

## Chapter 2

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### Theoretical Background

IN THIS CHAPTER WE LAY THE THEORETICAL GROUNDWORK FOR UNDERSTANDING the Dynamic-Maturational Model's (DMM) approach to the AAI in two ways. First, we review briefly the accretion of ideas included in the DMM method for analyzing discourse in the AAI. In addition, we differentiate the array of patterns used in the DMM method from those used in the Main and Goldwyn method. Second, we describe the conceptual organization of the ABC strategies. That is, in Chapter 1 we described the patterns whereas here we present their underlying structures. Ainsworth offered three distinct categories (A, B, and C); in the DMM method, these are reconceptualized as reflecting two opposite psychological processes (Types A and C) and their co-occurrence (Types B and A/C).

#### ATTACHMENT AND PATTERNS OF ATTACHMENT

Understanding attachment in adulthood requires considerable understanding of attachment theory itself. Because much has been written about attachment theory already, only the essential rudiments are provided here in the form of a very brief discussion of the major contribu-

tions of Bowlby, Ainsworth, Crittenden, Main, and Fonagy to attachment theory, particularly as it is operationalized in the DMM approach to the Adult Attachment Interview (AAI). References to fuller discussion of these ideas are included.

### Bowlby

Attachment theory, as introduced by Bowlby (1969/1982, 1973, 1980), is an organizational, systemic theory regarding the function and development of human protective behavior. Bowlby's theory integrated ethological, evolutionary, psychoanalytic, and cognitive theories. Attachment theory postulates that humans are innately predisposed to form attachment relationships to their primary caregivers, attachment relationships function to protect the attached person, and such relationships exist in an organized form by the end of the first year of life. The attachment relationship itself is defined as a tie, that endures across time and space, to a specific person to whom one turns when one feels vulnerable and in need of protection (Ainsworth, 1973). Bowlby presented considerable evidence indicating that separation from, or loss of, an attachment figure is associated with a variety of psychological and physical disorders, including anxiety, depressive disorders, and criminality (Bowlby, 1944, 1958, 1973, 1980). He believed that such disorders were relatively stable but amenable to change through treatment (Bowlby, 1979).

In his later work, Bowlby proposed the construct of internal representational models to explain how prior experience was retained over time and used to guide expectations and future behavior. He further suggested that there were multiple internal representational models tied to (a) different relationships and (b) different memory systems, such as semantic and episodic memory (Bowlby, 1980, Chapter 3). In the same chapter, Bowlby discussed mental integration of information held in different memory systems from the perspective of cognitive theory about information processing (Tulving, 1979).

Bowlby also introduced the notion of developmental pathways. Such pathways were not *trajectories*, meaning that, once the direction of the pathway was initiated, it was not necessarily maintained throughout the life-span. On the contrary, the metaphor of *pathways* was used explicitly because it contained the notion of change points and intersections where one's direction could be modified in ways that were not necessarily predictable from the original path. This aspect of mental

and behavioral organization is especially important because Bowlby was dedicated to the development of theory that would be clinically relevant to initiating change. The notion of pathways is relevant to the AAI classifications that are "earned" or "reorganizing," that is, changing from a former Type A or C strategy to a Type B strategy.

Possibly the most useful of Bowlby's contributions was his example of integration of the best of empirical science and other theories into attachment theory. By doing so, he created a state-of-the-art theory and modeled the means by which its relevance could be maintained.

### Ainsworth

Ainsworth's primary contribution to attachment theory was the notion of individual differences in patterns of attachment (Ainsworth et al., 1978). Patterns of attachment reflect individuals' unique expectations regarding the availability and responsivity of specific attachment figures to meet their need for protection. This notion was developed through Ainsworth's anthropological observation of infant-mother dyads in Uganda (Ainsworth, 1967), then replicated and expanded in her longitudinal research in the United States (Ainsworth et al., 1978).

Her second and crucial contribution was to tie these outcome categories to differences in maternal home behavior during the 11 months preceding the administration of the Strange Situation. Without this empirical basis, it is unlikely that attachment theory would have been taken seriously. Instead, with an elegantly designed, ecologically valid data collection and careful, detailed data analysis of a short longitudinal study, Ainsworth put attachment front and center in development psychology.

