Imagine interaction due to loneliness, attachment insecurity and basic psychological needs dissatisfaction within peer relationships

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Loneliness can occur when there is a discrepancy between the imagined and real relationships. Connections were robust between loneliness and psychological needs dissatisfaction within relationships. However, only a few studies delve into how individuals with attachment insecurity process this form of distress. Framed by relationships motivation theory and attachment theory, this study examined loneliness as a predictor of engagement in an imagine interaction of late adolescents and young adults with attachment insecurity (18-30 years, N=531). Regression-based mediation analyses revealed that the dissatisfaction of psychological needs within peer relationships partially explains the relationship between anxious attachment and loneliness. Lack of significant mediation was found between avoidant attachment and loneliness. Through recursive path analysis, loneliness was seen as a predictive of imagine interaction for anxious but not for avoidant attachment. Anxious attachment can predict loneliness and imagine interaction related to keeping the relationship alive, solving conflicts, preparation for future conversation, understanding of self and release of stress and anxiety. Practical implications and suggestions for future research are discussed.

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