Diagnostic Checklist for Pathogenic Parenting: Extended Version

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All three of the diagnostic indicators must be present (either 2a OR 2b) for a clinical diagnosis of attachment-based "parental alienation." Sub-threshold clinical presentations can be further evaluated using a "Response to Intervention" trial.

1. Attachment System Suppression

Present	Sub-Threshold	Absent
☐	☐	☐

The child's symptoms evidence a selective and targeted suppression of the normal-range functioning of the child's attachment bonding motivations toward one parent, the targeted-rejected parent, in which the child seeks to entirely terminate a relationship with this parent (i.e., a child-initiated cutoff in the child's relationship with a normal-range and affectionally available parent).

Secondary Criterion: **Normal-Range Parenting:**

yes	no
☐	☐

The parenting practices of the targeted-rejected parent are assessed to be broadly normal-range, with due consideration given to the wide spectrum of acceptable parenting that is typically displayed in normal-range families.

Normal-range parenting includes the legitimate exercise of parental prerogatives in establishing desired family values through parental expectations for desired child behavior and normal-range discipline practices.

2(a). Personality Disorder Traits

Present	Sub-Threshold	Absent
☐	☐	☐

The child's symptoms evidence all five of the following narcissistic/(borderline) personality disorder features displayed toward the targeted-rejected parent.

Sub-Criterion Met yes	no	
☐	☐	**Grandiosity:** The child displays a grandiose perception of occupying an inappropriately elevated status in the family hierarchy that is above the targeted-rejected parent from which the child feels empowered to sit in judgment of the targeted-rejected parent as both a parent and as a person.
☐	☐	**Absence of Empathy:** The child displays a complete absence of empathy for the emotional pain being inflicted on the targeted-rejected parent by the child's hostility and rejection of this parent.
☐	☐	**Entitlement:** The child displays an over-empowered sense of entitlement in which the child expects that his or her desires will be met by the targeted-rejected parent to the child's satisfaction, and if the rejected parent fails to meet the child's entitled expectations to the child's satisfaction then the child feels entitled to enact a retaliatory punishment on the rejected parent for the child's judgment of parental failures
☐	☐	**Haughty and Arrogant Attitude:** The child displays an attitude of haughty arrogance and contemptuous disdain for the targeted-rejected parent.
☐	☐	**Splitting:** The child evidences polarized extremes of attitude toward the parents, in which the supposedly "favored" parent is idealized as the all-good and nurturing parent while the rejected parent is entirely devalued as the all-bad and entirely inadequate parent.

2(b). Phobic Anxiety Toward a Parent

Present	Sub-Threshold	Absent	
☐	☐	☐	The child's symptoms evidence an extreme and excessive anxiety toward the targeted-rejected parent that meets the following DSM-5 diagnostic criteria for a specific phobia:

Criterion Met yes	no	
☐	☐	**Persistent Unwarranted Fear**: The child displays a persistent and unwarranted fear of the targeted-rejected parent that is cued either by the presence of the targeted parent or in anticipation of being in the presence of the targeted parent
☐	☐	**Severe Anxiety Response:** The presence of the targeted-rejected parent almost invariably provokes an anxiety response which can reach the levels of a situationally provoked panic attack.
☐	☐	**Avoidance of Parent:** The child seeks to avoid exposure to the targeted parent due to the situationally provoked anxiety or else endures the presence of the targeted parent with great distress.

3. Fixed False Belief

Present	Sub-Threshold	Absent	
☐	☐	☐	The child's symptoms display an intransigently held, fixed and false belief regarding the fundamental parental inadequacy of the targeted-rejected parent in which the child characterizes a relationship with the targeted-rejected parent as being somehow emotionally or psychologically "abusive" of the child. While the child may not explicitly use the term "abusive," the implication of emotional or psychological abuse is contained within the child's belief system and is not warranted based on the assessed parenting practices of the targeted-rejected parent (which are assessed to be broadly normal-range).

DSM-5 Diagnosis

If the three diagnostic indicators of attachment-based "parental alienation" are present in the child's symptom display (either 2a or 2b), the appropriate DSM-5 diagnosis is:

DSM-5 Diagnosis

309.4 Adjustment Disorder with mixed disturbance of emotions and conduct

V61.20 Parent-Child Relational Problem

V61.29 Child Affected by Parental Relationship Distress

V995.51 Child Psychological Abuse, Confirmed (pathogenic parenting)

Checklist of Associated Clinical Signs (ACS)

evident	not evident	
☐	☐	ACS 1: Use of the Word "Forced"
☐	☐	ACS 2: Enhancing Child Empowerment to Reject the Other Parent

evident	not evident	
☐	☐	"Child should decide on visitation"
☐	☐	"Listen to the child"
☐	☐	Advocating for child testimony

☐	☐	ACS 3: The Exclusion Demand
☐	☐	ACS 4: Parental Replacement
☐	☐	ACS 5: The Unforgivable Event
☐	☐	ACS 6: Liar – "Fake"
☐	☐	ACS 7: Themes for Rejection

evident	not evident	
☐	☐	Too Controlling
☐	☐	Anger management
☐	☐	Targeted parent doesn't take responsibility/apologize
☐	☐	New romantic relationship neglects the child
☐	☐	Prior neglect of the child by the parent
☐	☐	Vague personhood of the targeted parent
☐	☐	Non-forgivable grudge
☐	☐	Not feeding the child

☐	☐	ACS 8: Unwarranted Use of the Word "Abuse"
☐	☐	ACS 9: Excessive Texting, Phone Calls, and Emails
☐	☐	ACS 10: Role-Reversal Use of the Child ("It's not me, it's the child who…")
☐	☐	ACS 11: Targeted Parent "Deserves" to be Rejected
☐	☐	ACS 12: Allied Parent Disregards Court Orders and Court Authority

evident	not evident	
☐	☐	Child disregard of court orders for custody
☐	☐	Child runaway behavior from the targeted parent