Ainsworth also introduced the idea that *patterning*, and not quantitative variation on multiple dimensions, was the basis of organization. Three major patterns of attachment in infancy were identified and empirically tied to their roots in maternal sensitive responsiveness:

- Infants whose mothers were consistently and sensitively responsive to infants' attachment behavior were labeled Type B (Secure).
- Infants whose mothers were predictably rejecting of attachment behavior were labeled Type A (Avoidant).
- Infants whose mothers were inconsistently or insensitively responsive to attachment behavior were labeled Type C (Ambivalent).

Early studies indicated that approximately two thirds of infants could be classified as securely attached (Type B) and almost one third as avoidantly attached (Type A) with a small percentage as ambivalently attached (Type C) (Ainsworth, 1979). Nevertheless, when the classificatory procedure was applied to infants who varied widely in socioeconomic status, culture, and quality of childrearing, the proportion of securely attached children was lower, sometimes very substantially lower. In addition, there were three expansions to the original Ainsworth system: Bell's identification of the B4 classification (Bell, 1970), Crittenden's identification of an A/C classification (1985a, 1985b), and Main and Solomon's identification of a disorganized category (Main & Solomon, 1986, 1990). The latter two expansions reduced even further the proportion of securely attached children, even in low-risk samples. Finally, the use of videotape permitted more precise and detailed observation of infant behavior. By permitting identification of fleeting behavior and subtle discrepancies among behaviors, this technological advance further reduced the proportion of children classified as Type B. Thus, a better estimate of security would be that no more than half of a nonrisk, middle-class, Anglo (specifically, American, Australian, Canadian, and English) sample would be expected to be classified as Type B (see van IJzendoorn, Goldberg, Kroonenberg, & Frenkel, 1992). The distributions for other cultures are less clear (see Crittenden, 2000b). For high-risk groups, the proportion of Type B children is substantially lower to nonexistent (cf. Pleshkova & Muhamedrahimov, 2010).

Discussion of the use of terminology is relevant here. The terms *secure* and *anxious* (including both anxious-avoidant and anxious-ambivalent) tend to be used more often than the letters A, B, and C. Nevertheless, when Ainsworth first identified the three patterns, Bowlby's advice was to give them simple letter identifiers until meanings of behaviors were understood (Ainsworth, personal communication, 1980). As work expanded to include an increasing range of cultures and subcultures, it became apparent that attachment nomenclature is sometimes perceived as offensive and pejorative. This is true of both the labels given by Ainsworth and those that Crittenden and others have applied. In addition, the terminology overlooks the contextual validity and adaptiveness of the non-B patterns. Put another way, the terminology may be prematurely evaluative. For these reasons, we use the letter notations frequently. Nevertheless, there remains a tension between the theory offered and the pattern labels. Hopefully, this discrepancy will

function to instigate further research into the meaning of the patterns in varied contexts.

To summarize, Ainsworth's central contribution to attachment in adulthood is the notion of individual differences in patterns of attachment, expressed as the ABC classificatory system that she identified among infant-mother dyads and tied to the infants' developmental experience. Main applied this to the AAI in terms of both the classificatory system and the expected distributions of the classifications.<sup>1</sup> Ainsworth's classificatory system is applied in the DMM with modification of both the array of classifications and the distributional expectations. It should be noted that Ainsworth ultimately concluded that an expanding array of organized patterns better captured the essence of attachment than did the idea of disorganization, which she thought would only be a transitory state (Crittenden & Ainsworth, 1989).

In addition, Ainsworth exemplified a model of theory development and exploratory research that is open-ended and anthropologically descriptive and that encourages expansion and modification of earlier work. Thus, in the terminology of attachment theory, both Bowlby and Ainsworth demonstrated use of representations that were open to new information and readily modified on the basis of such information.

### Crittenden

Based on several developmental theories, current work in the cognitive neurosciences, and work with risk families (particularly maltreating families), Crittenden began proposing expansions to Ainsworth's ABC model. As she prepared her thesis under Ainsworth (Crittenden, 1981), she proposed new organizations. She also proposed an A/C pattern for endangered infants while preparing her dissertation, again under Ainsworth (Crittenden, 1985b). Later, A3-4 and C3-4 patterns were added for the preschool years (Crittenden, 1992) and A5-6 and C5-6 were proposed for the school years (Crittenden, 1994). With Ainsworth, she coauthored a chapter on the self-protective strategies of maltreated children (Crittenden & Ainsworth, 1989). They argued that disorganization, if it occurred, would be transient and replaced by context-adapted strategies, including A/C, compulsive Type A (i.e., A3-6), and extremely anxious strategies.

