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**Adult attachment styles and paranoia: a mediational analysis**

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**Learning Goal:**

This study aimed to explore Experiential avoidance and self-acceptance as potential mediators between attachment and paranoia in a sample of people with severe mental illness (n=134).

**Abstract Text:**

Attachment styles has been identified as an important factor in models of psychopathology (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2012) and can help in understanding persecutory ideation (Sitko et al., 2014), although potential mediators mechanisms for adult psychopathology have not been sufficiently examined. Experiential avoidance (EA) and self-acceptance (SA) are relevant factors to understand how attachment styles lead to persecutory ideation. This study aimed to explore these factors as potential mediators between attachment and paranoia.

Participants with severe mental illness (n = 134) were assessed in terms of paranoid ideation as measured by the corresponding subscale of SCL-90-R (Derogatis, 1994 ), adult attachment style by the Relationships Questionnaire (RQ; Bartholomew y Horowitz, 1991), experiential avoidance by the Acceptance and Action Questionnaire (Bond et al., 2011) and self-acceptance by the corresponding subscale of the Scales of Psychological Well-being (Ryff & Keyes, 1995). An anxious attachment index was calculated by adding Fearful to Preoccupied attachment styles and subtracting the sum of the secure plus the dismissing-avoidant attachment styles as measured by the RQ.

Our analysis revealed that an anxious attachment was associated with higher levels of paranoia and was partially mediated by EA. However, we found that the relationship between a secure attachment and paranoia levels was inversely and totally mediated by SA.

Identification of mediating variables allows for increased understanding of persecutory ideation and the processes that should be targeted in the course of recovery in individuals with severe mental illness.

**ON THE HEALING POWER  
OF HUMAN RECONNECTION**