Relationship Science Online

Therapeutic Approaches: Communication Skills

Communication Skills

- **Skill building if used may need to be framed in ways that aligns with both people's attachment styles:**
  - For attachment anxiety communication skill building can be discussed about skills to enhance closeness and connection and to minimise misinterpretation
  - For attachment avoidance communication skill building can be discussed as a way to enhance competence and capability and to minimise situations of intense conflictual interactions in which they are criticised
    - *Using "I feel" statements early on in skill building to address, for example criticism, may be difficult for those high on attachment avoidance*
  - For both attachment anxiety and avoidance, skill building is about reducing the emotionally charged destructive interactions – for anxiety, its about reducing negative affect, for avoidance its about limiting situations where they are faced with high negative affect.
- **From an attachment perspective, skill building may only work so much (at least in the first instance)**
  - Seemingly destructive and thus dysfunctional patterns are functional – patterns of distress regulation.

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