1. Main retained both B4 and the disorganized category, but not A/C, in her AAI classificatory system. Hesse later included A/C equivalents under the heading of "Cannot Classify" (Hesse, 1996).

Later, the array of expansions became known as the Dynamic-Maturational Model of attachment and adaptation. The DMM describes variation and change across the life-span in the development of attachment relationships. This perspective proposes that maturation is in dynamic interaction with experience, yielding the potential for lawful change in patterns of attachment, that is, "reorganization" (Crittenden, 1994, 1995, 2008). Changes in pattern are expected to be particularly frequent near periods of rapid neurological change (i.e., near transitions in developmental "stage"). Thus, Crittenden expected the possibility of changes in pattern of attachment at several points prior to adulthood.

Further, Crittenden suggested that a very great majority of infants, especially those who experience dangerous circumstances, have organized strategies for relating to their attachment figures. Indeed, she argued that danger is central both to the evolution of attachment processes in our species and also to the organization of specific attachment relationships in each individual (Crittenden, 1997c, 1999b). Consequently, she considers information relevant to predicting danger and protecting oneself from it to be the basis of pattern of attachment. She uses this perspective because it focuses attention on the *function* of attachment; distortions in the way information is processed preserve the function under conditions of threat. The distortions are of considerable clinical relevance; indeed, they can be considered the means by which risk for psychopathology develops and maladaptation is maintained (Crittenden, 1996, 2002). If this perspective is accurate, understanding the organization and function of these distortions may generate new approaches to diagnosis and treatment. If the distortions can be identified in the AAI, then the AAI may become an important clinical diagnostic tool.

Because maltreated children experience both threats of danger and actual danger, they provide an exceptional opportunity to study the development of adaptation to danger. In Crittenden's studies of maltreated children, she identified one complex pattern in infancy that protected children who were both abused and neglected (i.e., A/C, Crittenden, 1985a, 1985b). Other researchers have associated this pattern with bipolar depression in mothers, that is, another source of variable danger (Radke-Yarrow, Cummings, Kuczynski, & Chapman, 1985). In addition, she hypothesized that patterns of attachment become more complex with development and has offered evidence of one new major pattern of organization, coercion (Type C), and several new patterns

within Type A, including compulsive caregiving and compulsive compliance, that first develop in the preschool years (Crittenden, 1992).

This process of expanding the array of patterns, resulting from the interaction of experience with maturation, became the basis of a life-span model of the development of strategies for coping with dangerous conditions (see Figure 1.1 in Chapter 1). Because this model has been described at length in many places (Crittenden, 1995, 2000a, 2000b, 2008), it will not be described in more than a cursory manner here. It does, however, form the backbone of the DMM method for analyzing AAI transcripts.

The Dynamic-Maturational Model represents a conceptualization of self-protective strategies based on evolved aspects of information processing. Specifically, innate aspects of organic processing (somatic information), temporal order of stimulation (cognition), and intensity of stimulation (affect) are identified as the three most basic forms of information about whether, when, and where there might be danger. Reliance on cognitive information, to the relative exclusion of affect, is the basis for the Type A classifications, whereas reliance on affect, to the relative exclusion of cognition, is the basis for the Type C classifications. Type B is defined by flexible use and integration of both sources of information. Transformations of cognition and affect permit more precise identification of the most probable sources of danger as well as the organization of protective responses. Concurrently, however, the transformations distort information in ways that often lead to heightened expectation of danger and, thus, to the use of self-protective behavior under safe circumstances. Change in the array of transformations reflects change in strategy in this model. Framed in this way, the pattern of attachment becomes a dimensional construct defined by a horizontal dimension of source of information and a vertical dimension of type of transformation of information (see Figure 1.1). Type B individuals, at the top of the model, integrate true affect and cognition whereas, at the bottom of the model, falsified and sometimes delusional information is integrated by psychopathic individuals while they exclude denied information from processing (Type AC).

