

**THE IMPACT OF ATTACHMENT STYLE ON
COPING STRATEGIES, IDENTITY
DEVELOPMENT AND THE PERCEPTION OF
SOCIAL SUPPORT**

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree

of Master of Arts in Psychology

in the University of Canterbury

by J. K. Baker

University of Canterbury

2006

Abstract

This thesis describes the relationship between adult attachment style, coping strategies, identity development and perception of social support. 107 participants answered four self-report questionnaires examining their attachment style, coping strategies, identity development status and perception of social support. Correlation analyses were used. Results showed secure attachment to significantly positively correlate with identity moratorium and to negatively correlate with identity foreclosure. Avoidant attachment significantly positively correlated with denial and mental disengagement and negatively correlated with seeking social support. Individuals with high avoidant attachment scores were more likely to have high scores for identity diffusion, more likely to perceive fewer available social supports and were less likely to be satisfied with this support. Anxious ambivalence positively correlated with denial and mental, behavioural and alcohol/drug disengagement, and negatively correlated with active and planning which are pro-active coping strategies. Anxious ambivalence positively correlated with identity diffusion and negatively with identity foreclosure. Individuals with high anxious ambivalence scores were more likely to be dissatisfied with social support. Overall, secure attachment was found to correlate with acknowledging the need for an identity search. Insecure attachment was found to relate to less effective coping methods, to correlate with not acknowledging the need for an identity search and dissatisfaction with social support. Results are considered in terms of attachment styles and applications, for example in therapeutic settings.

Acknowledgments

I wish to offer sincere appreciation for the support and guidance of my supervisor, Dr Lucy Johnston. I am also thankful for the support and guidance of my former supervisor, Dr Mark Byrd. Thanks are also due to the participants in this study who gave their time to complete a booklet of questionnaires.

Table of Contents

| | |
|--|-----------|
| <i>Abstract</i> | ii |
| <i>Acknowledgments</i> | ii |
| <i>Table of Contents</i> | iii |
| <i>List of Tables</i> | iv |
| | |
| 1 Introduction | 5 |
| 1.1 Overview | 5 |
| 1.2 Attachment | 7 |
| 1.3 Coping | 13 |
| 1.4 Identity Development | 20 |
| 1.5 Identity Development and Coping | 23 |
| 1.6 Social Support | 25 |
| 1.7 Social Support and Identity Development | 32 |
| 1.8 Hypotheses | 33 |
| 2 Method | 37 |
| 2.1 Participants | 37 |
| 2.2 Measures | 37 |
| 2.3 Procedure | 40 |
| 3 Results | 40 |
| 3.1 Secure | 43 |
| 3.2 Avoidance | 43 |
| 3.3 Anxious Ambivalence | 44 |
| 3.4 Identity and Coping | 45 |
| 3.5 Social Support and Coping | 46 |
| 4 Discussion | 48 |
| 4.1 Discussion of Hypotheses | 48 |
| 4.1.1 Hypothesis 1 | 48 |
| 4.1.2 Hypothesis 2 | 49 |
| 4.1.3 Hypothesis 3 | 53 |
| 4.1.4 Hypothesis 4 | 60 |
| 4.2 Practical Uses | 62 |
| 4.3 Conclusions | 64 |
| 4.3.1 Key Findings from this study | 64 |
| 4.3.2 Future Research Recommendations | 65 |
| 5 References | 68 |
| 6 Appendices | 74 |
| 6.1 Appendix 1: Adult Attachment Scale | 74 |
| 6.2 Appendix 2: The COPE Scale | 75 |
| 6.3 Appendix 3: EOMEIS-2 | 78 |
| 6.4 Appendix 4: Social Support Questionnaire - Short Form | 84 |

List of Tables

Table 1 Descriptive Statistics for age, attachment style, coping strategies, identity status and perception of social support..... 41

Table 2 Correlations of attachment orientation with age, coping strategies and perception of social support. 43

Table 3 Correlations of coping strategies with identity status..... 45

Table 4 Correlations of coping strategies with perception of social support. 46

Table 5 Correlations between perception of social support and identity status 47

1 Introduction

1.1 Overview

The primary focus of this study is to investigate the relationship between an individual's adult attachment styles and their use of coping strategies in stressful situations, their identity development and their perceptions of the degree of social support available to them. Participants will complete a series of self-report questionnaires to assess each factor. Each participant will receive a score according to his or her degree of each of the three attachment types – secure, avoidant and anxious ambivalent. These scores will be correlated with their scores for coping strategies, identity development status and social support.

How well a person copes with life situations is expected to be associated with attachment style. It is thought that positive relationships promote resilience in a person's life, which should result in a greater ability to cope with negative or stressful circumstances. Accordingly, it is predicted that high scores in attachment security will be associated with more effective coping strategies, such as actively taking steps to solve the problem and not retreating into avoidance. Identity development involves exploration, which is promoted by secure attachments and inhibited by insecure attachments, that is avoidant and anxious ambivalent attachments. Attachment is therefore expected to be directly related to identity development, which in turn is expected to correlate with coping. The degree to which an individual is able to explore life in general should affect the degree to which they are able to explore a problem and therefore affect the coping strategy they use when faced with a problem. Attachment style is also expected to influence perception of social support, which will interrelate with coping. As people with secure attachments have a history of positive, supportive relationships with significant others, they are more likely to perceive good social

support networks and be satisfied with the amount of support they receive. Conversely, those with insecure attachments are likely to perceive poor support networks and be dissatisfied with the amount they receive. Individuals perceiving a high level of social support are more likely to have high scores in attachment security, and a greater ability to cope with difficult situations.

In introducing the current research, I will first present an overview of relevant attachment literature. This overview will include a brief history of attachment research, define attachment behaviour and introduce the three attachment styles. There is extensive literature on attachment styles, a comprehensive review of which is outside the scope of this thesis. Focus in the present overview will therefore be on the nature of adult attachment styles and the relationship between such styles and coping behaviour, social support and identity development. The coping literature is again too extensive to be comprehensively reviewed here. Focus will be on the relationship between coping and attachment. The four stages of identity development will be defined and an overview of the relationship between identity development and attachment discussed. The relationship between coping and identity development will be included at the end of this section. Social support will then be defined and literature focusing on the relationship between perception of social support and attachment styles discussed. The interaction between identity and perception of social support will also be briefly discussed. Finally, hypotheses for the effect of each attachment style on coping strategies, identity development and perception of social support will be provided.

1.2 Attachment

This section will begin with a definition of attachment behaviour and a brief introduction of attachment theory. It will then discuss attachment in childhood and how it relates to attachment in adulthood, prior to describing the three types of attachment styles: secure, avoidant and anxious ambivalent.

Attachment behaviour is defined as any form of behaviour that results in a person attaining or retaining proximity to some other specific and preferred individual (Bowlby, 1980). The principal determinants of attachment behaviour development are the experiences with attachment figures in infancy, childhood and adolescence. Attachment behaviour leads to goal-corrected attachment plans (Bowlby, 1969), which are executed by the individual to meet an attachment need by changing the behaviour of the other person. This may be as simple or complex as the individual is able, depending on the developmental stage. The goal of attachment behaviour is to maintain an affectional bond, therefore any situation perceived to be endangering the bond elicits action designed to preserve it, which becomes more intense as the danger of loss appears more intense (Bowlby, 1980). Ainsworth (1989) defines an affectional bond as a relatively long enduring tie in which the partner is important as a unique individual and is interchangeable with none other. Attachment is an affectional bond in that there is a desire for proximity, distress upon inexplicable separation, pleasure or joy upon reunion and grief at loss. An attachment figure is never wholly interchangeable or replaceable. It differs from an affectional bond with respect to the experience of a secure base provided by the attachment figure. Bowlby and Ainsworth's observations and theorizing led to the Strange Situation, an observational study which has been repeated

throughout different cultures and established the classification of attachment into different styles.

Bowlby's research on attachment arose from observations of children separated from their mother in a residential setting. He reported that after a prolonged or repeated separation during the first three years of life, detachment can persist indefinitely (Bowlby, 1973). Separation from the mother figure leads to sadness, anger (primarily at the attachment figure) and anxiety in children. Observations of children's responses to parental separation were conducted in three residential nurseries. Children (age one to three) were observed to cry for their mother, search for their mother, were resistant to nurses and were sometimes hostile during their time away. On reunion they all showed some form of detachment and eighty percent were ambivalent toward their parents, being demanding of their presence but rejecting, hostile or defiant toward them. Bowlby (1969) concluded that the mother-child interactions are appraised to favour the development of attachment. Proximity and affection are appraised and experienced by both attachment partners as pleasurable, while distance and expressions of rejection are appraised and experienced by both as painful or negative. These same patterns can be seen in adult attachment relationships.

The Strange Situation (Ainsworth & Bell, 1970; Ainsworth et al., 1978) is a well-known basis for attachment theory. One-year-old infants are observed over 20 minutes for eight different episodes in which the infant and mother are taken into a laboratory playroom by an observer. The baby plays with toys, a stranger enters, the mother leaves then returns and the baby's reaction both to being left alone with the stranger and to the mother on her return is observed. Infants tended to explore the room more enthusiastically when alone in the presence of their mothers, supporting the view of the attachment figure as a secure base from

which to explore (Ainsworth & Bell, 1970). Ainsworth et al. (1978) used observations from the Strange Situation to classify infants into three groups. Infants who were securely attached sought proximity and contact with the mother, and tended to resist being put down after being picked up. They always responded in the reunion episodes with a smile, cry or approach. About 65 percent of babies were classified as securely attached. About 20 percent of infants have an avoidant attachment style. These babies appeared unresponsive to the mother, often ignoring her. They were not distressed when she left the room and appeared disinterested on her return, avoiding her and failing to cling or squirming to get down when picked up. They give the impression of indifference to the whereabouts and behaviour of the attachment figure but this indifference is likely to be a product of intense conflict between highly activated attachment behaviour and avoidant behaviour evoked by the seeming rejection by the attachment figure. About 10 to 15 percent of infants sought closeness to the mother prior to separation. They were extremely distressed during the separation episodes and often displayed anger when she returned, seeking comfort but often pushing or hitting when it was given. Many continued to cry when picked up and were unable to be comforted easily. These babies were classified as anxious ambivalent.

While attachment behaviour is most evident in early childhood and diminishes with age, it can be seen throughout the lifespan, especially in people who are distressed, sick or afraid (Bowlby, 1979). Adult attachment research was established by Hazan and Shaver's research (1987) on romantic love. It was found that adult attachment styles could be categorised in the same way that Ainsworth et al. (1978) initially categorised children, with approximately the same proportion in each category. Their results indicated that working models of self and relationship were related to attachment style, finding that attachment style leads to beliefs

about the availability and trustworthiness of romantic partners and their own worthiness. This will be summarised in the next paragraph.

Approximately 60 percent of individuals are considered to have a secure attachment style. Secure individuals tended to describe their most important love experience as happy, friendly and trusting, and emphasised being able to support and accept their partner despite their partner's faults (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). They tended to hold a more positive view of themselves and others (Brennan & Morris, 1997), were more expressive, comfortable with closeness and able to depend on others. Secure individuals rarely worried about being abandoned or unloved (Collins & Read, 1990) and are confident others will like and accept them (Guerrero & Jones, 2003). They show lower levels of depression and anxiety than insecure adults (Wautier & Blume, 2004). Attachment security provides a base from which individuals can explore, develop new attitudes, roles and relationships (Zimmerman & Becker-Stoll, 2002). Secure people describe themselves in positive terms and admit negative characteristics (Mikulincer, 1995). This relates back to the parenting style they received as infants. Secure people received consistent, affectionate parenting as infants. They grew up expecting acceptance and positivity from their caregivers, leading to confidence in their acceptance by others (Ainsworth et al., 1978).

About 25 percent of individuals in Hazan & Shaver's study were classified as avoidant. These individuals were characterised by a fear of intimacy, emotional highs and lows and found it difficult to find a person they could really fall in love with (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). They were not worried about being abandoned but had little confidence in the availability of others (Collins & Read, 1990). Simpson et al. (2002) found avoidant women to be less supportive of their partners. They tend to be confident and self-sufficient and will often place

emphasis on work or self-fulfilment over relationships (Guerrero & Jones, 2003). As they received little physical affection and sensitivity in infancy, they grow to expect that others cannot or will not provide it and so are highly sensitive to rejection (Ainsworth et al., 1978). They are likely to defend against this vulnerability however, and therefore avoid intimacy and reliance on others as much as possible. This also has the effect of not being available to others. Other research has focused on the cognitions associated with attachment style. Mikulincer (1995) found that avoidant people are unable to integrate aspects of the self. They tend to repress negative self-traits and have a greater accessibility of positive self-attributes than individuals with different attachment styles. This is probably due to high defensiveness, ensuring that they cannot be rejected by others as they experienced repeated episodes of rejection as infants, receiving the message that others will not meet their needs and will be unavailable (Vetere & Myers, 2002; Mikulincer, 1995). They, like anxious ambivalent individuals, are likely to have a low sense of worth and value and so attempt to find this worth outside of intimate relationships to avoid further rejection.

Bowlby (1979; 1980) describes anxious attachment as the over-ready elicitation of attachment behaviour due to a constant fear of losing the attachment figure. Fifteen percent of individuals are considered anxious ambivalent. These individuals are characterised by a fear of abandonment with relationships that often involved obsession, the desire for reciprocation, emotional highs and lows, jealousy and extreme sexual attraction (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). Anxious ambivalent individuals were found to be comfortable with closeness and fairly confident in the availability of others but very worried about being abandoned or unloved. They tended to hold negative beliefs about themselves and others, had a lower social self-confidence, were more likely to have an obsessive love style and were found to have a greater degree of warmth-dominance (Collins & Read, 1990; Bartholomew &

Horowitz, 1991). Anxious ambivalent individuals also give more social support when more is sought, however they perceive their partners as less socially expressive (Guerrero & Jones, 2003), reflecting their need for validation and expectation that others will not meet that need. While some research suggests that anxious ambivalent individuals hold negative beliefs about others, this is likely to be in relation to themselves. These people hold negative beliefs about themselves and tend to believe that they are unworthy or undeserving of others being available to them, but that others have the capability to do so. They are likely to be highly sensitive to fluctuations in their social environment and to negative behaviours and attitudes of others, which may explain why they are more likely to experience loneliness (Larose et al., 2002). The rejection by attachment figures results in a negative self-image, since they feel they cannot meet their own or other's expectations of them. They have difficulty regulating distress. Anxious ambivalent people have been shown to have a negative, simple and less-integrated self-structure, meaning that in a stressful event they are likely to become overwhelmed by negative thoughts and feelings, and are likely to lack the resources for compartmentalising events (Mikulincer, 1995).

While most attachment research has categorised participants, this research used a continuous measure, giving participants a score for each of secure, avoidance and anxious ambivalence. These three scores were then correlated with the other measures; coping, identity development status and social support. This approach was used because of the relatively small sample size and to avoid the issues that arise when categorising participants, since categorising does not take people's individuality into account. The description of a category tends to focus on individuals that fit exactly into that category, not allowing for those who may have a lesser degree of that attachment type or even for those who fit into two categories, for example anxious and avoidant. Anxious and avoidant individuals both tend to

have a low sense of self-worth, although these manifest in different ways, they both have strong defence systems against rejection set in place, and both hold expectancies that they are likely to be rejected. While appropriate questioning can differentiate between the two styles, individuals may show both avoidant and anxious tendencies depending on the situation that they are in, for instance showing avoidant tendencies toward family but anxious tendencies toward a romantic partner. Previous research (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991; Bartholomew & Griffin, 1994) has placed people onto dimensions, with model of self (dependence) on one axis and model of other (avoidance) on the other axis. Individuals are rated as positive or negative for each dimension. This gives four categories of secure (positive-positive), preoccupied (positive-negative), dismissing (negative-positive) and fearful (negative-negative). Preoccupied equates to anxious, dismissing to avoidant and fearful to both anxious and avoidant. Although the use of dimensions removes the problem of categorising people who fit into more than one attachment style, it still requires labelling participants as having a particular attachment style. Using continuous measures enables the underlying correlations to become apparent and focuses on the trends for the whole group as opposed to each individual participant who may or may not fit strongly into that category. As the focus of this research is on the relationship of each attachment style to coping, identity development and perception of social support, finding participants' scores for each attachment dimension is the most effective method to measure each correlation.

