

## Attachment theory and psychoanalysis: controversial issues

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*On the present theoretical arena of psychoanalysis, attachment theory has obtained increasing attention, especially from psychoanalysts interested in empirical research. This paper presents the controversies raised by Bowlby's theory, and discusses the relationship between attachment theory and psychoanalysis. Although Freud and Bowlby differ in their image of Man, ideas developed within attachment theory have parallels in those of psychoanalytic object relation theories, both with regard to the conceptualisation of motivation and the understanding of the origins of psychological disturbances. As regards therapy, the emphasis on the "emotional availability" of the analyst is highlighted. It is concluded that Bowlby's theory does not, however, contribute specifically to analytic technique. Bowlby's main concern is the interpersonal and traumatic origins of psychological disturbances, rather than the patient's fantasies and constructions of narratives.*

### INTRODUCTION

Attachment theory was originally introduced by John Bowlby in the late nineteen 50s and early 60s, and may be regarded as the joint work of Bowlby and Mary Ainsworth (Bretherton, 1991). The theory has been further elaborated through the work of, among others, Mary Main and Peter Fonagy. Attachment theory deals with the child's tie to his caregivers, and seeks to explain individual differences in qualities of attachment. The theory and its "vocabulary" have always been controversial within psychoanalysis. To many psychoanalysts, "attachment" is a key concept in their understanding of development, and for them attachment theory enriches psychoanalysis. To other psychoanalysts, the assumptions of attachment theory seem to differ radically from their conception of psychoanalysis, and attachment theory is therefore more or less left outside psychoanalysis proper. On the present theoretical arena of psychoanalysis, attachment theory has obtained increasing attention, especially from psychoanalysts interested in empirical research. This is due mainly to the introduction of the Adult Attachment Interview (AAI), developed by Main, George and Kaplan (George et al., 1985). AAI is a method for evaluating attachment patterns in the adult person developed by Main and Goldwyn (1985–1994). The AAI method has been used exten-

sively in developmental research (Ainsworth et al., 1978; Main et al., 1985; Fonagy et al., 1991; Crittenden, 1992; Killén, 1999), and is currently being applied for studying therapeutic outcome of psychoanalysis (Varvin, 1999).

Today, more than ever, psychoanalysis is facing the challenge of validation. There is a need for testing psychoanalysis both as a theory of mind, and as a therapeutic method. As pointed out by Kernberg (2000), qualified research should be given the highest priority within the psychoanalytic enterprise. The attachment tradition has developed methods for in depth study of core personality variables and relational patterns (e.g., The Strange Situation, The Adult Attachment Interview). To what extent attachment research should be considered *psychoanalytic* research (Killingmo, 1992), remains to be discussed. As I have emphasised in a discussion of the AAI (Gullestad, 2000), the relevance of this method for process- and outcome studies of psychoanalysis needs to be *specified*. Furthermore, as Bowlby's theory was, and still is, being met with antagonism from many psychoanalysts, there also seems to be a need for a more general discussion of controversial issues at the interface between the two theories.

In this paper, I shall elaborate upon the relationship of attachment theory to psychoanalysis. I shall point out divergences and convergences, and I will

also discuss eventual therapeutic implications of attachment theory.

#### BACKGROUND

How can we understand the controversies aroused by attachment theory?<sup>1</sup> Trained as a psychoanalyst at the British Psychoanalytic Institute, Bowlby had been exposed to Kleinian ideas through his training analyst Joan Rivière and through supervision with Melanie Klein herself. Although he acknowledged Kleinian thinking for its emphasis on object relations, Bowlby was dissatisfied with the Kleinian view that children's emotional problems are mainly due to infantile fantasies generated from internal conflicts related to aggressive drives, rather than to environmental failure and trauma. Furthermore, he was dissatisfied with the psychoanalytic understanding of development, which was based, not on observations of normal children, but rather extrapolated from clinical experience. Clinical experience from the London Child Guidance Clinic had attracted Bowlby's attention to intergenerational transmission of attachment relations, and to the importance of maternal deprivation and separation. In trying to help troubled children, he worked with the whole family, experiencing how dealing with the mothers' own emotional difficulties would help them become more tolerant of their child. This way of working was in contrast to Kleinian child-therapy. The fact that Klein forbade Bowlby to talk to the mother of a three-year-old whom he analysed under her supervision, testifies to this (Bretherton, 1995). The following passage, from a paper written by Bowlby's analyst Rivière, illustrates the viewpoints that Bowlby opposed: "Psychoanalysis is Freud's discovery of what goes on in the imagination ... It has no concern with anything else, it is not concerned with the real world ... It is concerned simply and solely with the imaginings of the childish mind" (cited in Holmes, 1995, p. 23). Bowlby pencilled in the margin: "rôle of the environment = zero". With his evolutionary, Darwinian orientation, his belief in open scientific debate and inquiry and his leftist sympathies, Bowlby was profoundly sceptical towards the detachment from external reality that existed within psychoanalysis, especially in its Kleinian form (Holmes, 1995).

Bowlby continued to explore the effects of traumatic events, specifically separation and loss, on

young children. In collaboration with James Robertson he observed hospitalised and institutionalised children who were separated from their parents, a work which resulted in the classical film "A Two-Year-Old Goes to Hospital". For WHO, he made a documentary report on the mental health of homeless children in post-war Europe. The major conclusion was that to grow up mentally healthy, "the infant and young child should experience a warm, intimate, and continuous relationship with his mother (or permanent mother substitute) in which both find satisfaction and enjoyment" (Bowlby, 1951, p. 13). Dissatisfied with the existing psychoanalytic explanation of the bond between mother and child, emphasising that love derives from oral drive gratification, Bowlby found an alternative theoretical model in ethology, and the concept of imprinting, implying that bond formation need not be tied to feeding. Inspired by these ideas, Bowlby developed the key notions of attachment theory: The concept of "attachment", referring to a *continuous tie to a specific person that the child turns to when feeling vulnerable and in need of protection*. From this, follows that separation anxiety is a normal affective response. Furthermore, bereaved infants and small children can experience grief and mourning no less intensely than can adults.

