PARENTAL ENMESHMENT CHECKLIST

Read each of the following statements and put a checkmark by the ones that are true for you. Answer these questions from a historical perspective. In other words, try to recall how you felt when you were a child, rather than how you feel now. (The word 'parent' can refer to parents, stepparents, or other significant caretakers.)

- [x] ~~I felt closer to one parent than the other~~
- [x] ~~I was a source of emotional support for one of my parents~~
- [ ] I was "best friends" with a parent
- [ ] A parent shared confidences with me
- [ ] A parent was deeply involved in my activities or in developing my talents
- [ ] A parent took a lot of pride in my abilities or achievements
- [ ] I was given special privileges or gifts by one of my parents
- [ ] One of my parents told me in confidence that I was the favorite, most talented, or most lovable child
- [x] ~~A parent thought I was better company than his or her spouse~~
- [x] ~~I sometimes felt guilty when I spent time away from one of my parents~~
- [x] ~~I got the impression a parent did not want me to marry or move away from home~~
- [ ] When I was young I idolized one of my parents
- [ ] Any potential significant other of mine was never "good enough" for one of my parents
- [ ] A parent seemed overly aware of my sexuality
- [ ] A parent made inappropriate sexual remarks or violated my privacy
- [x] ~~My parents were separated, divorced, widowed, or didn't get along very well~~
- [x] ~~One of my parents was often lonely, angry, or depressed~~
- [ ] One of my parents did not have a lot of friends
- [ ] One of my parents thought the other parent was too indulgent or permissive
- [ ] I felt I had to hold back my own needs to protect a parent
- [x] ~~One or both parents had a drinking or drug problem~~
- [x] ~~A parent turned to me for comfort or advice~~
- [ ] A parent seemed to rely on me more than on my siblings
- [x] ~~I felt responsible for a parent's happiness~~
- [ ] My parents disagreed about parenting issues
- [x] ~~My needs were often ignored or neglected~~
- [x] ~~There was a great deal of conflict between me and a parent~~

- [x] ~~I was called hurtful names by a parent~~
- [ ] One of my parents had unrealistic expectations of me
- [x] ~~One of my parents was very critical of me~~
- [x] ~~I sometimes wanted to hide from a parent or had fantasies of running away~~
- [x] ~~When I was a child, other families seemed less emotionally intense than mine~~
- [x] ~~It was often a relief to get away from home~~
- [x] ~~I sometimes felt invaded by a parent~~
- [x] ~~I sometimes felt I added to a parent's unhappiness~~
- [ ] Do you have 10 or more checks spread out among the three sections? If so, it is likely that some degree of enmeshment occurred. Next, review the overall pattern of your checks. If your checks tend to be clustered in the first and second sections, you may have been enmeshed with a Romanticizing or a Sexualizing Parent. If your checks are clustered in second and third sections, you may have been enmeshed with a Critical/Abusive Parent. If you have checkmarks sprinkled throughout the three sections, you may have been alternately loved and abused by the same parent, or one parent my have abused you while the other allowed it.

Make and Share Free Checklists
checkli.com