1.3 Coping

Coping in this study will involve the general strategies that individuals use when they are faced with a problem. The fourteen types of coping focused on in this study will be described followed by the relationship between coping and attachment style. Coping in relation to distress will then be discussed followed by information processing and the way in

which it relates to coping. An explanation of the coping hypotheses for secure, avoidant and anxious ambivalent attachments will then be given.

In this study, the fourteen types of coping focused on were from the COPE (Carver et al., 1989). The COPE measures a range of methods of coping, had high internal consistency and was shown to be effective with a relatively small sample size ($n = 156$), which is why it was chosen for this study. It is a continuous measure enabling correlational analyses to be conducted between each of the coping strategies and the other measures in this study. The fourteen types of coping focused on in this study are as follows: active coping, planning, suppression of competing activities, restraint coping, seeking instrumental support, seeking emotional support, positive reinterpretation and growth, acceptance of the problem, turning to religion, the focus on and venting of emotions, denial of the problem, behavioural and mental disengagement and finally alcohol/drug disengagement. Active, planning and suppression of competing activities are all effective, pro-active coping strategies as they involve doing something about the problem. Restraint coping involves waiting until the right time to act. Seeking support, positive reinterpretation and growth, acceptance of the problem and turning to religion can also be effective when utilised in conjunction with active coping methods. Denial of the problem may be useful for a short amount of time in certain situations, however is ineffective long term. Behavioural, mental and alcohol/drug disengagement are similar to denial and also are likely to be hindrances in the long term. Denial and disengagement tend to be the most ineffective coping strategies and therefore individuals who use these can be considered to lack effective coping resources.

The effectiveness of the coping strategies that individuals employ are hypothesised to be determined, at least in part, by their attachment style. A study of first year college students

indicated that adult attachment style had a significant effect on problem coping style, with secure students reporting fewer problems, less depression and less self-splitting than insecurely attached students (Lopez & Gormley, 2002). Attachment style is also expected to determine the types of coping utilised, with positive correlations between the level of secure attachment and levels of more effective coping styles such as active and planning. Research by Buelow et al. (2002) found secure adult attachment to be significantly associated with higher coping resources, while an adolescent study found attachment security to be negatively related to negative coping methods, such as drinking or using drugs (Howard & Medway, 2004). Individuals with negative representations of their parents are likely to cope less effectively with social changes and times of transition (Larose et al., 2002). Schmidt et al. (2002) found insecure attachment to be related to less flexible coping, with anxiously attached individuals showing more negative emotional coping and avoidantly attached individuals showing more diverting strategies. Insecure people are more likely to use disengaging methods of coping.

Coping has been found to relate to attachment style and affect other factors such as distress, which is likely to be partly due to the perception of coping capability. Anxiously attached individuals were more likely to use coping styles that manifested strong emotional responses, impulsivity and distortion. Avoidantly attached individuals were more likely to cope by using denial, confusion and a tendency to avoid awareness of problems. Insecure attachment styles are likely to incline the individual to use less adaptive forms of coping which increases distress levels (Lopez et al., 2001). Wei et al. (2003) found that perceived coping was a mediator between attachment anxiety and psychological distress. Perceived coping was also found to partially mediate the relationship between attachment avoidance and psychological distress. As the measure in this study is a self-report questionnaire, it will

measure perceived coping. While psychological distress is not directly relevant to this study, it is closely linked with attachment style and is important to take into consideration as it is likely that people who do not have effective coping strategies will experience higher levels of distress. This will be discussed further in the discussion section. Wei's study found that both attachment anxiety and avoidance predicted psychological distress, whereas Lopez et al. (2001) found that attachment avoidance did not predict distress after attachment anxiety was controlled for. The authors suggest that this discrepancy is due to the differing measures on the two studies, with Lopez et al. using simpler measures. Both avoidant and anxious individuals would be expected to suffer higher levels of psychological distress than secure people due to their sensitivity to, or defensiveness against rejection, lessening their ability to relax and enjoy intimacy. Avoidant individuals may be more likely to attempt to disengage from this distress or be less likely to admit to it. As Wei et al. used multivariate indicators, they suggest avoidant people may be more likely to report distress in this measure as they are answering multiple questions. Both anxious and avoidant people were found to appraise their coping capabilities as more ineffective than secure people. Berant et al. (2003) found mothers with high attachment anxiety and avoidance to have lower appraisal of coping abilities for dealing with motherhood tasks a year later. In observing these impacts of coping styles in the literature, it seems likely that perceived coping styles will also mediate other relationships involving attachment style, meaning that the relationship between coping and attachment may be an important issue to consider in therapeutic settings. This will be discussed further in the discussion section.

Two important aspects of coping are the way in which individuals process information surrounding problems they are faced with, and whether they allow themselves to seek new information and show curiosity. Mikulincer (1997) studied the relationship between

information processing and attachment style, and concluded that information processing was a mediator. Secure people tend to have a positive attitude toward information processing as they can engage in information search and show flexibility in changing their beliefs. Insecure people tended to prefer secure and stable knowledge and be inflexible in processing any information which contradicted their prior beliefs. Despite these similarities, avoidant and anxious ambivalent people showed some differences in curiosity related cognitions and behaviours. Avoidant individuals tend to dismiss the importance of new information, avoiding information search and repressing curiosity in the face of obstacles, just as they do with attachment needs. They are likely to seek new information (that challenges their beliefs) only when it can serve as a method for avoiding social interaction. This results in a lack of exploration around problems or solutions to problems, meaning they are more likely to retreat into denial strategies. Anxious ambivalent individuals tend to be conflicted about curiosity, desiring to explore the world but believing they should not be as curious and that curiosity could jeopardise relationships. Despite their original desire to search for new information, these individuals show cognitive closure and rigidity when presented with new information. Mikulincer (1997) used a self-report 10 trait items designed to tap engagement in curiosity behaviour and 10 state items designed to tap the momentary desire to seek out novel stimuli. This is most likely to test recent examples rather than an accurate report of a personal trait. When filling in a questionnaire such as this one, participants are likely to recall their recent curious behaviour. Curiosity is probably not a trait that people spend much time considering and so are more likely to answer in a way that reflects their curious behaviour over the past few days as opposed to their overall behaviour. Arguably, this study tests the way people perceive themselves rather than actually testing curiosity, which fits the previous explanations of secure people being comfortable with new things, and insecure people being more comfortable with what they know. Mikulincer (1997) proposes that

insecure people lack the cognitive resources needed for analyzing new data because they direct resources toward worrying about close relationships or toward detecting any cue that may remind them of painful attachment experiences. While anxious people are thought of as hyper vigilant towards rejection and avoidant people are highly defensive towards rejection (Mikulincer & Horesh, 1999) and therefore avoid intimacy, it is unlikely that all their resources are taken up by this process, especially in situations that do not involve relationships. This research can be applied to coping and the way in which people will approach problems. According to this research, securely attached people will retain a positive attitude, and are more likely to concentrate their efforts on doing something about a problem, whereas insecurely attached people are likely to avoid thinking about the problem, utilising denial or avoidance strategies.

Explanations of the coping hypotheses for each attachment style will now be discussed. As secure people hold a positive self-view, this should enable them to cope with a sense of optimism and mastery. Their well-organised self-structure should allow them to experience distress without it overwhelming them and to be flexible and realistic in setting goals and plans (Mikulincer, 1995). They are therefore expected to take a more positive view of problems, use more effective coping strategies and be less likely to disengage from the problem. While they are expected to seek social support, it is expected to be to a lesser extent than active coping strategies and planning strategies to solve the problem.

Avoidant individuals appear similar to secure individuals in their self-view, however their self-structure has been found to be highly positive and differentiated without being affected by emotional experience, giving an unrealistic, unbalanced self-view. Mikulincer (1995) proposes that the self-esteem of avoidant people is so low, they suppress their imperfections

and idealise the self as a defence against rejection. It is therefore expected that while avoidant individuals may appear to cope well, they show high self-discrepancies that reflect a sense of failure (Mikulincer, 1995). Avoidant individuals have been found to be more likely to utilise a repressive coping style, which is defined as low anxiety but high defensiveness (Vetere & Myers, 2002), supporting Mikulincer's (1995) proposition of setting up a defence against rejection. Avoidance was also found to negatively affect the marital satisfaction and coping strategies of mothers of infants with congenital heart disease. The higher the avoidance at time one, the higher her reliance on emotion-focused strategies for dealing with motherhood tasks a year later (Berant et al., 2003). Individuals with high scores in avoidance are therefore expected to be more likely to utilise coping strategies that are less effective than those employed by individuals high in attachment security, and are likely to reflect their behaviour in relationships – those involving suppression and avoidance of the problem. Individuals with high avoidance scores are not expected to seek out social support either for emotional or instrumental reasons as a coping strategy.

Anxious ambivalent people hold a negative self-view, have a high accessibility of negative self-attributes and an excessive use of affect in organising self-relevant information. They may feel overwhelmed by negative thoughts and feelings and therefore lack the resources needed for developing a coherent self-structure (Mikulincer, 1995). Individuals with high anxious scores are therefore expected to have higher scores for the least effective coping strategies. As they also expect that others will not meet their needs, it is reasonable to assume that they will also be less likely to seek out social support. The excessive negative affect they experience will likely result in anxious ambivalence correlating with denial and disengagement as coping strategies to a greater extent than the other attachment styles. It is likely that individuals high in anxious ambivalence will focus on their emotions to a greater

extent than individuals with high secure or avoidant scores due to the high levels of distress that they tend to experience. They are expected to disengage as a method of coping with this distress as anxious ambivalent individuals lack resources to cope effectively. Similarly, it is expected that anxious ambivalence will negatively correlate with active coping strategies or those involving planning strategies.

1.4 Identity Development

This section will begin with a brief discussion of identity development including a description of each of the four stages. This will be followed by the stability of identity status throughout the lifespan. The relationship between attachment and identity development will then be discussed. Finally conclusions will be drawn from the literature as to which attachment styles are likely to relate to each identity status.

While identity development literature is generally only found in adolescent or university student studies, for many people, identity development continues well into adulthood. Ideas, beliefs and life choices, especially those surrounding vocation may continue to change during the early years of adulthood, and in some people, an identity may not be reached until much later in life. Marcia (1980) identified four stages of identity development that tend to develop in adolescence but continue into adulthood. Individuals who have committed themselves to self-chosen values and goals after exploring other options are considered to have reached identity achievement. At the minimum, these include a sexual orientation, ideological stance and a vocational direction. Individuals in the process of exploring values and goals who have not yet made any commitments are considered to be in the moratorium stage of identity development, and are undergoing an identity crisis. Those who have committed themselves to values and goals without exploring options are considered to be

identity foreclosed. Often these individuals will have accepted an identity given to them by an authority figure, usually a parent. Identity diffused individuals are those who have not committed themselves to values and goals and are not in the process of exploring them.

Attachment style is expected to correlate with identity status as identity development involves exploration. In childhood, attachment figures act as a secure base from which to explore, and this continues into adulthood. Research on college students supports the proposition that identity development and attachment are related. It was found that secure attachments appeared to facilitate identity development and prevent identity diffusion in females (Samuolis et. al., 2001). Adolescent attachment to parents and peers mediates personal and social identity by providing the adolescent with a secure base from which to develop identity (Lapsley et. al., 1990; Meeus et. al., 2002), although these studies did not specifically focus on Marcia's four stages of identity development. Secure attachments are proposed to promote the development of identity by encouraging the exploration of identity alternatives. In adolescents, communication was the most important aspect, with paternal trust a predictor of school commitment, while maternal trust was a predictor of school exploration (Meeus et al., 2002). In terms of Marcia's ego identity stages, Kennedy (1999) reported that secure individuals had higher identity achievement scores than fearful (anxious) individuals in a study of first year college students. They were also found to have lower moratorium scores than preoccupied (anxious and avoidant) individuals, and lower identity diffusion scores than fearful and preoccupied individuals. Zimmermann & Becker-Stoll (2002) reported that attachment security was related to identity achievement in adolescence, and dismissing (avoidant) attachment was related to identity diffusion. Preoccupied (anxious) attachment was marginally related to identity diffusion. Another study found insecurely attached woman with an uncommitted identity status to experience

higher levels of depression than those with a committed identity status (Wautier & Blume, 2004). Although the differences between chronic and temporary states of attachment have received some attention in the research literature, it is beyond the scope of this study and so is not discussed here.

Secure individuals tend to be comfortable with exploration and cope with a sense of mastery (Mikulincer, 1997). Their relationship experiences have taught them that exploration is a positive and necessary part of life. They do not worry about their exploration hurting others and so are unlikely to avoid any exploration of their identity or any necessary decision making in relation to their identity. It is expected that secure attachment will positively correlate with identity achievement or moratorium, which is the process of an identity search. Individuals with an insecure attachment (anxious ambivalent or avoidant) style have been found to be inflexible in processing any information which contradicts their prior beliefs (Mikulincer, 1997), and so are unlikely to have reached identity achievement. Avoidant individuals also experienced insensitive parenting and significant rejection as infants (Ainsworth et al., 1978). These experiences are also likely to make them fearful of exploration and new information as they did not have a secure base from which to explore. Instead of experiencing this fear as adults, they tend to shun information searches and repress curiosity (Mikulincer, 1997). Avoidance is therefore expected to positively correlate with identity diffusion, as avoidant individuals tend to use disengagement strategies and are unlikely to have reached the stage of deciding to explore their identity. Anxious ambivalent individuals have been taught through their attachment relationships that exploration can lead to rejection by their attachment figure. As children, their mothers were more likely to interfere with their game playing and were insensitive to their needs (Ainsworth et al., 1978), giving them a conflicting message about exploration. Consequently, they demonstrate a

desire to explore but are fearful that showing curiosity could jeopardise their relationships. Anxious ambivalence is therefore likely to positively correlate with identity foreclosure, as anxious individuals tend to be more dependent on other people and to attempt to meet the expectations of others. Anxious ambivalence is also expected to positively correlate with identity diffusion, as anxious individuals may not consider their identity and life choices at all.

1.5 Identity Development and Coping

While there is limited documented research on the relationship between coping and identity development, the literature indicates a relationship between identity and coping. Lapsley et al. (1990) found that attachment predicted social and personal identity and was significantly related to adjustment to college life. As going to college is a significant event (most adolescents leave home to go to college in the USA where this research was conducted), it is expected that the individuals who adjusted more easily would have more effective coping strategies. Conversely, it is expected that those individuals who do not cope well with adjustment to college are unlikely to cope well in other areas such as identity development. Individuals who are identity diffused may be inconsistent with the strategies they employ in stressful situations, or lack the skills to cope. In ethnic minority and majority 12 year olds, higher levels of ethnic identity and self-construal were associated with the use of more positive coping strategies (Zaff et al., 2002). In first year college students, individuals that were attempting personal growth were more likely to engage in environmental exploration and to have a more crystallized vocational identity. Coping style predicted self-exploration, and environmental exploration predicted vocational identity (Robitschek & Cook, 1999).

