A Dyadic Examination of Intimate Partner Violence Using Bowen Family Systems Theory and Adult Romantic Attachment Theory

DISSERTATION

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Abstract

The purpose of the study was to advance the understanding of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) by examining the overlap of Adult Attachment Theory and Bowen Family Systems Theory in a clinical sample of couples. This study utilized dyadic data analyses to examine how attachment styles and differentiation levels, measured in this study as separateness scores and connectedness scores, overlap in couples and then how a history of violence affected the relationship between attachment styles and differentiation levels. Few significant results were found, possibly due to the small sample for dyadic data analysis.

This study found that while the majority of both male and female participants identified with the secure attachment style, high proportions of male participants ascribed to the dismissing attachment style, while high proportions of female participants ascribed to the fearful attachment style. Furthermore, participants who ascribed to the dismissing or fearful attachment styles were most commonly paired with a partner who ascribed to the secure attachment style. Results of separateness and connectedness showed that the means for separateness scores were lower than the means for connectedness scores, regardless of gender. Partial support for the hypothesize were found, which are discussed.

A history of violence also had a substantial association with feelings of closeness and distance in a relationship, in that the scores for almost every variable and every relationship varied with the presence of a history of physical violence as compared to the absence of a history of physical violence. Significant main effects were found for
violence on female separateness, male separateness, and female connectedness, as well as significant interaction effects of violence and female attachment. Furthermore, separateness was consistently higher and connectedness was consistently lower when violence was reported than when it was not reported. Clinical implications, limitations, and future directions will be discussed.
Acknowledgments

As I am sure many of those before me have thought, the completion of my dissertation feels like culmination of an era and the beginning of my adult life.

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To my husband, Tom, thank you for supporting me, in every way possible through my entire college and graduate school career. You should receive an honorary degree for all of your hard work.
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Chapter 1: Introduction

Situational couple violence is a type of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) that is characterized by bidirectional violence that is mild to moderate in severity and frequency (Holtzworth-Munroe et al, 2002). This type of IPV, formally identified as Common Couple Violence, typically occurs within the context of arguments that escalate out of control into violence and does not exist within a pattern of controlling and coercive behaviors (Kelly & Jonson, 2008). Research reports that 30% of all married couples experience physical aggression at least once during the course of their marriage (Holtzworth-Munroe, Meehan, Rehman, & Marshall, 2002). However, among couples seeking therapy, the proportion of couples experiencing violence may be much higher (Bond & Bond, 2004). Many researchers have suggested that IPV may be a problem derived from maladaptive relationship patterns. For instance, when comparing violent couples to non-violent couples, studies consistently find that violent couples have lower satisfaction and when discussing relationship problems violent couples escalate their negativity and engage in more demanding and withdrawing behavior patterns than non-violent couples (Holtzworth-Munroe, Meehan, Rehman, & Marshall 2002). This suggests that violent couples may have communication deficits not found in non-violent couples, which may contribute to the use of violence as a conflict management technique.
Furthermore, the presence of physical aggression early in the marital relationship is a longitudinal predictor of later relationship problems (Holtzworth-Munroe et al, 2002).

Theoretically speaking, Bowen Family Systems Theory (BFST) suggests that when couples are unable to balance their emotional distance (separateness and connectedness), they become anxious and emotionally reactive, doing whatever is necessary to reduce the anxiety (Kerr & Bowen, 1988). This anxiety is derived from both a desire to be close to others, but fearing losing one’s’ identity or being rejected, and a desire to be distant from others, but fearing being alone or abandoned. Finding a balance between being too close and too distant is often difficult for couples. Violence is one “solution” for regulating the emotional distance and reducing anxiety in the relationship, in that the intensity of the interaction both during and afterward brings the couple closer together, but the violent nature of the act also pushes them apart (Bartle & Rosen, 1994).

Attachment theory has described Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) similarly, using dimensions of attachment anxiety (desire for closeness) and attachment avoidance (desire for distance; Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991; Holmes & Johnson, 2009). Allison and colleagues (2008) found in their study of couple attachment and Intimate Partner Violence that violence can serve as both a distancing strategy, such as when a member of the couple feels there is no way to escape the situation, or to increase closeness, such as when a member of the couple desires to stop the other member of the couple from leaving the situation (Allison, Bartholomew, Mayseless, & Dutton, 2008).

Prior research has demonstrated the overlap of Bowen’s concept of differentiation of self and attachment style (Cocoli, 2006; Hollander, 2008; Hospital, 2007; Skowron &
Dendy, 2004; Timm, 2000, Vick, 2006; Wei et al, 2005). However, each of these studies has used data only from one partner. Given that IPV may be a relational problem and no one perspective allows for a complete picture of the couple dynamic, it is important to utilize both perspectives when examining relational issues (Kenny, Kashy, & Cook, 2006). To date, no study has been identified that examined the relationship between differentiation of self and attachment style using couple-level data. The purpose of the current study is to examine the overlap of differentiation of self and attachment using dyadic data from couples who have experienced relationship violence and who are currently seeking couple therapy.
Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

To better understand how Bowen Family Systems Theory and Attachment Theory may have overlapping concepts and may be useful for conceptualizing about IPV, it is important to get a better understanding of the two theories, and how they individually address adult romantic relationship processes.

Attachment Theory

Adult Romantic Attachment Theory finds its roots in Infant Attachment Theory. An attachment is the emotional bond a person has to a significant other that makes him/her want to be close to the significant other because it provides him/her with a sense of comfort and security (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). As described by Bowlby, Infant Attachment Theory has three basic premises (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). The first premise is that individuals will be comfortable (not anxious) if they believe their attachment figure will be available to them whenever they need him/her. If they believe their attachment figure will be unavailable to them, they will experience intense or chronic fear. Second, the comfort or trust that an attachment figure will be there for them when they need it builds up slowly over time, through infancy, childhood, and even adolescence. Slowly people internalize these attachments and form expectations about their significant other that persists throughout the rest of their lives. Finally, the expectations that people develop about their attachment figure are fairly accurate
reflections of the experiences they had with their attachment figure (Bowlby, 1973 cited in Hazan & Shaver, 1987).

Bowlby believed that attachments develop in infancy based on a primary caregiver's sensitivity and responsiveness to the infants' basic needs, as well as needs for comfort and protection (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). Infants whose needs are responded to quickly, accurately, and with regularity will develop a secure attachment to their primary caregiver, meaning that they will believe the attachment figure will be available to them when they need him/her physically or emotionally (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). When an infant experiences a real or perceived threat to the attachment relationship, Bowlby suggested that anger may be a natural infant response, designed to convey to the attachment figure the seriousness that the infant felt the threat was to the attachment relationship (West & George, 1999). This anger is demonstrated by the infant as protest behaviors upon separation from the attachment figure. Theoretically, the anger should trigger a care-giving response, increasing the proximity to the attachment figure, and restoring the felt safety and security of the infant. If the attachment figure is unable or unwilling to respond in this way, the anger and frustration may continue, forming either an anxious/ambivalent or avoidant insecure attachment in the infant (West & George, 1999). The anxious/ambivalent infant has been responded to with irregularity or with inappropriate responses based on his/her needs (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). This creates an uncertainty in the availability of the attachment figure, so the infant becomes extremely anxious about distance from the attachment figure. The infant continually seeks out comfort, but is also very anxious and fearful about the stability of the attachment figure.
The avoidant infant has been consistently rejected, so s/he becomes very anxious about being close to others and will attempt to avoid the attachment figure to avoid future rejection (Hazan & Shaver, 1987).

The internalization of these attachment styles form the working models infants and young children have about themselves and others, which are the central components to personality development. A working model of the self centers on an individual’s judgment that s/he is a person that others are likely to respond to or be available to, whereas a working model of others centers on an individual’s judgment that other people are reliable and available (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). Bowlby hypothesized that these attachment styles and internal working models influence how we interact with our environment, as well as individuals within our environment (Fraley & Shaver, 2000).

