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Attachment theory

There are many theories on attachment or in other words love. Many great thinkers have sought to understand what love is and how it affects our everyday life and our relationship with others. There are many contributions to this field but this dialectic focuses on Diane Ackerman's theory. This theory was developed after researching great thinkers like Francois de la Rochefoucauld, John Barrymore, John Bowlby, Konrad Lorenz and Harry Harlow. Who in one aspect or the other agreed on attachment. In agreement with Francois love is some kind of escape from oneself, an addiction and a learnt vulnerability as Francois quoted that unless some people hear of love, they cannot fall in it. Barrymore explained love as a girl-boy relationship and differentiated real love and infatuation. John Harlow, a British psychiatrist studied behavior of human infants and children while Konrad Lorenz, and Harry Harlow studied animal behaviors. John Bowlby analyzed both studies and was shocked how similar they were.

The young ones depend on their families especially their mothers in cases of human and other animals. This is how attachment develops

and it binds family members together and this bond and their genes is passed on to their generations. Any separation calls for a strong, immediate and an automatic recovery of the lost member. This explains why the bereaved have a very strong urge to recover the dead even if they know it is impossible. There follows detachment with the dead this is the same scenario when an infant is separated from the mother for some time, on return the infant refuses to go to the mother. From this perspective, Ackerman describes most psychiatric diseases as a form of mourning lost or inadequate love.

Ackerman links disturbed adults to broken attachments during childhood. After development of attachment, it has to be sustained because if it breaks by any means there follows grief that is expressed in many ways. Ackerman states that our attachment is strongest during childhood. On maturing attachment is regarded strong but unlike during childhood, it directed to a lover, boss in employment, or an instructor at school. These are people stronger than we are and they make us feel safe and secure. This need arises when we are sick, frightened or alone.

The attachment of a child determines the kind of an adult that child matures to. For example, if a child has adequate comfort and contact it matures to a self-reliant person and if the child lacks closeness it becomes distracted, distant and anti-social thus becomes compulsively self-reliant. Ackerman further states that a child that is neglected becomes stingy and explorative. She concludes that trusting relations with parents matures a more stable and self-reliant adult.

A person undergoes a series of crushes, infatuations and love from childhood to maturity. They learn attachment and this feeling is felt

strongly within. If the attachment breaks, we tend to gather strengths to replace it, in case of child abuse or death of parents, it breaks the bond immaturely and this brings psychological outcomes in adulthood like personality disorders and difficulty in parenting. Sometimes these children forget the bad childhood experiences through psychotherapy. In conclusion, attachment or love is strongest during childhood. It determines the kind of an adult one becomes after maturity.