

EFT CORE SKILLS SESSION 4

Blamer Softening Steps 5, 6 and 7,

Consolidation Stage Three: Steps 8 & 9

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Process Topics

1. Definition
2. Prerequisites
3. Working Models of Self and Other
4. Therapist role
5. Themes of blamer softening (Bradley and Furrow research)

Core Skills

Please refer to Interventions for Stage Two from handout package Core Skills Session 3

1. **Reflecting** (present moment and underlying emotions)
2. **Evocative questions / responses** (to access: attachment fears; working models of self and other; attachment needs, experience of partner's reach)
3. **Heightening** – especially fears of self and other and fears of reaching)
4. **Empathic conjecture** r attachment fears, current fears longings
5. **Reframing** in context of attachment fears and needs
6. **Restructuring and shaping** interactions (directing enactments)

Stage 3: Steps 8 & 9:

Consolidation Process Topics

1. Creating a New Story
2. Attachment Rituals
3. Termination Markers

NOTE: Chapters most relevant to Core Skills Session 4:

Stepping into Emotionally Focused Couple Therapy: Key Ingredients of Change, Brubacher (2018):

Chapter 7, Working with emotion to shape the blamer softening change event (Steps 5–7), Chapter 8, Consolidating secure bonds in Stage 3 of EFT (Steps 8 and 9) and Chapter 11, Repairing broken bonds: Forgiveness and reconciliation with EFT's attachment injury resolution model (AIRM)

The Practice of Emotionally Focused Couple Therapy: Creating Connection (Johnson, 2019): Chapters 9 and 10

Becoming an Emotionally Focused Therapist: The Workbook (2005): Chapters 6 to 9

Also please read:

Inside Blamer Softening: Maps and Missteps, Bradley & Furrow, 2007 and AIRM in EFT, Brubacher, 2017.

Both are in the set of articles and chapters you received at the your externship: carolinaeft.com/articles-and-chapters-for-externship.html

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Learning Objectives

1. To understand common pursuer behaviours, experience, emotions, fears and needs.
2. To understand how to use EFT interventions to facilitate Blamer Softening.
3. To increase your ability to help pursuer express fears and needs.
4. To use enactments to choreograph blamer softening.
5. To facilitate and promote acceptance in the “observing” partner.
6. To help partners facilitate new solutions to old problems.
7. To help partners consolidate new interactional positions by highlighting new cycles and creating a new attachment narrative.
8. To identify and resolve common impasses with couples.
9. To recognize markers of termination.

Blamer Softening Event

1. Definition: Blamer Softening happens in Stage 2 when a previously hostile/critical partner accesses softer emotions and from a position of vulnerability and within a high level of emotional experiencing, risks reaching to his/her partner who is now engaged and responsive, asking for reassurance, comfort, or for attachment needs to be met.

- Research shows that softenings are crucial to success in EFT (Greenberg and Johnson, 1998)
- Blamer softening occurs when a previously blaming partner asks for attachment needs to be met from a *vulnerable* position.
- Blamer softening often triggers fears related to internal working models:
View of other: *"How could you really love me when no one has ever been there for me?"*
View of self: *"How could you really love me when I am so...?"*
Attachment history often comes to the fore as attachment fears are experienced in the here and now.
- Blamer softening occurs in therapy following the withdrawer reengaging emotionally in the relationship. Withdrawer engagement is crucial to responsiveness to a softening.
- Softening can occur as one event in therapy or as several smaller softenings over time.
- Blamer softening constitutes a bonding event that sets the stage for future bonding events and the creation of a secure relationship.
- Secure relationships are those where partners can ask for attachment fears to be soothed and attachment needs to be met.

The therapist initiates softenings when there is recognition that the partner and the relationship are ready to take this step. Client leads the process into attachment fears that are critical for the client. Therapist utilizes language, metaphors and history unique to this couple and to this client to facilitate the process.

What are the pre-requisites for a blamer softening event?

What are the markers of having de-escalated?

