

REFLECTIONS OF A FAMILY THERAPIST ON THE PARENTAL ALIENATION
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1. Unless your child was born of the Immaculate Conception, there is another parent out there who created your child and who must participate in rearing your child.
2. Even if the residential parent has sole legal custody, that parent can never have sole PSYCHOLOGICAL custody.
3. Hatred for a parent = self-hatred.
4. Annihilation of a parent = annihilation of the self.
5. The inability of a parent to subvert hatred for the other parent to the love for one's child is an indication of narcissism.
6. The twisting of a child's mind to repress the instinctual love for a parent is a form of emotional child abuse.
7. Teaching your child to disrespect the other parent is teaching your child to disrespect authority. It will eventually come around to you as well.
8. When a loving parent is eradicated from the child's life, the child will *"look for love in all the wrong places."*
9. The failure to obtain input from both parents in a custody evaluation is tantamount to evaluating only half of the child. Custody evaluators, if you commit this failure, you are imposing the story of King Solomon on the child.
10. How do you recognize an alienator? She/he always commences the opening remarks with the following exclamation: "I want my child to have a relationship with the other parent---if only...." There is always an "if only" about the other parent that is exaggerated, fabricated, misleading, and/or incredible.
11. Asking a child for her/his opinions about custody and visitation decisions places her/him in the same position as the rope in a tug-of-war between her/his parents. Just like the rope, she/he will eventually unravel.
12. If you don't empower a child as to whether to attend school, obtain medical care, decline to participate in important family functions, or any decision about a health and safety issue, why would you empower the child to make such a significant decision as to what relationship to have or not have with the non-residential parent?

13. Custody and visitation decisions, in cases when there is no substantiated child abuse and/or neglect and no social deviancy on the part of a parent, should be determined principally on the basis of which parent is more likely to facilitate the relationship with the other parent. (But a 50-50 shared physical custody arrangement supersedes any other arrangement.)
14. If you're not old enough to sit on a jury, you are not old enough to decide custody and visitation.
15. It is anti-instinctual to hate a parent.
16. You have to be carefully taught to hate and fear----especially a parent.
17. Children exhibit the serious symptoms resulting from hostile parenting, but they cannot fix their parents as an outcome of their individual therapy. The remedy for the child's symptoms is a cooperative and civil co-parenting relationship.
18. The influence of the residential parent on the child cannot be underestimated. (And in some cases that does apply to the nonresidential parent.) Therefore, before a lawyer for the child or GAL rushes to judgment about what to recommend to the court, please obtain a full explanation for the child's expressed feelings and wishes. Failure to do so puts the child at grave risk for suffering the continued emotional abuse of the PA. The same caution applies to child protection personnel.
19. If we accept that it is unhealthy for a child to remain with unresolved anger for a teacher, for peers, for siblings, for a parent with whom they live, then why do we condone and even support a child retaining unresolved anger for the non-residential parent? That is exactly what we are doing when we address these situations by severing or lessening the relationship between the parent and child rather than facilitating amelioration between them.
20. Parenting is a proactive and not a passive responsibility. It is therefore not good enough when the residential parent exclaims, "I do not interfere with my child's relationship with the other parent. My child has a mind of her/his own." It is therefore incumbent upon the residential parent to facilitate and encourage the relationship between the other parent and child.
21. When you send the PA child to an individual therapist so that the child is empowered to express the brainwashed feelings and opinions of the ventriloquist alienating parent, how is it therapeutic for the therapist to "validate" the misguided, distorted, imaginary, and illusionary perceptions of the child? Is it the job of the therapist to promote psychoses or is it the job, instead, of the therapist to facilitate healthy family functioning so that the

- child attains her/his optimal development? Any prudent layperson's perception would know the answer to this question.
22. How quickly can the PA be eradicated? Almost overnight if the professionals who intervene in child custody proceedings based on the recognition of what every child instinctively appreciates: that the sabotage of a relationship with a parent is destructive to the child.
 23. If you, as an attorney or as a mental health professional, assist your client/patient parent in engaging in the process of alienating the other parent from their child without determining whether the other parent is a danger to the child, then you are nothing more than a hired gun! And if you do not resign from employment by a parent who continues to engage in alienation, then you are committing malpractice!
 24. Our adversarial approach to child custody is an oxymoron with the best interests of the child.
 25. The spuriousness of the child's expressed enmity for and rejection of the targeted/alienated parent is revealed when the child flips like a light switch upon receiving permission from the alienating parent to do so.
 26. The spuriousness of the child's rejection of the targeted/alienated parent is also revealed in how rapidly they typically adjust to the transfer of custody to the alienated parent, especially when the alienating parent is simultaneously disempowered by being denied all contact with the child through judicial decree.
 27. The concept of "time is of the essence" is most appropriately applied to cases of the PA. The usual judicial delays only serve to escalate the PA.
 28. The pendulum on DV laws has swung wrongly to the opposite extreme. The current law is abusing innocent targeted parents, who are being subjected to the humiliation and disruption of arrest. They live daily with the anxiety from the fear of being violated based on lies.
 29. We need not get hung up on the label of PA: it is an observable family dynamic which can be described as hostile parenting, destructive parenting, parental interference with the other parent's relationship with the child, or just plain crappy parenting.
 30. Should the reader wish to rely on more scientific and anecdotal support for the PA, then study the extensive writings of the child psychiatrists of the 1950s who later founded the family therapy movement. They adopted the concept of "triangulation," originally labeled as such as the "pathological triangle" by child psychiatrist, Murray Bowen. Triangulation is the

characteristic family dynamic of the PA, and we therefore have more than 60 years of scientific support for its existence.

31. Not all therapy is the same: family therapy is as different from every other form of therapy as matrimonial law is different from international law, from tax law, from corporate law, from bankruptcy law, etc. Only someone who is trained thoroughly in family dynamics should be assigned by the court to provide therapy to children and families in high conflict divorce situations, to do custody evaluations, and to assess for the PA.
32. The alienating parent could not be successful in achieving "Parentectomy" were she/he not emboldened and empowered by the professionals whom they co-opt in the mental health, child protection, and judicial systems.
33. Because of procrastination, incompetence, rescue fantasy, ignorance, and frequently selfish self-interest, the professionals in the mental health, child protection, and judicial systems are enabling the PA to victimize the family.
34. Before any professional abets the alienator or the alienation process, I would urge you to ask yourself, "How easily could I reject one of my parents?"
35. Before any professional makes the momentous decision to limit or eradicate contact between a child and parent, ask yourself this question, "How easily could I reject one of my own parents?"