



The Flying Monkey Newsletter

Combating Mental Health Ignorance and Mental Health Complicity with Child Abuse

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Dark Triad Personality

The personality pathology that is creating the pathogenic parenting of attachment-based “parental alienation” (AB-PA) is called the **Dark Triad personality**.

The **Dark Triad personality** is comprised of:

1. Narcissistic personality traits
2. Psychopathic personality traits
3. Machiavellian manipulation

The **Dark Triad personality** is empirically linked in the research literature to **vengefulness** (Giammarco & Vernon, 2014; Rasmussen & Boon, 2014).

The **Dark Triad personality** is empirically linked to the “Four Horsemen” of destructive **high-conflict** spousal communication (Horan, Guinn, & Banghart, 2015).

The **Dark Triad personality** is empirically linked to **lying** and **deceitfulness** (Jonason, Lyons, Baughman, & Vernon, 2014; Baughman, Jonason, Lyons, & Vernon, 2014).

The empirically established link of the **Dark Triad personality** to the “Four Horsemen” of destructive **high-conflict** spousal communication means that EVERY mental health professional involved in families expressing **high-conflict** divorce need to be professionally competent in the assessment of the **Dark Triad personality**.

And ALL mental health professionals involved in families expressing **high-conflict** divorce need to assess for the potential role of a parental **Dark Triad personality** which is creating the **high-conflict** divorce.

Child Protection

Pathogenic parenting that is creating significant developmental pathology in the child (diagnostic indicator 1), personality pathology in the child (diagnostic indicator 2), and delusional-psychiatric pathology in the child (diagnostic indicator 3) in order to meet the emotional and psychological needs of the parent represents a **DSM-5 diagnosis of V995.51 Child Psychological Abuse, Confirmed**.

The pathology of pathogenic parenting is NOT a child custody issue; it is a **child protection issue**.

This is the fundamental ground on which the assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of this pathology is rooted.

This is not controversial. This is a fact.

Pathogenic parenting that is creating significant developmental pathology in the child (diagnostic indicator 1), personality pathology in the child (diagnostic indicator 2), and delusional-psychiatric pathology in the child (diagnostic indicator 3) in order to meet the emotional and psychological needs of the parent represents a **DSM-5 diagnosis of V995.51 Child Psychological Abuse, Confirmed**.

For anyone to argue that it is **acceptable** parenting to create developmental pathology, personality pathology, and delusional psychiatric pathology in the child is both bizarre and wrong.

Mental health professionals – ALL mental health professionals – who **fail to assess** for the developmental pathology, personality pathology, and delusional-psychiatric pathology created by **pathogenic parenting** are very likely in violation of Standard 9.01a of the APA ethics code that requires:

9.01 Bases for Assessments

- (a) Psychologists base the opinions contained in their recommendations, reports and **diagnostic** or evaluative statements, including forensic testimony, on information and techniques **sufficient to substantiate** their findings.

Mental health professionals cannot have information “sufficient to substantiate” their findings if they do not even assess for the presence of the pathology.

Assessment leads to accurate diagnosis. Diagnosis guides treatment.



The Justification for Colluding with Child Abuse: Protective Separation of the Child is Not Accepted Practice

The Justification: The protective separation of the child is not accepted professional practice in response to “parental alienation” (as defined by Gardnerian PAS).

The Truth: The construct of “parental alienation” is not a defined construct in clinical psychology. No such pathology exists within professional clinical psychology. Mental health professionals need to STOP using the poorly defined construct of “parental alienation” and rely instead on established and accepted psychological principles and constructs

- Narcissistic and borderline personality pathology (the **Dark Triad** and **Vulnerable Dark Triad** personalities) exist;
- Family systems constructs of the child’s triangulation into the spousal conflict through the formation of a **cross-generational coalition** with one parent against the other parent exist;
- Pathogenic parenting that creates child pathology exists.

DSM-5 V995.51 Child Psychological Abuse Confirmed

Diagnosis guides treatment.

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The pathology of pathogenic parenting is NOT a child custody issue; it is a **child protection issue**.

Diagnosis guides treatment

Child Protection

Diagnosis guides treatment.

Those mental health professionals who advocate leaving the child with the pathogenic parent are advocating that we abandon the child to a psychologically abusive parent who is creating significant developmental pathology in the child (diagnostic indicator 1), personality disorder pathology in the child (diagnostic indicator 2), and delusional-psychiatric pathology in the child (diagnostic indicator 3). Abandoning a child to a psychologically abusive parent is NOT standard of care.