Bishop et al. (1997) found identity maturity to be inversely related to the quantity of beer consumption in first year college students. Identity diffused and foreclosed individuals were relatively high consumers of beer, while moratorium individuals were relatively low consumers. Identity achieved individuals reported an intermediate level of beer consumption. These findings support the proposition that individuals who are lower on the ego identity scale are likely to use drug/alcohol disengagement as a coping strategy. Welton & Houser (1997) found drug abstainers to be more foreclosed but not less identity achieved than drug experimenters. Identity diffusion scores suggested these individuals were most likely to be abusers of drugs, which indicates this may be used as a coping strategy. Welton & Houser (1997) interpret these results to be a consequence of an environment in which children are encouraged to make their own decisions about values while being in a culture that emphasises freedom without limits. This brings about a greater sense of isolation which makes the identity process more difficult and creates the need for a challenge, which may be manifested in drug experimentation. It is likely that results in this study will have a comparable outcome.

As identity status correlates with decision making styles, it indicates that identity status will similarly affect coping style as some methods of coping involve decision making. Blustein & Phillips (1990) found identity achieved individuals to rely on rational decision making, while foreclosed individuals were more likely to use dependent decision making, which is projecting the responsibility for the decision making on to others. Identity diffused individuals were more likely to use dependent or intuitive decision making. Foreclosed and diffused individuals did not use systematic or rational decision making. Moratorium individuals were also more likely to use intuitive or dependent strategies which the authors explain by suggesting they may seek out rapid solutions to reduce the anxiety of this identity

formation phase (Blustein & Phillips, 1990). These results are expected to be comparable to the relationship between coping and identity status.

It is expected that individuals with high scores in identity achievement will have higher scores for adaptive coping styles such as active coping, planning and restraint coping, those styles that require consideration and decision-making. Individuals with high identity foreclosure scores are expected to have higher scores in strategies that manifest the tendency of foreclosed individuals to look to others for their methods of coping or disengaging. Identity diffusion is expected to positively correlate with the most maladaptive coping methods, those involving disengagement and denial.

1.6 Social Support

This section will begin with a definition of social support and the effects of social support on individuals' wellbeing. The relationship between social support and attachment will then be discussed, focusing predominantly on support seeking. An overview of support giving for each attachment style will be given, followed by a discussion of the perception of social support and an explanation of its relationship to attachment style. In conclusion, a prediction for the effect of each attachment style on social support will be given.

The essence of social support is defined as knowing that others love us and would willingly do what they can for us (B. Sarason et al., 1987). Individuals that are accepted, loved and involved in open-communication relationships were found to be less depressed and lonely and were more satisfied with current relationships than those who were not (B. Sarason et al., 1987). Another study found that the fewer people an individual (men and women) feels are available as a social support and the lower the satisfaction with these social supports, the

higher the likelihood of anxiety, neuroticism and depression (I. Sarason et al., 1987). People with high levels of social support have been found to have low anxiety levels, positive self-concepts, and a belief in their own ability to control aspects of their environment (Sarason et al., 1983). Participants in their study were given a task after obtaining scores on the number of social supports they had and their satisfaction with that support. They were then asked to complete a questionnaire that provided a measure of thoughts that interfere with task performance. Their study effectively tested the influence of social support as an experimental manipulation was conducted as opposed to simply relying on self-report. However, it does not determine which is the causal factor as it could be that people higher in anxiety with less positive self-concepts are likely to perceive less support, or that they actually have less. It is likely that confident people with a high sense of self-worth attract more people and therefore have a greater social support network.

The literature demonstrates a direct link between social support and attachment style. In linking social support to attachment orientation, B. Sarason et al. (1987) assumed that supportive attachments in childhood provide the child with a sense of worth which is reinforced later in life by additional supportive relationships. Supportive relationships also act to provide a secure base that promotes exploratory behaviour, both in childhood and in pursuit of goals later in life. Other literature and logic also support this proposition. The relationships that a child grows up with are likely to provide a foundation for the relationships that occur later in life. If a child grows up with the belief that others cannot be trusted or relied upon and are rejecting, as with an avoidant person, they would be expected to continue that theme in intimate relationships and friendships as an adult. They are less likely to seek out relationships that involve deeper levels of support and maintain the relationships they do have at a relatively superficial level. In a person with a secure

attachment who grows up with a high sense of worth, believing that others can be trusted and relied upon, relationships will come reasonably naturally, providing the person with more social support. Conversely, people with insecure attachments have been shown to perceive low levels of emotional and instrumental support from others and are less likely to seek social support in times of need than are secure people who have a history of relationships with attachment figures that were present in times of need (Florian et al., 1995). Hazan and Shaver (1987) reported significant differences in the way individuals with different attachment styles perceived their parents in childhood. Their research revealed that secure individuals perceive warmer relationships, both with and between their parents. Those who were classified as avoidant tended to view their mothers as cold and rejecting. Anxious ambivalent individuals perceived their fathers in childhood as unfair. Other studies have supported this research, finding that securely attached individuals expect that others will be there when needed, perceive more available support, and report seeking more support (Florian, et. al., 1995). It is reasonable to assume that individuals who seek more support are likely to receive more than those who do not seek any. Cozzarelli et al. (2003) found that stably insecure women reported lower levels of global support, had lower self-esteem and greater conflict than secure women. However, women whose attachment style changed from insecure to secure reported the sharpest increase in perceived support and women who became insecure the lowest. The attachment style change is unlikely to be solely caused by the environment, but is likely to be produced by a complex interaction of expectations, behaviours, and the environment of the women.

Secure individuals are more likely to seek positive feedback from romantic partners than are insecure individuals. They were shown to be predicted by high self-liking whereas avoidant individuals, while also high in self-esteem were shown to be predicted by high self-

competence. Avoidant individuals may find relationships a threat to their self-concepts due to the possibility of receiving negative feedback from partners and so avoid seeking feedback altogether. They are likely to view feedback from partners as irrelevant to their self-concepts, avoiding any threat to their positive self-view. These individuals may compensate for their lack of positive interactions with others by attempting to derive self-worth from other accomplishments such as work. Anxious ambivalent individuals were found to be low in both self-liking and self-competence, but especially low in self-liking, and were less likely than secure individuals to seek positive feedback from partners. These individuals have a history of rejection and therefore their patterns of feedback seeking from romantic partners are likely to reinforce their feelings of low self-worth (Brennan & Morris, 1997).

Simpson et al. (2002) studied the effect of attachment behaviour on social support in a stressful situation and found that women in general gave more support to male partners who sought more support. Secure women tended to provide the most situationally contingent social support, giving what their partners sought. Women who scored higher on the avoidance measure gave less support than women who were less avoidant. Further research examined the relationship between attachment style and perception of social support both given and received between partners. Securely attached women were shown to have high sociability and expressivity but low social sensitivity (Guerrero & Jones, 2003). People who were classified as avoidant were perceived as the least skilled in emotional and social sensitivity and were considered to be less expressive and sociable than anxious ambivalent or securely attached people (Guerrero & Jones, 2003; Mikulincer & Nachshon, 1991). Avoidant individuals are therefore expected to be less likely to seek or provide social support. Anxious individuals were perceived as the most socially sensitive, are more skilled

in emotional and social expressiveness, but perceived their partners as less skilled in social expression, reflecting their need for external validation (Guerrero & Jones, 2003). These individuals are therefore expected to perceive low levels of social support.

Arguably, the perception of social support is more important than the reality of how much support is available to the individual. Attachment should affect the perception of how much is available, but is also likely to affect the reality due to interaction of the different contributing factors. For instance, securely attached individuals are likely to perceive that a greater amount of support is available to them than insecurely attached individuals. Insecurely attached people, especially those high in anxiety, have a low self-worth and do not expect others to be available to them. Avoidant individuals tend to have a higher reliance on themselves and are more likely to find their self worth by devoting their time and energy to work or other activities rather than in intimate relationships (Guerrero & Jones, 2003). They are therefore expected to deliberately or inadvertently push others away, resulting in a lower social support network than would be available to a secure individual.

Attachment style affects an individual's perception of others. Anxious ambivalent people have been shown to excessively perceive their own self traits in others, that is both recalling those traits in another person faster, and to show greater confidence that their actual self traits were present in that person (Mikulincer & Horesh, 1999). Mikulincer and Horesh propose this to be due to anxious ambivalent individuals' self-focused attention and a tendency to minimise interpersonal distance. Avoidant individuals tended to excessively perceive unwanted traits in others, showing a tendency to perceive themselves as dissimilar from others, had less difficulty in recalling a person who possessed those unwanted self traits and increased confidence that those traits were present in the other person. Mikulincer and

Horesh conclude that this occurs because of the tendency of avoidant individuals to maintain a positive self view by suppressing personal faults and to maintain interpersonal distance. Mikulincer (1999) proposed that avoidant individuals have a low self-worth and are therefore highly defensive, avoiding any situation or information that could further damage their sense of self. Secure individuals did not show any bias in perceiving their actual or unwanted self traits in another person. The literature is relevant to the perception of available social support as it supports the idea of avoidant individuals being mistrustful of others. In over-perceiving their unwanted-self-traits in others they are able to maintain a negative view of others and a positive view of themselves on the surface, distancing themselves from the relationship. Viewing themselves as dissimilar to others also has the effect of creating or maintaining interpersonal distance. However, although they avoid intimacy, this avoidance is based on fear of rejection and mistrust, which means that they may actually be dissatisfied with little social support, but be less likely to have good support networks. As anxious ambivalent individuals strive to minimise interpersonal distance, it is probable that they perceive their social support network to be inadequate and therefore will also be dissatisfied with the social support they receive. This idea is supported by findings that individuals with insecure attachments are more likely to experience loneliness and cope less effectively with social changes in times of transition. They are more likely to make negative inferences about new social situations and others' behaviour (Larose et al., 2002), which suggests they will perceive less emotional support and will be less likely to seek it out. Insecurely attached individuals tend to perceive the offset of negative facial expressions as occurring later than secure individuals when in distress (Niedenthal et. al., 2002), suggesting that insecurely attached individuals are more likely to perceive negative emotions in others. Both avoidant and anxious attachments can result in a negative perception of others as anxious ambivalent individuals hold a negative self view (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991). Secure individuals

are expected to be satisfied with the social support they receive as they do not demonstrate a need to perceive their actual or unwanted self traits in others, suggesting they are comfortable with the interpersonal distance between themselves and others.

Guerrero & Jones (2003) hypothesised that secure individuals will perceive a higher level of social support than those who are insecurely attached, as they are less likely to perceive others as rejecting and are less concerned about what others think of them. Secure individuals have a history of supportive attachment relationships that act as a secure base enabling them to explore their environment and cope with new situations. They expect others to be available to them and are therefore more likely to seek social support when they need it, which will have the effect of providing them with more support. Attachment security is therefore expected to positively correlate with both the number of people available for social support and satisfaction with the levels of support they do have. Avoidant individuals also experienced inconsistent parenting in childhood and high levels of rejection, producing the belief that others will be unavailable and unreliable. Individuals with high scores in avoidance are expected to have low scores for number of people available for social support, as avoidant individuals tend not to seek it out. Although they may appear to be content without social support, rejecting before they can be rejected, it is expected that avoidance will correlate with low scores for satisfaction of the support available, especially as avoidant individuals are likely to experience poor levels of support. Anxious ambivalent individuals experienced inconsistent parenting in childhood and hold the belief that others will not be available to them. While anxious individuals are likely to seek out social support, anxious ambivalence is expected to be negatively correlate both with the number of people they perceive to be available for social support and with satisfaction of the support they have.

1.7 Social Support and Identity Development

In terms of Marcia's (1980) stages of identity development, it is expected that those who attain higher scores for identity achievement will have higher scores for the most effective coping strategies. The seeking out and perception of available social support is expected to be related in the same way, as it is a method of coping.

The self-worth of and distress suffered by men were studied with respect to their identity status. Identity diffused men reported high levels of psychosocial distress and low levels of general self-worth in comparison to men with an identity style that conforms to the prescriptions and expectations of significant others. Men with this type of identity had the lowest levels of distress compared to identity diffused men or information oriented men, those who were willing to test and revise aspects of their self-identity when confronted with discrepant feedback (Beaumont & Zukanovic, 2005). These results are somewhat unexpected in terms of men with a foreclosed identity suffering the least amount of psychological distress. One explanation is that the greater amounts of validation from significant others they receive by having an identity that fits with those people acts as a buffer against distress. As expected, identity diffused individuals suffered the highest amounts of distress. Individuals with an identity status that conforms to the expectations of others are therefore expected to seek more support and perceive more as they will receive more validation from others.

Caldwell et al. (1989) found the moratorium stage to be negatively related to social support satisfaction and identity achievement to be positively related. Individuals in identity diffusion and moratorium had a lower number of emotional supporters while individuals in identity achievement had a higher number. Other findings have supported the proposition

that individuals with a negative internal model of others to be more likely to use avoidant coping strategies. The extent to which individuals with negative models of self used more avoidant coping strategies depended on whether they perceived that others were likely to respond to their needs, that is those who perceived themselves as receiving high levels of social support (Williamson et al., 2002).

High scores for identity achievement or moratorium are expected to positively correlate with secure attachment and with number of people perceived to be available for social support as secure individuals seek out and provide more support as more is sought (Simpson et al., 2002). Anxious ambivalent individuals also give more social support when more is sought, however perceive their partners as less socially expressive, reflecting their need for validation and the expectation of others not meeting that need (Simpson et al., 2002). Anxious ambivalence is therefore expected to positively correlate with identity foreclosure because of the need for anxious individuals to make choices and decisions around pleasing others as opposed to choosing their own path in life. Identity foreclosure is expected to correlate with dissatisfaction of social support, as foreclosed individuals tend to rely on others to make decisions for them, which means they are likely to have unrealistic expectations of support for others.

1.8 Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: That individuals scoring high on attachment security have high scores for proactive coping strategies, have high scores for identity achievement or moratorium, and perceive satisfactory social support.

Individuals that score high on attachment security are expected to be the most psychologically healthy in terms of coping, perception of social support and identity development. Secure attachment is expected to positively correlate with active, and planning coping strategies, as secure individuals are unafraid to face problems or search for new information. It is also expected to correlate with restraint coping, seeking social support for instrumental and emotional reasons and positive reinterpretation and growth. Individuals with high attachment security scores are also expected to have high scores for identity achievement or moratorium, as they are willing to explore new ideas and therefore work towards establishing an identity. As secure people have a history of positive, supportive relationships with significant others, they are more likely to have good social support networks and therefore attachment security should correlate with satisfaction with social support.

Hypothesis 2: That high scores in avoidance negatively correlate with active and planning coping strategies, positively correlate with denial and disengagement coping strategies, identity diffusion and dissatisfaction with the social support available to them.

Avoidant individuals may appear to cope well but actually reflect a sense of failure as they experience low anxiety but high defensiveness. High scores in avoidance is therefore expected to positively correlate with the use of denial as a coping strategy and disengagement to deal with problems that arise, defending themselves against any possible threat to their self-view. Avoidant individuals are also unlikely to explore identity possibilities or even believe that they need to search new information to develop their own identity and so high avoidance scores are expected to positively correlate with identity diffusion. Avoidant people have a history of rejection from attachment figures and so hold a

belief that others cannot be relied upon. They are therefore unlikely to seek much support and so avoidance is expected to correlate with low levels of social support. While individuals with high avoidance scores are often thought of as avoiding social intimacy, they may in fact actually be dissatisfied with the amount of social support they receive as it is expected to be low.

Hypothesis 3: That individuals high in anxious ambivalence negatively correlate with proactive coping strategies such as active and planning, have high scores for denial and disengagement strategies, identity foreclosure and diffusion and dissatisfaction with the social support available to them.

Anxious ambivalent individuals are expected to have a high focus on their emotions when faced with a problem. They are likely to lack coping resources and so high scores in anxious ambivalence is likely to positively correlate with high scores for denial and disengagement strategies. Anxious ambivalence is also expected to correlate with high scores for identity foreclosure, as anxious ambivalent individuals are afraid that any exploration they do partake in will be damaging to their relationships. They attempt to meet the expectations of others and are likely to commit to an identity that conforms to these expectations. In terms of social support, high scores in anxious ambivalence are likely to correlate with dissatisfaction of perceived social support.