The new ideas, representing an integration of ethology, psychoanalysis and developmental psychology, were presented in a series of three papers in the British Psychoanalytic Society in London in the late 50s and early 60s ("The nature of the child's tie to his mother" (1958), "Separation anxiety" (1960a), "Grief and mourning in infancy and early childhood" (1960b)). Bowlby's papers were met with strong opposition and scepticism from the psychoanalytic community. At the first presentation, Bowlby's analyst, Joan Rivière, protested, and Donald Winnicott wrote to thank her: "It was certainly a difficult paper to appreciate without giving away everything that has been fought for by Freud" (Bretherton, 1991, p. 18). Anna Freud, who missed the meeting but read the paper, wrote: "Dr. Bowlby is too valuable a person to get lost to psychoanalysis" (Bretherton, 1991, p. 18). Winnicott also wrote to Anna Freud: "I can't quite make out why it is that Bowlby's papers are building up in me a kind of revulsion although in fact he has been scrupulously fair to me in my writing" (ibid., p. 20). Bowlby's ideas seem to have been rejected by psychoanalysts believing that mental pain originated in the internal rather than the external world. When the film "A Two-Year-Old Goes to Hospital" was shown in the British Society, Wilfred Bion maintained that the little girl's pain and trouble were

<sup>1</sup> The following discussion is based on the historical accounts of attachment theory by Bretherton (1991, 1995) and Holmes (1995).

a manifestation of her envy of her mother's pregnancy, rather than a response to the separation itself (Holmes, 1995). Whereas Bowlby had hoped to contribute to the scientific development of psychoanalysis, what he experienced was that the analytic world "closed ranks against him", in what Grotstein has described as "one of the most dreadful, shameful and regrettable chapters in the history of psychoanalysis" (ibid., p. 26). According to Holmes, Bowlby became for nearly two decades almost a non-person in analytic circles, until his rehabilitation in the 1980s began with his appointment as Freud Memorial Professor of Psychoanalysis at University College, London.

Why were Bowlby's ideas met with such strongly negative reactions within the psychoanalytic world? One answer appears to be that Bowlby must have challenged what was seen as "true" psychoanalytic theory – the legacy of Freud. Whereas Bowlby reacted to the extreme emphasis on the inner world of fantasy which prevailed, especially in Kleinian psychoanalysis, leading psychoanalysts seem to have found Bowlby's emphasis on external life events, like separation and loss, too extreme. Reacting to Bowlby's paper on grief and mourning, Anna Freud wrote that psychoanalysis does not "deal with the happenings in the external world as such but with their repercussions in the mind, i.e., with the form in which they are registered by the child" (A. Freud, 1960, p. 54). It would seem that Bowlby was read as if he were focusing only on external events and not on the way these are registered by the individual – as if he excluded the analysis of personal meanings and fantasies, that is, of psychic reality. However, this is a far too narrow reading of Bowlby. His concept of internal "working models" (Bowlby, 1969) testifies to this.

Maybe Bowlby's theory seemed less "deep" to many psychoanalysts? Maybe the very vocabulary of attachment theory, focusing on a behavioural system regulating the relationship between the child and his caregivers, conveys a less "dramatic" – and less exciting? – view of existence, than does Freud's dualistic drive theory? Can this difference in evocative quality explain the strong opposition to Bowlby's theory? As the critique from Bowlby's psychoanalytic colleagues was only to a certain extent precisely articulated, the answer can be no more than speculation. Certainly, Bowlby, not contributing to the "esoteric vision" (Holmes, 1995, p. 33) implied in uncovering the secrets of unconscious life, may to some analysts seem to miss the heart of the psychoanalytic project. According to Holmes, there is some truth in the accusation that Bowlby neglected the inner world. He cites Bowlby's characterisation of himself, "I'm not strong on in-

tuition". It is also clear that Bowlby was fully aware of "the giant problems (and giant controversies)" encountered if one approaches the questions of how the child builds up his own internal world. Bowlby "certainly knew his own limitations, as well as his strengths" (ibid., p. 27). Even so, considering the similarity of approach to human motivation within attachment theory and by Winnicott for one, we are still puzzled by the hostility encountered by Bowlby, while Winnicott remained securely within the ranks of the psychoanalytic community. Maybe another answer could be that Winnicott's ideas were cast in the language of paradox, and did not directly challenge the existing psychoanalytic framework. Winnicott "much more cautiously and ambivalently attempted through the invocation of paradox to remain loyal to the Kleinian tradition, while at the same time undermining it" – he created "an interpersonal perspective out of an intrapsychic model" (Holmes, 1995, p. 32). In contrast, Bowlby explicitly sought to establish an alternative theoretical model drawing on the science of ethology. Within the psychoanalytic tradition, there seems to have been, for a long period of time, a strong loyalty towards the founding theorists, Freud and Klein. Probably, this is due to the fact that psychoanalysis, in addition to being a scientific and therapeutic discipline, is also a *movement* (Killingmo, 1993), providing identity for its members, with an expectation that they should keep together in spite of their differences. Maybe this is one of the reasons for the "elasticity of concepts" (Sandler, 1983) so prevalent within psychoanalytic theory, and which Winnicott's hidden challenge of the intrapsychic model illustrates. As I see it, elasticity may serve to conceal important theoretical divergences and preclude a further development of the theory. Psychoanalysis would profit from clearer and more precise definitions of central terms and assumptions, which would make it possible to identify weak points in the theory as well (Gullestad, 1992a). Bowlby contributed precisely to this end.

#### DIVERGENCES AND CONVERGENCES

In the following, I shall explore controversial issues that may arise when attachment concepts are compared to traditional psychoanalytic concepts. I shall distinguish between three different levels of conceptualisation: (1) basic explanatory principles; (2) theory of motivation; (3) theory of psychopathology.

##### *Basic explanatory principles*

The basic explanatory principle of Bowlby's ethological model is that Man is biologically predisposed to

form attachment relationships with primary caregivers. The model focuses on the *attachment system*, as a basic system of behaviour which is biologically rooted and species-specific, and how it is constituted by an emotional signal system (i.e., smiling, crying, sucking, clinging, following), implying that specific emotional expressions from the child will elicit specific responses from the caregiver (i.e., the cry elicits comfort). The emotional signal system has the function of binding the mother to the infant, and the attachment system guarantees the protection and survival of the child, thus making, in line with evolutionary theory, the basic explanatory principle: the *survival of the species*. It seems that this model differs from the Freudian one in several important respects. In Freudian theory, all human behaviour of psychological interest is explained on the basis of one motivational principle, namely *drive*. The aim of the drives is satisfaction of pleasure, or tension reduction – a conception which Freud called the principle of Nirvana. When Freud discusses the origin and development of the ego, the point of departure is a hypothesis of primary needs. When the need for drive satisfaction cannot be met by reality, a tension arises, which is reduced through internalisation of the drive-satisfying objects and through the building of structure. The formation of ego functions like reality testing; language and cognition then takes place as a result of a collision or clash between need and hindrance. The development of ego and secondary process functioning are necessary to guarantee future tension reduction. In the final analysis, such psychological structures represent a “detour” to the attainment of drive satisfaction. It seems that Freud applies a dynamic model, even when analysing the development of the fundamental structures of personality. The *dynamic principle* reigns sovereign. In Freud’s thinking, reality, or culture, implies *Unbehag* (Freud, 1930). In this understanding, there is a basic *conflict* between pleasure and reality, between nature and culture. One could say that Man adapts to reality because he is forced to do so.