This model leads to at least two points of tension. First, it creates a range of functioning (as opposed to categories) within all classifications (including within Type B). Consequently, the classifications become approximations of unique individual patterns. Second, in this model every pattern carries both adaptive and maladaptive aspects.

Given this complexity, the verbal labels cannot reflect all the possi-

bilities within a pattern or even the primary function of the pattern and primary advantages and risks associated with it. Consequently, this model offers the advantages of being theoretically comprehensive and of differentiating a wider range of functioning than the original Ainsworth system and the early expansions of it. Nevertheless, it, too, leaves a range of differentiation (ultimately individual-specific, unique differentiation) unnamed.

An important point regarding within-pattern variation is the pervasiveness of the strategy within the person's functioning. If one considers distance from the center of the model as indicative of greater penetration of the strategy into all aspects of an individual's functioning, then placement near the edges of the model should have implications for both greater risk of psychopathology and also more severe psychopathology.

An important feature of the model is the inclusion of sexuality in adolescent and adult functioning. Protection and reproduction are proposed to constitute the two major organizing functions of human behavior (Crittenden, 1997a). The emphasis on danger harkens back to the earliest work in attachment theory, for example, Bowlby's study of 44 juvenile thieves (Bowlby, 1944) and his work with children displaced during World War II (Bowlby, 1951). Because reproduction does not motivate behavior until after puberty, distortions of sexuality are reflected only in the late developing patterns. Nevertheless, the central threat of failure to reproduce successfully is presumed to interact with aspects of attachment in ways that modify mental and behavioral organization. Further, even though the AAI was not intended to address sexuality, in clinical populations speakers' responses frequently include references to sexuality. Therefore, distortions of sexuality are addressed in the coding method described here.

Finally, Crittenden emphasized the notion that patterns of attachment reflect learned patterns of mentally managing cognitive and affective information so as to predict and adapt to dangerous circumstances and opportunities for reproduction (Crittenden, 2002). In particular, she focused on the notion that the brain transforms sensory stimulation into predictive information about dangerous and safe conditions and opportunities for sex. This idea is expanded in Chapter 4 in the discussion of transformations of information, representational models, and memory systems.

With regard to the AAI, we propose that adults' discourse reflects mental processes used both to focus on the most salient and meaning-

ful predictors of danger and reproduction and to preclude awareness of information that increases danger and feelings of anxiety. Because maturation increases the range of mental and behavioral responses, the need for and use of self-protective organizations of thought and behavior may change with development, even when circumstances themselves are unchanging. This can result in a change in pathways as well as the organization of new strategies. The outcome of the changes can be observed in AAI discourse. These changes involve a process of reorganization and that, too, can be observed in AAI discourse.

The developmental aspects of a Dynamic-Maturational approach to attachment theory suggest that new patterns that reflect increasingly sophisticated organizations of the ABC processes of managing information should be expected. One of the most exciting aspects of the AAI and its discourse analysis is its potential to enable us to identify new patterns. Thus, we think the AAI can be used for exploratory research that will extend our understanding of human development and adaptation.

### Main

Main and her colleagues have made crucial contributions to the understanding and assessment of attachment in adulthood. These began with identifying unusual behavior among mildly stressed infants that were interpreted as being indicative of disorganized attachment to a caregiver who was frightened or frightening (Main & Hesse, 1990; Main & Solomon, 1986, 1990; Main & Weston, 1981). The disorganized category was hypothesized to be associated, in the AAI, with fearful preoccupation with attachment relationships (E3) and lack of resolution of loss and trauma (Main & Hesse, 1990) or Cannot Classify (Hesse, 1996).<sup>2</sup>

Using Bowlby's ideas regarding semantic and episodic memory, George, together with Kaplan and Main, constructed a protocol of questions for the AAI (George et al., 1985, 1996). Main and Goldwyn constructed a method of discourse analysis (Main & Goldwyn, 1984). The interview and classificatory method incorporate the notion of memory systems by asking specifically about semantic and episodic memory and the integration of these; lack of concordance between these memory systems is crucial to assigning an insecure classification.

