



**DEBRIEFING FORM**

Project Title: Attention and Attachment

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Thank you for your participation in our study. Your time and commitment to psychological research at the University of Alberta is greatly appreciated. Although there has been much research investigating the ways in which people pay attention, there is still much that remains unknown. For example, some researchers have found that an individual's attachment style can influence their attention due to their ability/inability to ignore distractions (Wichmann et al., 2016; Sakman & Sümer, 2018; Omri, 2009). However, there have been mixed results (Menon et al., 2020; Niedenthal et al., 2002). Research has also shown that behaviour is influenced by the presence of other people (e.g., Ha & Hayward, in prep; Steinmetz & Pfattheicher, 2017). However, it is unknown how virtual social presence, such as using desktop cameras, influences the arousal or attention of individuals, or whether this is due to attachment style. Finally, research indicates that social information is prioritized by our attention system (Fletcher-Watson et al., 2008; Langton & Bruce, 2008), however the relationship between attachment and attention to social or nonsocial objects is unknown. Thus, the purpose of this study is to measure attention and heart rate across attachment styles, while varying the amount of social presence and social objects the individuals face.

Implied social presence was varied by having a third of the participants complete the study at the same time on the virtual meeting with their cameras turned on, a third with their cameras turned off, and the final third completed the study solo. In addition, we varied whether there was a social item on screen or not, to see if social content is more distracting for some attachment styles than others. We also collected questionnaire measures in order to see whether different personality traits such as sociality or attachment styles relate to attention.

It is important that you be assured that any distress you may have experienced is taken seriously; if completing any of the materials has raised any personal issues, you are encouraged to follow up with student counselling services, provided below:

Peer Support Centre <a href="https://www.su.ualberta.ca/services/psc/">https://www.su.ualberta.ca/services/psc/</a>	Room 2-707, Student's Union Building (SUB). Helpline: (780) 492-4357 Phone: (780) 492-4268 Email: psc@su.ualberta.ca
Counselling & Clinical Services <a href="https://www.ualberta.ca/current-students/counselling/index.html">https://www.ualberta.ca/current-students/counselling/index.html</a>	Room 2-600 SUB Phone (780) 492-5205

If you have any further questions about this research, please do not hesitate to contact either PI at the email addresses above. If you would like to withdraw your data from the study after testing is completed you may do any time up until 7 days after your testing session was completed. This can be done by contacting the PI. If you have any questions about research participation, contact our Research Participation Coordinator at (780) 492-5689, or rescrcd@ualberta.ca.



For further reading on similar issues you may want to consult this interesting article:

Gillath, O., Giesbrecht, B., & Shaver, P. R. (2009). Attachment, attention, and cognitive control: Attachment style and performance on general attention tasks. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 45(4), 647-654.

Thank you very much for participating. Without the help of volunteers like you, we could not answer many important scientific questions in psychology. We have one last request: **Please don't tell other people about what we asked you to do in this study, as it is very important that they approach the study as you originally did, i.e., without expectations and without full awareness of our objectives.** This is important because it is the only way we can obtain objective and valid information.

Yours truly,  
Drs Dana Hayward & Kyle Nash  
Assistant Professors