In contrast, the notion of pre-programmed signal systems, i.e., species-specific structures evolutionary developed as a result of a long process of selection and modification, and in the service of adaptation, focuses on the “directedness” towards reality of the human organism. Bowlby here seems to be in line with Hartmann (1939a), who emphasises the concept of “fitting in” between the child and the surrounding environment. Hartmann’s conception is that primary autonomous ego structures are “wired” to the physical and social reality, what Hartmann names “adap-

tation”, and structure building is dependent upon certain forms of stimulation from the milieu – “average expectable environment” – for development and differentiation to take place. The unfolding of inborn potentials depends upon interaction with significant others. In this biologically based understanding, Man, belonging to a species characterised by premature birth, is dependent for his survival on close attachment to his fellow human beings. Man is no longer seen as fundamentally asocial, being forced by civilisation to forego his animal nature. Thus, on the most fundamental level of the theory, conflict does not seem to be given as a basic premise. In accordance with this way of reasoning, recent psychoanalytic developmental theory explicitly questions the universality of dynamic explanations. A relevant question here is: At what point in child development does it become meaningful to analyse psychic phenomena from a psychodynamic point of view? In Stern’s formulation the child is “unapproachable by psychodynamic considerations for an initial period, resulting in a non-psychodynamic beginning of life” (Stern, 1985, p. 255). Within this perspective, psychoanalytic developmental theory is no longer characterised by what can be called an “obsessional search for meaning” (Elster, 1983, p. 101), which in this context implies a search for unconscious motives to explain development.

To sum up, Freud and Bowlby differ radically in their image of Man. Whereas Freud emphasises a monadic individual, driven by untamed passion, in a battle with the norms and requirements of society, Bowlby’s ethological model focuses on an interacting system, consisting of the child and his caregivers, in which each partner adapts to the other through a mutual signalling system. As pointed out by Mitchell, both Freud and Bowlby were inspired by Darwin, but they read him in different ways. Whereas Freud’s Darwin focuses on the primitive descent of Man, Bowlby’s Darwin focuses on adaptation. Notwithstanding the fact that there are differences, this way of contrasting the two can be questioned. After all, wasn’t survival and adaptation also a fundamental issue in Freud’s thinking? The concept of self-preservation as a drive, which was central in Freud’s early theory building, testifies to his preoccupation with the subject of survival. The problem of adaptation to reality represents, likewise, a key issue in Freud’s discussion of ego development (Freud, 1923). Indeed, both Freud and Bowlby struggle with the fundamental question of how Man as a biologically based organism adapts to reality.

When Freud and Bowlby are compared in this way,

one should bear in mind that they operate with different kinds of data. While Freud addresses psychic conflict and psychological derivatives of conflict, Bowlby's definition of psychoanalytic data is more extensive. Maybe one of the most important contributions of Bowlby has been to convey an openness to other disciplines, be it on a theoretical or on an empirical level.

#### *Theory of motivation*

In stating that mother-child attachment is a primary bond, not one secondary to drive satisfaction, Bowlby challenges Freud's drive theory, which implies that in the final analysis, all human behaviour can be explained as derived from sexuality or aggression. In Bowlby's thinking, attachment is an autonomous motivational system. Attachment theory, therefore, implies either a rejection or a revision of the classical Freudian theory of motivation. Even if formulated in a different language, the concept of attachment is not too different from ideas developed by object relations analysts in the 1950s. The concept has parallels in Fairbairn's (1952) notion of libido as "object seeking" rather than "pleasure seeking", in Balint's (1937) "primary love", and also in Winnicott's concepts of "ego relatedness" (Winnicott, 1958) and "holding" (Winnicott, 1960a, b). All these concepts imply that the child's need for human contact is a primary one. This view is a key notion in most psychoanalytic theories which call themselves object relations theories, if not in all. An exception should be made for Kleinian psychoanalysis, which, although focusing on the mother-child relation, concentrates on orality, food and the breast: "the relation to the loved and hated - good and bad - breast is the infant's first object relation" (Klein et al., 1952, p. 209). Attachment theory may be viewed as a particular kind of object relations theory. This is what Eagle is aiming at when he states that quite frequently "points of *divergence* between classical psychoanalysis and attachment theory constitute points of *convergence* between contemporary psychoanalysis and attachment theory" (Eagle, 1995, p. 123). The same line of reasoning is represented by the conclusion of Bretherton's historical overview of attachment theory: "The time has come when the psychoanalytical origins of attachment theory are coming into sharper focus. Thus, attachment theory can now more clearly be seen as a theory of interpersonal relationship in the lineage of object relations theory" (Bretherton, 1991, p. 27). Today, most psychoanalysts will regard the relational perspective on motivation as an integrated part of contemporary psychoanalytical thinking. A controversial question

is, however, whether the relational motive *replaces* the Freudian concept of drive, as for instance Mitchell (1988) maintains, or whether it *supplements* it, which is the position of, e.g., Kernberg (1976).

Even if there are similarities between the formulations of Bowlby and Fairbairn, Winnicott etc., attachment theory has a specific conceptualisation of the relational motive. As in evolutionary theory and ethology, what is emphasised is *danger* and protection from danger. To stay safe, the child has to keep close to caregivers who can provide protection and comfort. There is an urge to keep *proximity*. Of the instinctual responses, Bowlby considered "clinging" and "following" to be the most important. He was struck by the connection between psychological disturbances in the child and "the extent to which the mother has permitted clinging and following and all the responses associated with them, or has refused them" (Bowlby, 1958, p. 21). As pointed out by Holmes, attachment theory is a spatial theory. *Space* is a more important issue than power - the power of the phallus, the breast, the logos - "where I *am* in relation to my loved ones becomes the key issue, rather than what I can do or have done to me" (Holmes, 1995, p. 25).

