

Beyond Piaget

Further insights on
human development



VYGOTSKY'S INFLUENCE

- Not everyone was convinced that children “go it alone” in their quest for advanced cognitive abilities
- Deep in the heart of the repressive Soviet Union, Lev Vigotsky looked beyond a child’s solitary interactions with his/her environment



THE ZONE OF PROXIMAL DEVELOPMENT

- Each generation profits from the experience of adults and older peers
- With the help of an encouraging adult, children can do more than what they could do by themselves
- The gap between what a child can do alone, and what they can do with help is the *zone of proximal development*

EXAMPLES OF THAT GENTLE NUDGE

- Did you learn how to tie your shoes by yourself?
- Ride a bike?
- Seven year old street merchants.
- Adults use *scaffolding* to temporarily help a child reason at a higher level.
- Their instructions become “self-talk” that we internalize and use when necessary.

LEV'S LEGACY

- Dead from tuberculosis at 37, Vigotsky's ideas were buried by the Soviet authorities
- Resurrected by loyal students, his approach has slowly spread and expanded, world-wide
- A child's *personal story*
- The rise of *collaborative learning*



WHAT DO BABIES NEED?

- At first, we thought that mothers primary purpose was to provide nourishment
- We were wrong
- Harlow gave infant rhesus monkeys a stark choice:
- Nourishment or contact comfort
- It wasn't even close



LONG-LASTING DEFICITS

- Denied comfort and contact:
the monkeys could not socialize
worse yet, they rejected their own young
- Only letting them watch younger monkeys play and then slow assimilation helped



EXAMPLES

- London infants in WW II
- Romania
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0MSg0Otwgz4>
- Some one must teach us how to be a loving human



ATTACHMENT

- *The emotional bond that forms between a child and its primary caretaker(s)*
- A crucial stage in development
- Best measured through the **Strange Situation** - *an innovative experimental design in which the infant is exposed to a series of departures and appearances of the caretaker and a stranger*

THE STRANGE SITUATION

- Mary Ainsworth's work
- Begins with Mom (caretaker) and 12-18 month old child in room with lots of toys
- Then a stranger enters
- Mom leaves
- Mom returns
- Both leave
- Stranger, then mom return

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

- The infant is watched carefully through a one-way mirror
- Great attention is placed on the child's reaction's to mom's departure and return
- Of equal importance is the child's willingness to explore the toy-filled environment
- Is mom used as a “base” for discovery?

THE FOUR ATTACHMENT STYLES

- **Secure** – willing to leave mom to explore the room, kept an eye on her, and occasionally, returned to her, wary but not too upset by stranger's appearance, upset at mom's departure, when she returned noticeably happy and easily soothed
- Approximately 65% of children
- Temperament can hinder soothing

A GREAT START

- Mothers of these children:
 - 1) interacted lovingly and warmly
 - 2) encouraged exploration
 - 3) were sensitive to the child's needs
 - 4) communicated often and appropriately