2. The notion of trauma has been narrowed to abuse in childhood in more recent guides to Main and Goldwyn's method.

Based on Main's transgenerational hypothesis, mothers are thought to "transmit" their pattern of attachment to their infants. Thus, mothers of Type A infants were expected to be "Dismissing" (Ds) with regard to attachment; mothers of Type B infants would be "Free/autonomous" (F), and mothers of Type C infants would be "Preoccupied/entangled" (E). In the DMM, parents' representations are not thought to directly affect children's representations. Instead, parents act, creating a sensory context for children. From that context, children select stimuli to attend to and then transform those stimuli into representations that organize the child's behavior. That is, each person constructs his or her own representations independently of others' representations and without direct access to any other mind or representations. Thus, children's representations may (or may not) match their parents' representations (Crittenden, 2008).

A number of studies support Main's hypothesis of continuity in pattern of attachment across the life-span and across generations in middle-class, low-risk, maritally and geographically stable families (van IJzendoorn, 1995). Thus, it appears that the conditions conducive to Type B attachments are also those associated with continuity of pattern of attachment. Families in high-risk and unstable conditions and with Types A and C attachments showed considerably less stability (see, e.g., Crittenden et al., 1991). On the other hand, studies that looked at continuity *within* anxious attachment have found discontinuity in the form of A-to-C and C-to-A reversals (see Hautamäki, Hautamäki, Neuvonen, & Maliniemi-Piispanen, 2010; Shah, Fonagy, & Strathearn, 2010).

### Fonagy

Peter Fonagy and his colleagues have been particularly attracted to the notion of mentalization, that is, the ability to imagine that the minds of other people might perceive things differently from one's own. Their particular contribution to the analysis of AAI discourse has been to integrate psychoanalytic perspectives and work on theory of mind with attachment theory. The outcomes were the construct of "reflective functioning" (Fonagy et al., 1995) as well as a method for identifying such processes in AAI discourse (Fonagy, Steele, Steele, & Target, 1997). Reflective thought is associated with Type B and its absence with psychopathology (Fonagy et al., 1996). In the method offered here, there is considerable overlap between the notion of reflective self-processes

and what we call "reflective integration." (Because the concepts are not identical, a related term was used, rather than appropriating, and possibly distorting, Fonagy's term.) Nevertheless, Fonagy's thinking has been central to the notion of reflective integration.

There are, however, differences between Fonagy's perspective and the DMM. Like most attachment researchers, Fonagy focused on attachment as a specific dyadic relationship. In the DMM, that is one aspect of attachment, but the power of early attachment to predict later functioning is thought to lie in the influence of early relationships with attachment figures on how children learn to process information. Thus, attachment is treated here as (a) a relationship construct, (b) the pattern of mentally processing of information about danger and safety, and (c) a self-protective strategy.

In addition, Fonagy and his colleagues focused more on the positive quality of "mentalization," including how individuals monitor their own mental representations and how attachment figures' mental representations affect the mental representations of attached children. In the DMM, mental functioning is very important, but there is equal interest in how the minds of individuals who do not mentalize manage information.

Finally, according to Fonagy, reflective functioning is central to accurate prediction of others' behaviors, attachment security, differentiation of appearance from reality, and communication. Although we agree with that, we are aware that, in deceptive situations, distorted representations can predict more safely than accurate representations. Moreover, we are wary of encouraging very disturbed individuals to use mentalization for self-protective functions because this may concurrently endanger others. That is, as one approaches psychopathy, in the Dynamic-Maturational Model, the integration of false, denied, and delusional information may lead to unnervingly accurate predictions about others' behaviors, deceptively smooth communication, and uncanny distortions of appearance and reality, all couched in statements that closely resemble reflective thinking. The issue becomes differentiating these two, being able to do this might be essential for avoiding classifying criminals as "secure" (Fonagy, Target, et al., 1997). As Fonagy noted, one key to this differentiation is the ability to conceptualize concurrently and accurately both others' and one's own perspectives (Fonagy et al., 1995).

Nevertheless, most of these differences in theory are peripheral to

the notion of reflective functioning itself. Fonagy's approach to reflective self-functioning is highly relevant to the method offered here and many ideas are borrowed from it.

### THE DYNAMIC-MATURATIONAL CLASSIFICATORY SYSTEM

In this section, we provide a theoretical introduction to the AAI classifications in the Dynamic-Maturational Model. Ainsworth's three basic strategies form the core of the classificatory system, with the notion of cognition and affect functioning as information about when and where there might be danger constituting the explanation for the universality of the three patterns.

