hazan and Shaver. A secure attachment style with God is exemplified by statements such as, "God is generally warm and responsive to me; He always seems to know when to be supportive and protective of me, and when to let me make my own mistakes. My relationship with God is always comfortable, and I am very happy and satisfied with it" (Kirkpatrick and Shaver, 1992, p.639). Thus, individuals with a secure attachment to God have a positive view of themselves and of God. God is seen as trustworthy and dependable. There is little fear of abandonment and there is a great deal of emphasis on having intimacy with God.

An anxious-preoccupied attachment style is described as, "God is generally impersonal, distant, and often seems to have little or no interest in my personal affairs and

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problems. I frequently have the feeling that He doesn't care very much about me, or that

he might not like me" (Kirkpatrick and Shaver, 1992, p. 639). Individuals with an

anxious-preoccupied attachment style to God have a positive view of God but a negative

view of themselves. There is much guilt, shame, and fear of not measuring up to God's

expectations. This leads to feeling rejected or being abandoned due to their

transgressions. Although these individuals desire intimacy with God, they fear they are

not worthy of such a relationship and constantly work to remain in good favor with God.

An avoidant-dismissive attachment style with God states that "God seems to be

inconsistent in His reactions to me; He sometimes seems very warm and responsive to my

needs, but sometimes not. I'm sure that He loves me and cares about me, but sometimes

He seems to show it in ways I really don't understand" (Kirkpatrick & Shaver, 1992, p.

639). Those with an avoidant-dismissive attachment style to God have a negative view of

God and positive view of themselves. Individuals are more independent and have

difficulty trusting God because they see Him as unreliable and unpredictable. A

relationship with God is not a priority nor is it a necessity.

Lastly, those with fearful-avoidant attachment (disorganized) have a negative view

of God and a negative view of themselves. They fear intimacy with God because they do

not want to be rejected of abandoned. Thus, they usually avoid having any kind of

relationship in order to protect themselves from these disappointments.

Research into the connection between attachment to God and attachment to adults

also introduces the correspondence and compensation hypotheses (Kirkpatrick, 1992;

Kirkpatrick & Shaver, 1990). The correspondence hypothesis is based on the idea that

attachment style, once developed, is static throughout one's lifetime. Thus, an

individual's attachment style to their caregiver will influence and quite possibly predict their attachment styles in romantic relationships and relationships with other adults. In addition, it might predict their attachment style to God. If one develops an insecure attachment to a caregiver early in life, this might lead to the same insecure relationship with God (Kirkpatrick, 1992). For example, avoidant attachment to God is positively correlated with the avoidant dimension of adult attachment (Granqvist and Hagekull, 1999; Kirkpatrick & Shaver, 1992; Kirkpatrick, 1998) and supports the theoretical correspondence between attachments in these two domains. On the other hand, a secure attachment to caregivers in early life leads to an individual adopting the same, if any, religious and spiritual values and beliefs similar to those of their parents (Reinert & Edwards, 2009).

The compensation hypothesis suggests the opposite of the correspondence hypothesis. As discussed previously, one's attachment system is activated when they perceive a situation to be threatening or distressful. The compensation hypothesis suggests that if the attachment figure is not accessible or responsive to attachment behaviors, a secondary or surrogate attachment figure may be sought (Ainsworth, 1985). This secondary attachment figure could be an older sibling, athletic coach, teacher, and pastors among other possibilities. The secondary attachment figure could also be God (Granqvist, 1998; Kirkpatrick, 1992; Kirkpatrick & Shaver, 1990). Individuals who grow up with insecure attachments to nonreligious parents have more of a tendency to turn to God and religion as they get older while those with insecure relationships with parents who are very religious are more likely to turn away from God (Granqvist, 1998; Kirkpatrick, 1997). In 2004, Granqvist and Kirkpatrick conducted a meta-analysis of studies and

found that gradual conversions occurred more for those with a history of secure

attachments, consistent with the correspondence hypothesis. On the other hand,

individuals with sudden religious conversions were more likely to have a history of

insecure attachment, consistent with the compensation hypothesis.

Appendix B

Informed Consent

Dear Participant,

My name is Michelle Hastings and I am a doctoral student in the Department of Education, School and Counseling Psychology at the University of Missouri. I am collecting data for my dissertation research project and I would like to invite you to participate in this project. The goal of this research project is to better understand people's relationship with God and with other individuals.

Your participation in this research project is completely voluntary and anonymous. You are not required to answer every question and you will not be penalized if you do not complete the survey. The entire procedure involves completing a survey online that should take about 15 minutes.

If you choose to participate in any part of taking the survey, you may opt to enter your e-mail into a drawing for one of three $100 gift certificates from the campus bookstore. Only an e-mail address will be asked if you choose to participate in the drawing, otherwise no identifying information will be asked of you to complete the survey. Neither your name nor any other identifying information will be linked to your responses in any way. Access to the data will be limited to the principal investigator and the faculty advisor. All data will be stored in a password-protected computer, under the control of the principal investigator.

Participating in this research involves minimal risk. There is a chance that you may feel somewhat uncomfortable answering some of the questions about yourself, your relationship with God, and your relationship with others. If you do experience distress as a result of filling out this survey, it is recommended that you contact the campus Counseling & Health Services office at (573) 592-5361. There are no direct benefits for your participation. However, your participation will help to further research in the areas of psychology and religion.

If you have any questions concerning this research, please contact me by phone at (573) 639-0055 or via e-mail at mrh989@mizzou.edu. If you have any further questions, you can reach my MU Faculty Advisor for this project, Dr. Norm Gysbers by phone at (573) 882-6386 or via e-mail at gysbersn@missouri.edu. If you have any questions concerning the rights of research participants or if you want to file any complaints about this project, please contact UMC Campus IRB Office at (573) 882-9585.

Warmly,
Michelle Hastings, M.Ed.
Doctoral Student, University of Missouri
Department of Education, School and Counseling Psychology

The Experiences in Close Relationships-Revised Scale
(Fraley, Waller, & Brennan, 2000)

The statements below concern how you feel in emotionally intimate relationships. We are interested in how you generally experience relationships, not just in what is happening in a current relationship. Respond to each statement by clicking a number to indicate how much you agree or disagree with the statement

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

1. I'm afraid that I will lose the love of others._____
2. I often worry that other people will not want to stay with me._____
3. I often worry that other people don't really love me._____
4. I worry that other people won't care about me as much as I care about them._____
5. I often wish that other people's feelings for me were as strong as my feelings for him or her._____
6. I worry a lot about my relationships._____
7. When other people are out of my sight, I worry that they might become interested in someone else._____
8. When I show my feelings for other people, I'm afraid they will not feel the same about me._____
9. I rarely worry about people leaving me._____
10. Other people make me doubt myself._____
11. I do not often worry about being abandoned._____
12. I find that people don't want to get as close as I would like._____
13. Sometimes people change their feelings about me for no apparent reason._____
14. My desire to be very close sometimes scares people away._____
15. I'm afraid that once someone gets to know me, he or she won't like who I really am._____
16. It makes me mad that I don't get the affection and support I need from my people._____
17. I worry that I won't measure up to other people._____
18. People only seem to notice me when I'm angry._____
19. I prefer not to show people how I feel deep down._____
20. I feel comfortable sharing my private thoughts and feelings with other people._____
21. I find it difficult to allow myself to depend on other people._____
22. I am very comfortable being close to other people._____
23. I don't feel comfortable opening up to other people._____
24. I prefer not to be too close to other people._____
25. I get uncomfortable when another person wants to be very close._____
26. I find it relatively easy to get close to other people._____

27. It's not difficult for me to get close to other people._____
28. I usually discuss my problems and concerns with other people._____
29. It helps to turn to others in times of need._____
30. I tell other people just about everything._____
31. I talk things over with other people._____
32. I am nervous when people get too close to me._____
33. I feel comfortable depending on other people._____
34. I find it easy to depend on other people._____
35. It's easy for me to be affectionate with other people._____
36. People really understand me and my needs._____

<u>The Attachment to God Inventory</u>
(Beck & McDonald, 2004)

The following statements concern how you feel about your relationship with God. We are interested in how you generally experience your relationship with God, not just in what is happening in that relationship currently. Respond to each statement by indicating how much you agree or disagree with it. Write the number in the space provided, using the following rating scale:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Disagree Strongly			Neutral/Mixed			Agree Strongly

_____ 1. I worry a lot about my relationship with God.
_____ 2. I just don't feel a deep need to be close to God.
_____ 3. If I can't see God working in my life, I get upset or angry.
_____ 4. I am totally dependent upon God for everything in my life. (R)
_____ 5. I am jealous at how God seems to care more for others than for me.
_____ 6. It is uncommon for me to cry when sharing with God.
_____ 7. Sometimes I feel that God loves others more than me.
_____ 8. My experiences with God are very intimate and emotional. (R)
_____ 9. I am jealous at how close some people are to God.
_____10. I prefer not to depend too much on God.
_____11. I often worry about whether God is pleased with me.
_____12. I am uncomfortable being emotional in my communication with God.
_____13. Even if I fail, I never question that God is pleased with me. (R)
_____14. My prayers to God are often matter-of-fact and not very personal.*
_____15. Almost daily I feel that my relationship with God goes back and forth from "hot" to "cold."
_____16. I am uncomfortable with emotional displays of affection to God.*
_____17. I fear God does not accept me when I do wrong.
_____18. Without God I couldn't function at all. (R)
_____19. I often feel angry with God for not responding to me when I want.
_____20. I believe people should not depend on God for things they should do for themselves.
_____21. I crave reassurance from God that God loves me.
_____22. Daily I discuss all of my problems and concerns with God. (R)
_____23. I am jealous when others feel God's presence when I cannot.
_____24. I am uncomfortable allowing God to control every aspect of my life.
_____25. I worry a lot about damaging my relationship with God.
_____26. My prayers to God are very emotional. (R)
_____27. I get upset when I feel God helps others, but forgets about me.
_____28. I let God make most of the decisions in my life. (R)

Appendix E

<u>Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS)</u>
(Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1984)

Below are five statements with which you may agree or disagree. Using the scale below, indicate your agreement with each item by placing the appropriate number on the line preceding that item. Please be open and honest in your response.

> 7 Strongly agree
> 6 Agree
> 5 Slightly agree
> 4 Neither agree nor disagree
> 3 Slightly disagree
> 2 Disagree
> 1 Strongly disagree

_____ In most ways, my life is close to my ideal.
_____ The conditions of my life are excellent.
_____ I am satisfied with my life.
_____ So far, I have gotten the important things I want in life.
_____ If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing.

Now add up your total score for the five items: _____

Appendix F

<u>Demographic Questions</u>

1. What is your age? _____

2. What is your gender?
a. Female
b. Male

3. What is your race?
a. White or Caucasian
b. Black or African American
c. American Indian or Alaska Native
d. Asian (i.e. Indian, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese)
e. Hispanic or Latino (i.e. Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban)
f. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
g. Some other race
h. Two or more races

4. Are you a native U.S. citizen or foreign born?
a. Native (this refers to anyone born in the U.S. or a U.S Island Area such as Puerto Rico, or born abroad of a U.S. citizen parent.)
b. Foreign born (this refers to anyone who is not a U.S. citizen at birth)

5. What is your current status as a student?
a. Freshman
b. Sophomore
c. Junior
d. Senior

6. What is currently your highest level of education?
a. High school graduate or GED
b. Some college, no degree
c. Associate degree
d. Bachelor's degree
e. Graduate or professional degree

7. What is your current relationship status?
a. Single
b. Married
c. Divorced
d. Separated
e. In a relationship
f. Widowed

8. Please indicate your religious background:
a. Agnostic
b. Atheist
c. Buddhist
d. Christian
e. Hindu
f. Islam
g. Jewish
h. Other

VITA

Michelle Hastings graduated from Stephens College in 1998 with a Bachelor's degree in Fine Arts. After graduating, she spent five years working in Los Angeles in various fields of work. She returned to graduate school in 2004 and earned a Master's degree in counseling psychology from the University of Missouri in 2006. She is currently a doctoral candidate in the Counseling Psychology program at the University of Missouri and will complete her predoctoral internship at the University of Texas at Austin in 2011-2012.

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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ATTACHMENT TO ADULTS,
ATTACHMENT TO GOD, AND SATISFACTION WITH LIFE

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ABSTRACT

The present study was created to contribute to the literature on religious and spiritual
issues in the field of psychology by examining the relationship of attachment with individuals
and attachment to God on life satisfaction. Multiple regressions were conducted using a
sample of 197 undergraduate students who believe in the existence of God or higher power.
This study concluded that a high secure attachment with individuals and a high secure
attachment with God yielded one of the highest levels of life satisfaction. Thus, both secure
relationships with individuals and secure relationships with God both appear to be important
constructs when predicting overall life satisfaction. Clinical implications of this study's
findings are discussed.

The Relationship between Attachment to Adults, Attachment to God,

and Life Satisfaction

INTRODUCTION

Richards, Rector and Tjelveit (1999) found that "95% of Americans say that they

believe in God…70% belong to a church or synagogue…72% say that religious faith is

the most important influence in their life…84% say they try hard to put their religious

beliefs into practice in their relationships with others" (p.155-6). More recently, a

Newsweek/Beliefnet poll (Adler, 2005) of Americans showed that over 80% of

respondents identified with some denomination of Christianity, while only 6% claimed to

be atheist, agnostic, or have no religious affiliation at all. In addition, 84% of Americans

rated spirituality as being somewhat or very important in their daily lives. Furthermore,

64% of respondents reported that they engage in prayer, and 29% engage in meditation

every day.

Despite these numbers, researchers maintain that religion and spirituality are often

neglected in psychological research (Jones, 1994; Plante, 1996). Since its inception, the

field of psychology took a negative view of these subjects. In his book, *Future of an

Illusion*, Freud criticized religion by stating that it was "A system of wishful illusions

together with a disavowal of reality, such as we find nowhere else…but in a state of

blissful hallucinatory confusion" (1927/1964, p.71). A national study of APA

psychologists found that 85% reported rarely, if ever, having discussed religion or

spiritual issues during their own training (Lukoff, Lu, & Turner, 1998). Other studies

report that most psychotherapists either avoid the theme of religion, or handle it with insufficient professionalism (Miller, 2003). Along with avoidance of the topic, counselors may be influenced by their own religious or spiritual beliefs. Practitioners might not be aware of potential countertransference, may be biased in their interventions, or inadvertently impose their own values on clients.

Attachment Theory

Attachment theory suggests that, in order to survive, individuals develop an attachment to a primary caregiver who insures a sense of closeness, safety, and protection (e.g., Ainsworth, 1991; Hazan & Shaver, 1994; Hazan & Zeifman, 1994). In infancy and childhood, primary caregivers serve as attachment figures and in adolescence and adulthood other relationship partners can serve as attachment figures. Individuals learn to regulate their behavior so that they can be close to the primary caregiver or relationship partner (Bretherton, 1985). These behaviors then manifest into clear attachment styles based on the history of their emotional and physical needs being met by the primary caregiver or relationship partner (Fraley & Shaver, 2000).

