

Getting started with attachment-oriented counseling with the BondingBoard

The attachment theory has been developed into a complex structure in recent decades, in particular due to numerous neurological findings. The thought of learning about a broad new area can discourage professionals from exploring attachment theory. However, this fear is unfounded. The basic assumptions of attachment theory are still manageable in quantity and easy to internalize in their logic and above all thanks to their suitability for everyday use. They are also easy to teach with the bonding board. Here are a few suggestions for step-by-step 'on-boarding':

1. Familiarize yourself with the material. Read the manual. If you're new to attachment theory, take a course or read a book specific to your field of work.
2. Select a case for a dry run. Consider the movement sequences of the attachment patterns described in the manual and lay or play them on the BondingBoard. For each pattern, think about how much the client fits in with it, or play through the 'Tendency Interview' with a colleague.
3. Play through the 'Situation Interview' with a colleague using the same or another case, either internally or in a role play.
4. Choose a not too complex case for a first use with clients. Choose one of the two interviews. The 'Tendency Interview' is very highly structured and also guides professionals very well who are not yet very familiar with attachment-oriented procedures. The 'Situation Interview' is more open and can probably be closely based on or interwoven with anamnesis or other surveys you are already familiar with.
5. Perhaps you would like to introduce somehow like this: *"We have purchased a new counseling tool. I think it could provide us with additional information here. At the end I would also like to ask you what you think about the tool, whether it was or could be helpful or what I should be paying particular attention to when using it. Is that OK?"*
6. Take the liberty of including questions that are otherwise important to you in a client interview, at the appropriate point, or digress spontaneously from the course of the interview if additional questions arise that you consider important. Then come back to the interview thread.
7. Possible evaluation questions for clients:
*What do you think about this counseling tool? Is it easy to understand how it is structured?
Was your situation well represented in it? What did (didn't) fit particularly well?
Could it stimulate new perspectives? Which one? Would you appreciate it if I used it again in a similar or modified form? Do I have to do something differently?*
8. Afterwards, reflect on the session for yourself, if necessary with a colleague.
9. Identify where your already familiar ways of working overlap or can be extended by attachment theory. Build in digressions there: *"You could also look at this from the perspective of relationships, attachment, stress management. There is this game board, ... one would represent it like this ... or how would you represent it here ...does this show us a new aspect "* and you're right in the middle of it.
10. Make at least three to four attempts before deciding, whether to continue using the BondingBoard or to plan, in which direction you need further support in order to be able to use it fruitfully.