Hypothesis 4: High scores in identity achievement and moratorium will correlate with proactive coping strategies and satisfaction with social support. High scores in identity foreclosure and diffusion will correlate with disengagement and denial coping strategies and dissatisfaction with social support.

Individuals with high scores for identity achievement are expected to have more coping strategies that require decision making and exploration such as active, planning, suppression and restraint coping. Identity diffusion is expected to positively correlate with disengagement and denial strategies, those that avoid exploration. Identity achievement is expected to correlate with a perception of a high number of social supports and high support satisfaction.

2 Method

2.1 Participants

Participants were recruited by personal approach and through word of mouth. They were offered a five-dollar café voucher or ten-dollar mall voucher for participating in research, depending on the stage at which they were recruited, ie those recruited in the early stages were given a smaller voucher based on time available before completion date. There were 47 male, and 60 female participants, who had a mean age of 28 and 29 years respectively. The age range was between 18 and 74 years. Of the 107 participants, 41 were married, 4 engaged, 4 living with someone, 20 dating one person exclusively, 1 was dating multiple partners, 30 not currently involved in a romantic relationship with anyone, 2 were divorced and 5 had never been involved with anyone. Of the two participants that were divorced, one was living with another partner and one had remarried.

2.2 Measures

The adult attachment scale (Appendix 1) is an 18-item scale developed by Collins and Read (1990) that gives each participant a score for three attachment dimensions: depend, anxiety and close. It was used to obtain an attachment score for avoidance, anxious ambivalence and secure which are the attachment dimensions used in this study. Participants' scores on each dimension were calculated by taking the total of their scores on the six questions relating to each attachment style. Participants indicated on a five-point Likert type scale, the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with each of the 18 statements. It had reasonable internal consistency with Cronbach's alpha .75, .72 and .69 for depend, anxiety and close respectively (Collins & Read, 1990). Test-retest reliability correlations were .71, .52, and .68 for the three items (Collins & Read, 1990). Collins and Read were able to correctly classify 73 percent of their total sample, according to self-classification of participants on Hazan and

Shaver's (1987) measure, indicating high construct validity. While much attachment research has categorised participants, this study gave participants a score for avoidance, anxious and secure. This study focussed on the relationship between each attachment dimension and coping, identity development and social support as opposed to categorising participants and then comparing their results with participants in other categories.

The COPE (Appendix 2) is a 52-item measure that assesses fourteen different methods of coping: active coping, planning, suppression of competing activities, restraint coping, seeking instrumental support, seeking emotional support, positive reinterpretation and growth, acceptance of the problem, turning to religion, the focus on and venting of emotions, denial of the problem, behavioural and mental disengagement and finally alcohol/drug disengagement (Carver et al., 1989). Participants were required to rate what they generally do and feel when experiencing stressful events on a four-point scale ranging from "I usually don't do this at all" to "I usually do this a lot". With the exception of alcohol/drug disengagement, which had only one item, the subscales had four items each. The COPE is a continuous measure, giving participants a score for each coping method. The internal consistency of the COPE (Carver et al., 1989) was high, with all except one Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients greater than 0.6. Carver et al. (1989) also performed a correlational analysis of the relationships between each of the COPE variables. Their sample size was 978 participants.

The revised version of the Extended Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status (EOMEIS-2; Adams et al., 1989), is a 64 item scale that evaluates identity in terms of Marcia's (1980) stages of identity development, for each of; occupation, politics, religion, friendship, recreation, philosophy, dating and sex roles. Participants indicated on a six-point Likert type

scale the degree to which they agreed or disagreed with each of the 64 statements. Cronbach's alpha scores were .58 to .80, with test-retest yielding scores of .63 to .83 (Bennion & Adams, 1986). The content validity showed 94 percent agreement across nine judges (Bennion & Adams, 1986) on a study of college students. An overall score for identity diffusion, foreclosure, moratorium and achievement was obtained for each participant by taking the total score of the sixteen questions that related to each identity status. Two questions were asked for each of the following: occupation, politics, religion, friendship, recreation, philosophy, dating and sex roles, for each identity status.

The short form of the Social Support Questionnaire (Sarason et al., 1987) (Appendix 4) is a 12-item measure designed to test the number of social supports a person perceives to be available to them, and their satisfaction with the amount of support they receive. Participants were asked six questions about people in their environment who provide them with help or support. For each question they were required to list up to nine people who provide help or support in the manner described, then to rate on a six-point scale their satisfaction with the support for each circumstance. The scale is scored by taking an average of the number of social supports and an average of the satisfaction scores the participant gives for each question, giving two scores for each participant. The short form of the SSQ had strong internal reliabilities, which ranged from .90 to .98 (Sarason et. al., 1987).

Data were analysed using Statistica. Analyses were employed to determine the descriptive statistics and a correlation matrix was created to determine the relationship between each of the variables. Age was included in these analyses. No other personal information was included when analysing these data as previous research did not justify its use. To obtain total percentages for each attachment style, participants were also placed into an attachment category based on the attachment style that they had the highest score for.

2.3 Procedure

Each participant was given a booklet of a background information page, a consent form and four questionnaires. Each booklet was identical. Participants were told an estimate of the time it would take to fill out the booklet (approximately 20 to 30 minutes) and assured that their results would remain anonymous. Before beginning the questionnaires they were required to sign a consent form. Participants were also required to answer questions about their sex, age and relationship status to ensure a broad sample was obtained and that these results could be applied to the general population. Four scales were used: Collins and Read's adult attachment scale (1990); the COPE, a measure of coping style (Carver et. al., 1989); EOMEIS-2, a measure of ego identity status (Adams et. al., 1989); and Sarason et al.'s (1987) Social Support Questionnaire - short form. On completion of the questionnaire, participants were given a debriefing form which explained what their responses would be used to measure and contact details if they had further questions. They were then given a voucher for participating in the research.

3 Results

This section will begin with a table of the descriptive statistics, followed by a table of correlations and a discussion of the significant correlations between age and other variables. The results will be then be listed in terms of the correlations between each attachment style and the other factors. Correlations between coping and identity status will then be given followed by correlations between coping and social support and finally identity status and social support.

Table 1 Descriptive Statistics for age, attachment style, coping strategies, identity status and perception of social support.

| | Mean | Minimum | Maximum |
|------------------------------|------|---------|---------|
| Age | 29.0 | 18 | 74 |
| Attachment Style | | | |
| Secure | 21.5 | 12 | 29 |
| Avoidant | 15.5 | 6 | 25 |
| Anxious | 14.1 | 6 | 24 |
| Coping | | | |
| Active | 11.2 | 4 | 16 |
| Planning | 11.6 | 4 | 16 |
| Suppression | 10.0 | 4 | 16 |
| Restraint | 9.1 | 4 | 15 |
| Seeking Instrumental Support | 10.8 | 4 | 16 |
| Seeking Emotional Support | 11.0 | 4 | 16 |
| Positive Reinterpretation | 11.6 | 5 | 16 |
| Acceptance | 11.1 | 4 | 16 |
| Religion | 10.5 | 4 | 16 |
| Focus on Emotions | 9.2 | 4 | 16 |
| Denial | 5.4 | 4 | 14 |
| Behavioural Disengagement | 6.2 | 4 | 13 |
| Mental Disengagement | 8.0 | 4 | 16 |
| Alcohol/Drug Disengagement | 1.3 | 1 | 4 |
| Identity Status | | | |
| Diffusion | 66.3 | 46 | 84 |
| Foreclosure | 81.7 | 66 | 105 |
| Moratorium | 80.5 | 60 | 102 |
| Achievement | 54.6 | 38 | 70 |
| Social Support | | | |
| Number | 4.3 | 1 | 9 |
| Satisfaction | 5.2 | 1.5 | 6 |

When scoring participants for attachment style categorically, 77.4 percent had the highest score for secure, 16.5 percent for avoidant and 6.1 percent scored highest for anxious ambivalence. Mean scores were considerably higher for secure than avoidant or anxious. For coping strategies, the highest means were for planning and positive reinterpretation and growth while the lowest were for alcohol/drug disengagement (after the number of items was considered) and denial. Mean scores for identity status were highest for identity foreclosure and lowest for identity achievement.

A series of correlations (Table 2) were then generated to determine the relationship between attachment and each of the other variables, grouped under coping strategies, identity status

and social support. Younger participants were more likely to have a higher anxious score ($r(107) = -.22, p < .05$), less likely to be satisfied with the social support they received ($r(107) = .22, p < .05$), less likely to use restraint as a coping strategy ($r(107) = .21, p < .05$), less likely to turn to religion ($r(107) = .31, p < .05$), more likely to use alcohol or drugs to disengage from a problem ($r(107) = -.24, p < .05$) and more likely to be identity foreclosed ($r(107) = -.23, p < .05$).

All styles of attachment correlated significantly with each other. Avoidance scores correlated positively with anxious scores ($r(107) = .49, p < .05$) and negatively with secure scores ($r(107) = -.61, p < .05$). Anxious scores correlated negatively with secure scores ($r(107) = -.30, p < .05$). Individuals high in avoidance were more likely to be high in anxious ambivalence, and individuals high in attachment security were less likely to have high scores in avoidance or anxious ambivalence.

Table 2 Correlations of attachment orientation with age, coping strategies and perception of social support.

| Attachment Orientation | Secure | Avoidant | Anxious |
|-------------------------------|--------|----------|---------|
| Age | -0.12 | -0.02 | -0.22* |
| Coping | | | |
| Active | -0.03 | -0.07 | -0.21* |
| Planning | 0.00 | -0.08 | -0.28* |
| Suppression | 0.05 | -0.10 | -0.15 |
| Restraint | 0.10 | -0.02 | -0.05 |
| Instrumental support | 0.18 | -0.22* | -0.21* |
| Emotional support | 0.10 | -0.27* | -0.04 |
| Positive | 0.18 | -0.10 | -0.29* |
| Acceptance | 0.11 | -0.08 | -0.06 |
| Religion | -0.04 | 0.01 | -0.07 |
| Focus on emotions | -0.16 | 0.01 | 0.18 |
| Denial | -0.03 | 0.33* | 0.37* |
| Behavioural disengagement | -0.11 | 0.16 | 0.32* |
| Mental disengagement | -0.18 | 0.29* | 0.35* |
| Alcohol/drug | 0.02 | 0.18 | 0.33* |
| Identity Status | | | |
| Diffusion | -0.15 | 0.24* | 0.24* |
| Foreclosure | -0.36* | -0.01 | -0.49* |
| Moratorium | 0.30* | -0.32* | -0.03 |
| Identity Achievement | -0.13 | 0.10 | -0.03 |
| Social Support | | | |
| Support number | 0.13 | -0.29* | -0.10 |
| Support satisfaction | 0.12 | -0.32* | -0.31* |

*Marked correlations are significant at $p < .05$.

3.1 Secure

There were no significant correlations between scores on attachment security and any of the measures of social support or coping strategies (Table 2, Column 1). For identity development, secure scores were positively correlated with identity moratorium ($r(107) = .30, p < .05$) and negatively correlated with identity foreclosure ($r(107) = -.36, p < .05$) (Table 2, Column 1).

3.2 Avoidance

In terms of coping, avoidance scores (Table 2, Column 2) correlated positively with denial ($r(107) = .33, p < .05$) and mental disengagement ($r(107) = .29, p < .05$) and negatively with

seeking emotional ($r(107) = -.27, p < .05$) or instrumental ($r(107) = -.22, p < .05$) support from others.

For identity development, scores in avoidance (Table 2, Column 2) were positively correlated with diffusion scores ($r(107) = .24, p < .05$) and negatively with moratorium scores ($r(107) = -.32, p < .05$).

In terms of social support, scores in avoidance (Table 2, Column 2) correlated negatively with a perception of number of social supports ($r(107) = -.29, p < .05$), support satisfaction ($r(107) = -.32, p < .05$).

3.3 Anxious Ambivalence

There were a number of significant correlations between anxious ambivalence scores and subscales of the COPE measure (Table 2, Column 3). Anxious ambivalence scores negatively correlated with active coping ($r(107) = -.21, p < .05$); planning ($r(107) = -.28, p < .05$); seeking instrumental support ($r(107) = -.21, p < .05$), and taking a positive view of the problem ($r(107) = -.29, p < .05$). Anxious ambivalence scores were positively correlated with use of denial ($r(107) = .37, p < .05$), behavioural disengagement ($r(107) = .32, p < .05$), mental disengagement ($r(107) = .35, p < .05$), and use of alcohol or drugs as a form of disengagement when faced with a problem ($r = .33, p < .05$).

In terms of identity development, anxious ambivalence scores correlated positively with diffusion ($r(107) = .24, p < .05$), and negatively with foreclosure ($r(107) = -.49, p < .05$) (Table 2, Column 3).

Anxious ambivalence scores were significantly negatively correlated with satisfaction of social support ($r(107) = -.31, p < .05$) (Table 2, Column 3).

Table 3 Correlations of coping strategies with identity status.

| | Diffusion | Foreclosure | Moratorium | Identity Achievement |
|---------------------------|-----------|-------------|------------|----------------------|
| Active | -0.09 | 0.23* | -0.13 | 0.14 |
| Planning | -0.12 | 0.26* | -0.15 | 0.10 |
| Suppression | -0.04 | 0.16 | -0.09 | -0.26* |
| Restraint | 0.22* | 0.05 | 0.14 | 0.10 |
| Instrumental support | -0.26* | 0.13 | -0.03 | -0.01 |
| Emotional support | -0.16 | 0.05 | 0.04 | -0.03 |
| Positive | -0.20* | 0.10 | -0.08 | -0.00 |
| Acceptance | -0.01 | -0.09 | 0.17 | 0.07 |
| Religion | -0.02 | 0.15 | -0.36* | 0.21* |
| Focus on emotions | -0.03 | 0.11 | -0.09 | -0.06 |
| Denial | 0.11 | -0.21* | 0.16 | -0.08 |
| Behavioural disengagement | 0.12 | -0.16 | 0.03 | -0.02 |
| Mental disengagement | 0.13 | 0.00 | 0.02 | 0.05 |
| Alcohol/drug | 0.19* | -0.32* | 0.18 | -0.14 |

*Marked correlations are significant at $p < .05$

3.4 Identity and Coping

Identity diffusion (Table 3, Column 1) positively correlated with restraint coping ($r(107) = .22, p < .05$), and alcohol and drug disengagement ($r(107) = .19, p < .05$). Diffusion scores negatively correlated with instrumental support ($r(107) = -.26, p < .05$) and taking a positive view of a problem ($r(107) = -.20, p < .05$).

Identity foreclosure (Table 3, Column 2) was positively associated with active and planning strategies ($r(107) = .23$ and $r(107) = .26$ respectively, $p < .05$), and negatively associated with denial ($r(107) = -.21, p < .05$) and alcohol and drug disengagement ($r(107) = -.32, p < .05$).

Moratorium scores (Table 3, Column 3) were negatively correlated with turning to religion as a coping strategy ($r(107) = -.36, p < .05$).

Identity achievement (Table 3, Column 4) negatively correlated with suppression of competing activities ($r(107) = -.26, p < .05$) and positively correlated with turning to religion ($r(107) = .21, p < .05$).

Table 4 Correlations of coping strategies with perception of social support.

| | Support Number | Support Satisfaction |
|---------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| Active | 0.04 | 0.12 |
| Planning | 0.07 | 0.17 |
| Suppression | -0.03 | 0.03 |
| Restraint | 0.20* | 0.18 |
| Instrumental support | 0.15 | 0.13 |
| Emotional support | 0.26* | 0.21* |
| Positive | 0.13 | 0.13 |
| Acceptance | 0.10 | 0.08 |
| Religion | 0.15 | 0.24* |
| Focus on emotions | 0.04 | 0.16 |
| Denial | -0.12 | -0.25* |
| Behavioural disengagement | 0.08 | -0.13 |
| Mental disengagement | -0.07 | -0.22* |
| Alcohol/drug | -0.09 | -0.13 |

*Marked correlations are significant at $p < .05$

3.5 Social Support and Coping

A perception of a high number of social supports (Table 4, Column 1) was positively correlated with restraint coping ($r(107) = .20, p < .05$), and seeking social support for emotional reasons ($r(107) = .26, p < .05$).