Attachment styles have been categorized as secure, avoidant, anxious, and disorganized/fearful. Attachment styles guide the quality of our relationships, our view of the world, and the depth of our lives (Bowlby, 1958). Attachment theory is an important framework in research examining psychological and emotional well-being (Lopez & Brennan, 2000; Mallinckrodt, 2000). The theory has been used to explain critical phenomena related to relationships with caregivers (Bowlby, 1988), adult romantic relationships (Hazan & Shaver, 1987), coping after trauma (Mikulincer, Florian, & Weller, 1993), client-counselor working alliance (Mallinckrodt, 2000; Mallinckrodt, B.,

Coble, H.M., & Gantt, D.L., 1995; Mallinckrodt, B., Gantt, D. L., & Coble, H. M., 1995; Mallinckrodt, B., Porter, M. J., Kivlighan, D. M., Jr., 2005), client-supervisor working alliance (Riggs & Bretz, 2000), as well as religious and spiritual beliefs and behaviors (Kirkpatrick, 1997, 1998, 1999; Kirkpatrick & Shaver, 1990).

Religion and spirituality are considered key elements of psychological and emotional well-being (Compton, 2005). Attachment styles and religious and spiritual beliefs often manifests similar relationship qualities. Not only do individuals have an attachment style with other people but they can also have an attachment style to God. For example, those who have more insecure attachment styles in their adult relationships may compensate for this by trying to create a secure relationship with God (Granqvist & Hagekull, 1999; Kirkpatrick, 1998). In contrast, those with secure or insecure attachment styles in their adult relationships may have a similar or corresponding attachment style with God (Granqvist & Hagekull, 1999; Kirkpatrick, 1998).

Life Satisfaction

According to Pavot and Diener (1993), overall life satisfaction is a "distinct construct representing a cognitive and global evaluation of the quality of one's life as a whole" (p.137). Relationships are a determinant of life satisfaction (Kapteyn, Smith, & Van Soest, 2009) thus, the kind of attachment in these relationships is important to understand (Lopez, 2003; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000; Snyder & Lopez, 2002).

Purpose of Study and Potential Implications

As explained earlier, past research finds positive correlations in secure attachment style to adults and positive elements of life satisfaction. As expected, there is also a positive correlation between insecure attachment styles to adults and negative elements of

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life satisfaction. In addition, there is a positive correlation in secure attachment style to God and positive elements of life satisfaction and a positive correlation between insecure attachment styles to God and negative elements of life satisfaction. The strong associations with life satisfaction and healthy self-regulation in adulthood, attachment style with adults and with God could serve as key constructs in the continued development of positive psychology which aims to better understand "the factors that allow individuals, communities, and societies to flourish," (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000, p.5).

The relationship between the two constructs of attachment with adults and with God and their roles on life satisfaction have not been studied together. The purpose of this study is to extend the literature in the attachment to God research by addressing the void that exists concerning how both the role of attachment with adults and attachment with God have on overall life satisfaction. Essentially, is there a relationship between attachment to adults and attachment to God in overall life satisfaction? If this research question is answered and our hypotheses are supported by the data then it will suggest that having a religious or spiritual component in one's life contributes to life satisfaction. This will not only support research in the area of positive psychology which suggests that a relationship with a higher power leads to higher levels of life satisfaction, but it also will suggest that practitioners and researchers alike, must take a closer look at these constructs in the lives of individuals.

Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1. If a participant reports having a secure attachment with both individuals and with God (low levels of anxiety and low levels of avoidance), it is predicted that the level of satisfaction with life will be high.

Hypothesis 2. If a participant reports having a secure attachment with individuals (low levels of anxiety and low levels of avoidance), but an insecure attachment with God (high levels of anxiety and/or high levels of avoidance), it is predicted that the level of satisfaction with life will be low.

Hypothesis 3. If a participant reports having an insecure attachment with individuals (high levels of anxiety and/or avoidance), but a secure attachment with God (low levels of anxiety and avoidance), it is predicted that the level of satisfaction with life will be high.

Hypothesis 4. If a participant reports having an insecure attachment with individuals (high levels of anxiety and/or avoidance) and an insecure attachment with God (high levels of anxiety and/or avoidance), it is predicted that the level of satisfaction with life will be low.

METHOD

Participants

The targeted group for this study was students at a small, coeducational, four-year, residential liberal arts college in the Midwest. Student enrollment for this college is just over 1,000. In the academic year for 2009-2010, the student body represented 27 states and 65 countries, making this college one of the most diverse small liberal arts colleges in the country. The college offers 36 majors, 34 minors, and 12 pre-professional programs. Participants were students enrolled in the college for the 2010-2011 year and represented a variety of geographical locations and several different academic majors, thus not

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restricting the generalizability of this study's results to one immediate area or one program of study.

A power analysis using the G*Power analysis software (Faul, Erdfelder, Lang, & Buchner, 2007) suggested a sample size of 106 participants in order to detect a medium effect size (w =.15). Based on past sample sizes in adult attachment and attachment to God studies (Beck & McDonald, 2004), a sample size of approximately 150+ appeared to be appropriate and was sought.

Instruments

Experiences in Close Relationships-Revised Scale (ECR-R). The Experiences in Close Relationships-Revised Scale (ECR-R) developed by Fraley, Waller, and Brennan (2000) (see Appendix C) is a revised version of Brennan, Clark, and Shaver's (1998) Experiences in Close Relationships Scale. The ECR-R is a 36 item self-report scale that asks participants to respond using a 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from "Strongly Disagree" (1) to "Strongly Agree" (7).

Fraley et al. (2000) define attachment style anxiety as the extent to which a person is insecure about his or her partner's availability and responsiveness. They define attachment style avoidance as the extent to which a person is uncomfortable being close to others. Lower attachment anxiety or attachment avoidance scores indicate a more secure attachment style. They suggest rewording items to read as "others" or "other people" rather than "romantic partners," if this will better suit the intended research. Since we were more concerned with general adult attachment rather than romantic adult attachment, we modified these items in the measure for this study.

Sibley and Liu (2004) assessed the ECR-R and concluded that the scale has acceptable classical psychometric properties. Factor structure, internal reliability, and short-term temporal stability were assessed. Separate exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses collected two separate times showed that the ECR-R displayed a two factor structure and provided reliable and replicable measures of the attachment anxiety and avoidance subscales. In addition, latent variable path analyses and test-retest over a 6-week period suggested that repeated measures of the subscales shared 86% of their variance. The estimate of internal consistency reliability is .90 or higher for the ECR-R (Fraley, Waller, & Brennan, 2000). A study by Strodl and Noller (2003) found validity of the ECR-R supported with good correlations with other measures of attachment style and predictable patterns of correlations with measures of family functioning and personality; the coefficient alpha for this study's sample on the ECR-R was .95.

Examples of the anxiety items are: "I often worry that my partner will not want to stay with me," and "I often wish that my partner's feelings for me were as strong as my feelings for him/her." Examples of the avoidance items are: "I feel comfortable sharing my private thoughts and feelings with my partner," and "I am nervous when partners get too close to me." These items are indicated on a 7-point Likert scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*).

To score the ECR-R, answers 1-18 comprised the attachment-related anxiety scale and items 19-36 comprised the attachment –related avoidance scale. An individual's attachment-related anxiety was scored by averaging their responses to items 1-18. Scores ranged from 1 through 7. The higher the number, the more probable it is that an individual is anxious in relationships. An individual's attachment-related avoidance was

scored by averaging their responses to items 19-36. Scores ranged from 1 through 7. The higher the number, the more probable it was that an individual avoids intimacy in relationships. Participants had a score for anxiety attachment to individuals and a score for avoidance attachment to individuals, resulting in two scores for these constructs. Items 9, 11, 20, 22, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 33, 34, 35, and 36 were reversed scored so that 1=7, 2=6, 3=5, 4=4, 5=3, 6=2, 7=1.

Attachment to God Inventory. The Attachment to God Inventory (AGI) was developed by Beck and McDonald (2004) and assesses the attachment dimensions of an individual's attachment to God in terms of avoidance of intimacy and anxiety about abandonment (see Appendix D). It is based on the Experiences in Close Relationships Scale (ECR), developed by Brennan, Clark, and Shaver (1998) that assesses these attachment dimensions in adult relationships. The AGI is a 28 item self-report scale that asks participants to respond using a 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). As in the ECR, the two dimensions of anxiety and avoidance are also dichotomized in the AGI.

The inventory contains 14 items on the anxiety subscale and 14 items on the avoidance subscale. A study with the AGI and a sample of 507 undergraduate and graduate students reported good internal consistency with an alpha coefficient of .84 for the anxiety subscale and .86 for the avoidance subscale (Beck & McDonald, 2004). In a replication sample, internal consistency for the anxiety and avoidance subscales reported an alpha of .80 and .84. After replicating the psychometrics of the AGI in a homogenous college population, Beck and McDonald (2004) administered the measure to a religiously diverse community sample of 109 participants. Again, good internal consistency

coefficients were found for both the anxiety subscale with an alpha of .86 and .87 for the avoidance subscale. Cooper, Bruce, Harman, and Boccaccini (2009), also reported Cronbach's alpha of .89 for the avoidance subscale and .82 for the anxiety subscale, using a sample with participants from various Protestant churches.

The anxiety subscale includes "fear of potential abandonment by God, angry protest… jealousy over God's seemingly differential intimacy with others, anxiety over one's lovability in God's eyes, and finally, preoccupation with or worry concerning one's relationship with God" (Beck & McDonald, 2004, p.94). Examples of the anxiety items are: "I often worry about whether God is pleased with me," and "I fear God does not accept me when I do wrong." The avoidance subscale includes "need for self-reliance, a difficulty with depending upon God, and unwillingness to be emotionally intimate with God" (Beck & McDonald, 2004, p.94). Examples of the avoidance items are: "I prefer not to depend too much on God," and "I just don't feel a deep need to be close to God."

The two AGI subscales, anxiety and avoidance, were scored according to the instructions provided by Beck and McDonald (2004). Items were answered on a 7-point Likert scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). To score the AGI, answers to 4, 8, 13, 18, 22, 26, and 28 were reversed scored so that 1=7, 2=6, 3=5, 4=4, 5=3, 6=2, 7=1. Items added together were 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, 17, 19, 21, 23, 25, and 27. These were the scores for attachment-related anxiety with God. The higher the sum the more probable an individual is anxious about their relationship with God. Items 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24, 26, and 28 were added together to create scores for attachment-related avoidance with God. The higher the sum, the more probable an individual avoids intimacy in their relationship with God. Participants had a score for anxiety attachment to

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God and a score for avoidance attachment to God resulting in two scores for these constructs.

Satisfaction With Life Scale. The Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS) is a 5-item self report scale developed by Diener, Emmons, Larson, and Griffith (1985) (see Appendix E). It is widely used to measure the global cognitive judgments of satisfaction with one's life. The SWLS is used with multiple populations that vary in age and nationality. Items are rated on a 7-point scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*), with a sample item being "I am satisfied with my life." In support of its validity, Diener et al. (1985) found with the SWLS correlated positively with measures of self-esteem and happiness and negatively with measures of neuroticism and psychological symptoms. Internal consistency of the SWLS has been reported to be .87 and test-retest correlation was .82 (Diener et al., 1985). Scores on the SWLS correlate moderately to high with other measures of subjective well-being, and correlate predictably with specific personality characteristics.

The first three items of the Satisfaction With Life Scale focus primarily on a person's current life, whereas the last two items ask how one's life has been previously, up until the present. Some people score high on the first three items of the life satisfaction scale, but score lower on the last two items. This suggests that their lives are going well now, but that they are not entirely satisfied with their pasts. Other individuals might score low on the first three items, but higher on the last two items. This pattern suggests the respondent sees his or her past as more desirable than the present. Thus, a discrepancy in the scores between the first three items and the last two items can reveal whether people

view their lives as improving or declining. The higher the overall score, the more satisfied

an individual is with their life.

Demographic questionnaire. Participants were asked to complete a demographic

questionnaire prepared by the researcher (see Appendix F). This questionnaire was

prepared in accordance with U.S. Census bureau information and the Pew Research

Center. Specifically, participants were asked their age, gender, race, citizenship status,

current relationship status, highest level of education, and religious background. All

demographic variables, with the exception of age, are categorical variables. A criterion

for participants was that they acknowledged some kind of belief in God or a higher power,

thus, those who identified as atheist were not included in the data set. In addition, those

who identified as agnostics were also excluded because agnosticism lies on a continuum

of theism and atheism. For example, there are those who believe it is impossible to know

if God exists because it cannot be proven beyond one's own subjective experience.

Agnostics may recognize that there might be a God, but there is no objective way to

validate the existence of God, thus, they have no true relationship with God. Lastly, there

are agnostics who are unsure either way and lie between belief and non-belief.

Procedure

After receiving permission from the Institutional Review Board from the

University of Missouri and the Midwestern College from which participants were

recruited, a flyer was placed in student mailboxes suggesting that students watch their e-

mail for an upcoming survey. Three days later, the principal investigator sent out an e-

mail to the entire student body asking for their participation in an online survey. Each e-

mail had a unique link to an online survey that could not be used more than once. An e-

mail to remind students about the invitation to participate was sent out two weeks after the initial invitation.

Students wanting to participate in the survey clicked on the link and were directed to a survey posted on a research website, SurveyGizmo.com where they were presented the informed consent (see Appendix B) explaining the (a) nature of the study; (b) potential benefits and risks from participating in the study; (c) the fact that the study was voluntary; (d) participation in the study was completely confidential; (e) how much time would be required to complete the study; and (f) a request for students to participate in the study. The students completed a 75-item battery (Appendix C, D, E, and F). A recent analysis concluded that results from Internet data are consistent with those from paper and pencil measures (Gosling, Vazire, Srivastava, & John, 2004). Upon completion or exit of the survey, participants were given the opportunity to enter into a raffle for one of three $100 gift certificates to the campus bookstore.

RESULTS

Sample Characteristics

Data were collected on 274 students who responded to the survey out of approximately 1,200 students leading to a response rate of approximately 23%. Participants who were under the age of 18 ($n = 2$) or over 25 ($n = 3$) were excluded from further analysis due to age of consent (under the age of 18) or outliers (over the age of 23). Individuals who indicated that they were atheists ($n = 13$) or agnostics ($n = 28$) or who did not provide information for age or religion were excluded from further analyses. Some

students met two exclusion criteria (e.g., two agnostics were over the age of 25). The sample that met inclusion criteria consisted of $N = 228$ participants with complete or near-complete data who met the inclusion criteria. After deleting participants who had missing data, the final sample consisted on $N = 197$ which represents participants with scores on every independent and dependent variable.