The central points to be made about the strategies in this chapter are that (1) Types A and C are construed as psychological opposites, with Types B and AC being their integration, and (2) the patterns are organized on several logical gradients. It should be noted that the discussion in this chapter is focused on the strategies themselves and not on the classificatory method for discerning an individual's strategy from an AAI.

Ainsworth identified three patterns of attachment descriptively. Nevertheless, to her and to many others, there appeared to be a dimensional relation among the three. In the section below, two processes and their co-occurrence are described. That is, the DMM is inherently a two-category model that includes gradations between the two processes. The two processes are drawn from information processing and refer to transformation of sensory stimulation into two basic forms of information. One is temporally ordered "cognitive" information; this is the basis for the Type A organization. The other is based on the intensity of the stimulation and yields the construct of "affect"; this is the basis of the Type C organization. Type B is their balanced integration.

#### *Type B Patterns*

The Type B pattern in adulthood is labeled "balanced" in the DMM method because it reflects a balanced integration of affect and cognition and because adults in unsafe conditions can be psychologically balanced without being secure. Within Type B, there is variation from those who emphasize cognitive information a bit (B1-2) to those who

emphasize affective information a bit (B4-5), with B3 indicating (theoretically) perfect balance between the sources of information. The hallmark, however, is flexibility in the use of cognition or affect in any particular situation. Moreover, Type B individuals use true information in their own processing and, thus, do not distort, omit, or falsify information to themselves (i.e., they do not deceive themselves). Nevertheless, they can apply any of the strategies to particular problems that are best resolved with a non-B strategy. Moreover, they can both explain why they used the non-B strategy and also cease to use it when it is no longer necessary for protection. That is, individuals using a Type B strategy have access to all the information, all the transformations of information, and all the behavioral strategies. They use these in a flexible, context-specific manner, seeking always the most adaptive strategy for their own benefit and for the benefit of their partners and progeny and of their human context in general.

#### *Type A Patterns*

The Type A pattern in adulthood refers to both dismissing the perspective, intentions, and feelings of the self and also preoccupation with the perspectives, desires, and feelings of others. The source of information regarding others' perspectives is temporal consequences tied to behavior of the self. Type A individuals behave as if following the rule: *Do the right thing—from the perspective of other people and without regard to your own feelings or desires.*

The Dynamic-Maturational classifications include six patterns (A3-8) not found in Ainsworth's infant model or Main's life-span model. Some of these were described by Bowlby and some were derived from Crittenden's clinical and empirical work. The A3 (compulsive caregiving) and A6 (compulsively self-reliant) patterns have their roots in Bowlby's work (1973, 1980, respectively), and A4 (compulsive compliance) has a substantial clinical history in the child abuse literature (see Crittenden & DiLalla, 1988). The A5 (compulsively promiscuous) pattern was observed by Crittenden in AAIs of some speakers who were in therapy. It is an expected pattern, based on (a) the early work on children's indiscriminate or "promiscuous" attachment behavior during extended (or permanent) separation from parents (Robertson & Bowlby, 1952; Robertson & Robertson, 1971) and after foster placement and (b) theory (Crittenden, 1997a). The A7 (delusional idealization) pattern has been described in the clinical literature on traumatized in-

**Figure 2.1. Affective structure of the Type A subpatterns.**

A1-2	Inhibit negative affect regarding psychological discomfort
A3-4	Substitute false positive affect for inhibited negative affect
A5-6	Deny significance of physiological discomfort while continuing inhibition and falsification as needed
A7-8	Deny perception of pain while sometimes adding delusional positive affects, and continuing inhibition and falsification as needed

dividuals under various labels, including the "hostage syndrome" (Cassidy, 2002; Goddard & Stanley, 1994; Kuleshnyk, 1984). The A8 (externally assembled self) refers to the often masochistic strategy of individuals who have been severely mistreated from very early in life in ways that prevent the construction of a self-narrative.

These strategies all emphasize cognitive information in the organization of behavior and vary in how affect is treated. On the vertical gradient, the Type A patterns vary from omitting display of negative affect to replacing it with false positive affect to increasing negation of affective response of all kinds up to lack of response to pain (see Figure 2.1).

The gradient within cognitive information differentiates odd- and even-numbered patterns such that the odd-numbered patterns increasingly idealize the attachment figure whereas the even-numbered patterns increasingly negate the self (see Figure 2.2).