This emphasis on the need for physical closeness and the attachment bond has important implications for our understanding of human psychology. In this connection, I want to underline the distinction made by Bowlby between "attachment" on the one hand and "dependency" on the other. To be dependent is the opposite of being "independent", and carries the value implication of something undesirable (Bowlby, 1969). In contrast, attachment is a psychological motive in its own right and something to be cherished. With this distinction in mind, a phenomenon like "clinging" in a child, which is often regarded as a sign of pathological functioning, may be viewed as part of normal attachment behaviour. The urge to keep proximity is to be regarded as a need that should be respected, and even valued as making for potential strength, instead of being looked upon as a sign of possible weakness. When the attachment figure is unavailable such needs might be drawn into conflict, as insecurely attached children bear witness to. Attachment theory furthermore emphasises that attachment needs are never outgrown. On the contrary, attachment represents a life-long theme. In the adult person, we might thus speak of attachment within mature relationships. Thus, Bowlby contributes to "upgrading" and normalising an important psychological need, as one might say Kohut (1972) did for narcissistic needs 20 years later.

Attachment theory also places strong emphasis on another motivational system, dialectically connected to the need for proximity, namely the need for *exploration*. The relationship between the two was pointed out by Mary Ainsworth. The central idea is that familial security, i.e. secure dependence on parents, provides a basis for exploring unfamiliar situations, and for depending confidently on oneself. The concept of *secure base*, which occupies a central position in attachment theory, was coined by Ainsworth in this context: "Where familial security is lacking, the individual is handicapped by the lack of what might be called a secure base from which to work" (Bretherton, 1991, p. 13). Without a secure base, the child constantly "monitors" his caregivers. There is no freedom to play and to encounter the world. It is clear that secure attachment and autonomy are regarded as closely related issues in psychological development. Again, there is an interesting parallel between attachment theory and Winnicott, emphasising that the "capacity to be alone" (Winnicott, 1958) is dependent on the internalisation of the secure "presence of the other". Indeed, this same interconnection is later underlined as a main theme of development in the theory of Mahler et al. (1975), stressing that separation and individuation presuppose successful symbiosis. The idea of reciprocity between attachment and exploration has inspired multiple research projects, studying, e.g., the consequences of attachment for different aspects of psychological functioning (see, e.g., Main, (1991)). It should be emphasised that exploration concerns not only the outer, but also the inner world.

In emphasising the importance of attachment and exploration as motivational systems, attachment theory plays down the significance of aggression and sexuality, which occupy the centre stage of the classical theory. As to aggression, Bowlby quite early noted a connection between the caregivers' rejection of the child's attachment behaviour, and frustration and aggression in the child. Certainly, anger and aggression are the hallmark of the so called *ambivalent* attachment pattern identified by Ainsworth et al. (1978). The AAI method permits studying the vicissitudes of aggression in adult attachment patterns. However, in the attachment context, aggression is regarded as secondary to frustration and rejection. There is no place for a notion of primary aggression and destructiveness. Indeed, in this respect, attachment theory differs from classical psychoanalysis both in the Freudian, and especially in the Kleinian, version. Even if the rôle of sexuality is less central, in a motivational context, it is not ignored by attachment theory. In

Bowlby's thinking, sexuality is one of several systems of social behaviour. "Sexual behaviour" is a system of behaviour distinct from attachment behaviour, and one that has a different ontogeny and, of course, a different function" (Bowlby, 1969, p. 280). Bowlby argues that the two should be kept conceptually distinct, because they are (1) activated "independently of one another"; (2) the objects to which each is directed are different; (3) the sensitive phases of each system occur at different ages. Bowlby then, although he recognises that there are close linkages between the two systems, and points out that for example clinging and kissing are common to both types of behaviour, his emphasis is on *differences*. In contrast, Freud's theory emphasises a libidinal force underlying different types of behaviour. Once more, the two theories come forward with different profiles. Whereas Freud is more monolithic in his search for a single, unifying dynamic force, Bowlby is more pluralistic and "additive" in enumerating different motivational systems.

It is interesting to note that Ainsworth was somewhat wary of the ethological explanation of the child's tie to his mother, because it was obvious to her that a baby loves his mother also because she satisfies his needs (Bretherton, 1995). Certainly, it is difficult to ignore the role of sucking and oral lust at the breast in establishing the first relationship. Within attachment theory, there seems to be no explicit room for such pleasure seeking per se. Generally speaking, it would seem that both attachment theory and self psychology give priority to specific aspects of object relating, thereby failing to account for the complexity of human object relations. Self psychology, by exclusively emphasising the self-object function that the caregiver has for the child, and which the individual continues to need throughout life, may come to overlook other important psychological functions that objects may also have. There is a tendency to reduce objects to what might be called "narcissistic supporters" (Gullestad, 1992a). In attachment theory, object relations are discussed mainly from the point of view of safety and comfort, and the affect regulation related to this system. To put it sharply, objects are reduced to "security supporters". There seems to be little room left for desire and for the object of desire. So, whereas Freudian theory may be accused of sexual reductionism, the theories supporting the relational motive may be accused of what Eagle (1995) has named "relational reductionism". Furthermore, it seems relevant to question whether the feeling of "love" can be explained as derived from the attachment system alone. In line with this, Smith notes that "attachment in infancy may be something

quite different from the symbolic love relation that exists between a young child and his parents" (Smith, 1981, p. 136).

### *Theory of psychopathology*

In Freud's theory, the Oedipal triangle occupies centre stage. Freud maintained that psychopathology derived from unresolved oedipal conflict, and that particular forms of psychopathology could be explained as a result of specific patterns of regression caused by the conflict in each case. In focusing on separation and loss as life events predisposing for later vulnerability and pathological development, Bowlby poses a timely challenge to classical theory's monolithic focus on the Oedipal complex as a source of psychopathology and as an explanation of the emotional life of children. As pointed out by Holmes (1995), the triangular rivalries of family life need not necessarily be understood in oedipal terms, but might as well be conceived of as expressing a vying for attachment. According to Holmes, both anthropological and ethological evidence suggests that we need to consider sexual behaviour, as expressed both in immature organisms and as pathological sexual functioning in adults, as for example incest, in the light of the weakening of attachment bonds (Holmes, 1995, p. 36). Certainly, this is an arena in need of further elaboration and research.