Table 1 presents frequencies and percentages for categorical variables. Of the 197 participants with data on every independent and dependent variable, one failed to provide student status, relationship status, and citizenship status. A second participant failed to provide relationship status. The majority of students in the sample were female (60.9%), White (81.7%), US citizens (80.1%), single (57.4%), and Christian (84.8%). The sample was fairly evenly split across freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors.

Table 1.

Frequencies and Percentages for Categorical Variables

	Frequency	Percent
Gender ($N = 197$)		
Male	77	39.1
Female	120	60.9
Race ($N = 197$)		
White	161	81.7
Black or African American	9	4.6
American Indian or Alaska Native	1	0.5
Asian (Indian, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese)	16	8.1
Hispanic or Latino (Mexican, Puerto Rican,Cuban)	3	1.5
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	1	0.5
Some other race	4	2.0
Two or more races	2	1.0
US native ($N = 196$)		
Native (this refers to anyone born in the U.S. or a U.S. Islander)	157	80.1

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Foreign born (this refers to anyone who is not a U.S. citizen)	39	19.9
Student status (*N* = 196)		
Freshman	57	29.1
Sophomore	53	27.0
Junior	41	20.9
Senior	45	23.0
Highest level of education (*N* = 197)		
High school graduate or GED	57	28.9
Some college, no degree	126	64.0
Associate's Degree	5	2.5
Bachelor's Degree	9	4.6
Relationship status (*N* = 195)		
Single	112	57.4
Married	4	2.1
In a relationship	79	40.5
Religious background (*N* = 197)		
Buddhist	1	0.5
Christian	167	84.8
Hindu	5	2.5
Islam	9	4.6
Jewish	1	0.5
Other	14	7.1

Scale Scoring

Participants were administered the Experiences in Close Relationships-Revised Scale (ECR-R), the Attachment to God Inventory (AGI), and the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS).

Experiences in Close Relationships-Revised Scale and Subscales. The two ECR-R subscales, anxiety and avoidance to people, were scored according to the instructions provided by Fraley, Waller, and Brennan (2000). For the anxiety items, one participant skipped four items, six participants skipped two items, and 13 participants skipped one item. For the avoidance items, one participant skipped four items and 18 participants

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skipped one item. In order to maximize the number of participants with scale scores, subscales were computed for all participants who met inclusion criteria and answered all items by averaging their scores across the items they answered. The subscales for the ECR-R are based on the average of the sum that made it possible to compute subscale scores for participants even if they had skipped an item or two. For example, if a participant answered nine of the ten items on the subscale the score is computed as an average across the nine items answered instead of across ten items. Thus, all 228 participants received scores on the ECR-R subscales but, because of listwise deletion, descriptive statistics are presented for the 197 participants who had scores on all scales.

Attachment to God Inventory and Subscales. The two AGI subscales, anxiety and avoidance to God, were scored according to instructions provided by Beck and McDonald (2004). Participants, who met inclusion criteria and answered all items, had a score for both subscales resulting in two scores for these constructs. Subscale scores were computed only for participants who answered all AGI items because the scores are based on sums. A valid sum score is obtained only if the participant answered all items. For example, if the participant answered nine of out the ten items on a subscale the overall sum score would be an underestimate of what would be the overall score. Thus, due to missing items, 210 participants received scores on the AGI and, because of listwise deletion, descriptive statistics are presented for the 197 participants who had scores on all scales.

Satisfaction With Life Scale. The Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS) is a 5-item self-report scale developed by Diener, Emmons, Larson, and Griffith (1985). Just like the AGI, an SWLS score was computed only for participants who answered all SWLS items

because the scores are based on sums. A valid sum score is obtained only if the participant answered all items. For example, if the participant answered four out of the five items the overall sum score would be a significant underestimate of what the overall score would be. Thus, due to missing items, 222 participants received scores on the SWLS and, because of listwise deletion, descriptive statistics are presented for the 197 participants who had scores on all scales.

Descriptive Statistics

Table 2 presents descriptive statistics for each of the scales described above as well as for age. To assess normality of each scale in Table 2, measures of skewness and kurtosis were computed for each measurement. Skewness and kurtosis values of zero are indicative of a normal distribution, and values between -2 and +2 signify no problematic deviations from normality (Balanda & MacGillivray, 1988; De Carlo, 1997; Groeneveld & Meeden, 1984; Hopkins & Weeks, 1990; Kendall, Stuart, Ord, & Arnold, 1999). All measures of skewness and kurtosis were between the values of -1 and +1, indicating that all variables were sufficiently normally distributed and that parametric statistics could be appropriately applied in the analyses.

Table 2.

Descriptive Statistics for Continuous Variables (N =197)

	M	*SD*	Range	Skewness	Kurtosis
ECR-R anxiety (people)	3.68	1.15	1.06 – 6.50	0.02	-0.58
ECR-R avoidance (people)	3.65	1.00	1.39 – 6.72	0.31	-0.05
AGI anxiety (God)	45.06	14.60	14.00 – 91.00	0.15	-0.18
AGI avoidance (God)	54.66	15.56	14.00 – 98.00	0.09	-0.30
Satisfaction with life	24.88	6.36	6.00 – 35.00	-0.62	-0.16
Age	19.84	1.39	18.00 – 25.00	0.78	0.76

Table 3 presents the Cronbach's alpha reliabilities (Cronbach, 1951) that were

computed to assess the internal consistencies of the items on each of the ECR-R and AGI

subscales and the SWLS. These reliabilities were computed across the items that

comprised each subscale; thus, a participant could be included in the reliability assessment

of a scale only if they had scores for every item that comprised that scale. For example,

for the ECR-R anxiety scale, only scores for participants who answered all 18 items on

that scale could be included in the reliability assessment. Thus, sample sizes in Table 3

differ from sample sizes in Table 2 for the ECR-R subscales because those subscale scores

ignored missing items. Cronbach's alpha reliabilities should be greater than .70 in order to

be considered acceptable (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). All Cronbach's reliabilities were

well above .70, indicating very good internal consistencies for all scales.

Table 3.

Cronbach's Alpha Reliabilities for Scales

	N	Number of items	Reliability (α)
ECR-R anxiety (people)	183	18	.93
ECR-R avoidance (people)	184	18	.92
AGI anxiety (God)	197	14	.89
AGI avoidance (God)	197	14	.89
Satisfaction with life	197	5	.88

Regression Assumptions

Each regression model was first assessed to determine whether it met the

necessary assumptions of multiple regression. The variables were assessed and found

sufficiently normally distributed as discussed earlier in the chapter in the section on

skewness and kurtosis. In addition, a linear relationship was determined between the

independent and dependent variables by plotting the studentized residuals against the

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standardized predicted values of the dependent variable. Figure 1 displays a scatterplot

showing this relationship for the regression. As can be seen in the scatterplot in Figure 1,

there were no obvious curvilinear patterns in the data; thus, a linear relationship could be

assumed. To be thorough, Mahalanobis distance was calculated to check for multivariate

outliers.

Figure 1.

Scatterplot of studentized residuals and standardized predicted values for the regression.

Scatterplot

Dependent Variable: SWL

Figure 1 can also be used to assess the data for homoscedasticity, which is a

measure of whether the error variances are equal across all levels of the independent

variables. When error variances are not equal, obvious patterns (e.g., bowtie pattern, fan

pattern) will appear in the scatterplot, indicating heteroscedasticity. Figure 1 is free of

patterns, thus indicating that the assumption of homoscedasticity has been met. Finally,

the independent variables were assessed for multicollinearity. Typical measures of

multicollinearity include the Tolerance and the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF).

Typically, tolerance measures should be > .20 and the VIF should be < 4.0. All

independent variables in the tested models met these assumptions.

Main Analyses

Analysis was conducted using the enter method and listwise deletion so that

participants who had data on every variable ($N = 197$) were used in the correlation and

regression analyses.

Pearson Correlations

Pearson correlations were computed as preliminary analyses to consider the

relation between each attachment dimension and satisfaction with life when considering

only two variables at a time. The first analysis was computed using the zero-order

correlation between the SWLS score and the ECR-R anxiety subscale score. The

correlation was $r = -.34$, $p < .001$, indicating that life satisfaction was negatively related to

anxiety toward people. A second analysis was conducted by computing the zero-order

correlation between the SWLS score and the ECR-R avoidance subscale score. The

correlation was $r = -.29$, $p < .001$, indicating that satisfaction with life was negatively

related to avoidance toward people. A third preliminary analysis was conducted by

computing the zero-order correlation between the SWLS score and the AGI anxiety

subscale score. The correlation was $r = -.33$, $p < .001$, indicating that satisfaction with life

was negatively related to anxiety toward God. A fourth analysis was conducted by

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computing the zero-order correlation between the SWLS score and the AGI avoidance

subscale score. The correlation was $r = .12, p > .05$, indicating that satisfaction with life

was not significantly related to avoidance toward God.

 Table 4.

Pearson Correlations between Scales and Age

	SWLS	ECR-R Anxiety	ECR-R Avoidance	AGI Anxiety	AGI Avoidance	Age
SWLS	--					
ECR-R anxiety	-.34***	--				
ECR-R avoidance	-.29***	.29***	--			
AGI anxiety	-.33***	.46***	.18**	--		
AGI avoidance	.12	.01	.06	-.14	--	
Age	.06	-.13	.04	-.01	-.13	--

Note. SWL = Satisfaction with life. ECR-R = Experiences in Close Relationships-
Revised. AGI = Attachment to God Inventory. Listwise deletion was applied so $N = 197$
for all correlations.
**$p < .01$. ***$p < .001$.

Tests of Hypotheses

Independent t tests

Before computing the regression analyses, independent t tests were computed to

compare participants by race (white vs. non-white), relationship status (in a relationship

vs. not in a relationship), citizenship status (domestic vs. international), and gender (male

vs. female) on each independent and dependent variable. The results for SWLS were as

follows: race: whites compared to nonwhites, $t(195) = 1.80, p > .05$; relationship status:

married or in a relationship compared to individuals who were single, separated, divorced,

or widowed, $t(193) = -0.42, p > .05$; citizenship status: domestic students compared to

international students, $t(194) = 0.90$, $p > .05$; and gender: males compared to females, $t(195) = -0.64$, $p > .05$). There were no significant differences between any groups on satisfaction with life. The full results for all t tests can be found in the Tables section. There were significant, but small, differences between whites and nonwhites on AGI avoidance, $t(195) = 2.10$, $p < .05$, and between those in a relationship and not in a relationship on ECR-R avoidance, $t(193) = 2.25$, $p < .05$. However, when the Bonferroni correction was applied by dividing the significance level by the number of t tests, these t tests were not significant. Additionally, when those variables were entered as controls in the regression equation, the results changed very little and the conclusions were unchanged. Thus, in order to create a regression model that was not restricted by demographics such as race or gender, the only covariate used in the final regression model was age.

Simultaneous multiple linear regressions for predicting Satisfaction with Life

Multiple linear regression was used to address the hypotheses in this study. The standardized regression equation from Table 9 can be written as follows (note that the βs are not rounded in the equation): Predicted score on Satisfaction with Life = .049*(Age) - .183*(Anxiety with People) - .209*(Avoidance with People) - .193*(Anxiety with God) + .119*(Avoidance with God). Anxiety with individuals has a mean score of 3.68 and avoidance with individuals has a mean score of 3.65. Anxiety with God has a mean score of 45.06 and avoidance with God has a mean score of 54.67.

Multiple regression was conducted by regressing the SWLS score on the ECR-R anxiety subscale, the ECR-R avoidance subscale, the AGI anxiety subscale, and the AGI avoidance subscale while controlling for age. The regression results can be found in

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Table 9. The overall model was significant, $F(5, 191) = 9.82$, $p = .001$, explaining 20.4%

of the variance in satisfaction with life.

Table 9.

Simultaneous Multiple Regressions for Predicting Satisfaction with Life from ECR-R

Anxiety, ECR-R Avoidance, AGI Anxiety, and AGI Avoidance controlling for Age (N =

197)

Predictors	B	SE B	β	p	R^2
Age	0.25	0.30	0.05	.415	.204
ECR-R anxiety	-1.02	0.42	-0.18	.016	
ECR-R avoidance	-1.32	0.43	-0.21	.002	
AGI anxiety	-0.08	0.03	-0.19	.009	
AGI avoidance	0.05	0.03	0.12	.073	

Note. The overall model was significant, $F(5, 191) = 9.82$, $p = .001$. The constant for the model = 29.70.

Hypothesis 1.

If a participant reports having a secure attachment with both individuals and with

God (low levels of anxiety and low levels of avoidance), it is predicted that the level of

satisfaction with life will be high.

Hypothesis 2.

If a participant reports having a secure attachment with individuals (low levels of

anxiety and low levels of avoidance), but an insecure attachment with God (high levels of

anxiety and/or high levels of avoidance), it is predicted that the level of satisfaction with

life will be low.

Hypothesis 3.

If a participant reports having an insecure attachment with individuals (high levels of anxiety and/or avoidance), but a secure attachment with God (low levels of anxiety and avoidance), it is predicted that the level of satisfaction with life will be high.

Hypothesis 4.

If a participant reports having an insecure attachment with individuals (high levels of anxiety and/or avoidance) and an insecure attachment with God (high levels of anxiety and/or avoidance), it is predicted that the level of satisfaction with life will be low.

A regression for the SWLS score and the ECR-R anxiety subscale while controlling for the ECR-R avoidance subscale, the AGI anxiety subscale, and the AGI avoidance subscale found the ECR-R anxiety score was a significant negative predictor ($\beta = -.18$, $p = .016$). It could be concluded that life satisfaction was negatively predicted by attachment-related anxiety toward people while controlling for attachment-related avoidance toward people and attachment-related anxiety and avoidance toward God. This indicates that lower anxiety with people predicted higher life satisfaction and that higher anxiety with people predicted lower life satisfaction.

A regression for the SWLS score and the ECR-R avoidance subscale, while controlling for the other variables, found the ECR-R avoidance score as a significant negative predictor ($\beta = -.21$, $p = .002$). It could be concluded that life satisfaction was negatively predicted by attachment-related avoidance toward people while controlling for attachment-related anxiety toward people and attachment-related anxiety and avoidance toward God. This indicates that lower avoidance with people predicted higher life satisfaction and that higher avoidance with people predicted lower life satisfaction.

A regression for the SWLS score and the AGI anxiety subscale, while controlling for the other variables, found the AGI anxiety score as a significant negative predictor (β = -.19, p = .009). Thus, it could be concluded that life satisfaction was negatively predicted by attachment-related anxiety toward God while controlling for attachment-related anxiety and avoidance toward people and attachment-related avoidance toward God. This indicates that lower anxiety with God predicted higher life satisfaction and higher anxiety with God predicted lower life satisfaction.

A regression for the SWLS score and the AGI avoidance subscale, while controlling for the other variables, found the AGI avoidance score to be a nonsignificant positive predictor (β = .12, p = .073). Thus, it could *not* be concluded that life satisfaction was negatively predicted by attachment-related avoidance toward God while controlling for attachment-related anxiety and avoidance toward people and attachment-related anxiety toward God. This indicates that the level of avoidance with God did *not* significantly predict life satisfaction.