Research on how infants with different attachment styles interact with their environment has found that infants with a secure attachment style use their attachment figure as a secure base, such that when their attachment figure is comfortably close and reliable they will explore the environment without the distance creating any great anxiety. When infants sense a threat in their environment to either themselves or the attachment relationship, they seek closeness to the attachment figure to reestablish feelings of safety and security. For infants who are securely attached, reconnecting with the attachment figure quickly restores those feelings of safety and security; however, insecurely attached infants who are unsure of the reliability of their attachment figure, are much more difficult to console (Fraley & Shaver, 2000).
Although Bowlby did not specifically address what attachment would look like in adult romantic relationships, he hypothesized that these infant attachment styles would be stable across the lifespan (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). Longitudinal research has supported this premise, generally finding continuity between secure and insecure classifications given in infancy and again measured in adulthood (Waters, Merrick, Treboux, Crowell, & Albersheim, 2000a; Waters, Weinfield, & Hamilton, 2000b; Weinfeld, Sroufe, & Egelund, 2000). However, the same research has also found that significant negative life events such as abuse or the death of a significant other, can induce movement in attachment style from a secure classification in infancy to an insecure classification in adulthood (Hamilton, 2000; Lewis, Feiring, & Rosenthal, 2000; Waters et al., 2000a; Waters et al., 2000b; Weinfeld et al., 2000).

Similar to the infant-caregiver relationship, in adult relationships, securely attached adults should be tolerant of fluctuation in closeness and distance from their significant other because they have an internal working model that tells them their significant other is reliable and available to them. However, insecurely attached adults will not be able to tolerate as much closeness to or distance from their significant other. Specifically, Adult Romantic Attachment Theory describes securely attached adults as comfortable with closeness in relationships and without fears about being rejected by their significant others (Pietromonaco & Barrett, 2000). Anxious-ambivalent adults have been described as seeking extreme closeness and having intense fears of rejection. Finally, avoidant adults have been described as being extremely uncomfortable with closeness, finding it difficult to depend on others (Pietromonaco & Barrett, 2000).
Expanding upon the original conceptualization of adult romantic attachment styles in terms of adults’ comfort with closeness and distance just described, Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) conceptualized adult romantic attachment in terms of the working models of self and others. They used two continuums to create four possible attachment styles: secure, preoccupied, dismissive, and fearful (Figure 1; Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991). These continuums have more recently been labeled attachment avoidance and attachment anxiety (Holmes & Johnson, 2009). Those adults who have positive working models of the self will be most comfortable with autonomy, while those who have negative working models of the self will be least comfortable with autonomy (analogous to the attachment avoidance continuum). Also, those adults who have positive working models of others will be most comfortable with intimacy, while those who have negative working models of others will be least comfortable with intimacy (analogous to the attachment anxiety continuum). Combining those two continuums, the securely attached person has a positive image of both self and others, feeling comfortable with both intimacy and autonomy (low avoidance and low anxiety). A person with a dismissive attachment style has a positive view of self and a negative view of others, such that they are comfortable with autonomy and uncomfortable with intimacy (low anxiety and high avoidance). The dismissive attachment style is analogous to the previously described avoidant attachment style. They believe that they (themselves) are worthy of love, but believe others are too needy and dependent. The preoccupied person has a negative view of self and a positive view of others, feeling very uncomfortable with autonomy and desiring intense closeness to their significant others (low avoidance and
high anxiety), yet believing they (themselves) are unworthy of love. The preoccupied attachment style is analogous to the previously described anxious-ambivalent attachment style. The fearful person has a negative view of self and a negative view of others, fearing both intimacy and autonomy (high anxiety and high avoidance), such that they desire closeness with significant others, but avoid intimacy because of fears that others will reject them (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991; Holmes & Johnson, 2009).

In addition to the premise that attachment style should be stable across the lifespan, attachment theorists have suggested that our attachment style would affect how we choose partners (Holmes & Johnson, 2009). Some have suggested that we want to be in relationships that provide the most emotional safety and security based on our internal working models. For instance, securely attached people would feel the most attachment security when in a relationship characterized by high intimacy and high autonomy, whereas people with a preoccupied attachment style would find the most security when in a relationship characterized by high intimacy and low autonomy, and people with a dismissive attachment style would find the most security when in a relationship characterized by low intimacy and high autonomy. Three hypotheses have been derived from this about what type of partners we would choose: partners that would provide us with the most attachment security (i.e. all attachment styles paired with securely attached partners), partners with complimentary attachment styles (secure-secure pairing versus dismissing-preoccupied pairing), and partners with similar attachment styles (Holmes & Johnson, 2009). Results from a review showed that when choosing hypothetical partners, people choose partners whose attachment style was similar to their own or provided them...
with attachment security. On the other hand, support for the complimentary hypothesis was found when examining studies that investigated the maintenance of long-term relationships. The authors concluded that while we may be attracted to partners who provide the most attachment security, relationships that last may be the ones in which our partners’ attachment styles are complementary to our own (Holmes & Johnson, 2009).

**Adult Romantic Attachment Theory applied to Intimate Partner Violence**

Research applying Adult Romantic Attachment Theory to Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) has suggested that it may be the interaction of complimentary insecure attachment styles in relationships that triggers violent behavior. For instance, research has found that IPV occurred when the perpetrator was high in attachment anxiety (fearing abandonment) and the other partner was high in attachment avoidance (fearing intimacy; Roberts & Noller, 1998 cited in Allison, Bartholomew, Mayeless, & Dutton, 2008). Similarly, research has shown that IPV occurs in couples when a male high in attachment avoidance is “mispaired” with a female high in attachment anxiety (Allison et al., 2008; Doumas, Pearson, Elgin & McKinley, 2008). Still other research has found that violence was more likely to occur in couples in which both members were high in attachment anxiety (preoccupied attachment style; Allison et al., 2008).

Theoretically, each attachment style has a certain level of comfort and security with closeness and distance (Pistole, 1994). For instance, the dismissing attachment style would be most comfortable and feel most secure with maximum distance and minimum closeness, while the preoccupied attachment style would be most comfortable and feel most secure with maximum closeness and minimum distance. In order to keep the arousal
of the attachment system low and attachment behaviors from being triggered (designed to preserve the attachment relationship from a real or perceived threat), a balance needs to be found between closeness and distance. Balance in this context does not mean equally close and distant, but a balancing point between the continuums of close and distance that is comfortable for each partner. When partners with opposing closeness and distance needs are paired, such as dismissing and preoccupied, or when partners who both desire intense closeness, such as both partners identifying as preoccupied, finding a balancing point may be especially difficult and the attachment system may become aroused frequently (Pistole, 1994). In these adult romantic relationships, one or both partners may have experienced attachment injuries and increased proximity may not elicit the safe and secure feeling it is supposed to. The anger response that at one point elicited care-giving behaviors in their attachment figure may actually heighten the perception of threats for one or both partners, snowballing into an explosion of violence. Thus, in these relationships, violence may serve as a way of relieving the built up anger triggered by attachment anxiety and rebalancing the closeness and distance between the partners.

**Bowen Family Systems Theory – Differentiation**

The cornerstones of Bowen’s family theory are his concepts of chronic anxiety and differentiation, which are opposing constructs, the former causing symptoms and the latter acting as the antidote (Kerr & Bowen, 1988). What makes the two concepts similar is that humans are always struggling with both; struggling against succumbing to the former and attempting to achieve the latter. Influencing our levels of chronic anxiety and differentiation are two counterbalancing life forces: individuality and togetherness (Kerr
& Bowen, 1988). Like gravity, the togetherness force pulls us toward one another. However, getting too close to others triggers our anxieties about losing our sense of self. On the other hand, when we attempt to individuate or separate from others, our anxieties about being alone are triggered. In other words, we are driven to be as close to others as possible; however, at the same time, we need to find a way to maintain our distance without becoming too separate. The automatic emotional and physical responses that occur in human interactions while we attempt to balance these forces are known as chronic anxiety (Friedman, 1991). The chronic anxiety that permeates all situations may overwhelm us, blocking our ability to think and reflect rationally when under emotional pressures triggered through interactions with others (Kerr & Bowen, 1988).

All symptoms and problems that develop in individuals and families result from our inability to tolerate this chronic anxiety, while the antidote for these problems is our ability to be differentiated (Friedman, 1991). Differentiation has been defined as our capacity to not automatically respond to emotional pressures from interacting with others (Kerr & Bowen, 1988). It has also been described as the ability to be able to distinguish between our cognitions and emotions (Bowen, 1978), so that when we are in anxiety-provoking situations (chronic anxiety), we are able to choose whether or not to act on our emotional reaction. Intrapersonally, an emotionally reactive person is unable to make this choice. Emotional reactivity is not the same as having an emotional reaction, rather it is succumbing to interpersonal pressures to act a certain way. Interpersonally, an emotionally reactive person is unable to differentiate him/herself from significant others,
also making it difficult to maintain the balance between closeness and separateness to those people.