Bowlby's model of psychopathology is demonstrated through his discussion of the potentially pathological consequences of separation and loss. One of Bowlby's most significant contributions is his conceptualisation of the normal reactions to separation and loss, namely *protest*, *despair* and *detachment*. Of special importance is the concept of "detachment", which refers to a specific phase following separation, characterised by the termination of protest and despair. This behavioural reaction in the child was previously regarded as adjustment for example to the hospital setting. Bowlby demonstrated that detachment, far from expressing healthy adaptation, was the result of defensive processes that could indicate disturbance in the child's attachment relationships. The understanding of the detrimental effects of separation, and the detachment reaction, has contributed to a revolution in the way the hospitalisation of children is handled. In the country of this author, Norway, attachment theory was explicitly applied in a report on the hospitalisation of children, commissioned by The Department of Health, in an argumentation for changing the existing practice of separating children from their parents (Auestad et al.,

1971). Parents are now allowed to stay with their children in the hospital.

Bowlby's theory also implies a different understanding of the role of *anxiety*. Freud struggled all his life to understand anxiety and defence, the foundation stones of psychoanalytic psychopathology. According to Bowlby (1973), Freud on a clinical level clearly recognises that "missing someone who is loved and longed for ... (is) ... the key to an understanding of anxiety" (Freud, 1926, p. 136-137). On a theoretical level, however, Freud, in Bowlby's view, was limited by an implicit assumption that the only situation that could properly arouse fear in a human being is the presence of something likely to hurt or damage him. Thus, even though Freud in his later theory recognises the fear of object loss, the anxiety connected with the separation from the object is attributed to the excessive accumulation of tension arising from bodily needs, which remain unsatisfied in the absence of the object.

In Klein's theory, anxiety is understood in terms of the death instinct, and thus in terms of aggression: "the danger arising from the inner workings of the death instinct is the first cause of anxiety" (Klein et al., 1952, p. 276). This is felt by the infant as persecution, experienced first at birth, and resulting in making "the first external object, the mother's breast, appear hostile" (*ibid.*, p. 278). Separation anxiety is understood in terms of the child's own aggression. Klein does not agree with Freud's view, but states that when an infant misses his mother, and his needs are not satisfied, "her absence is felt to be the result of his own destructive impulses" (*ibid.*, p. 269-270), i.e., the child apprehends that the loving and loved mother has been destroyed by his own sadism. In Kleinian theory, "no danger-situation arising from external sources could ever be experienced by the young child as a purely external and known danger" (*ibid.*, p. 288). Bowlby points out that Klein, in her understanding of separation anxiety, gives primacy to persecutory anxiety and the threat of destruction from within (Bowlby, 1973). In contrast, Bowlby maintains that the absence of the mother can, "in and of itself, be the real cause of the distress and anxiety seen" (*ibid.*, p. 52), and that "the fear response to inaccessibility of mother can usefully be regarded as a basic adaptive response" because "being alone carries an increased risk of danger, especially for young individuals and others who are weak" (*ibid.*, p. 211). Thus, according to Bowlby, anxiety is the result when attachment needs are not met, and separation anxiety is understood as a *normal affective response* when attachment needs are activated, and the attachment

figure, who represents a haven of safety, is not available.

A key notion in this respect is "availability", which means that an attachment figure is both accessible and responsive. Bowlby emphasises both the concrete, physical proximity of the object, and the psychological presence, i.e., the *emotional availability*. We are unable to understand reactions to separation from loved ones unless we capture the importance of a very *specific* object, able to "terminate" the response systems of attachment and escape. It should be noted that Bowlby is dissatisfied both with the term "separation anxiety", and with the clinical labels "dependency" or "overdependence", which, to him, carry an aura of disapproval and disparagement. He prefers the terms "anxious attachment" or "insecure attachment", which make clear that the heart of the condition is "apprehension lest attachment figures be inaccessible and/or unresponsive", and which convey respect of "the person's natural desire for a close relationship with an attachment figure" (ibid., p. 247).

In the light of the theory of anxious attachment, well known clinical syndromes like school phobia, animal phobia and agoraphobia are reconsidered. Through a thorough re-reading of Freud's "Little Hans", Bowlby convincingly demonstrates that Freud, guided by a hypothesis of castration anxiety, overlooked clinical material pointing to the little boy's fear of being left by his mother. In a discussion of school phobia, Bowlby emphasises that family patterns in these cases are often characterised by different forms of separation anxiety in the parents, for instance, which may result in mother's retaining the child at home as a companion. The situation feared by the child is that of leaving home, and school phobia appears as a misnomer. Thus, Bowlby, through detailed clinical discussions, is able to demonstrate that puzzling phobias may turn out to be based on understandable fears originating in the interpersonal milieu of the child.

What is the status of Bowlby's theory of anxiety? It should be noted that Bowlby himself is quite modest in stating his ambitions: "No attempt is made to present a general theory of anxiety" (ibid., p. 50). Missing someone who is loved is certainly *one* of the keys to understanding anxiety, but not *the* key; in the complex scene of anxiety states "the place of separation anxiety is still unclear" (ibid., p. 50). Bowlby's discussion of school phobia demonstrates that lack of accessibility and responsiveness in the attachment figure, which is underlined in the theoretical model, can hardly be regarded as the only factor predisposing for separation anxiety. Furthermore, Bowlby seems to operate with

other variables. When the mother's *own* anxiety results in an overprotection of the child, it seems more adequate to speak of needs for *separation* not being respected. Such needs have no formal place in attachment theory, but are explicitly formulated by Mahler et al. (1975). Mahler's focus is not only on the need for proximity ("symbiosis"), but also on a *need* for separation. The mother who cannot tolerate her child's separation from her, will convey to the child that he is unable to manage on his own. The child comes to feel that in order to be safe, he has to stay close to mother. Understood in this way, separation anxiety may be seen as the consequence not only of attachment needs not responded to, but also of separation needs overruled. Mahler's idea of the mother's "gentle push" towards autonomy, is important in this respect.

Whereas "separation" in Bowlby's theory denotes the inaccessibility of attachment figures, Mahler employs the term to describe an *intrapsychic* process which results in the differentiation of the representation of the self from that of the symbiotic object. Mahler's key notion is *psychological separateness*. A structural correlate to psychological separateness is conveyed by the concept of *object constancy*, which refers to the establishment of a distinct, internal representation of the other, independent of the physical presence of the object, and independent of variations in states of need. However, both in Mahler's and Bowlby's view separation anxiety does not necessarily manifest itself in overt behaviour, which would be labelled "separation problems" from an observational viewpoint. On the contrary, a person might "solve" his separation anxiety by avoiding all close relationships and establishing a self-sufficient life style. There is no one-to-one relation between the behavioural and the psychodynamic levels.