The regression results indicated that the AGI anxiety score was a significant negative predictor of SWLS (β = -.19, p = .009) that may be slightly stronger than the ECR-R anxiety score (β = -.18, p = .016). It could be concluded that attachment-related anxiety toward God was a stronger predictor than attachment-related anxiety toward people in predicting life satisfaction while controlling for attachment-related avoidance toward God and people, although the advantage was *very* small. This indicates that anxiety with God was the strongest predictor of life satisfaction when the other variables were in the model.

The regression results also indicated that the AGI avoidance score was not a significant negative predictor of SWLS ($\beta = .12$, $p = .073$), but the ECR-R avoidance score was a significant negative predictor ($\beta = -.21$, $p = .002$). Thus, it could not be concluded that attachment-related avoidance toward God was a stronger predictor than attachment-related avoidance toward people in predicting life satisfaction while controlling for attachment-related avoidance toward God and people. This indicates that avoidance with people was a significantly and unique predictor of life satisfaction when the other variables were in the model.

Supplementary Analysis: Predicting Satisfaction with Life

In the standardized equation, a person's age and their four attachment scores in z-score form can be inserted into the equation to get a *predicted* satisfaction score in raw score form. To provide a *general picture* of the different levels of satisfaction that would be provided by different patterns of high and low anxiety and avoidance scores with people and God, values of -1 and +1 were inserted into the standardized regression equation to represent low and high attachment scores on each variable. The value of -1 was chosen to represent a low score because a z-score of -1 represents a score that is 1 standard deviation below the mean of that variable. The value of +1 was chosen to represent a high score because a z-score of +1 represents a score that is 1 standard deviation above the mean of that variable. Age was held constant at the mean, so it was always entered as 0, thus eliminating the age variable from the standardized equation. The mean of age for the $N = 197$ participants who were used to create the regression model was 19.84 years, so the following scores apply to a person who is approximately 20 years of age.

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Table 10.

Predicted Satisfaction Scores for Different Patterns of Attachment from Regression

Equation

Profile	Anxiety w/people	Avoidance w/people	Anxiety w/God	Avoidance w/God	Predicted Satisfaction w/Life score
1	High (1)	High (1)	High (1)	Low (-1)	20.41
2	High (1)	High (1)	High (1)	High (1)	21.92
3	Low (-1)	High (1)	High (1)	Low (-1)	22.74
4	High (1)	High (1)	Low (-1)	Low (-1)	22.86
5	High (1)	Low (-1)	High (1)	Low (-1)	23.07
6	Low (-1)	High (1)	High (1)	High (1)	24.25
7	High (1)	High (1)	Low (-1)	High (1)	24.37
8	High (1)	Low (-1)	High (1)	High (1)	24.58
9	Low (-1)	High (1)	Low (-1)	Low (-1)	25.19
10	Low (-1)	Low (-1)	High (1)	Low (-1)	25.39
11	High (1)	Low (-1)	Low (-1)	Low (-1)	25.52
12	Low (-1)	High (1)	Low (-1)	High (1)	26.70
13	Low (-1)	Low (-1)	High (1)	High (1)	26.90
Profile	Anxiety w/People	Avoidance w/People	Anxiety w/God	Avoidance w/God	Predicted Satisfaction w/Life Score
14	High (1)	Low (-1)	Low (-1)	High (1)	27.03
15	Low (-1)	Low (-1)	Low (-1)	Low (-1)	27.84
16	Low (-1)	Low (-1)	Low (-1)	High (1)	29.36

Note. Values of -1 and +1 were used to represent low and high z-scores on attachment, respectively. The standardized regression equation was used to compute z-scores on Satisfaction. The z-scores were then transformed into raw SWLS scores by multiplying by the standard deviation of 6.36 and adding to the mean of 24.88.

Patterns Interpreted As Profiles

This study had four different predictor variables since both measures had two subscales each measuring anxiety and avoidance. Adults with low levels of both attachment anxiety and avoidance are said to possess more attachment security, whereas higher scores in either dimensions (or both) are indicative of insecure attachment.

The four predicted variables in this study yielded 16 different outcome patterns based on the different possible scores for each variable. Table 10 displays the predicted

satisfaction scores for the 16 patterns of high and low anxiety and avoidance with people and God developed from the regression equation. The range for satisfaction of life scores is from 5 (lowest score possible) to 35 (highest score possible).

Patterns are presented in the order of lowest to highest satisfaction with life and range from 20.41 (lowest score) to 29.36 (highest score). For example, the pattern in which a person has high anxiety with people, high avoidance with people, high anxiety with God, and low avoidance with God produced the lowest predicted satisfaction score. (20.41) The pattern in which a person has low anxiety with people, low avoidance with people, low anxiety with God, and high avoidance with God produced the highest predicted satisfaction score (29.36). Based on Bartholomew's model (1990) found in Figure 2, it is possible to elaborate on each profile.

Figure 2. *Bartholomew's Four-Point Model of Individual Differences in Adult Attachment*

Profile 1.

High anxiety with people and high avoidance with people on Bartholomew's model would be categorized as fearful-avoidant attachment. One has a negative perception of self, a negative perception of people, a desire for intimacy but distrust of others, and avoids close relationships. High anxiety with God and low avoidance with God on Bartholomew's model would be categorized as anxious-preoccupied attachment. One has a negative perception of self in relation to God, a positive perception of God, and overdependence on God. This profile predicted the lowest level of life satisfaction (20.41) in this sample.

Profile 2.

High anxiety with people and high avoidance with people on Bartholomew's model is categorized as fearful-avoidant attachment. One has a negative perception of self, a negative perception of people, a desire for intimacy but distrust of others, and avoids close relationships. High anxiety with God and high avoidance with God on Bartholomew's model is categorized as fearful-avoidant attachment. One has a negative perception of self in relation to God, a negative perception of God, desires intimacy with God but distrusts God, and avoids a close relationship with God. This profile predicted a very low level of life satisfaction (21.92) in this sample.

Profile 3.

Low anxiety with people and high avoidance with people on Bartholomew's model is categorized as dismissive-avoidant attachment. One has a positive perception of self, a negative perception of others, a denial of attachment or intimacy with others, and relies more on self and personal achievement. High anxiety with God with low avoidance

with God is categorized as anxious-preoccupied on Bartholomew's model. One has a negative perception of self in relation to God, a positive perception of God, and is overly dependent on God. This profile predicted a low level of life satisfaction (22.74) in this sample.

Profile 4.

High anxiety with people and high avoidance with people is categorized on Bartholomew's model as fearful-avoidant attachment. One has a negative perception of self, a negative perception of people, a desire for intimacy but a distrust of others, and avoids close relationships. Low anxiety with God and low avoidance with God is categorized as secure attachment. One has a positive perception of self in relation to God, a positive perception of God, is comfortable with intimacy and autonomy with God. This profile predicted a low level of life satisfaction (22.86) in this sample.

Profile 5.

High anxiety with people and low avoidance with people is categorized as anxious-preoccupied attachment. One has a negative perception of self, a positive perception of others, and is overly dependent on others. High anxiety with God and low avoidance with God is categorized as anxious-preoccupied attachment. One has a negative perception of self in relation to God, a positive perception of God, and is overly dependent on God. This profile predicted a low level of life satisfaction (23.07) in this sample.

Profile 6.

Low anxiety with people and high avoidance with people is categorized as dismissive-avoidant attachment. One has a positive perception of self, a negative

perception of others, denies attachment or intimacy with others, and relies on self and individual achievement. High anxiety with God and high avoidance with God is categorized as fearful-avoidant attachment. One has a negative perception of self in relation to God, a negative perception of God, desires intimacy but distrusts God, and avoids close relationships with God. This profile predicted a low level of life satisfaction (24.25) in this sample.

　　Profile 7.

　　High anxiety with people and high avoidance with people is categorized in Bartholomew's model as fearful-avoidant attachment. One has a negative perception of self, a negative perception of others, desires intimacy but distrusts others, and avoids close relationships. Low anxiety with God and high avoidance with God is categorized as dismissive-avoidant attachment. One has a positive perception of self in relation to God, a negative perception of God, denies attachment or intimacy with God, and relies more on self and individual goals. This profile predicted a low to average level of life satisfaction (24.37) in this sample.

　　Profile 8.

　　High anxiety with people and low avoidance with people is categorized as anxious-preoccupied attachment. One has a negative perception of self, a positive perception of others, and is overly dependent on others. High anxiety with God and high avoidance with God is categorized on Bartholomew's model as fearful-avoidant attachment. One has a negative perception of self in relation to God, a negative perception of God, desires intimacy with God but cannot trust God, and avoids a close

relationship with God. This profile predicted an average level of life satisfaction (24.58) in this sample.

Profile 9.

Low anxiety with people and high avoidance with people is categorized as dismissive-avoidant attachment. One has a positive perception of self, a negative view of others, denies attachment or intimacy with others, and relies more on self and individual achievement. Low anxiety with God and low avoidance with God leads to a secure attachment. One has a positive view of self, in relation to God, a positive view of God, and is comfortable with intimacy and autonomy with God. This profile predicted an average level of life satisfaction (25.19) in this sample.

Profile 10.

Low anxiety with people and low avoidance with people is categorized as a secure attachment. One has a positive view of self, a positive view of others, and is comfortable with intimacy and autonomy with others. High anxiety and low avoidance with God is an anxious-preoccupied attachment. One has a negative perception of self in relation to God, a positive perception of God, and is overly dependent on God. This profile predicted an average to high level of life satisfaction (25.39) in this sample.

Profile 11.

High anxiety with people and low avoidance with people is categorized as anxious-preoccupied attachment. One has a negative perception of self, a positive perception of others, and is overly dependent on others. Low anxiety with God and low avoidance with God is a secure attachment. One has a positive perception of self in relation to God, a positive perception of God, and is comfortable with intimacy and

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autonomy with God. This profile predicted a high level of life satisfaction (25.52) in this sample.

Profile 12.

Low anxiety with people and high avoidance with people is categorized as dismissive-avoidant attachment. One has a positive view of self, a negative view of others, denies attachment or intimacy with others, and relies more on self and individual achievement. Low anxiety with God and high avoidance with God is categorized as dismissive-avoidant attachment. One has a positive perception of self in relation to God, a negative view of God, denies attachment or intimacy with God, and relies more on self and individual achievement. This profile predicted a high level of life satisfaction (26.70) in this sample.

Profile 13.

Low anxiety with people and low avoidance with people leads to a secure attachment. One has a positive view of self, a positive view of others, and is comfortable with intimacy and autonomy with others. High anxiety with God and high avoidance with God leads to a fearful-avoidant attachment to God. One has a negative perception of self in relation to God, a negative view of God, desires intimacy but distrusts God, and avoids a close relationship with God. This profile predicted a high level of life satisfaction (26.90) in this sample.

Profile 14.

High anxiety with people and low avoidance with people is categorized as anxious-preoccupied attachment. One has a negative view of self, a positive view of others, and is overly dependent on others. Low anxiety with God and high avoidance with

God is a dismissive-avoidant attachment style. One has a positive perception of self in relation to God, a negative view of God, denies attachment or intimacy with God, and relies more on self and individual achievement. This profile predicted a high level of life satisfaction (27.03) in this sample.

Profile 15.

Low anxiety with people and low avoidance with people is categorized as secure attachment. One has a positive view of self, a positive view of others, and is comfortable with intimacy and autonomy with others. Low anxiety with God and low avoidance with God also leads to secure attachment. One has a positive perception of self in relation to God, a positive perception of God, and is comfortable with intimacy and autonomy with God. This profile predicted a very high level of life satisfaction (27.84) in this sample.

Profile 16.

Low anxiety with people and low avoidance with people is categorized as secure attachment. One has a positive view of self, a positive view of others, and is comfortable with intimacy and autonomy with others. Low anxiety with God and high avoidance with God leads to a dismissive-avoidant attachment. One has a positive perception of self in relation to God, a negative perception of God, denies attachment or intimacy with God, and relies more on self and individual achievement. This profile predicted the highest level of life satisfaction (29.36) in this sample.

Generalized interpretation of four profiles in relation to hypotheses

Profile 15 in Table 10 shows that participants who scored low levels of anxiety and avoidance with adults on the ECR-R (secure attachment) and low levels of anxiety

and avoidance with God on the AGI (secure attachment) predicts the second highest score on the Satisfaction with Life Scale (27.84). This supports our first hypothesis.

Profile 13 in Table 10 shows that participants who scored low levels on anxiety and low levels of avoidance with adults on the ECR-R (secure attachment) and high levels of anxiety and high levels of avoidance with God on the AGI (insecure attachment) have the fourth highest score on the Satisfaction with Life Scale (26.90). This profile does not support our second hypothesis.

Profile 4 in Table 10 shows that participants who scored high levels on anxiety and high levels of avoidance with adults on the ECR-R (insecure attachment) and low levels of anxiety and low levels of avoidance with God on the AGI (secure attachment) is the fourth from the lowest score on the Satisfaction with Life Scale (22.86). This profile does not support hypothesis three.

Profile 2 in Table 10 where participants who scored high levels on anxiety and high levels of avoidance with adults on the ECR-R (insecure attachment) and low levels of anxiety and low levels of avoidance with God (secure attachment) on the AGI is the second lowest score on the Satisfaction with Life Scale (21.92). This profile does not support hypothesis four.

DISCUSSION

The main goal of this study was to investigate the relationship between attachment with people and attachment with God and their relationship to on life satisfaction. It was hypothesized that individuals with higher levels of secure attachment with people and

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with God would exhibit a higher level of life satisfaction and those with higher levels of insecure attachment with people and with God would have a lower level of life satisfaction. It was also hypothesized that, even if an individual has a higher level of secure attachment with people, an insecure attachment with God would result in lower levels of satisfaction and those with lower levels of secure attachment with people and higher levels of secure attachment with God would exhibit higher levels of life satisfaction.

The results show, as hypothesized, that higher levels of secure attachment with people and higher levels of secure attachment with God resulted in a higher level of life satisfaction. The study also found and supported the hypothesis that individuals who exhibited higher levels of insecure attachment with people and higher levels of insecure attachment with God resulted in a lower level of life satisfaction. These results contribute to the research on attachment and are supported by the literature.

Previous studies find that those who report higher life satisfaction exhibit more trust in others (Brehm & Rahn, 1997) and are more prone to self-disclosure (Diener & Seligman, 2004), which are characteristics of securely attached relationships. In addition, individuals who exhibit strong and secure attachment styles in their relationships with others evidence less loneliness, hostility, and/or psychosomatic illness when compared to individuals with insecure attachment styles (Hazan & Shaver, 1990). Past studies on attachment support the idea that insecure attachment style is consistently associated with low levels of emotional well-being and higher levels of depression and anxiety (Carnelley, Pietromonaco, & Jaffe, 1994; Kobak, Sudler, & Gamble, 1991).

