

# THE HARDENED HEART (AVOIDANT) ATTACHMENT STYLE\*



The Way I Love, Feel, & Act (Problem)	Why I Love, Feel, & Act this Way (Cause)	How the Way I Love, Feel, & Act Affects Me & Others (Consequences)	How I Can Change the Way I Love, Feel, & Act (Solution) <sup>3</sup>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I struggle to connect with people on an emotional level, that is, I am not very sensitive to their thoughts and feelings.</li> <li>• I struggle with sharing my thoughts and feelings with another person.</li> <li>• I am uncomfortable touching other people, that is, hugging, patting on the back, shaking hands, giving high fives, etc.</li> <li>• I do not trust others, and they are unable to love me and/or meet my needs.</li> <li>• I do not want to be known or to know others, because it stirs up difficult memories of my being rejected as a child.</li> <li>• I am angry with God because He has rejected and abandoned me.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent[s] were unavailable, depressed, divorced, chemically dependent, etc. In times of trouble there was no one to turn to for comfort or support. I had to make it on my own. Showing my feelings was a sign of weakness. My parents didn't tolerate failure yet they applauded success.</li> <li>• During times of trouble I cling to my success, possessions, addictive, compulsive, and dysfunctional behaviors. God is not in the picture.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Because I did not receive the love and affection I needed as a child, I am unable to express love and affection to my spouse, children, and others.</li> <li>• I self-medicate to kill the pain of the past through drugs, alcohol, sex, pornography, masturbation, gambling, food, etc. All these things replace the love and approval I long for from another person.</li> <li>• I get angry and defensive or I shutdown when others come to me with a problem, or criticism.</li> <li>• I struggle with perfectionism. I have high expectations of myself and others.</li> <li>• I don't understand others and they don't understand me.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I must take the time and effort to learn that God created me to be in a relationship with Him and others.</li> <li>• Learning to trust God and others is at the heart of intimacy. This requires opening my heart and expressing my true feelings to God and others. I learn to trust as I know and become known in the body of believers – this takes time and will not happen overnight.</li> <li>• I must invest the time and effort to learn that I am worthy of love, and God and others are also able to provide love, peace, security, support, and encouragement in good and bad times, but this healing process takes time and will not happen overnight. Just as I grow physically, I also grow spiritually – a process that takes time).</li> <li>• I must make God the priority in all relationships.</li> <li>• When I complete these steps, I should gradually move from the hardened heart attachment style to the secure attachment style.</li> </ul>

\* Dr. Tim Clinton & Dr. Gary Sibcy. *Attachments: Why You Love, Feel, & Act the Way You Do*. Thomas Nelson Publishers. Brentwood, TN. 2002. And Dr. Tim Clinton & Dr. Joshua Straub. *God Attachment: Why You Believe, Act, & Feel the Way You Do About God*. Howard Books. New York, N.Y. 2010.