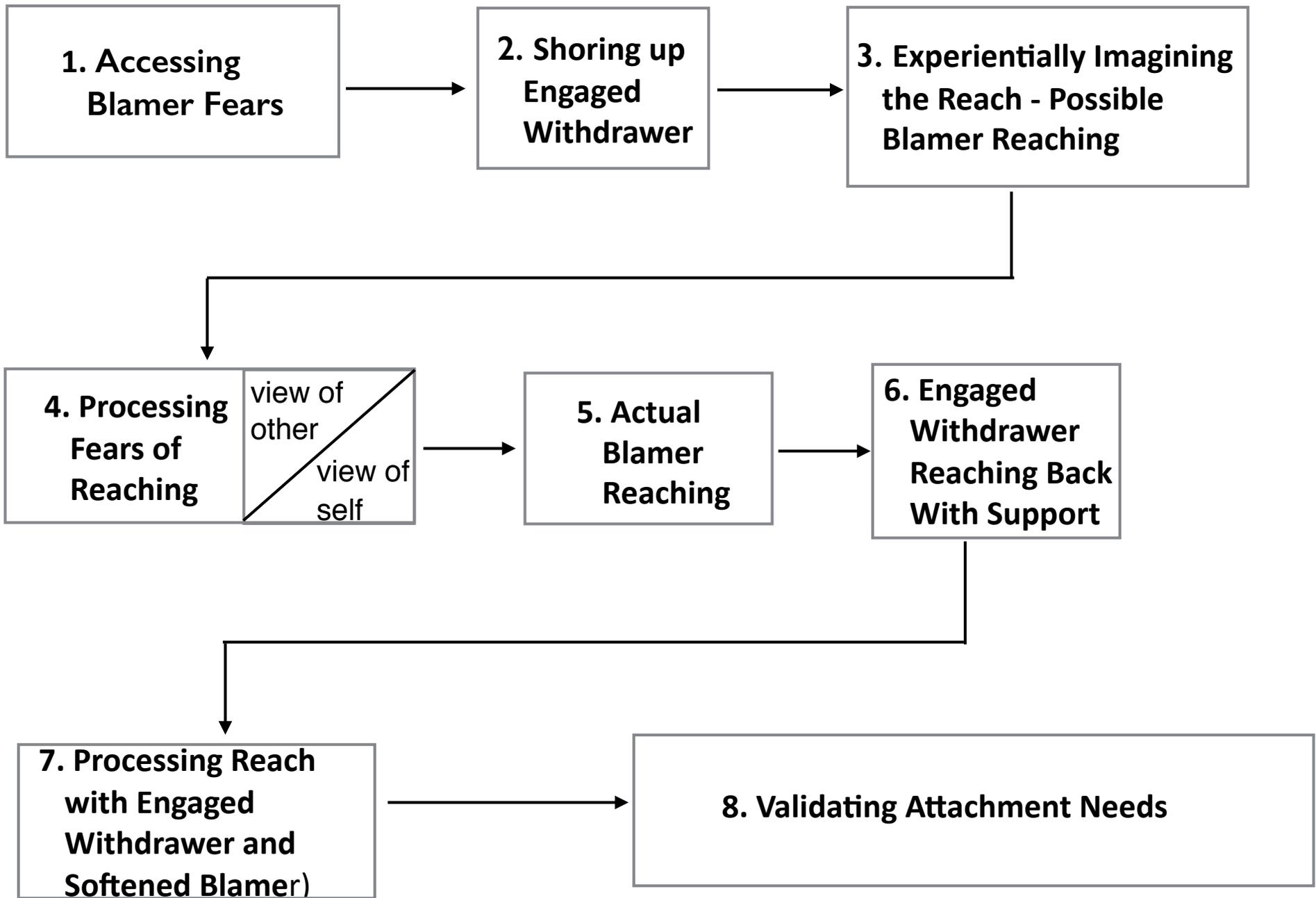
What are markers of having re-engaged the more withdrawn spouse/that the partner is adequately engaged that it is safe for the more blaming spouse to take this big risk?

What are some therapist abilities that are essential to a successful softening?

Themes of Blamer Softening

Brent Bradley and James Furrow, (Softening Mini-Theory, 2004; Inside Blamer Softening: Maps and Missteps, 2007; and 2010, Revised Therapist Themes)

1. Accessing Blamer Fears
(Evocative Responding)
2. Shoring up Engaged Withdrawer
(Evocative Responding, Empathic Conjecture)
3. Experientially Imagining the Reach - Possible Blamer Reaching
(Evocative Responding)
4. Processing Fears of Reaching- (embedded in internal views of Other and of Self)
(Heightening, Empathic Conjecture /Interpretation,
Evocative Responding, Reflecting Underlying Emotions,
Reframing in Context of Attachment Needs)
5. Actual Blamer Reaching
(Restructuring and Shaping Interactions)
6. Engaged Withdrawer Reaching Back With Support
(Restructuring and Shaping Interactions)
7. Processing Reach with Engaged Withdrawer and Softened Blamer
(Evocative Responding)
8. Validating Attachment Needs
(Validating Newly Experienced Emotions and Attachment Needs, Empathic Attunement)



THEMES OF BLAMER SOFTENING

Blamer Softening Exercise

Exercise: Themes of Blamer Softening with Interventions

Ben (Pursuer) and Marlo (Re-engaged Withdrawer)

Begin with video clip of Ben and Marlo before beginning Theme 1

1. Role-Play Accessing Blamer Fears

(Use these interventions: Evocative responding, Shape enactment)

Therapist: What happens when you touch this deep dreadful place – where you long to belong, -- you try to belong and you have this sense, “if I make one mistake – everything will fall away”?

Continue to Reflect (the emotion in his eyes, the “rock in his heart,” Evoke, Shape enactment

2. Shoring up Engaged Withdrawer

(Use these interventions: Evocative responding, Conjecture)

Marlo: (Leaning in, listening intently)

Reflect – Evoke more of her engaged position – Conjecture at her longing (make the picture of her engagement and desire to respond, vivid and alive)

3. Experimentally Imagining the Reach - Possible Blamer Reaching

(Use these interventions: Evocative responding)

Evoke – create an image of him reaching to her when in this fear / need e.g. :

Therapist: You can't imagine saying – “Come and be with me Marlo – I need to feel you with me. I need to know you care?” “Marlo – I am so afraid – if I make one mistake everything will fall away – come and show me you'll never leave me!”?

4. Processing Fears of Reaching- (embedded in internal views of Other and of Self)

Role-play Expanding his fears – (Use these interventions:: Heightening, Empathic Conjecture, Evocative Responding, Reflecting Underlying Emotions, Reframing in Context of Attachment Needs)

a) Fear related to view of other –

Ben: People always walk away from me – like no one wants to talk about death, about loneliness. - Like a cold white marble wall, with nothing to hold on to.

Therapist: Always waiting – holding your breath – waiting for everyone to walk away? Cold white marble – I’m all alone. Ill always be alone.

Ben: I feel a fear in the back of my throat – like the moment you bury someone and you know they’re out of your life forever...

Therapist: You’re always on the edge of danger –that there’ll be no one to turn to – to stay with you. So when Marlo is busy – you get this same lump in your throat – She’s gone – not interested – not caring about me, yeah? [deepened and distilled in the cycle]

b) Fear related to view of self:

Ben: It’s me –like I have a sign on my head that says WALK AWAY – I am too much - not important – I am pathetic. My sadness, my loneliness is WAY too much! It’s not pretty – it’s disgusting.

Therapist – Reflect, Heighten, Reframe In Attachment Fears/Needs

c) Fear of reaching: Ben: I can’t show her my sadness. I can’t tell her I am lonely. I can’t ask!

Therapist: You fear - I’ll reach and she won’t be there. She’ll be too busy. I’ll show her this dreadful rock in my heart and she’ll take one look and go “Yuck!”