Individuals who report having a secure attachment to God report a higher level of well-being and lower levels of anxiety, loneliness, depression, and physical illness than those with an insecure attachment to God (Kirkpatrick & Shaver, 1992; Kirkpatrick, Shillito, & Kellas, 1999). Individuals who report having an insecure attachment to God exhibit a lower level of well-being and higher levels of anxiety, loneliness, depression, and physical illness than those with a secure attachment to God (Kirkpatrick & Shaver, 1992; Kirkpatrick, Shillito, & Kellas, 1999). In addition, a study by Rowatt and Kirkpatrick (2002) demonstrated how an anxious (or insecure) attachment to God was a significant predictor of negative affect, which could also contribute to low satisfaction of life.

Thus, possessing secure relationships on both constructs is predictive of a higher level of satisfaction and possessing insecure relationships on both constructs is predictive of a lower level of life satisfaction. These findings contribute and support previous research as well as the correspondence hypothesis that suggests that the same attachment one has with individuals is the same kind of attachment they seek from God. It is a familiar relationship style that, once developed, is static throughout one's lifetime (Kirkpatrick, 1992; Kirkpatrick & Shaver, 1990). This suggests that an individual's attachment style to their caregiver will influence and quite possibly predict their attachment styles in romantic relationships, relationships with other adults, and to God. If one develops an insecure attachment to a caregiver early in life, this might lead to the same insecure relationship with God (Kirkpatrick, 1992). For example, avoidant attachment to God is positively correlated with the avoidant dimension of adult and supports the theoretical correspondence between attachments in these two domains

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attachment (Granqvist & Hagekull, 1999; Kirkpatrick & Shaver, 1992; Kirkpatrick, 1998).

On the other hand, a secure attachment to caregivers in early life is found to lead an

individual to adopt the same, if any, religious and spiritual values and beliefs similar to

those of their parents (Reinert & Edwards, 2009).

Interestingly, the current study also discovered that individuals who scored lower

on secure attachment with people and higher on secure attachment to God resulted in

lower levels of life satisfaction. In contrast, individuals who scored higher on secure

attachment with people and lower on insecure attachment to God resulted in a higher level

of life satisfaction. These results did not support the other two hypotheses in this study,

which suggested that, despite the secure or insecure relationship one has with individuals,

the secure or insecure relationship with God would be the determining factor in high life

satisfaction. Instead, they support the compensation hypothesis (Granqvist, 1998;

Kirkpatrick, 1997, 1998). The compensation hypothesis suggests that if an attachment

system is activated when one perceives a situation to be threatening or distressful and the

attachment figure is not accessible or responsive to attachment behaviors, a secondary or

surrogate attachment figure may be sought (Ainsworth, 1985). This secondary attachment

figure could be an older sibling, athletic coach, teacher, and pastors among other

possibilities. The secondary attachment figure could also be God (Granqvist, 1998;

Kirkpatrick, 1992; Kirkpatrick & Shaver, 1990). Essentially, individuals who lack

sufficient attachment bonds seek out that attachment with God and those with strong

attachment bonds do not feel the need to compensate with a relationship with God.

Individuals who grow up with insecure attachments to nonreligious parents have more of a

tendency to turn to God and religion, as they get older (Granqvist, 1998; Kirkpatrick,

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1997).

Table 4 presents us with the data that may explain why these hypotheses are not supported. Anxiety ($\beta = -.18$, $p = .016$) and avoidance with people ($\beta = -.21$, $p = .002$) have significant negative regression weights. Anxiety with God has a significant negative regression weight ($\beta = -.19$, $p = .009$), but avoidance with God has a nonsignificant, but positive regression weight ($\beta = .12$, $p = .073$). Anxiety with God carries more of the weight because it is a significant predictor and is larger in magnitude. Avoidance with God does not carry as much weight in predicting SWLS because it is not a significant predictor and is smaller in magnitude. It could be possible to interpret this result as anxiety and avoidance with God cancelling each other out when a person is higher in both anxiety and/or avoidance or lower on both anxiety and/or avoidance with God. Essentially, satisfaction with life goes up about equally when anxiety with people, avoidance with people, and anxiety with God goes down, but satisfaction goes down just slightly when avoidance with God goes down because avoidance with God is not a significant predictor of satisfaction. Thus, it can be concluded that attachment with people ends up carrying more weight in predicting life satisfaction than attachment with God. There might be a few possibilities for these findings.

First, those who have a secure attachment with people, an insecure attachment to God, and a higher satisfaction with life may invest more in the "here and now," rather than the Hereafter. Indeed, numerous studies conclude that social relationships are essential to well-being and life satisfaction (Lansford, 2000; Park, Peterson, and Seligman, 2004). Diener and Seligman (2002) found in their study that those who reported being

very happy, which is a component of life satisfaction and subjective well-being, had

excellent social relationships.

In fact, in this study, the general profile for an individual with the highest level of

life satisfaction also had slight high avoidance with God that may indicate that, even

though they believe in God, they may not be distressed by their ambivalent relationship

with God. Perhaps Kierkegaard (1847) said it best when stressing the importance of

social relationships while also living "before God":

> It is in fact Christian love which discovers and knows that one's neighbor exists
> and that—it is one and the same thing—everyone is one's neighbor. If it were not
> a duty to love, then there would be no concept of neighbor at all. But only when
> one loves his neighbor, only then is the selfishness or preferential love rooted out
> and the equality of the eternal preserved…If you want to love me, then love the
> men you see; what you do for them, you do for me…if you want to show that
> your life is intended to serve God, *then let it serve people*, yet continually with the
> thought of God. (p. 58)

People are primarily relational and this is emphasized in the Judeo-Christian

philosophy as well as the dogma of other religions. For example, for Jews, religion

involves relationships with the community. Much of Jewish law focuses on how Jews

relate to each other within and outside of the Jewish community and the steadfast love

(*hesed*) to be bestowed on others (Worthington and Berry, 2005). In Christianity, two of

the primary commands of Jesus are to love God (Matthew 22:37, New International

Version) and to love thy neighbor as thy self (Matthew 19:19 and Matthew 22:39, New

International Version). St. Paul stressed love (*agape*) to be one of the greatest of all

spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 13, New International Version). In Islamic tradition,

compassion is compared to selfless love for others. The Sufi mystic Muhaiyaddeen

(1981) stated that, "Once you have God's love, God's qualities, and God's actions,

everyone is connected to you…" (p.24). The Buddha taught compassion and loving-

kindness through *metta*, preaching, "…whatever kinds of worldly merit there are, all are not worth one sixteenth part of the heart-deliverance of loving kindness," (Itivuttaka sutta 27).

There is a second possibility for the findings in this study. Individuals who have an insecure attachment with people, a secure relationship with God, and exhibit a lower satisfaction with life may be less invested in the "here and now," seeing it as temporary. Instead, these individuals focus more on the life to come after death. Satisfaction with "life" is, instead, an ethereal concept and unattainable here on earth. Satisfaction will come in the afterlife through faith and grace of God. Hence, these individuals do not invest as much into their personal relationships with others because people are mere "houses" for their souls for the duration of time on this earth. This perspective is most likely limited to monotheistic religions since many polytheistic religions, such as Hinduism and Buddhism, believe in reincarnation and karma. Reincarnation refers to the individual's soul taking on the embodiment of a new form on earth after each death. The rebirth will occur on earth and be one of five classes of living beings (including animals and humans) and is governed by karma, the concept that one's actions in this life will determine the consequences or benefits of their next life on earth (Jones and Hostler, 2005). Thus, relationships and actions taken in this life are deemed as important because it will influence the one's next life and, most likely, how satisfied one is with it.

Another possibility is the life stage of college students. This stage is full of change and exploration. A transition to this stage can be influenced by attachment and that can then effect life satisfaction and social competence (Wei, Russell, & Azkalik, 2005; Wright & Perrone, 2010). Students who have a history of secure relationships have the ability to

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access social support, resources, and have the confidence to create interpersonal relationships to meet their needs (Weinfield, Sroufe, Egeland, & Carlson, 2008). Students who have a history of insecure relationships are more likely to have significantly high interpersonal distress, lack social confidence, and might gravitate more towards a relationship with God in order to compensate for these social deficits (Wei & Mallinckrodt, 2002). However, even though they might be able to develop a secure relationship with God, their lack of self-efficacy in social situations might still lead them to have a lower satisfaction of life.

Limitations of Study

There are a few important methodological limitations of this study. First, there is the possibility of response bias and social desirability that can occur with self-reports, though this is unlikely due to the measures taken to assure anonymity. In addition, the AGI, one of the measures used for this study, does not have test-retest reliability, despite its history of use in replicated studies that show good internal consistency.

Second, the sample for this study was primarily homogenous, with Christian, college aged, White women as the dominant part of the sample. Further research is needed to replicate this study with different populations, specifically homogenous monotheistic religious groups, such as Muslims or Southern Baptists and polytheistic groups, such as Hindis.

Third, although age was controlled for in this study, older populations might have different results since they tend to engage more in religious or spiritual practices than those of younger populations (Miller, 2005). In addition, research on attachment and the transition from high school to college indicates that attachment styles strongly contribute

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to adjustment (Cutrona, Cole, & Colangelo, 1994; Holmbeck & Wandrei, 1993; Kenny & Donaldson, 1991; Kenny & Rice, 1995; Rice, 1992). Adolescents and young adults, which would be the developmental stage for the sample of this study, often report that friends are their most important influence, outside of family, and friendship is related to social competence and well-being (Brown, 2004; Hartup & Abecassis, 2002). Social relationships are important and this could be why, for this particular sample, attachment to people is more significant in life satisfaction rather than attachment to God. Future studies should include a different or a more broad age range.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this study is that a secure relationship with God and a secure relationship with people are significant predictors for higher life satisfaction. This supports our first hypothesis as well as the previous literature. This study also found that relationships with people might be slightly more significant in determining life satisfaction than a relationship with God. This may suggest that a secure attachment and relationship with individuals are *more* significant to higher life satisfaction than a secure attachment and a relationship with God. This does not minimize the importance of a relationship with God or the benefits of a religious or spiritual component in one's life. There are still strong associations between religious and spiritual commitment and healthy physiological and psychological processes. However, a secure relationship with God *and* a secure relationship with people might be considered the ideal for higher life satisfaction.

Implications for Practice

In closing, if practitioners, public policies, employers, and others can cultivate an environment that encourages and values quality relationships with families, co-workers, and communities it could very well have a positive effect on one's overall satisfaction with life. Satisfaction with life can then create a spillover effect. For example, higher satisfaction with life for individuals might increase one's engagement in work and lead to higher production and lower turnover. Satisfaction with life and positive secure relationships, which correlate with better physical and mental health, might create healthier individuals and decrease the dependence on medical assistance from the government. Schools that stress social skills within their curriculum may contribute to the creation of rewarding friendships and monogamous relationships.

Counseling psychologists should acknowledge the amount of influence attachment has on client's current relationships, relationship with God, social self-efficacy, and life satisfaction. A client's current struggles in their intimate relationships might reflect the kind of relationship they have with God and might help explain the level of satisfaction they have with their life. Understanding these relationships is helpful to gain perspective on a client's worldview and how they see themselves, their expectations from others, self-regulation, coping behaviors, paths toward forgiveness or empathy, ways to find peace, and, hopefully, enhance therapeutic change. The findings of this study can also help support the motivation to explore spiritual or religious issues with clients in therapy. These issues may be vital elements of a client's life but have often had a history of being ignored in a therapeutic setting.

Ultimately, the inclusion of religious and spiritual issues, such as these, in psychological practice, emphasizes the importance of multicultural competence. Thus, in order to promote the ideals of multicultural competence and these specific client issues, there is a need for practitioners and researchers to have better self-awareness of their own religious and spiritual values and attachment styles, knowledge of conceptual models and intervention techniques, and an ability to implement training opportunities.

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Figure 1.

Scatterplot of studentized residuals and standardized predicted values for the regression.

Scatterplot

Dependent Variable: SWL

Figure 2.

Bartholomew's Four-Point Model of Individual Differences in Adult Attachment (1990)

Table 1.

Frequencies and Percentages for Categorical Variables

	Frequency	Percent
Gender (*N* = 197)		
Male	77	39.1
Female	120	60.9
Race (*N* = 197)		
White	161	81.7
Black or African American	9	4.6
American Indian or Alaska Native	1	0.5
Asian (Indian, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese)	16	8.1
Hispanic or Latino (Mexican, Puerto Rican,Cuban)	3	1.5
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	1	0.5
Some other race	4	2.0
Two or more races	2	1.0
US native (*N* = 196)		
Native (this refers to anyone born in the U.S. or a U.S. Islander)	157	80.1
Foreign born (this refers to anyone who is not a U.S. citizen)	39	19.9
Student status (*N* = 196)		
Freshman	57	29.1
Sophomore	53	27.0
Junior	41	20.9
Senior	45	23.0
Highest level of education (*N* = 197)		
High school graduate or GED	57	28.9
Some college, no degree	126	64.0
Associate's Degree	5	2.5
Bachelor's Degree	9	4.6
Relationship status (*N* = 195)		
Single	112	57.4
Married	4	2.1
In a relationship	79	40.5

Religious background ($N = 197$)		
Buddhist	1	0.5
Christian	167	84.8
Hindu	5	2.5
Islam	9	4.6
Jewish	1	0.5
Other	14	7.1

Table 2.

Descriptive Statistics for Continuous Variables (N = 197)

	M	*SD*	Range	Skewness	Kurtosis
ECR-R anxiety (people)	3.68	1.15	1.06 – 6.50	0.02	-0.58
ECR-R avoidance (people)	3.65	1.00	1.39 – 6.72	0.31	-0.05
AGI anxiety (God)	45.06	14.60	14.00 – 91.00	0.15	-0.18
AGI avoidance (God)	54.66	15.56	14.00 – 98.00	0.09	-0.30
Satisfaction with life	24.88	6.36	6.00 – 35.00	-0.62	-0.16
Age	19.84	1.39	18.00 – 25.00	0.78	0.76

Table 3.

Cronbach's Alpha Reliabilities for Scales

	N	Number of items	Reliability (α)
ECR-R anxiety (people)	183	18	.93
ECR-R avoidance (people)	184	18	.92
AGI anxiety (God)	197	14	.89
AGI avoidance (God)	197	14	.89
Satisfaction with life	197	5	.88

Table 4.

Pearson Correlations between Scales and Age

	SWLS	ECR-R Anxiety	ECR-R Avoidance	AGI Anxiety	AGI Avoidance	Age
SWLS	--					
ECR-R anxiety	-.34***	--				
ECR-R avoidance	-.29***	.29***	--			
AGI anxiety	-.33***	.46***	.18**	--		
AGI avoidance	.12	.01	.06	-.14	--	
Age	.06	-.13	.04	-.01	-.13	--

Note. SWL = Satisfaction with life. ECR-R = Experiences in Close Relationships-Revised. AGI = Attachment to God Inventory. Listwise deletion was applied so $N = 197$ for all correlations.
**$p \leq .01$. ***$p \leq .001$.

