



Anxious Attachment Workbook

To the Anxiously Attached,

I created this workbook with you in mind—the part of you that loves deeply, feels everything intensely, and sometimes wonders why it still isn't enough to feel secure. I know what it's like to question yourself, to replay conversations, to hold on tightly because letting go feels unbearable. This isn't just information on a page—it's something I poured my heart into, hoping it reaches yours in the moments you feel most unsure, most overwhelmed, and most alone.

My hope is that as you move through it, you begin to see yourself differently—not as “too much,” but as someone who learned to love in a way that was never fully met. You're not broken. You're responding exactly how your story taught you to. And healing is possible. Step by step, I want to help you feel more grounded, more secure, and more at peace within yourself—because you deserve a love that doesn't leave you questioning your worth, especially from yourself.

To the Partner of the Anxiously Attached,

I created this workbook with you in mind—the one who loves someone deeply, yet often feels overwhelmed, confused, or unsure how to reach them. You may find yourself walking a fine line between wanting to comfort them and wanting space for yourself, between trying to say the right thing and feeling like nothing quite lands. That tension is real, and it can be exhausting. I want you to know this was made to support you too—not just in understanding them, but in understanding yourself within the relationship.

My hope is that as you move through it, you begin to see the pattern more clearly—what's happening underneath the reactions, the distance, the intensity. Not so you can fix them, but so you can respond in a way that creates more stability, clarity, and connection for both of you. You're not the problem, and neither are they. You're two people trying to meet each other with different maps. And with the right tools, it can start to feel less like walking on eggshells and more like building something steady, together.

Work privately first, then share as you are comfortable.
Just like anything else, you will get what you put into it.



The Anxious Attachment Style BluePrint By Communication Matters

A practical roadmap to understanding the four attachment styles and building secure, lasting love.

Why Your Attachment Style Matters

Your attachment style is your nervous system's blueprint for relationships—it shapes what you notice, how you react in relationships, and how you seek comfort. Without understanding it (and your partner's), you'll solve problems with the wrong tools or blame natural instincts but there is good news! This can be rewired through awareness and practice!

How Attachment Forms

From infancy, we learn: seek safety when distressed, explore when calm. Reliable caregiving builds secure bonds; inconsistent or scary responses create anxious, avoidant, or fearful patterns. These old survival strategies now block the intimacy you crave—but targeted tools can shift you toward earned security.

Where It Starts

Picture childhood moments when a hug came one day but felt far away the next. Caregivers might have been loving at times, distracted or stressed at others—leaving you guessing if your needs would be met. This rollercoaster teaches a young heart: I have to turn up my feelings louder to be truly seen. Love starts feeling fragile, like it could vanish unless you chase it.

What Anxious Attachment Feels Like

Imagine your chest tightening the moment your partner doesn't reply right away. That pit in your stomach grows as minutes turn to hours—every unanswered text feels like proof you're slipping away. You replay the last conversation: Did I say too much? Are they pulling back? Your mind spins stories of rejection, and suddenly you're sending another message, explaining yourself again, just to feel okay. This is what someone experiences when they have an anxious attachment

This isn't "needy"—it's your nervous system on high alert, wired from childhood moments when love felt shaky. Maybe Mom was loving one day, overwhelmed the next. Dad showed up sometimes, vanished others. You learned to amplify your feelings to pull them close, because inconsistent care taught you connection takes work. Now, even small silences trigger that old panic: If I don't hold on tighter, I'll lose them.

The Four Attachment Styles

Style	Core Fear	Key Patterns	Self-ID Cues
Dismissive Avoidant (DA)	"Closeness threatens my independence"	Delays replies, sticks to logistics, needs space, intellectualizes feelings	Relief from distance; trapped by emotional needs
Fearful Avoidant (FA)	"Closeness means danger"	Push-pull cycles, tests loyalty, hot/cold shifts, anger then shame	Exposed when close, rejected when distant
Anxious Preoccupied (AP)	"I'll be abandoned if I don't hold on"	Frequent texts, over-explains, chases reassurance, ruminates	Physically ill from space; replays conversations
Secure	None dominant	Communicates needs directly, repairs quickly, balances space and closeness	Assumes good intent; asks clearly without panic

