

## Vulnerable Attachment Style Questionnaire (VASQ) With support

This questionnaire combines the support elements for partner and Very Close Other from the Vulnerability to Depression Questionnaire (VDQ) and the insecure attachment items from the Vulnerable Attachment Style Questionnaire (VASQ).

### A. Support

The support section is taken from the Vulnerability to Depression Questionnaire (Moran et al, 2001). It assesses the extent to which the partner and/or close others are identified as close confiding support figures

Reference:

Moran P M, Bifulco A , Ball C & Campbell C (2001). Predicting onset of depression: The Vulnerability to Depression Questionnaire. British Journal of Clinical Psychology, 40: 411-427

**Definitions:** A close confidant is a person whom the subject feels very close to, can confide in to a high degree, and has visual contact with at least once a month.

- Having **one close confidant** is evidence of support and protective against depression
- Having **at least 2** is indicative of **'good ability to make and maintain relationships'** and associated with secure attachment style..

SUPPORT	Circle answers describing PERSON A
1. What is the relationship of this person to you?	a. Partner b. Friend c. Family member d. Other relative e. Other..... (please specify)
2. How often do you see this person?	a. Daily. b. Weekly or more c. Monthly or more d. Less than monthly
3. How much do you tell this person about your very personal worries?	a. Everything b. Most things, a few exceptions c. Some things, a number of exceptions c. Not much
4. Have you told this person about personal worries you've had in the last 12 months?	a. Yes, everything b. Yes, some things/no worries c. No, nothing
5. How close to this person do you feel?	a. Very close b. Quite close c. Not close

In terms of the questionnaire items, the person named as a potential close confiding support figure should fulfill the following criteria:

For each of the three figures identified

- In response to item 2, they must circle 'a, b or c' (i.e. be seen at least monthly; and
- \*In response to item 3, they must circle 'a or b' (i.e. be able to confide in most things);
- in response to item 4, they must circle 'a or b'
- In response to item 4, they must circle 'a' (i.e. feel very close).

If the figures identified are scored as above, then they are close confidants.

## **B. VASQ (Attachment Style) Scoring procedure.**

### **Introduction**

This 22 item questionnaire, validated against the Attachment Style Interview, was originally used to screen for vulnerable and insecure attachment score in relation to clinical depression in adults or adolescents.

It utilises a **total** score of insecure attachment style and two subscales reflecting **insecurity/mistrust** and **degree of proximity/distance** in relating. Cut-offs have been derived based on median ratings in high risk community women. The VASQ does not derive attachment styles, but the insecurity/mistrust dimension was highly correlated to both Fearful and Angry-dismissive attachment styles and high proximity seeking to Enmeshed styles.

Analysis shows the total score and the insecurity/mistrust scale relate to depression in a study of 262 adolescents and adults.

VASQ scores are highly correlated with the RQ scores and have good test-retest reliability.

Higher cut-off scores can be used in different samples to optimise disorder risk. Higher vulnerability in style can be derived from combining insecurity and proximity seeking dimensions (Anxious) and insecurity and low proximity seeking (Avoidant).

### **Reference**

*Bifulco, A, Mahon J, Kwon J-H, Moran PM & Jacobs C (2003). The Vulnerable Attachment Style Questionnaire: An interview-derived measure of relationship styles predictive of depression. Psychological Medicine, 33, 1099-1110*

### **Scoring**

The items below represent the insecurity/mistrust items (non- highlighted/ italicised) and the proximity-seeking items (highlighted and italicised).

*All are rated 5: strongly agree, 4:agree, 3:unsure, 2:disagree or 1: strongly disagree.*

*Apart from 14 and 15 which are reversed:*

*5: Strongly disagree, 4: disagree, 3: unsure 2: agree, 1: strongly agree (see overleaf)*

**Step 1** - reversed scoring (items 14 and 15): change the scoring so that 1=Strongly agree and 5=strong disagree.

**Step 2 - Total scale (vulnerable) attachment style** = sum of all items, Add up the individual scores for each questionnaire (number 1-22), making sure first you reverse the scoring for question 14 and 15. The total score gives you vulnerability of attachment style - **cut-off 57** or more indicates a high level of vulnerable attachment style.

**Step 3 – Level of insecurity/mistrust of style (Fearful or Angry-dismissive)**

Sum items (non shaded/italicised above) 1,3,5,8,9,10,12,17,18,19,20 & 22). Here the **cut-off is 30** or higher. This means high insecurity of attachment.

**Step 4: Degree of proximity seeking (Enmeshed)**

Sum the shaded/yellow items above (2,4,6,7,11,13,14,15,16,21). Here the **cut-off is 27** or more for high level of proximity seeking.

**Step 5: Higher levels and type of insecure style**

**Insecure anxious style:** both high insecurity score and high proximity score

**Insecure avoidant style:** both high insecurity score and low proximity score

Vulnerable Attachment Style Questionnaire	5→ Strongly agree → 1 Strongly disagree
1. I take my time getting to know people 2. <i>I rely on others to help me make decisions</i> 3. People let me down a lot. 4. <i>I miss the company of others when I am alone.</i> 5. It's best not to get too emotionally close to other people 6. <i>I worry a lot if people I live with arrive back later than expected</i> 7. <i>I usually rely on advice from others when I've got a problem</i> 8. I feel uncomfortable when people get too close to me 9. People close to me often get on my nerves 10. I feel people are against me 11. <i>I worry about things happening to close family and friends</i> 12. I often get into arguments. 13. <i>I am clingy with others.</i> 14. <i>I look forward to spending time on my own ( Reverse score)</i> 15. <i>I like making decisions on my own. ( Reverse score)</i> 16. <i>I get anxious when people close to me are away</i> 17. I feel uneasy when others confide in me. 18. I find it hard to trust others. 19. Having people around me can be a nuisance. 20. I feel people haven't done enough for me. 21. <i>It's important to have people around me.</i> 22. I find it difficult to confide in people.	