Differentiation exists on a continuum, with the majority of people lying somewhere in the middle (Kerr & Bowen, 1988), in a constant battle to react in a differentiated manner when anxious. The lower the level of differentiation, the more emotionally reactive people become, meaning that they have a difficult time tolerating the chronic anxiety and will respond to anxiety-provoking events by attempting to simply shut down their anxiety by any means necessary (Kerr & Bowen, 1988). The limited research on differentiation and anxiety has found support for this inverse relationship between differentiation and chronic anxiety (Knauth, Skowron, & Escobar; 2006), or at least trait anxiety (Miller, Anderson, & Kaulana-Keala, 2004). This research suggests that people who have higher levels of differentiation report experiencing less anxiety, perhaps because they are better able to manage it.

Undifferentiated people can become so emotionally reactive in relationships that their individual identities become defined by who they are in that relationship, so when they become anxious, they perceive any threat to the relationship a threat to their individual identity (Bowen, 1978). Getting too close (fusing) or too far away (cutting off) from loved ones is an emotionally reactive response that will temporarily reduce anxiety. Fusion is the inability to maintain an “I” stance in the face of an overwhelming “we”, while cutting off is the inability to maintain “we”, while asserting an “I” stance. While fusion and cutoff appear to be different, they are manifestations of the same inability to be differentiated or not emotionally reactive when faced with high levels of anxiety (Kerr
& Bowen, 1988). Research has supported this relationship between differentiation, one’s ability to take an “I” stance, and the use of fusion or cutoff as a distance regulator, such that higher levels of differentiation are associated with less use of fusion and cutoff (Skowron & Schmitt, 2003).

Bowen hypothesized that people will tend to be drawn to partners with similar levels of differentiation as their own, which means their ability to tolerate the chronic anxiety is similar, although he suggested that their means of dealing with that anxiety tends to contrast (Bowen, 1978; Kerr & Bowen, 1988). Some research has supported this proposition (Miller, Anderson, & Kaulana-Keala, 2004), while other research has not (Bartle, 1993; Miller et al., 2004). A possible explanation for this contradictory evidence is that although their basic level of differentiation should be the same, Bowen hypothesized that in emotionally reactive couples one member of the couple may develop a higher functioning level of differentiation than the other (Kerr & Bowen, 1988). As a couple they have a basic relational level of differentiation, such that it is not one person who is emotionally reactive, but that both are simultaneously emotionally reactive to each other. When we pull them apart and examine them individually, we cannot see the relational processes at play. For instance, the member of the couple who is not a symptom bearer may appear to have a higher level of differentiation because s/he is the “overfunctioner” for the relationship, while the member of the couple who is the symptom bearer appears to have a lower level of differentiation because s/he is the “underfunctioner” for the relationship. Their level of basic differentiation does not
change, but their level of functional differentiation may look different in response to their relational processes (Kerr & Bowen, 1988).

Bowen Family Systems Theory applied to Intimate Partner Violence

In addition to the “overfunctioner/underfunctioner” dynamic, Bowen also hypothesized that marital conflict would be a frequently occurring symptom triangulated into couples with a lower level of differentiation (Bowen, 1978), which has been supported by research (Miller, Anderson, & Kaulana-Keala, 2004). Although Bowen did not specifically address violence in relationships in his theory, it stands to reason that Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) may be an extreme version of marital conflict, a manifestation of intense emotional reactivity (Bartle & Rosen, 1994). Violence becomes the “perfect” way to regulate the distance in couples. Their desire to be close to each other will draw them in until the anxiety of being too close culminates in an explosion of violent intimacy (Bartle & Rosen, 1994). It is as though the couple is so anxious about being too close that they have to physically push each other apart, but the violence also physically restrains the other partner so they have to stay close at the same time (Allison, Bartholomew, Mayseless, & Dutton, 2008). In the aftermath of the violence, the couple will create distance as they attempt to heal and make sense of the incident. However, any increased distance is perceived as a threat to the relationship and their identities, so the trauma of the violence also inadvertently bonds them together, a process that has been labeled Traumatic Bonding (Dutton & Painter, 1993). Some research has supported this theoretical conceptualization of IPV, finding that couples experiencing either unidirectional or bidirectional IPV have higher reactivity to each other. Furthermore,
distressed couples’ communication is “characterized by a heightened sensitivity to their partners’ behavior and their interactions are related to greater behavioral dependency” (Bartle & Rosen, 1994, p.228). Allison and colleagues (2008) also found that violence can be used as both a distancing and a pursuit strategy.

The Current Study

Although created in very different fields and using different observations of human interactions, Bowen Family Systems Theory and Attachment Theory (both infant and adult romantic) have a surprising amount in common. First and foremost, both theories emphasize the powerful influence of anxiety, especially in relation to attempts to balance closeness or distance with significant others. The continuums that Attachment Theory uses to create the four attachment styles (avoidance and anxiety) are also very similar to the continuums of closeness and distance that Bowen discusses. It seems that the dismissing attachment style is similar to Bowen’s concept of cutoff and the preoccupied attachment style is similar to Bowen’s concept of fusion. Theoretically, fusion and cutoff are on opposing ends of the same spectrum, so it may also be that rather than being categories, the dismissing and preoccupied insecure attachment styles are also on the same spectrum. In addition, research on Attachment Theory found that couples with complimentary attachment styles (dismissive and preoccupied) were common in long term relationships (Holmes & Johnson, 2009), which coincides with Bowen’s hypothesis that people with similar levels of differentiation, but opposing methods of handling anxiety will be drawn to each other.
To continue, the secure attachment style seems similar to a person with a high level of differentiation, who is able to tolerate both closeness and distance. The fearful attachment style is unique, unable to tolerate either closeness or distance, and may be representative of a person who has a very low level of differentiation (lower than the other two insecure attachment styles). Research has partially supported this hypothesis, in that both fusion and cutoff have been found to be related to the fears of abandonment typically associated with Attachment Theory (Skowron & Schmitt, 2003). Additional research has also shown that differentiation accounts for 40% of the variability in attachment anxiety and 62% of the variability in attachment avoidance (Skowron & Dendy, 2004). However, no study has specifically examined the overlap of these two theories’ major constructs.

Both theories also have similar conceptualizations of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV); that it is a response to an inability to regulate closeness and distance in relationships, and that all threats are perceived as threats to the relationship and one’s individual identity. Bowen expands on this to discuss the triangulation piece of IPV, which is a means of reducing anxiety and bringing the couple closer together. Attachment Theory adds the dimension of anger to its’ explanation of IPV, in that insecurely attached couples may respond to their attachment anxiety by becoming angry, with the desired effect of getting the attention of their significant other to restore the balance of closeness and distance. However, this anger seems to trigger attachment anxiety in the other partner, escalating, rather than deescalating the attachment anxiety, ultimately leading to the violence.
Given the above theoretical conceptualizations of IPV, the purpose of the current study is to satisfy the following specific aims:

Specific Aims:

1) To examine the overlap of differentiation level and the attachment styles. Specifically, we hypothesize that the secure attachment style will correlate with higher separateness and connectedness scores (tolerant of intimacy, tolerant of autonomy), while the insecure dismissing attachment style will correlate with higher separateness and lower connectedness scores (tolerant of autonomy, but not intimacy), the insecure fearful attachment style will correlate with lower separateness and lower connectedness (not tolerate of intimacy or autonomy), and the insecure preoccupied attachment style will correlate with lower separateness and higher connectedness (tolerant of intimacy, but not tolerant of autonomy).

2) To examine how attachment and differentiation overlap in the context of the couple relationship. Specifically, we hypothesize that the secure-secure pairing would be associated with higher separateness and connectedness scores, while insecure-insecure pairing would be associated with lower separateness and lower connectedness scores or opposing scores, with one being lower and one being higher.

3) To examine if the attachment styles and differentiation levels differ when physical violence is reported than when it is not reported. Specifically, we hypothesized that a history of physical violence will be associated with the insecure attachment styles (dismissing, preoccupied, and fearful) and lower separateness and connectedness or opposing separateness and connectedness scores, while no history of physical
violence would be associated to the secure attachment styles and higher separateness and connectedness scores.
Chapter 3: Methodology

Clinical Sample

The sample for this study is part of a larger longitudinal study conducted at the OSU Couple and Family Therapy Clinic. The sample consists of 52 heterosexual couples who are dating, cohabitating or married. The average age for women was 31 years and 33 years for men, with a range of 21 to 65 for both men and women. Men were more frequently older than their partners. The average age difference between partners was 2.7 years, with a range of less than 1 year to 14 years. The average relationship length was 6 years, with a range of less than 1 year to 41 years. The majority of the couples were cohabitating (32.6%), followed by married for the first time (23.9%), dating (21.7%), remarried (15.2%), and divorced (6.5%). Six couples disagreed on their relationship status. In three couples, one partner reported this as a first marriage and the other partner as a remarriage. In two more couples, one partner reported being divorced and the other partner designated the relationship as dating. Finally, one couple disagreed about whether they were dating or cohabitating. Most of the clients had at least a Bachelor’s degree; however, women more frequently reported having achieved advanced education (Masters and beyond) than men. The majority of the clients identified themselves as Caucasian (67.3% for both men and women) and African American (15.4% for women and 17.3% for men). The remainder of the participants identified themselves as Asian (3.7% for
women and 1.9% for men), Hispanic (1.9% for women and 3.8% for men), Native American (1.9% for men), and other (5.8% for women and 7.7% for men). There were 16 mixed-race couples and 33 same-race couples.