Attachment theory's emphasis on the manner in which caregivers respond to the child's attachment behaviour is paralleled by ideas elaborated upon by object relations theorists, and later by self psychology. Furthermore, Hartmann's concept of "average expectable environment" implies that particular qualities in the interpersonal milieu are required for normal development to take place. Bowlby's concept of *emotional availability* should be regarded as an important contribution in this field. According to Emde (1988), emotional availability is a basic factor for normal development, satisfying an "intersubjective developmental need" by confirming a shared experience of a "we". This is in line with Stern's (1985) idea of "affect attunement", referring to the sharing of the child's emotional states by the parents as a basis for an experience of "intersubjective relatedness". The

consequence of lack of sharing is psychic isolation. Although emotional availability has gained the status of a collective term denoting qualities of interpersonal interaction required for the development of a feeling of safety, Bowlby's own research does not specifically address this issue. Bowlby's main focus was on separation, deprivation and loss as real, concrete life events – he studied the reaction of children to hospitalisation, the consequences of separation and loss in post-war Europe etc. As to psychological presence and qualities of interpersonal interaction, we have to turn to other psychoanalytic concepts such as Kohut's "mirroring", as conveyed by the expression "the gleam in the mother's eye" (Kohut & Wolf, 1978), Winnicott's (1960a) "holding environment", Anzieu's (1979) notion of the mother's function as a "sound mirror", contributing to constitute the "primary psychic qualities of the beginning self", and so on. All these concepts imply an underscoring of interpersonal, as opposed to intrapsychic factors in the etiology of psychopathology.

Holmes emphasises as one of the main differences between attachment theory and classical psychoanalysis, that attachment theory implies "an essentially *harmonious*, rather than *conflictual*, model of mother-infant interaction, unless the interaction is disturbed by external difficulty" (Holmes, 1995, p.25). Of course, stating that conflict is not inherent does not mean that it is absent altogether. Indeed, Holmes implies that conflict can come about secondarily, as a consequence of environmental failure. Research done within the attachment tradition, as that using the AAI, amply demonstrates the existence of conflictual attachment patterns. At the same time, the characterisation of the attachment model as an harmonious one gives reason to ask whether attachment theory fails to take into consideration the pervasiveness of conflict in human development. In stressing the primary mutual adaptation of the partners within the attachment system, attachment theory may seem to imply that conflict is synonymous with maladaptation. An implication of such a view is that the aim of treatment should be a state of non-conflict. In contrast, classical psychoanalysis regards conflict as an inherent part of normal development. In Hartmann's words: "Typical conflicts are part and parcel of 'normal' development and disturbances in adaptation are included in its scope" (Hartmann, 1939b, p. 311). In other words, human self realisation and life together with other people necessarily imply conflicts in the individual, whether conscious or unconscious. A typical example is jealousy conflicts between siblings, where the older child becomes angry and aggressive

with the newcomer who has dethroned him, at the same time as he is expected to be kind and considerate: The internalisation of the demand to curb aggressiveness creates an intrapsychic conflict. Certainly, it seems difficult to consider conflicts such as these as a kind of pathology, or solely as a consequence of, e.g., empathic failure. The emphasis on the universality of conflicts constitutes a strong point of classical psychoanalysis. One could speculate whether different images of Man are at stake in the two theories. Does attachment theory offer a model that "softens" the tragic vision (Schafer, 1970) which is implied in classic theory, emphasising the inevitability of conflict?

The idea of deficiency in early years, however, has obtained broad acceptance also in contemporary psychoanalysis. Killingmo (1989) discusses how deficit can be added to the classical notion of conflict in conceptualising psychopathology. Most analysts of today will view psychopathology in terms of both conflict and deficit. In contrast, Kleinian psychoanalysis considers the classical conflict-paradigm sufficient when explaining psychopathology, so that no concept of deficit is needed. These different positions, of course, imply different conceptualisations of development. In Klein's thinking, the child has, from the start, an inherent destructiveness in conflict with the struggle to obtain a good internal object. In this theory, the stage is set for a dramatic psychological conflict, right from the beginning of postnatal life. However, as conflict is a psychic structure presupposing a certain level of development, Klein has to assume that the new-born is equipped with capacities both as concerns perceptual differentiation and formation of inner representations. In contrast, Killingmo (1989) argues that the organising of tension in intrapsychic conflict presupposes a certain structural development. Differentiation of ego functions is required. This means that the self representation has to be constituted as a centre responsible for one's own feelings and actions, before the organisation of psychic representations in a conflict structure becomes possible. A parallel question should be posed as regards the prerequisites for internal fantasy formation. If psychoanalysis is to be a theory encompassing an informed understanding of psychic development, such questions have to be addressed, taking into consideration research within e.g. the developmental field and the cognitive sciences. This is exactly what Bowlby aimed at, emphasising that the theoretical models of psychoanalysis should be confronted with findings from other scientific disciplines.

Another question is that of intrapsychic reper-

cussions of environmental failure. The issue here is the internalisation of experience, represented by Bowlby's (1969) concept of "internal working models". Working models of attachment are sets of expectations that include representations of self in relation to others, linked to affects. Generally speaking, internal models, according to Bowlby, represent relatively accurate accounts of actual interaction between child and caregiver: "the particular form that a person's working models take are a fair reflection of the types of experience he has had in his relationships with attachment figures" (Bowlby, 1973, p. 297). As has been pointed out by Holmes (1995) and Eagle (1995), this leads to a shift within attachment theory as regards the view of the unconscious, which is seen not so much as constructions of fantasy, but rather as containing a *direct* representation of the interpersonal world – of self, of object and of prototypic interactions between the two.

