

Hypotheses

Reports of Childhood Fears

Relationship between Childhood Fears and View of Parents

1. Participants who report their parents (mother, father) as having been neglectful (low care, low protection) or as having had affectionless control (low care, high protection) as measured by the Parental Bonding Inventory will report more *overall childhood* fears as measured by the Fear Survey Schedule for Children than those who viewed their parents as having been optimal (high care, low protection) and/or having had affectionate constraint (high care, high protection). Care refers to specific items on the inventory, such as “(my parent) seemed to understand my problems and worries.” Protection refers to questions such as “(my parent) tried to control everything I did.”

Rationale: This hypothesis follows from the idea that when parents are experienced as neglectful and/or controlling, the ensuing feeling of lack of safety for the individual will generalize to the rest of the world which will feel unsafe. More fears will be present because such individuals see the world as a less safe place than individuals with positive views of their parents.

- 1a) Since there are many different fear factors, the study will look at whether the people who report elevated fearfulness have more fears in general or specific subgroups of fear. The Fear Survey Schedule for Children measures six types of fears: fear of failure and criticism, fear of the unknown, fear of minor injury and small animals, fear of danger and death, medical fears and other fears. Which fears are prevalent remains as an open question. Will participants who report their parents as having

been neglectful or controlling and uncaring as measured by the Parental Bonding Inventory report *specific childhood* fears as measured by the Fear Survey Schedule for Children more often than other fears? Will that group report those fears more often than participants with memories of views of their parents as warm and accepting as measured by the Parental Bonding Inventory?

Attachment Style

Bartholomew Relationship Questionnaire (Adult Attachment):

2. Participants with insecure attachment of the fearful and preoccupied styles as measured by the Relationship Questionnaire, will report more *overall childhood* fears as measured by the Fear Survey Schedule for Children than individuals with insecure attachment of the dismissing style or secure attachment styles as measured by the Relationship Questionnaire.

Rationale: Individuals who are insecurely attached in the fearful and preoccupied sub-types will have the most fears because they live in a fearful world that is full of the fear of abandonment. Those who are insecurely attached in the dismissing sub-type are denying their lack of security and fearfulness about the world being an unsafe place and will therefore report the least amount of fears. Individuals who are securely attached will have a low amount of fears, since they are not defensively denying fearfulness and also are not overwhelmed by fearfulness.

- 2a) Since there are many different fear factors, the study will look at whether the people who report more fear have more fears in general or specific subgroups of fear. The

Fear Survey Schedule for Children measures six types of fears: fear of failure and criticism, fear of the unknown, fear of minor injury and small animals, fear of danger and death, medical fears and other fears. Which fears are prevalent remains as an open question. Will individuals with insecure attachment styles as measured by the Relationship Questionnaire report *specific childhood* fears as measured by the Fear Survey Schedule for Children more often than other fears? Will that group report those fears more often than individuals with a more secure attachment style?

Sperling Attachment Style Inventory (Childhood Attachment):

3. Participants with insecure attachment of the hostile or ambivalent subtypes to their mother and/or father in childhood as reported on the Attachment Style Inventory will report more *overall childhood* fears as measured by the Fear Survey Schedule for Children than those with secure attachment or avoidant attachment to their mother and/or father as reported on the Attachment Style Inventory.

Rationale: Individuals with hostile or ambivalent attachment will have the most fears because they live in a fearful world that is full of the fear of abandonment. Individuals with avoidant attachment tend to deny their lack of security and fearfulness about the world being an unsafe place and will therefore report the least amount of fears.

Individuals who are securely attached will have a low amount of fearfulness, since they are not defensively denying fears and also are not overwhelmed by fearfulness.

- 3a) Since there are many different fear factors, the study will look at whether the people who report more fear have more fears in general or specific subgroups of fear. The

Fear Survey Schedule for Children measures six types of fears: fear of failure and criticism, fear of the unknown, fear of minor injury and small animals, fear of danger and death, medical fears and other fears. Which fears are prevalent remains as an open question. Will participants with insecure attachment styles to the mother and/or father as measured by the Attachment Style Inventory report *specific childhood* fears as measured by the Fear Survey Schedule for Children more often than other fears? Will that group report those fears more often than participants with a secure attachment style as measured by the Attachment Style Inventory?