How It Plays Out in Relationships

When connection feels shaky, your system goes into overdrive:

- Floods of texts or calls to bridge the gap.
- Spiraling thoughts: chasing "what ifs," explaining yourself over and over.
- Taking on all the emotional heavy lifting, just to keep peace.
- That urge to ask one more time, test the waters, or smooth things over.
- Physical waves of dread when they need space (heart racing, nausea, tight throat).
- Endless mental loops—analyzing texts, predicting breakups, rehearsing apologies.
- Protest behaviors you hate afterward: multiple messages, over-explaining, people-pleasing to avoid conflict.
- A deep ache for reassurance, yet feeling "too much" when you ask.

During arguments, quiet moments feel dangerous. Neutral words twist into signs of goodbye. You might say sorry too quickly, even when unsure why, just to stop the disconnect. You're empathetic, intuitive, and fiercely loyal—but the constant worry steals your peace.

- "Is This Me?" Quick Signs
- You refresh messages nonstop when they go quiet.
- Conversations replay in your head—what did you do wrong?
- Their need for space hits you like a wave of sickness.
- Thoughts and words from fights loop endlessly.
- Apologies slip out, even without knowing the reason.

Spotting the Difference

Sometimes confused with fearful-avoidant (who crave closeness but then pull back), anxious attachment stays in pursuit mode—no backing away. Unlike secure folks who ask once and trust the answer, you might circle back from worry, needing it settled now. This is your heart's way of protecting itself—smart, survival-driven.

The Path to Feeling Secure

With help, anxious attachment can soften into something much calmer. At Communication Matters, we uncover those old triggers together, build your inner calm so space doesn't feel like rejection, and practice simple ways to communicate that actually bring you closer. You'll start trusting the connection holds, feeling worthy on your own, and letting go of the worry that steals your peace. Ready for that shift? You'll start realizing your relationship is strong even when apart, feeling worthy on your own, and letting go of the worry that steals your peace. You deserve relationships that feel safe and steady. You're not broken. You just want to learn how to feel safe in love. When you are ready, we have several ways for you to choose how you want to become secure and it starts with scheduling the free consultation.

Nicole



communication
matters

Nicole Lowery, Owner

Step 1: What Anxious Attachment Feels Like Inside You

Your heart races when a text goes unread for 30 minutes. That knot in your stomach whispers, "They don't care anymore," even after a sweet good morning text. You've replayed one unanswered call a dozen times, each loop convincing you love slips away unless you hold on tighter. Closeness calms the storm, but doubt lingers—am I too much? These aren't weaknesses; they're echoes from early days when love flickered on and off, teaching your body to chase safety. You wake up scanning for reassurance signs. Silence feels like silent goodbye. Arguments spiral because even brief space equals loss to you. You need words like air after the smallest disconnects.

Circle ALL moments that hit home (check as many as resonate):

- Waking up already scanning for reassurance signs from yesterday
- Silence feels like you are slipping away
- Arguments spiral because even brief space feels like total loss
- Needing verbal "I love you"s after the smallest disconnects
- Partner's neutral face reads as if they are "done with me"
- Body floods with heat/panic when they mention needing "me time"
- Reassurance works fast but fades by next quiet moment

Emotional Deep Dive Questions - Answer in your own words:

When does this anxious grip feel strongest with your partner? Be specific about the situation:

What exact body sensation hits first (racing heart, throat tight, stomach drop)? Where do you feel it most?

What's the first thought that automatically floods your mind in that moment?

Before you reach out (text/call), what do you imagine will happen if you DON'T get reassurance?

This is your truth space. No right or wrong answers. Let the feelings spill onto this page exactly as they live in your body. This moment of naming them steals their secret power.

This understanding doesn't blame your past—it frees your present.

Step 2: Where Your Anxious Wiring Began

Picture little you after a tough fall or scary moment, arms outstretched for comfort and safety. Sometimes caregivers swept you up with warmth and presence, other times they were distracted by phones, work, stress, or simply unavailable emotionally. Love swung unpredictable—one day smothering and all-in, the next day distant and overwhelmed. Your young brain made a survival conclusion: Love isn't steady or reliable; you have to fight, chase, and perform to keep it close. Now adult triggers (a late reply, distracted look, or busy week) echo that exact same childhood terror—"Act NOW or it will disappear forever!" This wiring protected little you; it's not a character flaw.