From a traditional psychoanalytic perspective, objections can obviously be raised against the idea of accuracy of representations, playing down the importance of fantasy and unconscious wishes in the establishment of internal representations. However, Bowlby's concept of internal working models, rather than addressing the rôle of fantasy, may be regarded as specifying the building up of the so called "representational world" (Sandler & Rosenblatt, 1962) on the basis of *perception*. Both the concept of "internal working model" and that of "representational world", so central in Sandler's theorising, may be regarded as filling a gap in psychoanalytic theory. Bowlby's concept is paralleled by many psychoanalysts focusing on affective representations of self in relation to others, e.g., Kernberg (1976) and Bucci (1997), and has been further detailed in, e.g., Stern's (1985) developmental theory, where the interpersonal world of the infant is in focus. Certainly, the idea of emotion schemas of self in relation to others occupies centre stage in contemporary psychoanalysis, and, according to Emde, has turned out particularly useful both in psychoanalytic research and in "developmentally oriented clinical thinking" (Emde, 1999, p. 329). In this connection, it should be noted that Bowlby also operates with a concept of *multiple* working models, which refers to contradictory or incompatible models regarding the attachment figures and the self. One example would be the formation of idealised models of parent-child interaction, reflecting the operation of defence mechanisms and fantasy elaborations. Here, it is suggested that different internal models in the individual may conflict with each other. Bowlby maintains that "the hypothesis of multiple

models, one of which is highly influential but relatively or completely unconscious, is no more than a version, in different terms, of Freud's hypothesis of a dynamic unconscious" (Bowlby, 1973, p. 239). As pointed out by Eagle, the concept of multiple models also seems to contradict the notion that representations are accurate. At this point, there would appear to be an unresolved contradiction within Bowlby's own theory. Attachment theory, after Bowlby, has addressed precisely the subject of internal representations, especially through the development of the Adult Attachment Interview.

To sum up, attachment theory differs from classical psychoanalysis at three levels: (1) basic explanatory principles, (2) theory of motivation and (3) understanding of psychopathology. Attachment, expressing a need for proximity, becomes the central motivational system instead of sexuality and aggression; the environmental and interpersonal dimensions are focused on at the expense of the intrapsychic; deficiency, to a large extent, replaces the notion of conflict. However, points of divergence with classical psychoanalysis also constitute points of convergence with object relations theories. A key idea is that psychological disturbances have their origin in real interactions and events, and that intrapsychic conflicts are formed later.

#### THERAPEUTIC IMPLICATIONS

Has attachment theory any implications for analytic attitude and technique? This question has not been extensively discussed within the attachment tradition. Bowlby himself emphasises that although attachment theory was formulated by a clinician for use in the diagnosis and treatment of "emotionally disturbed patients and families", its usage has hitherto mainly been to "promote research in developmental psychology" (Bowlby, 1988, p. ix). This is unfortunate: "it has ... been disappointing that clinicians have been so slow to test the theory's uses" (*ibid.*, p. x). Bowlby does not, however, indicate more precisely *which* assumptions that should eventually be tested.

In a discussion of therapeutic implications, Bowlby points out that a therapist applying attachment theory sees his rôle as being one of providing the conditions in which his patient can "explore his representational models of himself and his attachment figures with a view to reappraising and restructuring them in the light of the new understanding he acquires and the new experiences he has in the therapeutic relationship" (Bowlby, 1988, p. 138). It is emphasised that this process takes place through examination of the patient-therapist relationship. Fur-

thermore, understanding the origins of outdated, dysfunctional models comes forward as a main aim. Even though Bowlby uses a vocabulary different from that of classical psychoanalysis, there is a striking parallel to the classical psychoanalytical conception, emphasising the attainment of insight through repetition of maladaptive patterns in the transference. Certainly, it may seem somewhat surprising that attachment theory, focusing on relationships and bonding, is so much on a par with traditional views. Eagle notes that it is "ironic that during a period in psychoanalytic history in which the therapeutic value of insight, awareness and remembering has been radically de-emphasised, attachment research reminds us of their importance" (Eagle, 1995, p. 129).

Notwithstanding this general similarity with standard psychoanalysis, can we point to specific implications of interest for psychoanalytic technique? I will approach this question from the following three viewpoints: (1) secure base; (2) reality and fantasy; (3) parallels between parenting and psychotherapy.

#### *Secure base*

Attachment theory demonstrates a dialectical connection between attachment and exploration. The central finding is that whereas the insecure child constantly has to monitor the whereabouts of his attachment figures, the secure child can devote himself to exploration. As stated above, exploration concerns not only the outer, but also the inner world: The secure child can investigate both his own mind and that of his caregiver. A key concept here is that of "epistemic space". In psychoanalytic treatment, the analyst is faced with the question of how to help the patient tolerate and integrate his emotions and his own internal world and so to widen his epistemic space. In Holmes' (1995) words, the aim of psychoanalysis is to "liberate exploratory behaviour". Bowlby emphasises that a prerequisite for exploration in the treatment situation is that the therapist provides the patient with a *secure base* (Bowlby, 1988, p. 138). To treat a deeply distrustful person may be compared to making friends with a "shy or frightened pony: both situations require a prolonged, quiet, and friendly patience" (Bowlby, 1988, p. 143).

However, it seems difficult to argue that the emphasis on "friendly patience", etc., as aspects of the analyst's attitude, constitutes something radically new in psychoanalytic technique. First of all, Bowlby himself holds that the concept of secure base conveys the same qualities as Winnicott's concept of "holding" and Bion's concept of "containment". In a discussion of the "analytic attitude", Schafer (1983) points out

that also Freud, in his technical papers, implicitly underlines "safety" as a prerequisite for giving up resistance against extreme infantile anxiety and underlying fantasies. Thus, furthering an atmosphere of safety comes forward as an overriding aim of the analytic attitude (Schafer, 1983). Certainly, the idea of safety is more *explicitly* emphasised within psychoanalytic theory after Freud, e.g., through Sandler's (1969) concept of "the background of safety". In a recent discussion of psychoanalytic technique, Killingmo (1989) emphasises that the exploratory, knowing mode of psychoanalytic treatment presupposes a mode of an existential kind, where the feeling of safety is an essential component. So, even though the idea of safety has been lifted to the foreground in contemporary psychoanalysis, and quite pointedly by attachment theory, it has always acted as a "back cloth" in analytic technique.

However, it remains to be discussed what concrete implications this idea has for the analytic process. When Bowlby underscores that the therapist should "provide the patient with a secure base", every analyst will agree. At the same time, they know that this is not an easy task. It might be useful to distinguish between external preconditions for safety, and the subjective experience of the patient. "The therapeutic setting", i.e., fixed sessions, constancy, and predictability, as well as qualities of the therapeutic attitude, i.e., absence of critical or moral judgement, empathy and benign acceptance, and the "holding" atmosphere, constitute a necessary prerequisite for a feeling of safety. However, often patients' feelings of scepticism, mistrust and insecurity will remain. To weaken such feelings, empathy and benign acceptance are not enough. They can be weakened only through careful interpretative work. Put sharply, one could say that when the patient is able to experience the analytic setting as a secure base, the treatment can be terminated. Therefore, it is inadequate to say that *first*, a secure base has to be provided, and then exploration can begin. The point is that feelings of mistrust and insecurity are part of what has to be explored. Maybe it would be better to say that the patient must feel that he is *safe enough* to explore also his own insecurity.

