

## Abstract

The focus of this dissertation is an exploration of the anxious avoidant attachment style from a humanistic and integrative perspective. Early on in my therapeutic journey alongside my studies, I became aware of my attachment style, and its impact on my relationships with others, but more importantly my relationship with myself. As Wallin (2007) describes, the avoidant person maintains a distance from others to feel safe, yet they are no more intimate with themselves. Here I was living my life as a person I did not really know, my true self hiding in plain sight.

My motivation in choosing to research this topic is to further my learning about my own defences against intimacy; to lessen my distance from others and ultimately from myself. My hope is this research will help me in promoting change in my avoidant clients; but also give me a deeper understanding of any attachment behaviours I could potentially bring into the therapeutic relationship.

“Vulnerability is about showing up and being seen. It’s tough to do that when we’re terrified about what people might see or think.”

Brene Brown.