Reports of Current Adulthood Fears

Relationship between Adult Fears and View of Parents

4. Participants who report their parents (mother, father) as neglectful (low care, low protection) or as having had affectionless control (low care, high protection) as measured by the Parental Bonding Inventory will report more *current overall* fears than participants with childhood views of their parents as having been optimal (high care, low protection) and/or having had affectionate constraint (high care, high protection). Care refers to specific items on the inventory, such as “(my parent) seemed to understand my problems and worries.” Protection refers to questions such as “(my parent) tried to control everything I did.”

Rationale: This hypothesis follows from the idea that when parents are experienced as neglectful and controlling, the ensuing feeling of lack of safety will generalize to the rest of the world which will feel unsafe. Those individuals will have more fears because they see the world as a less safe place than individuals with positive views of their parents.

Participants who had such childhood views of their parents may continue to suffer from the same symptoms.

- 4a) Since there are many different types of fear, the study will look at whether the people who report more fearfulness have more fears in general or specific subgroups of fear. Which fears are prevalent remains as an open question. The Fear Survey Schedule measures several types of fears, such as spooky phenomena, being maltreated, authority and being socially unacceptable. Will participants who report their parents as neglectful or controlling and uncaring as measured by the Parental Bonding Inventory report *specific current* fears as measured by the Fear Survey Schedule more often than other fears? Will that group report those fears more often than participants with memories of positive views of their parents as measured by the Parental Bonding Inventory?

Attachment Styles

Bartholomew Relationship Questionnaire (Adulthood Attachment):

5. Participants with specifically insecure attachment of the fearful and preoccupied subtypes as measured by the Relationship Questionnaire, will report more *overall current* fears as measured by the Fear Survey Schedule than those with insecure attachment of the dismissing sub-type or secure attachment as measured by the Relationship Questionnaire.

Rationale: Participants who are insecurely attached in the fearful and preoccupied subtypes will have the most fears because they live in a fearful world that is full of the fear

of abandonment. Participants who are insecurely attached in the dismissing sub-type are denying their lack of security and fears about the world being an unsafe place and will therefore report the least amount of fears. Participants who are securely attached will have a low amount of fears, since they are not defensively denying fears and also are not overwhelmed by fear.

- 5a) Since there are many different fear factors, the study will look at whether the people who report more fearfulness have more fears in general or specific subgroups of fear. The Fear Survey Schedule measures several types of fears, such as spooky phenomena, being maltreated, authority and being socially unacceptable. Which fears are prevalent remains as an open question. Will participants with insecure attachment styles as measured by the Relationship Questionnaire report *specific current* fears as measured by the Fear Survey Schedule more often than other fears? Will that group report those fears more often than participants with a secure attachment style as measured by the Relationship Questionnaire?

Sperling Attachment Style Inventory

6. Participants with insecure attachment of the hostile or resistant ambivalent subtypes to their mother and/or father in childhood as reported on the Attachment Style Inventory will have more *overall current* fears as measured by the Fear Survey Schedule than those with secure attachment or avoidant attachment to their mother and/or father as reported on the Attachment Style Inventory.

Rationale: Individuals with hostile or ambivalent attachment will have the most fears because they live in a fearful world that is full of the fear of abandonment. Individuals with avoidant attachment tend to deny their lack of security and fears about the world being an unsafe place and will therefore report the least amount of fears. Individuals who are securely attached will have a low amount of fears, since they are not defensively denying fears and also are not overwhelmed by fear.

- 6a) Since there are many different fear factors, the study will look at whether the people who report more fearfulness have more fears in general or specific subgroups of fear. The Fear Survey Schedule measures several types of fears, such as spooky phenomena, being maltreated, authority and being socially unacceptable. Which fears are prevalent remains as an open question. Will participants with insecure attachment styles to the mother and/or father as measured by the Attachment Style Inventory report *specific current* fears as measured by the Fear Survey Schedule more often than other fears? Will that group report those fears more often than participants with a secure attachment style as measured by the Attachment Style Inventory?

Although the same predictions are made for current attachment style as childhood attachment style, the study will investigate whether attachment to the parent or attachment to current attachment figures is more predictive of current and childhood fears. Ideally, the study will find a stronger relationship between reported childhood attachment style to mother and father and childhood fears and between current

attachment style and current fearfulness because it is logical that reported childhood attachment style should be most influential in childhood fearfulness and adulthood attachment style should be most influential adulthood fearfulness as attachment style and fearfulness may both change from childhood to adulthood.