



Distancing: Avoidant Personality Disorder, Revised and Expanded

Martin Kantor M.D.

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Kantor focuses on a misunderstood but common condition that brings severe and pervasive anxiety about social contacts and relationships. He offers psychotherapists a specific method for helping avoidants overcome their fear of closeness and commitments, and offers a guide for avoidants themselves to use for developing lasting, intimate, anxiety-free relationships.

Fear of intimacy and commitment keeps avoidants from forming close, meaningful relationships. Types of avoidants can include confirmed bachelors, femme fatales, and people who form what appear to be solid relationships only to tire of them and leave with little warning, often devastating their partners/victims. Kantor takes us through the history of this disorder, and into clinical treatment rooms, to see and hear how avoidants think, feel, and recover. He offers psychotherapists a specific method for helping avoidants overcome their fear of closeness and commitments, and offers a guide for avoidants themselves to use for developing lasting, intimate, anxiety-free relationships.

The avoidance reduction techniques presented in this book recognize that avoidants not only fear criticism and humiliation, but also fear being flooded by their feelings and being depleted if they express them. Acceptance is feared as much as rejection, because avoidants fear compromising their identity and losing personal freedom. Kantor describes the different therapeutic emphasis required for the four types of avoidants, including those who are withdrawn due to shyness and social phobia, such as people who intensely fear public speaking; those who relate easily, widely, and well, but cannot sustain relationships due to fear of closeness; those whose restlessness causes them to leave steady relationships, often without warning; and those who grow dependent on?and merge with?a single lover or family member and avoid relating to anyone else.

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