Table 5.

Independent t tests Comparing White and Nonwhite Participants on all Scales

	White (n = 161) M (SD)	Nonwhite (n = 36) M (SD)	t(df)
Satisfaction with life	25.27 (6.25)	23.17 (6.62)	1.80(195)
ECR-R anxiety (people)	3.74 (1.16)	3.40 (1.07)	1.62(195)
ECR-R avoidance (people)	3.62 (1.01)	3.79 (0.99)	-0.93(195)
AGI anxiety (God)	44.57 (14.56)	47.25 (14.75)	-1.00(195)
AGI avoidance (God)	55.76 (15.39)	49.78 (15.60)	2.10(195)*

*p < .05.

Table 6.

Independent t tests Comparing Participants who were not in a Relationship and

Participants who were in a Relationship on all Scales

	Not in a relationship (*n* = 112) M (SD)	In a relationship (*n* = 83) M (SD)	t(df)
Satisfaction with life	24.67 (6.21)	25.06 (6.60)	-0.42(193)
ECR-R anxiety (people)	3.79 (1.05)	3.50 (1.24)	1.74(158.91)
ECR-R avoidance (people)	3.78 (1.03)	3.45 (0.93)	2.25(193)*
AGI anxiety (God)	44.09 (13.93)	46.34 (15.53)	-1.06(193)
AGI avoidance (God)	54.49 (16.44)	54.89 (14.59)	-0.18(193)

Note. If Levene's test for unequal variances was significant, the *t* test for unequal variances was applied and the degrees of freedom differ from $n_1 + n_2 - 2$.
*$p < .05$.

Table 7.

Independent t tests Comparing Native and International Participants on all Scales

	Native (n = 157) M (SD)	International (n = 39) M (SD)	t(df)
Satisfaction with life	25.05 (6.22)	24.03 (6.87)	0.90(194)
ECR-R anxiety (people)	3.75 (1.15)	3.40 (1.14)	1.72(194)
ECR-R avoidance (people)	3.59 (1.04)	3.88 (0.86)	-1.82(68.37)
AGI anxiety (God)	45.03 (14.94)	45.41 (13.42)	-0.15(194)
AGI avoidance (God)	55.65 (15.80)	50.72 (14.27)	1.78(194)

Note. If Levene's test for unequal variances was significant, the *t* test for unequal variances was applied and the degrees of freedom differ from $n_1 + n_2 - 2$. There were no significant *t* tests.

Table 8.

Independent t tests Comparing Male and Female Participants on all Scales

	Male (*n* = 77) M (SD)	Female (*n* = 120) M (SD)	t(df)
Satisfaction with life	24.52 (5.70)	25.12 (6.76)	-0.64(195)
ECR-R anxiety (people)	3.49 (1.16)	3.81 (1.13)	-1.91(195)
ECR-R avoidance (people)	3.65 (1.89)	3.65 (1.08)	0.04(195)
AGI anxiety (God)	43.64 (13.65)	45.97 (15.16)	-1.09(195)
AGI avoidance (God)	55.13 (14.08)	54.37 (16.49)	0.34(195)

Note. There were no significant *t* tests.

Table 9.

Simultaneous Multiple Regressions for Predicting Satisfaction with Life from ECR-R Anxiety, ECR-R Avoidance, AGI Anxiety, and AGI Avoidance controlling for Age (N = 197)

Predictors	B	$SE\ B$	β	p	R^2
Age	0.25	0.30	0.05	.415	.204
ECR-R anxiety	-1.02	0.42	-0.18	.016	
ECR-R avoidance	-1.32	0.43	-0.21	.002	
AGI anxiety	-0.08	0.03	-0.19	.009	
AGI avoidance	0.05	0.03	0.12	.073	

Note. The overall model was significant, $F(5, 191) = 9.82$, $p = .000$. The constant for the model = 29.70.

Table 10.

Predicted Satisfaction Scores for Different Patterns of Attachment from Regression

Equation

Profile	Anxiety w/people	Avoidance w/people	Anxiety w/God	Avoidance w/God	Predicted Satisfaction w/life score
1	High (1)	High (1)	High (1)	Low (-1)	20.41
2	High (1)	High (1)	High (1)	High (1)	21.92
3	Low (-1)	High (1)	High (1)	Low (-1)	22.74
4	High (1)	High (1)	Low (-1)	Low (-1)	22.86
5	High (1)	Low (-1)	High (1)	Low (-1)	23.07
6	Low (-1)	High (1)	High (1)	High (1)	24.25
7	High (1)	High (1)	Low (-1)	High (1)	24.37
8	High (1)	Low (-1)	High (1)	High (1)	24.58
9	Low (-1)	High (1)	Low (-1)	Low (-1)	25.19
10	Low (-1)	Low (-1)	High (1)	Low (-1)	25.39
11	High (1)	Low (-1)	Low (-1)	Low (-1)	25.52
12	Low (-1)	High (1)	Low (-1)	High (1)	26.70
13	Low (-1)	Low (-1)	High (1)	High (1)	26.90
14	High (1)	Low (-1)	Low (-1)	High (1)	27.03
15	Low (-1)	Low (-1)	Low (-1)	Low (-1)	27.84
16	Low (-1)	Low (-1)	Low (-1)	High (1)	29.36

Note. Values of -1 and +1 were used to represent low and high z-scores on attachment, respectively. The standardized regression equation was used to compute z-scores on Satisfaction. The z-scores were then transformed into raw SWLS scores by multiplying by the standard deviation of 6.36 and adding to the mean of 24.88.

APPENDIX A

Extended Literature Review

Introduction

This chapter includes four sections. The first section helps define some of the terms used in this study. The second section discusses the role of religion and spirituality in psychology. The third section gives an overview of attachment theory. The fourth section discusses attachment theory as conceptualized in a relationship with God.

Definition of Terms

Religion and Spirituality

Religious factors are concerned with "prescribed beliefs, rituals, and practices, as well as social institutional features" (Miller & Thoreson 1999, p.6), which demonstrate how one relates to the divine or sacred. According to Wong (1998) religion is "one manifestation of spirituality and, as a cultural phenomenon, tends to involve societal institutions, shared beliefs, symbols, and rituals" (p.367). Melton's (1996) *Encyclopedia of American Religions* identifies over 2,135 religious groups in the U.S., including nearly 1,200 Christian denominations (p.29). Koenig, McCullough, and Larson (2001) describe religion as an organized system of beliefs, rituals, practices, and symbols that create a kind of closeness to the sacred and transcendent (God, higher power, The Divine, ultimate truth). Religion also embodies a commitment to foster one's understanding and one's responsibility to others within a community.

On the other hand, spirituality focuses on an individual's subjective experience; it can be conceptualized but not captured in dichotomous categories. Schneiders (1989)

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says spirituality is the "experience of consciously striving to integrate one's life in terms not of isolation and self-absorption but of self-transcendence toward the ultimate value one perceives" (p.684). Spirituality is also described as having observable behaviors, such as meditation, fasting, prayer, and study that bring about a "reality of a spiritual dimension beyond sensory and intellectual knowledge" (Miller & Thoreson, 1999, p.8). In *The Handbook of Religion and Health* (2001), Koenig, et al. define spirituality as a personal journey toward discovering answers to life's ultimate questions about life, meaning, and relationships with the sacred or transcendent, which may or may not lead to the development of religious rituals and creation of a community.

For the purposes of this study, religion and spirituality will be used interchangeably, due to the main objective being to better understand an individual's relationship with God, higher power, the Divine, the sacred, or the transcendent, in terms of attachment.

Attachment System

Bowlby (1969) first introduced attachment theory as a behavioral system. Mikulincer and Shaver (2007) described this system as, "a species-universal, biologically evolved neural program that organizes behavior in ways that increase the chances of an individual's survival and reproduction, despite inevitable environmental dangers and demands" (p.10). Essentially, the attachment system creates and regulates behaviors that obtain and maintain proximity with a specific person or persons identified as an infant or child's primary caregiver (Bretherton, 1985). The proximity with the caregiver ideally provides a sense of safety and protection, which insures survival.

Attachment Styles

The attachment system manifests as patterns that create attachment styles. These styles are a result of the history of an individual's attachment experiences (Ainsworth, 1967). These attachment styles are differentiated by distinct patterns of expectations, needs, and emotions (Fraley & Shaver, 2000). Attachment styles are described generally as secure, avoidant, anxious, and disorganized, depending on the kind of patterns exhibited toward the primary caregiver or relationship partner.

Attachment Figures

Attachment figures are individuals a person turns to when protection and support are needed. According to attachment theory (e.g., Ainsworth, 1991; Hazan & Shaver, 1994; Hazan & Zeifman, 1994), an attachment figure has three purposes. First, the attachment figure is the focus of "proximity seeking." Closeness to the attachment figure is desired in times of need. Second, the attachment figure serves as a "safe haven," providing protection, comfort, and support. Third, the attachment figure provides a "secure base" which creates a safe environment in order to pursue goals that are not related to attachment. Lastly, when the attachment figure is separated from the infant or child, there is often "separation protest," meaning the infant or child becomes distressed when separated from the figure because they perceive the separation as a threat to accessibility to the caregiver (Kobak & Madsen, 2008). An individual only becomes an attachment figure when he or she provides a safe haven and secure base in times of threat or danger (Mikulciner & Shaver, 2007). Primary caregivers serve as attachment figures during infancy, but in later childhood, adolescence, and adulthood other relationship partners can serve as attachment figures.

Life Satisfaction

Life satisfaction is an evaluative judgment (Pavot & Diener, 2008) and a "cognitive evaluation of one's life" (Diener, 1984, p.550). There are six main variables that best predict an individual's happiness and satisfaction with life (Argyle, 1987; Diener, Suh, Lucas, & Smith, 1999; Myers, 1992). These variables are a sense of perceived control, positive self-esteem, extroversion, optimism, a sense of meaning and purpose in life, and positive social relationships (Compton, 2005). More specifically, according to a 2009 study by Kapteyn, Smith, and Van Soest, determinates of global life satisfaction include four domains: daily activities (including one's job), social contact and family, health, and income, the latter being the lowest determinate. The positive psychology movement places an emphasis on understanding the importance of life satisfaction and how to enhance these variables and determinates.

Social bonds and attachment to other individuals can result in health benefits or decrements from the absence or loss of such bonds. Disruptions in relationships can make an individual more vulnerable to mental illness, disease, an impaired immune system, substance abuse, and suicide, all elements that contribute to life satisfaction (Bloom, Asher, & White, 1978; Goodwin, Hurt, Key, & Sarret, 1987; Lynch, 1977; Uchino, Cacioppo, & Kiecolt-Glaser, 1996). Thus, the importance of understanding these relationships in the context of an individual's life can be essential in treatment.

The Importance of Religion and Spirituality in Psychology

Multicultural training and competency are now promoted heavily in the areas of counseling and psychology. This competency is tested when students and practitioners are required to have: "(a) an awareness of one's own cultural heritage, (b) respect and

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comfort with other cultures and values that differ from one's own, and (c) an awareness of one's helping style and how this style could affect clients from other cultural backgrounds" (Walker, Gorsuch, & Tan, 2004, p.49). However, in an attempt to distance itself from the subjective, unscientific nature of religion and spirituality in psychology, psychological research and training overlooks a major area of diversity and an integral part of human lives.

The psychology of religion and spirituality is often ignored by mainstream psychology (Baumeister, 2002; Hill, Sarazin, Atkinson, Cousineau, & Hsu, 2003; Kirkpatrick, 1992). There are reasons why this may occur. First, some researchers may view the study of religion and spirituality as unscientific (Simpson, 2002). Second, some of the variables involved in religion (e.g., social support) can be studied outside the realm of religion (Funder, 2002). Third, religiosity and spirituality may be too complex, multifaceted, and therefore, too difficult to study (Hill et al., 2003; Simpson, 2002). Fourth, psychologists as researchers and clinicians tend to be less religious or spiritual than the general public and surround themselves with like-minded colleagues, hence psychologists tend to believe religion and spirituality are relatively unimportant in research or practice (Baumeister, 2002; Joules, 2001). Finally, there are few major, mainstream psychological theories directly applied to the psychology of religion research (Kirkpatrick, 1992; Simpson, 2002).

In addition to lack of a research emphasis, educational programs and professional organizations also fail to incorporate religion and spirituality in their training. Burke, Chauvin, & Miranti (2005) propose several different reasons for why spirituality and religion have been omitted from educational training in the past:

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Our nation's founding principle of separation of church and state, the sacred from the secular, has contributed to the segregation of religious beliefs and practices from the professional mental health field. Like the larger society, secular mental health professionals adopted a hands-off attitude, wanting to be 'value free' so as not to intrude into client's spirituality or to impose personal values on the client. Rigid boundaries were drawn and issues of religion and spirituality have been viewed as the province of ministers, priests, and rabbis. Spiritual issues were seen as existing in a separate realm from psychological and physical distress and therefore were to be ignored. Professionals were taught to adopt a stance of neutrality and remain objective and unbiased. (p. 6-7)

Religion was finally included as an element of human diversity in the American Counseling Association and the American Psychological Association codes of ethics (Miller, 2003). Additionally, in 2001, the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Education Programs (CACREP) included religious and spiritual values in the standards under the common core area of Social and Cultural Foundations (Miller, 2003, p.3-4). These guidelines include explaining the difference between spirituality and religion, exploring one's own religious and spiritual beliefs, showing sensitivity to a variety of religious clients, and identifying competency and professional limits (Burke, et al., 2005).

The latest revision of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-IV TR)* also recognizes the role of spirituality and religion in mental health. A patient can be diagnosed with a DSM-IV code, listed as V Code 62.89, which is "a religious or spiritual problem…that involve(s) loss or questioning of faith, problems associated with conversion to a new faith, or questioning of spiritual values that may or

may not necessarily be related to an organized church or religious institution" and demonstrates a need for clinical attention (American Psychiatric Association [DSM-IV-TR], 2000, p.741). Richards and Bergin (1997) discuss five reasons helping professionals should assess for religion and spirituality when diagnosing and doing treatment planning. These reasons include obtaining a more thorough understanding of the client's worldviews, exploring whether or not religious orientation is healthy or maladaptive, and becoming aware of religious interventions that might be helpful in treatment.

Researchers are also starting to recognize the influences of religion on psychological functioning (Jones, 1994). More specifically, recent research is examining the relationship between religious faith and positive mental health benefits. This research reveals that positive contributions to overall mental and physical health are attributed to religious and spiritual faith (Donahue & Benson, 1995; Ellison, 1991; Larson et al., 1992). Richards and Bergin (2000), recognize that religion and spirituality provide coping behaviors for stress, grief, and illnesses. Religious individuals report fewer illnesses, better recovery from illnesses, a greater tolerance for pain, and live longer lives (George, Larson, Koenig, & McCullough, 2000). Religious individuals are also less likely to suffer from depression, anxiety, suicidal ideation, and partake in alcohol or drug abuse (Donahue & Benson, 1995).