These patterns effect all subsequent relations

INSECURE ATTACHMENT

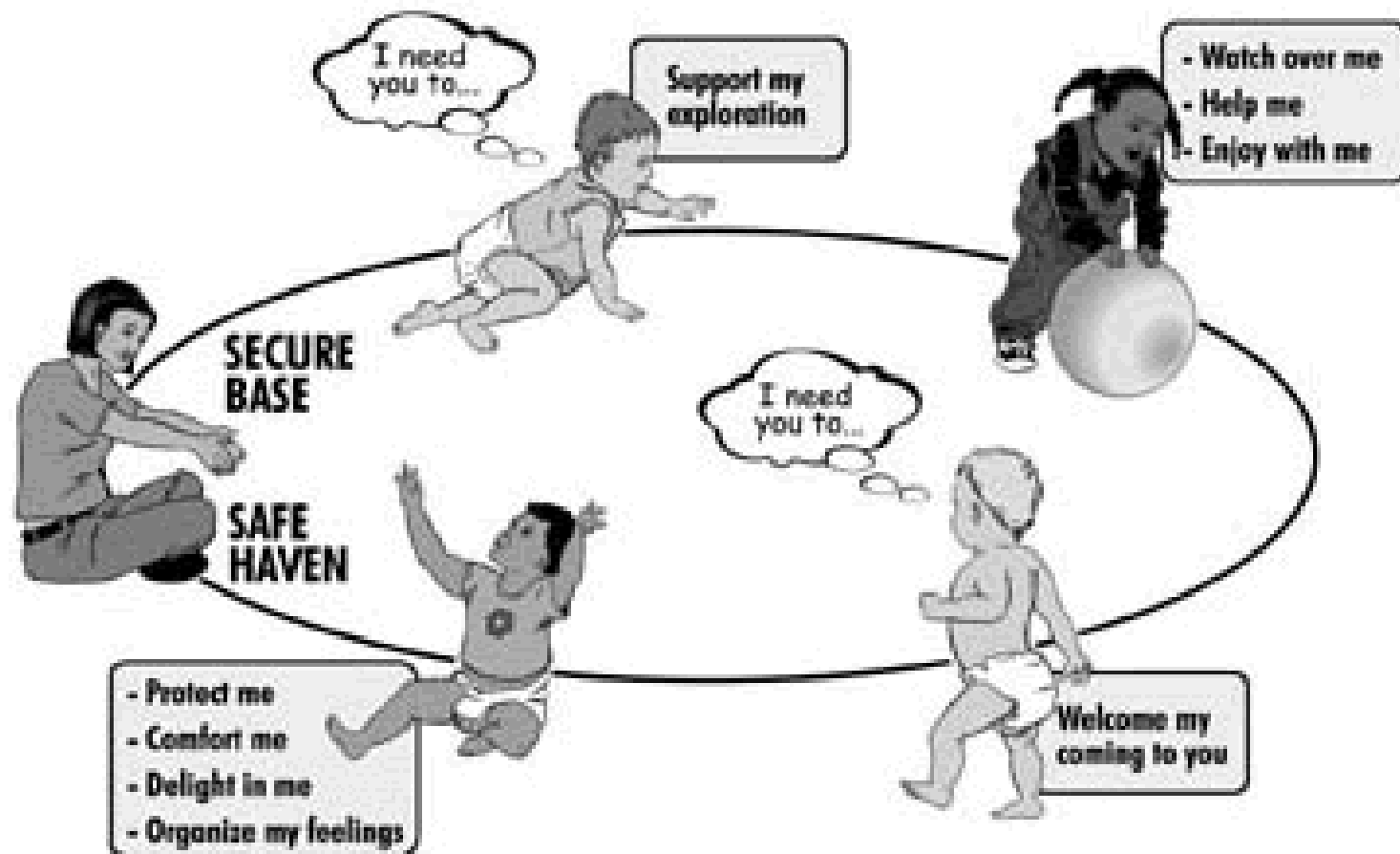
- **Avoidant style** – children did not “touch base” during hesitant periods of exploration and seemed to care little about the stranger or mom’s comings and goings

Mom’s were observed to be unresponsive, cold, and often rejecting

15% in North America

CIRCLE OF SECURITY

PARENT ATTENDING TO THE CHILD'S NEEDS



ANOTHER INSECURE STYLE

- **Ambivalent** – babies cling to mom and are unwilling to explore, the stranger bothered them, they became very upset when mom left, hard to soothe on her return, demanding mom's attention while pushing her away
- Moms were inconsistent and interacted with the baby in an inappropriate manner
- 10%

IT GETS WORSE

- **Disorganized-disoriented** – some babies didn't know what to do when mom returned, approaching her while looking away, they seemed afraid, confused, and sad
- Observation showed these moms to be abusive and/or neglectful
- Less than 10%

ATTACHMENT OVERVIEW

- Can form with someone besides mom
- Stressed importance of comfort, stimulation, and consistency
- Most *insecure attachments* are within the normal variability of behavior
- But they pose challenges for future emotional relationships

PARENTING STYLES

- Emerged through the work of Diana Baumrind
- Discovered the importance of two separate continuums:
Warmth/Support &
Control/Structure
- Four styles were revealed



AUTHORITARIAN

- Plenty, probably too much, structure
- Little warmth
- Parents are excessively demanding, controlling, and unreasoning
- “Do what I say because I say so!”
- Children are often aggressive, fearful, with low self-esteem and initiative

PERMISSIVE

- Plenty of affection
- Little or no structure or demands
- Parents place no limits, shower children with gifts, affection and privileges
- “Please clean your room?” but no consequences
- Irresponsible, aggressive, “spoiled”

NEGLECTFUL

- No structure, no warmth
- Parents are uninvolved, self-centered, indifferent to child's needs
- “A breeding ground for *antisocial behavior*.”
- Down-played in more recent discussions

AUTHORITATIVE

- Loads of affection **and** structure
- Set high standards and monitor actions while highly involved
- Consistent, loving, and willing to explain and listen
- Grant freedom as it is **earned**

AUTHORITATIVE II

- Children are self-reliant, self-controlled, secure, popular, curious
- Warmth emerges as #1 characteristic
- Easy for me to say, hard to do
- Wide-spread ripples
- But does the child's *temperament* really decide whether any style will work?
- And, do peers override?