Ben: I can’t reach - She will turn away too!

Watch Video clip to prepare for Theme 5 – After seeing the clip, role play how to bring his fear alive (again) to help him access the need embedded in his fear.

5. Role-play Actual Blamer Reaching

Shape the Reach from a vulnerable, fearful position (His fear needs to be fully alive – fully experienced in the present moment – bodily felt - at a boil – and from within that fully felt fear he needs to make the reach – take the risk – and she will be there to catch him and assure him. This is the step that serves as the antidote and restructures the relationship / his world)

Therapist: What do you need from her right now?

Can you ask her? Right now she is here – Can you ask her? She is leaning right in – saying ask me – give me a chance to show you I *am* here – Can you ask her?

6. Role-play Supporting Engaged Withdrawer Reaching Back With Support
Shape Enactment / Response

Watch 2 brief video clip to see the beginning of Themes 7 and 8, and then role play Theme 7 and 8

7. Role-play Processing Reach with Engaged Withdrawer and Softened Blamer
(Use interventions: Evocative questions, Reflections)

8. Validating Attachment Needs
Validate Newly Experienced Emotions and Attachment Needs,
(Use these interventions: Empathic Reflections, Validation)

Therapeutic Impasses

Adapted from *Becoming an emotionally focused couple therapist: The workbook*, (2005)
Johnson et al pp 259-267

Impasses occur most often during de-escalation and with completing change events of withdrawer re-engagement and blamer softening. During de-escalation, an impasse is reached if the couple continues to fight and argue and react to each other in and out of the session. Impasses can be related to the therapist's inability to control session, effectively soothe or engage one or both partners or to clearly identify the cycle and to access the primary emotions that are driving it.

Warning signs of reaching an impasse:

- No change is occurring.
- Therapist feels aligned with, or against one partner.
- One partner does not seem engaged in therapy.
- Therapist is losing focus or deviating into other models.
- Therapist is feeling hopeless or doubting the viability of the couple's relationship.

Common Causes:

- Therapist has a weak alliance with one or both partners.
- The couple or the therapist does not accept cycle as the problem.
- The cycle or the underlying emotions have not been fully accessed, validated or shared.
- Attachment vulnerabilities are avoided because of an attachment injury or previous attachment trauma.
- Couple or therapist does not have a map of what a secure attachment looks like.
- Therapist has difficulty working with strong emotion.
- Therapist gets caught in self-doubt or does not have a strong belief in couple's capacity for change.
- One or both are involved in a third party relationship- with a person or a substance

Ways to address impasses:

With clients:

1. Make the impasse explicit – paint a picture or hold up a mirror to the couple.
2. Work with client's resistance.
3. Actively block exits that a couple usually takes and process the impasse directly.
4. "Slice it thinner." Stay with the emotion/where the client is or go with the resistance.
Recognize the raw spots. Invite very small risks.
5. Find alternate ways of creating emotional awareness and engagement.
6. Use disquisitions, a story that indirectly paints a picture of the relationship; use images and metaphors.

7. Have individual sessions.
8. Review the attachment history (source of comfort and connection in past relationships) to identify unresolved attachment injuries or undisclosed trauma. Seed secure attachment.

Never blame the client.

With self as therapist:

1. Evaluate your own responses to the impasse, the relationship and to each partner.
2. If you can identify your own anxiety, seek the triggers and ways to regulate or soothe it.
2. Evaluate your own working models of attachment and your own attachment wounds and/or insecurities.
3. Repair the alliance.
4. Record sessions and review.
5. Do case write-ups, write out the cycle; use infinity loop. Are you staying with the model? Examine your interventions. Be clear of the step you are at and what needs to happen next.
6. Examine common obstacles in Bradley and Furrow (2007) and identify ones that may be blocking your work.
7. Seek peer and/or formal supervision.
8. Organize a single consultation session with an experienced EFT therapist.

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Impasse exercise

Taking a case from your practice, describe an impasse you are experiencing with your couple. Identify with your partner the following elements:

- What are the indicators you are at an impasse with your couple?
- Which change event is the stuck point of the impasse?
- What do you hypothesize are the causes for the impasse?
- What would you see as the most effective means of intervening with this impasse?
- Describe how you would intervene with your couple.

Stage Three: Consolidation Steps 8 & 9

Step 8: Therapist facilitates the emergence of new solutions to pragmatic issues and old relationship problems. Problem solving: Therapist supports withdrawer staying engaged and blamer remaining receptive and open.

Step 9: New positions are consolidated and new cycles of attachment behaviours are created. Shape new stories of problems and repair.

Consolidations consists of couple creating a story of their relationship in a way that promotes attachment security. A secure couple attachment narrative commonly includes the following elements (Dickstein, 2004):

- An awareness and understanding of their ability to handle negative affect.
- An expression of the value they both place on their relationship and specific attachment-related experiences.
- Minimal engagement in defensiveness when discussing negative aspects or problem areas.
- An ability to reflect on how they each contributed to the changes in the relationship.
- An ability to reflect on personal growth that has resulted from the relationship.

Examples of Attachment Rituals

- Kissing and hugging spouse goodbye and hello
- Letter writing -leaving notes for each other
- Participate in religious rituals together
- Reading a book together
- Saying hello and asking about the other's day
- Call during the day to check in
- Spending time in bed talking and holding each other
- Making a conversation ritual- a daily time to talk and catch up with one another
- Maintain a regular date night
- Develop a hobby together and share it together
- Take a class together or learn a new skill together
- Finding someone in need and working together to serve or help
- Having a ceremony to renew vows

NOTE: What makes this an attachment ritual is not the activity but *the meaning* the activity has for the couple. The ritual is an opportunity to routinely remind each other of the connection they share.