Support satisfaction (Table 4, Column 2) was positively correlated with seeking social support for emotional reasons ($r(107) = .21, p < .05$) and turning to religion ($r(107) = .24, p$

< .05). Support satisfaction correlated negatively with denial ($r(107) = -.25, p < .05$) and mental disengagement ($r(107) = -.22, p < .05$).

Table 5 Correlations between perception of social support and identity status

| | Support Number | Support Satisfaction |
|----------------------|----------------|----------------------|
| Diffusion | -0.10 | -0.12 |
| Foreclosure | 0.08 | 0.15 |
| Moratorium | 0.04 | -0.05 |
| Identity Achievement | 0.02 | -0.02 |

There were no significant correlations between perception of social support and identity development status (Table 5).

4 Discussion

4.1 Discussion of Hypotheses

4.1.1 Hypothesis 1: That individuals scoring high on attachment security have high scores for pro-active coping strategies, have high scores for identity achievement or moratorium, and perceive satisfactory social support.

There were few significant correlations for secure attachment (Table 2, Column 1). This is likely to be due to participants scoring higher for secure attachment on average than the other attachment styles (Table 1). In categorical terms, previous research has found approximately 60 to 65 percent of individuals to be secure (Hazan & Shaver, 1987; Collins & Read, 1990). This study found 77.4 percent of individuals to be secure, which suggests results may not have been accurate in terms of categories. There were no significant results for coping or social support.

Higher scores in attachment security were significantly correlated with higher identity moratorium scores and lower identity foreclosure scores. These findings align with Hypothesis 1 in that individuals with high attachment security scores were expected to have high scores for identity moratorium, the process of discovering their identity as they are willing to explore new ideas and have the history of a secure base from which to explore. Based on the correlations, individuals with high attachment security scores could be expected to have more time to consider their identity and life decisions. This may be because their resources are not diverted towards attempting to preserve a positive self-view as in the case of avoidant individuals, or worrying about being abandoned or rejected as in the case of anxious individuals. They are likely to be more comfortable with the identity they have chosen (or are in the process of choosing) as their self-worth tends to be higher than that of insecure individuals (Brennan & Morris, 1997) and they are confident of others liking and

accepting them (Guerrero & Jones, 2003). Secure individuals do not need to conform to the expectations of others as they have no fears about exploration and are able to be flexible in changing their beliefs (Mikulincer, 1997). Their relationship experiences have taught them that exploration is a part of life, which may explain why attachment security correlated highly with identity moratorium but not with identity achievement. Secure individuals may be more likely to leave their options open, to have a flexible identity that changes over time instead of committing to certain beliefs and lifestyles. Secure individuals hold a more positive view of themselves and others (Brennan & Morris, 1997) and so are more comfortable with accepting their own and others' differences. The negative correlation between identity foreclosure and attachment security is likely to be due to their belief that others will accept and love them no matter what choices they make.

It is possible that results for secure attachment were not reliable considering the large percentage difference between this study and previous research. A discussion of what could have been done to get more reliable results for secure attachment will be included in Section 4.3.2 Future Research Recommendations.

4.1.2 Hypothesis 2: That high scores in avoidance negatively correlate with active and planning coping strategies, positively correlate with denial and disengagement coping strategies, identity diffusion and dissatisfaction with the social support available to them.

This section will discuss results obtained for individuals with high avoidance scores. It will begin with the results for coping, first discussing the finding that individuals high in avoidance are less likely to seek out instrumental and emotional support as coping strategies. The positive correlation with denial and mental disengagement will then be discussed followed by the expected findings that were not found to be significant in this research.

Findings for identity development status followed by perception of social support will then be included.

4.1.2.1 Coping

High scores in avoidance correlated with a lower likelihood of seeking instrumental and emotional support (Table 2, Column 2). Firstly, this may reflect the lack of trust and the belief that others will not provide them with social support found in individuals high in avoidance. Instead of seeking support and not receiving any, which could be taken as rejection, they do not seek any and so avoid further threats to their sense of self worth. Secondly, they may not have the necessary skills or confidence to seek support from others. Avoidant individuals have been found to be less expressive and sociable (Guerrero & Jones, 2003). They are likely to appear self-sufficient as they do not tend to derive their self-esteem from others and seem disinterested in intimacy. These factors are likely to drive others away and to result in a lower probability of being offered either instrumental or emotional support, which is then likely to be perceived as further rejection, causing avoidant individuals to turn to other methods of coping. Results for perception of social support showed that individuals with high scores in avoidance were dissatisfied with the support they received and perceived support available from fewer people than secure or anxious ambivalent individuals. The self-sufficient manner and fear of seeking support of individuals high in avoidance are probable causes of this discrepancy. Lastly, relying on support from people, who in the past have proved to be unavailable and untrustworthy is likely to be too stressful for these individuals who prefer to derive their self-worth from outside of intimate relationships (Mikulincer, 1995).

The findings that high scores in avoidance correlate with using denial and mental disengagement as coping strategies align with avoidant individuals not taking in new information and defending against rejection (Ainsworth et al., 1978) or any threat to their self-view, which they are highly sensitive to. Mikulincer's (1997) study found avoidant individuals to show cognitive closure and rigidity when presented with new information. Similarly, when faced with a problem or stressful situation, avoidant individuals prefer to deny the problem or stressful situation and use mental disengagement to maintain this process of avoidance. These results also support the proposition that individuals high in avoidance cannot handle any threat to their sense of self. Mikulincer (1995) found avoidant individuals to repress negative self-traits and have a greater accessibility of positive self-attributes. In the same way, individuals high in avoidance repress negative or stressful situations, as these situations may cause the feeling that they cannot cope or cannot control the situation, which may impact on their self-worth. By using mental disengagement and denial, these individuals are able to maintain their view of the world and themselves without new information or potentially negative feedback having any effect (Mikulincer, 1999). They use these denial strategies to take away the power of factors beyond their control or the power of other people to have any impact on their sense of self.

It was hypothesised that avoidant individuals would be less likely to use active and planning coping strategies, which was not found in these results. It is likely that this is due to individuals with high avoidance scores having a highly differentiated self-structure (Mikulincer, 1995) and therefore the ability to diminish their affect level. Their predominant coping techniques however are denial and mental disengagement with no significant positive results for any other coping strategy. With more participants in this study, behavioural disengagement and alcohol/drug disengagement may have been significant at 95 percent

confidence as these also have a positive trend and reached significance at the 90 percent confidence level.

4.1.2.2 Identity

As expected, individuals with high scores in avoidance were more likely to have higher scores for identity diffusion and lower scores for identity moratorium (Table 2, Column 2). This is probably due to avoidant individuals avoiding information searches, and dismissing the importance of new information (Mikulincer, 1999). As they did not have a secure base as children from which to explore (Ainsworth et al., 1978), they are likely to be fearful of exploration and shun information search (Mikulincer, 1997). This will prevent them from being able to form an identity or even reaching moratorium, the stage in which individuals search for the right life choices to make. Instead of entering a process of identity search, they are more likely to utilise denial and to not recognise the need for their own identity.

4.1.2.3 Social Support

Avoidance was positively correlated with a perception of few social supports and low satisfaction with social support (Table 2, Column 2). Individuals high in avoidance grew up in an environment in which their primary attachment figure(s) were insensitive to their needs (Ainsworth et al., 1978), producing the belief that others will be unavailable and unreliable. They have a need to protect their self worth from further rejection and so will often reject before they can be rejected. Previous research has shown them to view themselves as dissimilar from others as a means of maintaining or creating interpersonal distance (Mikulincer & Horesh, 1999). If they do not allow others to help them or to get too close, this will act as a protection against rejection. Individuals high in avoidance still desire intimacy and social support, which is why they are more likely to be dissatisfied with the

social support they receive, but as a defence mechanism are less likely to seek out relationships that would provide this. Alternatively, avoidant individuals are perceived as the least skilled in emotional and social sensitivity, being less expressive and sociable than others (Guerrero & Jones, 2003) and so may lack the knowledge and skills to seek support from others. Their friends and acquaintances may not recognise their need for support as they tend to appear very self-sufficient and may even seem rejecting as they attempt to protect themselves by maintaining an interpersonal distance beyond societal norms.

As hypothesised, individuals with high scores in avoidance tend to have ineffective coping strategies, utilising denial and mental disengagement at the expense of active coping strategies. They were more likely to be in identity diffusion and less likely to be in identity moratorium. As expected, these individuals perceived few social supports to be available to them and had low satisfaction with this support.

4.1.3 Hypothesis 3: That individuals high in anxious ambivalence negatively correlate with pro-active coping strategies such as active and planning, have high scores for denial and disengagement strategies, identity foreclosure and diffusion and dissatisfaction with the social support available to them.

This section will discuss results obtained for individuals with high anxious ambivalence scores. The results for coping will first be discussed, beginning with the findings that individuals high in anxious ambivalence are less likely to use active coping, planning or positive reinterpretation and growth as coping strategies. Their lower likelihood of using instrumental support will then be discussed followed by the positive correlation with denial, behavioural disengagement, mental disengagement and alcohol/drug disengagement. Findings for identity development status will then be followed by perception of social support. Each of these sections will include a paragraph for unexpected results.

4.1.3.1 Coping

As hypothesised, individuals with high scores in anxious ambivalence had a significant lack of effective coping strategies (Table 2, Column 3), as they were less likely to use active coping and planning. They were also less likely to seek instrumental support and were less likely to take a positive view of a problem. They were more likely to use denial and behavioural, mental and alcohol/drug disengagement as coping strategies, which are the least effective methods of coping.

These results support Mikulincer's (1997) findings that individuals high in anxious ambivalence tend to be conflicted about curiosity, desiring to explore but believing that they should not be as curious, and that their curiosity could jeopardise their relationships. When presented with new information, anxious ambivalent individuals show cognitive closure and rigidity. Active coping, planning and positive reinterpretation and growth require the exploration of new information. Planning in particular involves spending time thinking about the problem to find a solution, which is difficult for anxious ambivalent individuals due to the high levels of distress that they experience in stressful situations. Anxious ambivalence can result in hypervigilance, being highly sensitive to fluctuations in the social environment. These individuals have difficulty regulating their distress and can easily become overwhelmed by the negative thoughts and feelings that they experience when under stress (Mikulincer & Horesh, 1999). They have difficulty compartmentalising events and have a greater recall of their emotions than other people. Because of this, they are likely to avoid thinking about the problem to preserve their (already low) sense of self-worth and prevent themselves from experiencing unbearable feelings (these will differ between individuals but may be abandonment or rejection for instance). Anxious ambivalent people tend to have a high accessibility of negative self-attributes and excessive use of affect when organising self-

relevant information, resulting in high distress levels and a tendency to become overwhelmed by thoughts and feelings in stressful situations (Mikulincer, 1995). A stressful situation is likely to elicit high anxiety for people disposed to this reaction which is likely to overwhelm any strategic approaches the person may otherwise have. Anxious ambivalent individuals tend to hold negative beliefs about themselves (Collins & Read, 1990) and have a lower appraisal of their coping abilities (Berant et al, 2003). This may be a self-fulfilling prophecy, with these individuals turning to less effective coping measures as they believe they cannot adequately use effective coping methods.

Individuals with high scores in anxious ambivalence were less likely to seek instrumental support. This supports previous research that found anxious ambivalent individuals believe that others are available as support but feel that they are unworthy or that others may reject them (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). The negative correlation between anxious ambivalence and seeking instrumental support may reflect the lack of trust in others of individuals high in anxious ambivalence. Alternatively it may be a defence against rejection, showing that an instrumental need may make them even more of a burden to others than they feel they already are, instead concluding that if they do not ask, they cannot be rejected.

Anxious ambivalence yielded the highest correlations with denial, mental, behavioural and alcohol/drug disengagement of the three attachment types. This is probably due to the overwhelming distress that anxious ambivalent individuals experience (Mikulincer & Horesh, 1999). They are unable to separate the experience from their feelings, and unless they can avoid the problem or situation, a negative experience will work to further damage their already low self-worth. The positive correlation between anxious ambivalence and denial and disengagement strategies may be due to individuals high in anxious ambivalence

attempting to regulate their distress by turning their minds and behaviour to other things and hence avoid experiencing strong emotions. Under certain circumstances, this may be effective in the short term to regulate their distress, but in the longer term it is more likely to be a hindrance. This may occur especially in situations that require immediate strategising, for example when a deadline is involved or a conflict arises that needs addressing. Constantly using these avoidant strategies is likely to further reduce these individuals' perceptions of their coping abilities, as the longer they avoid problems, the more difficult effective coping strategies will be to employ. Learning how to regulate their distress and therefore enabling an individual high in anxious ambivalence to deal with the problem at the appropriate time may be one of the most effective methods of increasing their coping abilities. Using effective coping strategies will increase the individual's perception of his or her coping abilities, which is likely to reduce distress in the future, and increase their self-esteem.

Perhaps the most interesting finding among the non-correlated results was that individuals with high scores in anxious ambivalence have scores that are insignificantly correlated at 95 percent with seeking emotional support, although they did yield a significant result for seeking instrumental support. While these two factors appear closely related and would be expected to yield similar results, this was not the case for individuals high in anxious ambivalence. Seeking emotional support may not comprise the same risks for individuals high in anxious ambivalence as seeking instrumental support. Anxious ambivalent individuals are more skilled in social and emotional expressiveness, are more socially sensitive and provide more support for others than secure or avoidant individuals do (Guerrero and Jones, 2003). Perhaps their lack of security in seeking instrumental support is due to proving their worth and not wanting to be a burden to others. As they provide

emotional support to others and are skilled in it, they may feel they have an equal relationship in the sense of give and take. Seeking instrumental support on the other hand is likely to leave individuals high in anxious ambivalence feeling that they owe something or that they are a burden on the other person. Anxious ambivalent individuals have been found to be comfortable with closeness and feel that others do not want to get as close as they would like (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). While individuals high in anxious ambivalence are no more likely to seek emotional support than individuals high in avoidance or attachment security, they are more likely to provide it and therefore are unlikely to perceive emotional support as a threat to the relationship. Alternatively, as anxious individuals are more likely to become overwhelmed by high amounts of affect (Mikulincer & Horesh, 1999), distressing situations may lessen the barriers surrounding seeking support from others. Individuals with high anxious ambivalent scores were hypothesised to have higher scores for focus on emotions. This was insignificant at 95 percent confidence but significant at 90 percent confidence, and the trend was in the hypothesised direction. This may have been significant at 95 percent confidence with a larger sample size.

4.1.3.2 Identity

Results for identity development were unexpected (Table 2, Column 3). High scores in anxious ambivalence correlated with high scores in identity diffusion but lower scores in identity foreclosure. As children, anxious ambivalent individuals had no secure base from which to explore (Ainsworth et al., 1978), which in adulthood may lead to a fear of rejection if they attempt exploration. Anxious ambivalent individuals are inflexible in changing their beliefs, prefer secure and stable knowledge (Mikulincer, 1997) and also tend to attempt to minimise interpersonal distance (Mikulincer & Horesh, 1999). It is likely that having different beliefs from others will enlarge the interpersonal distance and therefore be too

distressing for the individual high in anxious ambivalence, especially with their experiences of rejection. As exploration and holding beliefs about life choices that are different from others are too dangerous for these individuals, they do not acknowledge their need for an identity and do not make strong decisions about life choices. Simply having an identity may pose a risk of rejection if others do not like the choices the person has made.