**Measures**

General demographic information was gathered in a separate questionnaire. The information collected includes income, education, race, age, gender, childhood history of violence or abuse, and current medications (Appendix A).

Attachment style was measured with the *Relationship Questionnaire*: 4 prototypical descriptions of attachment styles which respondents rate (on a 7-point scale) in terms of how well they fit their characteristic style in close relationships, with higher numbers indicating greater agreement and lower numbers indicating less agreement (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991; Appendix C). The four attachment categories were secure, dismissing, preoccupied, and fearful. External validity of the RQ has been established; the measure is significantly similar to the cluster-based classification of the Experiences in Close Relationships ($\chi^2 (9) = 497.78, p < 0.0001; n = 1,082$; Brennan et al., 1998). For analyses, the attachment style that each participant rated the highest was identified as his or her attachment style (Scharfe & Bartholomew, 1994). In the cases in which there is a tie between secure and one of the insecure attachment styles, the participant was categorized as secure (Scharfe & Bartholomew, 1994).

Differentiation is measured with two instruments: *Healthy Separation in the Family* and *Connectedness within the Family*. *Healthy Separation in the Family* (revised from Healthy Separation from the SITA) is a 6-item questionnaire measuring tolerance
for physical and emotional separateness and connectedness in both the spousal relationship (Levine, Green, & Millon, 1986; Appendix D). It is measured on a 5 point Likert scale, with lower numbers showing more agreement and higher numbers showing more disagreement. Reliability analyses were computed to determine which items should be used in the analysis. Using all items, the Chronbach’s Alpha for healthy separation in the family was .796 for female participants and .591 for male participants. Item 5 was then removed from the analysis because it seemed to address connectedness and separateness together, rather than separateness individually. The Chronbach’s Alpha increased to .813 for females and .576 for males when item 5 was removed from the analysis. A summary score was created by averaging the remaining scores.

*Connectedness within the Family* (Revised from The Social Connectedness Scale-Revised: Lee, Draper & Lee, 2001) is a 9 item questionnaire that also measures tolerance for separateness and connectedness in the spousal relationship (Appendix E). This is also measured on a 5 point Likert scale, with lower numbers showing more agreement and higher numbers showing more disagreement. Items 4, 6, 7, 8 were reverse coded for the purpose of analyses. Using all items, the Chronbach’s Alpha for connectedness within the family was .903 for female participants and .830 for male participants. A summary score was created by averaging the scores.

Physical violence was measured using the *Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS)* survey, which is a 5-item instrument designed to measure Intimate Partner Violence (Saltzman, Fanslow, McMahon, & Shelley, 1999). Each question is answered with a yes or no (Appendix F). To address the impact of physical violence, an
affirmative response to item 3 (Has an intimate partner ever hit, slapped, shoved, choked, kicked, shaken, or otherwise physically hurt you?) by either partner was used to identify couples in which there was a history of physical violence. Psychological violence, assessed with item 5 (Appendix F) was not examined in this study because an overwhelming majority of the participants reported a history of psychological violence. Sexual violence, assessed with items 1 and 2 (Appendix F), was not examined in this study because of there were no male participants who reported a history of sexual violence and an extremely small number of female participants reported a history of sexual violence. Item 4 (Appendix F) was not used in this study because the researcher believed this item taps into a more severe pattern of violence than is being examined in this study.

Data Analysis

To test whether attachment styles and differentiation levels were related two one-way ANOVAs were conducted with the attachment styles as the between subject and each partner’s differentiation scale scores used as the dependent variables. To test how the interaction of attachment in the couple context relates to differentiation levels a one-way ANOVA was conducted with couple attachment pairing as the between subject and each partner’s differentiation scale scores used as the dependent variables. Then, a repeated measures MANOVA was conducted with the individual attachment styles as the between subject, partner as the repeated measure, and each partner’s differentiation scale scores used as the dependent variables.
To test how a reported history of physical violence, as compared to those who did not report a history of IPV, affects the relationship between attachment and differentiation, a repeated measures MANOVA was also performed with couple attachment pairings as the between subjects factor, history of physical violence based on the BRFSS scores used as the repeated subject factor, and each partner’s differentiation scale scores used as the dependent variables. Additionally, two repeated measures MANOVAs were conducted, with individual attachment as the between subjects factor, history of physical violence based on the BRFSS scores used as the repeated subject factor, and each partner’s differentiation scale scores used as the dependent variables.

Due to the small sample size and dyadic nature of the data analysis, the p-value has been increased to 0.08.
Chapter 4: Results

Preliminary Results

Preliminary results for attachment showed that the majority of female participants rated the secure and fearful attachment styles the highest (32.7%), followed closely by the preoccupied attachment style (15.4%), and the dismissing attachment style (3.8%; Table 1). Male participants rated the secure attachment style the highest (40.4%), followed by the dismissing attachment style (23.1%), the preoccupied attachment style (13.5%), and finally the fearful attachment style (9.6%; Table 1). The most common attachment style couple pairing was secure-insecure (51.9%), followed by insecure-insecure (32.7%), and secure-secure (9.6%; Table 1). The most common attachment pairings when examining all four attachment styles were the fearful female - secure male pairing (21%), followed by the dismissing male - secure female pairing (18%).

Preliminary results of separateness and connectedness scores showed that the range for male separateness was limited, with the highest score being 3.40 out of 5 (see Table 2 for mean scores). The variance of both male separateness and male connectedness were also limited (0.379 and 0.416, respectively), while the variance of female separateness and female connectedness were within normal limits (0.759 and 0.765, respectively). The means for separateness scores were lower than the means for connectedness scores, regardless of gender (Table 2). A Paired Samples T-test was
performed to determine if partner separateness and connectedness scores were significantly different. Results showed that there was a significant correlation between partner separateness scores ($p<0.08$) and partner connectedness scores ($p<0.08$). Results did not show that male and female separateness scores were significantly different from each other ($t(46)=-0.299$, $p=0.767$) or that male and female connectedness scores were significantly different from each other ($t(41)=1.252$, $p=0.218$).

Specific Aim 1

The first aim of this study was to examine the overlap of differentiation levels and the individual attachment styles, hypothesizing that the secure attachment style would be related to higher separateness and higher connectedness scores, while the insecure dismissing attachment style will correlate with higher separateness and lower connectedness scores (tolerant of autonomy, but not intimacy), the insecure fearful attachment style will correlate with lower separateness and lower connectedness (not tolerate of intimacy or autonomy), and the insecure preoccupied attachment style will correlate with lower separateness and higher connectedness (tolerant of intimacy, but not tolerant of autonomy). To address the first aim, two One-way ANOVAs were performed. Individual female attachment was used as the independent variable in the first One-way ANOVA, with individual separateness and individual connectedness for both male and female participants as the dependent variables. Contrary to the hypothesis, this analysis yielded no significant results, meaning that female attachment styles were not significantly different across the dependent variables and female attachment styles were not significantly related to individual male or female separateness or connectedness.
Individual male attachment was used as the independent variable for the second One-way ANOVA; again individual separateness and individual connectedness for both male and female participants were the dependent variables. This analysis yielded a significant main effect for male attachment, Roy’s Largest Root $f(4)=2.862$, $p<0.08$, meaning that male attachment styles were significantly related to all of the dependent variables. When examining the graphical representation of the significant impact of male attachment on separateness and connectedness, partial support for the hypothesis can be found (Figure 2). Specifically, when the male participants ascribed to the secure attachment style, male and female connectedness and separateness scores were consistently higher and when the male participants ascribed to the fearful attachment styles, male and female connectedness and separateness scores were consistently lower (Figure 2). Contrary to the hypothesis that the preoccupied attachment style would be associated with lower separateness and higher connectedness, similar to the fearful attachment style when the male participant ascribed to the preoccupied attachment style male and female connectedness and separateness scores were consistently lower (Figure 2). Also contradicting the hypothesis that the dismissing attachment style would be significantly related to higher separateness and lower connectedness scores, when the male participant ascribed to the dismissing attachment style, female separateness as well as both female and male connectedness were consistently higher, while male separateness was lower (Figure 2). See Table 3 for mean scores.
Specific Aim 2

The second aim of this study was to examine how attachment and differentiation interact in the context of couple attachment. Specifically, we hypothesize that the secure-secure pairing would be associated with higher separateness and connectedness scores, while insecure-insecure pairing would be associated with lower separateness and connectedness scores or opposing separateness and connectedness scores. To address this aim, two analyses were conducted. First, a One-way ANOVA using individual separateness and connectedness scores for both male and female participants as the dependent variables and couple attachment pairings as the independent variable was conducted. For this analysis, couple attachment was identified with three types of attachment pairings: secure-secure, secure-insecure, and insecure-insecure. In this instance, the three insecure attachment styles (preoccupied, dismissing, fearful) were combined into one “insecure” attachment style. No significant results were found. See Table 4 for mean scores for separateness and connectedness.