Bowlby would seem to agree to this point, when he underlines that the patient, due to previous experience, will meet the therapist with mistrust and "misconstructions", without regard to the therapist's benevolence and consistency. To handle such distrust, the therapist needs to have the widest possible knowledge of the many forms these misconstructions can take and of the types of earlier experience from which they

are likely to have sprung from. "Without such knowledge, a therapist is poorly placed to see and feel the world as his patient is doing" (Bowlby 1988, p. 141). Bowlby here underlines the importance of getting to know the *unique* constructions of the individual's psychic reality. This point has to be emphasised, if not, the secure base idea may be simplified to imply that "warmth", empathy etc. exhaustively describe the therapeutic attitude.

A concept which may prove more fruitful, not only in describing qualities in interaction between the child and his caregivers, but also for characterising therapeutic attitude, is Bowlby's concept of "emotional availability" (Emde, 1988; Killingmo, 1989). Bowlby does not, however, elaborate on this concept in a therapeutic context. A challenge for future research is to describe and define more precisely what it means to be emotionally available, and how the analyst can be available to different kinds of patients. A contribution in this direction is the concept of *affirmation* developed by Killingmo (1989, 1995). Affirmation refers to a mode of intervention which is required in relation to patients who are unable to function in an exploratory mode. Whereas interpretation aims at *revealing* meaning, affirmation aims at *establishing* an experiential quality of meaningfulness. Affirmation implies an extension of traditional psychoanalytic technique.

#### *Reality and fantasy*

According to Bowlby, the theory of the *origins* of psychological disturbance constitutes the greatest difference between the attachment perspective and classical psychoanalysis. "Attachment-informed" listening is directed towards "what the patient has actually experienced in the past, or has repeatedly been told" (Bowlby, 1988, p. 141), and not towards unconscious fantasies. This emphasis on interpersonal experience in explaining psychopathology is undoubtedly one of the most significant contributions of attachment theory. At the same time, attachment theory may create an artificial antagonism between real experience and personal constructions of meaning, between reality and fantasy.

The basis for internalisation of interaction with caregivers is the child's *subjective experience* both of the attitudes, values, etc., of the object, and of the interaction with the object. This experience may be determined by the parents' unconscious attitude and communication, rather than by the verbally conveyed message. A boy may for example "capture" and internalise an unexpressed ambition or a judgmental attitude of his father's, contrasting with the father's declared attitude and values. Furthermore, the inter-

nalised picture of the father may be coloured by the boy's own aggression against his father. The "inner" father thus becomes more merciless in his strictness than the "real" father. This inner father may significantly mark the boy's attitude, both towards himself and towards other people. Thus, internalisation is to be conceived of as an active, "creative" process. Internalised object relations are not copies of observable interaction patterns, but represent subjective constructions of such interactions. *Psychic reality* is marked by unconscious perception, emotional reactions and fantasies. In psychoanalytic treatment, this psychic reality is what the analyst deals with. Furthermore, the analyst has to take into account that inner object scenarios represent intrapsychic structures, that are relatively independent of the surrounding environment, and that are resistant to change. For example, an internalised scepticism may constitute a persistent resistance in analysis.

As stated before, Bowlby also underlines the importance of the patient's constructions and misconstructions. On the other hand, other statements by Bowlby emphasise that therapeutic listening should give priority to external circumstances, to what actually happened. In a discussion of the scientific status of psychoanalysis, Bowlby (1988) seems to imply that the two perspectives, the internal and the external, should be given different emphasis in different contexts. External events are stressed when trying to understand the general principles of personality development and the origins of psychological disturbance, while the patient's psychic reality, the personal constructions and meanings, is the focus in the clinical situation. The first perspective stands at the heart of Bowlby's theory. As to the interpretation of the patient's idiosyncratic constructions, this is not of *specific* interest to him.

#### *The parental metaphor*

Bowlby's idea of emotional availability may lead one to think that there are, generally speaking, clear parallels between the interactive processes taking place between parent-child, and those of the therapeutic relationship. For example, Holmes (1995) states that "similar behaviours" (i.e., consistency, responsiveness, attunement) that influence security in childhood, may influence the establishment of a secure therapeutic bond. Using the role of the parent as a paradigm for that of the analyst was not unknown in former psychoanalysis (Loewald, 1963), but has been actualised in recent theory (Emde, 1988). There are undoubtedly good reasons for such a comparison. The increased emphasis on understanding psychic

disturbances as a consequence of developmental failures, may result in an even broader use of the parental function as a model of that of the therapist. One may, e.g., think that the analyst should adopt the role of the "developmental object" that the parents failed to be.

To my mind there are, however, clear limits to the parallels. I have argued elsewhere that the application of a "parental metaphor" to describe the therapeutic attitude should be examined critically. The fact that certain relationship patterns between parents and child are optimal for the development of the child, does not necessarily mean that the *same* type of relationship has a *therapeutic* effect (Gullestad, 1992b). An illustrative example is the confirming function of the parents, as conceived by Kohut (1971). In Kohut's thinking, "confirmation" refers to a mirroring of the child's grandiose self, the core experience being "the gleam in the mother's eye which mirrors the child's exhibitionistic display" (Kohut, 1971, p. 116). As I see it, this kind of confirmation is radically different from the confirming function of the therapist. Whereas the former, which I call "first-order confirmation", represents a direct "recharging" of self-esteem through gratification of narcissistic needs, the second – "second-order confirmation" conveys that it is legitimate to feel what one feels. Uncritical application of a parental metaphor may lead to a simplified conception of the therapist role and runs the risk of confusing therapy and caregiving.

Bowlby himself expressed the wish that the therapeutic implications of attachment theory should be taken more seriously by clinicians. I have discussed the question of therapeutic implications from three viewpoints: (1) secure base; (2) reality and fantasy; (3) parallels between parenting and psychotherapy. As far as I can see, attachment theory has not contributed in a *specific* manner to psychoanalytic technique along these lines. However, to my mind, the concept of emotional availability comes forward as a creative formulation contributing to the analyst's position in the therapeutic interaction.

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