

## Abstract

The present study explored the effect of the attachment style on one's mental states with the use of different receptive/response style in a simulated dyadic affect regulation context. 112 undergraduates were recruited and assigned to use either an analytical or experiential receptive/response style to respond to a non-intimate other's plight. Post-manipulation negative emotion, stress reaction, perceived distress and state self-esteem were measured. Results suggested that participants experienced more post-manipulation negative emotion and stress reaction by using the experiential receptive/response style. Individuals prone to anxiety attachment reported relatively more post-manipulation negative emotion and stress reaction across conditions. Individuals prone to both anxiety attachment and avoidance attachment reported relatively more post-manipulation negative emotion and stress reaction as well. However, individuals prone to avoidance attachment reported minimal negative emotion when experiential receptive/response style was employed, suggesting the use of a habitual minimizing approach on expressivity to deal with the heightened negative emotions. Inhibited emotional expressivity was not observed on these individuals when analytical style was employed. There was no significant effect of receptive/response style or attachment-style difference on perceived distress and state self-esteem. The present study provided preliminary evidence that the attachment style is related to the listener's mental states when using different processing and responding style to the shared distress in an interpersonal affect regulation context.

*Keywords:* attachment style, responding style, mental states, dyadic affect regulation