To delineate more specific information about how the combination of attachment styles in a couple relationship impacts separateness and connectedness, a repeated measures MANOVA using individual separateness and individual connectedness scores for both male and female participants as the dependent variables and individual attachment for both male and female participants as the independent variable was conducted. Results yielded a significant interaction for the relationship between individual male and female attachment styles, Roys Largest Root f(5)=5.239, p<0.08. Further results showed a significant main effect of female attachment on male
connectedness $f(3)=2.755$, $p=0.08$ and significant interaction effects of male and female attachment on male connectedness $f(5)=3.607$, $p<0.08$ (Figure 3). See Table 5 for mean scores.

**Specific Aim 3**

The final aim for this study was to examine how the relationship between attachment styles and differentiation differ when physical violence has been reported than when it has not been reported. Specifically, we hypothesized that a history of physical violence will be associated with the insecure attachment styles, such that the insecure dismissing attachment style will correlate with higher separateness and lower connectedness scores, the insecure fearful attachment style will correlate with lower separateness and lower connectedness, and the insecure preoccupied attachment style will correlate with lower separateness and higher connectedness. Further, we hypothesize that no history of physical violence would be associated to the secure attachment styles and higher separateness and connectedness scores. Preliminary results showed that 36.5% of the couples reported a history of physical violence. A Chi-Squared difference test found no significant differences in the distribution of female or male attachment styles when physical violence was reported than when it was not reported ($\chi^2 (3, N=44) = 2.814$, $p=0.421$), $\chi^2 (3, N=45) = 1.275$, $p=0.735$, respectively), which contradicts the hypothesis that there would be significantly different attachment styles endorsed when physical violence was reported than when it was not reported. However, trends in the data suggest that there was more than an 11% difference in secure and fearful attachment style endorsements when violence is reported than when it is not reported for both male and
female participants, suggesting that there may be clinically significant if not statistically significant differences. See Table 1 for percentages.

An Independent Samples T-Test was performed to assess for significant differences in means for separateness and connectedness when physical violence was reported, as compared to when it was not reported. Results did not yield any significant differences in mean scores of separateness or connectedness for either male or female participants when physical violence was reported, as compared to when it was not reported (female separateness F(46)=2.575, p=0.292, male separateness F(48)=0.208, p=0.075, female connectedness F(42)=0.494, p=0.223, male connectedness F(45)=0.540, p=0.217). However, trends in the data showed that both male and female separateness were higher when physical violence was reported than when it was not reported, while both male and female connectedness were lower when physical violence was reported than when it was not reported (Table 2). Again, this suggests that while there were no statistically significant differences, there may be clinically significant differences.

Three additional analyses were conducted to address the third hypothesis that a history of physical violence will be associated with the insecure attachment styles (dismissing, preoccupied, and fearful) and lower or opposing separateness and connectedness scores, while no history of physical violence would be associated to the secure attachment styles and higher separateness and connectedness scores. First, a repeated measures MANOVA using individual separateness and connectedness scores for both male and female participants as the dependent variables, with physical violence and couple attachment scores as the independent variables was conducted. Results showed a
significant main effect for physical violence on male separateness F(1)=3.505, p=0.08 (Figure 5B), and physical violence on female connectedness F(1)=3.622, p=0.08 (Figure 5A). These results provide partial support for the opposing separateness and connectedness scores when violence is reported, in that female connectedness was significantly lower and male separateness was significantly higher when violence was reported as compared to when it was not reported (Figure 5). See Table 2 for mean scores.

To gather further detailed information about the impact of physical violence on the relationship between attachment style on individual separateness and connectedness scores, two repeated measures MANOVAs were conducted, one using female attachment styles as the independent variable and the other using male attachment scores as the independent variable. Both of the analyses included individual separateness and connectedness scores for both male and female participants as the dependent variable and physical violence as an additional independent variable.

Results from the first repeated measures MANOVA using female attachment styles as the independent variable yielded significant main effects of physical violence across all dependent variables; Pillai’s Trace, Wilks’ Lambda, Hotelling’s Trace, and Roy’s Largest Root f(4)=3.100, p<0.08. The interaction between physical violence and female attachment was also significant; Wilks’ Lambda f(12)=1.941, p<0.08, Hotelling’s Trace f(12)=2.256, p<0.08 & Roy’s Largest Root f(4)=7.282, p<0.08. Further results yielded significant main effects for physical violence on female separateness F(1)=4.980, p<0.08 (Figure 6A), male separateness F(1)=6.344, p<0.08 (Figure 6B), and female
connectedness F(1)=6.170, p<0.08 (Figure 6C). Again, these results provide partial support for the opposing separateness and connectedness scores when violence is reported, in that female connectedness was significantly lower and male and female separateness was significantly higher when violence was reported as compared to when it was not reported (Figure 6). The interaction of female attachment and physical violence was also significant on male separateness, F(3)=3.609, p<0.08 (Figure 7). This result provides partial support for the hypothesize, in that when violence was reported as compared to when it was not reported male separateness was significantly higher, except when the female ascribed to the fearful attachment style (Figure 7).

Results from the second repeated measures MANOVA using male attachment styles as the independent variables yielded a significant main effect for male attachment across all dependent variables; Roy’s Largest Root f(4)=3.114, p<0.08. The interaction of male attachment and physical violence was also significant on male separateness; f(3)=2.572, p<0.08 (Figure 8). Figure 8 graphically depicts the significant interaction.
Chapter 5: Discussion

The purpose of the study was to examine the relationship between attachment styles and differentiation levels; then, to examine how a history of physical violence affects the relationship between attachment styles and differentiation levels. The first hypothesis was that individual attachment styles would be significantly related to separateness and connectedness. Specifically, we hypothesized that the secure attachment style would be related to higher separateness and higher connectedness scores, while the insecure dismissing attachment style will correlate with higher separateness and lower connectedness scores (tolerant of autonomy, but not intimacy), the insecure fearful attachment style will correlate with lower separateness and lower connectedness (not tolerate of intimacy or autonomy), and the insecure preoccupied attachment style will correlate with lower separateness and higher connectedness (tolerant of intimacy, but not tolerant of autonomy). Contrary to the hypothesis, individual female attachment was not significantly related to individual separateness and connectedness. Providing support for the hypothesis, male attachment styles were significantly related to separateness and connectedness and the male secure attachment style was consistently associated with higher connectedness and separateness scores for both male and female participants. Additionally, the male fearful and preoccupied attachment styles were consistently associated with lower connectedness and separateness scores for both male and female
participants. Contrary to the hypothesis, the male dismissing attachment style was associated with lower male separateness scores, higher female separateness, higher female connectedness and higher male connectedness scores.

Given that higher scores on separateness demonstrate more comfort with disagreement and difference in relationships, while higher scores on connectedness demonstrate a stronger feeling of closeness to one’s partner, we can further interpret these results. The male participants ascribing to the secure attachment style, which is low in attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance and is associated with a positive self-image and image of others (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991; Holmes & Johnson, 2009), consistently reported increased feelings of closeness to their partners and their partners to them. It was also associated with an increased comfort with disagreement with their partners and an increase in their partner’s comfort with disagreement with them. This seems consistent with the definition of high differentiation, which is characterized by both high intimacy and high autonomy (Kerr & Bowen, 1988). The male participants ascribing to the fearful and preoccupied attachment styles, which are both high in attachment anxiety and associated with negative self-images (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991; Holmes & Johnson, 2009), reported decreased feelings of closeness to their partners and their partners to them. These attachment styles were also associated with decreased comfort with disagreement with their partner, and their partner to them. The findings for the preoccupied attachment style here contradict the conceptualization of the preoccupied attachment style that is characterized by an extreme desire for intimacy (Allison et al, 2008). The preoccupied and fearful attachment style seems to fit with what
Bowen referred to as fusion/cutoff, which occurs when people have lower levels of differentiation and is characterized by alternating intense closeness (discomfort with disagreement) with intense feelings of distance (decreased feelings of closeness; Kerr & Bowen, 1988). Couples in relationships characterized by fusion/cutoff are said to be unable to tolerate differences in opinion and disagreements. That is, in order to maintain a this type of relationship nothing that would constitute a “boundary” between the partners could be tolerated; however, intense intimacy would also trigger anxiety. Thus, those who find themselves in a relationship with a partner who identifies with being preoccupied or fearful, are probably not well differentiated, leading to a fused/cutoff relationship in which they and their partner are unable to tolerate difference or disagreement.

