

# Mother-Son Enmeshment Checklist

Patient's name: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Examiner: \_\_\_\_\_

Please mark each statement that applies. This checklist can help assess whether enmeshment is present in the mother-son relationship.

## Mother's behaviors

	The mother is overly involved in the son's personal life, frequently making decisions for him or offering unsolicited advice.
	The mother uses guilt or emotional manipulation to influence the son's choices or behavior.
	The mother shares intimate or personal details with the son that may be inappropriate for their relationship.
	The mother expects the son to be available at all times and becomes upset if he is not.
	The mother struggles to allow the son to live independently and frequently inserts herself into his life.
	The mother pushes the son to choose romantic partners or friends that do not threaten her relationship with him.
	The mother relies on the son for emotional support, often treating him more like a partner than a child.
	The mother is overly involved in the son's career decisions, encouraging him to pursue a path that pleases her rather than his own dreams.
	The mother encourages the son to over-involve himself in the family business, leading him to sacrifice his own ambitions.

## Son's behaviors

	The son feels responsible for managing his mother's emotional well-being and tries to ensure she is always happy.
	The son relies heavily on his mother for emotional support and assistance in decision-making.
	The son feels guilty when he makes decisions that the mother disapproves of or disagrees with.
	The son has difficulty setting personal boundaries with his mother and often shares more than he is comfortable with.
	The son struggles to separate his identity and life choices from his mother's needs and expectations.

	The son's true self remains hidden, and he adopts a false, people-pleasing identity to gain his mother's approval.
	The son feels ambivalent about making commitments, particularly in romantic relationships, often placing his mother's needs above those of a spouse or partner.
	The son chooses romantic partners who do not challenge or threaten the mother-son dynamic.
	The son struggles with feelings of shame or conflict regarding his sexuality, often feeling ambivalence or guilt in intimate relationships.
	The son's relationships, especially with romantic partners, are often strained, leaving the partner feeling "second" to his mother.
	The son engages in compulsive caretaking behaviors, either in his friendships or romantic relationships, mirroring his relationship with his mother.
	The son avoids pursuing personal dreams or overcompensates through work to cope with feelings of disempowerment from the enmeshed relationship.
	The son is overly competitive with male peers but maintains a large number of female friends.
	The son struggles to commit to friendships, resulting in lost friendships over time.
	The son is over-involved in his own children's lives, potentially repeating patterns of enmeshment from his relationship with his mother.

## Additional notes

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Barber, B. K., & Buehler, C. (1996). Family cohesion and enmeshment: Different constructs, different effects. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 58(2), 433–441. <https://doi.org/10.2307/353507>

Hann-Morrison, D. (2012). Maternal Enmeshment. *SAGE Open*, 2(4). <https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244012470115>