Although anxious ambivalence was expected to positively correlate with identity foreclosure, the negative correlation may be due to these individuals having a higher likelihood of identity diffusion and therefore not acknowledging any decisions about life choices. It may be easier for them to take things as they come and to avoid the stress and therefore the negative affect, which would accompany the decisions. Nevertheless, the most likely explanation is that due to the history of rejection that anxious ambivalent individuals have, their life experience has taught them that others, especially authority figures, will be inconsistent toward them (Ainsworth et al., 1978) and therefore cannot be trusted. A lack of trust in authority figures indicates that they are unlikely to take on their views and beliefs and therefore will have low scores for identity foreclosure.

4.1.3.3 Social Support

Results for social support were as hypothesised for high scores in anxious ambivalence (Table 2, Column 3). Anxious ambivalence correlated with low social support satisfaction, supporting the belief of anxious ambivalent individuals that others cannot be trusted or relied on (Collins & Read, 1990). Anxious ambivalent individuals constantly seek intimacy and tend to feel that others never want to get as close as they would like (Hazan & Shaver, 1987), which is a probable cause for the negative correlation between anxious ambivalence and satisfaction with the social support they receive. Anxious ambivalent individuals have a

stronger need for validation and support than secure individuals and to over-perceive negative behaviours and attitudes in others (Larose et al., 2002). This is likely to prevent them from seeing the actual social support that is available to them, and to lead them to perceive others as not putting enough effort into meeting their needs. Alternatively, their support needs may be so high that it is almost impossible for those around them to provide enough support. Anxious ambivalent individuals are less likely to seek positive feedback from their partners (Brennan & Morris, 1997), and perceive their partners as less socially expressive (Guerrero & Jones, 2003). This will possibly lead individuals high in anxious ambivalence into a vicious cycle where they want the support but do not believe they will get it. Alternatively they may believe that they will not get enough and so do not seek it, resulting in actually receiving less and so continuing the cycle of inadequate social support.

Individuals with high scores in anxious ambivalence were hypothesised to have low scores in both support number and support satisfaction. While support satisfaction was significant, support number was insignificant. This is likely to be due to the belief of anxious individuals that others will not get as close as they would like (Hazan & Shaver, 1987) and also supports the findings of Guerrero and Jones (2003) that anxious ambivalent individuals are the most socially sensitive. Individuals with high anxious scores are likely to have a lot of people around them but feel dissatisfied with the support they receive, expecting others to be more sensitive to them and hence they feel dissatisfied with the level of closeness they are able to achieve with others.

As hypothesised, individuals with high scores in anxious ambivalence had the least effective coping strategies. They were less likely to use active coping, planning and positive reinterpretation and growth and more likely to use denial and behavioural, mental and

alcohol/drug disengagement strategies. They were less likely to seek instrumental support although results for emotional support were not significant. Identity development scores for individuals with high scores in anxious ambivalence were unexpected with high identity diffusion scores but low foreclosure scores. As expected, high scores in anxious ambivalence correlated with a low satisfaction of social support, although there were no significant results for the perceived number of social supports.

4.1.4 Hypothesis 4: High scores in identity achievement and moratorium will correlate with pro-active coping strategies and satisfaction with social support. High scores in identity foreclosure and diffusion will correlate with disengagement and denial coping strategies and dissatisfaction with social support.

This section will begin with a discussion of the findings for coping and identity status and include correlations between coping and social support, followed by those for perception of social support and identity status. Individuals with high diffusion scores (Table 3, Column 1) were more likely to use restraint coping. This may reflect procrastination, as individuals with high avoidance and anxious scores were more likely to be diffused and were more likely to use denial and disengagement. They were less likely to seek instrumental support, which again is likely to be related to attachment style. As expected, high scores in diffusion negatively correlated with taking a positive view of the problem, since these individuals cannot face an identity crisis so are unlikely to have the ability to face a problem and to see the positive side of it. Individuals with high foreclosure scores (Table 3, Column 2) were more likely to use active and planning strategies when faced with a problem and less likely to use denial or alcohol/drug disengagement, probably reflecting their sense of responsibility. These results are interesting as it means that individuals with high scores for identity foreclosure are more likely to have the most effective coping strategies. Individuals with high moratorium scores (Table 3, Column 3) were less likely to turn to religion. As

individuals in moratorium are in the process of making a decision about life choices including religion, they do not have a religion to turn to. High scores in identity achievement (Table 3, Column 4) negatively correlated with suppression of competing activities as a coping strategy and positively with turning to religion. Identity achieved individuals have made decisions about life choices including religion and have integrated those beliefs into their lives, meaning they are more likely to turn to religion. Suppression of competing activities may not be a strategy they need to use as they have already undergone exploration of their identity and are likely to have a greater sense of their ability to cope, resulting in the ability to focus on more than just the problem at hand.

The significant correlations between coping and perception of social support are likely to be due in part to the effect of attachment style. A perception of a high number of social supports was positively correlated with restraint coping and seeking social support for emotional reasons (Table 4, Column 1). Support satisfaction (Table 4, Column 2) was positively correlated with seeking social support for emotional reasons and turning to religion but negatively with denial and mental disengagement. This was expected as insecurely attached individuals who are more likely to be dissatisfied with the social support they receive, are more likely to use denial and disengagement strategies and in the case of individuals high in avoidance, are less likely to seek social support for emotional reasons.

There were no significant correlations between social support and identity (Table 5). There was however, a positive trend between identity foreclosure and support satisfaction ($r(107) = .15$, $p = \text{n.s.}$), which corroborates the results for individuals with high scores in anxious ambivalence having low scores in identity foreclosure. High social support satisfaction is likely to indicate high levels of trust, which results in a higher probability of trusting other

people's views, and therefore to take on an identity that others, for instance attachment figures, have given the person. This will require further research.

4.2 Practical Uses

A significant link between anxious attachment and a lack of effective coping skills emerged in people with high anxious ambivalent attachment scores. Individuals with high scores in avoidance showed no result for effective coping strategies (active or planning) but had significantly higher scores for denial and mental disengagement, two of the four most maladaptive coping methods. Instead of assuming that individuals with high scores for insecure attachment actually do not have the ability to cope well, a more effective approach could be to consider what is preventing them from coping effectively. Increasing attachment security is likely to improve the effectiveness of therapy leaving the client with more time to focus on coping abilities as Buelow et al. (2002) found securely attached people to require a shorter time in counselling than insecurely attached individuals. Although this will require further research, a starting point could be to begin changing beliefs. Individuals with high avoidance scores tend to have high mental disengagement and denial coping scores (Table 2, Column 2), a low sense of worth and value and tend to have strong defences against rejection (Mikulincer, 1995). High scores in avoidance also correlated with a lower likelihood of seeking social support for instrumental and emotional reasons and high scores for identity diffusion (Table 2 Column 2). Given these results and the previous research discussed above, it is reasonable to assume that avoidant individuals place their worth in the hands of other people. In the past they have received negative messages back, giving them their low sense of self worth and leading them to build up defences so they will not be rejected again. People with high avoidance scores may be helped by changing their negative beliefs about themselves and being taught to see their worth in who they are as a person as

opposed to what other people say about them or do to them. This is likely to reduce their reluctance to ask others for instrumental and emotional support and to enable them to face problems and possible criticism without having to avoid these situations for fear of affecting their already low sense of self-worth.

Individuals scoring high in anxious ambivalence also tended to have lower scores for instrumental support and to score highly on denial and disengagement (Table 2, Column 3). They had higher scores for all three types of disengagement, mental, behavioural and alcohol/drug disengagement, scoring higher than individuals with high avoidance scores (Table 2, Columns 2 and 3). This suggests that they use these strategies to a greater extent, and are possibly more fearful of facing negative situations. Individuals with high scores in anxious ambivalence hold negative beliefs about themselves, are highly sensitive to rejection or possible abandonment and easily become overwhelmed with distress (Collins & Read, 1990; Hazan & Shaver, 1987; Mikulincer, 1995). These individuals are also likely to perceive their worth from others, and like individuals with high scores in avoidance, have received a negative message back, giving them a low sense of self-worth. An effective approach to helping individuals with high scores in anxious ambivalence to improve their coping skills may be to focus on what is preventing them from implementing effective coping strategies. It is reasonable to assume that a significant barrier in their situation is the difficulty they experience in regulating distress (Mikulincer & Horesh, 1999). Firstly these individuals could be taught techniques for coping with the amount of negative affect they experience. This alone is likely to improve their coping skills, as they will then have the ability to face the problem or stressful situation instead of resorting to disengagement. Secondly their fear of abandonment needs to be considered. Like individuals with high avoidance scores, changing their negative beliefs about themselves and giving them truths to

focus on is likely to enable them to ask for instrumental help instead of having to prove their worth to others. For example insecurely attached individuals are likely to have the belief that since they were rejected as children they will always be rejected. Changing this belief is likely to result in changed behaviour in their relationships, enabling them to ask for support and not to be overwhelmed with distress in any circumstance in which they perceive a threat of abandonment, and will therefore learn how to cope in difficult situations. Reducing the distress they experience should reduce their likelihood of using disengaging strategies and to enable them to use effective coping strategies which directly face the problem.

4.3 Conclusions

4.3.1 Key Findings from this study

Individuals high in attachment security are more likely to be in identity moratorium, which is in the process of an identity search. There were no other significant correlations for attachment security. Individuals high in avoidance were more likely to use negative coping strategies such as denial and mental disengagement, and were less likely to cope by seeking emotional or instrumental support from others. They were more likely to be in identity diffusion, that is making no attempt to acknowledge their need for an identity or to begin the identity search process. High avoidance scores correlated negatively with satisfaction with social support and number of social supports available. Individuals with high anxious ambivalence scores were less likely to use pro-active coping strategies such as active coping, planning and taking a positive view of the problem. They were less likely to seek instrumental support although were no less likely to seek emotional support than individuals with high secure scores. High anxious ambivalent scores correlated with the most maladaptive coping strategies – denial, mental disengagement, behavioural disengagement and alcohol/drug disengagement. They were more likely to be in identity diffusion and less

likely to be in identity foreclosure (taking on an identity that an authority figure has given them). While the number of social supports these individuals felt they had was no different to that of individuals with high attachment security scores, their satisfaction with the support they received was low.

Overall, individuals with high attachment insecurity scores coped less effectively, were less likely to commit to an identity search or even realise the need for an identity and were less satisfied with the social support they received. Individuals with high anxious ambivalent scores tended to be slightly worse off than individuals with high avoidant scores as they had higher denial and disengagement scores and had significant negative correlations for proactive coping.

4.3.2 Future Research Recommendations

After conducting this research, the validity of the attachment questionnaire has to be questioned. It was apparent from the results that more participants were found to score highly on secure attachment than would otherwise be expected, given previous research that shows approximately 60 percent of individuals to be securely attached (Ainsworth et al., 1978; Hazan & Shaver, 1987; Collins & Read, 1990). Some possible reasons for this are proposed with suggestions for improvement. Individuals who have an anxious attachment style may appear secure most of the time. Attachment theory proposes that attachment style is only evident when the individual is under stress. Individuals may therefore answer the questions in such a way that most of the time is accurate for them, despite having even a strongly anxious attachment style under stressful conditions. Relationship status may also affect the results. A normally secure person in an unstable relationship, especially a dating relationship may show an anxious or avoidant attachment style solely because of their

circumstances. For instance, worrying that their partner does not really love them may be a reasonable thing to do, given circumstances leading to a relationship break up. The questions in Collins and Read's (1990) attachment questionnaire regarding abandonment by a partner are unlikely to give an accurate indication of the person's attachment style, especially if the person is married. Questions could be worded to include abandonment by death, as it is likely that anxious ambivalent individuals worry about this more than their partner leaving them if they are in a secure, long-term relationship.

Self-report may not be the most accurate method for this type of research, especially for insecurely attached people who have defences in place. Avoidant people in particular have a highly differentiated self-structure to defend against any further threat to their self-esteem (Mikulincer, 1995), meaning that they will see themselves in a more positive light than reality suggests. Anxious people have a more negative view of themselves than would otherwise be expected and so may also answer inaccurately. However, as this research is focused on the relationship between attachment and coping, the person's perception is likely to be more important than reality, as their perception of the world and other people will determine their experiences of reality. To focus on people at a categorical level, the attachment questionnaire needs to be reworded or people need to be placed in a stressful situation and observed as this measure did not give an accurate categorical measure of individuals' attachment style.

Participants complained about the wording of the identity development questionnaire, the EOMEIS-2, saying that many of the questions were asked in two parts, which meant that they were unsure how to answer if they agreed with one part but disagreed with the other. For example, "I haven't really thought about what style of relationship I want. I'm not too

concerned whether I have a relationship or not". The participant may strongly agree that they haven't thought about the style of relationship they want but may feel strongly that they do want a relationship or may even currently be in one. Improving the clarity of the questions could avoid or reduce inaccurate answers due to participant confusion.

In future research on coping and attachment, the focus needs to be on more effective methods of measuring the relationship between the factors and in which direction the causation factors lie. This research has measured people's attachment scores, their perceptions of how they cope, their identity status, and their perceptions of how much social support they receive without being able to find a true categorical measure of what they actually are. As reality is in the eye of the beholder perhaps this is the most effective method. In observational methods someone else's view of reality will still be involved to determine where a person should be categorised. To place people on a continuum of attachment and coping is likely to be more effective than focussing on categorising, as categorical measures are likely to describe the more extreme cases rather than accounting for those participants who fall at the lower end of insecure attachment types. However, to determine where participants fit on the attachment style continuum, questions could be more effectively worded to ensure that participants are measured either when under stress or by imagining a stressful situation if the measure is a self-report scale. According to Bowlby (1979), attachment behaviour diminishes with age and often will only be apparent when the person is sick or under stressful or fearful situations. Participants in this study were not asked to consider what they feel in certain situations (ie "How distressed would you be if your partner told you he/she wanted a break?") which may have given a more accurate conclusion.

5 References

- Adams, G. R., Bennion, L., & Huh, K. (1989). *Objective measure of ego identity status. A reference manual.*
- Ainsworth, M.D.S. (1989). Attachments beyond infancy. *American Psychologist*, 44(4), 709-716.
- Ainsworth, M.D.S., & Bell, S.M. (1970). Attachment, exploration and separation: illustrated by the behavior of one-year-olds in a strange situation. *Child Development*, 41(1), 49-67.
- Ainsworth, M.D.S., Blehar, M.C., Waters, E., & Wall, S. (1978). *Patterns of attachment: A psychological study of the strange situation.* Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Bartholomew, K., & Griffin, D. (1994). Models of the self and other: fundamental dimensions underlying measures of adult attachment. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 67(3), 430-445.
- Bartholomew, K., & Horowitz, L.M. (1991). Attachment styles among young adults: a test of a four-category model. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 61(2), 226-244.
- Beaumont, S.L., & Zukanovic, R. (2005). Identity development in men and its relation to psychosocial distress and self-worth. *Canadian Journal of Behavioural Science*, 37(1), 70-81.
- Bennion, L. D., & Adams, G. R. (1986). A revision of the extended version of the objective measure for ego identity status: An identity instrument for use with late adolescents. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 1, 183-197.

- Berant, E., Mikulincer, M., & Florian, V. (2003). Marital satisfaction among mothers of infants with congenital heart disease: the contribution of illness severity, attachment style, and the coping process. *Anxiety, Stress, and Coping*, 16(4), 397-415.
- Bishop, D.I., Macy-Lewis, J.A., Schneklath, C.A., Puswella, S., & Garrett, L. (1997). Ego identity status and reported alcohol consumption: a study of first-year college students. *Journal of Adolescence*, 20(2), 209-218.
- Blustein, D.L., & Phillips, S.D. (1990). Relation between ego identity statuses and decision-making styles. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 37(2), 160-168.
- Bowlby, J. (1969). *Attachment and loss: Attachment*. New York: Basic Books.
- Bowlby, J. (1973). *Attachment and loss: Separation, anxiety and anger*. New York: Basic Books.
- Bowlby, J. (1979). *The making and breaking of affectional bonds*. London: Tavistock Publications Limited.
- Bowlby, J. (1980). *Attachment and loss: Sadness and depression*. New York: Basic Books.
- Brennan, K. A., & Morris, K.A. (1997). Attachment styles, self-esteem, and patterns of seeking feedback from romantic partners. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 23(1), 23-31.
- Buelow, S. A., Lyddon, W.J., & Johnson, J.T. (2002). Client attachment and coping resources. *Counselling Psychology Quarterly*, 15(2), 145-152.
- Caldwell, R.A., Bogat, G.A., & Cruise, K. (1989). The relationship of ego identity to social network structure and function in young men and women. *Journal of Adolescence*, 12(3), 309-313.