Check ALL the childhood patterns that feel familiar (check as many as resonate):

- Love came in waves—feast today, famine tomorrow
- Caregivers were overwhelmed by your needs, sighed "not now"
- Comfort promised but rarely delivered consistently
- Had to be "good/perfect" to get attention and hugs
- Parents' fighting/chaos made your needs invisible
- Emotional rollercoaster—intense connection then cold silence
- Learned to read tiny mood shifts as "danger ahead"

Emotional Roots Deep Dive Questions - Answer in your own words:

Recall your clearest childhood memory where needing comfort felt uncertain. Explain the situation. Who was there? What did they do? How did you feel? Respond?

What did your little body feel in that moment(tight chest, racing heart, held breath)? Where did you feel it?

What survival belief did you form about love/relationships from repeated moments like this?

How does that EXACT same body feeling and belief show up with your partner? Give a recent example:

Compassion moment: Name at least one gentle thing you'd whisper to that scared little child version of yourself right now:

This understanding doesn't blame your past—it frees your present.

Step 3: Your Anxious Dance with Your Partner

You reach for connection—a simple question, gentle touch, bid for closeness. They pause to think, mention needing "me time," or seem distracted for 10 seconds. Boom—your pursuit system activates: extra texts, earnest pleas, heat rising in chest. They step back to breathe (perfectly healthy need), confirming your deepest abandonment terror. Cycle accelerates: you chase harder, they withdraw further, you flood with desperation. Deep down you crave steady arms, not this exhausting loop. Your body screams "losing them!" at neutral moments.

Circle ALL parts of this dance you recognize (check as many as resonate):

- My questions → Their short replies → My 5 follow-ups
- Their "busy night" → My stomach drop → Planning breakup speech
- Normal space needed → Feels like break up
- Their silence → My texts escalate → They go quieter
- My reassurance pleas → They feel pressured → I panic more
- Post-fight "space" → Pure torture, checking phone 50x
- Actually crave steady presence, not dramatic game

Cycle Deep Dive Questions - Map your specific pattern:

Describe your most recent cycle start to finish. What was your exact trigger?

What did you DO immediately after the trigger (texts, calls, accusations)?

How did they respond? How did that land in your heart/body?

Underneath all the pursuit/drama, what did you TRULY long for in that moment?

Draw your cycle here (or write the loop): Trigger → Reaction → Their response → Escalation → What breaks it?

Naming the dance is the first step to changing the music.

Step 4: Tools to Pause the Panic Before You Chase

Anxiety floods fast, old chase habits activate automatically. Your toolkit has 3 immediate interventions:

TOOL 1: 4-7-8 Emergency Breath

Inhale nose 4 seconds

Hold 7 seconds

Exhale mouth 8 seconds

Repeat 4 full cycles minimum

Directly tells your nervous system: "Safe terrain now."

TOOL 2: Name + Contain

Instead of 12 texts/pleading calls → One clear tether ask: "Feeling anxious right now. Can we talk in 10?"

TOOL 3: Self-Hold Anchor - Hands on heart, eyes closed, whisper: "I'm right here. I'm okay and lovable exactly as I am."

Check which tools you've tried (or want to try first):

- 4-7-8 breath during rising panic
- Name + Contain phrase
- Self-hold when phone tempts you
- All 3 in sequence

Practice Deep Dive - Test your tools NOW:

Current anxiety level (1-10, circle one): 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Do 4-7-8 breath cycle. New level: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

What shifted in your body?

Write your personal "Name + Contain" phrase for next trigger:

Try self-hold now. Hands on heart. What comes up?

Recall last panic moment—what tool would have helped most? Why?

Next 24 hour commitment: Use 1 tool next time urge hits. Log results.

Build this muscle daily—small felt wins literally rewire neural pathways over time.