What a Therapist Should See at Termination

- Reduction of negative affect
- Increase in positive cycles of interaction
- Expression of emotions and responses to partner's emotions
- Increase in accessibility and responsiveness between partners
- Partners ask for what they need in a way that encourages partner's response
- Partners make more positive attributions about responses of partner

Stage Three Role Play

Activity:

After watching Mark and Prue in Stage 3, continue with the same case used for stage two role-plays. Before role-play, brainstorm how the couple in the case, having restructured their bond may now be solving problems that were previously attachment threats and triggers for the negative cycle.

Set-up Role play

Brainstorm with group possible outcomes of step 8, where the new safety and bonding has changed their ability to problem solve, where the formerly more withdrawn partner stays engaged and the formerly more blaming partner remains receptive and open.

Goals for therapist:

Use reflections, evocative responding, tracking, validating, framing experience / interaction in attachment context. Choose from the following aspects of Stage 3

1. Ask “What has changed?” “What seems different?” “What changes have you both made to make this (new positive cycle) possible?” Track the positive cycle.
2. Track emotional experiences related to behaviours of the past and those of the present. (Before you had to hide because of the fear of.....and now you hang in there because...)
3. Focus on ways they have found to exit the cycle.
4. Validate their courage and ability to take risks.
5. Help couple to create a narrative of how they have changed (“Resilient Story” in *Hold ME Tight*). Seed secure attachment-by highlighting how these changes will help to protect and support them in the future.
6. Explore attachment rituals they may have developed and/or they would like to develop to help maintain this positive connection.

Goals for couple:

To experience tracking the elements of a new positive cycle and relating it to how different it is from the previous negative cycle.

To get a sense of the new quality in the interactions following the shaping of a safe and secure bond.

Goals for the Observer: 1. Note the interventions used. 2. Note the shift in the quality of the couple interactions. 3. Other observations? 4. Share with small or large group.

1 **Session 14 Prue's softening** 20 minutes (in reality a 90 min session)

NOTE: When we hear prosodic words (warm and melodic intonations), the muscles in the ears relax, then the muscles in the eyes and face. Our-breath deepens, the heart calms, and the sympathetic defense system down-regulates. Thus we are more able to receive a new experience. The EFT therapist heightens fear in Step 5-7 in a context of sufficient safety. The therapist's tone and pace of voice helps to down-regulate and maintain the safety zone, while at the same time the EFT therapist steps right into the most dangerous emotions with the pursuer, and heightens them.

2

3 Consider the importance of Mark being engaged before it is safe for Prue to soften. (If he
4 had not re-engaged...he would immediately withdraw when he felt threatened...The
5 withdrawer/one who automatically uses an avoidant attachment strategy feels threatened
6 in the face of vulnerability of either self or other. The automatic response is to de-
7 activate attachment needs.)

8

9 Below, the themes of blamer softening and the interventions used to explore these themes
10 are identified

11

12 M: Do you hear how she says that? I went to the party to celebrate my new job – as if it
13 was a crime! You know – there is a party to celebrate my new promotions –

14

15 P: Ahhhhh! Well, you know Mark now what's going to happen – you're going to come
16 home – you're going to go down into the basement. I'm not going to see you. I'm going
17 to feel even more alone – I'm going to feel even more by myself -- I mean this is going
18 to – is what's going to happen – it's what always happens – so this new job – I mean!

19

20 [Notice Prue's typical complaint and whining, while you also tune into the attachment
21 channel –of being left alone, without Mark! Get a feel for this experience - of “being left
22 alone – set apart from the most important person in your life, the one you have been
23 missing all day – who is now absent” -- in your own body.]

24

25 S: How are you feeling just now as you say that to him? [invites Prue to be aware in the
26 moment, of her experience as she launches a typical complaint – asks an evocative
27 question.]

28

29 P: I feel sad –but I feel angry!

30

31 S: You feel angry, right now? As you're saying to him I know what's going to happen
32 as a result of this new job – [repeats cue] you're going to be in the basement– you're not
33 going to be with me [heightens the attachment channel]

34

35 P: I'm going to be alone! [Therapist's reflection has helped client send a clear, congruent
36 message of her worst attachment fear.]

37

38 S: Yeah – because I guess when you say that – what happens for me -- and help me if
39 I'm wrong here – [Heightens tentativeness of her conjecture and gives client permission
40 to check if it fits and to reject the comment or tweak the comment if it does not fit.] what

41 I pick up when you say that is not anger or even sadness – I guess what I pick up is fear –
42 [conjectures at the primary, underlying attachment emotion, which was on the leading
43 edge and apparent from the attachment context.]– and – and what I hear Prue – [therapist
44 begins a process replay of the unfolding of the elements of emotion – beginning with the
45 cue, i.e. – Mark saying he has a new job] what I hear is that when Mark came home and
46 said, “I have a new job,” that – an alarm bell went off in you – An alarm that is always on
47 in this relationship – gets triggered very easily and my sense is that the alarm is, “There
48 you are – he’s not going to be there for me – I’m going to be alone – I can’t trust him –
49 He’s never going to be there.” [alarm bell (limbic appraisal), is directly linked to the cue,
50 and to the cognitive appraisal/attachment meaning. i.e.: - immediate cascade of emotion –
51 “Oh Oh! Mark has a new job = I’ll be alone!” – attachment panic = expressed as anger.
52 The anger of hope.]

53
54 P: Well, he can’t.

55
56 S: “I know he’s not going to be there – – He can’t be there. He’ll be too busy.”
57 [Repeating her meanings – Theme: Accessing Blamer Fears]

58
59 P: How can he be there when he’s in the basement?

60
61 S: “How can he be there when he has this new job? I know he’s not going to be there –
62 [Repeating her meanings – Theme: Accessing Blamer Fears] he’s never been there –
63 nobody has ever been there. I can’t trust him. I can’t trust him.” [Adding to /
64 heightening her meanings = her core fear Good example of how the core attachment fear
65 is associated with the meaning/cognitive appraisal element of emotion; – THEME:
66 Accessing Blamer Fears]

67
68 P: I can’t.