Further support for this conclusion can be found when examining the measures of separateness and connectedness. Specifically, it was found that male separateness and connectedness had limited variance, while the variance for female separateness and connectedness was normal, meaning that male participants’ scores for both separateness and connectedness were toward the lower end of the scale. Combined with the male participants rating both separateness and connectedness lower, it suggests ambivalence about intimate relationships, and a lower level of differentiation. Based on the items in the two scales, male participants may have difficulty with difference or disagreement from their partner, while also having a difficult time feeling close to their partner, which may also be especially true for the fearful and preoccupied attachment styles.
The male dismissing attachment style had contradictory findings. The dismissing attachment style, which is characterized by high in attachment avoidance and low in attachment anxiety, was associated in this study with increased comfort with disagreement with their partner, increased feelings of closeness to their partner and their partner to them, while also being associated with decreased comfort with disagreement of their partner to them.

The second aim of this study was to examine how attachment and differentiation overlap in the context of the couple relationship. Specifically, we hypothesized that the secure-secure pairing would be associated with higher separateness and connectedness scores, while insecure-insecure pairing would be associated with lower or opposing separateness and connectedness scores. Significant interactions were found for male and female attachment pairings; however, no specific support for the hypothesis was determined.

The final aim for this study was to examine how the relationship between attachment styles and differentiation differ when physical violence has been reported than when it has not been reported. The percentage of couples in this study who reported a history of physical violence was 36%, which is much lower than reported by previous studies using clinical samples (40-67%; Bond & Bond, 2004). The specific nature of the hypothesis for this aim was that a history of physical violence would be associated with the insecure attachment styles (dismissing, preoccupied, and fearful) and lower or opposing separateness and connectedness scores, while no history of physical violence would be associated with the secure attachment styles and higher separateness and
connectedness scores. Although preliminary results yielded no support for this hypothesis, additional results provided partial support in that when physical violence was reported as compared to when it is not reported female connectedness was significantly lower and male separateness was higher when physical violence was reported as compared to when it was not reported.

The findings from this study demonstrate that a history of physical violence has a substantial association with feelings of closeness and distance in a relationship, in that the scores for almost every variable and every relationship varied (although not always significantly) with the presence of a history of physical violence as compared to the absence of a history of physical violence. These results suggest that when at least one member of the couple has experienced physical violence female participants experience decreased feelings of closeness and male participants feel increased comfort with disagreement. distance Allison and colleagues (2008) suggest that both prototypically fearful and dismissing individuals will withdrawal in times of conflict, which seems consistent with the finding that a history of physical violence is associated with greater emotional distance given that the majority of the female participants here primarily ascribed to the fearful attachment style and the majority of the male participants ascribed to the dismissing attachment style (Allison, Bartholomew, Mayseless, & Dutton, 2008). While we saw in this study that violence is related to emotional distance, violence as a distance regulator should also be related to intense emotional closeness, something that we did not find in this study (Allison et al, 2008; Bartle & Rosen, 1994) It is evident that the impact of the experience of violence past or present can be dramatic on the individual
and the relationship, despite not having data on whether the physical violence occurred in this relationship or a previous relationship.

There were surprising findings for the proportions of individual attachment styles, as well as the pairings of attachment styles within the couple. For instance, the majority of both male and female participants identified with the secure attachment style. Given the clinical nature of this sample, this seems counterintuitive. Participants who ascribed to the secure attachment style were most commonly paired with a partner who ascribed to the dismissing or fearful attachment styles, with the fearful female - secure male pairing and the dismissing male - secure female pairing the most frequent attachment pairing. One possible explanation is that it may be that the negative effects of insecure attachment styles, such as the higher levels of avoidance characterized by the dismissing and fearful attachment styles are balanced or buffered by having a securely attached partner, as has been shown in previous research (Cohn, Silver, Cowan, Cowan, & Pearson, 1992). From a Bowen Family Systems Theory Perspective, it may be that the “secure” partner has become the overfunctioner in the relationship, while the “dismissing” or “fearful” partner has become the underfunctioner in the relationship (Kerr & Bowen, 1988).

Several gender differences were identified, such as high proportions of male participants ascribed to the dismissing attachment style, while few female participants ascribed to this attachment style, which is consistent with previous research that has found that this gender difference is almost ubiquitous (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991; Schmitt, 2008; Tagler & Gentry, 2011). In comparison, high proportions of female participants ascribed to the fearful attachment style, while few male participants ascribed
to this attachment style, a difference which has also been found in previous research (Brennan, Shaver, & Tobey, 1991; Tagler & Gentry, 2011). Contrary to previous research, there were no substantial gender differences in the preoccupied attachment style, which previous research has consistently shown that women are more likely to ascribe to than men (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991).

Further, results also showed that the means for separateness scores were lower than the means for connectedness scores, regardless of gender. Considering that higher scores on separateness demonstrate more comfort with disagreement and difference in relationships, while higher scores on connectedness demonstrate a stronger feeling of closeness to one’s partner, these trends in separateness and connectedness suggest that participants were more likely to report stronger feelings of closeness to their partner with less comfort with disagreement. This may be a result of using a sample of couples choosing to come to therapy. Typically couples in therapy want to be close but have a difficult time with conflict; believing any conflict is “bad” for their relationship and sense of closeness.

In terms of measuring differentiation, it seems that these results provide evidence that both a sense of closeness or isolation from the partner, as well as a sense of comfort with difference need to be examined in concert, rather than individually. Those couples in which one or both reported violence in the past, showed a pattern of higher separateness and lower connectedness. Interpreting these scores suggests that couples with a history of physical violence (either past of present) report being comfortable with difference and disagreement but also have a sense of isolation from their partner (at least females). The
separateness items used for this study come from the “Healthy Separation” subscale of the Adolescent Individuation Test (Levine, Green & Millon, 1986). The items are intended to assess an adolescent’s ability to be autonomous from parents, yet still have a sense of connection to their parents. That this higher sense of “healthy separateness” was not coupled with a higher sense of connection with the partner in couples who reported violence speaks to the imbalance in their distance regulating processes.

Clinical Implications

While there were few statistically significant results found in this study, the information gathered in this study has clinical significance. Assessment of attachment and differentiation during the initial phases of therapy may provide an abundance of clinical information for the therapist. By examining attachment style, as well as differentiation level, the therapist can screen for clients with increased chances of experiencing physical violence (Allison, Bartholomew, Mayseless, & Dutton, 2008; Bond & Bond, 2004), such as those with low separateness and connectedness scores, or those with the preoccupied or fearful attachment styles as was found to be associated with a history of physical violence in this study. As is suggested in Bowen Family Systems Theory, therapists should always maintain differentiated “I” stance with clients and not become emotionally reactive during the therapeutic process (Bartle & Rosen, 1994). Furthermore, when therapists intervene with couples experiencing violence should take a firm stand against the use of violence in relationships, creating safety plans when necessary and holding the perpetrator(s) of the violence accountable for their actions (Bartle & Rosen, 1994).
The men in this study appear to be associated with ambivalence about closeness and distance, which may appear in therapy as decreased engagement. Addressing gender role issues can be a way of indirectly acknowledging gender differences and the ambivalence that the men may experience (Bartle & Rosen, 1994). Information about attachment style and differentiation of self can help identify the clinical areas that may need to be addressed (negative view of self or others, discomfort with intimacy or disagreement in relationships), such as this ambivalence. Moreover, it will enable therapists to specifically address differences in how members of a couple perceive a similar situation based on gender, attachment style, and differentiation level.