**Figure 2.2. Cognitive structure of the Type A subpatterns.**

Odd-numbered subpatterns Idealize Others	Even-numbered subpatterns Negate Self
A1: Idealizing others	A2: Distancing from self
A3: Compulsive Caregiving 1. Attention 2. Caregiving	A4: Compulsive Compliance 1. Performance 2. Compliance
A5: Compulsive Promiscuity 1. Social 2. Sexual	A6: Compulsive Self-Reliance 1. Social 2. Isolated
A7: Delusional Idealization	A8: Externally Assembled Self

### *Type C Patterns*

The Type C pattern in adulthood refers to a preoccupation with the perspective of the self and justification of the self, and also dismissing of others, both as valued people and as sources of valid information. The source of information regarding the perspective of the self is one's feelings or one's arousal (i.e., affect). The strategy can be thought of as fitting the following dictum: *Stay true to your feelings and do not negotiate, compromise, or delay gratification in ways that favor the perspectives of others.*

In the Dynamic-Maturational Model, the Type C coercive strategy is organized around affect, specifically desire for comfort, anger, and fear. These feelings motivate specific sorts of behavior. Desire for comfort motivates approach with requests for affection or comfort. Anger motivates approach with verbal or physical attack. Fear motivates withdrawal/escape. Quite obviously, if all are displayed at once, one's behavior becomes incoherent, self-defeating, and nonprotective. Nevertheless, any one of these might be the best solution to a threat. Because all are activated by perceived danger, the issue becomes organizing them in a way that permits strategic use of affective arousal and motivation.

Beginning in the preschool years—and continuing throughout the life-span—this organization is managed by "splitting" the mixed feelings associated with arousal and displaying one part in an exaggerated manner that elicits a response from others while concurrently inhibiting display of the competing feelings. Once the other person has responded, the current display is maintained or reversed, contingent upon the other person's behavior. The most frequent split is between the invulnerable display of anger and the vulnerable appearance of fear and desire for comfort.

The Dynamic-Maturational classifications include increasingly extreme forms of the coercive strategy, all of which involve an even-odd alternation of displaying angry invulnerability with vulnerable fear and desire for comfort (i.e., C1-2, C5-6, etc.). C1 is a simple mildly threatening pattern in which the threat is easily and quickly disarmed by its paired strategy C2. C3 is a strategy of displaying exaggerating anger, that is, aggression, whereas C4 indicates a strategy of exaggerated fearfulness (feigned helpless). The obsessive strategies include C5 (punitively angry and obsessed with revenge) and C6 (seductive or ob-



essed with rescue). C5-6 also reflect the distorted integration of sexuality with the Type C strategy in which sexuality is used as a currency in interpersonal exchange to obtain other less explicitly identified advantages from the seduced person. The extreme obsessive strategies consist of C7 (menacing) and C8 (paranoid) in which anger and fear, respectively, are combined with denial of self-responsibility. As affect becomes more intense and focused, true cognition is transformed first to distorted cognition, then to falsified cognition, and, at C7-8, to denied cognition. The absence of accurate cognitive information accounts for the irrational quality of C7-8 behavior.

Viewed this way, in Figure 2.3, the odd-numbered patterns on the right side of the model all organize around feelings of anger, from very slight irritated anger (B5) to mild anger (C1), to substantial anger expressed with overt aggression (C3), to obsessive directed anger that may be covertly enacted (C5), to overwhelming, unfocused rage that is directed toward unsuspecting victims who perceive no logical connection of themselves to the aggressor (C7). On the vulnerable side, where desire for comfort and fear are used to organize behavior, the gradient is from almost complete desire for comfort to the near exclusion of anger and fear (B4) to mostly desire for comfort with some minor fear (C2), to substantial fear mixed with equal desire for comfort (C4), to dominating fear that is expressed covertly (C6), to overwhelming, unfocused fear in response to people from whom there is no logical reason to expect attack (C8).

Cognitively, Type C individuals avoid taking responsibility by using increasingly distorted transformations of information. As shown in Figure 2.4, cognitive structures include passive semantic thought, which refers to failing to reach semantic conclusions; reductionist blam-

Figure 2.3. Affective structure of the Type C subpatterns.