69
70 S: “This is dangerous, dangerous, I can’t trust him.” It’s dangerous, huh? [Conjecture –
71 in attachment channel; heightening attachment fear the limbic and cognitive appraisal
72 element of emotion] – That’s the sense I get – the sense I get is – I’ll never be first with
73 Mark. I’ll never count. My needs to be close to him will never count. [Conjecture of the
74 cognitive appraisal/attachment meaning she routinely makes in the negative cycle, when
75 she cannot clearly express this underlying fear and thus cannot send a clear message or
76 reach for comfort] It doesn’t really matter. And the voice says, “ You can’t trust him. –
77 You gotta fight! You gotta protect yourself.” [Heightening the fear – and linking it her
78 action tendency- how the fear attachment panic) is expressed as anger]

79
80 P: Well it’s the only thing that works.

81
82 S: (nodding)

83
84 S So that fits for you then? [Confirming her conjecture of the primary underlying fear.
85 Also using repetition – to replay the process of emotion: from cue to immediate limbic
86 appraisal of danger to immediate primary fear, underlying her secondary, surface anger. –

87 Replaying the cue – Mark came home with new job -- and her immediate limbic appraisal
88 of danger/attachment panic/ alarm went off and she felt afraid.] What happened for you
89 was – was that Mark came home and the alarm went off and you got afraid – Yeah?
90
91 P: I’ve never seen it that way – as being afraid – but well ... I – – – guess that’s what it
92 is –I don’t know (sigh).
93
94 S It almost sounds like back in Edmonton doesn’t it – where – he got a new job. He went
95 off to a new city and you went with him – and what happened is – it ended up you being
96 alone and you feeling deserted – and having to take care of a baby with no one to take
97 care of you. [Repeats the experience of a similar trigger of the attachment panic f being
98 left alone]
99
100 P: I always feel like that.
101
102 S: Yeah -- So when he comes home and says, “I have a new job” – what you hear him
103 say is – you know – you’re going to be deserted all over again – he’s not going to be
104 there for you, huh? [Again repeats the process: replays the cue and links it to attachment
105 panic.]
106
107 P: Isn’t that what it is Mark?
108
109 Pause
110
111 M: That’s not what I mean it to be –
112
113 S: That’s not what the new job means to you? [Reflection of Mark’s experience –
114 validating Prue’s cognitive appraisal is not the same as Mark’s meaning / intention.
115 THEME: Shoring up the withdrawer]
116
117 M: No S: Right M: No
118
119 P: But then you go off. (Shaking head)
120
121 S: He goes off and he gets busy and you feel like you’re not gonna count, right?
122
123 P: I don’t count.
124
125 S: You don’t count. [Reflecting her attachment meaning. Being with her in her fear
126 without trying to correct her]
127
128 P: I don’t count.
129
130 S: What does that feel to say that? [Joining with her in the full experience of living this
131 terrifying meaning in the attachment channel] What’s that about for you that you don’t
132 count?

133
134 P: I don't even feel that I have a right to say that -- that I don't count.
135
136 S: You don't *feel you have a right* to say that? [*Italics – to illustrate how therapist implies*
137 *this is her perception, her felt sense, her attachment view of self, but there may be an*
138 *alternative.*] Help me understand? What's that about for you that you don't have a right
139 to say that?
140
141 P: Well – You know I've never really worked in this relationship. I mean I know Mark
142 has got to do the job – I understand that – I don't feel I contribute to the relationship at all
143 – not really.
144
145 S: So your needs aren't important because you haven't been pulling you weight? You
146 haven't been working so – the job is what's important [*Validating and making explicit*
147 *her attachment meanings...*]and you don't get to go and say to Mark, "Come and be with
148 me," [*seeding attachment*] because the job is what's important – Is that it? [*Validating*
149 *and making explicit her attachment meanings...*]
150
151 P: Well – that's the way I feel – that the job is what the priority is and I really have -- to
152 keep quiet about what I need – And besides – I mean – what is he going to do?
153
154 S: So help me understand, you couldn't ever, ever turn to him and say come and be with
155 me? [*THEME: Experientially imagining the reach*]
156
157 P: No.
158
159 S: Come and be with me because I need you [P: No!] and I need to be [P: No] and I need
160 to be first? You could never say that, right? [*THEME: Experientially imagining the*
161 *reach*]
162 Never, never say that.
163 You would never let yourself say that.
164 That would be too risky? [*Heightening the fear, while Experientially imagining the reach*]
165 You don't deserve that even – huh? Is that right?
166
167 P: I really don't – I don't know – I mean –
168
169 S: You don't feel that you are important enough that just who you are – that you could
170 never just turn to Mark and say, "I need you – just come and be with me because I need
171 you"? [*THEME: Experientially imagining the reach*]
172
173 P: I can't do that.
174
175 S: Right. — and so when you do feel abandoned and deserted – I guess there is nothing
176 else but to get mad? – Huh? [*Validating action tendency/secondary emotion as it is*
177 *linked to primary attachment fear*]
178

