Anxious, Avoidant, Secure, and What to Do Next

Three attachment styles, side by side. Use this to understand your patterns, spot his, and know what to say next.

	SECURE	ANXIOUS	AVOIDANT
What it feels like	Close and independent are both okay	Closeness feels urgent, distance feels threatening	Closeness feels crowded, independence feels safe
In dating	Clear plans, steady contact	Needs reassurance, reads into silence	Pulls back as things get serious
Under stress	Says what's wrong and stays	Reaches harder	Goes quiet or leaves
What helps	Honesty and respect	Consistency	Space, with a way back

Styles are patterns, not labels. Most of us are a mix, and it shifts with who we're with.

The 10-question self-check

Check every statement that is mostly true for you right now.

A B C

- [ ] A When he's slow to text back, I assume something is wrong.
- [ ] A I need frequent reassurance that we're okay.
- [ ] A I replay conversations looking for signs he's pulling away.
- [ ] B When things get serious, I feel the urge to pull back or need space.
- [ ] B I'd rather handle problems alone than ask him for help.
- [ ] B Talking about feelings feels uncomfortable or unnecessary.
- [ ] C I can tell him what I need without apologizing.
- [ ] C A disagreement doesn't make me think the relationship is over.
- [ ] C I'm okay being alone and okay being close.
- [ ] C I can hear feedback without collapsing or attacking.

Score it. Count your checks in each group. Mostly A leans anxious. Mostly B leans avoidant. Mostly C leans secure. A mix is normal. This is a snapshot of today, not a label.

Scripts for the hard moments

Say it plainly and kindly. Swap the first column's habit for the third column's words.

THE MOMENT	NOT THAT	SAY THIS
You want reassurance	"You're being weird. What did I do?"	**"I'm feeling a little uncertain. Can you tell me where we are?"**
You need space	Silence and a cold shoulder	**"I need a little time to think. I'll come back to this tomorrow."**
After a fight	"Fine. Nothing's wrong."	**"I don't want to leave this unresolved. Can we try again in an hour?"**

> **How to read his reply.** A secure partner meets you where you are. If he mocks the request or goes silent for days, that is information.

Next steps

3 habits that move you toward secure

1. Pause ten minutes before you send the message you'll regret.
2. Name the need: "I need" instead of "you never."
3. Ask one direct question instead of testing him.

GO DEEPER

Attached by Amir Levine and Rachel Heller, and ***Hold Me Tight*** by Dr. Sue Johnson.

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NEXT FREE GUIDE

Is He a Keeper? The Green Flag Guide

A simple checklist for spotting healthy love early.

SAFETY NOTE

Controlling or frightening behavior is not an attachment style. National Domestic Violence Hotline: 1-800-799-7233, or text BEGIN to 88788.