In order to encourage religious and spiritual identity and assessment in education, training, and practice, clear standards, such as course objectives and textbook recommendations can be set by professional organizations. Although it is noted in professional ethical codes, there is very little done to actually promote this diversity issue in the profession. Faculty and staff must have an openness to offer this area of diversity

training and create an environment where students feel safe and respected rather than stereotyped and ostracized. Clinical and training settings can also encourage religious and spiritual assessment by providing intake forms tailored to include these aspects of a client's history. Formal quantitative assessment tools, as well as qualitative assessments, can be used to gauge spiritual and religious histories. For example, the genogram and narrative life-line activities allow therapists to map out the generations of a client's family and give a visual representation of the "ways in which clients' religious/spiritual heritage continues to affect their current beliefs" (Frame, 2003, p.104). The spiritual genogram and narrative life-line take note of conversions, baptisms, significant rituals and events that were religious or spiritual in nature. In addition, the absence of such rituals and events can also have significance.

Theory, research, and training in psychology are beginning to address religious and spiritual issues, but there is still much work to be done. Although there are faith identity models, assessment tools, and ethical codes promoting multicultural competency in this area, there is a need for more research and information for practical application. Therapy content, such as grief, illness, world events, marriage, gender roles, and sexuality, often influence a client's thoughts on religion. How can practitioners be best prepared for these discussions? When is it time for them to refer their client due to conflicting values? What leads people to experience a complete religious overhaul or give up on God?

Overview of Attachment Theory

Childhood Attachment

Attachment theory was first introduced by John Bowlby to help explain the emotional bond and the behaviors that were used to maintain an infant's proximity to a

caregiver and to protect the infant from danger (Bowlby, 1969/1982). Bowlby found that

when infants were separated from their caregiver they would go to great lengths to prevent

the separation or to immediately reestablish proximity to their caregiver. Bowlby

suggested that these kinds of behaviors (clinging, crying, raising of the hands) might serve

an evolutionary function. Since infants are unable to feed and care for themselves, they

are dependent upon the parent or caregiver. Throughout history, infants who were able to

maintain proximity to their caregiver, through the use of attachment behaviors, were more

likely to survive and reproduce.

In order to survive during times of alarm or distress the attachment system

becomes activated and the child engages in activities that allow the child to grow closer in

proximity to the attachment figure. Bowlby (1969/1982) notes that there are three

situations that can trigger the activation of attachment behaviors: (a) frightening or

alarming events; (b) illness, injury, or fatigue; and (c) separation or threat of separation

from attachment figures. The activation of the attachment system results in attachment

behaviors that are thought to have the biological function to protect oneself from

psychological or physical harm (Bretherton, 1985). Bowlby (1969/1982) suggested that

attachment behaviors, such as these, are just as important as mating and feeding because

the attachment system has its own distinct internal motivation: safety. When put in these

situations a child that exhibits attachment behaviors is then soothed most effectively and

quickly by the attachment figure (Bretherton, 1985). The knowledge that the attachment

figure will be available and responsive creates a feeling of security and a strong bond

between the attached person and attachment figure.

The attachment system is cyclical (Mikulciner & Shaver, 2007). The individual experiences distress, seeks protection and safety from an attachment figure, experiences a reduction in distress, feels safe once again, and the individual is then able to return to other activities and interests (Mikulciner & Shaver, 2007). Thus, the availability or lack of protection and security has many implications for regulating emotions, coping with distress, feeling valued, and modeling in relationships (Mikulciner & Shaver, 2007).

Early attachment experiences with caregivers create expectations of these caregivers, which are then incorporated into an internal working model (IWM) (Bowlby, 1969). These internal working models provide a schema that guides perceptions and behaviors in later relationships (Main, Kaplan, & Cassidy, 1985). More specifically, an internal working model (IWM) can set the stage for how an individual feels worthy of love and their level of trust with others in relationships (Neswald-NcCalip, 2001). Attachment style and internal working models (IWM) are participant to change due to history and contextual factors (Bowlby, 1988). However, most attachment styles remain static and resistant to change. Attachment styles will more than likely end up manifesting in other relationships often during times of distress or emergency (Bretherton, 1985; Shaver & Hazan, 1988).

Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, and Wall (1978) added upon Bowlby's theory by suggesting that there are different styles of attachment observed in children as early as six months old. The Strange Situation, developed by Ainsworth and her colleagues, presented 12-month old infants with a play environment where they were in the presence of their mothers, exposed to strangers and separated from their mothers, and then reunited with their mothers. Three attachment styles were coded: secure, anxious-ambivalent, and

anxious-avoidant. A fourth attachment style, disorganized-disoriented, was later

identified by Main et al. (1985).

Infants that explored the environment in their mother's presence, showed some

anxiety upon her separation, and were easily comforted when reunited with their parent,

were categorized as having a secure attachment style. A secure style suggests high

functioning of attachment between the child and caregiver. The attachment figure gives

help and comfort when needed, provides a safe haven, and a secure base for exploration.

In response to this cycle, the attached child develops an internal working model (IWM)

that suggests they are worthy of love and support.

Another category of infants in the Strange Situation showed anxiety in exploration

of the novel environment, even with the mother present. These infants became extremely

distressed when the mother left them in the room with the stranger. Upon the mother's

return, the infants sought to remain close to the mother, but also became resentful and

resistant when the mother initiated attention. Infants displaying these attachment

behaviors were categorized as having an anxious-ambivalent attachment style because

they reflected a child's uncertainty about a caregiver's responsiveness and availability.

An anxious-ambivalent style suggests that caregivers are inconsistent and unpredictable in

how they respond to an infant's needs. The child is constantly unsure how the caregiver

will meet their needs or requests. The attached child may develop an internal working

model (IWM) that leads them to question their worthiness and their trust in others.

Lastly, Ainsworth and her colleagues categorized infants into an anxious-avoidant

attachment style. These infants avoided or ignored their mother in the novel environment,

showed little to no emotion when the mother left, exhibited low levels of exploration, and

had little to no emotion when the mother returned. The anxious-avoidant attachment style results when a caregiver lacks responsiveness and availability; they also avoid physical contact. In avoidant relationships, the child expects all efforts to gain attention from the caregiver to be dismissed. In response to this, the attached child may develop an internal working model (IWM) that leads them to believe they are unworthy of help, comfort, or love.

Main and her colleagues (1985) extended the attachment research by identifying the attachment style of infants who did not fit into these three attachment styles by Ainsworth. She labeled infants with a disorganized-disoriented style. These infants exhibited behaviors that were "inexplicable, odd, disorganized, disoriented or overtly conflicted… in the parent's presence" (Main & Hesse, 2000, p. 1099). When in distress or in need of comfort, these infants seemed confused about what to do and exhibited misdirected movements and incomplete expressions. They engaged in contradictory behaviors such as reaching their arms out to the parent while backing away. Infants also displayed apprehension when their mother approached or they would freeze or slow their movements in response to their mother's attempts to approach them. The disorganized-disoriented attachment style often results from parents who frighten their children when they are seeking comfort and security. Parents also may unconsciously respond to their children in threatening or inappropriate ways that confuse and disorient their children in their attempt to seek proximity and comfort.

Adult Attachment

Differences in attachment in childhood will, more often than not, influence relationship styles and patterns in adulthood. The internal working models (IWM) that

individuals create regarding adult relationships are often a reflection of their childhood experiences. For example, a child that grows up with a secure style of attachment has experiences that validate they can depend on others and that others will keep them safe. Having these experiences encourages the child to seek out relationships that correspond to these relationship expectations.

The requirements of the attachment figure in adult relationships are similar to those in infancy and childhood. The adult attachment figure is the focus of "proximity seeking," behaviors; however, unlike attachment in children, proximity can be in the form of mental representations of the relationship partner (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007). Mental representations can create a feeling of safety and can be symbolic of protection. The adult attachment figure, or partner, serves as a "safe haven," by providing reassurance, comfort, and support in times of need, just as the attachment figure in infancy or childhood. The adult attachment figure provides a "secure base" which creates a sense of security and safety in the relationship so that the individual can pursue goals outside of the attachment relationship and grow as a person (Feeney & Monin, 2007). Lastly, "separation protest" and distress occurs as a result of losing the adult attachment figure through death, divorce, or some other sort of separation, either temporary or permanent.

Hazan and Shaver (Hazan & Shaver, 1987; Shaver & Hazan, 1998; Shaver, Hazan, & Bradshaw, 1988) agree that adult attachment is the emotional bond created between adult romantic partners and has similar characteristics and motivations found in the emotional bond between infants and their caregivers. They found that individuals, when asked to self-report about their romantic attachment patterns, variables, such as working models about relationships and love, reflections of childhood experiences with parents,

and work experiences were theoretically relevant to adult attachment (1987, 1990). Hazan and Shaver developed a prototype for adult attachment that follows in the footsteps of Ainsworth's attachment styles: a secure style, an avoidant style, and an anxious-ambivalent style.

Investigators became somewhat critical of Hazan and Shaver's model of adult attachment (Collins & Read, 1990; Levy & Davis, 1988) because they felt that it was limited by placing individuals into categories of attachment rather than dimensions of attachment. Researchers then attempted to design measures that would use continuous rating scales (Collins & Read, 1990; Feeney & Noller, 1990; Levy & Davis, 1988) and broadened their focus on close relationships rather than just romantic relationships.

The attempts to create multi-item scales found that there were two distinct dimensions that continued to manifest in self-report measures about attachment style. These distinct dimensions were anxiety and avoidance. Attachment anxiety is defined as "involving a fear of interpersonal rejection or abandonment, an excessive need for approval from others, and distress when one's partner is unavailable or unresponsive" (Wei, Russell, Mallinckrodt, & Vogel, 2007, p.188). Attachment avoidance is defined as "involving fear of dependence and interpersonal intimacy, an excessive need for self-reliance, and reluctance to self-disclose" (Wei et al., 2007, p. 188). High scores on one or both of these dimensions suggest that individuals have an insecure attachment style (Wei et al., 2007). Low scores on attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance dimensions suggest that individuals have a secure attachment style (Brennan, Clark, & Shaver, 1998; Lopez & Brennan, 2000; Mallinckrodt, 2000).

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Using dimensions rather than categories, Bartholomew (1990) proposed a different model of adult attachment. She suggested that our attachment style was a reflection of both our models of self and our models of others. These perceptions of the self and others are either positive or negative. The self is seen as worthy or unworthy of love and others are seen as available, unreliable, or dismissive. By looking at both the self and others, Bartholomew proposed a model of four attachment styles in adulthood. These styles include a secure style and the insecure styles labeled in dimensions as anxious-preoccupied, dismissive-avoidant, and fearful-avoidant. Researchers are increasingly adopting Bartholomew's four-point model of adult attachment.

In Bartholomew's model, a secure adult attachment style involves a positive perception of the self and a positive perception of others. This is exhibited as low avoidance and low anxiety on the model. A secure style leads to an individual being comfortable with intimacy and autonomy. An anxious-preoccupied attachment style involves a negative perception of the self and a positive perception of others. This is exhibited as low avoidance and high anxiety on the model. An individual with an anxious-preoccupied attachment style may find their self as overly dependent in their adult relationships. Dismissive-avoidant style individuals have a positive perception of self and a negative perception of others. This is exhibited as low anxiety and high avoidance on the model. Often individuals with a dismissive avoidant attachment style deny attachment or intimacy with others and rely heavily on individual achievement and self-reliance. Fearful-avoidant (which has also been described as disorganized) individuals have a negative perception of self and a negative perception of others. This is exhibited as high anxiety and high avoidance on the model. Individuals who have a

fearful-avoidant attachment style desire intimacy but their distrust in others leads them to avoid close relationships that could lead to rejection or loss. Bartholomew's model can be seen in Appendix I.

Attachment Conceptualized in a Relationship With God

It is suggested that one's relationship with God is not only an attachment relationship, but also a reflection of one's internalized relational schemas (Brokaw & Edwards, 1994; Heinrich, 1982; Jensma, 1993; Rizzuto, 1974). One's perceived idea of God will also be a reflection of one's early attachments as well as other significant attachment relationships throughout one's lifespan. Kirkpatrick (1992, Kirkpatrick & Shaver, 1990) suggests that monotheistic religions believing in a personal God might also fit into the attachment theory framework because God is often conceptualized as a parent or attachment figure (Granqvist & Kirkpatrick, 2008). Kaufman (1981, p. 67) states that, "The idea of God is the idea of an absolutely adequate attachment-figure…God is thought of as a protective and caring parent who is always reliable and always available to its children when they are in need." In contrast, a 2006 study by Baylor Institute for Studies of Religion reported that 31% of Americans view God as "judgmental," 25% see God as "benevolent," 23% describe God as "distant," and 16% view God as "critical."

Attachment to God, at least in monotheistic traditions, fulfills the same criteria that are required in an attachment relationship with another individual: the importance of proximity to the attachment figure, the attachment figure is seen as a "safe haven," the attachment figure provides a secure base, and separation protest can occur. However, a study by Kumari and Pirta (2009) using the Attachment to God Inventory (Beck & McDonald, 2004) with a sample of individuals who identified as Hindu, a polytheistic

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religion, found that individuals held a strong belief in God, a strong belief in the power of

God, and various ways and uses for prayer. Additionally, Granqvist, Mikulincer, and

Shaver (2010), suggest that attachment theory proves useful in conceptualizing other

aspects of religion where there is no anthropomorphic God figure, such as Buddhism.

Buddhism "involves vividly what it feels like to have an attachment figure (often one's

mother) provide one with unconditional love, and this love is then turned outward toward

other people" (p.56). A Buddhist nun, Pima Chödrön, (2003) emphasizes the importance

of security (a safe haven), love, and "mindfulness":

> Our mind is always seeking zones of safety…We fear losing our illusion of
> security—that's what makes us so anxious…That's the essences of samsara—that
> cycle of suffering that comes from continuing to seek happiness in all the wrong
> places. (pp.23-24)

Religion offers a variety of ways to seek proximity to God. Although God is

frequently described as being omnipresent, the most important form of proximity-

maintaining attachment behavior is prayer (Reed, 1978). Prayer is described as "the most

often practiced form of religiosity," (Trier & Shupe, 1991) and individuals who pray,

"believe(s) that he speaks with God, immediately present and personal" (Heiler, 1932, p.

356). Attachment patterns with God in a secure relationship include a desire to maintain a

close proximity to God. This proximity is satisfied through prayer and religious services

that instill a sense of security and comfort from God. Individuals can be "touched" by

God, be "close" and intimate with God, or be cold and distant from God. An avoidant

attachment to God results in less effort toward proximity, while an anxious-ambivalent

attachment to God may lead to maladaptive efforts toward proximity.