179 P: It's really a lot safer to get mad. It feels a lot better . I can't ---- I've never been able
180 to tell Mark about what I need -- I mean I don't think I've ever been able to tell
181 anybody about what I need.
182
183 S: Mhmmmmmm. You've never been in a relationship where you felt somebody was
184 there to take care of you. It's sort of like you always been -- [THEME: Processing fears
185 of Reaching – View of Other; heightening, evocative responding]
186
187 P: I've had to take care of myself!
188
189 S: Aahaa. You've always been in a relationship where you feel you have to take care of
190 yourself. [THEME: Processing fears of Reaching – View of Other; heightening,
191 evocative responding]
192
193 P: I mean -- That's what this going away after a fight is all about!
194
195 S: Right.
196
197 P: I have to look after myself – who's going to look after me?! . [THEME: Processing
198 fears of Reaching – View of Other; heightening, evocative responding]
199
200 S: So can you turn to him – Prue – and can you tell him – “I'm too scared to show you
201 how much I need you.” Can you do that? [Shaping interaction – Disclosing fear of
202 Reaching / view of other]
203
204 P: No. Ohhhhhh --- I'm -- It's really hard -- I really can't show you how much I
205 need you.
206
207 S: What will happen if he really sees that? What will happen? [Setting up enactment;
208 Evocative Question; heightening Fear/view of other]
209
210 P: -- I don't know --
211
212 S: If you reach for him – If you let him see how much you need him. If you let him see
213 how afraid you are that he's not going to be there -- what will happen? You will reach
214 and then --? [Evocative Question; heightening Fear/view of other]
215
216 P: He won't be there.
217
218 S: He won't be there. Yeah, Right. If you really reach and let him see how much you
219 need – he won't be there – so you don't do that. [Validating; heightening Fear/view of
220 other]
221
222 P: No.
223

224 S: You get mad or you run. You smack him or you run, right? [Validating action
225 tendency – linked to fear / view of other as nonresponsive]
226
227 P: (nodding) It's just -- It's just that – (hand gesture -- cringe) I didn't know that I was
228 doing that. (hand gesture).
229
230 S: 'cause this is (mirroring Prue's hand movement) — what you are doing with your
231 hand right now (moving both hands in a mirroring gesture, and cringing in her face like
232 P was). It's like that. [Heightening fear]
233
234 P: Yeah.
235
236 S: It's too much, yeah? It's too much -- yeah? [Heightening fear]
237
238 P: If I let him see me like this -- then he may think that I am -- I don't know --small
239 -- or childish -- or I don't know -- That I am not really independent -- He wouldn't be
240 there -- just -- well -- you know -- I know he would be there -- but -- (sigh) -- I know you
241 would be there --
242
243 S: In your head you know he would be there -- is that is? On a cognitive level you know
244 he would be there is that it? On a cognitive level you know he would be there, right?
245
246 P: Yeah.
247
248 S: Yeah?
249
250 P: (nodding)
251
252 S: [heightening] But, somehow in the kind of situations we talking about somehow that
253 doesn't quite -- that isn't quite enough yeah -- it's sort of like -- I get the sense that when
254 we are normally talking about that kind of level, we are talking about the kind of level --
255 of fear -- where -- the kind of fear where -- that a little child has -- you know? -- that a little
256 child has -- it's sort of like there is a little -- tiny -- Prue -- that starts screaming -- and says
257 -- "I can't-- I can't -- it's too dangerous -- I won't -- He won't be there -- I'll ask and he
258 won't be there" -- yeah? And it's awful -- "He won't be there -- and I'll die if that
259 happens -- He won't be there" -- That's how it sort of feels to me that it's like -- sort of
260 not really on a cognitive level --? Do you know what I am talking about Prue?
261 [Conjecture; heightening fear -- view of other as nonresponsive]
262
263 P: Yes. But it's -- too -- hard -- to stay with that level -- (shaking head) It's too hard to
264 stay there because if I stay there -- I --
265
266 S: You don't know if he'll come? Is that? [Evoking, Heightening fear -- view of other as
267 nonresponsive]
268
269 P: I don't -- that's it!

270
271 S: It'll feel just dreadful -- he won't come to you? [Evoking, Heightening fear – view
272 of other as nonresponsive]
273
274 P: That's it. -- I mean – like I know you're going to be at home – in the basement – like
275 I know all that -- but – it's – not – where I need you –
276
277 S: Mhhhhmmmmmm
278
279 P: that's – that's – (turning from Mark to Sue) I don't know how to tell you –
280
281 S: Right – (nodding) –that's not the same as being connected with you? That's not what
282 we're talking about – him being in the basement -- right? (Turning to Mark) How do
283 you feel – Mark – when Prue is talking about this? Wh— [Theme: Shoring up
284 withdrawer; evocative question]
285
286 M: I think it's very sad for both of us--- We – don't communicate these things very well
287 – needs –
288
289 S: Can you tell her about how you feel right now? (Gesturing towards P) — [Theme:
290 Shoring up withdrawer; shaping interaction.]
291
292 M: I feel sad for both of us. We don't seem to be able to talk about these things --
293
294 P: I can't talk about them (head in hands) – just can't talk about them – (shaking head)
295
296 S: You'd like Prue to be able to talk with you about this? [Theme: Shoring up
297 withdrawer; conjecture.]
298
299 M: Oh yeah – I – I would be there for you (looking at Prue – nodding)
300
301 S: (leaning in) I see you asking her to give you a chance to be there – is that what you are
302 doing? [Theme: Shoring up withdrawer; conjecture; heightening his engagement.]
303
304 M: (looking at Prue who has her head in her hands) If you did, I would be there for you –
305 I am sure I would be.
306
307 P: I don't know -- I don't know
308
309 S: Can you hear him Prue? Can you hear him? Can the little girl Prue hear him? Can you
310 hear him saying – [Heightening Wdr's engagement; heightening fear of reaching]
311
312 P: No, cause – S: Can you hear P: sounds like this big grown up!
313
314 S: Yeah Can you hear him say, “Reach for me – Risk it Prue – I'll be there – It's o.k. –
315 reach for me – Let go -- and I'll catch you --“ Can you hear him? – He's inviting you –

