

Avoidant Attachment in Men: The Worksheet

Here is the specific problem with this pattern in men: it is indistinguishable, from the inside, from being good at being a man. Handle your own problems -- applauded. Stay calm while others flap -- applauded. Show love by fixing, providing, showing up with a van on moving day -- applauded. The avoidant pattern can run its entire programme inside behaviour your culture rewards, which is why men usually meet it late, and secondhand: in a partner's exhausted sentence -- "I never know what is going on with you" -- that seems to come out of nowhere. This sheet is edge detection: finding where the solid, chosen stoicism ends and the installed reflex begins.

Who this is for: Men who are genuinely reliable, calm and self-contained -- and whose partners say some version of "you are here but I can't reach you". Also men between relationships whose exes agreed with each other suspiciously precisely.

The five exercises

1. The choice test

Find out which parts of your composure are optional.

Behaviour one, and its chosen exception if I can find one:

Behaviour two, and its exception:

Behaviours three to five, tested:

Which behaviours failed the test outright?

For one failure: who did I learn it from, and what did it protect me from then?

2. What the providing replaced

Audit the fix-it channel your closeness actually runs through.

My last five acts of care, listed:

For each: the sentence that could have accompanied it -- sent or unsent?

When someone needed nothing done, only presence: what did I do, last time that happened?

The person most likely to say "he shows up but I don't know him" about me:

3. The exit inventory

Catalogue your escape hatches, and what opening them buys you.

My five ambient exits, named specifically:

For my most reflexive exit: the relief it buys, described precisely:

What it looks like from her side of the room when I take it:

One exit I could close for a defined hour without dread? Which, and when?

4. Presence reps

Train staying, in doses measured in minutes, with the exits closed.

Rep 1 -- which, when, discomfort before /10 and after /10:

Rep 2:

Rep 3:

Rep 4:

Which rep gave the most for its price? That one becomes standing.

5. The van-day translation

Write the spoken versions of what your actions have been saying for years.

Five acts, and the sentence each was carrying:

The least exposing sentence of the five:

Its eight-word-or-fewer spoken version, drafted:

Delivered on ____ -- and what actually happened:

Honest review: did saying it cost what the pattern predicted?

This worksheet is free to print, photocopy and share, including with clients. It is self-reflection material, not a diagnosis, an assessment or a substitute for professional support. If a relationship involves fear, control or coercion, or if working through this raises more than feels manageable, please speak to a doctor, a therapist or a domestic abuse service.