- Carver, C. S., Scheier, M.F., & Weintraub, J.K. (1989). Assessing coping strategies: a theoretically based approach. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 56(2), 267-283.
- Collins, N. L., & Read, S.J. (1990). Adult attachment, working models, and relationship quality in dating couples. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 58(4), 644-663.
- Cozzarelli, C., Karafa, J.A., Collins, N.L., & Tagler, M.J. (2003). Stability and change in adult attachment styles: associations with personal vulnerabilities, life events, and global construals of self and others. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, 22(3), 315-416.
- Florian, V., Mikulincer, M., & Bucholtz, I. (1995). Effects of adult attachment style on the perception and search for social support. *The Journal of Psychology*, 129(6), 665-676.
- Guerrero, L. K., & Jones, S.M. (2003). Differences in one's own and one's partner's perceptions of social skills as a function of attachment style. *Communication Quarterly*, 51(3), 277-282.
- Hazan, C., & Shaver, P. (1987). Romantic love conceptualized as an attachment process. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 52(3), 511-524.
- Howard, M. S., & Medway, F.J. (2004). Adolescents' attachment and coping with stress. *Psychology in the Schools*, 41(3), 391-402.
- Kennedy, J.H. (1999). Romantic attachment style and ego identity, attributional style, and family of origin in first-year college students. *College Student Journal*, 33(2), 171-180.
- Lapsley, D. K., Rice, K.G., & Fitzgerald, D.P. (1990). Adolescent attachment, identity, and adjustment to college: implications for the continuity of adaptation hypothesis. *Journal of Counselling and Development*, 68.

- Larose, S., Guay, F., & Boivin, M. (2002). Attachment, social support, and loneliness in young adulthood: a test of two models. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 28(5), 684-693.
- Lopez, F. G., & Gormley, B. (2002). Stability and change in adult attachment style over the first-year college transition: relations to self-confidence, coping, and distress patterns. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 49(3), 355-364.
- Lopez, F.G., Mauricio, A.M., Gormley, B., Simko, T., & Berger, E. (2001) Adult attachment orientations and college student distress: the mediating role of problem coping styles. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, 79(4), 459-464.
- Marcia, J. E. (1980). Identity in adolescence. In J. Adelson (Ed.), *Handbook of Adolescent Psychology* (pp. 159-187). USA: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Meeus, W., Oosterwegel, A., & Vollerbergh, W. (2002). Parental and peer attachment and identity development in adolescence. *Journal of Adolescence*, 25, 93-106.
- Mikulincer, M. (1995). Attachment style and the mental representation of the self. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 69(6), 1203-1215.
- Mikulincer, M. (1997). Adult attachment style and information processing: individual differences in curiosity and cognitive closure. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 72 (5), 1217-1230.
- Mikulincer, M., & Horesh, N. (1999). Adult attachment style and the perception of others: the role of projective mechanisms. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 76(6), 1022-1034.
- Mikulincer, M., & Nachshon, O. (1991). Attachment styles and patterns of self-disclosure. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 61(2), 321-331.

- Niedenthal, P. M., Brauer, M., Robin, L., & Innes-Ker, A.H. (2002). Adult attachment and the perception of facial expression of emotion. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 82(3), 419-433.
- Robitschek, C., & Cook, S.W. (1999). The influence of personal growth initiative and coping styles on career exploration and vocational identity. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 54, 127-141.
- Samuolis, J., Layburn, K., & Schiaffino, K.M. (2001). Identity development and attachment to parents in college students. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 30(3), 373.
- Sarason, B.R., Shearin, E.N., Pierce, G.R., & Sarason, I.G. (1987). Interrelations of social support measures: theoretical and practical implications. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 52(4), 813-832.
- Sarason, I.G., Levine, H.M., Basham, R.B., & Sarason, B.R. (1983). Assessing social support: the social support questionnaire. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 44, 127-129.
- Sarason, I.G., Sarason, B.R., Shearin, E.N., & Pierce, G.R. (1987). A brief measure of social support: practical and theoretical implications. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 4, 498-510.
- Schmidt, S., Nachtigall, C., Wuethrich-Martone, O., & Strauss, B. (2002). Attachment and coping with chronic disease. *Journal of Psychosomatic Research*, 53(3), 763-777.
- Simpson, J. A., Rholes, W.S., Orina, M.M., & Grich, J. (2002). Working models of attachment, support giving, and support seeking in a stressful situation. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 28(5), 598-608.
- Vetere, A., & Myers, L.B. (2002). Repressive coping style and adult attachment style: is there a relationship? *Personality and Individual Differences*, 32(5), 799-807.

- Wautier, G., & Blume, L.B. (2004). The effects of ego identity, gender role, and attachment on depression and anxiety in young adults. *Identity, 4*(1), 59-76.
- Wei, M., Heppner, P., & Mallinckrodt, B. (2003). Perceiving coping as a mediator between attachment and psychological distress: a structural equation modeling approach. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 50*(4), 438-447.
- Welton, G.L., & Houser, M.D. (1997). Ego identity and drug experimentation: the fable of the arrested abstainer. *Counseling and Values, 41*(3), 219-234.
- Williamson, G.M., Walters, A.S., & Shaffer, D.R. (2002). Caregiver models of self and others, coping, and depression: predictors of depression in children with chronic pain. *Health Psychology, 21*(4), 405-410.
- Zaff, J.F., Blount, R.L., Phillips, L., & Cohen, L. (2002). The role of ethnic identity and self-construal in coping among African American and Caucasian American seventh graders: An exploratory analysis of within-group variance. *Adolescence, 37*(148), 751-773.
- Zimmermann, P., & Becker-Stoll, F. (2002). Stability of attachment representation during adolescence: the influence of ego-identity status. *Journal of Adolescence, 25*(1), 107-124.

6 Appendices

6.1 Appendix 1

Adult Attachment Scale (Collins & Read, 1990)

Please read over each statement and circle the number that corresponds to the level of your agreement or disagreement with the statement. For each question please use the following scale:

| | 1 Strongly Disagree | 2 Disagree | 3 Neutral | 4 Agree | 5 Strongly Agree |
|--|---------------------------|---------------|--------------|------------|------------------------|
| I find it difficult to allow myself to depend on others. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| People are never there when you need them. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| I am comfortable depending on others. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| I know that others will be there when I need them. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| I find it difficult to trust others completely. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| I am not sure that I can always depend on others to be there when I need them | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| I do not often worry about being abandoned by others. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| I often worry that my partner does not really love me. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| I find others are reluctant to get as close as I would like. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| I often worry that my partner will not want to stay with me. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| I often want to merge completely with another person. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| My desire to merge sometimes scares people away. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| I find it relatively easy to get close to others. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| I do not often worry about someone getting too close to me. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| I am somewhat uncomfortable being close to others. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| I am nervous when anyone gets too close. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| I am comfortable having others depend on me. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Often, my partner wants me to be more intimate than I feel comfortable being. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

6.2 Appendix 2

The COPE scale (Carver et al., 1989)

Please indicate what you generally do and feel when you experience stressful events. Obviously, different events bring out somewhat different responses, but think about what you usually do when you are under a lot of stress.

| | | | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|------------------------------|
| I take additional action to try to get rid of the problem. | 1 I usually don't do this at all | 2 I usually do this a little bit | 3 I usually do this a medium amount | 4 I usually do this a lot |
| I try to come up with a strategy about what to do. | 1 I usually don't do this at all | 2 I usually do this a little bit | 3 I usually do this a medium amount | 4 I usually do this a lot |
| I put aside other activities in order to concentrate on this. | 1 I usually don't do this at all | 2 I usually do this a little bit | 3 I usually do this a medium amount | 4 I usually do this a lot |
| I force myself to wait for the right time to do something. | 1 I usually don't do this at all | 2 I usually do this a little bit | 3 I usually do this a medium amount | 4 I usually do this a lot |
| I ask people who have had similar experiences what they did. | 1 I usually don't do this at all | 2 I usually do this a little bit | 3 I usually do this a medium amount | 4 I usually do this a lot |
| I talk to someone about how I feel. | 1 I usually don't do this at all | 2 I usually do this a little bit | 3 I usually do this a medium amount | 4 I usually do this a lot |
| I look for something good in what is happening. | 1 I usually don't do this at all | 2 I usually do this a little bit | 3 I usually do this a medium amount | 4 I usually do this a lot |
| I learn to live with it. | 1 I usually don't do this at all | 2 I usually do this a little bit | 3 I usually do this a medium amount | 4 I usually do this a lot |
| I seek God's help. | 1 I usually don't do this at all | 2 I usually do this a little bit | 3 I usually do this a medium amount | 4 I usually do this a lot |
| I get upset and let my emotions out. | 1 I usually don't do this at all | 2 I usually do this a little bit | 3 I usually do this a medium amount | 4 I usually do this a lot |
| I refuse to believe that it has happened. | 1 I usually don't do this at all | 2 I usually do this a little bit | 3 I usually do this a medium amount | 4 I usually do this a lot |
| I give up the attempt to get what I want. | 1 I usually don't do this at all | 2 I usually do this a little bit | 3 I usually do this a medium amount | 4 I usually do this a lot |
| I turn to other work or substitute activities to take my mind off things. | 1 I usually don't do this at all | 2 I usually do this a little bit | 3 I usually do this a medium amount | 4 I usually do this a lot |
| I concentrate my efforts on doing something about it. | 1 I usually don't do this at all | 2 I usually do this a little bit | 3 I usually do this a medium amount | 4 I usually do this a lot |
| I make a plan of action. | 1 I usually don't do this at all | 2 I usually do this a little bit | 3 I usually do this a medium amount | 4 I usually do this a lot |
| I focus on dealing with this problem, and if necessary let other things slide a little. | 1 I usually don't do this at all | 2 I usually do this a little bit | 3 I usually do this a medium amount | 4 I usually do this a lot |
| I hold off doing anything about it until the situation permits. | 1 I usually don't | 2 I usually do | 3 I usually do this | 4 I usually do |

| | do this at all | this a little bit | a medium amount | this a lot |
|--|--|--|--|---------------------------------|
| I try to get advice from someone about what to do. | 1 I usually don't do this at all | 2 I usually do this a little bit | 3 I usually do this a medium amount | 4 I usually do this a lot |
| I drink alcohol or take drugs, in order to think about it less. | 1 I usually don't do this at all | 2 I usually do this a little bit | 3 I usually do this a medium amount | 4 I usually do this a lot |
| I try to get emotional support from friends or relatives. | 1 I usually don't do this at all | 2 I usually do this a little bit | 34 I usually do this a medium amount | I usually do this a lot |
| I try to see it in a different light, to make it seem more positive. | 1 I usually don't do this at all | 2 I usually do this a little bit | 3 I usually do this a medium amount | 4 I usually do this a lot |
| I accept that this has happened and that it can't be changed. | 1 I usually don't do this at all | 2 I usually do this a little bit | 3 I usually do this a medium amount | 4 I usually do this a lot |
| I put my trust in God. | 1 I usually don't do this at all | 2 I usually do this a little bit | 3 I usually do this a medium amount | 4 I usually do this a lot |
| I let my feelings out. | 1 I usually don't do this at all | 2 I usually do this a little bit | 3 I usually do this a medium amount | 4 I usually do this a lot |
| I pretend that it hasn't really happened. | 1 I usually don't do this at all | 2 I usually do this a little bit | 3 I usually do this a medium amount | 4 I usually do this a lot |
| I just give up trying to reach my goal. | 1 I usually don't do this at all | 2 I usually do this a little bit | 3 I usually do this a medium amount | 4 I usually do this a lot |
| I go to the movies or watch TV, to think about it less. | 1 I usually don't do this at all | 2 I usually do this a little bit | 3 I usually do this a medium amount | 4 I usually do this a lot |
| I do what has to be done, one step at a time. | 1 I usually don't do this at all | 2 I usually do this a little bit | 3 I usually do this a medium amount | 4 I usually do this a lot |
| I think hard about what steps to take. | 1 I usually don't do this at all | 2 I usually do this a little bit | 3 I usually do this a medium amount | 4 I usually do this a lot |
| I keep myself from getting distracted by other thoughts | 1 I usually don't do this at all | 2 I usually do this a little bit | 3 I usually do this a medium amount | 4 I usually do this a lot |
| I make sure not to make matters worse by acting too soon. | 1 I usually don't do this at all | 2 I usually do this a little bit | 3 I usually do this a medium amount | 4 I usually do this a lot |
| I talk to someone to find out more about the situation. | 1 I usually don't do this at all | 2 I usually do this a little bit | 3 I usually do this a medium amount | 4 I usually do this a lot |
| I discuss my feelings with someone. | 1 I usually don't do this at all | 2 I usually do this a little bit | 3 I usually do this a medium amount | 4 I usually do this a lot |
| I learn something from the experience. | 1 I usually don't do this at all | 2 I usually do this a little bit | 3 I usually do this a medium amount | 4 I usually do this a lot |
| I get used to the idea that it happened. | 1 I usually don't do this at all | 2 I usually do this a little bit | 3 I usually do this a medium amount | 4 I usually do this a lot |

| | | | | |
|---|--|--|---|---------------------------------|
| I try to find comfort in my religion. | 1 I usually don't do this at all | 2 I usually do this a little bit | 3 I usually do this a medium amount | 4 I usually do this a lot |
| I feel a lot of emotional distress and I find myself venting | 1 I usually don't do this at all | 2 I usually do this a little bit | 3 I usually do this a medium amount | 4 I usually do this a lot |
| I act as though it hasn't even happened. | 1 I usually don't do this at all | 2 I usually do this a little bit | 3 I usually do this a medium amount | 4 I usually do this a lot |
| I admit to myself that I can't deal with it, and quit trying. | 1 I usually don't do this at all | 2 I usually do this a little bit | 3 I usually do this a medium amount | 4 I usually do this a lot |
| I daydream about things other than this. | 1 I usually don't do this at all | 2 I usually do this a little bit | 3 I usually do this a medium amount | 4 I usually do this a lot |
| I take direct action to get around the problem. | 1 I usually don't do this at all | 2 I usually do this a little bit | 3 I usually do this a medium amount | 4 I usually do this a lot |
| I think about how I might best handle the problem. | 1 I usually don't do this at all | 2 I usually do this a little bit | 3 I usually do this a medium amount | 4 I usually do this a lot |
| I try hard to prevent other things from interfering with | 1 I usually don't do this at all | 2 I usually do this a little bit | 3 I usually do this a medium amount | 4 I usually do this a lot |
| I restrain myself from doing anything too quickly. | 1 I usually don't do this at all | 2 I usually do this a little bit | 3 I usually do this a medium amount | 4 I usually do this a lot |
| I talk to someone who could do something concrete | 1 I usually don't do this at all | 2 I usually do this a little bit | 3 I usually do this a medium amount | 4 I usually do this a lot |
| I get sympathy and understanding from someone. | 1 I usually don't do this at all | 2 I usually do this a little bit | 3 I usually do this a medium amount | 4 I usually do this a lot |
| I try to grow as a person as a result of the experience. | 1 I usually don't do this at all | 2 I usually do this a little bit | 3 I usually do this a medium amount | 4 I usually do this a lot |
| I accept the reality of the fact that it happened. | 1 I usually don't do this at all | 2 I usually do this a little bit | 3 I usually do this a medium amount | 4 I usually do this a lot |
| I pray more than usual. | 1 I usually don't do this at all | 2 I usually do this a little bit | 3 I usually do this a medium amount | 4 I usually do this a lot |
| I get upset, and am really aware of it. | 1 I usually don't do this at all | 2 I usually do this a little bit | 3 I usually do this a medium amount | 4 I usually do this a lot |
| I say to myself "this isn't real". | 1 I usually don't do this at all | 2 I usually do this a little bit | 3 I usually do this a medium amount | 4 I usually do this a lot |
| I reduce the amount of effort I'm putting into solving | 1 I usually don't do this at all | 2 I usually do this a little bit | 3 I usually do this a medium amount | 4 I usually do this a lot |
| I sleep more than usual. | 1 I usually don't do this at all | 2 I usually do this a little bit | 3 I usually do this a medium amount | 4 I usually do this a lot |

6.3 Appendix 3

EOMEIS-2, Identity Development Questionnaire (Adams et al., 1989)

Listed below are a number of statements that may, or may not describe your personality. Please read each item and indicate to what degree it reflects your own thoughts and feelings by circling the number that corresponds with how much you agree or disagree with the statement. If a statement has more than one part, please indicate your reaction to the statement as a whole.