316 He's inviting you--- He's inviting you to come and have him take care of you – Can you
317 hear that? – (Leaning in closer to P) – [Heightening Wdr's engagement; heightening
318 fear of reaching; experientially imagining the reach]
319
320 P: (looks at Mark)
321
322 M: (looks at Sue) I do think we need to learn how to resolve these things because we
323 never really seem to put an end to these things. We both have hard feelings – seem to go
324 on for a long time –
325
326 S: Mark I'm going to stop you right now, o.k.? I have a sense that you're going to sort
327 of resolve this problem? I don't want you to solve this problem. I just want you to look at
328 your wife. – Can you look at your wife – Can you see that she's afraid? [Blocking his
329 exit; shoring up withdrawer – calming Mark from his old impulse to fix the problem;
330 Shaping interaction.]
331
332 M: (looks – – nods)
333
334 S: I don't think she wants you to solve the problem. I think she just wants you to be with
335 her. Can you just be with her right now? Can you like sorta not worry about the problem
336 solving? Can you just come out and meet your wife? [Shoring up withdrawer; Shaping
337 interaction]
338
339 (Mark looks at Prue)
340
341 S: You know it's like you said – you took your business suit off to meet her ? [Shoring up
342 withdrawer]
343
344 M: Mhmmmmmm.
345
346 S: Well she's here right now – (gesturing) Can you come out and meet your wife?
347 [Shoring up withdrawer; Shaping interaction]
348
349 M: (looking at Prue -- big SIGH --) I really want you to give me a chance. – I will really
350 be there if you – give me a chance and I'll do – whatever I have to –
351
352 S: So can you – can you (Looking at P) – let him in right now? Prue? Can you let him
353 come in and meet you? [interaction; Inviting Blamer Reaching]
354
355 P: No (head in hands). No.
356
357 S: No.
358
359 P: No – No I don't want him to see me. [THEME: – Fear of Reaching – View of Self as
360 unlovable emerges]
361

362 S: You don't want him to see you. [Reflecting fear/ negative view of Self]
363
364 P: No
365
366 S: Right. [validating]
367
368 P: I don't like this part at all.
369
370 S: You don't like this...[Reflecting fear/ negative view of Self]
371
372 P: I don't want him to see it.
373
374 S: You don't want that little scared, needy part of you –[Reflecting fear/ negative view
375 of Self]
376
377 P: No.
378
379 S: Is that it? You don't want anyone to see that – is that it? [Reflecting fear/ negative
380 view of Self]
381
382 P: No. It's awful
383
384 S: Right. [validating]. S: You don't see that part as lovable – Huh? You can't imagine
385 that Mark might want to come and hold that part of you? That little girl part of you? –
386 [Reflecting fear/ negative view of Self – also seeding attachment – THEME; Imagining
387 the reach]
388
389 P: No!
390
391 S: He'd feel disappointed? –[Conjecture; THEME: Processing fear of reaching – view of
392 Self]
393
394 P: He wouldn't like it.
395
396 S: He wouldn't like it? [Reflection; THEME: Processing fear of reaching – view of Self]
397
398 P: No
399
400 S: Because she's needy – that part? She's not this big strong person? Huh? THEME:
401 Processing fear of reaching – view of Self; Conjecture]]
402
403 P: It's just an awful part. (head in hands) It's a horrible part.
404
405 S: Right. How do you feel about that Mark? [Shoring up withdrawer; Evocative
406 responding]
407

408 M: I'd love it if you'd show that part –
409
410 P: No.
411
412 M: It's been so long since I've felt you've needed me---you've wanted me. – That's part
413 of who I fell in love with – you needed me – you used to be able to show me that part
414 more
415
416 (M and P looking at each other.)
417
418 M: I really, really want to see it and I'd be there...
419
420 S: So that – If you saw that little part of Prue – that actually connects you with her, yeah?
421 [THEME: Engaged withdrawer reaching with support; conjecture]
422
423 M: That's what I really want to see.
424
425 S: (nodding)
426
427 M: That's the part of you I miss the most.
428
429 S: Ah ha. Right. ---What's happening Prue? [Evocative response]
430
431 P: It's SO SCAREY!
432
433 S; Ah ha -- What would you like from him right now? [Evocative response;
434 THEME: Inviting the Reach]
435
436 P: (head in hands, shaking head) -- I'd just -- like him -- to hold --me -- that's all.
437
438 S: Can you ask him? [THEME: Inviting the Reach]
439
440 P: No.
441
442 S: I'd like you to try. [THEME: Inviting the Reach]
443
444 P: Can you? [THEME: Actual Reach]
445
446 M: Oh sure -- [THEME: Engaged withdrawer reaching back with support (M and P
447 embrace)
448
449 SESSION 15 (approx 1:29:00) ~ 10 min
450
451 S: O.k. so what we've been talking about here is that last time – in the last session you
452 took a lot of risks with Mark and we talked about how very, very difficult it is for you to
453 be vulnerable with him – right? And it's interesting that in this session you came in

454 angry and finding lots of very good reasons to be angry P: Well you know – S: because
455 my sense is that it is so difficult for you to let him see that scary, needy vulnerable side of
456 you – you – it feels so dangerous for you to do that
457
458 P: I guess what I really worry about is that if I show him that side – I mean he won't see
459 the strong, capable me, um – and I feel I have to be that way. [THEME: FEAR of
460 Reaching Negative view of self]
461
462 S: Yeah – and the feeling I get is that you never experienced – it's sort of like a foreign
463 country for you – you've never experienced really being able to show somebody those
464 parts of you – the parts we talked about being associated with little Prue and have
465 someone want to comfort and protect and take care of you – You've never experienced
466 that so it feels terribly dangerous. Yeah? [THEME: FEAR of Reaching Negative view of
467 self and other]
468
469 P: Well – I – I am actually not sure how to do that –sometimes. (S: Right.) – I am not
470 sure how to open that side of me up (S: Yes) and I don't know what to do -- It's almost
471 like I need some kind of – I don't know – a flag or something – it's like – I just don't
472 know how to do it. -- It's just so much easier –
473
474 S: You don't know how to open that door and let him in?
475
476 P: No. No. And if I do – ooh – you know like (S: Yeah) P: so I don't know how –
477 and if I do – I mean it's just – I don't know – I get very confused.
478
479 S: What you want is a sort of flag to say – “Look what I'm doing – look what I'm doing
480 – be careful with me,” Yeah?
481
482 P: Yeah – this is the flag and you'd better act right – and if you don't act right boy, that's
483 going to be it for you! (Prue and Mark laughing; Mark nodding)
484
485 S: If he gives you one hint that he'd not going to be there for you -- You're sort of
486 waiting for him to let you down, right? [THEME: FEAR of Reaching Negative view of
487 other] (P: Yeah.)
488
489 S: If he gives you one hint that that's what he's going to do, you're either going to bring
490 out your artillery or run like crazy, yeah?
491
492 P: Yeah, (nodding) that's really the way I feel, that it's just too hard -- I'm not really
493 sure how to do it.
494
495 S: Mhmmmm. I really understand that – and why would you – why would you know
496 how to do it – I mean you've never experienced it –and – it's very difficult to let someone
497 in when you don't feel safe. I mean – [THEME: Processing Fear of Reaching; THEME:
498 Processing Reach]
499