Abandoning the Child to Abuse

Diagnosis guides treatment.

The mental health response to ALL forms of child abuse – physical child abuse, sexual child abuse, and psychological child abuse – is to **protect the child** by immediately separating the child from the abusive parent.

We never abandon a child to the abusive parent. We protect the child from a physically abusive parent. We protect the child from a sexually abusive parent. We protect the child from a psychologically abusive parent.

Diagnosis guides treatment. We start with an accurate DSM-5 diagnosis of the pathology.



Quotes from Professional Psychology

The Dark Triad Personality:

“First cited by Paulhus and Williams (2002), the Dark Triad refers to a set of three distinct but related antisocial personality traits: **Machiavellianism**, **narcissism**, and **psychopathy**. Each of the Dark Triad traits is associated with feelings of superiority and privilege. This, coupled with a lack of remorse and empathy, often leads individuals high in these socially malevolent traits to exploit others for their own personal gain.” (Giammarco & Vernon, 2014, p. 23; emphasis added)

“Despite their diverse origins, the personalities composing this Dark Triad share a number of features. To varying degrees, all three entail a **socially malevolent character** with behavior tendencies toward self-promotion, emotional coldness, duplicity, and aggressiveness. In the clinical literature, the links among the triad have been noted for some time (e.g., Hart & Hare, 1998). The recent development of non-clinical measures of all three constructs has permitted the evaluation of empirical associations in normal populations. As a result, there is now **empirical evidence** for the overlap of (a) Machiavellianism with psychopathy (Fehr, Samsom, & Paulhus, 1992; McHoskey, Worzel, & Szyarto, 1998), (b) narcissism with psychopathy (Gustafson & Ritzer, 1995), and (c) Machiavellianism with narcissism (McHoskey, 1995).” (Paulhus & Williams, 2002, p. 557; emphasis added)

The Dark Triad and High-Conflict Communication

From: Horan, S.M., Guinn, T.D., and Banghart, S. (2015). **Understanding relationships among the Dark Triad personality profile and romantic partners' conflict communication**. *Communication Quarterly*, 63, 156-170.

“How individuals communicate during conflict is important, and the previously reviewed studies reinforce that personality is important in understanding this process. Four conflict messages that have received academic attention are **contempt**, **criticism**, **stonewalling**, and **defensiveness**. “Contempt involves “statements that come from a relative position of superiority...‘You’re an idiot’”; “Criticism entails “stating one’s complaints as a defect in one’s partner’s personality...‘You always talk about yourself. You are so selfish’”; “Stonewalling describes “the listener’s withdrawal from interaction;” “and defensiveness describes self-protection in the form of “righteous indignation or innocent victimhood.” (Gottman, 1993, p. 62).

“Such behaviors can work together, wherein there is “process cascade in which criticism leads to contempt, which leads to defensiveness, which leads to stonewalling.” Collectively, these conflict messages are known as **The Four Horsemen** (Gottman, 1993).” (Horan, Guinn, & Banghart. 2015, 159; emphasis added)

“Hypotheses 1a–1c examined the relationships among the Dark Triad personality structure and general nature of romantic partner conflict. Results demonstrated that individuals reporting higher levels of Machiavellianism, subclinical psychopathy, and subclinical narcissism tended to have higher levels of romantic partner disagreement and that such conflict discussions were both **intense** and **hostile**.” (Horan, Guinn, & Banghart. 2015, p. 165)

“Hypothesis 2 explored the relationships among the Dark Triad personality structure and use of the Four Horsemen during romantic partner conflict. Correlations revealed that individuals reporting higher levels Machiavellianism and subclinical psychopathy also reported **greater use of contempt, criticism, stonewalling, and defensiveness**. A similar picture was painted for narcissism, with the exception of stonewalling.”



References

The Dark Triad Personality

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About the Newsletter

Urban Dictionary: “In popular psychology, a flying monkey is someone who does the narcissist’s bidding to inflict additional torment to the narcissist’s victim.”

Too many mental health professionals collude with the pathology of the narcissistic/borderline parent because of professional ignorance and incompetence in the recognition, assessment, and diagnosis of narcissistic and borderline personality pathology as it is being expressed within the family. As a direct consequence of their professional ignorance and incompetence, these mental health persons collude with the **psychological abuse of children**, to the developmental and psychological harm of children and families, and in apparent violation of Standard 3.04 of the APA ethics code and their professional “duty to protect.”

Each edition of the Flying Monkey Newsletter will answer a false and distorted justification offered for **their collusion with child abuse**.