**Limitations**

There were several limitations to this study. First, the separateness measure had low reliability for the male participants and the connectedness measure had low reliability for the female participants. Moreover, participants who were administered the attachment measure were not asked to choose the attachment style that best describes them, which is necessary to adequately determine the attachment profile (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991). The categorical assessment of attachment styles also inhibited the type of analyses that could be performed. Two methods have been identified from previous studies that have created a continuous attachment variable (Doumas, Pearson, Elgin & McKinley, 2008; Matsuoka, Uji, Hiramura, Chen, Shikai, Kishida, & Kitamura, 2006). For instance, Matsuoka et al (2006) created a total attachment scores by subtracting participants’ ratings of each of the three insecure attachment styles from their rating on the secure attachment style, with a higher scores indicating a more secure attachment style. Doumas
et al. (2012) created a continuum of attachment anxiety by summing participants’ ratings of the attachment styles high in attachment anxiety, preoccupied and fearful, then subtracting that score from the sum of their ratings of the attachment styles low in attachment anxiety, secure and dismissing. Doumas and colleagues (2012) also created a continuum of attachment avoidance by summing participants’ ratings of the attachment styles high in attachment avoidance, dismissing and fearful, then subtracting it from the sum of their rating of the attachment styles low in attachment avoidance, secure and preoccupied.

Participants were drawn from a clinical sample and the results are not generalizable to the larger population. There are several artifacts associated with a clinical sample as well, including perhaps an increased internalization of gender stereotypes, and a higher incidence of relational problems. The sample size in this study was small for dyadic data analysis (52 couples). The limited sample size reduced the ability to detect significant differences in the relationships between the variables and prevented the dyadic analysis of the interaction of attachment styles and differentiation in relation to violence. Furthermore, the question about physical violence addressed “ever” occurrence of violence, rather than violence in the present relationship. The lack of information about current violence prohibits us from making conclusions about the direct impact of attachment style and differentiation level on the chances of experiencing violence, as it is possible that a traumatic experience, such as becoming involved in a violence relationship could dramatically impact the attachment styles reported in this study (Hamilton, 2000; Lewis, Feiring, & Rosenthal, 2000; Waters et al., 2000a; Waters
et al., 2000b; Weinfeld et al., 2000). Additionally, this study only examined physical violence rather than including multiple types of violence, including sexual and psychological as has been suggested by the Centers for Disease Control (Saltzman, Fanslow, McMahon, & Shelley, 1999). Despite not having this information, significant main effects and interactions were still found for the association of physical violence with differentiation and the relationship between attachment and differentiation.

Future Directions

Based on the limitations of this study, several future directions can be recommended. Attachment was measured in using the Relationship Questionnaire in a categorical format and participants were inadvertently not asked to choose the attachment style that best describes them (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991). Future studies should examine attachment on continuums of attachment avoidance and anxiety, such that it will be possible to specifically examine how the differentiation continuums of closeness and distance overlap with attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance. It seems plausible that comfort with closeness is comparable to attachment anxiety and comfort with disagreement is comparable to attachment avoidance.

Alternatively to examining attachment on continuums of attachment anxiety and avoidance, previous research involving violent couples has shown that people may have either a predominant attachment style and a secondary attachment style or two predominant attachment styles, rather than being forced to be assigned to a single attachment style (Allison, Bartholomew, Mayseless, & Dutton, 2008). For instance, Allison and colleagues (2008) found that individuals used violence to help meet with
attachment needs for closeness and distance, such as those individuals with primarily preoccupied attachment orientations used violence to when their attempts to pursue their partners through verbal communication were unsuccessful. Conversely, those participants with primarily dismissing attachment orientations used violence when their attempts to create distance from their partner either through verbal communication or attempting to leave the situation were unsuccessful. When participants had two primary attachment orientations or a primary and a secondary attachment orientation, Allison et al (2008) found that the participants’ needs for closeness and distance became more complicated such that at times they desired intense closeness and at other times they desired distance. Furthermore, they found that the combination of attachment orientations in the couple, primary or secondary, affected the triggers for violence as it affected each partners need for intimacy and distance. Specifically, when two partners with preoccupied attachment orientations were coupled, violence would erupt when both partners attempted to pursue each other simultaneously as neither felt their attachment needs were being met, while when a preoccupied partner coupled with a dismissing partner, violence would erupt when the preoccupied partner attempted to pursue the dismissing partner when the dismissing partner desired distance and nonviolent methods for creating distance were unsuccessful (Allison et al., 2008).

Future research should continue to examine how the combination of attachment style in couples impacts violence, as well as the overlap between attachment styles and differentiation. Bowen suggested that fusion and cutoff were opposing responses to the same interpersonal forces and that people will either fuse or cutoff based
on their emotional reactivity to a particular situation. Perhaps the preoccupied and dismissing attachment styles are similar and people will fluctuate in attachment style reactions based on the situation, as well. By examining attachment on continuums, future research will also be able to delineate if this is the case. This study utilized differentiation as the independent variable as it was a continuous variable and attachment was a categorical variable; however, by analyzing attachment on a continuum, future research can also examine the impact of differentiation on attachment.

A majority of the participants in this study ascribed to the secure attachment style, which seems counter-intuitive given the clinical nature of the sample. Bowen suggested that it may be that one member of the couple overfunctions, while the other member underfunctions (Kerr & Bowen, 1988). Future research should further examine the validity of this hypothesis, as well as examine if this artifact may apply to attachment style in couples as well.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attachment Style</th>
<th>Female % (N)</th>
<th>Male % (N)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Secure</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence</td>
<td>47.4 (9)</td>
<td>31.6 (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No-Violence</td>
<td>25 (8)</td>
<td>46.9 (15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fearful</td>
<td>32.7 (17)</td>
<td>9.6 (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence</td>
<td>26.3 (5)</td>
<td>5.3 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No-Violence</td>
<td>37.5 (12)</td>
<td>12.5 (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preoccupied</td>
<td>15.4 (8)</td>
<td>13.5 (7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence</td>
<td>10.5 (2)</td>
<td>15.8 (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No-Violence</td>
<td>18.8 (6)</td>
<td>12.5 (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dismissing</td>
<td>3.8 (2)</td>
<td>23.1 (12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence</td>
<td>5.3 (1)</td>
<td>26.3 (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No-Violence</td>
<td>3.1 (1)</td>
<td>21.9 (7)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Quantity of participants who ascribed to each attachment style overall, as well as when violence was and was not reported by the couple.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Separateness</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence</td>
<td>2.27</td>
<td>2.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No-violence</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>1.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Connectedness</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence</td>
<td>3.35</td>
<td>3.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No-violence</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td>3.62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Overall means for separateness and connectedness, as well as means when violence was reported by the couple and when it was not reported.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Female Separateness</th>
<th>Female Connectedness</th>
<th>Male Separateness</th>
<th>Male Connectedness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Female</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>attachment</td>
<td>Secure</td>
<td>2.43</td>
<td>3.51</td>
<td>2.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>style</td>
<td>Fearful</td>
<td>1.85</td>
<td>3.76</td>
<td>2.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Preoccupied</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>3.42</td>
<td>1.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dismissing</td>
<td>2.60</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>2.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Male</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>attachment</td>
<td>Secure</td>
<td>2.17</td>
<td>3.71</td>
<td>2.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>style</td>
<td>Fearful</td>
<td>1.60</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>1.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Preoccupied</td>
<td>1.56</td>
<td>3.62</td>
<td>1.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dismissing</td>
<td>2.20</td>
<td>3.69</td>
<td>1.91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Individual mean scores for separateness and connectedness by attachment style.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Secure-Secure</th>
<th>Secure-Insecure</th>
<th>Insecure-Insecure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Female Separateness</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence</td>
<td>2.35</td>
<td>2.28</td>
<td>1.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No-Violence</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>2.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Male Separateness</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence</td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>2.15</td>
<td>2.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No-Violence</td>
<td>2.80</td>
<td>2.38</td>
<td>2.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Female Connectedness</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>3.59</td>
<td>3.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No-Violence</td>
<td>3.11</td>
<td>3.52</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Male Connectedness</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence</td>
<td>3.89</td>
<td>3.65</td>
<td>3.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No-Violence</td>
<td>4.22</td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td>3.86</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: Means for Separateness and Connectedness separated by couple attachment pairings and the report of violence by the couple.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Male Attachment Style</th>
<th>Female Attachment Style</th>
<th>Secure</th>
<th>Fearful</th>
<th>Preoccupied</th>
<th>Dismissing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male Separateness</td>
<td>Secure</td>
<td>2.35</td>
<td>1.89</td>
<td>2.20</td>
<td>1.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fearful</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>1.86</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Preoccupied</td>
<td>1.80</td>
<td>2.20</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dismissing</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>1.67</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male Separateness</td>
<td>Secure</td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>2.34</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>1.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fearful</td>
<td>2.80</td>
<td>1.93</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Preoccupied</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>1.60</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dismissing</td>
<td>1.97</td>
<td>1.67</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female Connectedness</td>
<td>Secure</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>3.90</td>
<td>2.56</td>
<td>4.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fearful</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>3.22</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Preoccupied</td>
<td>2.89</td>
<td>3.44</td>
<td>4.67</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dismissing</td>
<td>3.51</td>
<td>4.15</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male Connectedness</td>
<td>Secure</td>
<td>3.89</td>
<td>3.87</td>
<td>2.44</td>
<td>4.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fearful</td>
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<td>3.07</td>
<td>4.89</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Preoccupied</td>
<td>2.67</td>
<td>3.22</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dismissing</td>
<td>3.65</td>
<td>4.11</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5: Female separateness mean scores for the interaction of male and female attachment styles. *Non-estimable means.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Violence</th>
<th>Female attachment style</th>
<th>Female Separateness</th>
<th>Connectedness</th>
<th>Male Separateness</th>
<th>Connectedness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>Secure</td>
<td>2.17</td>
<td>3.82</td>
<td>1.83</td>
<td>3.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fearful</td>
<td>1.93</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>2.24</td>
<td>3.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Preoccupied</td>
<td>1.53</td>
<td>4.07</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>3.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dismissing</td>
<td>1.80</td>
<td>4.22</td>
<td>1.80</td>
<td>4.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Secure</td>
<td>2.60</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>2.47</td>
<td>3.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fearful</td>
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<td>3.92</td>
<td>1.85</td>
<td>3.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>1.44</td>
<td>3.40</td>
<td>3.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dismissing</td>
<td>3.40</td>
<td>2.78</td>
<td>4.22</td>
<td>3.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>Secure</td>
<td>2.26</td>
<td>3.73</td>
<td>2.04</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fearful</td>
<td>1.65</td>
<td>3.61</td>
<td>2.20</td>
<td>3.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Preoccupied</td>
<td>1.53</td>
<td>3.85</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>3.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dismissing</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>3.93</td>
<td>1.60</td>
<td>3.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Secure</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>3.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fearful</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>3.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Preoccupied</td>
<td>1.60</td>
<td>3.28</td>
<td>1.90</td>
<td>3.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dismissing</td>
<td>2.44</td>
<td>3.40</td>
<td>2.28</td>
<td>3.69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6: Individual mean scores for separateness and connectedness by attachment style and violence.
Figure 1: Four attachment styles shown on dimensions of anxiety and avoidance (Allison, Bartholomew, Mayseless, & Dutton, 2008, p.127).
Figure 2: The relationships between individual male attachment styles and individual separateness and connectedness.
Figure 2 continued