500 P I know he's going to be there, Sue. I know he's going to be there but I just don't – It's
501 like I don't have any – I just don't know how. I don't know how. (shaking her head).
502
503 S: Right. How could he help you with that? How could he help you may-be not listen
504 so much to your fear and give him a chance to come in and be with you? [Theme:
505 inviting Reach / Expression of need]
506
507 P: Boy! (chuckling; looks at Mark).
508
509 S: Is there anything he could do? What could he do? [Theme: inviting Reach /
510 Expression of need]
511
512 P: Well, it's really like that he'd have to – have to not be upset to see that part of me. Or
513 that he could stay there and, and you know sort of support that part of me when it comes
514 out – and – I keep having this feeling that he's gonna take one look at it and then – then
515 I'll lose him!
516
517 S: I remember -- I remember you saying, when I asked if you could look at him in one of
518 the other sessions, I remember you saying – “No I can't look into his eyes because I
519 know what I'm going to see there. I'm going to see... [Theme: Processing fear of
520 reaching – negative view of Self]
521
522 P: He's going to be disappointed. S: disappointment, disapproval – almost like a sort of
523 contempt or something ... [Theme: Processing fear of reaching – negative view of Self]
524
525 P: I know there's a part of me that has always said you have to be independent--- you
526 have to do your own thing. You have to take care of self – It's like I've always had to be
527 this capable wife that's had to look after myself in this marriage. S: Right. P: So where?
528
529 S: How do you feel – um – um – when your wife talks about this Mark? What's
530 happening for you just now? ... [Theme: Processing Reach; Evocative responding]
531
532 M: When I see that part of you, Prue, I just I want to hold you. I just want to protect
533 you.....wrap my arms around you. That's really what happens. You don't have to be
534 strong and tough all the time with me. I'm not as strong as you think I am and I just want
535 to take care of you.
536
537 S: Mhmmmm. So when you see that little girl part of Prue – what comes up for you is –
538 is not disapproval, right? What comes up for you is you want to protect and comfort and
539 nurture? – And actually you begin to feel connected with her because she suddenly
540 doesn't seem so different and so dangerous? ... [Theme: Processing Reach; Evocative
541 responding; conjecture; THEME: Validating Attachment Needs]
542
543 M: so angry. S: so angry. Right.
544

545 M: I want that little girl to come out. S: Can you tell her that? M: I really want you to
546 let that little girl part out ---- when it's there. ... [Theme: Engaged Withdrawer
547 Reaching Back with Support]
548
549 P: How do I know I can trust you?
550
551 M: Well – I can't make any promises. I can't guarantee but I really want to see that little
552 girl part – and when I see it I just want to hold you and wrap my arms around you and
553 take care of you....that's what happens. That's what I really feel like. [Theme: Engaged
554 Withdrawer Reaching Back with Support]
555
556 P: I want
557
558 S: What you are saying is, "I want you to risk it with me. I want you to give me a
559 chance to hold and comfort that little girl. What you are really saying is, "I want that
560 little girl back?" M: Mhmmmm. S: Really, please let me is so I can comfort her? M:
561 Mhmmmm. S: Is that what you're saying? [Theme: Engaged Withdrawer Reaching
562 Back with Support; Conjecture, heightening; THEME: Validating attachment needs]
563
564 M: Yeah.
565
566 S: Could you tell her that please? [THEME: Validating attachment needs] Structuring
567 interaction]
568
569 M: (Big sigh!) I do really need that little girl back. That's the part I fell in love with.
570 And I really need that part -- That is how I know you need me, and you really care for
571 me. And I want you to take a risk with me. I want you to trust me again. I want that little
572 girl part to trust me.
573
574 P: I really do – I want to do that – I guess you know – what I said before is that I – I
575 guess I have a hard time knowing how to do that. But you know I need your help too
576 with that – to help me see that is o.k. [view of Self] and that you'll be there [view of
577 other].
578
579 S: That you really need to – may-be a little time just to get the feel that he is not
580 dangerous and that he is not going to disapprove of you – in a sense that he's not going to
581 disapprove of you as much as you sometimes disapprove of you. Is that he's going to –
582 um it's funny how (To M) you were talking in the beginning of how much you needed
583 Prue's acceptance, approval, affirmation? (M: Mhmmmm) S: and now it's like Prue
584 you are talking about that – you are saying how much you need his acceptance.
585 [THEMES: processing Reach, validating attachment needs]
586
587 P: I do. I need him to see that part of me and to say that it's o.k. And the fear I guess that
588 I have is that every time you see that part of me, it's going – that you're going to stand
589 there with disapproval in your eyes.
590

591 M: I can really accept and handle you being scared – what I can't accept is you being
592 angry all the time. [THEME: Validating attachment needs]

593

594 S: Right. Right. And you are both very sensitive people and both have an incredible
595 impact on each other.and you really need the other one to affirm you – that we're o.k
596 even when we're scared and vulnerable and needy. I know I need that from my spouse.