I haven't chosen the occupation I really want to get into, and I'm just working at what is available until something better comes along.

| | | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|-------|----------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Strongly Agree | Moderately Agree | Agree | Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

When it comes to religion I just haven't found anything that appeals and I don't really feel the need to look.

| | | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|-------|----------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Strongly Agree | Moderately Agree | Agree | Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

My ideas about men's and women's roles are identical to my parents' ideas. What has worked for them will obviously work for me.

| | | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|-------|----------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Strongly Agree | Moderately Agree | Agree | Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

There's no single 'life style' that appeals to me more than another.

| | | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|-------|----------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Strongly Agree | Moderately Agree | Agree | Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

There are a lot of different kinds of people. I'm still exploring the many possibilities to find the right kind of friends for me.

| | | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|-------|----------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Strongly Agree | Moderately Agree | Agree | Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

I sometimes join in recreational activities when asked, but I rarely try anything on my own.

| | | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|-------|----------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Strongly Agree | Moderately Agree | Agree | Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

I haven't really thought about what 'style of relationship I want. I'm not too concerned whether I have a relationship or not.

| | | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|-------|----------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Strongly Agree | Moderately Agree | Agree | Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

Politics is something that I can never be too sure about because things change so fast. But I do think it's important to know what I can politically stand for and believe in.

| | | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|-------|----------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Strongly Agree | Moderately Agree | Agree | Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

I'm still trying to decide how capable I am as a person and what career will be right for me.

| | | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|-------|----------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Strongly Agree | Moderately Agree | Agree | Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

I don't give religion much thought and it doesn't bother me one way or the other.

| | | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|-------|----------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Strongly Agree | Moderately Agree | Agree | Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

There's so many ways to divide responsibility in marriage, I'm trying to decide what will work for me.

| | | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|-------|----------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Strongly Agree | Moderately Agree | Agree | Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

I'm looking for an acceptable perspective for my own 'life style' view, but I haven't really found it yet.

| | | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|-------|----------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Strongly Agree | Moderately Agree | Agree | Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

There are many reasons for friendship, but I choose my close friends on the basis of certain values and similarities that I've personally decided on.

| | | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|-------|----------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Strongly Agree | Moderately Agree | Agree | Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

While I don't have one recreational activity I'm really committed to, I'm experiencing numerous leisure outlets to identify one I can truly enjoy.

| | | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|-------|----------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Strongly Agree | Moderately Agree | Agree | Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

Based on past experiences, I've chosen the type of relationship that I want now.

| | | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|-------|----------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Strongly Agree | Moderately Agree | Agree | Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

I haven't really thought about politics. It just doesn't excite me much.

| | | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|-------|----------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Strongly Agree | Moderately Agree | Agree | Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

I might have thought about a lot of different careers, but there's never really been any question since my parents said what they wanted me to do.

| | | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|-------|----------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Strongly Agree | Moderately Agree | Agree | Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

A person's faith is unique to each individual. I've considered and reconsidered it myself and know what I believe.

| | | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|-------|----------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Strongly Agree | Moderately Agree | Agree | Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

I've never really considered men's and women's roles in marriage. It just doesn't seem to concern me.

| | | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|-------|----------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Strongly Agree | Moderately Agree | Agree | Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

After considerable thought I've developed my own individual viewpoint of what is for me an 'ideal lifestyle' and don't believe anyone will be likely to change my perspective.

| | | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|-------|----------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Strongly Agree | Moderately Agree | Agree | Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

My parents know what's best for me in terms of how to choose my friends.

| | | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|-------|----------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Strongly Agree | Moderately Agree | Agree | Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

I've chosen one or more recreational activities to engage in regularly from lots of things and I'm satisfied with those choices.

| | | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|-------|----------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Strongly Agree | Moderately Agree | Agree | Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

I don't think about relationships much. I just kind of take them as they come.

| | | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|-------|----------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Strongly Agree | Moderately Agree | Agree | Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

I guess I'm pretty much like my parents when it comes to politics. I follow what they do in terms of voting and such.

| | | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|-------|----------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Strongly Agree | Moderately Agree | Agree | Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

I'm not really interested in finding the right career, any career will do. I just seem to flow with what is available.

| | | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|-------|----------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Strongly Agree | Moderately Agree | Agree | Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

I'm not sure what religion means to me. I'd like to make up my own mind but I'm not done looking yet.

| | | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|-------|----------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Strongly Agree | Moderately Agree | Agree | Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

My ideas about men's and women's roles have come right from my parents and family. I haven't seen the need to look any further.

| | | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|-------|----------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Strongly Agree | Moderately Agree | Agree | Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

My own views on a desirable 'life style' were taught to me by my parents and I don't see any need to question what they taught me.

| | | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|-------|----------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Strongly Agree | Moderately Agree | Agree | Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

I don't have any really close friends, and I don't think I'm looking for one now.

| | | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|-------|----------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Strongly Agree | Moderately Agree | Agree | Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

Sometimes I join in leisure activities, but I really don't see a need to look for a particular activity to do regularly.

| | | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|-------|----------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Strongly Agree | Moderately Agree | Agree | Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

I'm trying out different types of relationships. I just haven't decided what is best for me.

| | | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|-------|----------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Strongly Agree | Moderately Agree | Agree | Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

There are so many different political parties and ideals. I can't decide which to follow until I figure it all out.

| | | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|-------|----------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Strongly Agree | Moderately Agree | Agree | Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

It took me a while to figure it out, but now I really know what I want for a career.

| | | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|-------|----------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Strongly Agree | Moderately Agree | Agree | Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

Religion is confusing to me right now. I keep changing my views on what is right or wrong for me.

| | | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|-------|----------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Strongly Agree | Moderately Agree | Agree | Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

I've spent some time thinking about men's and women's roles in marriage and I've decided what will work best for me.

| | | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|----------------|-------------------|------------|----------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Strongly Agree | Moderately Agree | Agree Disagree | Disagree Disagree | Moderately | Strongly |

In finding an acceptable viewpoint to life itself, I find myself engaging in a lot of discussions with others and some self-exploration.

| | | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|-------|----------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Strongly Agree | Moderately Agree | Agree | Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

I only pick friends of whom my parents would approve.

| | | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|-------|----------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Strongly Agree | Moderately Agree | Agree | Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

I've always liked doing the same recreational activities my parents do and haven't ever seriously considered doing anything else.

| | | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|----------------|-------------------|------------|----------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Strongly Agree | Moderately Agree | Agree Disagree | Disagree Disagree | Moderately | Strongly |

I only go out with the type of people my parents expect me to have a relationship with.

| | | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|----------------|-------------------|------------|----------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 6 |
| Strongly Agree | Moderately Agree | Agree Disagree | Disagree Disagree | Moderately | Strongly |

I've thought my political beliefs through and realize I can agree with some and not other aspects of what my parents believe.

| | | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|-------|----------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Strongly Agree | Moderately Agree | Agree | Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

My parents decided a long time ago what I should go into for a career and I'm following through on their plans.

| | | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|-------|----------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Strongly Agree | Moderately Agree | Agree | Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

I've gone through a series of serious questions about faith and can say I understand what I believe in as an individual.

| | | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|-------|----------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Strongly Agree | Moderately Agree | Agree | Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

I've been thinking about the roles husbands and wives play a lot these days, and I'm trying to make a final decision about what is right.

| | | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|-------|----------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Strongly Agree | Moderately Agree | Agree | Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

My parents' views on life are good enough for me. I don't need anything else.

| | | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|-------|----------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Strongly Agree | Moderately Agree | Agree | Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

I've had many different friendships and now I have a clear idea of what I look for in a friend.

| | | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|-------|----------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Strongly Agree | Moderately Agree | Agree | Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

After trying out a lot of different recreational activities I've found one or more I really enjoy doing by myself or with friends.

| | | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|-------|----------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Strongly Agree | Moderately Agree | Agree | Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

My preferences about relationships are still in the process of developing. I haven't fully decided what type of relationship I want.

| | | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|-------|----------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Strongly Agree | Moderately Agree | Agree | Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

I'm not sure about my political beliefs, but I'm trying to figure out what I can truly believe in.

| | | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|-------|----------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Strongly Agree | Moderately Agree | Agree | Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

It took me a long time to decide but now I know for sure what direction to move in for a career.

| | | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|-------|----------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Strongly Agree | Moderately Agree | Agree | Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

I attend the same church as my family has always attended. I've never really questioned why.

| | | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|-------|----------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Strongly Agree | Moderately Agree | Agree | Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

There are many ways married couples can divide up family responsibilities. I've thought about lots of ways and now I know exactly how I want it to happen to me.

| | | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|-------|----------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Strongly Agree | Moderately Agree | Agree | Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

I guess I just enjoy life in general, and I don't see myself living by any particular viewpoint in life.

| | | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|-------|----------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Strongly Agree | Moderately Agree | Agree | Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

I don't have any close friends. I just like to hang around with the crowd.

| | | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|-------|----------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Strongly Agree | Moderately Agree | Agree | Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

I've been experiencing a variety of recreational activities in hopes of finding one or more I can really enjoy for some time to come.

| | | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|-------|----------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Strongly Agree | Moderately Agree | Agree | Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

I've had relationships with different types of people and know exactly what my own preferences are for a relationship and for the type of person with whom I wish to have a relationship.

| | | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|-------|----------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Strongly Agree | Moderately Agree | Agree | Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

I really have never been involved in politics enough to have made a firm stand one way or the other.

| | | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|-------|----------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Strongly Agree | Moderately Agree | Agree | Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

I just can't decide what to do for a career. There are so many that have possibilities.

| | | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|-------|----------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Strongly Agree | Moderately Agree | Agree | Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

I've never really questioned my religion. If it's right for my parents it must be right for me.

| | | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|-------|----------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Strongly Agree | Moderately Agree | Agree | Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

Opinions on men's and women's roles seem so varied that I don't think much about it.

| | | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|-------|----------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Strongly Agree | Moderately Agree | Agree | Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

After a lot of self-examination I have established a very definite view on what my own 'life style' will be.

| | | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|-------|----------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Strongly Agree | Moderately Agree | Agree | Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

I really don't know what kind of friend is best for me. I'm trying to figure out exactly what friendship means to me.

| | | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|-------|----------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Strongly Agree | Moderately Agree | Agree | Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

All of my recreational preferences I got from my parents and haven't really tried anything else.

| | | | | | |
|------------------|------------------|-------|----------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Strongly - Agree | Moderately Agree | Agree | Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

I have relationships only with people of whom my parents would approve.

| | | | | | |
|-------------------|---------------------|-------|----------|------------------------|----------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Strongly Agree | Moderately Agree | Agree | Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

My parents have always had their own political and moral beliefs about issues like abortion and mercy killing and I've always gone along accepting what they had.

| | | | | | |
|-------------------|---------------------|-------|----------|------------------------|----------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Strongly Agree | Moderately Agree | Agree | Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

6.4 Appendix 4

Social Support Questionnaire – Short Form (Sarason et al., 1987)

The following questions ask about people in your environment who provide you with help or support. Each question has two parts. For the first part list all the people you know, excluding yourself, whom you can count on for help or support in the manner described. Give the person's relationship to you (see example). Do not list more than one person next to each of the numbers beneath the question.

For the second part, circle how satisfied you are with the overall support you have.

If you have had no support for a question, check the words "No one," but still rate your level of satisfaction. Do not list more than nine persons per question.

Please answer all the questions as best you can.

Example:

Who do you know whom you can trust with information that could get you in trouble?

| | | | |
|--------|------------|-------------|----|
| No one | 1) Brother | 4) Father | 7) |
| | 2) Friend | 5) Employer | 8) |
| | 3) Friend | 6) | 9) |

| | | | | | | |
|---|-----------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| How satisfied are you with this support? | 6 – very Satisfied | 5 – fairly satisfied | 4 - a little satisfied | 3 - a little dissatisfied | 2 – fairly dissatisfied | 1 - very dissatisfied |
|---|-----------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|

Who can you really count on to be dependable when you need help?

| | | | |
|--------|----|----|----|
| No one | 1) | 4) | 7) |
| | 2) | 5) | 8) |
| | 3) | 6) | 9) |

| | | | | | | |
|---|-----------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| How satisfied are you with this support? | 6 – very satisfied | 5 - fairly satisfied | 4 - a little satisfied | 3 - a little dissatisfied | 2 - fairly dissatisfied | 1 - very dissatisfied |
|---|-----------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|

Who can you really count on to help you feel more relaxed when you are under pressure or tense?

| | | | |
|--------|----|----|----|
| No one | 1) | 4) | 7) |
| | 2) | 5) | 8) |
| | 3) | 6) | 9) |

| | | | | | | |
|---|-----------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| How satisfied are you with this support? | 6 - very satisfied | 5 - fairly satisfied | 4 - a little satisfied | 3 - a little dissatisfied | 2 - fairly dissatisfied | 1 - very dissatisfied |
|---|-----------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|

Who accepts you totally, including both your worst and your best points?

| | | | |
|--------|----|----|----|
| No one | 1) | 4) | 7) |
| | 2) | 5) | 8) |
| | 3) | 6) | 9) |

**How satisfied are
you with this
support?**

| | | | | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| 6 - very satisfied | 5 - fairly satisfied | 4 - a little satisfied | 3 - a little dissatisfied | 2 - fairly dissatisfied | 1 - very dissatisfied |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|

Who can you really count on to care about you, regardless of what is happening to you?

| | | | |
|--------|----|----|----|
| No one | 1) | 4) | 7) |
| | 2) | 5) | 8) |
| | 3) | 6) | 9) |

**How satisfied are
you with this
support?**

| | | | | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| 6 - very satisfied | 5 - fairly satisfied | 4 - a little satisfied | 3 - a little dissatisfied | 2 - fairly dissatisfied | 1 - very dissatisfied |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|

Who can you really count on to help you feel better when you are feeling generally down-in-the-dumps?

| | | | |
|--------|----|----|----|
| No one | 1) | 4) | 7) |
| | 2) | 5) | 8) |
| | 3) | 6) | 9) |

**How satisfied are
you with this
support?**

| | | | | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| 6 - very satisfied | 5 - fairly satisfied | 4 - a little satisfied | 3 - a little dissatisfied | 2 - fairly dissatisfied | 1 - very dissatisfied |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|

Who can you count on to console you when you are very upset?

| | | | |
|--------|----|----|----|
| No one | 1) | 4) | 7) |
| | 2) | 5) | 8) |
| | 3) | 6) | 9) |

**How satisfied are
you with this
support?**

| | | | | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| 6 - very satisfied | 5 - fairly satisfied | 4 - a little satisfied | 3 - a little dissatisfied | 2 - fairly dissatisfied | 1 - very dissatisfied |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|