Step 5: Celebrating Your Wins Toward Steady Safety

You've chased abandonment shadows for years, but secure glimmers already exist inside you. Secure moments happened: breathing through doubt instead of flooding partner, asking calmly without desperate edge, feeling briefly safe.

Check ALL secure glimmers you remember:

- Used tools/coping tools instead of typical behaviors (excessive texting/calling/talking)
- Named my feeling without blaming my partner
- Let brief silence pass without panicking
- Received love without questioning it
- Responded to their text/call calmly
- Felt "enough" for one whole hour

Wins Deep Dive - Anchor your progress:

List 3 SPECIFIC times you felt even flicker of safety in relationship—what exact partner words/actions landed?

What felt different in your BODY during those safe moments?

Your earned Secure daily practice (pick ONE):

- 4-7-8 breath every morning
- Self-hold when phone tempts
- Name + Contain phrase practice
- Notice one safe moment daily

Weekly Progress Tracker (4 weeks):

Week 1: Did I pause the urge at least once? Yes/No Moment: _____

Week 2: Did I pause the urge at least once? Yes/No Moment: _____

Week 3: Did I pause the urge at least once? Yes/No Moment: _____

Week 4: Did I pause the urge at least once? Yes/No Moment: _____

Reflection space: What felt lighter/easier in body or heart this week?

You're building earned security breath by breath. Your first victory deserves celebration!

Step 6: Loving Someone Anxiously Attached (For Your Partner)

Their texts and check-ins aren't clingy, controlling, or needy. They're scared and crying out, "I need to know you're still there with me." When they reach out a lot during normal moments, hear this instead: "I only feel truly safe in this relationship when I know we're connected and you're not slipping away." Your completely healthy need for space directly triggers their deepest abandonment fear from childhood. You've felt tired, overwhelmed, maybe even trapped or suffocated by their emotional intensity at times. Maybe you've wondered, "Will I ever get a moment to breathe?" But here's the good news: your calm, steady presence literally helps rewire their brain toward feeling safe over time. You don't have to fix them, become their constant emotional support, or change who you are. Small, consistent moments of attunement from you plant secure seeds that grow.

Check what you notice about them:

- Lots of texts = their way to show love
- Gets upset from fear, not anger at you
- Calms down fast with simple "I'm here"
- Loves deeply when feeling safe
- Needs words more than most people
- Softens when you stay steady

Your Heart Questions:

When has their worry touched your heart? What happened?

What do you feel in your body when they reach out a lot?

What's your first thought when they need reassurance?

What do you wish they understood about your need for space?

What's one small thing they've done lately that made you feel loved, even through their anxiety?

This is teamwork. Your steady heart helps theirs.

Step 7: Their Roots, Seen Through Your Eyes (For Your Partner)

They didn't choose to chase love or send lots of texts. Childhood taught them love comes and goes. Sometimes their parents hugged them tight and stayed close. Other times they got ignored, pushed away, or left waiting. Their little heart learned: "I have to fight to keep people close." Now when you need normal space or get busy, their old childhood fear screams "They're leaving me forever." Those 10 texts aren't about you personally—they're that scared kid inside them trying to hold on. When you see their worry, picture them as the small child waiting for that steady love that never came. Your understanding doesn't excuse bad behavior, but it explains the wiring. Your steady words and presence can help that little kid finally feel safe.

Check what makes sense about their childhood roots (check all that feels true):

- Their worry comes from old childhood fear, not dislike of you
- Parents were unpredictable—one day close, next day distant
- They learned to chase attention and love as their main protection
- Your healthy space needs feel like total rejection to their system
- They actually love deeply but their fear blocks it sometimes
- Need steady, predictable words more than most people do
- Little kid inside them still waits for consistent love

Your Understanding Questions:

When have you clearly seen their childhood fear come out with you? What exactly happened?

If you saw their flood of texts as "scared little kid reaching out" instead of "you're too much," how would you respond differently?

What kind, simple thing have you already said or done that helped them calm down even a little?

What do you need them to understand about your need for space? How could you say it in a way that feels safe for them?

What's one moment you felt compassion for their struggle instead of just frustration?

Seeing their scared roots builds real compassion that changes everything.

