

A COMPANION TO *NEW BABY, OLD PATTERNS*

The New Parent *Codependency* Checklist.

A 5-minute self-assessment for spotting codependent patterns activated by parenthood.

Codependency does not announce itself when you become a parent; it activates. The hypervigilance, the self-erasure, the urge to manage everyone else's involvement with the baby. This is a mirror, not a diagnosis. Use it once now, then again in 30 days. Patterns shift. So can you.

From *New Baby, Old Patterns*. A 90-day reset for new parents who suspect the pattern is theirs.

PATTERN A

Boundary Collapse.

The new parent who cannot have a separate self once the baby is here. Sleep, hobbies, friendships, and partner-time get traded away for proximity to the baby. Saying yes to everything baby-shaped feels safer than letting anyone else hold any part of it. Check the boxes that sound like you (or a partner you live with) since the baby arrived.

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- 1.** I cannot bring myself to leave the baby with my partner for an evening, even when I know it would be safe and good for me.
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- 2.** I check the baby monitor or the baby physically more than six times an hour when she is fine.
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- 3.** I have not slept more than 90 consecutive minutes since the baby was born, and turning down help feels easier than accepting it.
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- 4.** I feel guilty when I take 30 minutes for myself, even when someone else is fully in charge of the baby.
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- 5.** The thought of stepping away from being primary caregiver triggers panic, not just grief.
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PATTERN B

The Control Trap.

The parent who manages everyone else's involvement with the baby. Partners get coached, in-laws get redirected, schedules get optimized to a level only one person can sustain. The promise underneath is, if I run all of this perfectly, no one gets hurt. The cost is exhaustion and a partner who quietly stops trying.

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- 1.** I redo or correct how my partner handles the baby (feeds, changes, holds) within five minutes of them starting.
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- 2.** I keep mental scoreboards of who did what for the baby today, and I am usually losing.
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- 3.** I cannot let an in-law or friend hold the baby without coaching them through it.
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- 4.** I micro-manage the baby's nap, feed, and diaper schedule with a precision my partner finds unbearable.
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- 5.** I tell myself I am the only one who knows what the baby needs, and most days I half-believe it.
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PATTERN C

Self-Erasure.

The parent who disappears into the role. Old hobbies, old friendships, old aspirations recede until only the role of parent is left. There is no protest in this; it feels like the right kind of love. The cost shows up later, in a self that is hard to recover when the baby no longer needs the disappearing.

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- 1.** I cannot remember the last time someone asked how I am and I gave an answer that wasn't about the baby.
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- 2.** My identity outside of being a parent feels distant, like a person I used to know.
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- 3.** I have stopped doing the things that used to matter to me, and the loss feels less like grief than like inevitability.
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- 4.** I let my partner make decisions about money, schedule, and household defaults because I do not have the energy to be a stakeholder.
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- 5.** When friends ask if I am okay, I say "fine" and mean "I do not have the bandwidth to know."
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HOW TO READ THIS

Count your checks.

Tally the boxes you checked in each of the three sections. The pattern with the most checks is your dominant one. Two patterns close together is common; that means both are activated and they reinforce each other. Three close together usually means you are running on empty. Be honest. First reaction is usually the right one.

Boundary Collapse PATTERN A

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The Control Trap PATTERN B

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Self-Erasure PATTERN C

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Three things to know. Recognizing a pattern does not fix it. Patterns activate under stress and quiet down with rest, support, and practice. The patterns are interruptible. Knowing your dominant pattern is the first useful piece of information you have had since the baby arrived.

The full book traces each pattern to its source (parentification, ghosts in the nursery, intergenerational transmission) and gives you a 90-day plan to interrupt it before it reaches the next generation. ***New Baby, Old Patterns*** is on Amazon.