C

D
Figure 3: The interaction effect of individual male and female attachment styles on male connectedness. Non-estimable means are not plotted.
Figure 4: The main effect of physical violence on female connectedness and male separateness, with couple attachment pairings as the additional dependent variable.
Figure 5: The main effect of physical violence on female separateness, male separateness, and female connectedness, with female attachment as the additional dependent variable.
Figure 5 continued
Figure 6: The interaction effect of physical violence and female attachment styles on male separateness.
Figure 7: The interaction effect of physical violence and male attachment style on male separateness.
References


1. What is your age? ______

2. What is your gender? (Circle one)  Male  Female

3. What is your current relationships status?
   (Circle all that apply)
   Married (first time)
   Remarried
   Cohabiting
   Divorced
   Widowed
   Single (never married)

4. What is your current relationship length? _____

5. Circle your highest degree earned:
   Less than high school
   High school Diploma
   GED
   Some College
   Associates Degree
   Bachelor's Degree
   Master's Degree
   Professional Degree
   Ph.D., MD, JD.

6. Which best describes your race/ethnicity?
   Native American
   Asian
   Hispanic
   Caucasian
   African American
   Other ________________

7. How many hours a week are you currently employed?
   Less than 10
   10 to 20 hours
   21-35 hours
   35-40 hours
   more than 40 hours

8. What is your occupation? ___________________

9. What is your annual family income?
   Less than 10,000
10,000-19,000
20,000-29,000
30,000-39,000
40,000-49,000
50,000-59,000
60,000-69,000
70,000-79,000
80,000-89,000
90,000-99,000
100,000 or more

10. How many children do you have? ______

11. How many children do you currently have living with you? ______

12. How many stepchildren do you have? ______

13. How many stepchildren do you have living with you full time? ______

14. Have you or any of your family members been to therapy before? Yes No

15. Have you or any of your family members been in therapy for the same problem you are now seeking therapy for? Yes No

16. Have you or any of your family members been in treatment for alcohol or drug abuse? Yes No

17. When you were growing up, was there ever violence between adults in the household? Yes No

18. Were you the victim of abuse during childhood? Yes No

19. Have you ever thought about hurting yourself? Yes No

20. Have you ever attempted suicide? Yes No

21. Are you or any member of your family currently on medication? Yes No
   If so please list the member and the medication:
   ________________  _________________________________
   ________________  _________________________________
   ________________  _________________________________
   ________________  _________________________________

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APPENDIX B: RELATIONSHIP QUESTIONNAIRE
Following are descriptions of four general relationship styles that people often report. Please rate each of the following relationship styles according to the extent to which you think each description corresponds to your general relationship style. Please CIRCLE the number that corresponds to your choice below EACH description.

1. It is easy for me to become emotionally close to others. I am comfortable depending on them and having them depend on me. I don’t worry about being alone or having others not accept me.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not at all Like me</th>
<th>Somewhat like me</th>
<th>Very much like me</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. I am uncomfortable getting close to others. I want emotionally close relationships, but I find it difficult to trust others completely, or to depend on them. I worry that I will be hurt if I allow myself to become too close to others.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not at all Like me</th>
<th>Somewhat like me</th>
<th>Very much Like me</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. I want to be completely emotionally intimate with others, but I often find that others are reluctant to get as close as I would like. I am uncomfortable being without close relationships, but I sometimes worry that others don’t value me as much as I value them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not at all Like me</th>
<th>Somewhat like me</th>
<th>Very much like me</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. I am comfortable without close emotional relationships. It is very important to me to feel independent and self-sufficient, and I prefer not to depend on others or have others depend on me.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not at all Like me</th>
<th>Somewhat like me</th>
<th>Very much like me</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX C: HEALTHY SEPARATION IN THE FAMILY
Using the scale provide below, please answer the following questions about your current relationship partner/spouse:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 = Strongly Agree</th>
<th>2 = Generally Agree</th>
<th>3 = Slightly Agree</th>
<th>4 = Generally Disagree</th>
<th>5 = Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spouse</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Even though I’m very close to my spouse, I feel I can be myself.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I feel so comfortable with my spouse that I can tell him/her anything.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. My spouse and I have some common interests and some differences.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I am comfortable with some degree of conflict with my spouse.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Although I’m like my spouse in some ways we’re different from each other in other ways.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. While I like to get along with my spouse, if I disagree with something he/she is doing I usually feel free to say so.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX D: CONNECTEDNESS WITHIN THE FAMILY
Using the scale provide below, please answer the following questions about your most recent relationship partner/spouse:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 = Strongly Agree</th>
<th>2 = Generally Agree</th>
<th>3 = Slightly Agree</th>
<th>4 = Generally Disagree</th>
<th>5 = Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Spouse**  | **Son or Daughter** |
--- | --- |
1. I feel distant from my spouse. |
2. I don’t feel related to my spouse most of the time. |
3. I feel like an outsider with my spouse. |
4. I feel close to my spouse. |
5. Even around my spouse I don’t feel that I really belong. |
6. I am able to relate to my spouse. |
7. I feel understood by my spouse. |
8. I see my spouse as friendly and approachable. |
9. I have little sense of togetherness with my spouse. |
APPENDIX E: BEHAVIORAL RISK FACTOR SURVEILLANCE SYSTEM
Please answer the following questions with a Yes or No:

1. Has an intimate partner ever forced you to participate in a sex act (e.g., oral, vaginal or anal penetration) against your will?
   - YES
   - NO

2. Ever threatened, coerced, or physically forced you into any sexual contact that did not result in intercourse or penetration?
   - YES
   - NO

3. Ever hit, slapped, shoved, choked, kicked, shaken, or otherwise physically hurt you?
   - YES
   - NO

4. Ever been frightened for your safety, or that of your family or friends because of anger or threats of an intimate partner?
   - YES
   - NO

5. Ever put you down, or called you names repeatedly, or controlled your behavior?
   - YES
   - NO