Step 8: Your Shared Dance (For Your Partner)

Your normal need for space triggers their deepest abandonment panic. They reach out more. You feel overwhelmed and pull back further. They panic harder and send more texts. Both of you end up scared and exhausted. This chase-withdraw loop confirms both your worst fears. You think "I can't breathe." They think "They're leaving me." Good news: you can help with one simple communication change. When you need space, don't just disappear. Say exactly: "I need 20 minutes alone to think. I will come back at 7pm. I love you." This gives them a clear timeline instead of scary silence. Both get needs met and the loop stops.

Check your exact part of this dance (check all that feel true):

- I say "need space" → They send 10 texts → I go completely quiet
- They ask "Do you still love me?" → I feel trapped and overwhelmed
- My short replies make their worry worse → I get more annoyed
- Their worry texts → I want to run away and hide
- Need alone time to recharge → Feels like attack to their system
- My silence → Pure torture for their abandonment fear

Your Cycle Questions:

What specific situations make you need space the most from them?

What do they do that makes you want to pull back or shut down?

What do you think they really need (not want) when they pull back or shut down?

New words to practice: "Need 20 min alone. Text you at 7 with love." When will you try this next time?

What's one moment you both got out of the loop even briefly? What worked?

Draw your loop here: Space need → Their panic → Your withdrawal → Escalation → New path?

*Love doesn't live in perfection; it grows every time you say,
"I'm still here, and I'm learning how to meet you."*

Step 9: What Helps Them Most (For Your Partner)

Quick, predictable, steady words work magic on anxious wiring. Try eye contact + "I'm right here with you." Text same time every day when apart. Always start soft: "I love how much you show me you care." Never say "You're too much right now" or disappear without warning. Their brain craves small, consistent moments over big dramatic talks. One "I'm here" at right moment > hour long discussion. Your reliability literally rebuilds their ability to trust over time.

Check what you've seen help them most (check all that work):

- Simple "I'm right here" with calm eye contact
- Text same time every day (noon check-in)
- "I love how you show me you care" soft words
- Quick 10-second hug + reassurance words
- Predictable check-ins they can count on
- Staying steady when they worry instead of getting annoyed
- Short clear timeline: "Back in 20. Love you"

Your Helper Questions:

What specific words calm them down the fastest? List them:

What responses make it worse for both of you? Be honest:

Practice log: When did you try one of these helping techniques (or similar)? What exactly happened?

Your personal top 3 helper moves:

What feels different in YOUR body when you help them calm?

Your steady love literally rewires their fear system to trust.

Step 10: Team Secure Tracker

How to use this final page: Work on this together once a week. Sit close but comfortable. Set a timer for 15 minutes max. Anxious partner goes first: "What felt safe for me this week?" You reflect back: "What hurt or felt unsafe for you?" Then switch. Each person makes ONE small, doable wish for next week. Keep it simple. No fixing, just hearing.

Daily Team Rituals to Start (pick 1-2):

Morning text: "Appreciate you because ____" (30 seconds)

Evening touch: 60 seconds hands/shoulder contact, no talking

Bedtime: "One good thing from today" (voice or text)

Why this works: Small steady moments beat big dramatic changes. Your brain needs repetition to trust. One calm week rewires more than one perfect day. Celebrate tiny shifts.

Blend both paths into simple team habits. Weekly 15-minute safe talk: Anxious partner shares "What felt safe for me?" You reflect "What hurt or felt unsafe?" Each makes one small wish for next week.

Morning ritual: "Appreciate you because ____" text. Evening: 60 seconds touch, no talking. Small habits > big promises. Track together 4 weeks. Celebrate every shared win.

Team Wins Table (fill together):

Week 1

Anxious partner win: _____

Your win: _____

Felt safer together? Yes/No How body felt different: _____

Week 2

Anxious partner win: _____

Your win: _____

Felt safer together? Yes/No How body felt different: _____

Week 3

Anxious partner win: _____

Your win: _____

Felt safer together? Yes/No How body felt different: _____

Week 4

Anxious partner win: _____

Your win: _____

Felt safer together? Yes/No How body felt different: _____

Team Reflection:

What's clearly better between you now?

One next step you'll both try:

Communication Matters—you're building lasting safe love together. Keep going!