God also serves as a "safe haven," which is another criterion of attachment. Hood,

Spilka, Hunsberger, and Gorsuch (2003, p. 386-387) suggest three triggers that may have

people turning to God in times of trouble: (a) illness, disability, and other negative life events that cause both mental and physical distress; (b) the anticipated or actual death of friends and relatives; and (c) dealing with an adverse life situation. These triggers are similar to the attachment triggers that Bowlby (1969/1982) suggests as being necessary to activate the attachment system in children.

Attachment also provides a "secure base" to allow for exploration. Secure-base themes are found in much of the Judeo-Christian Bible. In the book of Psalms, God is often described as "a shield for me" (Psalms 3:3 New International Version), "my rock, and my fortress" (Psalms 18:2, New International Version), and "the strength of my life" (Psalms 27:2, New International Version). The 23rd Psalm (New International Version) which states, "Yea, though I walk through the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me" is probably one of the most well known examples describing God as providing this secure base. A relationship with God is often seen to provide strength, peace, and resiliency and the concept of God as providing a secure base is not limited to Christian religious tradition (Kirkpatrick, 2005).

Finally, the threat of separation from God also fits into the requirements for an attachment figure. God does not die or move away as might happen in child or adult attachment relationships, but separation can happen in other ways. Potential separation might occur depending on what one believes happens after death (Kirkpatrick, 2005). Another way to "lose" God might be to simply cease believing in God. There are also situations where individuals believe they have been abandoned by God and "lose" God. Pargament (1990) quotes a Holocaust survivor:

> I used to have a very personal intimate relationship with God. I thought
> everything I did and every move I made God knew and was right there…He'd be

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there just above me, watching and admonishing and saying 'tut-tut-tut' about those inner thoughts I might have…Then the Nazis came and where did He go? God was no longer near me. Disappeared. And I am no longer the person I was. (p. 134)

It appears that even Mother Theresa, a mentor for spiritual and religious individuals alike, suffered from a similar separation from God. Her posthumously published private papers (2007) portray a painful experience:

Since [age] 49 or 50 this terrible sense of loss-this untold darkness—this loneliness, this untold darkness—this loneliness, this continual longing for God—which gives me that pain deep down in my heart—Darkness is such that I really do not see…—the place if God in my soul is blank—There is no God in me—when the pain of longing is so great—I just long & long for God—and then it is that I feel—He does not want me—He is not there—…God does not want me—sometimes I just hear my own heart cry out—"My God" and nothing else comes. (pp. 1-2)

If God can be conceptualized as an attachment figure, then it suggests that attachment styles to God also manifest, just as they do in child and adult relationships. Kirkpatrick and Shaver (1992) constructed a measure of attachment to God using similar attachment categories as outlined earlier by Ainsworth and Hazan and Shaver. A secure attachment style with God is exemplified by statements such as, "God is generally warm and responsive to me; He always seems to know when to be supportive and protective of me, and when to let me make my own mistakes. My relationship with God is always comfortable, and I am very happy and satisfied with it" (Kirkpatrick and Shaver, 1992, p.639). Thus, individuals with a secure attachment to God have a positive view of themselves and of God. God is seen as trustworthy and dependable. There is little fear of abandonment and there is a great deal of emphasis on having intimacy with God.

An anxious-preoccupied attachment style is described as, "God is generally impersonal, distant, and often seems to have little or no interest in my personal affairs and

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problems. I frequently have the feeling that He doesn't care very much about me, or that

he might not like me" (Kirkpatrick and Shaver, 1992, p. 639). Individuals with an

anxious-preoccupied attachment style to God have a positive view of God but a negative

view of themselves. There is much guilt, shame, and fear of not measuring up to God's

expectations. This leads to feeling rejected or being abandoned due to their

transgressions. Although these individuals desire intimacy with God, they fear they are

not worthy of such a relationship and constantly work to remain in good favor with God.

An avoidant-dismissive attachment style with God states that "God seems to be

inconsistent in His reactions to me; He sometimes seems very warm and responsive to my

needs, but sometimes not. I'm sure that He loves me and cares about me, but sometimes

He seems to show it in ways I really don't understand" (Kirkpatrick & Shaver, 1992, p.

639). Those with an avoidant-dismissive attachment style to God have a negative view of

God and positive view of themselves. Individuals are more independent and have

difficulty trusting God because they see Him as unreliable and unpredictable. A

relationship with God is not a priority nor is it a necessity.

Lastly, those with fearful-avoidant attachment (disorganized) have a negative view

of God and a negative view of themselves. They fear intimacy with God because they do

not want to be rejected of abandoned. Thus, they usually avoid having any kind of

relationship in order to protect themselves from these disappointments.

Research into the connection between attachment to God and attachment to adults

also introduces the correspondence and compensation hypotheses (Kirkpatrick, 1992;

Kirkpatrick & Shaver, 1990). The correspondence hypothesis is based on the idea that

attachment style, once developed, is static throughout one's lifetime. Thus, an

individual's attachment style to their caregiver will influence and quite possibly predict

their attachment styles in romantic relationships and relationships with other adults. In

addition, it might predict their attachment style to God. If one develops an insecure

attachment to a caregiver early in life, this might lead to the same insecure relationship

with God (Kirkpatrick, 1992). For example, avoidant attachment to God is positively

correlated with the avoidant dimension of adult attachment (Granqvist and Hagekull,

1999; Kirkpatrick & Shaver, 1992; Kirkpatrick, 1998) and supports the theoretical

correspondence between attachments in these two domains. On the other hand, a secure

attachment to caregivers in early life leads to an individual adopting the same, if any,

religious and spiritual values and beliefs similar to those of their parents (Reinert &

Edwards, 2009).

The compensation hypothesis suggests the opposite of the correspondence

hypothesis. As discussed previously, one's attachment system is activated when they

perceive a situation to be threatening or distressful. The compensation hypothesis suggests

that if the attachment figure is not accessible or responsive to attachment behaviors, a

secondary or surrogate attachment figure may be sought (Ainsworth, 1985). This

secondary attachment figure could be an older sibling, athletic coach, teacher, and pastors

among other possibilities. The secondary attachment figure could also be God (Granqvist,

1998; Kirkpatrick, 1992; Kirkpatrick & Shaver, 1990). Individuals who grow up with

insecure attachments to nonreligious parents have more of a tendency to turn to God and

religion as they get older while those with insecure relationships with parents who are

very religious are more likely to turn away from God (Granqvist, 1998; Kirkpatrick,

1997). In 2004, Granqvist and Kirkpatrick conducted a meta-analysis of studies and

found that gradual conversions occurred more for those with a history of secure

attachments, consistent with the correspondence hypothesis. On the other hand,

individuals with sudden religious conversions were more likely to have a history of

insecure attachment, consistent with the compensation hypothesis.

Appendix B

Informed Consent

Dear Participant,

My name is Michelle Hastings and I am a doctoral student in the Department of
Education, School and Counseling Psychology at the University of Missouri. I am
collecting data for my dissertation research project and I would like to invite you to
participate in this project. The goal of this research project is to better understand
people's relationship with God and with other individuals.

Your participation in this research project is completely voluntary and anonymous. You
are not required to answer every question and you will not be penalized if you do not
complete the survey. The entire procedure involves completing a survey online that
should take about 15 minutes.

If you choose to participate in any part of taking the survey, you may opt to enter your e-
mail into a drawing for one of three $100 gift certificates from the campus bookstore.
Only an e-mail address will be asked if you choose to participate in the drawing,
otherwise no identifying information will be asked of you to complete the survey. Neither
your name nor any other identifying information will be linked to your responses in any
way. Access to the data will be limited to the principal investigator and the faculty
advisor. All data will be stored in a password-protected computer, under the control of the
principal investigator.

Participating in this research involves minimal risk. There is a chance that you may feel
somewhat uncomfortable answering some of the questions about yourself, your
relationship with God, and your relationship with others. If you do experience distress as
a result of filling out this survey, it is recommended that you contact the campus
Counseling & Health Services office at (573) 592-5361. There are no direct benefits for
your participation. However, your participation will help to further research in the areas
of psychology and religion.

If you have any questions concerning this research, please contact me by phone at (573)
639-0055 or via e-mail at mrh989@mizzou.edu. If you have any further questions, you can
reach my MU Faculty Advisor for this project, Dr. Norm Gysbers by phone at (573) 882-
6386 or via e-mail at gysbersn@missouri.edu. If you have any questions concerning the
rights of research participants or if you want to file any complaints about this project,
please contact UMC Campus IRB Office at (573) 882-9585.

Warmly,
Michelle Hastings, M.Ed.
Doctoral Student, University of Missouri
Department of Education, School and Counseling Psychology

Appendix C

<u>The Experiences in Close Relationships-Revised Scale</u>
(Fraley, Waller, & Brennan, 2000)

The statements below concern how you feel in emotionally intimate relationships. We are interested in how you generally experience relationships, not just in what is happening in a current relationship. Respond to each statement by clicking a number to indicate how much you agree or disagree with the statement

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

1. I'm afraid that I will lose the love of others._____
2. I often worry that other people will not want to stay with me._____
3. I often worry that other people don't really love me._____
4. I worry that other people won't care about me as much as I care about them._____
5. I often wish that other people's feelings for me were as strong as my feelings for him or her._____
6. I worry a lot about my relationships._____
7. When other people are out of my sight, I worry that they might become interested in someone else._____
8. When I show my feelings for other people, I'm afraid they will not feel the same about me._____
9. I rarely worry about people leaving me._____
10. Other people make me doubt myself._____
11. I do not often worry about being abandoned._____
12. I find that people don't want to get as close as I would like._____
13. Sometimes people change their feelings about me for no apparent reason._____
14. My desire to be very close sometimes scares people away._____
15. I'm afraid that once someone gets to know me, he or she won't like who I really am._____
16. It makes me mad that I don't get the affection and support I need from my people._____
17. I worry that I won't measure up to other people._____
18. People only seem to notice me when I'm angry._____
19. I prefer not to show people how I feel deep down._____
20. I feel comfortable sharing my private thoughts and feelings with other people._____
21. I find it difficult to allow myself to depend on other people._____
22. I am very comfortable being close to other people._____
23. I don't feel comfortable opening up to other people._____
24. I prefer not to be too close to other people._____
25. I get uncomfortable when another person wants to be very close._____
26. I find it relatively easy to get close to other people._____

27. It's not difficult for me to get close to other people._____
28. I usually discuss my problems and concerns with other people._____
29. It helps to turn to others in times of need._____
30. I tell other people just about everything._____
31. I talk things over with other people._____
32. I am nervous when people get too close to me._____
33. I feel comfortable depending on other people._____
34. I find it easy to depend on other people._____
35. It's easy for me to be affectionate with other people._____
36. People really understand me and my needs._____

Appendix D

The Attachment to God Inventory
(Beck & McDonald, 2004)

The following statements concern how you feel about your relationship with God. We are interested in how you generally experience your relationship with God, not just in what is happening in that relationship currently. Respond to each statement by indicating how much you agree or disagree with it. Write the number in the space provided, using the following rating scale:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Disagree Strongly			Neutral/Mixed			Agree Strongly

_____ 1. I worry a lot about my relationship with God.
_____ 2. I just don't feel a deep need to be close to God.
_____ 3. If I can't see God working in my life, I get upset or angry.
_____ 4. I am totally dependent upon God for everything in my life. (R)
_____ 5. I am jealous at how God seems to care more for others than for me.
_____ 6. It is uncommon for me to cry when sharing with God.
_____ 7. Sometimes I feel that God loves others more than me.
_____ 8. My experiences with God are very intimate and emotional. (R)
_____ 9. I am jealous at how close some people are to God.
_____10. I prefer not to depend too much on God.
_____11. I often worry about whether God is pleased with me.
_____12. I am uncomfortable being emotional in my communication with God.
_____13. Even if I fail, I never question that God is pleased with me. (R)
_____14. My prayers to God are often matter-of-fact and not very personal.*
_____15. Almost daily I feel that my relationship with God goes back and forth from "hot" to "cold."
_____16. I am uncomfortable with emotional displays of affection to God.*
_____17. I fear God does not accept me when I do wrong.
_____18. Without God I couldn't function at all. (R)
_____19. I often feel angry with God for not responding to me when I want.
_____20. I believe people should not depend on God for things they should do for themselves.
_____21. I crave reassurance from God that God loves me.
_____22. Daily I discuss all of my problems and concerns with God. (R)
_____23. I am jealous when others feel God's presence when I cannot.
_____24. I am uncomfortable allowing God to control every aspect of my life.
_____25. I worry a lot about damaging my relationship with God.
_____26. My prayers to God are very emotional. (R)
_____27. I get upset when I feel God helps others, but forgets about me.
_____28. I let God make most of the decisions in my life. (R)

Appendix E

<u>Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS)</u>
(Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1984)

Below are five statements with which you may agree or disagree. Using the scale below, indicate your agreement with each item by placing the appropriate number on the line preceding that item. Please be open and honest in your response.

      7 Strongly agree
      6 Agree
      5 Slightly agree
      4 Neither agree nor disagree
      3 Slightly disagree
      2 Disagree
      1 Strongly disagree

_____ In most ways, my life is close to my ideal.
_____ The conditions of my life are excellent.
_____ I am satisfied with my life.
_____ So far, I have gotten the important things I want in life.
_____ If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing.

Now add up your total score for the five items: _____

Appendix F

Demographic Questions

1. What is your age? _____

2. What is your gender?
a. Female
b. Male

3. What is your race?
a. White or Caucasian
b. Black or African American
c. American Indian or Alaska Native
d. Asian (i.e. Indian, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese)
e. Hispanic or Latino (i.e. Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban)
f. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
g. Some other race
h. Two or more races

4. Are you a native U.S. citizen or foreign born?
a. Native (this refers to anyone born in the U.S. or a U.S Island Area such as Puerto Rico, or born abroad of a U.S. citizen parent.)
b. Foreign born (this refers to anyone who is not a U.S. citizen at birth)

5. What is your current status as a student?
a. Freshman
b. Sophomore
c. Junior
d. Senior

6. What is currently your highest level of education?
a. High school graduate or GED
b. Some college, no degree
c. Associate degree
d. Bachelor's degree
e. Graduate or professional degree

7. What is your current relationship status?
a. Single
b. Married
c. Divorced
d. Separated
e. In a relationship
f. Widowed

8. Please indicate your religious background:
a. Agnostic
b. Atheist
c. Buddhist
d. Christian
e. Hindu
f. Islam
g. Jewish
h. Other

VITA

      Michelle Hastings graduated from Stephens College in 1998 with a Bachelor's degree in Fine Arts. After graduating, she spent five years working in Los Angeles in various fields of work. She returned to graduate school in 2004 and earned a Master's degree in counseling psychology from the University of Missouri in 2006. She is currently a doctoral candidate in the Counseling Psychology program at the University of Missouri and will complete her predoctoral internship at the University of Texas at Austin in 2011-2012.