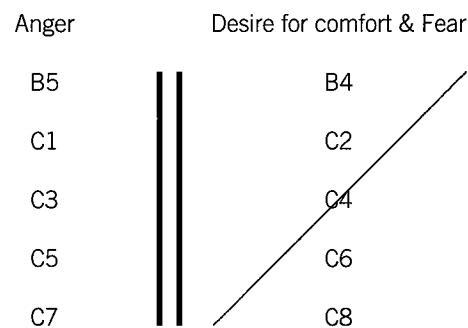


Figure 2.4. Cognitive structure of the Type C subpatterns.

C1-2	Passive semantic thought
C3-4	Reductionist blaming thought
C5-6	Rationalization of self
C7-8	Denied self-responsibility and, sometimes, delusions of power/threat

ing thought, which refers to attributing responsibility to others by omitting information about one's own contribution; rationalization of self, which refers to creating false, but persuasive, reasons that relieve the self of responsibility (thus making the self an innocent aggressor or victim); and denied self-responsibility or delusional states in which, coupled with denial of one's own causal contribution, one perceives oneself as having overwhelming power or being completely victimized.

### Other Categories

In the Dynamic-Maturational Model, any Type A or Type C strategy can be combined in an alternating A/C strategy, for example, A2/C1 or A4/C4. Strategies can also be blended, with the ultimate integration of the threatened and threatening strategies being A7-8/C7-8, psychopathy.

This is admittedly a very cursory review of the DMM classificatory method. These classifications are described more thoroughly in the remainder of this book. For a more detailed understanding of the theory underlying the new patterns, please refer to the publications in the references, particularly those by Crittenden (1995, 2000a, 2000b, 2000c, 2008).

### CONCLUSION

The ideas of Bowlby, Ainsworth, Crittenden, Main, and Fonagy are all reflected in the modified AAI. However, DMM theory implies less continuity, across individual life-spans and across generations, than Main hypothesizes and this suggests the need for a broader range of adult classifications. In addition, Crittenden's thinking about the processing

of cognition and affect suggests additional techniques for the analysis of AAI discourse (see Chapter 4). These additional techniques expand Main and Goldwyn's classificatory procedures by clarifying and augmenting them rather than being in conflict with them. In addition, they provide a starting point for the exploration of new classifications. Finally, a DMM approach focuses attention directly on the roles of danger and sexuality in organizing thought and behavior, particularly in disturbed individuals. This approach holds the potential to facilitate study of the meaningful function (both currently and in childhood) of apparently maladaptive behavior and, with appropriate modification of the interview, of other adult attachment relationships (e.g., with spouses, children, and aging parents). The outcome could be better understanding of

- the developmental processes that lead to dysfunction (thus, promoting prevention efforts);
- the mental processes that maintain maladaptive behavior (thus, promoting new perspectives on the nature of psychological treatment); and
- normative developmental processes.

A particular contribution of the DMM method of discourse analysis is the focus on the nature of mental processes in cases of disturbance and psychopathology. Put another way, rather than assigning most of these transcripts to a "Cannot Classify" category, an attempt has been made to understand how information is transformed and how these transformations function when speakers have been exposed to self-threatening danger.

## Chapter 3

### Information Processing

IN THIS CHAPTER WE FOCUS ON THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF COGNITIVE PSYCHOLOGY and the cognitive neurosciences to the discourse analysis used in the Dynamic-Maturational Model (DMM) method. In essence, we provide a guide to the relation between brain/mind and the Adult Attachment Interview (AAI), as an assessment of mental representations.

That is, the brain is conceptualized as a meaning-generating organ, one that uses input to generate self-relevant meanings, particularly with regard to danger and sexual opportunity. The basic notion to be presented here is that the brain functions as a branching network of distributed parallel processing, in which each different neurological pathway transforms the input signal differently. The input to this network is initially sensory stimulation, generated from within the self and from outside the self, and, as processing continues, also from self-generated transformations that reflect attempts to bring coherence to the set of representations.

The first split in the branching network responds to two different attributes of sensory stimulation: temporal order and intensity. Thereafter, different areas of the brain receive the transformed output and transform it further before passing it forward, again in parallel branches, to other parts of the brain for further analysis and imputation of meaning. At each step, the neurological pathway constitutes a representation